A Director’s Note

Since its inception in 2005, the MSU – China Collaboration, co-founded with my dear friend and internationally acclaimed baritone Haijing Fu, has served more than 110 MSU and Chinese students as well as utilized dozens of faculty from various Chinese conservatories, universities and MSU. Tonight’s student concert represents the seventh collaborative performance at MSU and eighth overall in the program’s history. How wonderful it is to preview our newly renovated Cook Recital Hall! This is a truly special evening for many of us in so many ways.

For eight years, Haijing and I have watched this collaboration develop and grow. It has provided not only excellent musical experiences for its participants and audiences alike – it has fostered enduring friendships that bind two great nations together in a unique and personal way.

Haijing and I want to issue special thanks to Linda Nelson who has chosen to sponsor this year’s student concert. Special thanks as well to Alan Nathan and Ren Chun-Ying, this evening’s collaborative pianists and a personal note of gratitude to my colleagues in the voice area whose expert training of their students contributes so greatly to the success of this collaboration. Finally, special gratitude to Dean James Forger who makes this project possible at Michigan State University – and to all of my academic and choral colleagues who make special efforts to support our student participants.

Richard Fracker, Co-founder, Director

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | COLLEGE OF MUSIC

The Tianjin Conservatory of Music present

Spartans and Dragons in Harmonic Progression

from the Tianjin Conservatory of Music:

Chen Ya-Qi, Soprano
Xu Lu-Jia, Xie Ying-Zhi, and Li Pei-Zhe, Mezzo-soprano
Bao Zhong-Xiao, Tenor
Zhang Yan, Baritone,
Gong Hao-Tian and Zhao Zhao, Bass-baritone

from the Michigan State University College of Music:

Jocelyn Ascherl, Ann Marie Theis, and Schyler Sheltrown, Soprano
Katie Bethel and Rachel Kallman, Mezzo-soprano
Brysien Beer and Joseph Caigoy, Tenor
Darius Gillard, Baritone

Alan Nathan, Piano
Ren Chun-Ying, Piano

Saturday, October 6, 2012, at 8:00 pm
Cook Recital Hall

This concert is generously sponsored by Linda Nelson
Act I

*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*  
Gioachino Rossini  
*Largo al factotum* (Make way for the factotum)  
(1792 – 1868)

Filled with bluster and self-importance, Figaro – the town’s all-knowing barber – arrives.

Zhang Yan, Baritone

*La fille du régiment*  
Gaetano Donizetti  
*Chacun le sait* (Everyone knows it)  
(1797 – 1848)

Found as a baby on a battlefield, Marie is adopted and raised by the Twenty-first Regiment of Grenadiers. Now a beautiful young woman, Marie is called upon by the regiment to sing the regimental song to the new recruit (Tonio) who recently saved her from plunging over a precipice.

Jocelyn Ascherl, Soprano

*Traditional Chinese*  
Zheng Qiu-Feng  
*PA-MI-ER* (My Beautiful Homeland)  
Folk song from the Xin-Jiang region located in northern China . . .

Xu Lu-Jia, Mezzo-soprano

*Don Pasquale*  
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
*Com’è gentil* (How peaceful it is)  
(1756 – 1791)

Ernesto passionately serenades Norina on a beautiful night in April

Joseph Caigoy, Tenor

*Trouble in Tahiti*  
Leonard Bernstein  
*What a movie!*  
(1918 – 1990)

Dinah mocks a terrible movie she recently viewed, yet its romantic plotline intrigues her.

Rachel Kallman, Mezzo-soprano

*Rusalka*  
Antonín Dvořák  
*Song to the Moon*  
(1841 – 1904)

Rusalka is a water nymph who loves a human. She asks the moon to beam a message to the man she loves that she awaits his return.

Chen Ya-Qi, Soprano

*Le Nozze di Figaro*  
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
*Cruel! Perchè finora*  
(Cruel girl! Why did you make me wait?)

Count Almaviva continues his pursuit of Susanna, who true to Countess’s scheme to unmask the Count—falsely agrees to meet the Count later in the garden. Susanna’s series of unexpected yes and no answers to the Count’s expected no and yes questions further confound the situation.

Chen Ya-Qi, Soprano  
Darius Gillard, Baritone

*Galathée*  
Victor Massé  
*Quelle couleur! C’est blonde et vermeille*  
(What color! It is blond and rosy)  
(1822 – 1884)

Galathée drinks her first cup of wine, drinks too much and declares she will have her own way.

Katie Bethel, Mezzo-soprano

*Showboat*  
Jerome Kern  
*You are love*  
(1885 – 1945)

A riverboat gambler (Ravenal) and an aspiring young performer (Magnolia) have agreed to marry and celebrate their love.

Katie Bethel, Mezzo-soprano  
Brysien Beer, Tenor
Quan Qing-Hao

The Yellow Maintain

A patriotic song of inspiration . . .

Xie Ying-Zhi, Mezzo-soprano

Don Pasquale

Gaetano Donizetti

Pronto io son (I am ready)

Malatesta has asked Norina to play his non-existent sister and marry Don Pasquale in a mock ceremony—and then drive the old codger to such distraction that he will be at their mercy. Norina eagerly agrees if will help her be with her lover Ernesto.

Jocelyn Ascherl, Soprano
Zhang Yan, Baritone

Intermission

Act II

Thaïs

Jules Massenet

Voilà donc la terrible cité (Behold the terrible city) (1842 – 1912)

Athanaël, a Cenobite monk returns to Alexandria—the city of his birth. As he peers over the city, he is convinced it has fallen on evil times.

Darius Gillard

Traditional Chinese

Yu Yong-Yi

Love with Moon

The moon often symbolizes the strongest feeling of love and friendship in Chinese song . . .

Li Pei-Zhe, Mezzo-soprano

Jingxin Xu

Fei-Tian (Flying Fairy)

Fei-Tian represents a goddess or many goddesses in Chinese Buddhist legend. She often floats in the sky and tosses flowers that symbolize peace.

Schyler Sheltrown, Soprano

La Clemenza di Tito

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Ah, perdona al primo affetto (Ah, forgive my earlier love)

The emperor must marry a Roman wife and tells Annio that he has chosen to marry Servilia—Annio’s secret love. When Annio tells Servilia of the emperor’s intentions, she assures Annio that she will always love him.

Schyler Sheltrown, Soprano
Li Pei-Zhe, Mezzo-soprano

Traditional Chinese

In a far away place

A young man passes by a small village and notices a beautiful young woman tending a flock a sheep. He wishes he could be one of those sheep so she would care for him as affectionately.

Joseph Caigoy, Tenor

Simon Boccanegra

Giuseppe Verdi

Il lacerato spirito (The torn spirit) (1813 – 1901)

Discovering that his daughter Maria had an affair with Simon Boccanegra (a commoner) and gave birth to his child, Jacopo Fiesco—a nobleman in Genoa—virtually imprisons his daughter in her own home. Now he mourns her death.

Gong Hao-Tian, Bass-baritone

Il Corsaro

Giuseppe Verdi

Non so le tetre immagini
(I don’t know how the somber imagings)

Medora, Corrado’s young lover, awaits his arrival. A feeling that something bad is about to happen to him overwhelms her.

Ann Marie Theis, Soprano

Il Trovatore

Giuseppe Verdi

Ah si, ben mio coll’esser (Oh yes, my love with being)

Leonora asks Manrico how to ignore the darkness that surrounds their union. Manrico replies his soul will prove fearless and his arm stronger.

Bao Zhong-Xiao, Tenor
Il Corsaro

Giuseppe Verdi

La terra, il ciel m’abborrino
(Earth and heaven may abhor me)

Gulnara bribes a guard and gains entry to Corrado’s cell. She reveals she is the woman he had saved earlier from a fire and that she loves him and must save him even if he loves another (Medora).

Ann Marie Theis, Soprano
Bao Zhong-Xiao, Tenor

Traditional Chinese

Chen Ke-Zheng

TA-LI-MU River

The Talimu River is actually composed of three rivers and is the longest river in China.

Zhao Zhao, Bass-baritone

Traditional

Moses Hogan

Deep River
(1957 – 2003)

African-American spiritual of hope and despair.

Brysien Beer, Tenor

La vocabulario di musica

Nancy Grundahl
(The vocabulary of music)

A humorous look at the language of music.

MSU Student Ensemble

Die Fledermaus

Ricard Strauss

Sing to Love
(1864 – 1949)

Falke’s toast to everlasting love, happiness, and friendship.

TCM and MSU Students

Acknowledgements

Fu Haijing and I wish to acknowledge and thank the following donors for their support over the years of the MSU-China Collaboration.

Roger and Elaine Calantone
James Forger and Deborah Moriarty
Richard and Lynne Fracker
Melanie Helton
Douglas and Ellen Hoard
Selma and the late Stanley Hollander
Cecil and Clare Mackey
Alfred and Agnes Marco
Gordon Miracle
Linda Nelson
Bill and Shirley Paxton
David Rayl and Joel Maurer
Carolyn Schuurmans
Charles and Mary Ellen Toy

More than 110 students and dozens of faculty have participated and contributed to the MSU-China project since 2005, the year I co-founded this collaboration with my dear friend and internationally acclaimed baritone Fu Haijing. Conceived in rehearsal at the Metropolitan Opera, this collaboration continues to grow and develop. Last year, our students competed as an ensemble in an international competition held in Tianjin, China and won the Grand Prize! Great musical events, astonishing cultural experiences, and abiding international friendships embody the MSU-China project. Please help this collaboration flourish by considering a donation to the MSU-China Exchange Fund. A gift of $1,000, $500, $250 or $100 supports a program proven to provide life-changing experiences for MSU students, international visibility for Michigan State’s College of Music, and significant recruitment opportunities and impact for the Vocal Arts Area.

If you are interested in supporting this international exchange, please complete the pledge form in this program, write your check payable to Michigan State University, and indicate “MSU China Exchange” on the memo line (AE06082). Your contribution and this pledge form can be sent to:

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