

1. BUTTERFLY

by Gao Hong

Commissioned by IFTPAs with support from the Minnesota State Arts Board.

Gao Hong, pipa; Nirmala Rajasekar, veena & vocals;

Michelle Kinney, cello; Biplob Bhattacharya, tabla

Just as the butterfly comes into our lives briefly and brings us great joy and pleasure during its short stay on earth, so too do some people. This piece is dedicated to those who have come into our lives, touched our hearts deeply and brought us much joy and inspiration, but like the butterfly, have left far too soon.

**2. MOTHER-IN-LAW ARGUING WITH DAUGHTER-IN-LAW** by Lin Shicheng

Supported by the Bush Foundation's Folk and Traditional Arts Fellowship

Gao Hong, pipa

Lost for decades, this piece was recently reconstructed by Gao Hong's mentor - the late pipa master of the Pudong style, Lin Shicheng - and passed on to Gao Hong during her travels to Hong Kong and Beijing. It tells the story of a mother-in-law arguing with her daughter-in-law with a wide array of entertaining and descriptive sounds coming from the pipa. The recording of this piece is dedicated to Gao Hong's teacher, Lin Shicheng.

3. COURAGE

by Gao Hong

Commissioned by the Jerome Foundation

Gao Hong, pipa; David Hagedorn, percussion

In April of 2005, Gao Hong's precious daughter, Alida, was diagnosed with leukemia. Due to numerous rare complications with her chemotherapy, a four-year old girl who loved to sing and dance and play with her friends was suddenly bedridden, in extreme pain, and unable to walk. She immediately began a rigorous 26-month chemotherapy program and remained hospitalized for a solid month, having a chest tube inserted and her nose cauterized on both sides. She spent most of the summer in physical therapy, and through hard work and the strong desire to be a "normal girl" she regained her ability to walk and dance.

QUIET FOREST, FLOWING STREAM

靜靜的森林，潺潺的小溪

NEW CHINESE PIPA MUSIC BY GAO HONG

高虹音樂專集 中國琵琶演奏家 / 作曲家



Throughout her treatment, Alida was as brave as anyone could ever be. She was a great inspiration to her entire family, and kept them all going during this difficult time. Gao Hong's piece *Courage* is inspired by Alida's triumph and her ability to overcome great difficulties and remain positive throughout her trauma. The piece is in three movements, played without pauses.

4. QUIET FOREST, FLOWING STREAM by Gao Hong
Commissioned by the Jerome Foundation
Gao Hong, pipa; Shubhendra Rao, sitar

Inspired by the serenity of a forest and the excitement and playfulness of a flowing stream, *Quiet Forest, Flowing Stream* was premiered at the Southern Theater in 2003. A second version was quickly adapted for Gao Hong's multicultural group *Speaking in Tongues*. It is included in the Minnesota Science Museum's "Wild Music: Sounds and Songs of Life" exhibition that is currently touring the U.S. A third incarnation of the piece, an arrangement for pipa and piano trio by Gao Hong and her husband, Paul Dice, was premiered by the Bakken Trio at the Southern Theater in 2005.

5. FLYING DRAGON CONCERTO by Gao Hong
Commissioned by the American Composers Forum's Jerome Composers' Commissioning Program
Gao Hong, pipa; Joseph Schad, piano

Based on Gao Hong's solo composition *Flying Dragon*, the concerto version was premiered in July 2005 by the Minneapolis Pops Orchestra with Jere Lantz conducting. It has since been performed by the Oshkosh Symphony, William LaRue Jones, Conductor, and by the Rochester Symphony with Jere Lantz conducting. The version featured on this CD is a piano adaptation of the orchestral score interpreted by piano prodigy Joseph Schad.



Gao Hong was born in the Year of the Dragon. When she was 3 years old her mother took her to a fortuneteller who told them that because of the time and date she was born, she was a "flying dragon." Her life has paralleled several of the characteristics associated with a flying dragon - constantly being on the move, never being settled, never being certain of where your home is, never knowing what your future will bring. Gao left her family at age 12 to become a professional musician and avoid the severe consequences of the Cultural Revolution. She has since moved further and further from her hometown - first to a neighboring province, then to Beijing, Japan, and finally the United States. In *Flying Dragon Concerto* she explores the mixed emotions and confusion brought on by her nomadic lifestyle that continues to leave her uncertain of what her future will bring. She reflects upon the constant struggles and challenges in a life filled with both hardship and happiness as well as a constant need for inner strength.

6. CELEBRATION by Gao Hong

Kenny Endo, taiko; Gao Hong, pipa; Nirmala Rajasekar, veena & vocals;
Shubhendra Rao, sitar; Michelle Kinney, cello;
Biplab Bhattacharya, tabla; David Hagedorn, percussion

Inspiration for this piece comes from Gao Hong's daughter's victory over leukemia, her friendships with musicians worldwide that have inspired her greatly, and reflecting on her 35 years of playing the pipa.

Commissioned by the Jerome Foundation in celebration of the Jerome Hill Centennial and in recognition of the valuable cultural contributions of artists to society. This CD is also partly funded by a subito grant from the American Composers Forum.

Producer : Paul Dice
Design: Gao Hong, Philip Blackburn
Engineer : Matthew Zimmerman
Tracks 3, 5, and 6 are live recordings
Innova Director: Philip Blackburn
Operations Manager: Chris Campbell
Innova is supported by an endowment from the McKnight Foundation.

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