

Qiu Xia He

Chinese pipa performer, composer and producer

Born in Baoji, China, Qiu Xia He (pronounced chu sha her) has had two notable careers in music: as a performer and teacher in China, and then as performer, composer, producer and teacher in Canada.

Neither career was entirely predictable. As a little girl hoping to learn the violin, Qiu Xia was told she would instead study the pipa, a Chinese lute. Showing early talent, she toured the country with the popular Bao ji Shaanxi Music and Dance Troupe. She both studied and taught the pipa at Xian Music Academy.

Given the opportunity to settle in Canada, Qiu Xia learned fluent English, made friends everywhere she went, and delighted audiences across the country and around the world. Qiu Xia has been a featured soloist with the Vancouver Symphony and the Glacier Symphony of Montana. She has performed with top musicians such as Brazilian virtuoso Celso Machado and Indian legend Trichy Sankaran. She has toured internationally with her own remarkable group, Silk Road Music, as well as with the renowned world-music groups ASZA and Jou Tou.

As a musical producer, Qiu Xia is the founder and musical director of "Enchanted Evenings," a series of summer concerts at the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Gardens in Vancouver. She has produced numerous concerts, musical events, and CDs. Her compositions include the sound tracks for films such as Tears of the Lotus and Darcy Island (both Leo nominees) and In Our Own Hand.

Qiu Xia has been an artist in residence with the Vancouver School Board, and a musician in the "Learning through the Arts" program of the Royal Conservatory of Canada. In both these roles, she teaches music appreciation to children in the schools.

"My music has a definite cross-cultural bent," she says. "It combines the traditional styles of the east, with new influences picked up in the west. I play Chinese music on Chinese instruments, but with western performance techniques gained from jazz, folk, and Celtic music. And I also use the pipa to play western music. I love to play with musicians from other cultural backgrounds, creating an entirely new sound."

Her own Silk Road Music CDs, Endless and Village Tales, capture this multicultural fusion by including songs from both Chinese and western traditions.

"I believe strongly in this new art," she says. "I want to bring the Chinese pipa into the new world where I now live, to introduce the richness of Chinese music to a new audience. I want to build a deeper understanding between east and west, and to develop a unique new language on this traditional instrument."

"My wife and I were enthralled with the virtuosity of the performers and by the beautiful fit of the lyrics to the Chinese rhythms... Thanks for a new experience."

— Ken Pinder, Vancouver



Qiu Xia with her pipa (pee-pah)

“Qiu Xia He played the pipa, a Chinese lute, with the pristine ferocity of a worldclass virtuoso. Shifting between ancient Chinese odes and contemporary, jazzy arrangements, she was an instrumental marvel.”

Mary Rose, KY Courier Journal~Louisville

“I would like to express my feeling of fortune and happiness of meeting all of you during the Calgary Globalfest... I do not know where to start, I have been listening to your music CD... I cannot help but feel the power and dynamic energy in your music that can and will shape and bridge the gap of cultural barriers. It is just what is needed nowadays.”

Ken Lee~Calgary

“I have had the pleasure of listening to your concert in Britain broadcast live on the BBC world service last week... I am utterly stunned by your music... and I find it really touching with deep meanings and open spaces in the horizon...”

Abdullatif A. O.~Amsterdam

CONTACT

SILK ROAD Music

Qiu Xia He (chu sha her)
Tel & Fax: (604)434-9316

e-mail: qxcloud@telus.net

website: www.silkroadmusic.ca