

# noexit

new music ensemble

Summer 2021

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Composer and Flutist Hong-Da Chin

## Program

(all works by Hong-Da Chin)

**Darker** *for xiao and electronics*

**Voice Poem** *for xun improvisation*

**The Buzz of a Fly** *for dizi solo*

**Clarinet** *for bawu solo*

**Crying** *for xun and electronics*

## Program Notes

**Darker** *for xiao and electronics*

The electronics in this improvisation is taken from another composition of mine written for clarinet and electronics titled *Darker than Dark*. The inspiration of the electronics comes from the flanger effect which, with different levels of depth, creates oscillations with wide vibrato, therefore creating a distorted otherworldly microtonal world that compliments the microtonal versatility of the xiao.

**Voice Poem** *for xun improvisation*

Xun, or the Chinese ocarina, is made of clay. Of all of the Chinese flutes, it has a timbre that is closest to a human singing voice. The close-ended nature of the xun provides a resonant sound when it is blown into. Most of the western flute extended techniques – residual sound, tongue click, pitch bend – can be heard in this improvisation. The close-ended nature and the globular shape of the xun restricts its range to an octave and a major second.

### **The Buzz of a Fly** *for dizi solo*

Dizi is also made of bamboo. A distinct feature of the dizi is that it has a membrane that will vibrate when the dizi is blown creating a buzz. The absence of the key mechanism on the dizi gives the performer a lot of freedom for timbral variation and pitch bend. The Buzz of a Fly for dizi solo involves techniques such as wide glissandos, microtonal trills and whistle tones.

### **Clarinet** *for bawu solo*

Similarly to xiao and dizi, bawu is also made of bamboo. The bawu looks very much like the dizi and xiao. A special feature of the bawu is that the sound is produced by blowing into a metal reed instead of a blowing hole. The bawu can also produce a number of timbral variation and pitch bend just like dizi and xiao. Due to the sound production of the metal reed, overblowing a bawu does not produce an upper partial harmonics restricting its range to an octave and a major second, similarly to the xun. The timbre of the bawu is comparable to that of the clarinet, thus, the title.

### **Crying** *for xun and electronics*

The electronics of “Crying” is a musical imagination of a Taoist funeral that involves chanting and striking on a Chinese temple block and gong. In this improvisation, a bass xun is used.

## Biography

Originally from Kajang, Malaysia, Hong-Da Chin’s music is influenced by folk music from the Malay, Chinese and Indian cultures. As a Chinese flutist, he has performed with gamelan groups and Indian traditional ensembles at cultural and political events in Malaysia.

Chin’s music has been performed in the US, Germany, France, Hungary, Czech Republic, Romania, Austria, Poland, Israel, Malaysia, Japan, the Philippines and Singapore. The ensembles and performers who have performed his work include the No Exit New Music Ensemble, Cleveland Chamber Symphony, Orkiestra Muzyki Nowej (Poland), Bowling Green Philharmonia, Bel Canto Trio, Karr and Mattingly Duo, Altered Sound Duo, Ogni Suono, Patchwork, and Orlando Cela.

The festivals and residencies where his music has been performed include Spoleto Festival USA, World Saxophone Congress, Asian Composers League Festival and Conference, Bowling Green New Music Festival, NEOSonic Festival, Threshold Festival, Electroacoustic Barn Dance, Rasquache Artist Residency and Avaloch Farm Institute.

In addition to his work as a composer, Chin is an accomplished Chinese flutist specializing in contemporary music. He has performed at venues and festivals such as Carnegie Hall (NYC), Alice Tully Hall (NYC), the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Washington D.C.), the Metropolitan Museum of Art (NYC), Asia Society (NYC), the Phillips Collection (Washington D.C.), the Huntington Library (LA), the Smithsonian Institution (Washington D.C.), Jay Pritzker Pavilion at Millennium Park (Chicago), the Art Institute of Chicago, the Silesian Theatre (Katowice, Poland), Lincoln Center Festival, Lincoln Center Global Exchange and Spoleto Festival USA.

Chin earned his A.A from Del Mar College in Corpus Christi studying composition with Neil Flory, and flute with Joy Kairies, B.M. from the University of Houston studying composition with Rob Smith and flute with Jennifer Keeney, and M.M. from the University of Louisville studying composition with Steve Rouse and flute with Kathy Karr. He studied composition with Marilyn Shrude and Mikel Kuehn at Bowling Green State University and earned a Doctor of Musical Arts in December 2017.

Chin is currently Assistant Professor of Music Theory and Composition at Western Illinois University, a member of the ADJ·ective New Music Composers' Collective and the Society of Malaysian Contemporary Composers.

Beyond his musical activities, Chin is an avid badminton player.