

A woman with dark hair, wearing a red coat, is looking upwards and to the right. The background is a blurred city skyline at sunset or sunrise, with warm light and a blue sky.

Legend of the Phoenix Queen

and other tales

凤凰之传说

Zhenni
Li-Cohen

piano

李珍妮

钢琴



STEINWAY & SONS

Legend of the Phoenix Queen and other tales 凤凰之传说

I grew up with my father singing traditional songs and playing his erhu around the house, deeply influencing my nascent ears. He had learned to play a variety of traditional Chinese instruments, such as the Chinese flute, xun, and hulusi, during his school years while leading the school's orchestra. Although I eventually chose to play the piano, the sound of those beautiful yet unique instruments was a big part of my childhood, making this a very meaningful and intimate project for me. During the pandemic, I finally delved into this repertoire that was familiar yet distant to me; I combed through all the music I could find as my parents laboriously scanned everything from their library, page by page, and emailed it to me--often woefully out of order. It was incredibly difficult to choose from so many great works of art, but we finally settled on twelve pieces that represented a rich tapestry of genres and categories, including music containing traditional folk melodies, ancient tales and stories, folk tunes or rituals, and music inspired by historic artworks or reactions to traditional instrumental works.

This project would not have been possible without Jon Feidner, who first suggested an album of traditional Chinese works and supported it from beginning to end. I am eternally grateful to my parents for passing their heritage and culture down to me, my xiaoyeye and dayeye, as well as my childhood teachers Mr. Ke and Ms. Chen, for introducing me to this repertoire in my early years. Finally, I want to dedicate this album to my parents Yongming Li and Jian Liu, and to Dean and Bunny Cai for their unwavering love, support and belief in me.

— Zhenni Li-Cohen

在我成长过程中，我时常在家中与我的父亲一起哼唱民族歌谣以及拉奏他的二胡，这些经历对我初期的音乐欣赏能力与艺术涵养影响甚深。他还拥有其他的中国传统乐器，像是中国笛、埙、葫芦丝。在他大学就读期间，曾担任学校民族乐队的指挥，深谙怎么样去演奏这些乐器。尽管我后来选择学习钢琴，但这些独特乐器所演奏出的优美声音深藏于我童年记忆。这些回忆使我感到录制此张专辑格外地具有意义与亲切。起初，在选择曲目的过程中非常地困难，因为优秀的民族音乐曲目非常多，而且每首乐曲都有其独特之处。我们最终拣选最具代表性的十二首曲目。这些曲目所涵盖的种类有传统民族旋律、古老的故事传说、民间音乐舞蹈，还包含历史性的艺术作品或传统器乐作品所启发的音乐。由于我父母原先的存谱不是那么的井井有序，在他们不辞辛劳把乐谱一页一页的扫描邮寄给我后，我慢慢的将它们拼凑在一起。在疫情期间，我开始重新钻研这些既熟悉又陌生的曲目。

感谢有斯坦威专辑制作人Jon的建议与始终如一的支持，这张传统中国乐曲专辑才得以出版发行。我特别感激我的父母亲将他们的传统与文化延续到对我的音乐教育上，感谢我的大爷爷，小爷爷和阿婆，幼时学琴陪伴。感谢柯老师和陈老师在我习琴初期，将这些珍贵的曲目介绍给我认识。我将此专辑谨献给我的父母李泳明与刘健，以及献给Dean 和Bunny Cai。谢谢他们对我的爱与支持。

-李珍妮

1. ***A Hundred Birds Honoring the Phoenix*** 百鸟朝凤

(arranged from traditional instrument Suona) (根据唢呐曲改编)

Traditional; arr. Jianzhong Wang (1933-2016) 王建中改编

在中国有个古老的传说：在很久很久以前，鸟群中有一只小鸟，它个大肤黑少毛，其他小鸟都不愿喜欢它。但小鸟非常勤劳，它每天都从早忙到晚收集果实，将地上的果实一颗颗捡起来，藏在自己洞中。其他贪玩的小鸟都不理解它，嘲笑它。

天气很久没有下雨，森林里大旱，鸟儿们四处找不到吃的了，饿得快不行了。这时小鸟赶紧打开山洞，把自己多年辛苦储存的食物拿出来分给大家，让鸟儿们度过了难关。旱灾后，森林又恢复了生机，而鸟儿们没有忘恩。为感谢它，鸟儿们将自己身上最漂亮的羽毛拔下来，制成一件美丽的百鸟衣送给她，并推举它为百鸟之王。这小鸟就是凤凰。从此，每到这一天，四面八方的鸟儿都会飞来向凤凰朝拜和祝贺。各种鸟儿一起莺歌燕舞，就形成了百鸟朝凤的美丽场景。作品所展示的就是这样一幅美丽生动的自然景象。钢琴曲《百鸟朝凤》根据同名唢呐曲改编。曲目以鲜明深刻的音乐形象，高超的艺术气息，独特的音乐魅力、丰富的艺术形象描绘了大自然的美景。

One popular Chinese legend tells the story of the phoenix long before she became the mythical Queen of Birds. Once an ordinary bird with plain plumage, she was overlooked by the rest of the flock. Through unwavering diligence, however, she gathered and stored an abundance of fruit. When a devastating drought brought famine to the forest, she selflessly shared her provisions with the other animals. In gratitude, every bird contributed its most beautiful feather to fashion a magnificent robe for their benefactor, crowning her the Phoenix—the Queen

of Birds. Thereafter, birds from around the world gathered to pay homage, creating a spectacular scene of music, dance and celebration.

This solo piano work is Jianzhong Wang's (1933–2016) transcription of the celebrated traditional *suona* (Chinese double-reed horn) piece of the same name. One of the landmark works in the twentieth-century Chinese piano repertoire, it unites the expressive language of Chinese folk music with techniques from the Western classical piano tradition. Through inventive pianistic writing, richly layered textures, and a wide spectrum of tonal color, Wang translates the *suona*'s distinctive sonority and its vivid imitation of birdsong into a richly evocative musical landscape. The result is a vibrant musical portrayal of nature and a fitting musical tribute to the majesty of the phoenix.

2. *Liu-yang River* 浏阳河

(Traditional folk song of Hunan region) (湖南民歌)

Traditional; arr. Jianzhong Wang 王建中改编

在中华大地流淌着一条美丽的小河叫浏阳河，河水清澈，两岸风光优美。浏阳河两岸人民勤劳朴实，幸福安康。他们用歌声歌颂美好的生活，歌曲《浏阳河》应运而生。歌曲曲调流畅，旋律优美婉转，带着浓郁的湖湘风情。

作曲家王建中被歌曲《浏阳河》深深感染，改编成钢琴曲《浏阳河》。作品有着典型的二段体，中间的华彩段成功的模仿了流水的动态。不仅保持了原有曲调的特点和韵味，同时也将西方演奏风格表现出来，具有很高的艺术价值。

The beautiful Liu-yang River of mainland China is celebrated for its crystal-clear waters and picturesque banks. The people of this region, renowned for their diligence and joyful spirit, frequently sing in praise of their homeland—a tradition that gave birth to the famous folk song “Liu-yang River.”

Deeply inspired by this lyrical melody, composer Jianzhong Wang transcribed it into a brilliant work for solo piano. The piece is structured in a traditional two-part form, heightened by a dazzling, cadenza-like passage that vividly imitates the movement of flowing water. While preserving the expressive character of the original folk song, Wang seamlessly integrates the virtuosic techniques of the Western classical piano tradition, creating a work that is both deeply rooted in Chinese folk music and idiomatic to the piano.

3. *Xinjiang Dance* (1958) 新疆舞曲

Zhihong Guo (1932-2024) 郭志鸿

中国西北的新疆是个神秘又令人向往的地方。那里有澄清的高原湖泊、壮丽的雪山雄峰、苍莽的原始森林、辽阔的大草原；那里的人们聪明善良，热情好客，能歌善舞。

当年年轻的作曲家郭志鸿先生到新疆采风，经历了哈萨克人的隆重婚礼。蓝天白云下，绿茵茵草地上：篝火熊熊燃烧，美酒甘醇，奶茶飘香；人们伴随欢快的音乐跳起优美的舞蹈。作曲家深受感染，怀着激动的心情创作了《新疆舞曲》。

钢琴曲《新疆舞曲》旋律优美，织体简练，节奏热情奔放。作品牢牢地根植在丰富的民族音乐上，伴奏部分持续的切分节奏蕴含着浓厚的新疆民族特色。

Located in northwest China, Xinjiang is a land of striking natural beauty, home to vibrant communities with rich traditions of song and dance. The inspiration for this work came when a young composer named Zhihong Guo (1932-2024) visited the region to collect folk material and witnessed a grand Kazakh wedding celebration. Set against vast green grasslands under a brilliant blue sky, the celebration was filled with blazing bonfires, traditional Kazakh milk tea, and joyful dancing. Deeply inspired by the festive atmosphere, Guo composed *Xinjiang Dance*.

Cast in a three-part form, *Xinjiang Dance* opens with an energetic dance section driven by continuous syncopated rhythms and percussive gestures that evoke local instruments. The contrasting middle section unfolds like an expressive folk song, with a freely flowing, improvisatory quality that allows the melody to breathe with expressive spontaneity. As the opening material returns, the music builds to an exhilarating conclusion, capturing the vitality, warmth, and celebratory spirit of Xinjiang's musical heritage.

4. ***The Butterfly Lovers*** 梁祝

(arranged from the Violin Concerto)

He Zhanhao, Chen Gang; arr. Deben Yin, HongJiang 尹德本和蒋泓改编

梁山伯和祝英台是家喻户晓的美丽传说，1958年青年作曲家何占豪和陈刚将她改编成小提琴协奏曲，获得巨大成功，成为我国乐曲经典。乐曲由抗婚出走、楼台相会和哭灵控诉三个情节，用西洋小提琴形象的诉说了中国美丽的爱情故事。

钢琴曲《梁祝》是尹德本和蒋泓根据小提琴协奏曲改编的，保留了主要的几个段落：引子 – 成功的把笛子的声音由钢琴的跳音表达出来，有着对话般的主题，抗婚的激烈的发展部分很好的表现了钢琴的音域和效果，再现段的高潮和最后的化蝶之尾声。

The tragic romance of Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai is one of China's most beloved folktales. In 1959, composers He Zhanhao (b. 1933) and Chen Gang (b. 1935) transformed this timeless legend into the *Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto*, a landmark work in the Chinese concert repertoire. Cast as a single continuous movement, the concerto unfolds through a series of interconnected episodes that trace the lovers' journey from their first meeting and blossoming romance, through separation and tragedy, to their final spiritual transformation.

This solo piano transcription by Deben Yin and Hong Jiang preserves both the narrative sweep and emotional depth of the original score. The opening section employs crisp staccato articulation to evoke the bright, singing tone of the traditional Chinese flute before unfolding into a tender exchange between the two protagonists. The central dramatic episode captures the story's peak drama, tracing the narrative arc of the lovers' elopement and resistance against an arranged marriage, their bittersweet reunion in an attic, and their eventual despair and heartrending lament that ultimately leads to their deaths. The music then resolves into the serene final transformation, where the lovers are reborn as butterflies, united forever in one of the most enduring images of Chinese literature and folklore.

5. ***Glowing Red Morning Star Lilies*** 山丹丹开花红艳艳

(Folk song of Shanbei Region) (主题根据陕北民歌)

Traditional; arr. Jianzhong Wang 王建中改编

在古老苍茫的中国黄土高原上，盛开的山丹丹花光亮夺目。她给大地带来了生机，给人们带来了希望。高原上迎来了一群远方的客人，他们将为赶走侵略者而浴血奋战，他们将为民族的解放流血牺牲。高原的人们举行了盛大的欢迎仪式，老人们捧来了高粱酒，小伙子们唱起了信天游，姑娘们扭起了秧歌，漫山遍野的山丹丹开得更加红艳艳。

钢琴曲《山丹丹开花红艳艳》描绘了这个欢歌乐舞的情景。它的旋律优美动人，曲调明亮宽广，运用了陕北高腔的激越热烈，使朴素的情感无比真实的展示。

On the ancient Chinese Loess Plateau, the vibrant *shandandan* (morningstar lily) blooms in brilliant red, bringing renewed life to the landscape and symbolizing hope for its people. This work portrays a festive gathering in which the local community welcomes honored guests with warmth and celebration. Elders offer traditional sorghum wine, young men sing the soaring melodies of *xintianyou* (northern Shaanxi folk songs), and young women perform the spirited *yangko* dance, filling the hillsides of blooming lilies with music and joy.

This solo piano work is adapted by composer Jianzhong Wang from the celebrated Shaanxi folk song of the same name. Characterized by an expansive melody and heartfelt lyricism, the work evokes the passionate, high-register vocal style of northern Shaanxi folk singing. Through its rich pianistic textures, the arrangement captures the sincere, unadorned emotions and joyous spirit of the plateau's people.

6. ***The Sound of Waves*** (1979) 涛声, 选自《东山魁夷画意》

Lisan Wang (1933-2013) 汪立三

作曲家汪立三先生，同时也是一位绘画爱好者。当年日本画家东山魁夷在北京举办关于鉴真大师东赴日本的画展，激发了他的创作灵感。著名的《东山魁夷画意》组曲就这样便诞生了，这组钢琴曲可以说是绘画和音乐的高度融合。

《东山魁夷画意》组曲根据画家作品中的意境，由《冬花》《森林秋装》《湖》和《涛声》四首乐曲构成。《涛声》是第四首，也是整个作品的主题。《涛声》音乐讲述了两千多年前我国著名的鉴真法师，历经艰险六次东渡日本传教的感人事迹；颂扬了鉴真大师为了崇高的信仰，不惜献身的精神。

在《涛声》钢琴曲中，汪立三先生将两地的民族传统音乐元素巧妙地融入作品之中，使作品呈现出新颖独特的和声、生动优美的旋律以及炽热深沉的情感。

Possessing a deep passion for the visual arts, composer Lisan Wang (1933–2013) was profoundly inspired by a Beijing exhibition of Japanese painter Kaii Higashiyama's work, which depicted the historical eastward journey of the revered monk Master Jianzhen to Japan. This encounter gave birth to Wang's piano suite, *Paintings by Kaii Higashiyama*, a sublime fusion of art and music. Reflecting the artistic concepts of the original paintings, the suite comprises four movements: *Winter Blossom*, *Autumn Woods*, *The Lake*, and *The Sound of Waves*.

The concluding movement, *The Sound of Waves*, forms the emotional and spiritual culmination of the suite. It narrates the eighth-century story of Master Jianzhen, who famously endured six perilous attempts to cross the sea to

Japan to spread Buddhist teachings, undeterred even after losing his sight to the hardships of the journey. In this evocative piano work, Wang seamlessly blends Chinese and Japanese musical idioms. Richly varied textures and expansive sonorities mirror both the physical turbulence of the ocean waves and the unyielding spiritual dedication of the legendary monk.

7. *Lan Hua-Hua's Story* 兰花花

(Folk song of Shanbei Region) (主题根据陕北民歌)

Traditional; arr. Lisan Wang 汪立三改编

在中国西北高原上，有一个美丽的姑娘叫兰花花。兰花花心灵手巧，聪明善良。当她的心上人离开去了战场打击侵略者，她不幸被恶霸地主抢走，在地主家受尽虐待和折磨。她不久在痛苦折磨和对心上人的思念中离开了人世。兰花花的心上人从战场回来，听到了她的悲惨遭遇，伤心欲绝。在病床上写下了民歌《兰花花》来纪念她。歌词情深意切，曲调亲切优美。不久传遍了西北高原。

钢琴曲《兰花花》根据这个民歌改编，述说了兰花花的悲惨一生。曲调悠扬柔美，节奏舒缓自由，带着强烈的西北民歌风情。仿佛把我们带到辽远、迷人的西北高原，仿佛让我们看到了兰花花那纯朴、美丽的身影。

Born out of the ancient musical traditions of the Yellow River basin, the legendary folk ballad *Lan Hua-Hua* tells the poignant story of a beautiful and spirited young woman. According to the traditional narrative, her beloved departed to defend his homeland, and in his absence she was forced into an arranged marriage by a ruthless local

landlord. After fiercely resisting her fate, she ultimately succumbed to heartbreak and an unyielding longing for her true love. Upon his return, her grief-stricken lover gives voice to his sorrow through the song *Lan Hua-Hua*, whose deeply expressive and melancholic melody has since become one of northern China's best-known folk songs.

In this evocative solo piano transcription, Lisan Wang preserves the emotional depth and dramatic sweep of the original ballad while expanding its expressive possibilities through the piano. Unfolding like an operatic scene, the work moves from a tender, lyrical beginning to a heightened dramatic climax before returning to its opening theme, where the gentle rhythmic pulse once again supports the melancholic melody. This return completes the emotional arc of the work, revealing both the tragedy of Lan Hua-Hua's fate and the strength of her unwavering spirit.

8. ***Spring Dance*** (1980) 春舞

Yiqiang Sun (b. 1945) 孙以强

美丽而又神秘的新疆，勤劳而又能歌善舞新疆人民，总是带给所有人美好的想象和向往。也给创作者带来巨大的创作热情和素材。

乐曲具有浓郁的新疆风格。作品的开始是一段神秘而又充满幻想的引子，接下来的是有着哈巴涅拉 (Habanera) 节奏的伴奏带着强烈的舞蹈的韵律，主题里特别的和声小调充满了民族感。是西洋乐器与民族音乐结合的成功之作。

Along the ancient Silk Road, the arrival of spring represents the long-awaited revival of nature, growth, and vitality after a harsh winter. This solo piano work uses the physical awakening of the season as a direct metaphor for human joy, hope, and community celebration. Renowned for their infectious style of song and dance, the local people leave an unforgettable impression on all who encounter them. It was this spirited energy that inspired composer Yiqiang Sun (b. 1945) to create *Spring Dance* in 1980 after witnessing youth gathering the summer grape harvests under a twilight sky.

The composition masterfully mirrors this festive scene through its distinct structural design. It opens with a mysterious, fantasy-like introduction before settling into a robust, driving accompaniment pattern in the left hand. These percussive, syncopated patterns are purposefully written to emulate traditional Uyghur hand drums, particularly the *dap*. Over this driving rhythmic pulse, the principal theme features striking modal and minor harmonies that evoke the unique cultural tapestry of the region.

9. ***Three Variations on a Plum Blossom*** 《梅花三弄》

(arranged from traditional instrument Guqin) (根据古琴曲改编)

Traditional; arr. Jianzhong Wang 王建中

中国十大经典古曲之一《梅花三弄》，相传晋朝桓伊所作的一首笛曲。著名作曲家王建中改编为钢琴曲。东晋时期，有“笛圣”之称的将军桓伊从河岸码头经过，恰巧侍郎王徽之（书法家王羲之子）停泊在码头，在去都城途中。彼此并不相识，但王徽之听说桓伊善吹笛演奏，便托人请求桓伊吹奏。桓伊受邀便

上船用笛吹奏三弄梅花之调后离去。二人相会虽未说话，知音无需言语。因为桓伊和王徽之美好的音乐邂逅，从此《梅花三弄》广泛流传。

“梅花香自苦寒来”《梅花三弄》展现梅花在暴风雪中迎风摇曳傲雪凌霜顽强不屈的神态，表达了梅花不畏严寒芬芳绽放的高洁品格特征，经历风雪依然绽放唤醒春天。借物咏怀，比喻高尚的情操和不屈不挠的个性气概，赞颂具有高尚品德的人。作品的梅花主题重复出现三次，故三弄，采用的是变奏曲的形式。

雪花飞扬处，看梅花枝头芬芳绽放，百花皆未醒，踏雪寻梅报春第一花。

严冬腊月时，闻冬梅邀春暗香流淌，手指弹奏间，听赏《梅花三弄》悠扬。

One of China's most celebrated classical melodies, *Three Variations on a Plum Blossom* originated as a flute piece traditionally attributed to Huan Yi (d. 384) of the Eastern Jin Dynasty. Revered for its elegant lyricism, the work was later transcribed for solo piano by Jianzhong Wang, who preserved its poetic spirit while enriching it with the expressive possibilities of the modern piano.

According to a well-known legend, Huan Yi and the scholar Wang Huizhi (338–386), son of the renowned calligrapher Wang Xizhi, encountered one another by chance at a riverside pier. Although the two men had never met, Wang Huizhi had heard of Huan Yi's extraordinary flute playing and requested a performance. Huan Yi played *Three Variations on a Plum Blossom* before quietly departing, and the two never exchanged a single word. Their silent yet profound musical encounter has since become a symbol of the unspoken understanding shared between true kindred spirits.

In Chinese culture, the plum blossom symbolizes resilience, integrity, and unwavering strength, blooming amidst the cold of winter when few other flowers can survive. Its enduring beauty has long been associated with noble character and moral fortitude. The title refers to the work's principal theme, which returns in three successive variations, each offering a fresh perspective on the plum blossom's quiet elegance and enduring spirit.

10. ***Celebrating Our New Life*** 翻身的日子

(arranged from a traditional instrumental ensemble piece by Jian-er Zhu) (根据朱践耳民族管弦乐曲改编)

Traditional; arr. Wanghua Chu (b. 1941) 储望华改编

钢琴曲《翻身的日子》以火热的激情、流畅的旋律和欢快的节奏生动反映了人们翻身的幸福欢乐情景。乐曲旋律优美，音乐形象鲜明，带有浓郁的民族风情。作品有着陕北特色的舞蹈节奏，和具有地方特色的小二度和声重复出现在主题旋律上充分体现了千千万万的劳苦大众盼来了打败侵略者，迎来了翻身解放的日子的喜悦心情和欢呼呐喊、敲锣打鼓、载歌载舞、欢庆新的生活的场景。

Originally composed in 1953 by Jian-er Zhu (1922–2017) as a cinematic score, *Celebrating Our New Life* was later arranged for solo piano by Wanghua Chu (b. 1941). Evoking a radiant portrait of a rural community embracing a new era of freedom, the work draws upon the high-pitched, theatrical style of northern Bangzi Opera and the vibrant sounds of village chuida folk percussion. Filled with sweeping energy and a festive, driving rhythmic pulse, the composition unfolds as a vibrant celebration of village life.

A distinctive hallmark of the work is its use of minor-second intervals to replicate traditional Chinese instrumental techniques on a Western piano. In the main theme, clashing minor seconds mimic the piercing sliding tones (hua yin) of the banhu fiddle and the nasal pitch-bends of the guanzi reed pipe, characteristic of northern Bangzi Opera Style. In the middle section, these intervals shift to the left hand as sharply accented clusters. By employing irregular, shifting accents, Chu overcomes the piano's acoustic limitations to evoke the interlocking rhythms and metallic sonorities of *chuida* percussion—cymbals (*bo*), gongs (*luo*), and drums (*gu*)—capturing the dense, ringing clatter of a traditional village ensemble.

11. ***Pictures from Bashu*** (1958) 巴蜀之画

(Sichuan Folk song Suite) (四川民歌主题钢琴组曲)

Huwei Huang (1932-2019) 黄虎威

- I. *Morning Song* (晨歌)
- II. *Echo in a Deep Valley (or: Echoes in the Valley)* (空谷回声)
- III. *Lyrical Tune, (or: Serenade)* (抒情小曲)
- IV. *XuanZi Dance, (or: Chinese Banjo Dance)* (弦子舞)
- V. *Spring in Chengdu, (or: Springtime in Lotus Meadow)* (蓉城春郊)
- VI. *Evening Dance at Aba, (or: Evening Dance of Ngawa)* (阿坝夜会)

在中国西部有一片巴山蜀水之地，那里山清水秀，鸟语花香；那里人们勤劳，民风质朴。作者黄虎威先生深深被感动，用纪实的手法写下了钢琴曲《巴蜀之画》。

《晨歌》描写了山区清晨的美丽景象，在蒙蒙雾气笼罩下的青山、溪流、林海。

《空谷回声》展现的是幽静的山谷中，只有秋蝉的嘶鸣和呼叫在山谷中回响。

《抒情小曲》描绘了大山里的年轻男女在相互倾诉爱情彼此赞美和祝福心上人。

《弦子舞》展现了山里人载歌载舞欢庆丰收的盛大场面，山歌嘹亮，舞蹈优美。

《蓉城春郊》展现了城外平原的春天，阳光下万物复兴，芳草连天的美丽画卷。

《阿坝夜会》描述了阿巴的狂欢之夜，草地上，篝火旁，人们喝着美酒，唱起山歌，跳起欢乐的舞蹈。

In southwestern China, the historic region of Bashu (modern-day Sichuan Province) is a land of breathtaking natural beauty shaped by towering mountains, winding rivers, and rich cultural traditions. Deeply inspired by the region's landscapes and heritage, composer Huwei Huang (1932–2019) captured these impressions in 1958 through his celebrated six-movement piano suite, *Pictures from Bashu*. Through vivid musical imagery, the suite unfolds as an evocative journey through the region:

- I. Morning Song: Vividly paints a serene morning landscape, depicting verdant mountains, trickling creeks, and ancient forests veiled in a soft mist.
- II. Echo in a Deep Valley: Captures the profound stillness of a secluded valley, where the rhythmic call of a cicada reverberates against the surrounding cliffs.
- III. Lyrical Tune: Portrays a tender, romantic scene of mountain youth singing heartfelt love songs to praise and bless their chosen partners.

- IV. Xuanzi Dance: Native to the high plateau of western Sichuan, the ancient Tibetan *Xuanzi* dance is named after the traditional two-stringed bowed instrument that guides the performers in a large collective circle. Characterized by elegant, sweeping movements with long, flowing sleeves, the music vividly depicts a festive mountain harvest scene, celebrating seasonal abundance through joyous song and dance.
- V. Spring in Chengdu: Presents a bright, pastoral panorama of the plains just outside the city walls as the landscape rejuvenates under the warm spring sun.
- VI. Evening Dance at Aba: Aba is a high-altitude region in the mountainous northwest of Sichuan Province, home to vibrant Tibetan and Qiang communities. Folk dancing is central to local life, with people gathering around bonfires to form large circles, rhythmically stamping their boots and chanting in unison. Built upon an accompaniment of alternating open fifths, the piano captures the weight and regularity of the dancers' collective foot-stamping.

12. ***Flute and Drum at Sunset*** 《夕阳箫鼓》

(arranged from the traditional instrument Pipa) (根据古琴曲改编)

Traditional; arr. Yinghai Li (1927-2007) 黎英海改编

《夕阳箫鼓》是中国十大经典古曲之一，音乐展示的意境来自唐代诗人张若虚的诗《春江花月夜》。1972年由著名作曲家黎英海先生改编为钢琴曲。乐曲的意境就象一幅水天一色的山水长卷，音画辉映令人沉醉。夕阳西下江楼钟鼓交替齐鸣，人们泛舟春江，两岸青山叠翠花枝弄影，月光映照江面，波涛拍打江

岸。从江岸到花海、春江到海潮；又从月升到月落；再从水上箫声到渔歌归舟，从现实到虚幻形象地呈现了春江花月夜的迷人景色。乐曲以优美的旋律表现出暮鼓送走夕阳，箫声迎来圆月的傍晚；钟鼓声与波涛声和鸣、箫声与渔歌呼应，鼓声、箫声，声声入耳，波涛声、桨橹声、渔歌唱晚声声不绝。交替奏鸣将乐曲引向水天合一、音画合一的境界。

乐曲旋律中古典音韵传统优雅的格调，韵律宛转悠扬，极具东方的诗情画意，寄情于景，情景交融，又有反复咏叹的艺术效果。

Widely regarded as one of China's Ten Great Traditional Masterpieces, *Flute and Drum at Sunset* draws its poetic inspiration from the celebrated Tang dynasty poem *A Moonlit Night on the Spring River* by Zhang Ruoxu. In 1975, composer Yinghai Li (1927–2007) transcribed this ancient melody for solo piano, capturing a tranquil spring evening where sky and water seamlessly blur. As dusk falls, the alternating sounds of evening bells and distant drums bid farewell to the setting sun, welcoming a brilliant full moon. The narrative sweeps from flower-lined riverbanks to the open sea, blending reality and illusion into a luminous, meditative soundscape.

Li's transcription preserves the antique elegance of traditional pentatonic modes while expanding the expressive palette of the modern piano. A hallmark of the arrangement is its use of the traditional *yu yao wei* ("fish-biting-tail") technique, in which the final note of one phrase flows seamlessly into the beginning of the next, creating an unbroken melodic line. Throughout the work, Li employs specialized keyboard techniques to evoke the sonorities of traditional Chinese instruments. In the opening introduction, crisp repeated notes, finger-alternating tremolos, and sweeping runs evoke resonant evening drums and the brilliant plucking of the *pipa* (lute). The main theme then

emerges in the warm middle register, using a lyrical, breathing legato and subtle pauses to mimic the vocal-like intonation of a *xiao* (bamboo flute). Later, in the flowing transitions and ornamental variations, cascading pentatonic arpeggios recreate the sweeping, wave-like sonorities of the *guzheng* (zither).

– *Yongming Li and Jian Liu* (节目简介：由李泳明和刘健撰写与编辑)

A portrait of Zhenni Li-Cohen, a woman with voluminous, wavy brown hair and bangs. She is wearing a black, long-sleeved top with ruffled shoulders and cuffs, and a black skirt with three gold buttons at the waist. She is seated at a piano, with her hands on the keys. The background is dark and out of focus.

Zhenni Li-Cohen

Hailed as “...an artist of tremendous conviction, who fascinates even as she provokes...” by *Gramophone*, “...a thrillingly good pianist...” by *The New Yorker* and for her “...big, gorgeous tone and a mesmerizing touch” by *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, pianist Zhenni Li-Cohen has appeared as a soloist in such notable venues as Carnegie Hall’s Zankel Hall, New York’s Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Washington D.C’s Smithsonian Museum, Philadelphia’s Kimmel Performing Arts Center, the Grieghallen in Norway and the Berliner Philharmonie in Germany.

Zhenni’s recent concerto recording with Marin Alsop and the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra will be released by Pentatone in January 2027. Highly in demand as a soloist, she has appeared with numerous orchestras including the Bergen Philharmonic in Norway, the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia and the Knoxville, Fairbanks, Bay Atlantic, Dominican Republic National, Johns Hopkins and Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony Orchestras.

Following her critically acclaimed debut album, *Mélancholie*, Zhenni’s second album for the Steinway & Sons label, *A Letter*, featured works by the Ukrainian composer Sergei Bortkiewicz. It was praised by *Gramophone* as “the most consistently beautiful Bortkiewicz recording in the catalogue” and “a must-add to your listening list” by *American Record Guide*. The present album, *Legend of the Phoenix Queen and other tales*, grew out of Zhenni’s desire to reconnect with her musical heritage by exploring traditional and contemporary Chinese works inspired by folk songs, stories and historic instruments.

Zhenni was recently filmed by CNN for an upcoming national broadcast feature. She is currently the Co-Founder and Artistic Director of Opus 71 Concerts, a multimedia concert series near New York City’s Lincoln Center. Zhenni Li-Cohen is a Steinway Artist.

施坦威艺术家李珍妮 (Zhenni Li) 是活跃于国际古典音乐舞台的杰出钢琴演奏家与录音艺术家。她以极具个性、充满激情且富有诗意的演奏风格受到国际乐坛广泛关注。英国权威古典音乐杂志《留声机》(Gramophone) 称赞她为“令人印象深刻、极具说服力的艺术家”；《纽约客》(The New Yorker) 评价她为“一位令人兴奋的杰出钢琴家”；《费城问询报》(The Philadelphia Inquirer) 赞誉她拥有“宏大而华丽的音色与迷人的触键”。美国著名钢琴评论家大卫·杜巴尔 (David Dubal) 评价她为“一位充满感染力、兼具火焰与诗意的钢琴家，每个人都应该听到她的演奏”。

录音艺术始终是李珍妮艺术探索的重要组成部分。她由施坦威唱片公司 (Steinway & Sons) 发行的首张个人专辑《忧郁》(Mélancolie) 获得国际乐评界高度赞誉；随后发行的第二张专辑《A Letter》(收录乌克兰作曲家博特凯维奇的作品) 更被《留声机》杂志评价为“现有唱片目录中最美、且始终保持卓越艺术品质的版本”。《美国唱片指南 (American Record Guide) 亦赞誉该作品为“必定加入聆听清单的录音”。近期，李珍妮与著名指挥家马琳·阿尔索普 (Marin Alsop) 及维也纳广播交响乐团合作录制的钢琴协奏曲专辑，将由国际知名古典唱片公司 Pentatone 于2027年1月全球发行。此外，她还将陆续与施坦威唱片公司合作推出贝多芬作品专辑《贝多芬的神化》，以及中国传统音乐专辑《凤凰之传说》(Legend of the Phoenix Queen) 。

李珍妮的独奏演出足迹遍及世界各地，曾在纽约卡内基音乐厅 (Carnegie Hall)、林肯中心表演艺术艾丽斯·塔利音乐厅、大都会艺术博物馆、默金音乐厅 (Merkin Hall)、施坦威音乐厅、费城金梅尔表演艺术中心 (Kimmel Center)、华盛顿史密森尼博物馆 (Smithsonian)、波特兰国际钢琴音乐节，以及挪威格里格音乐厅 (Griegshallen)，德国柏林爱乐音乐厅 (Berliner Philharmonie) 等国际重要艺术殿堂演出。

作为备受国际乐坛青睐的钢琴独奏家，李珍妮曾与维也纳广播交响乐团、挪威卑尔根爱乐乐团、费城室内乐团、多米尼加共和国国家交响乐团、诺克斯维尔交响乐团、费尔班克斯交响乐团、约翰斯·霍普金斯交响乐团、巴克斯郡交响乐团、大西洋湾交响乐团等知名乐团合作，并与马琳·阿尔索普（Marin Alsop）、爱德华·加德纳（Edward Gardner）等国际著名指挥家携手演出。

作为活跃的室内乐演奏家，李珍妮受邀亮相众多国际知名室内乐音乐节。其中包括享誉国际的美国拉维尼亚音乐节（Ravinia Festival）与 Music@Menlo 音乐节，被誉为“美国室内乐摇篮”的 Kneisel Hall 音乐节，以及法国枫丹白露音乐节（Fontainebleau Festival）、Classical Bridge 国际音乐节、毛伊岛室内乐节（Maui Chamber Music Festival）、美索谷音乐节（Methow Valley）与奥卡斯岛室内乐节（Orcas Island）等。她同时也是纽约林肯中心区域室内乐音乐会“Opus 71 Concerts”的联合创办人兼艺术总监。在演奏事业之外，她亦深耕于音乐教育领域，现任加拿大著名高等学府 University of Alberta 钢琴副教授兼钢琴系主任，并受邀于全球各大高校举办独奏音乐会与大师班。

今天舞台上兼具激情与诗意的艺术气质，源于她早年淬炼而出的成长历程。七岁，被认为“天资不足”，却在家庭的艺术坚守中，呈现出了惊人的生命力。十一岁离乡求学，十六岁只身远赴重洋，成长早期的独立与孤独，赋予了她如今深邃而独具个性的艺术感受力。十七岁，她以优异成绩同时被五所世界顶尖音乐学院录取，最终选择以全额奖学金入读茱莉亚音乐学院，师从里普金（Seymour Lipkin）与卡利赫斯（Joseph Kalichstein）教授，并相继取得学士与硕士学位。随后，她进入耶鲁大学音乐学院师从弗兰克尔（Peter Frankl）教授攻读并完成艺术家文凭，继而追随斯勒梅林（Stéphane Lemelin）教授深造，荣获加拿大麦吉尔大学音乐博士学位。求学期间，她还曾得到古德（Richard Goode）、弗莱舍（Leon Fleisher），拉

威尔第三代传人高伯特（Gaubert）和普莱斯勒（Menahem Pressler）等世界钢琴大师的悉心指导。美国有线电视新闻网（CNN）为李珍妮拍摄了个人专题片，其人物专访即将在全国电视节目中播出。李珍妮的音乐会现场及录音作品曾由加拿大国家广播电台（CBC Radio）、挪威国家广播电台（NRK）等国家级广播电视网专题播送。同时，包括纽约 WQXR（全美全天候古典乐电台先驱）、加州 KUSC（全美最大古典乐台），芝加哥 WFMT、费城 WWFM 与 WRTI，以及德州与西弗吉尼亚公共广播电台在内的最具影响力的顶尖古典音乐电台，均曾对她的演出进行过现场直播或专题报道。她以深刻的音乐理解、独特的艺术视野与真挚的情感表达，在琴键之间不断追寻音乐的精神内核与属于自己的艺术声音。音乐于她，并非抵达，而是一场永不停息的探索。

Legend of the Phoenix Queen and other tales

Recorded 2025 at Steinway Hall, New York City.

Producer: Jon Feidner

Engineers: Joshua Frey, Lauren Sclafani,
Melody Nieun Hwang

Project Coordinator: Renée Oakford

Mixing and Mastering: Daniel Shores

Executive Producers: Eric Feidner, Jon Feidner

Art Direction: Jackie Fugere

Cover Photo: Brent Calis

Additional Photos: Sorin Cucui

Design: Cover to Cover Design, Anilda Carrasquillo

Piano Technician: John Veitch

Piano Steinway Model D #607799 (New York)



Legend of the Phoenix Queen and other tales

凤凰之传说

Zhenni Li-Cohen, piano 李珍妮, 钢琴

1. A Hundred Birds Honoring the Phoenix (1973) 百鸟朝凤 6:36
2. Liu-yang River (1972) 浏阳河 4:08
3. Xinjiang Dance (1950) 新疆舞曲 4:14
4. The Butterfly Lovers (1959/2012) 梁祝 6:50
5. Glowing Red Morning Star Lilies (1973) 山丹丹开花红艳艳 5:34
6. The Sound of Waves (1979) 涛声, 选自《东山魁夷画意》 8:41
7. Lan Hua-Hua's Story (1953) 兰花花 3:22
8. Spring Dance (1980) 春舞 5:58
9. Three Variations on a Plum Blossom (1973) 梅花三弄 9:29
10. Celebrating Our New Life (1972) 翻身的日子 1:52
11. Pictures from Bashu (1958) 巴蜀之画 7:52
12. Flute and Drum at Sunset (1975) 夕阳箫鼓 8:22

Playing Time: 73:23



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