



presents in association with OMNI Foundation for the Performing Arts

XUEFEI YANG, guitar

Saturday, October 29, 2011, 8pm

Herbst Theatre

J.S. BACH

(arr. Xuefei Yang)

Violin Sonata No. 1 in A minor

Adagio

Fuga

Siciliana

Presto

G. REGONDI

**Air Varie de l'Opera de Bellini,
I Capuleti e I Montecchi**

F. CHOPIN

Deux Valses:

Valse, Op. 69, No.2

Grande Valse Brilliante, Op. 18

INTERMISSION

R. SAINZ DE LA MAZA

Three Pieces

El Vito

Petenara

Zapateado

J. RODRIGO

Invocation y Danza

M. DE FALLA

Two Dances from "The Three Cornered Hat"

Corregidor's Dance

Miller's Dance

A.C. JOBIM

Three Brazilian Pieces

Modinha (arr. Raphael Rabello)

Luiza (arr. Raphael Rabello)

Felicidade (arr. Roland Dyens)

J. JIRIMAL

Baden Jazz Suite

Simplicitas

Berceuse

Rondo a la Samba

Xuefei Yang is represented by Askonas Holt Ltd, Lincoln House, 300 High Holborn, London; 020.7400.1700, info@askonasholt.co.uk



ARTIST PROFILE

This is Xuefei Yang's fourth performance with San Francisco Performances (in association with The Omni Foundation for the Performing Arts). She has also appeared in 2004, 2008 and 2009.

Beijing-born, UK-based, Xuefei Yang is acclaimed as one of the world's finest classical guitarists. Born following the Cultural Revolution, an era where Western music and instruments were banned, she was the first guitarist in China to enter a music school, and became the first to launch an international professional career.

Ms. Yang's first public appearance was at the age of ten and she received such acclaim that the Spanish Ambassador in China immediately presented her with a concert guitar. Her debut in Madrid at the age of fourteen was attended by the composer Joaquín Rodrigo and, when John Williams heard her play, he gave two of his own instruments to Beijing's Central Conservatory of Music, intended for her and other advanced students. She then went on to become the first Chinese student to be awarded a full postgraduate scholarship to study at London's Royal Academy of Music.

Ms. Yang enjoys a truly international career, performing worldwide as a soloist, chamber musician and with leading orchestras. Her success has led her to be invited to perform in many prestigious venues including Wigmore Hall, all Southbank venues and Royal Albert Hall in London, as well as the Philharmonie Berlin, Musikhalle Hamburg, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Konzerthaus Vienna, Auditorio Nacional de Espana, Lincoln Center New York and Herbst Theatre in San Francisco. In Asia she has appeared at the National Concert Hall Taipei, Hong Kong City Hall, Hong Kong Cultural Center, Esplanade Singapore, Seoul Arts Centre and gave the first guitar recital at the Beijing National Center of Performing Arts.

During the 2011/12 season, she performs

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GRIGORY GORYACHEV & JEROME MOUFFE

Saturday, March 10, 2012 8 pm, Green Room

THIBAUT CAUVIN

Saturday, March 24, 2012 8 pm, Green Room

CHRIS THILE

Sunday, April 8, 2012 7 pm, Herbst Theatre*

JOHANNES MÖLLER

Saturday, April 21, 2012 8 pm, San Francisco Debut. Green Room

YAMANDU COSTA

Sunday, April 29, 2012 7 pm, Marines Memorial Theater

DALE KAVANAGH

Bonus Concert: Time & Date To Be Announced

* Presented in association with San Francisco Performances.

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with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Detroit Symphony, Barcelona Symphony, the Hallé Orchestra, China National Philharmonic and Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra. In recital she performs throughout the United States and Canada; in San Francisco, New York City, Calgary, Boston, Las Vegas, Dallas, Fort Worth, Vermont and Toronto. In addition to solo recitals, Ms. Yang performs with the Elias String Quartet and gives duo recitals with Jian Wang. She also collaborates with tenor Ian Bostridge in a recital at Wigmore Hall, London.

Ms. Yang records exclusively for EMI Classics. Her debut album, *Romance de Amor*, won a gold disc in Hong Kong, and her second, *40 Degrees North*, was selected as Editor's Choice in *Gramophone* magazine. Her third was a concerto album recorded with the Barcelona Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Eiji Oue, featuring the music of Rodrigo's *Concerto de Aranjuez* and a new Albeniz Concerto by Stephen Goss commissioned by EMI for Xuefei. Her fourth recording, featuring the music of J.S. Bach, will be released by EMI in February 2012.

Fei has also appeared on numerous radio and television programs including BBC Radio 4's *Woman's Hour*, *BBC Proms*, a BBC documentary *The Story of Guitar*, and on China Central Television in a biographical documentary. For more information visit www.xuefeiyang.com.

Program Notes

Violin Sonata No. 1 BWV 1001 (arr. by Xuefei Yang)

Adagio

Fuga

Siciliana

Presto

J.S. BACH

Born March 21, 1685, Eisenach
Died July 28, 1750, Leipzig

Unlike most of the great composers, Bach spent his life in a very limited geographic area (just 600 kilometres from north to south, and 400 kilometres from west to east). In modern times, his reputation as a composer extends far beyond such boundaries. Indeed Bach was the most represented artist on the "Voyager Golden Record"—a recording sent into deep space on both of the Voyager missions.

During his lifetime, Bach was recognized across Europe for his ability as an organist.

Since the 19th century, a revival in interest in his work led to recognition of his genius as a composer. His work is now viewed as a peak of the Baroque era, for its intellectual depth, technical command and artistic beauty.

This piece was composed during the composer's time at Köthen (1717-1723)—a period where his creative powers in chamber music reached a peak. Bach's creative output from this period includes most of the six *Cello Suites*, the *Sonatas and Partitas for violin*, the *Brandenburg Concertos*, *Well-Tempered Clavier*, *Inventions*, and the *English and French Suites*.

The *Sonatas and Partitas for violin* (BWV1001-1006) consist of three sonatas, and three partitas. The set was completed by 1720 but remained unpublished until 1802. It is not known if the pieces were performed during Bach's lifetime. Today, they form an essential part of the violin repertoire.

The four movements of each of the sonatas follow the slow-fast-slow-fast structure of a "sonata de chiesa" (church sonata). Despite this title, such sonatas were not intended for religious use (they may have been used as voluntary music in church), but were performed in concert for entertainment.

Since Bach's time, the pieces have been arranged for other instruments. For example, Bach arranged the fugue for organ, and for lute.

Xuefei will perform her own arrangement of the *B-minor Sonata* (BWV1001), which she has transcribed into the key of A-minor.

Air Varie de l'Opera de Bellini, *I Capuleti e I Montecchi*

GIULIO REGONDI

Born 1822, Geneva or Lyon
Died May 6, 1872, London

Giulio Regondi was an Italian guitarist, concertinist and composer. He was born in Geneva, Switzerland in 1822, to a German mother (who may have died at child-birth) and an Italian father (who raised him). He learned to play guitar from his father, who was himself a talented guitarist, composer and baritone. Regondi was a child prodigy, being known as "The Infant Paganini." From the age of 5, he performed on stage, often in duo with his father. By the age of 9, he had played at all the major courts in Europe, except for Madrid in Spain. In 1831 the Regondis, father and son, arrived in London, and achieved critical and financial success, touring throughout the British Isles. In around 1835, his father gave the boy a five pound note, and absconded with the rest of the money (thought to be several thousand

pounds), and left the boy dependent on the good will of strangers. Giulio survived this trauma, and with the help of friends and foster parents became a UK resident and continued to earn a living as a performer.

Regondi also took up the newly invented concertina, and quickly developed a phenomenal technique on the instrument. He also wrote several virtuoso pieces of his own for the instrument, including a concerto. Regondi toured continental Europe with cellist Joseph Lidel, performing both guitar and concertina. In 1841 he performed in duo with Clara Schumann in Leipzig. There were other concert tours too, but he spent most of the rest of his life in London, performing in cities around the UK. Regondi was reportedly of a kind and gentle nature. Later in his life, there is an account of him being contacted by his father who has deserted him years before. He readily agreed to take in the destitute old man and care for him in his old age. Regondi died of cancer in 1872. He is buried in St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery in Kensal.

Regondi's poetic, and challenging, compositions are written in the Romantic style of his era. Much of his work was lost to posterity, for decades. From the 1980's to the present day, his scores are being re-discovered and re-published.

This piece by Regondi consists of a set of variations on themes from Bellini's opera, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*. Bellini was the quintessential composer of *belcanto* opera, and themes from his operas were most popular in the guitar repertoire of the nineteenth century. Various guitar arrangements were made of themes from this particular opera, but this recently re-discovered version by Regondi is perhaps the most refined of all, making it a truly exciting discovery.

Regondi himself played the piece in his concerts during the 1850's. It was highly acclaimed by critics. The last known performance of this piece by Regondi was in his annual London concert on June 9th, 1857.

Deux Valses

(arr. by Xuefei Yang)

Valse, Op. 69, No. 2

Grande Valse Brillante, Op. 18

F. CHOPIN

Born February 22, 1810, Żelazowa, Wola
Died October 17, 1848, Paris

Chopin was a Polish composer and piano virtuoso. In spite of many facts that would seem to diminish his chance of recognition, Chopin stands as one of the foremost composers in

the history of Western music. His short life was characterized by a steady decline in his health due to a debilitating illness. He wrote comparatively little music, and most of that for a single instrument. He performed only rarely, and then only for small intimate gatherings. Chopin's status stems from the extraordinary quality of his music; subtle, refined, elegant and profound. The qualities that make his music great and those that require the highest standards of musicianship, demand the player to make the music his own through individual expression, and effective and proper use of rubato.

The two waltzes are among the better known works of Chopin. *Valse Op. 69, No. 2*—was composed in 1829, and published posthumously in 1852—is melancholic in nature. In contrast, the *Grande Valse Brillante* is bold and lively. It was composed in 1833, and was the first published waltz of Chopin, in 1834. It was later used in the ballet *Les Sylphides*.

Xuefei has long admired the works of Chopin, and will play her own arrangements of these waltzes to mark the 200th anniversary of his birth.

Three Pieces

El Vito

Petenera

Zapateado

R. SAINZ DE LA MAZA

Born September 7, 1896, Burgos

Died November 26, 1981, Madrid

Sainz de la Maza was a Spanish guitarist, who was the dedicatee of, and gave the first-ever performance of, Rodrigo's *Concerto de Aranjuez* (see below). He was a contemporary of Andres Segovia, and performed all over Europe and South America, giving his final performance in Italy at the age of 82. He was also made professor of guitar at the Madrid Conservatory in 1935.

He also wrote (and arranged) a number of charming small pieces for guitar, based on Spanish folk music, evocative of flamenco. *El Vito* is a traditional Andalusian dance and folk song. *Petenera* is a flamenco rhythm, and a very old style song possibly dating back to the 16th century with lyrics in 4 line verses. *Zapateado* is a lively flamenco heel-dance.

Invocation y Danza

J. RODRIGO

Born November 22, 1901, Sagunto, Spain

Died July 6, 1999, Madrid

Rodrigo was a Spanish composer and

pianist. Born in Valencia, he lost his sight almost completely at the age of three following a bout of diphtheria. His formal musical education took place in Valencia, and later at the Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris. His first published compositions date from 1923, and in 1925 he won Spain's National Prize for Orchestra. His most famous work, *Concerto de Aranjuez*, for guitar and orchestra, was composed in Paris in 1939. The central movement is perhaps one of the most recognizable of 20th century classical music. He received innumerable accolades at home and abroad and many in Spain considered him to be the rightful successor to Manuel De Falla (1876-1946) as the dean of Spanish composers. Rodrigo died in Madrid, aged 97, and is buried alongside his wife Victoria in the cemetery at Aranjuez.

Rodrigo's *Invocation y Danza* for guitar was written in homage to his friend and mentor Manuel De Falla. It won Rodrigo first prize in a composition contest organized by the French broadcasting company in 1961 and it is still regarded as one of his best solo guitar works. *Invocation y Danza* visits a dark bleak landscape. It opens in an atmosphere of mystery and visits the edgy regions of his world or even perhaps the bleakness of Goya's Black Paintings. Rodrigo complained of periods of depression and anxiety and this piece comes from such a period.

Xuefei played this piece at her Spanish debut concert, aged 14, which the composer Rodrigo attended. She has recorded both the *Concerto de Aranjuez* and this piece for EMI.

Two Dances from "The Three Cornered Hat"

The Corregidor's Dance

The Miller's Dance

M. DE FALLA

Born November 23, 1876, Cádiz

Died November 14, 1946, Alta Gracia

Manuel de Falla is probably Spain's most significant 20th century composer. He was inspired by the music of Spain, particularly his native Andalusia, and he combined this with two of the great aesthetic movements of his time, Impressionism and Neo-classicism, to create many highly original works.

Born in Cadiz, Falla studied music in Madrid from the 1890's, and in Paris from 1907 where he met a number of important impressionist composers (Ravel, Debussy, Dukas) who influenced his composition

style. His return to Madrid at the start of World War I marked the start of his most creative period—*El Amor Brujo* and the ballet *The Three Cornered Hat* both date from this period. In 1921 he settled in Granada where he started work on the vast oratorio, *Atlantida*, a neo-classical work to which he devoted the rest of his life. In 1936 at the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, Falla tried, unsuccessfully, to prevent the murder of his close friend, the poet Federico Garcia Lorca. Following Franco's victory in the Spanish Civil War in 1939, Falla moved to Argentina, and was never to return. Falla was a superstitious man, who believed that life was divided into seven year periods—true to his belief, he died a few days before his 70th birthday. The orchestration of *Atlantida* remained incomplete on his death, and was posthumously completed by Halffter. Falla's remains were brought to Spain and are entombed in the cathedral of his home town, Cadiz.

The two pieces on tonight's program are guitar arrangements of famous dances from *The Three Cornered Hat*, composed in 1919 for the great ballet impresario Sergei Diaghilev and first performed in London. The story deals with the life of a young miller, his wife, and the elderly Corregidor (a magistrate appointed by the King) who courts the young woman, and loses his official head-gear (the three-cornered hat) in the process. The evidence of the hat convinces the couple's neighbours of his guilt.

Three Brazilian Pieces

Modinha (arr. Raphael Rabello)

Luiza (arr. Raphael Rabello)

Felicidade (arr. Roland Dyens)

A.C. JOBIM

Born January 25, 1927, Rio de Janeiro

Died December 8, 1994, New York City

Antonio Carlos Jobim was a Brazilian composer, song-writer, arranger, singer, pianist and guitarist. He was one of the most influential popular composers of the 20th century, and a major force behind the creation of the bossa nova style. Many of his songs are now standards of the jazz repertoire. The international airport in Rio de Janeiro was re-named Antonio Carlos Jobim Airport, in his honour. Jobim, like many Brazilian composers of the era, worked in close collaboration with the great Brazilian poet Vinicius de Moraes, who provided lyrics for many of Jobim's songs (in-

cluding the three on tonight's program).

His music received worldwide recognition through the sound track to the award winning movie *Black Orpheus*. *Felicidade* (Happiness) comes from this film. The jazzy arrangement by Roland Dyens (1955–) is rich in harmony and excitement.

A modinha is a sentimental love song often sung as a serenade in the open air. Luizahas been described “the most beautiful and perfect Brazilian song ever written.” These exciting and evocative arrangements by the late great virtuoso Raphael Rabello (1962-1995) are particularly haunting in their beauty and intensity.

Baden Jazz Suite

Simplicitas

Berceuse

Rondo a la Samba

J. JIRMAL

Born 1925, Prague

Jiri Jirmal, a Czech guitarist and composer, wrote this piece as a homage to great Brazilian guitarist Baden Powell de Aquino (1937-2000), known simply as Baden Powell. Baden Powell's father was a scouting enthusiast and named his son after the founder of the scouting movement, Robert Baden Powell. Baden Powell was one of the most influential Brazilian musicians of his age, across a range of styles including bossa nova, samba, Brazilian jazz, and Musica Popular Brasileira (MPB). Baden Pow-

ell was a young virtuoso, who at the age of 15 was already playing professionally in Brazil, accompanying singers and bands. He won popular acclaim with his composition *Samba Triste*, (possibly the first samba in a minor key), which went on to be covered by Stan Getz, and worked closely with Brazillian poet Vinicius de Moraes, a collaboration which yielded some of the classic Brazilian music of the 1960's. One of the most significant results of this collaboration was the introduction of Afro-Brazilian forms into the Samba. As a guitarist, Baden Powell has his own unique identifiable voice, often making use of chordal melody, and complex rhythm's played with the right hand.

The Baden Jazz Suite consists of three movements: *Simplicitas*, *Berceuse* and *Rondo de la Samba* and reflects Baden Powell's compositional and playing techniques.