

# Prof. Yong Ge and the Pipa π Ensemble Electrify New York's Carnegie Hall

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, July 28, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The venerable Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall was set ablaze by the captivating charm of the Chinese pipa on July 20, as Professor Yong Ge and the Pipa π Ensemble presented "Pipa Unbound: Tradition and Beyond." This highly anticipated concert was a prominent highlight of the 6th New York Big Apple Music Festival, hosted by the Paulus Hook Music Foundation. In collaboration with the United Nations Music Organizations, the festival is dedicated to fostering cross-regional and cross-cultural artistic exchange, spreading profound messages of friendship and peace to the world. At 1:00 PM, Weill Recital Hall was packed, and the pipa's multifaceted allure and powerful expressiveness captivated all attendees. Many lingered long after the final notes faded, a clear testament to the profound impact of this concert.

Professor Yong Ge, as a professor, doctoral supervisor, and committee member of the Academic Committee at the China Conservatory of Music, demonstrated masterful artistry throughout the performance. She is not only a renowned pipa virtuoso but also an inheritor of the legacy of the esteemed pipa master Dehai Liu. Her



Pipa Unbound: Tradition and Beyond Professor Yong Ge and Students Recital, Weill Hall of Carnegie(Photoed by Jiacy Yan)



Performed with violinists Andy Didorenko and Ella Yeshuang Chen, violist Jay Julio, and cellist Xia Wu

extensive experience and innovative interpretations were evident in every piece. Her numerous accolades, including “CCTV Top Ten Young Pipa Players” and “Beijing Youth Education Master,” underscore her exceptional talent and significant contributions to the field.

The concert opened with a stunning rendition of the ancient classic “Ambush from All Sides” (四面埋伏). Professor Yong Ge and the members of the Pipa π Ensemble—Xuanyu Xu, Yuemeng Li, Ruoshui Yang, Jiayi Wen, Yuqiao Wang, Wanxin Bai, Jiayu Qiu, and Xiaoqian Guo—perfectly recreated this representative martial suite with exquisite technique. This rendition, based on Dehai Liu’s performance score, vividly depicted the intense Battle of Gaixia. The Pipa π Ensemble is a practical music project at the China Conservatory of Music led by Professor Yong Ge, aimed at broadening the pipa instrument’s capabilities in chamber and ensemble music.

The following programs presented numerous outstanding works, many of them U.S. premieres or world premieres, showcasing the pipa repertoire’s continuous expansion. Jing Sun’s pipa quartet “Summer” (夏), based on Xinjiang folk music, was vibrant and dynamic. The world premiere of the ancient piece “Sai Shang Qu” (塞上曲), arranged by Weijie Gao in 2025 for pipa and string quartet, saw Professor Yong Ge’s pipa intertwining with the beautiful sounds of violinists Andy Didorenko and Ella Yeshuang Chen, violist Jay Julio, and cellist Xia Wu, deeply portraying Zhaojun Wang’s complex emotions before her journey to the frontier. Dehai Liu’s “Six Steeds of Zhaoling” (昭陵六骏) resonated with historical grandeur. Chen Tong’s “Moonlight” (月光) (2025 world premiere) offered a serene and contemplative experience. Si’ang Chen’s “Three Cantonese Tone Pictures” (三声粤曲) (2023) was composed for pipa ensemble, infusing traditional Cantonese melodies with new vitality. Additionally, Fandi Wang’s arrangement of the Xinjiang folk song “Grace Me a Rose” (新疆民歌《葡萄熟了》), led by Professor Yong Ge and the Pipa π Ensemble members, collaborated with the Malhaar



Pianist: Yunqing Huang(The Juilliard School)(Photo by Jiaci Yan)



Pipa: Yong Ge, Jiayi Wen, Xiaoqian Guo, Yuqiao Wang;  
Sitar: Galen Passen Tabla: Pradeep Chatterjee



Ensemble's sitar player Galen Passen and tabla player Pradeep Chatterjee, creating a cross-national, cross-cultural musical experience filled with exotic charm and vibrancy. Danhong Wang's large-scale pipa concerto "Clouds and Flowers, Thoughts of You" (彩云间), composed in 2013 and inspired by Bai Li's poem Qing Ping Yue, featured Professor Yong Ge collaborating with Juilliard School pianist Yunqing Huang, their exquisite coordination perfectly blending Imperial Consort Yang Yuhuan Yang's graceful elegance with the pipa's lyrical beauty and martial expressiveness.

The concert culminated in powerful cross-cultural collaborations, further emphasizing the festival's theme of global unity. Bin Zhang's "Poem of the Earth" (大地诗篇), making its U.S. premiere with the Celadon Stars World Orchestra and the Malhaar Ensemble, expressed profound gratitude for life, nature, love, and peace. Japanese composer Akira Mitake's "Flowing Onwards" (流水向前), inspired by his experience as a survivor of US Airways Flight 1549 (the 2009 Hudson River landing incident), movingly conveyed a sense of resilience and appreciation for life's continuous flow.

Prior to the performance, the Pipa Ensemble was also invited to the United Nations Headquarters on July 16, where Professor Yong Ge engaged in a depth discussions with music enthusiasts among the UN staff. She introduced the pipa and performed classic works, astonishing the UN staff who expressed that they had never before heard the pipa capable of such a wide array of playing techniques, with such crisp sound and superb skill.

Following the concert, a Xinhua News Agency journalist in New York interviewed Professor Yong Ge. Professor Ge expressed, "The successful realization of this performance at Carnegie Hall would not have been possible without the collaborative efforts of artists and institutions from both China and the United States. We hope through the pipa, a Chinese instrument with profound historical roots, to showcase the unique charm and contemporary vitality of Chinese traditional music to the world. Furthermore, collaborations with different national orchestras represent a crucial step for pipa art to reach international audiences and engage in dialogue with world music."

Touching on the future of Sino-US cultural exchange, Professor Yong Ge stated with confidence,



Pipa: Yong Ge, Xiaoqian Guo, Yuqiao Wang, Ruoshui Yang, Xuanyu Shi Erhu: Bin Zhang, Hina Zhang Guzheng: Wei Sun Guanzi: Andrew Hiu-Man Chan Dizi: Katelyn Weng, Violin: Ella Yeshuang Chen Cello: Xia Wu, Jivan Ramesh Piano: Xinchun Jia Vocal: Dr. Somdutta

"Music is a universal language that transcends linguistic and cultural barriers. Through such artistic exchange activities, we can not only help more American audiences understand and appreciate Chinese traditional music but also foster mutual understanding and friendship between the peoples of our two nations. Looking ahead, we anticipate that more outstanding young performers, like those nurtured by the China Conservatory of Music, will grace international stages, using music to tell Chinese stories and contribute to building a more harmonious and diverse world. We believe that through continuous cultural exchange, the hearts of the Chinese and American people will draw closer."

This "Pipa Unbound: Tradition and Beyond" concert was a resounding success. Professor Yong Ge and the Pipa π Ensemble, with their exquisite artistry and spirit of open collaboration, not only showcased the rich heritage and contemporary evolution of the Chinese pipa but also powerfully conveyed the festival's profound message of cross-cultural friendship and peace. It's particularly noteworthy that many of these exceptional young pipa performers were trained at the China Conservatory of Music, and their brilliant performances on the international stage fully demonstrate the institution's remarkable achievements and deep legacy in nurturing talent in traditional Chinese music.

Ms. Qianci Liu, Director of the New York Big Apple Music Festival, commented, "The Pipa π Ensemble, led by Professor Yong Ge, truly demonstrated the exquisite strength of Chinese folk music, which can only be described as having astonished the New York audience. We hope this music festival can serve as a bridge, welcoming even more folk music and world music groups to grace New York's stages." This concert brought the 6th New York Big Apple Music Festival to a perfect close. We look forward to more world music groups joining our festival, ready to shine brightly on the Lincoln Center stage in 2026!

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