

*20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season*

**Performing Arts Series**

**International Asia, Inc**

presents



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!**

**Friday, November 12, 2010**  
**Yardley Hall**  
**Johnson County Community College**

# Program

## ACT I

### **The Qin King Assembles His Army**

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*

### **Yellow Ground Music**

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

### **Double Dragon Pearl Music**

Bestowing good luck upon all who hear it, this selection displays the talents of one artist as he plays two drums simultaneously. This piece is also a blessing to the audience and it carries this message: "Let the blessing of the Yellow River People be upon you!"

*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 uncontrollable nature of the Bull and the power and 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*

## **~ Intermission ~**

## **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 spirits of the boatmen as they are summoned in this intricately woven, centuries-old tale!

*Composed by: Mr. Zhang Lie*

### **Sounds of Rolling Walnuts**

In 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 their warriors at their victory!

*Composed by: Mr. He Hua Jun, Mr. Liu Han Lin 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**

As 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 enralls the villagers that no one wants to leave when the festival ends!

*Traditional Drum Composition*

### **Drums of Freedom**

In this symphonic selection, the artistic 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 with their ancient artistry, in an ultra-sensory kaleidoscope of sight and sound. Come share with the performers the exhilaration to be found in this Season of Renewal, and in the joy of life!

*Traditional Drum Composition*

Program subject to change, at the discretion of the management.

# **JIGU! Thunder Drums of China**

## **The Composers**

Mr. Hao Shi Xun	Mr. Wang Guo Jie
Mr. Guo Min Zhi	Mr. Liu Han Lin
Mr. He Hua Jun	Mr. Wang Bao Can
Mr. Li Min Xiong	Mr. Zhang Lie
Mr. Liu Jin Zhu	Mr. Huai Hai
Mr. Jing Jian Shu	

## **The Performers**

Mr. Bo Yong Liang	Mr. Pei Rui Long
Ms. Cao Ya Qin	Mr. Qiao yan Bin
Mr. Guo Pan	Ms. Song Ya Wen
Mr. Han Hong Kai	Ms. Sun Jing
Ms. Lan Tian Tian	Ms. Sun Li Sha
Ms. Li Li	Mr. Wang Jing
Ms. Li Na	Mr. Wang Zhi Zeng
Mr. Li Nai Zhong	Ms. Yun Xiao Xin
Mr. Li Peng Fei	Mr. Zhang Jing Yu
Mr. Liang Er Jian	Mr. Zhang Yan Qing

## About

### **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 the West 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 China, Denmark, Morocco, Singapore, Malaysia, Korea, Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and the United States. Their performances at the Hong Kong Arts Festival were lauded to be 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 performances in festivals and arts events are numerous and include: the CCTV (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 won many awards including the 1992 Chinese Folk Competitions for Percussion and Drums Performers, and 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 China for 1992, 2000 and 2001. Company members participated in the cultural entertainment programming at various venues throughout Beijing, as part of the Beijing Olympic Games celebrations in 2008. The performers of JIGU! *Thunder Drums of China* were honored to be selected to participate in all of these prestigious events!

In 2007, 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 their initial tour, they visited over 25 North American cities including Seattle, San Francisco, Detroit and Philadelphia, among others. JIGU! *Thunder Drums of China* enchanted American audiences with their unique talents, awesome drumming techniques and powerful musical skills. While on this tour, the group visited Canada for the first time, and performed for enthusiastic audiences in Vancouver, British Columbia. On their 2008 and 2009 U.S. tours, Western audiences clamored to see their shows in such cities as Los Angeles, San Diego, Dallas, Houston, and many cities throughout Florida and several other states. All in all, JIGU! *Thunder Drums of China* visited over 40 cities on these highly successful, sold-out tours. As 2010 marks their fourth North

American tour, the artists look forward to entertaining North American audiences once again with their unique and thrilling artform. In addition to visiting many U.S. cities this year, JIGU! *Thunder Drums of China* will return to Canada, this time performing in several cities throughout the Ontario province.

Since their North American debut in 2007, JIGU! *Thunder Drums of China* has released their very first DVD and CD as part of an exciting entertainment package. These digitally produced media products feature their thrilling performances live and were recorded on their premiere U.S. tour. Vibrant costumes and stunning visual effects heighten the experience as viewers and listeners are transported to another realm by these amazing musicians, experiencing the awesome power of this incredible show. The DVD and CD capture all the joyful exuberance of a performance by JIGU! *Thunder Drums of China* and are available at all of their public performances and online at [www.iaipresentations.com](http://www.iaipresentations.com).

The drummers, percussionists and musicians of JIGU! *Thunder Drums of China* come from many villages within the Shanxi Province, and range in age from about 18 to 30 years old. Their families have passed down their musical skills from generation to generation. Their drumming tradition can be traced back centuries within the Chinese city of Jiangzhou, in Xinjiang County. In the seventh century, A.D., Jiangzhou was the home of the Emperor Li Shimin of the Tang Dynasty (618 A.D. – 907 A.D.). Li Shimin has also been called Tang Taizong in many historical records, and his renown comes, in part, from the impressive precision of his celebrated drum and percussion orchestra. Part of the legend of Emperor Li Shimin lives on in performances by JIGU! *Thunder Drums of China*. In fact, one of the musical vignettes in our program tells part of the Emperor Li Shimin's story.

Some of the earliest archaeological evidence of Chinese drums and percussion music has been unearthed in the Shanxi region of China. 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, is performed by villagers praying for prosperous weather and rich harvests. JIGU! *Thunder Drums of China's* 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 (1766 B.C. - 1050 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” in nature. By the time of the Han Dynasty, beginning around 206 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 multi-faceted artform and very unlike Western opera. Peking Opera combines singing, dancing, acrobatics, martial arts, pantomime, highly stylized acting, costume, make-up and more to create fantastic stage productions. The fundamental belief of Chinese theatre-goers is that theatre, at best, should be an illusion of life. Good Chinese theatre, 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 to be part of a professional music troupe from China and traveling the world!

While on tour, the artists will see many corners of the globe and will 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 joyful, thunderous roar of JIGU! *Thunder Drums of China*!

JIGU! THUNDER DRUMS OF CHINA®

is produced by



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