

Williams College Department of Music



Chinese Music Ensemble

Wang Guowei, director

Xinjiang folk song, arr. Wang Guowei

Horse Cart Driver's Song

Lei Zhenbang, arr. Wang Guowei

Iris

Taiwan folk song, arr. Wang Guowei

Lofty Green Mountains

Hunan folk song, arr. Zhang Yan

Liuyang River

Michelle Li '28, zheng

Inner Mongolia folk song, arr. Zeng Xun

Herding Camels

Abraham Paik '25, erhu; Leila Salken '27, piano

Huang Haihuai

Mongolian Horse Race

Abraham Paik '25, erhu; Leila Salken '27, piano

Shi Guangnan, arr. Wang Guowei

Fernleaf Bamboo by Moonlight

Austin Lin '27, hulusi

Lin Jiaqing, arr. Wang Guowei

Where the Water Lies

Nie Er, arr. Wang Guowei

Dance of the Golden Snake

Performers

Paik, Abraham '25, erhu, piano

Li, Reyna '27, zheng

Li, Michelle '28, zheng

Dai, Michael '28, dizi

Zhang, Yifan Coco '26, xiao, flute

Lin, Austin '27, hulusi, dizi

Lang, Samuel '23, erhu

Salken, Leila '27, piano

Wednesday, May 7, 2025

7:30 p.m.

*Brooks-Rogers Recital Hall
Williamstown, Massachusetts*

Please turn off cell phones. No photography or recording is permitted.

Wang Guowei

Born in Shanghai, China, Wang Guowei joined the Shanghai Traditional Orchestra at age 17, later becoming erhu soloist and concertmaster. He gained national prominence in garnering the prestigious “ART Cup” award at the 1989 International Chinese Instrumental Music Competition and accolades for his performances at the 15th annual “Shanghai Spring Music Festival.” He has toured internationally in Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Belgium, Canada, England, Italy, and Australia. In America, Wang Guowei has been hailed by *The New York Times* and *Washington Post* music critics as a “master of the erhu” and praised for his “extraordinary” and “gorgeous” playing of the instrument. Joining Music From China as Artistic Director in 1996, Wang Guowei has performed throughout the U.S. with appearances at Princeton, Duke, Pittsburgh, Yale, Wisconsin, Dayton, Bucknell, Vermont, Colgate, Indiana, Illinois State, Rhode Island, Texas A&M universities; Bard, Vassar, Dartmouth, Lafayette, St. Bonaventure, Williams, Middlebury colleges; Peabody Conservatory, UMKC Conservatory, Eastman School of Music, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, San Diego Museum of Art, Chautauqua Institution, 92nd Street Y, Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Folklife Festival, Boston Early Music Festival, Skaneateles Music Festival, Bowdoin International Music Festival, and the Library of Congress. He has also performed with Music From China at the Dionysia Center for Arts and Culture in Rome, Italy, and with the Avison Ensemble in Newcastle, England. Wang Guowei also maintains an active solo career. His musical collaboration includes performances with the Virginia Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, Princeton Symphony Orchestra, PRISM Quartet, Music From Copland House, New Music Consort, Norfolk Chamber Consort, Ethos Percussion Group, Amelia Piano Trio, Third Angle New Music Ensemble, Continuum; Philadelphia Classical Symphony, Columbus Symphony, DaCamera of Houston, Brooklyn Philharmonic; jazz artists Ornette Coleman, Anthony Braxton, Butch Morris, Kenny Garrett, and cellist Yo-Yo Ma; the Ying, Shanghai, Sunrise, Cassatt, and Todd Reynolds string quartets. Mr. Wang premiered Pulitzer Prize composer Zhou Long’s *Madame White Snake* presented by Opera Boston, and in Guo Wenjin’s highly acclaimed opera *Feng Yiting* at the 2012 Spoleto and Lincoln Center Festivals, and the 2013 Luminato Festival in Canada.

Giving expression to artistic creativity in composing new work, Wang Guowei seeks to expand the lexicon of the erhu and Chinese ensemble. This often leads to exploring unusual instrumental combinations of East and West. His works include *Sheng* for solo erhu; *Tea House* for Chinese ensemble which premiered at the 1998 Adelaide Festival; *Tang Wind* commissioned by the Multicultural Group for Chinese instruments and Western orchestra; *Two Pieces* for Percussion Quartet: *Kong – Wu* commissioned and premiered by the Ethos Percussion Group at Weill Recital Hall; *Two Plus Two* for Chinese string trio and tape; *Three Poems* for Erhu; *Lullaby* for erhu, clarinet and piano; *Songs* for Huqin and Saxophone Quartet; *Tea House II* for Chinese trio, *Leaving Home* for erhu, piccolo and cello; *Kong II* for erhu, flute, cello and piano; *Reflections* for erhu and cello; and *Soul: In Remembrance* (virtual ensemble for 12 erhu created during the COVID pandemic).

Orchestra training is an important part of Wang Guowei’s work in promoting Chinese music. He founded the Wesleyan University Chinese Music Ensemble in 2001 and conducted the orchestra for eight years. A similar program was established at New York University for two years. Wang Guowei became conductor of the Chinese music ensemble at Westminster Choir College at Rider University in 2011 and Swarthmore College in 2017. He assumed the position of Artist-in-Residence in Chinese Music Performance and Director of the Williams College Chinese Music Ensemble in 2014. To preserve the musical heritage of Chinese Americans, Wang Guowei founded the Music From China Youth Orchestra in 2004. He has conducted the orchestra at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Merkin Concert Hall, Dorothy Young Center for the Arts at Drew University, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Smithsonian Institution’s Freer & Sackler Gallery of Art, New York Public Library for the Performing arts at Lincoln Center, New York University, and Middlebury College. He brought the orchestra to Shanghai in 2008, 2010, and to Taipei in 2012 for three collaborative concerts with award-winning youth orchestras in these cities.

Wang Guowei is recipient of commissioning awards and artist grants from the American Composers Forum, New York State Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Queens Council on the Arts, and New York Foundation for the Arts.