

心韻 Nostalgia - October 2015 Press Release

On Saturday October 24, 2015 at 8:00 pm, the Alata Harmonia Chorus of Canada will present the works of a famous Chinese composer, Jin Xiang, at the P.C. Ho Theatre, Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto, 5183 Sheppard Avenue East in Scarborough.

As a composer, conductor and music critic, Mr. Jin Xiang is recognized as a famous Chinese contemporary musician of our time. Born at Zhu Ji in the Zhe Jiang province in 1935, Jin Xiang studied music composition at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing at the age of 19. Mr. Jin's five years of training has paved the way for a solid foundation in music composition. He graduated in 1959 with honours.

Upon his graduation, he was labeled as a "right wing capitalist" during the Chinese Cultural Revolution and forced to spend the next 20 years in hardship in the desolate province of Xin Jiang during the "Down to the Countryside Movement". While in captivity, not only did he face many daily physical and mental abuses and challenges, he also experienced various facets of societal oppression and cruelty. Despite all the injustice, Jin Xiang took a positive view of these 20 years of experience as an opportunity to build and strengthen his character. When he was finally released, Mr. Jin remained strong and resilient with no trace of hatred, resentment, hostility, violence or depression.

After his condemnation was redressed in 1979, Jin Xiang began to resume music composition. His music is elegant yet it reflects and integrates the strength and determination of his character. We, as current music students, are touched by Jin Xiang's experience and determination. Mr. Jin is truly a role model for us all.

The performing pieces in the upcoming concert to be presented by Alata Harmonia Chorus of Canada include the following works of Jin Xiang: *Five Songs from Shi Jing*, *Four Songs from Yue Fu*, and a selection of folk songs arranged by Jin Xiang. The performing pieces from *Shi Jing* will be accompanied by a traditional Chinese instrumental group which effectively complements the nostalgic flavour of the music. This repertoire and presentation can be characterized as "pleasing to the heart and all senses", a rare opportunity not to be missed!

Since its inception in 2002, under the direction of conductor Ms. Lillian Sit, the Alata Harmonia Chorus of Canada has evolved into a choral group that comprises of a main and chamber choir which currently exceeds 100 members in total. In 2013, the choir took part in a fifteen day tour to Paris, France for a choral exchange. Not only that their performance was well received, this musical event proved to be an invaluable experience for all choir members.

Their vast repertoire ranges from classical to contemporary, both western and Asian. The classical selections include Mozart's *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore*, Gounod's *Messe Breve No. 7 aux Chapelles*, Brahms' *A German Requiem*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Durufle's *Requiem* and various works of Haydn and Beethoven. The contemporary repertoire includes the works of Anlun Huang, Mitzi Tam, Tsang Wing Wu, Ruth Watson Henderson and Eric Whitacre. As well, the list includes western and Chinese folk music along with the debut performance of local young emerging composers such as Richard and Christopher Si.

Each performance demonstrates detailed attention to music technicality and artistic presentation. With Ms. Lillian Sit's years of relentless leadership and choir members' show of perseverance, we are grateful for her guidance and artistic contribution to the world of choral music.

For all choral music lovers, we urge you to take advantage of this valuable opportunity. Tickets are \$20 and \$25. Please contact Mr. Au (416-662-8278) for further information.