University of Florida Performing Arts

presents

Saturday, March 29, 2008, 7:30 p.m.

Sponsored by

Dharma Endowment Foundation

IAI Presentations, Inc.
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Ms. Cynthia A. Dike-Hughes, Vice President
Ms. Marissa Bywater, Production and Marketing Associate
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AND

International Asia, Inc. ~ Mr. Ken T. Hai, President
PO Box 546 Walnut, CA 91788
Ancient Chinese drumming and percussive traditions date back thousands of years and are representational in nature, meaning that each passage you will hear in this performance tells a story or imparts emotions that transcend mere drum music, and convey many meanings. These selections reveal the pageantry of epic sagas depicting ancient battles, vignettes about mythical characters in exotic locales, legendary fables and the beauty of nature. Due to the importance of the Yellow River to the daily lives of the people of Shanxi Province, her bounty is highlighted among nature’s many gifts in their music and this important aspect of their culture is explored in our program. As you experience our show, consider the thousands of years of rich and ancient cultural tradition being shared through the awesome, majestic, and exuberant musical expressions of JIGU! Thunder Drums of China!

PROGRAM

Act I

Hear the Tiger and the Dragon Roar!

In this spectacular opening to our performance, the performers welcome the audience with a commanding piece that exemplifies the strength and courage of two of the most revered animals in Chinese lore, the tiger and the dragon. This selection displays the incredible talents of the musicians while symbolizing the qualities of these two great beasts, one that is in existence today and one that may have walked the earth in mythical legends of ancient times.

Composed by Mr. Wang Bao Can, Mr. Jing Jian Shu and Mr. Huai Hai

Yellow Ground Music

This musical sketch offers up to the audience the inevitable march of nature and how the earth tells us tales of eons gone by. With its emotional drum sounds, passionate tone and tom-tom performances, this selection speaks to the changes of the ages and to the renewal of the earth.

Composed by Mr. Li Zhen Gui

Yellow River Music

Indicative of the personification of nature in man, this selection uses the Yellow River as a metaphor for the hearts and minds of the youth of China. Flowing thousands of miles and sustaining her people for centuries, the great waves of this legendary body of water represent the hearts of the people and the river itself is like the mind of the people, brave and unyielding.

Composed by Mr. Wang Bao Can

A Mouse-Fairy Wedding

The scene is whimsical and idyllic as the mouse-fairies are wed. All of their clan celebrate with happiness and delight...until an uninvited guest arrives at the festivities!

Composed by Mr. Hao Shi Xun

The Bull and the Tiger

Invoking the nature of animals and their contradictions as used allegorically in Chinese literature and legend, this composition signifies the brave, yet controllable, nature of the bull and the power and the ferocity of the tiger, and is suggestive of these qualities that are alive in each of us.

Composed by Mr. Wang Guo Jie
Lady Warriors of the Yang Family
Symbolizing the passion and romance of ancient battlefields, this composition tells the story of a generation of female heroes and their sacrifice for their loving and appreciative nation. Note the virtuosity of the performers and the beautiful costumes in this thrilling selection!

Composed by Mr. Zhang Lie

Act II

Boatmen of the Yellow River
A symphony of drum and percussive sound, this orchestration describes with great musicality and lyricism the boatmen’s courage and spirit of cooperation. Color, sound, light and emotion evoke the spirit of the boatmen as they are summoned in this intricately woven, centuries-old tale!

Composed by Mr. Zhang Lie

Sounds of Rolling Walnuts
A celebration dedicated to the harvest. When the walnuts are ripe, the farmers put them on their roofs to dry. As they dry, the winds blow the walnuts down from the rooftops and, as they hit the ground, they make a ‘ping-pong’ sound. This whimsical selection uses a series of drum and percussive sounds to evoke this wonderful noise and expresses the happiness of the farmers at their good fortune!

Composed by Mr. Wang Bao Can and Mr. Hao Shi Xun

Drums of Triumph
Quick rhythms and brilliant tunes are heard as the General and his people celebrate triumph on the battlefield. The music comes from ancient army rhythms and symbolizes the joy of the people and the warriors at their victory!

Composed by He Hua Jun, Mr. Liu Han and Mr. Hu Jun Quan

An Autumn Ode
Innovative and fresh, this music describes a time in the fall when the persimmons are ripe and the wind moves through the bamboo forest. As the winds of change echo the shifting of the seasons, a new and beautiful world comes into view and the seasonal change is captured in this compelling Autumn Ode.

Composed by Mr. Zhang Lie

Garden City Gathering
Farmers and their families gather to share stories of the fields. This music is about the harvest and the excitement of bringing in the bounty for all to share. The fascination with the tales imparted here so enthralls the visitors that no one wants to leave when the festival ends!

Traditional Drum Composition

The Qin King Assembles His Army/Drums of Freedom
As the West wind calls, the Qin Emperor, Li Shimin, assembles his army and they prepare to set out across the vast Northern Desert. The tone of this selection is marked by tight drum tones and the clanging of gongs, representing the sheer power and epic scope of
Emperor Li Shimin leading his army into battle. In this symphonic selection, the expression of freedom reigns supreme. The epic and powerful sounds of many musical instruments are employed to let freedom ring throughout the land!

Composed by Mr. Li Min Xiong

_Dogs Chasing Ducks_

In this playful and ebullient piece, everyone gets to have a little fun as we hear the sound of many dogs chasing ducks in the water. Creating these happy sounds are small cymbals used by the performers to evoke the image of romping dogs chasing wily ducks that are just too quick for their canine pursuers!

Composed by Mr. Guo Min Zhi and Mr. Liu Jin Zhu

_Springtime Paradise_

As singularly beautiful and full of life as the first day of Spring, this jubilant and energetic finale to our performance features the entire company melding modern performance skills and ancient art in an ultra-sensory kaleidoscope of sight and sound, sharing with the audience the exhilaration to be found in this Season of Renewal and in the joy of life!

 Traditional Drum Composition

The program for this performance will be selected from the above. Management reserves the right to make alterations in the order of the program or in the cast due to illness or any cause whatsoever.

The use of cameras or flash or video photography, and sound recorders are strictly prohibited.

**JIGU! THUNDER DRUMS OF CHINA**

Hailing from the Shanxi Province in China, the Shanxi Jiangzhou Drum Arts Ensemble, as they are known in China, comes to America as JIGU! Thunder Drums of China. In Chinese, _jigu_ (pronounced jee GOO) means to “beat or touch the drum” and the performance you are about to experience is the culmination of thousands of years of Chinese musical tradition. JIGU! Thunder Drums of China has performed in many countries and major cities worldwide including Denmark, Morocco, Singapore, Malaysia, Korea, Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and the United States. Their performances at the Hong Kong Arts Festival were lauded as “varied as the beats and drums themselves” and featured “dramatic, heart-stopping pieces” while also displaying a playful attitude with passages that are “entirely humorous!”

Their participation in festivals and arts events are numerous and include CCTV’s (Chinese Central Television’s) Spring Festival, the Macao International Music Festival, the Shanghai International Arts Festival, the Chinese Folk Art Festival, the Summer of Ha’ErBin Arts Festival, the Hong Kong Drum Festival and Competition, the internationally-renowned Arhus Cultural Festival in Denmark and the 2004 NBA International Games, where they were the featured performers. JIGU! Thunder Drums of China has also won many awards including the 1992 Chinese Folk Competition for Percussion and Drum Performers. They were the Gold Medalists at the 2004 National Star Awards in China, given for excellence in their fields of drumming and percussive performance. They also won Gold Medals at the National Star Awards competition in 1992, 2000 and 2001.

Last year, JIGU! Thunder Drums of China embarked on their very first North American Tour to great success and acclaim. Their sold-out shows were joyous celebrations of Chinese music, culture, drumming and percussive arts, and fun! On this tour they visited more than 25 North American cities including Seattle, Washington; San Francisco, California; Detroit,
Michigan; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, among others. JIGU! Thunder Drums of China amazed the crowds with their unique talents and powerful musical skills. Also while on this tour, the group visited Canada for the first time ever where they played to enthusiastic audiences in Vancouver, British Columbia. The year 2008 marks JIGU! Thunder Drums of China’s second North American Tour and they look forward to entertaining American audiences once again with their unique and thrilling art form.

The drummers, percussionists and musicians of JIGU! Thunder Drums of China come from 28 villages within the Shanxi Province, and range in age from 18 to 30 years old. Their families have passed down their skills from generation to generation. Their drumming traditions can be traced back centuries in the city of Jiangzhou, within Xinjiang County. Jiangzhou was the home of the Emperor Li Shimin of the Tang Dynasty (618 – 907 A.D.). Li Shimin has also been called “Tang Taizong” in many historical records, and his renown has come in part from his celebrated drum and percussion orchestra. Part of the legend of Emperor Li Shimin lives on in this performance as one of the scenes tells some of his story. Some of the earliest archaeological evidence of Chinese drums and percussion music has been unearthed in the Shanxi region. Chinese drumming and percussion music is generally placed in one of two categories. The Yuchui (pronounced “Yu-Shwee”) or drum and wind style, is mainly performed at weddings and funerals to bring good fortune or peace to those being honored. The Saishe (pronounced “Sigh-Sheh”) or festival style of performance was performed by villagers praying for prosperous weather and rich harvests. The JIGU Thunder Drums of China repertoire embraces both of these styles, the more formal and traditional, as well as the more joyful, light-hearted style found in daily life.

China has a long and rich theatrical history dating back many centuries to the Shang Dynasty (1523 – 1028 B.C.). In this period, “seers” performed ceremonial songs and dances to honor the gods, invoking them to drive out pestilence, cause crops to be abundant, or create other “miracles.” By the time of the Han Dynasty, beginning around 202 B.C., court entertainments were very popular. Clowns, wrestlers, acrobats, singers and musicians entertained emperors and their attendants by acting out mythical stories and famous fables.

These entertainments were the precursors of Peking Opera, which is a multifaceted art form, unlike Western Opera. Peking Opera combines singing, dancing, acrobatics, martial arts, pantomime, highly stylized acting, costumes, make-up and more to create fantastic stage productions. The fundamental belief of Chinese theatergoers is that theater, at best,
should be an illusion of life. Good Chinese theater, therefore, must show the real struggle of humans to succeed and survive as well as display the trials and joys of living.

The percussion section is among the most important aspects of Chinese opera. The artists of JIGU! Thunder Drums of China take part in the aforementioned philosophies of Peking Opera and express it through percussive style. In China, being selected to become a member of JIGU! Thunder Drums of China is an honor and brings with it a great deal of prestige and the possibility of travel for the artists. Imagine being chosen for a professional music troupe and travelling the world! While on tour, the artists will see many corners of the globe and meet new and different people. The musicians are representatives of their country and their art, and they take great pride in being selected to perform for audiences worldwide. So, prepare to be transported to another realm as you experience the thunderous roar of JIGU! Thunder Drums of China!

**STAFF FOR JIGU! THUNDER DRUMS OF CHINA**

Company Director..................................................................................................... Mr. Ken T. Hai
Principal Artist..................................................................................................... Mr. Wang Bao Can
Group Leader........................................................................................................ Mr. Li Nai Zhong
Technical Consultants....................................................................................... Mr. Sun Jian and Ms. Wan Sen
Stage Manager........................................................................................................... Mr. Wu De An

**TOUR DIRECTION BY**

SRO Artists Incorporated

**THE COMPANY**

Ms. Cao Ya Qin
Ms. Cong Wen Wen
Mr. Di Rui Jun

Mr. Sun Jian
Ms. Sun Li Sha
Mr. Wang Jian Qiang
Mr. Wang Jing
Mr. Wang Zhi Zhang
Mr. Wei Chao Hua
Mr. Wu De An
Mr. Zhang Shao Yong
Ms. Zhang Xiao Rong

Ms. Meng Qiong Qiong
Mr. Qiao Yan Bin
Ms. Song Ya Wen

Mr. He Hua Jun
Mr. Li Min Xiong

Mr. Hu Jun Quan
Mr. Liu Jin Zhu
Mr. Jing Jian Shu

Mr. Wang Guo Jie
Mr. Liu Han Lin
Mr. Wang Bao Can
Mr. Zhang Lie

**THE COMPOSERS**

Mr. Hao Shi Xun
Mr. Guo Min Zhi

Mr. Li Zhen Gui
Mr. Huai Hai