



THE DAEDALUS QUARTET

SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Violin Min-Young Kim

Violin Matila Kaul

Viola Jessica Thompson

Cello Thomas Kraines

Soprano Karen Slack

Pipa Min Xiao-fen

PROGRAM

There will be an intermission.

Saturday, January 25 @ 7:30 PM

Prince Theatre

This performance is co-presented with the University of Pennsylvania's Department of Music.

PROGRAM NOTES

Sofia Gubaidulina- *Reflections on the theme B-A-C-H*

Oswaldo Golijov- *Yiddishbbuk*

Nansi Carroll- Arrangements of traditional African American spirituals (world premiere)
with Karen Slack, soprano

Tan Dun- *Ghost Opera*

with Min Xiao-fen, pipa

The Daedalus Quartet, Penn's quartet-in-residence, explores migration through music, illustrating how centuries of cultural cross-pollination has enriched our artistic and spiritual life. Music truly has no borders, unifying through the universality of the human experience. In this performance, the quartet will perform works that exhibit the richness and complexity of this cultural convergence, including the world premiere of composer Nansi Carroll's new arrangement of traditional African American spirituals, along with music by Tan Dun, Sofia Gubaidulina, and Penn alumnus Oswaldo Golijov.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Daedalus Quartet

Since taking first prize at the 2001 Banff International String Quartet Competition, the Daedalus Quartet has performed in many of the world's leading venues, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Library of Congress, the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C., the Musikverein in Vienna, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and the Cité de la Musique in Paris. In 2017-18 Daedalus received accolades for its performance of the complete quartets of Beethoven as part of their residency at the University of Pennsylvania. Among the works the ensemble has premiered are Laurie San Martin's *Six Cuts*, Joshua Hey's *lens fare from alpha centauri*, Joan Tower's *White Water*, and Fred Lerdahl's *Chaconne* and *Third String Quartet*. The Quartet's recordings include the music of Fred Lerdahl, George Perle and Lawrence Dillon, on the Bridge Records label, and Joan Tower's *White Water* and *Dumbarton Quintet* (with pianist Blair McMillen) for NAXOS records.

Karen Slack (Soprano)

Hailed by critics for possessing a lustrous voice of extraordinary beauty and artistry of great dramatic depth, American soprano Karen Slack has performed with major conductors in opera houses including the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Washington National Opera and San Francisco Opera. Equally at home on the concert stage, Slack has performed at the Bergen Festival in Norway, Sydney Symphony and most recently premiered Hannibal Lokumbe's *Healing Tones* with the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin. A native of Philadelphia and a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, she is a winner of numerous awards and competitions, including the George London Award, Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation, Montserrat Caballe International Competition and the Marian Anderson ICON Award.

Min Xiao-fen (Pipa)

Few artists have done more to both honor and reinvent the 2000-year history of the pipa than renowned soloist, vocalist and composer Min Xiao-Fen. Classically trained in her native China, Xiao-fen was an in-demand interpreter of traditional music before relocating to the United States and forging a new path for her instrument alongside many of the leading lights in modern jazz, free improvisation and experimental and contemporary classical music. The *Village Voice* has lauded her as an artist who "has taken her ancient Chinese string instrument into the future," while the *New York Times* has raved that her singular work "has traversed a sweeping musical odyssey."

Xiao-fen's expressive approach to the four-stringed lute has led to collaborations with such inventive luminaries as Wadada Leo Smith, Derek Bailey, Randy Weston, John Zorn, Christian Marclay and Björk. Her Blue Pipa Trio commingles legendary trumpeter Buck Clayton's Kansas City swing with the music of Li Jinhui, the "Father of Chinese popular music," in a project titled *From Harlem to Shanghai and Back*. Xiao-fen's 2012 album *Dim Sum* spotlighted the stunning scope of her original compositions, while her latest release, *Mao, Monk and Me*, is a deeply personal exploration of the music of Thelonious Monk combined with Chinese folk tunes and children's songs remembered from her childhood in the ancient capital of Nanjing.

In May 2016, Xiao-fen was the principal soloist with Washington, D.C.'s PostClassical Ensemble for the world premiere of Daniel Schnyder's *Concerto for Pipa & Orchestra*, written expressly for Xiao-fen by the Swiss-American composer. Still a revered performer of traditional Chinese repertoire, she has been a featured soloist with a number of leading symphony orchestras. In February 2018, Xiao-fen premiered her original score, a duo with acclaimed guitarist Rez Abbasi, for the long-lost 1934 Chinese silent film *The Goddess*. In August, she premiered Alan Chan's *Moon Walk* for pipa and jazz orchestra. That major event follows a fruitful 2017, when Xiao-fen served as artist-in-residence with the Sound of Dragon Society at the Vancouver International Jazz Festival, and was a guiding artist for the Creative Music Studio in New York, performing with founder Karl Berger and his CMS Improvisers Orchestra in the fall. She is the founder of Blue Pipa Inc. (minxiaofenbluepipa.org) and currently lives in New York.