

Sunday, January 26, 2014, 3pm
Hertz Hall

Wu Man, *pipa*

PROGRAM

Classical (civil)	Xi Yang Xiao Gu (“Flute and Drum Music at Sunset”) The Sound of Bells and Drums from a Distant Temple along the River Moon on the Eastern Mountain Breeze over the Quiet Water Shadows of Flowers Clouds and Water Far Away Become as One A Fishman’s Song in the Evening Waves Lapping at the Shore The Returning Boat
Classical (martial)	Shi Mian Mai Fu (“Ambush Laid on Ten Sides”)
Liu Tianhua	Xu Lai (“Meditation”) (1929)
Nurlanbek Nyshanov	Music from Kyrgyzstan (2004)
<i>INTERMISSION</i>	
Wang Hurian (b.1935)	Dance of the Yi People (1960)
Traditional	San Liu (“Three Six”)
Wu Man	Night Thoughts (2005)
Wu Man	Leaves Flying in Autumn (2000)

Cal Performances’ 2013–2014 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

THE JOURNEY OF CHINESE PIPA: ANCIENT TIES FOR MODERN SOUND

MUSICAL AMERICA’S 2013 Instrumentalist of the Year and Grammy Award-nominated artist Wu Man is recognized as both a virtuoso and ambassador of the *pipa*, or Chinese lute, which has a history of over 2,000 years. Her creativity and curiosity has led to collaborations with some of the leading contemporary composers, such as Tan Dun, Philip Glass, the late Lou Harrison, Terry Riley, Bright Sheng, and Chen Yi. She also frequently performs as a member of the Silk Road Ensemble with cellist Yo-Yo Ma, and with the Kronos Quartet.

Wu Man has spent the majority of her career tracing the history of her instrument throughout her native China and into Central Asia. *Gramophone* has said: “A one-woman force of nature, she is a key figure not only for bringing Chinese traditional music to new audiences, but in becoming a muse for all manner of contemporary composers.”

While documenting hundreds of journeys and adventures to little-known regions of Asia, Wu Man unearthed ancient musical traditions that have influenced both the *pipa*’s repertoire and her own technique. In this program—which includes selections from her recordings *Wu Man and Friends*, *Immeasurable Light*, and her most recent album, *Borderlands*—Wu Man takes the audience on an illuminating and deeply personal journey of how the *pipa*’s story has shaped her own.

Xi Yang Xiao Gu
 (“Flute and Drum Music at Sunset”)
 Classical (civil)

A hand-written score for this *pipa* piece first appeared in 1875 as a piece with seven untitled sections. It was later discovered with subtitles among Chen Zijing’s hand-written collection of *pipa* music in 1898. The present score, having eight sections with subtitles, is taken from Li Fangyuan’s *New Collections* (1895). This composition is in the “civil” style of *pipa* music.

Shi Mian Mai Fu
 Classical (martial)

Shi Mian Mai Fu (“Ambush Laid on Ten Sides”) is perhaps the best known of all traditional *pipa* works. It is a grand opus of the “martial” school of *pipa* music. Structured in traditional storytelling form, *Shi Mian Mai Fu* portrays the epic battle between the kingdoms of Han (Liu Bang) and the warlord of Chu (Xiang Yu) in 202 B.C. The Han army ambushed the Chu army on ten sides and finally defeated the powerful Chu (Xiang Yu committed suicide), leading to the establishment of the Han Dynasty. The music describes how the armies set up camp, effected the ambush, and fought fiercely. In *Shi Mian Mai Fu* one hears the war drums, booming guns, soldiers and horses, and the shouting of soldiers at the massacre. The victors return to camp in triumph at the end of a tiring battle. Variations on a theme make use of tonal colors and timbres created by various fingering techniques to evoke a range of moods: heroism, stoicism, despair, and tragedy.

Xu Lai (“Meditation”) (1929)
 Liu Tianhua

Liu Tianhua was a 20th-century intellectual, composer, and musician who tried to formalize and modernize the study and performance of traditional Chinese music, sometimes with ideas borrowed from the West. In *Xu Lai* (“Meditation”), the music conjures up the image of a person seated by a window, in the emptiness and stillness of the night, lost in meditation.

Music from Kyrgyzstan (2004)
 Nurlanbek Nyshanov

Nurlanbek Nyshanov is a composer and musician who lives in Kyrgyzstan. He wrote this special short piece for Wu Man during the Silk Road Project residency program in Boston in 2004.

Dance of the Yi People (1960)

Wang Huiran (b. 1935)

An arrangement based on folk tunes of the Yi minority people who live in southwestern China. Virtuoso techniques of the *pipa* are displayed, such as tremolos, strumming, sliding notes, and harmonics. The music evokes the intoxicating nights on the mountainside and the joyous gathering of young people with lively dancing.

San Liu (“Three Six”)

Traditional

This is a popular folk tune from the Shanghai area, often played with a small ensemble at a tea house.

Night Thoughts (2005)

Wu Man

The piece was inspired by a ninth-century Buddhist *pipa* tune and represented for Wu Man a chance to rediscover the *pipa*'s native, regional language. *Night Thoughts* features the *pipa*'s ancient-tune scale, which is very different from today's mostly pentatonic *pipa* music, and the peaceful, meditative sound of the *pipa*'s lower register.

Leaves Flying in Autumn (2000)

Wu Man

Wu Man composed this improvisational collage a few years ago with inspiration from the classical “martial” style of *pipa* music and a nod to rock 'n' roll.



RECOGNIZED as the world's premier *pipa* virtuoso and leading ambassador of Chinese music, Grammy Award-nominated musician **Wu Man** has carved out a career as a soloist, educator, and composer, giving her lute-like instrument—which has a history of over 2,000 years in China—a new rôle in both traditional and contemporary music. Having been brought up in the Pudong School of *pipa* playing, Wu Man is now recognized as an outstanding exponent of the traditional repertoire as well as a leading interpreter of contemporary *pipa* music by today's most prominent composers. Wu Man's efforts were recognized when she was named *Musical America's* 2013 Instrumentalist of the Year, the first time this prestigious award has been bestowed on a player of a non-Western instrument.

Highlights of her 2013–2014 season included a performance with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra for the world première of Zhao Jiping's *Concerto for Pipa and Orchestra*. Wu Man was a featured performer with the Kronos

Quartet at their 40th birthday concerts at Cal Performances and Carnegie Hall. She performs as soloist with the Buffalo, Fresno, and Louisiana philharmonic orchestras, and the Hartford, Illinois, San Diego, and Santa Rosa symphonies, and performs recitals at Cal Performances and at Wigmore Hall in the United Kingdom. She also tours with the Silk Road Ensemble, serving as part of the ensemble's leadership team.

Born in Hangzhou, China, Wu Man became the first recipient of a master's degree in *pipa* at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. Wu Man's first exposure to Western classical music came in 1979 when she saw Seiji Ozawa and the Boston Symphony Orchestra performing in Beijing, and in 1985 she made her first visit to the United States as a member of the China Youth Arts Troupe. Wu Man moved to the United States in 1990 and currently resides in California. She is represented exclusively by Opus 3 Artists, 470 Park Avenue South, Ninth Floor North, New York, New York 10016.