



TANGRAM PRESENTS

# NATURE ECHO

27 January 2024 • 2PM, 7PM

LSO ST LUKE'S

Good evening and welcome! On the occasion of Tangram's 5th anniversary, we honour and are led by founding artist Daniel Shao, whose talent and dedication have marked and shaped Tangram's journey since 2019.

Joining us is the talented Echo Morgan, known for her fearless and captivating artistry. Echo's unique blend of visual and performing arts adds a vibrant and provocative dimension to our programme, embodying the spirit of Tangram to transcend traditional boundaries and cultivate transformative experiences. Together we bring to life a reflection on the global issue of climate change.

We hope you enjoy the performance and thank you for joining Tangram's journey.

Rockey and Alex



# NATURE ECHO

*ECHO MORGAN*

Tangram, a London-based music collective, is dedicated to crafting and curating ambitious, multi-disciplinary, and culturally-curious productions. What truly strikes a chord with me is their unwavering commitment to transcending the conventional divide between China and the West, connecting communities across the Chinese Diaspora and beyond. They inspire meaningful conversations, healing, and transformative change, all made possible through the collective experience of art.

I was already captivated by BeiBei Wang's mesmerising water drumming. So when Tangram's co-director, Alex Ho, approached me with the Nature Echo project, I couldn't help but see it as a remarkable opportunity. It promised a chance to connect with exceptionally talented musicians and immerse myself in the harmonious symphony of nature's echoes.

As my involvement progressed, I had the privilege of meeting co-director Rocky Sun Keting and the brilliant flautist Daniel Shao, who curated the evening's musical program. Through a series of online meetings, we meticulously selected nine musical compositions from four continents, categorising them into two distinct atmospheres: woodland and ocean. The audience can anticipate an enthralling auditory journey, replete with the evocative sounds of ice and plastic, the haunting echoes of vanishing whale songs, and the ethereal glow of bioluminescence—a musical expedition delving into the delicate yet perilous relationship between humanity and the environment. Our performance will feature compositions by distinguished artists such as Liza Lim, George Crumb, Dai Fujikura, Chen Yi, Alex Ho, and Sun Keting, complemented by the world premiere of an exclusive commission by Zhenyan Li.

The ensemble, consisting of the exceptionally talented BeiBei Wang on percussion, Daniel Shao on flute, Annie Yim on piano and Garwyn Linnell on cello, promises to deliver an unforgettable experience.

I hope you enjoy our performance.

Sincerely,  
Echo

# PROGRAMME

SATURDAY · 27 JAN 2024 · 2PM / 7PM

**ECHO MORGAN** Performing Artist

**DANIEL SHAO** Flute

**ANNIE YIM** Piano

**BEIBEI WANG** Percussion

**GARWYN LINNELL** Cello

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**DAI FUJIKURA** Hidden Tree

**ZHENYAN LI** Bamboo Echoes (*World Premiere*)

**ALEX HO** Plastic Ceremony

**ELECTRA  
PERIVOLARIS** Sleeping Warrior

**CHEN YI** Qi

• INTERVAL - 20 MINUTES •

**VIVIAN FUNG** The Ice is Talking

**LIZA LIM** Bioluminescence

**SUN KETING** before we were ocean

**GEORGE CRUMB** Vox Balaenae

# DAI FUJIKURA

## *HIDDEN TREE*

This cello piece was written for my cellist friend, Katinka Kleijn, in honour of her 50th birthday. It was commissioned by our mutual friend, Claire Chase, and the commission fee was donated to the New Music Solidarity Fund in honor of Katinka Kleijn, as it was written during the pandemic in the year 2020.

While we and the entire world were more or less in lockdown, I reflected on my dear friend with whom I have collaborated on many projects, including my cello concerto. Since this piece was intended as a secret gift, I delved into my memories of the years spent with her, thinking about her personal interests.

That's when I recalled her deep passion for trees. This was an easy connection for me, as my wife shares a similar passion for trees and plants. She often expresses to me the magical nature of the plant world. I began contemplating how my composition would grow, realising that it didn't always follow the direction I had initially envisioned or planned. The music seemed to have a life of its own, telling me how it wanted to develop. Despite its subtle voice, I needed to be sensitive to capture what the music wanted to tell me. In this case, the melodies extended in unexpected directions, creating interesting shapes and lines. My role was to refine and polish what emerged.

As I contemplated the growth of the composition, I also considered the analogy of how trees grow. I thought about the deep, wooden colours and the distinctive sound of the cello as an instrument. Everything in this piece is a part of the natural world, reminding us not to oppose it.

Dai Fujikura

# ZHENYAN LI

## *BAMBOO ECHOES*

In 'Bamboo Echoes,' I drew inspiration from the elegant qualities of bamboo. Originating from Chengdu, Sichuan, renowned for its bamboo cultivation, I am intrigued by the organic growth of this plant—a remarkable gift from nature. Notably, the growing process of bamboo produces distinct sounds, especially the creaky sound, adding a unique auditory dimension. The dizi (bamboo flute) plays a crucial role in this composition. Additionally, the incorporation of bamboo-made percussion instruments introduces surprising elements. I aim to invite listeners into a world where the essence of bamboo becomes a compelling artistic expression.

### ABOUT



Zhenyan Li (b.1998) is a Chinese composer and Chinese flautist based in London. Her works are inspired by theatrical elements, especially the performing style of traditional oriental theatre. Li's music has been performed worldwide including Switzerland, Germany, Slovakia, Netherland, UK and China. Recent highlights include works for London Philharmonic Orchestra, Beijing International Music Festival, London Symphony Orchestra and Lucerne Festival. Her opera 'Cummings & Goerings' was premiered as part of the 'Tête-à-tête' Festival. Other projects also include works for Ensemble Modern, International Guitar Foundation, Central School of Ballet, Psappah Ensemble and Leeds Lieder Festival. As an active collaborator, she has worked on projects with Architectural Association, London Film School, Leeds Lieder Festival, and SOAS University of London, as well as individuals conductors Martin Rajna, John Warner, and Jessica Cottis.

Li finished her Bachelor of Music degree and Master of Music degree (with distinction) in composition at the Royal Academy of Music with scholarship. Currently, she is a third year Ph.D. composer at the same institution studying with Philip Cashian and David Sawer.

# ALEX HO

## PLASTIC CEREMONY

*molto accel.* . . . . . *huge build-* . . . . . *as quickly as possible!!!*

Drum *140* *nat.* *repeat b. 129-130 for about 10"* *ff* *sffz*

Voice *mf* *cheesh\_* *ff* *cheesh\_*

Body *ff*

Plastic Ceremony is a response to a commission by Bascule Chamber Series in 2019. It responds to a brief for a performance inside Tower Bridge's underground Bascule Chamber. It responds to the 16 plastic bags I saw on the beach closest to the bridge on a Summer's day. It responds to the cans and crisp packets floating in the River Thames. It responds to those who leave their debris along its banks. It responds to the gradual and ongoing suffocation of nature. It responds to us.

### ABOUT



Winner of the UK Critics' Circle Young Artist Award 2021 for his "compelling and individual" works, Alex Ho is a British-Chinese composer based in London whose music and stageworks have been described as "menacing and poetic" (The Guardian), "important and impressive" (Opera Today), and a "fresh, different idea that captured the imagination" (Scottish New Music Awards 2021). Alex is Artist-in-Residence at Opéra Orchestre National Montpellier and Associate Composer at Oxford International Song Festival. His music theatre piece, Untold, co-created with Olivier-nominated choreographer Julia Cheng, premiered at Concertgebouw Brugge and O. Festival Rotterdam in Spring 2023 and won the FEDORA Opera Prize 2023 for a "bold and moving creation". Alex is supported by Glyndebourne Opera's 3-year Balancing the Score residency programme.

# ELECTRA PERIVOLARIS *SLEEPING WARRIOR*

This piece is inspired by my mixed Scottish and Greek heritage, taking the mountain contour lines from maps of my home on the Scottish Isle of Arran as its starting point. The outline of the mountains on Arran is described as 'The Sleeping Warrior', giving this piece its title. The ideas from Chinese drumming, including the use of dramatic storytelling with sound and movement and the use of dialect rhythms, are elements which are present in the Gaelic music in the Western Isles of Scotland. I use the mountain contour lines from the maps to create an element of choreography, as the shapes are traced in the air and on the drum heads using granite rocks collected from the mountains of Arran. Gaelic speech rhythms also influence my piece, as the descriptive names of the mountains influence the cyclic percussion and flute lines.

The use of the flautist's voice brings together influences from Gaelic Hebridean song traditions, as well as elements of the Byzantine chant which is present in the communities around my Greek family's home on the island of Chios. These melodic and lyrical lines layer with the cyclic language rhythms in the percussion part and, as the piece progresses, marble rocks from the mountains of Chios begin to combine with the granite rocks of Arran and the flautist also begins to trace mountain contour shapes using the blended sound of the flute, their voice, and their breath, creating ever more complex mountain contour shapes.

My piece for Tangram explores a 'borderless' kind of music which brings together influences from different musical cultures as a means of discovering a new compositional language, drawing on my dual island heritage of Scotland and Greece, as well as on Tangram's roots in Chinese music.

\*N.B. Please refer to detailed performance notes on playing techniques.

For Dan and Beibei of Tangram Ensemble  
Composed for the University of Oxford 6th Annual Henfrey Prize for Composition

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## The Sleeping Warrior A Mountain Contour Song for Two Islands

The score is for a piece titled "The Sleeping Warrior: A Mountain Contour Song for Two Islands". It is composed for the University of Oxford 6th Annual Henfrey Prize for Composition and is for the Dan and Beibei of Tangram Ensemble. The score is in 3/4 time, marked "Timeless" with a tempo of "c. ♩=54". It features several parts: Flute (with a "Played" instruction), Sung (with the lyrics "Medium Rocks Both Granite (Meall nan Damh) With a sense of excitement, mystery"), Medium Rocks, Marble and Granite Rocks (with three "c. 5 secs" durations and mountain contour drawings), Percussion, and 2 Large Chinese Drums (with a "pp" dynamic marking and a "To larger drum Soft end of beaters" instruction). The score includes three numbered boxes (1, 2, 3) with arrows pointing to specific measures, and a "3" above the first measure of the percussion part.

## ABOUT



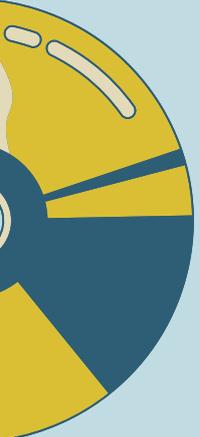
Electra Perivolaris is a composer and pianist of mixed Scottish and Greek heritage. She has been described as 'A Classical Star of the Future' by BBC Introducing, 'One of a new generation of female trailblazers' by BBC Radio 3 and was profiled as 'One to Watch in 2022' by The Scotsman newspaper. In 2021 she graduated with Distinction from the Master of Music in Composition course at the Royal Academy of Music, winning the Diploma of the Royal Academy of Music Award for an Outstanding Final Portfolio. She has been commissioned by the London Symphony Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, BBC Singers, BBC Concert Orchestra and Scottish Chamber Orchestra. She is Ambassador for the BBC Young Composers' Scheme and was selected for the Royal Scottish National Orchestra Composers' Hub. Last year she began a Doctor of Philosophy (DPhil) in Composition at the University of Oxford, supervised by Professor Daniel Grimley and Professor Martyn Harry and generously supported by Magdalen College's Leon E and Iris L Beghian Graduate Scholarship. Recent premieres include two performances in the Queen Elizabeth Hall of commissions Electra composed for the BBC Concert Orchestra, one of which was the culmination of Electra's work with Streetwise Opera when she created an opera in collaboration with a homeless shelter for women and children in East London. Electra was a 2022-2023 Royal Philharmonic Society Composer.

# CHEN YI

## *QI*

Qi was commissioned and premiered by the New Music Consort of New York, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players and Los Angeles Philharmonic Association and dedicated to composer and Columbia University professor Prof. Chou Wen-Chung. In this work, Chen Yi uses a mixed combination of Western instruments in order to create an Eastern sound. In the composer's words, she uses a mixed combination of Western instruments to "create the sound from the East, to express her feelings of the Qi abstractly. . .it's so untouchable, so mysterious, but so strong and powerful. It melts into air and light, it's like the space in Chinese paintings, it's filled into the dancing lines of Chinese calligraphy, it's the spirit in the human mind. In my composition, I translate the feeling of the Qi, the element of nature, into my musical language in a quite free and slow tempo. There are also exaggerated textures with tension, in which I try to sound the inner voices and spirit of human beings, to experience this eternal power.

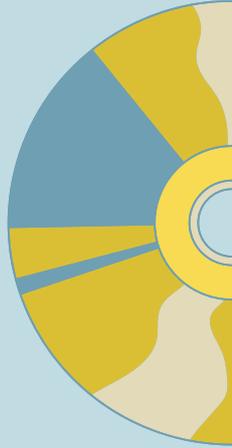
• INTERVAL - 20 MINUTES •



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# VIVIAN FUNG

## *THE ICE IS TALKING*

"A blade that runs across the ice beautifully"  
♩ = 66

RH: Right Rectangle Ice Block  
LH: Right Block;  
Left Rectangle Ice Block;  
Small Circle Block

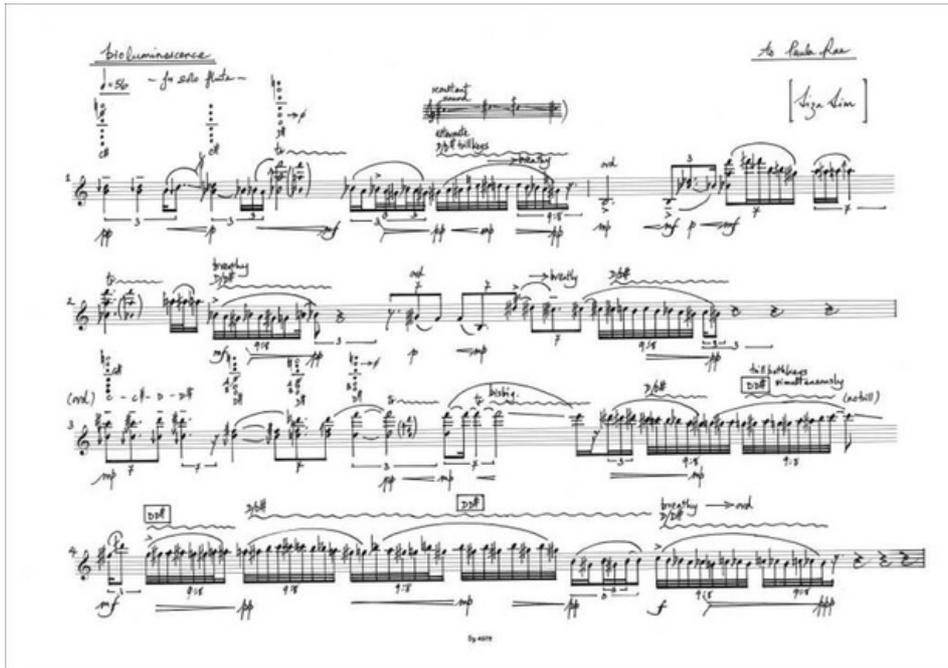
The musical score is for a piece in 4/4 time with a tempo of 66 beats per minute. It is written for a solo percussionist and electronics. The score is divided into two systems. The first system starts with a measure marked with a circled '8'. The right hand (RH) part is labeled 'Serrated knife' and features a series of eighth notes with triplets, followed by a section of 'shorter and shorter glides'. The left hand (LH) part is also labeled 'Serrated knife' and features a similar rhythmic pattern. The second system starts with a measure marked with a circled '9'. It includes a section labeled 'approximate rhythm - seamless accel.' with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano) that transitions to *f* (forte). The score includes various rhythmic notations such as eighth notes, triplets, and glides, along with dynamic markings and a tempo indication.

I grew up in Edmonton, and every year my family would vacation in the Canadian Rockies. I would greatly look forward to seeing the mountains, the majesty of the giant silhouettes, the clean, crisp air, and the proximity to nature and wildlife. I was invited back to the Banff Centre last year and decided to visit the Columbia Icefields as a bit of nostalgia for my childhood. That trip pained me deeply when I saw how much the glaciers had receded since the last time I was there, about 20 years ago. "The Ice Is Talking" is a work that is an emotional reaction to that experience.

Scored for a solo percussionist and electronics, it features the percussionist as the protagonist "playing" on a block of ice. At the start, it is a celebration of the elements, taking in the beauty of a blade gliding through ice, the taps and swishes of ice being shaped into virtuosic rhythmic patterns that speak through interjections by the performer. As the piece progresses, the piece becomes more and more violent, and the instruments reflect the rage and intensity of the protagonist, with a power drill, ice picks and stabbing motions reflecting the realization of human's ill effects on the natural landscape. It ends with dramatic flair in the hope of raising awareness to the world around us.

# LIZA LIM

## *BIOLUMINESCENCE*



Bioluminescence, for solo flute (2019) was written for Paula Rae and explores flickering, shimmering qualities. Bioluminescence is the emission of light by organisms such as fireflies, fungi, algae and many sea creatures. A famous example is the Hawaiian bobtail squid which carries bacteria whose luminescent specks act as a form of ‘invisibility cloak’. The squid blends with moonlight on a starry night seeming not to cast a shadow from the perspective of any prey below.

*While sailing in these latitudes on one very dark night, the sea presented a wonderful and most beautiful spectacle. There was a fresh breeze, and every part of the surface, which during the day is seen as foam, now glowed with a pale light. The vessel drove before her bows two billows of liquid phosphorus, and in her wake she was followed by a milky train. As far as the eye reached, the crest of every wave was bright, and the sky above the horizon, from the reflected glare of these livid flames, was not so utterly obscure, as over the rest of the heavens. Charles Darwin, Journal (1832-1836)*

*Pick any path of concrete or  
crock to this spirited place  
whose orchard-body belongingly  
offers that flickering, altered aroma  
– groves on fire  
Sappho/ Petrucci version (2008)*

Liza Lim

# SUN KETING

## BEFORE WE WERE OCEAN



I wrote this piece while I was back home after three years apart from my family. I had read this poem by Marie Howe while quarantined in a hotel. The coincidence of time and a sense of emotional resonance touched me, especially as I reached the closing line - home, an invocation, an incantation, an eternal word. I developed the piece into five sections based on the poem. The process from instability/oscillation to stability/harmony in music is the sense of belonging that I seek in my heart across space and time, selves and species, and the myriad artificial unbelonging we have manufactured in the past. (Sun Keting)

*would that we could wake up to what we were  
— when we were ocean and before that  
to when sky was earth, and animal was energy, and rock was  
liquid and stars were space and space was not*

*at all — nothing*

*before we came to believe humans were so important  
before this awful loneliness.*

*Can molecules recall it?  
what once was? before anything happened?*

*No I, no We, no one. No was  
No verb no noun  
only a tiny tiny dot brimming with*

*is is is is is  
All everything home*

- SINGULARITY by Marie Howe

## ABOUT



Sun Keting, a China-born, London-based composer, artist, and researcher, focuses on blending Eastern cultural elements with performing arts and instrumental sound in her compositions. Described as “the future way to go” by The Independent and praised for their “harmonic imagination, mastery of instrumentation” by Bachtrack, her works have been performed globally. Keting's music has graced stages from the UK to Asia, with pieces performed by prestigious groups like the London Symphony Orchestra and the BBC Singers. Notably, she composed for Birmingham Royal Ballet's "Black Sabbath."

Keting's music has graced prestigious venues and festivals worldwide, including the Royal Festival Hall, Wigmore Hall, King's Place London, Aldeburgh Festival, LSO St. Luke's, Helsinki Concert Hall, tête-à-tête Festival, and National Concert Hall Dublin. As a RPS Composer for 2023-2024 and a co-director at Tangram, she champions bold and innovative artistic endeavors. Among her upcoming events are a commissioned piece for Cheltenham Festival and Britten Pears Chamber Futures.

# GEORGE CRUMB

## *VOX BALAENAE*

for the New York Camerata

### VOX BALAENAE

FOR THREE MASKED PLAYERS  
(Electric Flute, Electric Cello, and Electric Piano)

George Crumb

Vocalise (...for the beginning of time)  
Wildly fantastic; grotesque (♩ = 64)

N.B. The pianist should keep the damper pedal depressed throughout the flute solo!

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George Crumb's "Vox balaenae for three masked players" (Voice of the Whale) is scored for electric flute, electric piano, and electric cello and four antique cymbals (crotales). Inspired by the singing of the humpbacked whale, the performance requires that each of the three players wear a black half-mask (visor-mask). "The masks, by effacing a sense of human projection, will symbolize the powerful impersonal forces of nature (nature dehumanized)" (Crumb). The stage is lit in a deep blue color.

The various sections of the work are played without pause: The "Vocalise (... for the beginning of time)" features the electric flute with the performer simultaneously playing and singing parallel lines into the flute, and then singing one sustained note into the flute while fingering fast arpeggios. The "Variations on Sea-Time ... Sea Theme", "Archeozoic (Var. I)" and "Proterozoic (Var. II)" are built from cello harmonics with string glissandos and silently depressed clusters on the keys of the electric piano. "Paleozoic (Var. III)" is built from flute harmonics and cycles on cello and piano. "Mesozoic (Var. IV)" has cello and flute melodies in unison underscored with punctuated patterns on the piano.

“Cenozoic (Var. V)” is played “Dramatic, with a sense of imminent destiny” is constructed from piano tremolos and accents, cello trills with simultaneous glissando shifting, and extremely fast triplet patterns on the flute. The concluding “Sea-Nocturne (...for the end of time)” builds an underwater atmosphere texture which gradually fragments.

Other works which are based on whale song include Alan Hovhaness’s “And God Created Great Whales” (1970) for orchestra and recorded whale voices, and John Cage’s “Litany For The Whale” (1980) for voices. Hovhaness’s work imitates the recorded sounds with low basses and creates a rich orchestral ocean atmosphere, and Cage’s piece breaks up the word “whale” into its phonemes and extends those sounds, in contrast to Crumb’s approach which acoustically imitates aspects of whale sounds and like most of his pieces relates them to a poetic viewpoint.

## ECHO MORGAN



Echo Morgan, also known as Xie Rong, is a fearless action artist challenging notions of "Chineseness" and femininity. Through her provocative performance art, she transforms her body into a canvas, utilizing Chinese ink, red lipstick, and chlorophyll to craft emotionally charged action paintings and portraits. Echo draws inspiration from personal experiences and broader themes like the body politic and eco-feminism, deftly merging Eastern philosophy, the Fluxus movement to provoke introspection and meaningful dialogue. With a background from Sichuan Fine Arts Institute High School, Central Saint Martins, and the Royal College of Art, Echo's visually captivating works have earned global recognition through exhibitions in various countries. Recently, she has ventured into immersive site-specific storytelling experiences, collaborating with musicians and movement artists, blurring the lines between theatre and visual art. Echo believes in art's healing power within our community.



## DANIEL SHAO



Daniel Shao is a British-Chinese flautist, who studied at the Purcell School, Oxford University, and Royal Academy of Music with teachers including Samuel Coles, graduating from both universities with first class honours and a DipRAM, and training as a member of the European Union Youth Orchestra. He now enjoys a varied freelance career, performing and recording with ensembles including the Philharmonia (having been Associate Member 2019–2021), London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, and Royal Scottish National Orchestra, as well as coaching for the National Youth Orchestra.

His solo performances have been described as presenting ‘virtuosity, charm, and charisma in abundance’ (by Ivan Hewitt for the Telegraph), and he has won awards including the British Flute Society Young Artist, Oxford Philharmonic Concerto Competition, and Royal Overseas League Sussex Prize. As a founding member of Tangram, he works with other Chinese-associated artists to explore issues of diasporic identity.



## ANNIE YIM



Annie Yim is a Hong Kong-born Canadian concert pianist, creative collaborator, and founder of MusicArt based in London. Her performance has been described by The Times as "the most beautiful sounds, radiantly coloured, thoughtfully articulated". Known for her wide-ranging solo and chamber music repertoire that encompasses canonic works and new music, Annie has broadcast live on BBC Radio 3, Classic FM, and national radios in Canada and Portugal, and made her UK concerto debut at LSO St Luke's, London. Annie is founding member of the Minerva Piano Trio. She is a recipient of Art Council England's Developing Your Creative Practice award in 2021 for her current work in making connections between music and nature, and Help Musicians UK's Do It Differently award in 2022. In July 2023 Annie was appointed Lecturer in Music Performance at the London College of Music, University of West London.



# GARWYN LINNELL



Born in Vancouver, Canada, Garwyn has also had the opportunity to perform as a soloist, and an orchestral musician in a wide range of venues and countries from small churches in Italy to concert halls in China. While classical music is his primary area of focus, he also has had the pleasure to collaborate and perform with various artists within the fields of dance, contemporary music, improvisation, jazz, and even poetry such as Abel Selaocoe, Max Baillie, Jess Gillam, and Max Richter. After completing his bachelor's degree in at the Folkwang University of the Arts in Germany, Garwyn studied at the Royal Academy of Music under the guidance of John Myerscough, the cellist of the Doric Quartet, and has recently finished his master's degree.



# BEIBEI WANG



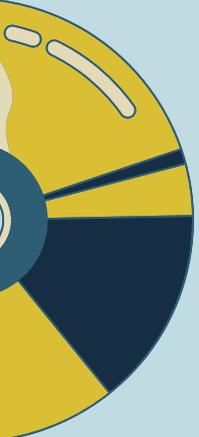
With her background in both Classical and traditional Chinese percussion, Beibei Wang brings her characteristic “high energy virtuosity” (Wall Street Journal) to performances of diverse repertoire.

As a soloist, she has performed around the world with orchestras such as BBC Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, New Japan Philharmonic, and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and has appeared as soloist on the world’s most prestigious stages.

Her unique background in classical and world music styles brings her to a range of multi-disciplinary projects ranging from performances of contemporary classics and new commissions to international tours with dance productions.

Beibei is a founding member of Tangram.

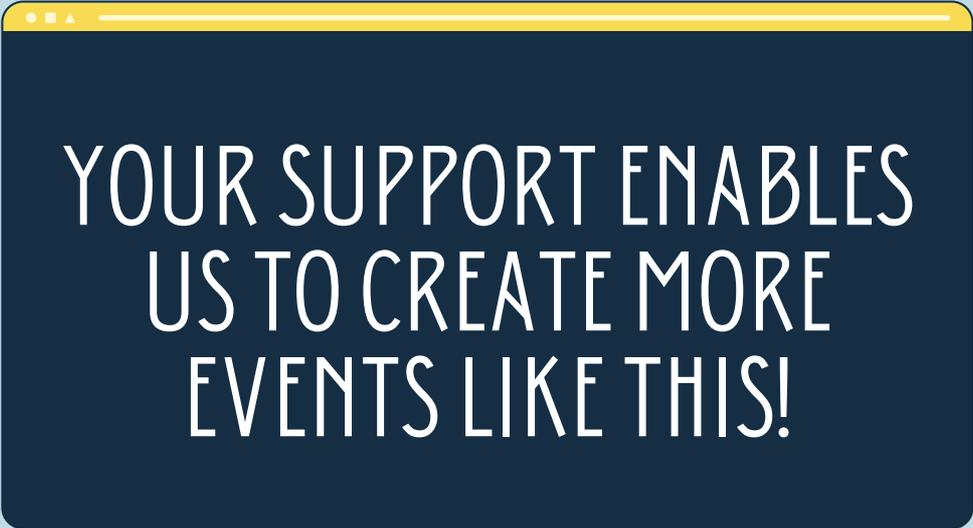




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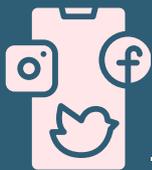
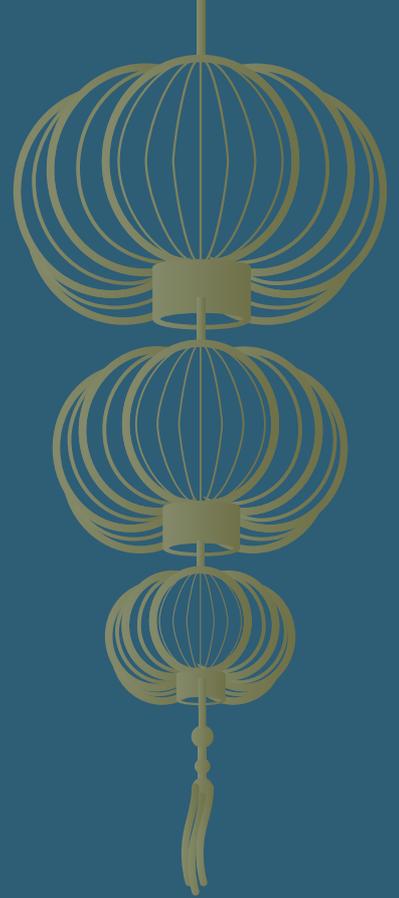
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