



Gateway Performance Series
2011 Season

G.I. 2
Gateway *Jazz* Initiative
GATEWAY JAZZ ORCHESTRA
with Alan Chan

This event is supported in part through *Subito*, the quick advancement grant program of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of the American Composers Forum



Monday, May 2, 2011, 8 p.m.
Sanctuary of Gateway Christian Church
11760 Gateway Boulevard, Los Angeles

www.gatewayperformanceseries.org

Gateway *Jazz* Initiative

Jazz is an icon of American music. It is a result of multicultural interaction, commercial success and the need for spontaneous expression of the human soul.

The theme of Jazz in this year's Gateway Initiative is manifested in two events: The Chinatown Collage Series by Elaine Cohen and the Gateway Jazz Orchestra with music written by me.

Both of us have a great deal of involvement in Jazz. Elaine is a writer of many articles about jazz, including ones in Coda and DownBeat magazines, as well as being co-author of jazz bassist Red Callender's biography. Elaine's "Chinatown Collage Series" is an example of how her experience of encountering Chinatown while living in New York, Chicago and San Francisco becomes a collection of colorful collages speaking about cultural dynamics in America.

Coming from a classical background, my involvement with the BMI Jazz Composers Workshop in New York City in the past three years helped me to create a body of work, which is showcased in tonight's concert. It is a great medium for expressing many cultural elements, as well as solo musicians speaking in their own voice through their solo sections, which I really enjoy.

To make these programs even more exciting, Elaine and I collaborated on two musical settings of Elaine's poems, "Monte Alban" and "Solita." It was really fun to work on these two poems. I hope you will enjoy the world premiere of these pieces.

Although Elaine and I come from different backgrounds and generations, we both have the urge to engage and interact with everything around us, and incorporate our experiences into our work. This is especially great in the U.S. because of the abundance of cultures and people surrounding us, which is often forgotten in day-to-day life. I am glad we are able to share this with all of you.

Join us for this journey of discovery.



Alan Chan
April, 2011

G.I. 2

Gateway *Jazz* Initiative

GATEWAY JAZZ ORCHESTRA

Alan Chan, leader

Elaine Cohen, poet / narrator

Kevin Garren, soprano sax / alto sax / flute

Alex Budman, alto sax / flute / clarinet

Vince Trombetta, tenor sax / flute / clarinet

Sean Franz, tenor sax / clarinet

Ken Fisher, baritone sax / bass clarinet

Bruce Otto, trombone

Bob McChesney, trombone

Paul Young, trombone

Steve Hughes, bass trombone

Rob Schaer, trumpet

Tony Bonsera, trumpet

Dan Rosenboom, trumpet

Mike Stever, trumpet

Andrew Synowiec, guitar

Andy Langham, piano

Joel Hamilton, bass

Adam Alesi, drums

~ All music composed and arranged by Alan Chan ~

Tzu Zu Ku **

René's Barcarolle **

Moving to a New Capital

A Spirit's Dream **

Monte Alban (poem by Elaine Cohen) **

Solita (poem by Elaine Cohen) **

Shrimp Tale

**** World Premiere**

Total duration of tonight's program is about 1 hour (no intermission).

All audience members are welcome to join our performers at the reception following the concert.

Program is subject to change.

Notes

Tzu Zu Ku つづく (2010) 7 minutes

I grew up watching Japanese animation and TV series. At the end of every episode there would be characters “Tzu Zu Ku” displayed at a corner, which means “to be continued...” I dedicated this optimistic piece to Helen and David McAllister, and also dedicated it as a symbol of hope to the people of Japan.

René's Barcarolle (2009) 9 minutes

This piece was originally a musical setting of a text by French philosopher and poet René Daumal (1908-1944), and was premiered at Emily Mast's thesis installation, *Everything, Nothing, Something, Always (Walla!)*, at the Roski School of Fine Arts in Los Angeles in March, 2009.

Je suis mort parce que je n'ai pas le désir;
Je n'ai pas le désir parce que je crois posséder;
Je crois posséder parce que je n'essaie pas de donner;
Essayant de donner, je vois que je n'ai rien;
Voyant que je n'ai rien, j'essaie de me donner;
Essayant de me donner, je vois que je ne suis rien;
Voyant que je ne suis rien, j'essaie de devenir;
Essayant de devenir, je vis.

I am dead because I have no desire,
I have no desire because I think I possess,
I think I possess because I do not try to give;
Trying to give, we see we have nothing,
Seeing that we have nothing, we try to give ourselves,
Trying to give ourselves, we see we are nothing,
Seeing that we are nothing, we desire to become,
Desiring to become, we live...

~ René Daumal (1944)

Moving to a New Capital 遷都怨 (2006/07) 13 minutes

The original Chinese title of this work, *Qian Dao Yuan**, literally means “Moving-Capital-Blues.” This piece is a composer’s reflection on the severe pollution in Beijing, the capital of China. The number of infamous dust storms has increased and intensified in recent years, due to soil erosion and desert expansion created by over-harvesting during the Cultural Revolution (1968-78). In addition, industrial and urban pollutants from factories and cars have worsened the air quality. Over-population and industrialization have also caused water shortages in the region. In 2002, the former prime minister of China, Zhu Yong Ji, warned that moving to a new capital may be the only option if no action is taken soon.

* It is also a pun on a title of a famous novel *Chin Gong Yuan*, which talks about political conflicts in the imperial household of the late Chin dynasty (late 19th century).

Monte Alban (2011) 4 minutes

By May, the heat, the longed for heat, was incessant
and garbage was burned near the center
of town on Sunday afternoons causing unbearable stench
The water, even bottled, was not to be trusted

I went to see the ruins at Monte Alban
high above the city, a world carved out of a mountain
by Olmecs, Zapotecs, Mixtecs and lastly, Aztecs
whose god demanded fresh human hearts

Goat-like I climbed monuments, imagining
the deadly stakes of their ballgames
The sun grew huge in the hard blue sky
the stellae shimmered in front of my eyes

The arrow-shaped observatory and esplanade
were now off limits, so I only learned that the ancients
had aligned their sights with Alpha and Beta Centauri,
only imagined seeing the Pleiades through the magic tunnel

When it came time to leave how I struggled against
the descent, as if something were holding me back
I can still see the dusty valley spreading out and the city
with its cathedrals, where everyone prayed for rain

~ Elaine Cohen

Notes (Con't)

Solita (2011) 4 minutes

In Spanish, the feminine for alone is *solita*.

Once I hated to eat alone.
But then I discovered
a culinary jewel that served
comida, the midday meal
until 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

The first time I arrived just before
they took in the handwritten sign
for the 40-peso special. The proprietor
in his sparkling white shirt asked me
gently, "Solita?"

"Si," I nodded shyly, as
he showed me to a table
in the walled garden
under a grapefruit tree laden
with pendulous low-hanging fruit.

Every day I returned
just before they took in the sign.
I raved to my friends about
the squash blossom sauce
the insanely delicious pork and fish
and sometimes they joined me
in dining like a goddess
under the shining
yellow globes of fruit.

But mostly I went alone. I liked
to hear the gentleman in charge
so politely inquire, "*Solita?*"
and my unwaveringly confident reply,
"*Si, gracias, solita.*"

~ Elaine Cohen

A Spirit's Dream 紅塵念 (2006/10) 7 minutes

A Spirit's Dream is a song originally written for a Taiwanese musical play *Blue Butterfly*, which is a work in progress. It is a setting of a poem of the same title by Ho Wen-Hsiung. Below is the English translation:

I am a spirit drifting on and on,
The universe has no place for me to stay,
Yet a bit of mankind's happiness and sorrow still stay with me.

People know of my existence, but won't even bother to recognize,
Is this loneliness which a spirit must withstand?
I left behind an emotion,
Yet from now on, it is something that I know not how to express.

Shrimp Tale (2005/06) 8 minutes

Shrimp Tale is a recollection of life in Miami, where I lived for three years, and of the diverse and vibrant culture there. It has a curvy narrative structure that includes two contrasting thematic elements: a groove-based 5/4-meter passage and a Salsa tune that are first exposed in short passages and are juxtaposed against each other. Various thematic transformations bring out different meanings for each element, often with a sense of humor or irony.

Alan Chan is a multi-faceted composer, with a goal to create original and innovative music by incorporating music from cultures around the globe, in order to bring a refreshing experience to audiences. He has received commissions from around the world and recognitions from ASCAP, American Composers Forum (ACF), twice from Percussive Arts Society (PAS) and the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, among others. He is a member of the prestigious BMI Jazz Composers Workshop, directed by composer Jim McNeely. His influences include music by Fred Ho, Hermeto Pascoal, Thad Jones and Uri Caine.

Holding a doctorate from the University of Southern California, Chan is the Co-Founder and Artistic Director of Gateway Performance Series in Los Angeles. He has held teaching positions at the University of Redlands and the Walden School and his percussion music is published by HoneyRock and MPI.

Visit alanchanmusic.com.

Acknowledgements

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We invite you to help us meet our goal of securing enough funding to make this series a resounding success. Ticket sales for each of the performances will cover some of the costs, with the balance of our Series budget needing to be met through donations. All donors will be acknowledged in the individual programs, and will receive a letter for tax deduction purposes.

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