

May 13, 2006

FOR *IMMEDIATE* RELEASE

Chinese Fine Arts Society celebrates the public debut of its
Great Wall Concert Series, featuring:

The All Chinese Music Concert

Featuring:

Katherine Jui Chang, Piano
Claudia Cryer, Flute
David Cunliffe, Cello
Elena Kawazu, Violin
Tina Keiter, Percussion
Debbie Katz Knowles, Percussion
Abraham Stokman, Piano
Betti Xiang, Erhu

At:

Sunday, May 21, 2006
3:00 p.m.
The Chicago Cultural Center
Preston Bradley Hall
78 East Washington Street
Chicago

And:

**The Great Wall International Music Composition Competition
Gala World Premiere Concert**

Featuring:

Dennis Azabagic, Guitar
Lawrie Bloom, Clarinet
Katherine Jui Chang, Piano
Amy Briggs Dissanayake, Piano
Russell Hershov, Violin
Eugenia Moliner, Flute
Ken Olson, Cello
Rami Solomonow, Viola
Betti Xiang, Erhu
Yuan-Qing Yu, Violin

At:

Sunday, June 25, 2006
2:00 pm
at
The Chicago Symphony Center
Buntrock Hall
220 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago

And:

The Music Festival in Honor of Confucius

Sunday, October 22, 2006

The year 2006 brings to Chicago yet another series of unforgettable and world-class concerts sponsored by the Chinese Fine Arts Society. In addition to the annual **All Chinese Music Concert (ACMC)**, as well as the **Music Festival in Honor of Confucius (MFHC)**, 2006 marks the return of the Chinese Fine Arts Society's International Music Composition Competition, held once every five years. The competition, which invites composers to create original musical compositions based upon a Chinese folk musical theme or subject. Drawing participants from all over the world, this year's theme, the Great Wall of China, will culminate in the **Great Wall International Music Composition Competition Gala World Premiere Concert (GWIMCC)**, which will take place on Sunday, **June 15th, 2 p.m.**, at the Chicago Symphony Center's Buntrock Hall.

Although held only once every five years, the International Music Composition Competition serves to energize and infuse fresh artistry into the set repertoire of Chinese Fine Arts Society's annual concerts. Drawing upon the submission of original work by emerging as well as seasoned composers, the International Music Composition Competition continues to inspire creativity and innovation in the global music community. The Great Wall International Composition Competition debuted its compositions at **the Great Wall Patron's Soiree on April 21st** at the residence of Julie Ma, CFAS President. There, patrons were offered a glimpse into the spectacular line up of performers and compositions for the upcoming concert series through the performances by the spectacular soprano Barbara Landis, pianist Anatoliy Torchinskiy, and cellist Victoria Mayne playing *On My Way Home*, by Victoria Bond, an honorable mention winner of the Great Wall International Music Composition Competition, and Chicago-based erhu maestro Betti Xiang and 2005 Music Festival in Honor of Confucius winners Johannes Gray and Elena Kawazu also dazzled the audience with their respective erhu, cello and violin performances.

Music from the Great Wall International Music Composition Competition will be featured at the **17th annual All Chinese Music Concert**. Taking place on **May 21st, 2006, at 3 p.m.** in the **Chicago Cultural Center's Preston Bradley Hall**, the concert coincides with Chicago's celebration of Asian Heritage month and is sponsored by the Illinois Arts Council as well as the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs. The concert will showcase two

compositions written for the Great Wall International Composition Competition; "Yuan" by Shao Sheng Li, winner of the competition's junior division, as well as "Meditation, Cello and Piano Duet," by Bo Chan Lee, junior division finalist. "Yuan," meaning the foundation of a wall, symbolizes the Great Wall of China, as well as the pride of the Chinese in their many achievements. Composed with the history of China in mind, "Yuan" utilizes unique traditional Chinese instruments such as the erhu and gongs in the musical arrangement. Audiences will also enjoy pieces by other acclaimed composers such as Frank Leung, Peixun Chen, and Tyzen Hsiao. Performers for the concert include Abe Stokman on Piano; Betti Xiang on Erhu; Claudia Cryer on Flute; Debbie Knowles on Percussion; Elena Kawazu on Violin; Katherine Jui Chang on Piano; Tina Keitel on Percussion. The Hakkanese Chorus, renowned for its dedication to Hakka folk music, and conducted by Lori Ho, will also perform at the concert. Entrance to the concert is free and open to the public. Early arrival is highly suggested, as high turn out volume is expected.

In June, the Chinese Fine Arts Society continues its celebration of Asian heritage with the **Great Wall International Music Composition Competition Gala World Premiere Concert on Sunday, June 25th, at 2 p.m.**, in the **Chicago Symphony Center's Buntrock Hall**. With the Great Wall of China as the musical theme of this year's competition, the composers examined the legends, the folk melodies, influence, as well as ideals of the illustrious edifice through innovative scores. The five finalist composers include Michael Djupstrom, Vivian Fung, Lu Pei, Huang Ruo, and Naomi Sekiya. Audiences will enjoy performance by *Chicago Symphony Orchestra* musicians Lawrie Bloom, Russell Hershow, Eugenia Moliner, Ken Olson, Rami Solomonow, and Yuan-Qing Yu. The concert will also feature renowned Chicago musicians Denis Azabagic, Katherine Jui Chang, Amy Briggs Dissanayake and Betti Xiang. Additionally, the audience will aid the judges in selecting the 1st and 2nd prize winners from the five finalists of the competition. A reception and silent auction will take place after the concert. Tickets are available through the Chinese Fine Arts Society by calling (312) 427-6267 x183.

The Chinese Fine Arts Society continues its concert series in the fall with the **22nd Annual Music Festival in Honor of Confucius**, held in commemoration of the birthday of the quintessential Chinese educator, Confucius. This year, the festival will take place on **October 22nd, 2006**. With the goal of educating students and teachers alike about the rich traditions of Chinese music, the Music Festival in Honor of Confucius encourages the development of musical training and appreciation through competitions and scholarships. The music festival includes three competitions; the **Confucius Competition**, for violinists, cellists, and pianists ages 18 or younger; the **Amei Hu Lin Violin Scholarship Competition**, for advanced violinists age 18 and younger; and the **Virginia Geyser Behrendt Scholarship Competition**, for young professionals and conservatory students age 25 and younger. Due to the coincidence of the Music Festival in Honor of Confucius with the Great Wall International Composition Competition, the repertoire of the music festival will feature two original compositions from the International Composition Competition. The Amei Hu Lin Violin Scholarship Competition's new repertoire includes the "Great Wall Fantasy" violin solo by Ma Ru Ming. Meanwhile, the Virginia Geyser Behrendt Scholarship Competition's repertoire will use "Meditation, Cello and Piano Duet" by Bo Chan Lee. Winners of the three competitions will perform for the general public at the **Music Festival in Honor of Confucius Winner's Concert** at the **Chicago Cultural Center's Preston Bradley Hall, on November 19th, at 3 p.m.**

The Chinese Fine Arts Society is proud to have the support of the Great Wall Honorary Committee, which includes luminaries of the classical music world such as **Rachel Barton Pine**, one of the most gifted virtuosos of our time; as well as **Henry Fogel**, former CEO of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for over 20 years. Other acclaimed musicians and

composers that form the Great Wall Honorary Committee include Shui-Long Ma, Bright Sheng, Augusta Read Thomas, John Bruce Yeh, Chen Yi, and Yuan-Qing Yu. Their advisement and patronage of the Chinese Fine Arts Society continues to bring the organization's educational goals and musical developments to higher grounds.

For 22 years, the Chinese Fine Arts Society has nurtured the Chicago public's interest in Chinese cultural heritage through the use of music and art forms to bridge the eastern and western cultures. Beginning as a small group of parents wanting to create opportunities for their children to learn more about Chinese culture, the group's volunteers grew to the multi-level non-profit organization it is today. From musical concerts, art gallery shows, musical competitions to encourage learning of Chinese music (Music Festival in Honor of Confucius), to world-wide competitions for composers to find a way to bring a mythical Chinese hero to life via music (Great Wall International Music Composition Competition); the Chinese Fine Arts Society continues to make a positive cultural contribution to Chicago.

All Chinese Music Concert Musician Bios

Abraham Stokman

Abraham Stokman was born in Tel Aviv, Israel, where he began his piano studies at the age of six. He came to the United States at the age of 12, when he was offered a scholarship from the Juilliard School in New York City, where he obtained his bachelor's and master's degree with his teacher, Edward Steuermann. For five years, he served as a vocal coach at the Juilliard opera department. Then in the ensuing years, he proceeded to give solo and chamber concerts at the United States and Canada. In 1969, he moved to Chicago and became the artist-in-residence and assistant professor at the Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University for six years, and subsequently served as chairman of the piano department at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago.

Betti Xiang

Betti Xiang was born in Shanghai, China where her father, Xiang Zuying, a renowned Erhu master, first introduced her to the Erhu. Ms. Xiang publicly debuted as an Erhu soloist at the young age of 17 in Guangzhou, China. For the following four years, Ms. Xiang was honored to present more than fifty performances to both military troops and local residents throughout China. In 1986, Ms. Xiang received the coveted Young Artists' award in both Shanghai and Beijing for outstanding solo artist. In 1996, Ms. Xiang embarked on her journey to establish a distinguished career in America. After having been invited to perform at such distinctive venues in the Chicago area, including the Ravinia International Music Festival, the Kimmel Center, and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Hall, Ms. Xiang was recognized as an Erhu maestro, and performances at the New York Lincoln Center and the Smithsonian Institute soon followed. Most recently, Ms. Xiang was privileged to appear at the inaugural of Chicago's Millennium Park, where she was the guest artist at the Pritzker Pavilion performing the Erhu concerto "Crouching Tiger," composed by Tan Dun. Ms. Xiang also performs with Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble, and currently appears with her uncle, Xiang Zuhua, on the CD recording of her late father's music, Joy of Countryside. Ms. Xiang has received the 2006 Master/Apprentice Award from the Illinois Arts Council.

Claudia Cryer

Flutist Claudia Cryer is currently principal flute with the Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra and a member of the Chicago Sinfonietta Orchestra, which also serves as the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago's orchestra. She is a versatile studio musician who regularly records for Hope Publishing Company of Carol Stream. In addition, she has been a chamber music coach with the Midwest Young Artists program, and recently performed numerous educational outreach programs with the ESO Woodwind Quintet. Ms. Cryer has played with the Oregon Symphony Orchestra, Elgin Symphony Orchestra, Lake Forest Symphony, Chicago Chamber Orchestra, New Black Repertory Ensemble, and the Park Ridge Civic Orchestra; she enjoys a variety of music which is such an important part of Chicago's rich and diverse culture.

David Cunliffe

Cellist David Cunliffe began studying at the age of 9 in his native England. Three years later he was chosen to receive a scholarship to the Royal College of Music in London. In 1984 Mr. Cunliffe went on to study at the Royal Northern College of Music where he founded the Argyll String Quartet, and was the recipient of the Terrance Weill and Leonard Hirsch Quartet prizes, as well as the Lady Barbicelli Chamber Music Award. He completed his studies at the International Yehudi Menuhin Music Academy in Switzerland, where he studied with Radu Aldulescu and toured throughout Europe with Yehudi Menuhin and the Camerata Lysy. In 1995 he was asked to join the Balanescu Quartet, touring extensively to Australia, Europe and the United States; during which he appeared frequently on radio and TV, including featured performances on NPR and the BBC. He has served as Principal cello with the RNCM Chamber and Symphony Orchestras, including performances with BBC Philharmonic, BBC Scottish and Royal Scottish Symphony Orchestras. Mr. Cunliffe can be heard on various recording labels including Enja and DMD. He is currently on the faculty of the Music Institute of Chicago and a founding member of the Lincoln Trio, ensemble-in-residence at the Music Institute. He is also a founding member of the Camerata Chicago Orchestra.

Debbie Knowles

Debbie Knowles has a bachelor's and a master's degree in Percussion Performance, both from Northwestern University. She is on the faculties of the Music Institute of Chicago, the Lake Forest Symphony Music School, and Lake Forest College. Ms. Knowles is the principal percussionist of the Lake Forest Symphony and Light Opera Works in Evanston, and has performed with many other orchestras including the Chicago Sinfonietta, the Ravinia Festival Orchestra, the Symphony of the Shores, the Elgin Symphony, and the Moscow Ballet Orchestra. She has played in pit orchestras for many musicals. Ms. Knowles also played in groups backing up entertainers like Tony Bennett and others. Ms. Knowles toured Japan with the Belle Air Brass, performed on one of their CDs, and also played on several CDs with the Millar Brass. Besides percussion, Ms. Knowles also plays other instruments including the baritone saxophone and tuba.

Elena Kawazu

Elena Kawazu, 8 year old violinist, is a pupil of Sang Mee Lee. Ms. Kawazu recently received Honorable Mentions in the Open Junior String Division of the 2006 Walgreens National Young Artist Competition. Ms. Kawazu won First Place in both the 2004 Youth and 2005 Junior I Division of the Chinese Fine Arts Society's Music Festival In Honor of Confucius Violin Competition. She was also awarded an Honorable Mention in the

Musichorale Competition in 2004. Ms. Kawazu takes piano lessons under the guidance of Emilio del Rosario. In her spare time, Ms. Kawazu enjoys nature, math, reading, art, singing, chess, yoga, and playing with her dog!

Katherine Jui Chang

Katherine Jui Chang, born in Taiwan, received her first piano lessons at the age of four, and has since moved on to the United States, Europe and Russia for her continued musical studies. At the age of 13, Ms. Chang made her orchestra debut performing the Haydn Piano Concerto in D Major. Her appearances as soloist have taken her to the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, the Bruno Waltur Auditorium at Lincoln Center in New York, the Rachmaninoff Hall in Moscow, the Teatro alla Scala di Milano in Milan, the Smetana Hall in Prague, the Nieuwe Kerk Theatre in Amsterdam, the Wiener Saal in Salzburg, and many other concert halls around the world. Here in Chicago, in addition to solo performances at Orchestra Hall, Ganz Hall and the Chicago Cultural Center, she has performed with the Oak Park Symphony Orchestra, the Hyde Park Chamber Orchestra, and the DuPage Symphony Orchestra. She was a featured artist at the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series, where in celebration of Mozart's bicentennial her performance was broadcast live over WFMT Radio. Recent summers have taken her to the Salzburg International Music Festival, the Aspen Music Festival, the Johannesen International Music Festival Canada, and the Moscow International Summer Music Festival; where she has performed as soloist, with chamber ensembles, and in master classes. Ms. Chang has received Artist's Diplomas from the Eastman School of Music and the Moscow Conservatory.

Tina Keitel

Tina Keitel was born in Elgin, Illinois and attended high school at the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan. She received both a bachelor's and a master's degree in Percussion Performance with a minor in Art History from DePaul University. Her training also included eight years with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, where she performed under the direction of Daniel Barenboim, Zubin Mehta, Pierre Boulez and Sir George Solti. As a freelance artist, Ms. Keitel performs with many orchestras and theaters in the Chicagoland area including the Lyric Opera Orchestra, Grant Park Orchestra, Lake Forest Symphony, the Joffrey Ballet, Chicago Sinfonietta, Light Opera Works, Drury Lane Oak Brook, and the Elgin Symphony. She is a strong advocate of new music, appearing regularly on the New Music DePaul concert series, and performed several of John Eaton's operas as well as many other projects. In 2000, Ms. Keitel became a core member of the Fulcrum Point New Music Project which is "dedicated to presenting thematically inspired programs that reinvigorate the concert experience through the presentation of works influenced by jazz, latin, rock, literature, film and theater." In the fall of 2003 Ms. Keitel performed in the Midwest Premiere of the Philip Glass operas "The Sound of a Voice" and "Hotel of Dreams" at the Court Theatre in Chicago.

Wen Ming Leung

Wen Ming Leung, accompanist, is a graduate of the University of Minnesota Music School in piano performance. Currently she is the Music Director of CFAS.

The Hakkanese Chorus

The Hakkanese Chorus was founded in 1995 by a group of Hakkanese interested in singing Hakka folk music. With its conductor, renowned soprano Lori Ho and piano accompanist Wen Ming Leung, the Chorus has actively participated in many outreach programs, including annual performances in the "Hai Hwa Arts and Music Festival," "The Midwest Hakkanese

Association Chinese New Year Celebration," and "The Westmont Folk Festival." The chorus has been invited to perform in Indianapolis by the Hakkanese Indianapolis Association in 2003, also by the Toronto Hakkanese Association in 2005. This is their first appearance in the Chinese Fine Arts Society sponsored All Chinese Music Concert at the Chicago Cultural Center's Preston Bradley Hall.

Lori Ho

Mrs. Ho, Soprano/Conductor, graduated from the Music Department of Shih-Chien University in Taiwan. She appeared in several operas including "Madame Butterfly" and "Magic Flute" while she was in Taiwan. Currently, she serves as the Music Director/Conductor of seven community choruses in the Greater Chicago area. Ms. Ho is a highly sought-after vocalist in performing the national anthem of the Republic of China and the United States for festive occasions. She has been invited as a soloist with both the Youth Symphony of DuPage the Chinese Fine Arts Society's All Chinese Music Concert.

ACMC Composer Bios:

Bo Chan Lee

Bo Chan Lee was born on May 13, 1992, and is currently 13 years old and attending the Preparatory School attached to the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. He began learning the piano at age five and began composing at age 10. He tested into the Beijing Central Conservatory of Music's Department of Composition at age 12 with the highest score. He composed "Meditation, Cello and Piano Duet" in 2005 for the Great Wall International Composition Competition.

Shaosheng Li

Shaosheng Li is 17 years old and attending the Preparatory School attached to the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. He entered the conservatory in 2001, and composed "Yuan" in 2005 for the junior division of the Great Wall International Music Composition Competition. "Yuan," meaning the foundation of a wall, symbolizes the Great Wall of China, as well as the pride of the Chinese in their many achievements.

Great Wall International Music Composition Competition Gala World Premiere Concert Musician Bios

Denis Azabagic

Denis Azabagic is one of the most compelling classical guitarists on the international concert circuit today. He performs concerts around the globe, maintaining a balance between his solo recitals, chamber music with the Cavatina Duo, as well as engagements as soloist for orchestras. In 1993, at the age of 20, he became the youngest winner of one of the most prestigious international guitar competitions, the "Jacinto e Inocencio Guerrero," in Madrid,

Spain. Between 1992 until 1999 he won 24 prizes in international competitions, from which 11 are 1st prizes. He has appeared as a guest performer in such venues as Masters of the Guitar at the Royal Concertgebouw in the Netherlands; Radio France in Paris, France; Aix en Provence Festival, France; El Palau de la Musica, Valencia, Spain; Savannah on Stage, USA; and the Omni Foundation, USA. His performances have been broadcasted live on the radio stations such as the NPR and WFMT, as well as on television in Europe and the US. His repertoire includes solo and orchestral music from the Baroque to our time.

As an active chamber musician with the Cavatina Duo, their repertoire in the music field is vast, and many composers have dedicated works to them. His love for performing extends to sharing with others the knowledge of music making. He frequently offers classes while on tour and teaches at the Roosevelt University in Chicago. Highlights of Mr. Azabagic's upcoming season include recital tours in North America, Europe and Asia, and performing in Venues such as Raising Stars Series from The Ravinia Festival; Domaine Forget, Canada; and the National Concert Hall in Taiwan.

J. Lawrie Bloom

J. Lawrie Bloom has performed at the Ambler, Grand Teton, Ravinia, Skaneateles and Spoleto festivals, and the Mostly Mozart Festival in New York. Mr. Bloom toured with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and has collaborated with the Chester, Chicago Symphony, and Mendelssohn String Quartets; the Chicago Chamber Musicians; and members of the Ridge, Orion and Vermeer string quartets. He has been heard many times in live concerts over the airwaves of WFMT in Chicago, and in live recital for the Australian Broadcast Company.

This season Mr. Bloom has been heard as a member of the Rembrandt Chamber Players, and guest artist on the Northwestern University Winter Chamber Festival. He continues as clarinetist and Artistic Co-Director at the Eastern Shore Chamber Music Festival. He is a member of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra clarinet section, and a Senior Lecturer at Northwestern University.

Katherine Jui Chang

Katherine Jui Chang, born in Taiwan, received her first piano lessons at the age of four, and has since moved on to the United States, Europe and Russia for her continued musical studies. At the age of 13, Ms. Chang made her orchestra debut performing the Haydn Piano Concerto in D Major. Her appearances as soloist have taken her to the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, the Bruno Waltur Auditorium at Lincoln Center in New York, the Rachmaninoff Hall in Moscow, the Teatro alla Scala di Milano in Milan, the Smetana Hall in Prague, the Nieuwe Kerk Theatre in Amsterdam, the Wiener Saal in Salzburg, and many other concert halls around the world. Here in Chicago, in addition to solo performances at Orchestra Hall, Ganz Hall and the Chicago Cultural Center, she has performed with the Oak Park Symphony Orchestra, the Hyde Park Chamber Orchestra, and the DuPage Symphony Orchestra. She was a featured artist at the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series, where in celebration of Mozart's bicentennial her performance was broadcast live over WFMT Radio. Recent summers have taken her to the Salzburg International Music Festival, the Aspen Music Festival, the Johannesen International Music Festival Canada, and the Moscow International Summer Music Festival; where she has performed as soloist, with chamber ensembles, and in master classes. Ms. Chang has received Artist's Diplomas from the Eastman School of Music and the Moscow Conservatory.

Russell Hershow

A native of New York City, Russell Hershow took his first music lessons from his father, an amateur violinist. He went on to attend the Juilliard School and the Indiana University School of Music. Mr. Hershow received private instruction from Louise Behrendt, Joseph Fuchs, Josef Gingold and Yuval Yaron. Mr. Hershow participated in numerous music festivals and competitions before joining the Baltimore Symphony in 1987. In 1989, he played briefly with the Pittsburgh Symphony before being hired by Sir Georg Solti to join the Chicago Symphony. Now a member of the first violin section, he is an active chamber music player, teacher and participates in the Grand Teton Music Festival every summer.

Eugenia Moliner

Eugenia Moliner is a member of the "Cavatina duo" with guitarist Denis Azabagic. They play in concert halls and festivals across Europe, USA and Asia; performing in venues such as the Aix en Provence summer festival, France; the Eem & Veem festival in Groningen, Netherlands; the International Guitar Festival in Frechen, Germany; the Dame Myra Hess Series, USA; the Link, Netherlands; and the National concert Hall in Taipei, Taiwan. Composers from around the world have dedicated new works to the duo. She has been featured on NPR and WFMT radio, and on television programs in Spain, Netherlands, Taiwan and the USA. Mrs. Moliner also performs recitals with pianist Rob Broek across Europe and the US, and teaches masters classes in both continents as well. Mrs. Moliner has recorded three CD's for Spanish labels Orobroy and Opera Tres. Her performances have received dazzling critiques from American Record guide, British flute society, and other specialized magazines.

Her musical education started at the age of 14 in the Conservatorio Superior de Musica Joaquin Rodrigo in Valencia, Spain, before continuing her studies at the Rotterdam's Conservatorium, Netherlands, and graduating with the highest honors. Her professors include Dolores Tomas, Jo Hagen, Jan Gruithuizen, Els Van zundert, Jaime Martin, Kate Hill, Raimond Guiot and Magdalena Martinez. While studying in the Netherlands she won the 1996 Young Musicians of De Doelen competition in Rotterdam. Mrs. Moliner has collaborated with different ensembles and orchestras in Europe, including the Baroque Ensemble in Rotterdam, the National Philharmonic of Netherlands, and the "Montebello Ensemble". Highlights of Mrs. Moliner's upcoming season include recital tours in North America, Europe, and Asia, as well as performing in venues such as the Raising Stars Series from the Ravinia Festival.

Rami Solomonow

Rami Solomonow is a graduate of the Rubin Academy of Music in Tel-Aviv, Israel, where he studied with Oedoen Partos. He was a member of the Israel Chamber Orchestra until 1972 and received prizes in chamber music from the American-Israel Foundation. Mr. Solomonow moved to the U.S. in 1973 where he studied with Shmuel Askenasi and served as principal violist for the Lyric Opera of Chicago from 1974 to 1995. In 1995, Mr. Solomonow became a member of the Chicago Chamber Musicians, and from 1995-2004 he was the violist of the Chicago String Quartet, the resident quartet of the Chicago Chamber Musicians and the Taos Music Festival. Mr. Solomonow has been a faculty member at DePaul University since 1981. He has performed in Israel, Japan, and South America. Mr. Solomonow has performed on live broadcasts on WFMT, WQXR and NPR, and he has been a guest violist with many string quartets. He has recorded with the Vermeer Quartet, the Chicago Chamber Musicians, the Chicago String Quartet and with the DePaul University Wind Embrace as a soloist.

Betti Xiang

Betti Xiang was born in Shanghai, China where her father, Xiang Zuying, a renowned Erhu master, first introduced her to the Erhu. Ms. Xiang publicly debuted as an Erhu soloist at the young age of 17 in Guangzhou, China. For the following four years, Ms. Xiang was honored to present more than fifty performances to both military troops and local residents throughout China. In 1986, Ms. Xiang received the coveted Young Artists' award in both Shanghai and Beijing for outstanding solo artist. In 1996, Ms. Xiang embarked on her journey to establish a distinguished career in America. After having been invited to perform at such distinctive venues in the Chicago area, including the Ravinia International Music Festival, the Kimmel Center, and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Hall, Ms. Xiang was recognized as an Erhu maestro, and performances at the New York Lincoln Center and the Smithsonian Institute soon followed. Most recently, Ms. Xiang was privileged to appear at the inaugural of Chicago's Millennium Park, where she was the guest artist at the Pritzker Pavilion performing the Erhu concerto "Crouching Tiger," composed by Tan Dun. Ms. Xiang also performs with Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble, and currently appears with her uncle, Xiang Zuhua, on the CD recording of her late father's music, Joy of Countryside. Ms. Xiang has received the 2006 Master/Apprentice Award from the Illinois Arts Council.

Yuan-Qing Yu

Yuan-Qing Yu joined the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1995. A year later, Daniel Barenboim appointed her Assistant Concertmaster. An international award-winning violinist, Ms. Yu won the Chinese National Violin competition at age 17. The following year, she captured second prize at the world renowned Menuhin International Violin Competition in England. Ms. Yu also took the third grand prize in the 50th Jacques Thibaud International Competition in Paris, and a special prize for outstanding performance of the contemporary work written specifically for the competition. As a soloist, she has performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Monte Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Radio France Philharmonic, and the London City Orchestra; collaborating with Christoph Von Dohnany, Marek Janowski, Ingo Metzmacher, James DePriest and the late Sir Yehudi Menuhin. In Chicago, Ms. Yu leads an active life in music as a soloist, chamber musician, teacher and advocate of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. She is often featured as soloist with many ensembles and orchestras. She also performs with a number of chamber music groups. Ms. Yu has performed with Daniel Barenboim, Pinchas Zuckerman, Menahem Pressler and Yo-Yo Ma on the Winter Chamber Music Series at Northwestern University.

Ms. Yu shares her love for the art of violin playing with students throughout Chicago. She teaches violin privately and as a professor at Northwestern University. As a member of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Ms. Yu regularly offers her services as a performer, teacher, and interviewee on the CSO Radiothon. She has donated her services to church and community music-education programs. She has also enjoyed performing in CSO-sponsored events for patrons and school concerts. Prior to joining the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Ms. Yu earned an artist certificate in violin and a master of music degree from Southern Methodist University. Her future engagement includes solo appearance with the Peninsula Festival in Door County, and chamber music collaboration with pianist Lang Lang.

The concert series is sponsored in part by:

The Illinois Arts Council
The Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Chicago
The Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, Cultural Division
The Chinese Cultural Center of TECO – Chicago

The Chinese Fine Arts Society (CFAS) was founded in 1984 as a 501c3 non-profit organization dedicated to the education and promotion of the Chinese Cultural Arts. In Chicago's culturally diversified society, CFAS provides programs and activities that promote the understanding of Chinese culture through music and other fine arts. By presenting traditional Chinese music compositions by Chinese composers and performances of Chinese music on western instruments, CFAS hopes to reach a greater number of people and heighten their awareness of the richness of Chinese culture.

For more information on the Chinese Fine Arts Society, please visit their website at www.chinesefinearts.org or contact them at info@chinesefinearts.org

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