Please join us for these upcoming concerts and recitals:

**October**

10/10  Avalon String Quartet, 8 p.m., Concert Hall $

10/12  Kishwaukee Symphony Orchestra & Campus Strings, 7:30 p.m., Concert Hall $
  (Pre-Concert lecture at 6:30 p.m., MB173)

10/15  Concert Choir, Chamber Choir, & University Chorus, 8 p.m., Concert Hall $

10/16  NIU Jazz Faculty Recital, 8 p.m., Recital Hall $

10/18  Jung-Bin Woo, Junior Cello Recital, 6:30 p.m., Recital Hall

10/20  NIU Jazz Orchestra Swing Dance, 6 p.m., TBA

10/23  NIU Philharmonic, 8 p.m., Concert Hall $

---

**World Music Recital Series**

**YI-CHIEH JAY LAI**

Guzheng (Chinese Zither) Recital

Assisted by:
Christian Yi, piano
Luke Anderson, bass

Thursday, October 10, 2019
6:30 p.m.
Recital Hall
Please turn off all cell phones and electronic devices, including personal photographic or recording devices. The School of Music appreciates your cooperation in providing a distraction-free environment for both audience and performers.

**BIOGRAPHIES**

**Guzheng/Dr. Yi-Chieh Jay Lai**
Yi-Chieh Jay Lai has performed across Asia, Europe, and the United States in such significant international cultural festivals as the UNESCO’s World Heritage Festival in Germany and the International Beijing Zheng Festival in China. She has served as an artist in residence at University of Hawai’i at Mānoa as a soloist and at Rice University and the Peabody-Essex Museum in Salem, MA with ensemble IIIZ+. Her first album, *Transformation*, was nominated as Best Folk Music Album of the Golden Melody Awards, Taiwan’s equivalent of the Grammys. She received her PhD in ethnomusicology at the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa in 2018. More info on [https://jaylaimusic.weebly.com](https://jaylaimusic.weebly.com)

**Composer/Jan Bach**
Jan Bach was born and educated in the Illinois public schools, and achieved the Doctor of Musical Arts in Composition from the University of Illinois. After three years in the U. S. Army Band and one at the University of Tampa, he began teaching French horn and theory-related courses at Northern Illinois University in 1966 for nearly forty years. His composition teachers included Robert Kelly, Kenneth Gaburo, Aaron Copland, Roberto Gerhard, Thea Musgrave, and Donald Martino. His commissioned compositions and grants, written for all acoustic media of performance, now number well over seventy, and his awards and honors have included the BMI Student Composers First Prize, the Koussevitsky Award at Tanglewood, The Mannes College Opera Composition Award, the New York City Opera Composition Award, election to the Fox Valley Arts Hall of Fame, six Pulitzer Prize recommendations, one of the first eight NIU Distinguished Research Professorships, and many others. There are many publications and commercial recordings to his credit, and he continues to garner performances worldwide, particularly his many works for brass. His biography can be found in Who's Who in America, the Bakers Biographical Dictionary, Groves New Music Dictionary, Wikipedia, and several other sources. Many performances of his music can be found on YouTube, and a few are actually pretty good!
time for the young lady to learn it for her graduate recital. I owe a great debt of gratitude to Dr. Jui-Ching Wang and Dr. Yi-Chieh Lai for making the eventual performance of this work a reality in these concerts.

The Guzheng is a plucked instrument with twenty-one strings roughly tuned to the pentatonic scale whose range, with only five pitches to each octave, covers little more than four octaves. But each string can be pretuned independently to a pitch a half-step higher or lower, and pressure can be exerted on it to raise it up to a minor third higher than its tuned pitch. In addition, the strings can be plucked like a harp, strummed, played as chords, or pressed by the left hand fingers to create a vibrato as its sound dissipates after each initial attack. The strings can also be struck in the manner of a percussion instrument.

My most difficult challenge was listening to these sound materials with an Eastern ear, accepting their scalar patterns readily without trying to force them into our customary seven-note scales and treating them as solitary, contemplative events unrelated to our Western expectations of beginnings, middles, and ends. Chief among these tasks for me was disassociating the instrument's patterns from those so often used within the gestures of our indigenous American blues. So I eventually gave in to that temptation, and my title for the piece, Blues, gave me the excuse to treat the Guzheng as an instrument one might come across in a Louisiana bluegrass band, not an exotic Eastern instrument with a 2,500 year history.

Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Composer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fisherman’s Song at Dusk</td>
<td>Shandong School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lotus Emerging from Water</td>
<td>Kejia School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Lilies Blooming on the Mountains (1972)</td>
<td>Jinhai Jiao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wusuli Boat Song (1981)</td>
<td>Cynthia Hsiang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting Against Typhoon (1965)</td>
<td>Changyuan Wang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elegant White (2015)</td>
<td>Yi-Chieh Jay Lai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterns of Plants No. 27-Taiwan Tea Collection (2018)</td>
<td>Mamoru Fujieda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance-like Sketches (2012)</td>
<td>Grant Carvalho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Blues (2018)</td>
<td>Jan Bach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*World Premier
PROGRAM NOTES

Fisherman’s Song at Dusk: Shandong School
This piece depicts the fishermen happily works on the lake at dusk, their paddles accompanying their singing.

Lotus Emerging from Water: Kejia School
Emerging from muddy water, the lotus is a metaphor for a person who grows up in a bad environment but becomes a fine person.

Red Lilies Blooming on the Mountains (1972): Jinhai Jiao
This is the guzheng solo arrangement of two folksongs of Shanxi and Gansu Provinces. It depicts the highland scenery and expresses the people’s affection for Red Lilies.

Wusuli Boat Song (1981): Cynthia Hsiang
Based on a folk tune of Heilongjiang province, it depicts the happy life of Heche people and their singing on a boat in the Wusuli River.

Fighting Against Typhoon (1965): Changyuan Wang
Fighting the Typhoon is a dramatic depiction of a fight of the Shanghai harbor proletariat against the forces of nature while protecting the property of the people and the Chinese communist government.

Elegant White (2015): Yi-Chieh Jay Lai
This is a bossa-nova style musical imagination of Taiwanese folksong Egret.

Patterns of Plants No. 27—Taiwan Tea Collection (2018): Mamoru Fujieda
Patterns of Plants is a composition series based on data of plants’ potential changes. Mamoru Fujieda composed the solo collections for guzheng by using the data from leaves of tea trees at the Fenghuang Tea Plantation in Experimental Forest of National Taiwan University.

Dance-like Sketches (2012): Grant Carvalho
The title refers to the dance-like qualities (fast tempo, repetitive figures, skipping motives), and the free-form nature of the composition (sketches implying different musical ideas coming and going).

Blues (2018): Jan Bach [world premier]
Composer’s Notes:
During my many years of composing music for acoustic instruments and voices, I have rarely been interested in writing for synthesizers and other means of electric sound production separate from those requiring the human touch in the performance of them. Rather, I have preferred my contacts with live human beings over associations with automatons for whom the elements of improvisation and spur-of-the-moment whimsy are absent. The only possible exception to this preference would have to have been my doctoral dissertation, an hour-long anti-war work for huge orchestra, black soprano, white baritone, mixed chorus, a little recorded musique concrete, and a keyboard musician who had to play combo organ, piano, harpsichord, celesta, and synthesizer, a work which of course has never been performed.

But once in awhile I have been seduced into writing for unusual acoustic instruments that posed special challenges as a way of expanding my horizons and convincing myself that perhaps an old dog could still learn new tricks. Thus it was in the past that I accepted commissions to write for harp, organ, guitar, accordion, percussion ensemble and steelpan, instruments with their own unique challenges beyond those of the standard single-voice instruments found in our Western bands and orchestras.

One of these instruments is the Guzheng, also known as the Chinese zither, which intrigued me when I heard it played recently in some dazzling performances by a young Chinese musician who then asked me to write a piece for her. I had never written for so-called "ethnic" instruments before, unaccustomed to their unusual non-Western notations, proprietary performance techniques, and limited patterns and modes available within their reduced scales. But I decided to give it a go. Unfortunately, it was such a challenge for me that I was unable to finish it in