

Trio (2010)

Yang Liqing

"I began to write this piece soon after I've received a commission from the Verdehr Trio in the summer vacation 2002. But I composed only a few measures after that time due to the heavy administrative duties of my job as President of the Shanghai Conservatory. Last year after I left the position of President, it was finally possible to continue and finish this work.

There are three different aspects in this piece:

- (A) Chinese folksong-like (a tune far away),
- (B) A disturbing element (the very short passages in twelve-tone music style), and
- (C) Materials and their development in a style similar to Shostakovich.

For me, the three different elements are symbols of three 'musical traditions,' the Chinese, the avant garde and the European classical. In my opinion, Chinese composers today are in a difficult situation, or to say, they are facing a conflict between the three 'traditions.' They have to make their choice and seek their own musical languages (the tunes far away, the language they have almost missed). In a word, there is a longing for the 'Renaissance' of the old Chinese culture."

—Yang Liqing

The world premiere of *Trio* was on March 20, 2011 in the Music Room, The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.

Yang Liqing (1942–2013) was a Chinese composer, pianist, and educator. He received his bachelor's degree from Shenyang Conservatory of Music (1970) and his master's degree from Shanghai Conservatory of Music (1980). He was the first Chinese composer and pianist to be sent abroad for study after the Cultural Revolution. In 1983, he received the *Solistenklasse* diploma and the *Ausbildungsklasse* diploma for composition and piano at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik und Theater in Hannover, Germany.

Liqing was the winner of several composition competitions, and his works have been performed widely in China, Germany, England, France, Italy, Switzerland, Norway, the United States, Mexico, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore. In addition, he gave lectures in more than twenty universities and music colleges in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Australia, and the United States.

Liqing taught in the *Mozarteum* of Salzburg, Austria as a guest professor in 1990, and he received a fellowship from Cornell University in 1995. He was professor and president of Shanghai Conservatory of Music (2000-2009) and a Board Director of China Musicians' Association. In 2006, he won the title of Honorary Fellowship from the Performing Arts Academy of Hong Kong. Since 2000, Liqing was president of the Shanghai International Piano Competition and served on the juries of many international music contests.

Viewed as an expert in Western contemporary music, Liqing made his unique contribution by disseminating modern Western composition and its techniques to Chinese composers in the 1980s. He was one of the leading theorists in China specializing in instrumentation and orchestration.