



Impressions of China

Winning works from the 2018 Huang Zi
International Chinese Piano Composition Competition

Shuying LI • Bo LIU
Emile NAOUMOFF • Haohan SUN
Pengfei YU • Zhiliang ZHANG

Gianluca Luisi, Piano



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| | Haohan SUN (孫昊瀚) (b. 1999) | |
| 1 | The Echoes of Tianchi (天池·回響) (2018) | 8:43 |
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| | Emile NAOUMOFF (艾莫利·瑙莫夫) (b. 1962) | |
| 2 | Celestial Parade (星際旅行) (2018) | 6:53 |
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| | Shuying LI (李姝穎) (b. 1989) | |
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| | The Field of My Hometown (故鄉的原野) (2017) | 13:25 |
| 4 | I. The Field Airspace (驚蟄的天空) | 1:37 |
| 5 | II. The Bird on the Tomb Sweeping Day (清明的鳥) | 5:06 |
| 6 | III. The Rains and Winds on the Field (白露風雨) | 2:00 |
| 7 | IV. Water Clouds in Summer Solstice (夏至的水雲) | 4:40 |
| | | |
| | Bo LIU (劉博) (b. 1986) | |
| 8 | Gasuo (嘎所) (2018) | 14:45 |
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| | Zhiliang ZHANG (張誌亮) (b. 1987) | |
| 9 | Qiao Ling Liu Dan ('The Beauty of Six Operatic Female Roles') (俏伶六旦) (2017) | 12:47 |

Gianluca Luisi (吉安盧卡·路易西), Piano

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Huang Zi (1904–1938), a native of Chuansha (now a part of Shanghai), was the most influential composer and music educator of his generation, mentoring many distinguished Chinese musicians. Huang Zi began his studies at Tsinghua School at the age of 12. He began studying composition at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music at the age of 20, before studies at the Yale School of Music in the US. His final work written while at college, the symphonic overture *In Memorium*, was highly regarded at Yale.

To mark the 80th anniversary of the death of Huang Zi, the People's Government of Chuansha New Town, Pudong New Area, Shanghai, and the American Pacific Musicians Association jointly launched the Huang Zi International Chinese Piano Composition Competition, which took place from August to November 2018. Yale University, of which Huang Zi was an alumni in the 1920s, provided academic support for the event and Schimmel, a German piano company, was the sponsor.

52 piano works from all over the world were submitted to the competition. In line with standard international competition appraisal practice, there were three rounds of voting, and numerous works were shortlisted, and reached the final round. After fierce competition, the winners were finally announced: two pieces shared the First Prize,

two won the Second Prize and two won the Third Prize. Italian pianist Gianluca Luisi was awarded the Best Performance Award.

Judges of the Final

Xiaogang YE • Shikun LIU • Robert Blocker
Changjun XU • Shuya XU • Yaoonil Auh
Gang CHEN • Nianqu LIU • Keng ZHOU
Anatoly Zatin • Francesco Monopoli

First Prize: Emile NAOUMOFF (b. 1962)

Celestial Parade (2018)

Emile Naoumoff has been likened to both Vladimir Horowitz and Arthur Rubinstein as a pianist, displaying, as one critic remarked: 'the fire of the former and the poetry of the latter'. Aged just 18 he was signed, as a composer, to the music publisher Schott Music, Mainz – the youngest on their roster. Naoumoff was already a musical prodigy at the age of five, taking up the piano and adding composition to his studies a year later. At the age of seven, after a fateful meeting in Paris, he became the last disciple of Nadia Boulanger, who referred to him as 'the gift of my old age'.

Celestial Parade describes the wonderful and first-hand experience of the composer while he was in Shanghai.

First Prize: Zhiliang ZHANG (b. 1987)
Qiao Ling Liu Dan ('The Beauty of Six Operatic Female Roles') (2017)

Zhiliang Zhang is a young teacher in the Electronic Music Department at the Sichuan Conservatory of Music. His works have been selected to be performed in many cities around the world, and have garnered prizes in international competitions.

The female roles in traditional Chinese opera are collectively known as '*Dan*', and they are divided into nine categories in Sichuanese opera: *Dan* in blue clothes ('*Qingyi*'), or those taking martial or elite roles; the flower *Dan* ('*Huadan*') are those who impersonate vivacious and unmarried women; other female roles which are easily distinguished include '*Laodan*' (old women), '*Wudan*' (females in combat), '*Yaodan*' (unpleasant-looking clown-like women), '*Guimendan*' (unmarried women), '*Nudan*' (young maid servants), '*Poladan*' (aggressive women) and '*Xianhudan*' (female ghosts and foxes). The composer endeavours to make a musical portrayal of the different characteristics of *Dan* in Sichuanese opera, focusing on six female roles in six movements, which are performed without a break.

Haohan SUN (b. 1999)
The Echoes of Tianchi (b. 2018)

Haohan Sun was born in Changchun, Jilin, and began to study the piano at the age of 6 under professor Wu Mingze. At the age of 15, he

started to study composition with professor Lin Chengjin and professor Yin Mingwu. In 2017 he began studies at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music with professor Chen Musheng. His work *Feng Qiu Huang* won First Prize in the Third Composition Competition of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music.

The Echoes of Tianchi depicts the echoes between Tianchi and the peaks of the Changbai mountains through the musical pitch range. The most intense part of the work expresses the unpredictable weather of Tianchi.

Second Prize: Bo LIU (b. 1986)
Gasuo (2018)

In 2010, Bo Liu graduated from Sichuan Conservatory of Music in composition and compositional theories. In 2016, he achieved a Master's Degree after three years studying at the Frankfurt University of Music and Performing Arts in Germany. Liu is currently a doctoral student majoring in composition at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Liu has had a number of works performed around the world. He has also collaborated several times with many outstanding groups such as Neue Philharmonie Frankfurt and the International Ensemble Modern Academy (IEMA).

The word '*Gasuo*' originated from the Dong minority in Guizhou, and it is translated as 'sound of singing, music, melody'.

Third Prize: Shuying LI (b. 1989)

Five (2010)

Shuying Li has been praised as ‘a real talent here waiting to emerge’ (*The Seattle Times*) and with her ‘skillful orchestral writing, very colourful language and huge waves of sound’, (*The SunBreak*) has become an award-winning composer who began her musical education in her native China. In her sophomore year at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, she won a scholarship to continue undergraduate studies at The Hartt School in Connecticut. She holds a Master’s and Doctoral Degree from the University of Michigan. In 2018 she was appointed to the Research Faculty at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Shuying’s compositions have been performed by the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Seattle Symphony Orchestra and New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, among others.

Five was composed for solo piano. Deeply rooted in Chinese traditional culture, the number five has multiple meanings in the composition – different pentatonic scales encounter each other and are mingled. It aims to achieve harmony through diversity with five different elements in a philosophical aspect, with pentatonic scales, and with five different musical gestures throughout the piece.

Third Prize: Pengfei YU (b. 1988)

The Field of My Hometown (2017)

Pengfei Yu was born in Anqing, Anhui Province, China and began piano studies in his childhood. He studied at the Affiliated Secondary School of the Wuhan Conservatory of Music, and the Central Conservatory of Music with professor Ye Xiaogang, graduating with a Master’s Degree in composition. His works have been selected for many contemporary music events, such as the Beijing Modern Music Festival and the Thailand International Composition Festival. He has collaborated with many performers, including the Polish New Music Troupe, and the NZTrio of New Zealand. Many of his works, such as chamber piece *Beat the moon silversmith* and art song *Diary* have been recorded and published by the People’s Music Publishing House and Universal Audio and the Video Publishing House.

The Field of My Hometown is based on the changes of wind, rain, clouds and birds in different seasons in the fields of South China, and expresses the charm of China’s land in music. It uses the combination of modern Western composing techniques and Chinese pentatonic tones. It is a Chinese piano work expressing the modern aesthetic recalling of Chinese classical folk art.

Best Performance Award: Gianluca Luisi

Italian pianist Gianluca Luisi is a winner of numerous competitions. He received First Prize at the 4th International Piano Competition 'Johann Sebastian Bach', Würzburg in March 2001. His repertoire includes J.S. Bach's complete *Well-Tempered Clavier*, a work he has performed countless times – his recording of the work for American label Centaur Records received enthusiastic acclaim from international critics.



All of the works in this programme were prize winners in the hotly contested 2018 Huang Zi International Chinese Piano Composition Competition, an event marking the 80th anniversary of the death of this influential composer and educator. Themes explored include the charm and unpredictability of China's landscape, alongside elements of Chinese musical and theatrical aesthetics. Joint First Prize winners were Emile Naoumoff, whose *Celestial Parade* describes the composer's wonderful experiences while in Shanghai, and Zhiliang Zhang, whose *Qiao Ling Liu Dan* portrays six widely differing 'Dan' or female characters in Sichuanese opera.

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- 9 Qiao Ling Liu Dan ('The Beauty of Six Operatic Female Roles')** **12:47**
(俏伶六旦) (2017)

Gianluca Luisi (吉安盧卡·路易西), Piano

A detailed track list can be found inside the booklet

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