



SOUTHWEST
CHAMBER
MUSIC

LA INTERNATIONAL NEW MUSIC FESTIVAL

4 commissions / 25 compositions
14 LA premieres / 4 world premieres
15 composers / 7 visiting composers

Vietnam, Mexico, South Korea/Berlin, Netherlands, and United States

Two-time Grammy® Award-winning Southwest Chamber Music announces its inaugural ***LA International New Music Festival*** which takes place May 9, 12, 21, and 26 at 8:00 p.m. at The Colburn School. The festival is a culmination of the ensemble's celebration of its 25th season. Each concert will be preceded at 7:00 p.m. by a discussion with the concert's composers and musicians moderated by Southwest Artistic Director Jeff von der Schmidt.

The Festival presents 25 works, which include **14 Los Angeles or west coast premieres, three US premieres, and four world premieres**. Southwest has commissioned four of the works to be presented: South Korean/German composer **Unsuik Chin's *Cosmiggimmicks*** (US Premiere), co-commissioned with the Nieuw Ensemble - Amsterdam and the WDR (West German Radio); ***The Song of Napalm*** (World Premiere) and ***Cracking Bamboo*** (WP) by Vietnamese composer **Vu Nhat Tân**; and South Korean composer **Hyo-shin Na's *Morning Study*** (WP).

Tôn Thất Tiêt's *Miroir, Mémoire*, presented as a gift to Southwest, will also receive its world premiere. Southwest is pleased to present the west coast premiere of the **103-year-old Elliott Carter's *Three Explorations***, as well as the US premieres of Mexican composer **Gabriela Ortiz' *Rio de las Mariposas*** and ***Rio Bravo***. LA premieres include works by **Kurt Rohde, Milton Babbitt, Peter Lieberman, Alexandra du Bois, Vu Nhat Tân, and Hyo-shin Na**.

Other composers whose works are presented on the festival include: **Anne LeBaron** (US), **Daniel Catán** (Mexico/Los Angeles), **Peter Lieberman** (US), **Igor Stravinsky, Milton Babbitt** (US), **Lou Harrison** (US), and **Arnold Schoenberg**. Composers in attendance will be **Chin, Na, Rohde, LeBaron, du Bois, Tân and Ortiz**.

Guest artists include Helenus de Rijke, guitar, and Hans Wesseling, mandolin, from the Nieuw Ensemble in Amsterdam; Vân Anh Vanessa Võ, *dan bau, dan tranh* and *T'rung*; poets Bruce and Hanh Weigl; Abdiel Gonzalez, baritone; Evan Hughes, bass-baritone; and Elissa Johnston, soprano.

Commissions and Premieres

Unsuik Chin's *Cosmigimmicks* is a music pantomime for seven instrumentalists inspired by the works of Samuel Beckett. The work features two concertante parts for guitarist Helenus de Rijke and mandolinist Hans Wesseling, members of the Nieuw Ensemble, Amsterdam, a co-commissioner. The work will be premiered in the Netherlands and repeated here at the festival for the US premiere. It is orchestrated for prepared piano, mandolin, guitar, trumpet, harp, strings and percussion.

The Song of Napalm by Vu Nhat Tân is set to a poem by the noted poet and Vietnam veteran Bruce Weigl. The searingly vivid text describes the "Napalm girl," Phan Thi Kim Phuc, immortalized in Nick Ut's 1972 photo of a young Vietnamese girl, clothes burnt off her body, holding her arms like wings and running toward the camera. It is sung by bass-baritone Evan Hughes and spoken by Weigl's adopted Vietnamese daughter Hanh. *The Song of Napalm* is composed for an eleven-piece chamber ensemble which includes the preeminent *dan bau*, *Trung* and *dan tranh* master Vân Ánh Vanessa Võ. A second Tân commission is *Cracking Bamboo*, an improvisatory piece played from charts and conducted by the composer.

Hyo-shin Na's *Morning Study*, composed in the mornings and evenings between March and September 2011, reflects the fluctuation between darkness and light, and the way the morning and evening sound of the Towhees became a part of this fluctuation. It is composed for strings, flute, clarinet, and percussion.

Tôn Thất Tiêt, now living in Paris, is a long-time friend of Southwest and presented them with *Miroir, Mémoire* on their visit to the French capital. Composed for Southwest as a string quartet, the work is the continuation of a series of three works for string quartet and string trio. The series is about the Perfume River that flows through Hue, Vietnam where the composer was born. *Miroir, Mémoire* was inspired by a poem of Li Po, which speaks of man and nature.

Events leading up to the LA International New Music Festival

Jeff von der Schmidt: "In hindsight I realize that I've been constructing the **LA International New Music Festival** since 2008. That summer Southwest received a highly competitive grant from the U.S. State Department to produce the *Ascending Dragon Music Festival and Cultural Exchange*. It was a cultural breakthrough between Vietnam and the United States, and a 2010 State Department project of major international scope. But I was also thinking, 'What's next?' I wrote down the sequence of Southwest's history, and this planning exercise easily showed me that 2012 would be the milestone of our 25th anniversary.

"Other threads came together: at my first meeting in Paris last May with Tôn Thất Tiêt, the father of Vietnamese classical music, he presented me with a new work, *Miroir, Mémoire* offered to Southwest's musicians and dedicated to us as a symbol of gratitude for our collective devotion to improving musical relations between Vietnam and the United States.

"As the final linchpin, Elliott Carter honored us for the second time with the west coast premiere of his most recent composition, *Three Explorations*, written at the amazing age of 103, for baritone Evan Hughes. Evan, now with the Metropolitan Opera, is from Santa Barbara and sang Carter's *On Conversing with Paradise* with us in Hanoi and Los Angeles."