



HANZHI WANG, accordion



Photo: Matt Dine

COMMUNITIES DIGITAL NEWS (Washington, DC):

“Ms. Wang dazzled all at the full house at the Kennedy Center with her skills and musicianship. She offered a program of surprisingly daring and eclectic repertoire, including a wide range of classical repertoire explored so masterfully that it seems as if these works had actually been written for the accordion in the first place. It was a genuinely eye-opening evening. Hanzhi Wang is undoubtedly well on her way to a brilliant career that is certain to be much discussed.”

OBERON’S GROVE (New York):

“Hanzhi Wang gave a remarkable performance. She displayed staggering virtuosity and a gift for drawing colors and magical dynamics from her accordion. It was an inspiring mixture of passion and finesse. Putting a regal polish on every phrase, her sparkling technique held the audience in a state of breathlessness, as thrilling to watch as to hear.”

NEW YORK MUSIC DAILY:

“Hanzhi Wang isn’t the first accordionist to specialize in classical music, but she is the first one ever to earn inclusion on the Young Concert Artists roster. That’s a pretty big deal. Nothing beats the plaintive lusciousness of Wang’s instrument of choice. She has a magically dynamic new album, and her Carnegie Hall debut in Zankel Hall is one of THE big accordion events of the year in New York. ”

Musical America Worldwide New Artist of the Month, July 2018

First Prize, 2017 Young Concert Artists International Auditions

First Prize, 40th Castelfidardo International Accordion Competition (Italy)

Peter P. Marino Debut Prize of YCA • Mortimer Levitt Career Development Award for Women Artists of YCA

Ruth Laredo Award of YCA • Candlelight Concert Society Prize • Chamber Orchestra of the Triangle Prize

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts Prize • Sinfonia Gulf Coast Prize • Tannery Pond Concerts Prize

University of Florida Performing Arts Prize • Usedom Music Festival Prize

Vancouver Recital Society Prize • Washington Performing Arts Prize

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CLASSICAL POST



Hanzhi Wang

Hanzhi Wang's Hard Work Brings Accordion To Classical Music Forefront

January 3, 2019

Despite her young age, success follows accordionist Hanzhi Wang. She is the first accordionist to join the roster of Young Concert Artists in its 57-year history, making her debut in New York this past fall. If that wasn't enough, the record label Naxos released its first-ever solo accordion album, Hanzhi's *On the Path to H.C. Andersen*.

Hanzhi credits it all to hard work. "I was brought up in a way that it was obvious that I should work hard. Looking back on that, I think it has been one of the most important lessons of life," she said.

[On the Path to H.C. Andersen](#)

During late summer, Hanzhi released the solo album, *On the Path to H.C. Andersen*, which she began promoting worldwide in the autumn. This album tells the story of the development of the classical accordion, which many Danish composers are inspired by the world famous fairy tales by Hans Christian Andersen, told in a shining and adventurous tonal language. Some of these pieces already belong to the standard repertoire for the accordion, and they are played all over the world as an important contribution to the rapidly growing repertoire for the instrument.

Poignant reflection and tragic depiction infuse Martin Lohse's Menuetto and The Little Match Girl, which is dedicated to Hanzhi. From Jesper Koch's quixotic Jabberwocky to Svend Aaquist's evocative Saga Night, Hanzhi's new repertoire for a relatively recent concert instrument is both dramatic and uplifting.

Hanzhi has always been fascinated by Andersen's fairy tales, beginning with her childhood in China. This invisible connection brought her to Andersen's native country, Denmark, where she found pieces that were connected to fairy tales and Nordic sagas. As she began to explore, she discovered the atmospheres of darkness and lightness, as well as the music that now takes the listener into all sorts of imaginations and colors.

"Coming from one country with a lot of folklore-based adventures (China), to another area with similar traditions (the Nordic countries), it also strikes me that the similarities of atmospheres are more obvious than the differences," she added.

On Stage

Hanzhi now shifts her focus to on stage, and she promotes the album and performs all over the world. She said the accordion is a very virtuosic instrument, so she tries to emphasize this particular element when programming her recitals. She believes music is a way to use our fantasy in a very personal way, as she even thinks in pictures and emotions while performing. This link between the audience and the performer is what makes music such an incredible art form, where everyone can find their own colors and fantasies during a performance.

"I consider myself to be a very communicative musician, and I really try to project the music into every single audience as much as I can! In this way, I hope that people will have a lot of imagination during my performances," she said. "When this sharing succeeds, then I feel very privileged to be able to perform on stage, and consider myself to be very lucky!"

Hanzhi feels humanity needs the intimacy of live music performances, almost like a healing process from the daily pressure and stress of life. When people experience this, the quality of life is more complete.

Despite the normal classical audience being of mature age, that doesn't mean young people shouldn't experience this art. The peace, colors, and atmosphere provided by classical music are needed for children and young people, which helps calm and, as a result, fosters a focus on creativity.

To learn more about Hanzhi Wang, [visit her website](#).

<https://classicalpost.com/read/2019/1/3/hanzhi-wang-new-album>

New Artist of the Month: Accordionist Hanzhi Wang

By Brian Wise, *Musical America*
July 1, 2018



The accordion is often identified with sultry tangos and beer-soaked polkas. But a Chinese accordionist who honed her craft in Copenhagen is helping to promote the squeezebox's potential in classical music.

Hanzhi Wang last December became one of four musicians to win the Young Concert Artists auditions and the first accordionist to join the agency's roster in its 57-year history. Unlike other noted performers on the instrument, the 27-year-old Wang has no plans to move into the crossover realm.

Rather, Wang's debut album, *On the path to H.C. Andersen*, to be released next month on Naxos, features four atmospheric works by contemporary Danish composers. Her summer schedule includes festival appearances with Carnegie Hall's Ensemble Connect, clarinetist Alexander Fiterstein, and the Zora String Quartet, as well as lectures and outreach events.

And while some concert presenters have been initially reticent about booking a classical accordionist, she'll make two U.S.

recital tours in the year ahead, which YCA officials say is uncommon demand for a newcomer to their roster.

Wang acknowledges that the classical accordion's presence in North America lags behind that in Europe, where it's taught in the major conservatories of London, Paris, and Vienna.

"It's very curious for me because in Europe or in China we have actually developed the instrument for so many years," she said, speaking from her home in Copenhagen. "But in America there's hardly anybody doing this. I guess more accordionists of the young generation are needed to develop it and bring the best repertoire for the instrument."

Wang remembers encountering street accordionists in her native Suzhou, near Shanghai. But the instrument truly captured her fancy when, at age five, her father was watching an Italian film on television. "There was a beautiful melody in the background and I remember thinking, "Wow, this is

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Wang performs Moszkovski's Etincelles

such a different sound than any instrument that I had heard before," Wang recalled.

Upon discovering its identity, she immediately asked for one. It was "very small and cute" beginner model with eight buttons, sufficient at least for her to begin lessons with a local teacher. At age 13 she began studies at the Tianjin conservatory. As luck would have it, Beijing's Central Conservatory had just hired its first accordion professor, the German-trained Cao Xiao-Qing. The next year she won a spot in the conservatory's middle school and she and her father moved to the Chinese capital.

"There were three students: me and two boys," she said of the accordion studio. "Then there became more and more students. Now I think they have 20 or 30 students."

Wang earned a bachelor's degree at the Central Conservatory, followed by a master's degree at the Royal Danish Conservatory of Music, widely recognized for its accordion department. Next December, she expects to complete her soloist degree, which she describes as the European equivalent of a Ph.D. or D.M.A.

Wang appears to have absorbed Danish culture in Copenhagen, forging ties with local composers including Martin Lohse, whose *The Little Match Girl* is dedicated to Wang. To promote the piece on her upcoming album, Wang shot a [music video](#) with a Taiwan-based filmmaker, in which she portrays Anderson's fairy-tale character scampering through parks and forests.

Wang has made several other whimsical videos and has recently begun a "Trip with Hanzhi," series of travel vlogs that have so far documented sun-soaked journeys in Switzerland, Italy's Amalfi Coast, and Croatia. Her Instagram feed offers dreamy shots of European villages and beaches along with performance clips and promotional updates. In one video she performs spontaneously aboard a KLM flight.

Travels have connected Wang with a wide European accordion community, and she will talk at length

(continues)

about extended techniques and the relative merits of button versus keyboard accordions (she prefers the former for its range of sounds). “As a keyboard instrument with the approximate range of a Steinway grand, as well as the tone qualities of a wind instrument, it also seems to be able to make the illusion of a small orchestra,” she says.

William Schimmel, the accordionist who served on the jury for Wang’s YCA audition, praised her musicianship and graceful stage presence. “Her Bach was enlightened,” Schimmel wrote in an e-mail. “Her Moszkovski was the best I’ve heard – by anyone. She literally owned the Gubaidulina [*De Profundis*] and her Mozart, sublime. And yet there is *still* room for her to develop.”

Schimmel was more reluctant to judge her prospects in the U.S., where the instrument is sometimes associated, however unfairly, with Lawrence Welk. “In the past, a number of European artists have intimated that it was better where they came from.” But, he added, “there is no one right road here.”

Vicki Margulies, the artist manager at YCA, says that she has sought to match Wang with other instrumentalists on the company’s roster. “Many presenters have come to trust us that we’re not sending something untraditional and crossover, but someone who comes with some credentials,” she said. “But they’re also intrigued by her. In addition to being a consummate artist, she’s a beautiful performer.”

With a certain hipster rediscovery of the accordion in recent years, Wang is all the more eager to serve as its advocate in classical circles. “I truly believe this instrument can bring a lot of possibilities for composers and for all kinds of works on stage, she said. “It just needs maybe a little bit of time. It also needs more accordion players to show people what it is. But I think it will have a brilliant future.”

<https://www.musicalamerica.com/news/newsstory.cfm?archived=0&storyid=40695&categoryid=2>

YCA Presents Hanzhi Wang ~ Accordion Recital



Above: Hanzhi Wang, photo by Matt Dine

Monday October 22nd, 2018 - Some of my friends eyed me with skepticism when I told them I was going to an accordion recital. But at Zankel Hall this evening, **Young Concert Artists** opened their 2018-2019 season with Hanzhi Wang giving a remarkable performance. Ms. Wang is the first-ever accordion player in the organization's history to win the YCA auditions.

In a way, the accordion is like the organ: a wind-driven keyboard instrument. There's nothing for classical music buffs to fear in an evening of accordion music. When played as Ms. Wang played tonight, listening to the sound gives a lot of pleasure.

Ms. Wang took her place center-stage tonight, glowingly gowned in pleated, iridescent turquoise. At first her accordion seemed way too large for her, but she immediately showed total command of her Rolls Royce of a squeeze-box.

J.S. Bach's *Partita in C minor* was the opening work, in which Ms. Wang displayed staggering virtuosity and a gift for drawing colours and magical dynamics from her accordion. Wending her way thru the suite of dances, Ms. Wang displayed an inspiring mixture of passion and finesse. Agile coloratura and ear-teasing trills were counter-balanced by passages of resonant wistfulness. Putting a regal polish on every phrase, her sparkling technique held the audience in a state of breathlessness.

A more perfect contrast could not have been imagined as Ms. Wang commenced on Sofia Gubaidulina's *De Profundis*. Dating from 1978, the Psalm passage "Out of the depths I cry to thee, O Lord!" was the composer's source of inspiration. Ms. Gubaidulina crafted a work that presents a veritable panorama of the accordion's possibilities when in the hands of a great artist.

From deep, awakening rumblings which at first keep faltering, the dark music slowly wells up. High trills are set over sustained lower chords. From swooshing, trembling, sighing sounds a rhythmic build-up emerges. The music growls, then scurries onward. Drooping notes carry us down to deep chant before rising to a grand climax, which gives way to exhausted wheezing. Ms. Wang encompassed all of this in a performance that was as thrilling to watch as to hear. The Gubaidulina was all the buzz among the crowd during intermission.

Mozart's *Andante, K. 616*, was written on commission less than a year before the composer's death. His patron in this case, one Count Deym, had asked for a "funeral piece" to be played on a small mechanical organ. The composer hated frittering away his talent on such a trivial pursuit, but he needed the money. The piece has a 'theme and variations' feeling whilst repeatedly interrupting itself with mini-cadenzas. Scale passages and airy embellishments abound. Ms. Wang played this music with gracious charm.



Following the interval, the players of the Omer Quartet (above) joined Ms. Wang for a set of Piazzolla tangos. A first-rate ensemble of young artists, the Omer will be featured at the upcoming Young Concert Artists presentation at Merkin Hall on December 11th, 2018. Members of the quartet are violinists Mason Yu and Erica Tursi, violist Jinsun Hong, and cellist Alex Cox.

In three selections from Piazzolla's *Five Tango Sensations*, the quintet of musicians reminded us of the allure of the genre with sensuous, spine-tingling rhythms and provocative turns of phrase. Ms. Wang's playing gave an irresistible impulse to the tunes, whilst the string players created a layering of timbres in which each voice was clear. In solo passages, the Omers shone delightfully. The audience greeted these persuasive Piazzolla interpretations with warm enthusiasm.

Three works by Martin Lohse - *Encircled* (dedicated to Ms. Wang and having its NY premiere), *Menuetto*, and *Passing III* - are distinctive miniatures. Ms. Wang read the poem the composer had

written to her before playing *Encircled*. The music is lively, dancelike, impulsive: in its repetitive motifs, with intriguing modulations and broad-spectrum dynamic component, it made me think somewhat of a more lyrical Philip Glass.

The second Lohse, *Menuetto*, is in a similar style at first, then devolves into a hymn-like state. Rolling gently on, it becomes delicate; the music veers from liturgical to ethereal. The composer keeps bending phrases into different shapes, as when an *obbligato* sounds over a simple melody. The hymn reappears, leading on to a soft, low ending.

Passing III, the last of the Lohse triptych, is an animated affair with fluttering, decorative swirls of notes, **blithely tossed off by the virtuosic Ms. Wang**. A chilly, vibrating passage carries on to a rich finish. Mr. Lohse joined the accordionist onstage for a bow and an embrace.

Moritz Moszkowski's *Etincelles* ('Sparks') brought the program to its end. Originally a piano solo, this relatively brief piece abounds in charm. It pulsates with rippling scales; it goes deep, and flies high. Shimmers of notes and *pianissimo* scalework delight us, as does a witty final gesture.

Called back by insistent applause, Ms. Wang offered two encores: *Chiquilin de Bachin* by Astor Piazzolla, and her own work entitled *My Story*.

~ *Oberon*

October 23, 2018 | [Permalink](#)

https://oberon481.typepad.com/oberons_grove/2018/10/yca-presents-hanzhi-wang-accordion-recital.html

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Classical accordion? YCA artist Hanzhi Wang dazzles at the KenCen

written by Terry Ponick Oct 15, 2018



WASHINGTON. I always thought I was pretty familiar with accordion music. Of Polish ancestry and growing up in the Pan-Slavic paradise of Cleveland, Ohio, I knew that accordions meant polkas, parties and fun. **Last Thursday, however, a full house at the [Kennedy Center Terrace Theater](#) – including this critic – learned something different from an unusual Young Concert Artist (YCA) recitalist Hanzhi Wang.** She is a *classical accordion performer*.

Ms. Wang's appearance at the Terrace in this opening recital of [YCA's 2018-2019 Washington season](#) was co-presented with Washington Performing Arts (WPA). In this, her DC debut, Ms. Wang dazzled all in attendance with her skills, her musicianship. She also offered the audience a program of surprisingly daring and eclectic repertoire.

Notes YCA:

“Praised for her captivating stage presence and performances that are technically and musically masterful, **Hanzhi Wang** is the first accordionist to win a place on the roster of Young Concert Artists in its 58-year history.”

A classical accordion?

Hanzhi Wang presented a program designed to acclimate the audience to what an accordion could really do in a world considerably beyond jovial, familiar polkas. In so doing, she explored a wide range of **classical repertoire so masterfully that it seemed as if these works had actually been written for the accordion in the first place.**

This isn't as crazy as it seems. Examine a real, professional accordion. You can easily see that, for all its many buttons, it's really another keyboard instrument. Actually, it effectively has two keyboards.

In addition, the accordion is similar, in its own unique way, to the harpsichord, the piano, the church organ and today's various electronic keyboards adopted by various pop music ensembles. Except that the modern concert accordion is portable and doesn't require you to plug it in. You can lug it around and make music on the go with no need of an electronic tether.

And yet as a portable keyboard instrument, there's no reason why a soloist can't use it to explore, adopt and adapt a sizeable chunk of the classical repertoire. That's particularly true when it comes to the vast treasure trove of piano and organ works composed over the centuries.

Bach at the beginning

Consequently, it might have been for that very reason that Hanzhi Wang chose to open her recital with J.S. Bach's "Partita No. 2 in C-minor," BWV 826. It seemed an appropriate choice, coming as it does at the beginning of a more contemporary approach to keyboard mastery. As a result, for many keyboard artists a mastery of Bach's enjoyably inventive, difficult, yet highly precise keyboard works is an important element in developing skills and techniques critical for expanding to other musical eras.

Closing your eyes and listening carefully as Ms. Wang played the six distinct, dance-like movements of Bach's Partita on her accordion. One could easily imagine that you were hearing this music performed on a small, Baroque foot-pedal pumped organ.

Ms. Wang's rendition of the Bach was perfectly matched to disciplined Baroque keyboard techniques. Every note, no matter how rapidly played, remained clean.

Like a harpsichord or a church organ, the accordion lacks the piano's sustain pedal. For that reason, well-executed, extended legato passages require paying a great deal of attention to fingering techniques. Ms. Wang's response was superb. Her mastery of these extended passages offered listeners a virtual master class in how to make them happen.

And now for something completely different

In an abrupt shift of repertoire, Ms. Wang's next offering was "De Profundis," composed specifically for the accordion by Russian-Tatar composer Sofia Gubaidulina (b. 1931). Ms. Gubaidulina is what you might generally regard as a "modernist" composer, meaning that her music is complicated, not

generally tonal, and thus, often hard to grasp. This got her in trouble for many years with the Soviet government at the time, but she persisted.

Ms. Gubaidulina composed the current work as a collaboration with another maverick, avant-garde Russian classical accordionist Friedrich Lips (b. 1948). The latter likes to explore new and unconventional tones and effects that could be coaxed out of his instrument. That's certainly embodied in Ms. Gubaidulina's piece.

“De Profundis”: Experimental music

“De Profundis” references the famous psalm, beginning “Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.” And it certainly does plumb those awful depths. The composition generally accomplishes this with a variety of scraping, screeching, dragging, sighing and trilling sounds that may very well emanate from a depressingly spiritual Slough of Despond.

Yet that's undoubtedly why Ms. Wang positioned it after the Bach on her program. Above all, it enables her to demonstrate to the audience an astonishing number of “special effects” the modern concert accordion can express.

“Complex polyphony..., dense clusters, glissandi, quasipercussive effects and sepulchral breathing sounds (the instrument has what is called an ‘air button’), a very wide dynamic range...”

“De Profundis” is tough listening. But by programming it, Ms. Wang informs her audience that the classical accordionist can create his or her own unique, accordion version of John Cage, prepared piano-style experimentalism on this instrument.

Mozart composes a novelty piece

Ms. Wang closed out the first half of her program with a delightful and decidedly intriguing experimental piece by none other than Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. His “Andante in F major,” K. 616, composed for an eccentric minor noble and inventor, Count Deym.

The Count had invented and built a clock-like memorial piece that contained a small, internal organ with wooden pipes. Consequently, on the hour, the piece was supposed to awaken the organ and automatically play one or more funeral pieces commemorating the life of a then-famous war hero. So, would Mozart accept the commission?

Of course he would, though he detested the sideshow circumstances. But Mozart had a family to support, and this most immortal of composers was always short of money in his short lifetime. The Andante is one of three pieces that were the result of his efforts. Not surprisingly, given the small, unique, wooden instrument for which it was composed, this charming movement sounded as if it had been written for Ms. Wang's accordion from the start.

Mozart may have considered this composition to be hackwork. But with Mozart, even hackwork sounded better than anything his competitors had to offer. Recognizing this, Ms. Wang brought the audience back to a recognizable earth with her light, playful, yet thoughtful interpretation of this novelty piece.

The Omer Quartet joins Hanzhi Wang for “Five Tango Sensations”

After the intermission, Hanzhi Wang returned accompanied by the Omer Quartet: Violinists Mason Yu and Erica Tursi, Violist Jinsun Hong, and Cellist Alex Cox. Together they performed the most robust

work of the evening, three selections from “Five Tango Sensations.” All were written by the late Argentinian composer, Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992).

Titled “Anxiety,” “Awake,” and “Fear,” each relatively short piece offers decidedly original takes that are more like meditations on the tango form rather than genuinely dance-able tangos. Combining tradition, modernism, and his own quizzical, exploratory touches, the composer creates in these three works tunes, patterns and sounds that emanate from the Latin American dance floor yet also float far beyond that environment.

At times fun, at times melancholy, and at other times ominous, these selections provide us with an interesting insight into the mind of an excellent composer who’s not too well known in the U.S. despite the fact that he spent a fair amount of time in this country, and hobnobbed extensively with well-known musicians, composers and teachers.

The Omer Quartet, along with Ms. Wang, were made to interpret and express all the complexities in this piece. The deep, modern, yet romantic sound that resulted made this ensemble radiate the atmospherics we’d more likely associate with a classical piano quintet. As a result, “Five Tango Sensations” was the real surprise of the evening, a genuine find and a genuine delight.

(BTW, the Omer Quartet will appear in their own program in the second half of the YCA season in 2019.)

Music by contemporary Danish composer Martin Lohse

Ms. Wang concluded her program with three pieces by contemporary Danish composer Martin Lohse (b. 1971), and an adaptation of “Étincelles,” Op. 36, No. 6, originally a piano piece by Polish composer Moritz Moszkowski (1854-1925).

As Ms. Wang currently lives in Copenhagen, she collaborates many artists and musicians, among them Mr. Lohse. Ms. Wang performed three short pieces by this composer: “Encircled,” “Menuetto” and “Passing III.” The first of these was written especially for the artist, and she read a dedicatory poem by the composer intended as a preface before she began to play.

Tradition + minimalism

Each of these three pieces by Mr. Lohse join Danish folksong-like elements with a subdued minimalist undercurrent. The composer first introduces each element. Then he repeats it again and again. But not insistently, and not without significant and inventive development. That’s what keeps things interesting.

Many of our younger composers today seek re-entry into musical tradition by tossing aside the 20th century’s weird fascination with the relentless atonal dogma preached for decades by academic musicians worldwide. As a result, they are reclaiming our nearly lost Western musical heritage while still putting their own individualistic and developmental stamps on their compositions.

Mr. Lohse appears to be one of them. And in Ms. Wang, this composer could not have found a more elegant collaborator. She painted each of them as miniature portraits of a moment or a mood, ranging from the very personal “Encircled,” through the strangely slow and moody “Menuetto” and on through “Passing III,” which, Ives-like, finds many passages crossing one another as if trains passing in the night.

A confection by Moritz Moszkowski

Moszkowski's "Étincelles" concluded this recital. Its title, roughly translated from the French, means "Sparks." It is a sprightly piece that sings, dances and runs about madly at times. Its effect is like a small ensemble of 4th of July sparklers, punctuated by the occasional "lady finger" firecracker. Ms. Wang jauntily explored the uplifting, light-hearted cleverness of this piece and easily conquered its challenges, bringing a bright, positive conclusion to a genuinely eye-opening evening.

An enthusiastic audience demanded more, and Ms. Wang graciously returned for an encore, Chinqilin de Bachin by Astor Piazzolla. A tuneful, sometimes enigmatic piece, it often managed to sound very unlike a waltz. But, as Frank Zappa once said, Ms. Wang's encore "put the eyebrows" on her recital, bringing this evening to a most satisfying close.

A brilliant career lies ahead for Hanzhi Wang

Only in her late 20s, Hanzhi Wang is undoubtedly well on her way to a unique career. Her first Naxos CD, a Denmark-centric offering entitled "On the Path to H.C. Andersen," recently went on sale, and her recital and concert dates are booked well into the future. It was good to see her early in a career that is certain to be much discussed and extensively recorded and/or streamed. We wish her well on her journey.

And once again, we have to commend YCA for its continuing, uncanny ability to discover and showcase a most astonishing parade of musicians, many of whom will become the classical stars of the future.

Rating: ****(Four out of four stars)

— **Headline photo:** Hanzhi Wang. Photo credit, Matt Dine for YCA.

Lucid Culture

JAZZ, CLASSICAL MUSIC AND THE ARTS IN NEW YORK CITY

October 17, 2018

Classical Accordionist Hanzhi Wang Brings Darkly Dynamic New Nordic Compositions to Carnegie Hall

Hanzhi Wang isn't the first accordionist to specialize in new classical music, but she is the first-ever squeezebox player to earn inclusion on the **Young Concert Artists** roster. Even though more composers these days are writing for the accordion, that's still a pretty big deal. Wang has a magically dynamic album of concise new works by Nordic composers, *On the Path to H.C. Andersen*, streaming at **Spotify**. She's making her Carnegie Hall debut on Oct 22 at 8:30 PM in Zankel Hall, playing works by Bach, Gubaidulina, Moszkowski, Piazzolla and Martin Lohse. Along with this past summer's Bryant Park Accordion Festival – and maybe **Golden Fest**, which always has plenty of accordion music – this is THE big accordion event of the year in New York.

The first composition is **Lohse's** Menuetto, a steady, Philip Glass-ine, austere waltzing theme punctuated by airy, rather still interludes, growing more uneasy as its distantly baroque-tinged, cell-like variations rise and then recede.

Lohse's triptych *Passing* begins with a similarly circling if almost marionettishly pulsing allegro section. The steady, moonlit waltz that follows is deliciously ominous; the concluding variation is 180 degrees the opposite until that same resonance is artfully interpolated amidst the starry, flitting optimism. Wang's precision, all the way through a persistent strobe effect, is striking.

A final Lohse piece, *The Little Match Girl* begins with sparse, Ligeti-esque syncopation and expands from there: the central theme reminds of the old English folk tune *Scarborough Fair*. Wang has gone on record as having a close personal connection to its persistent melancholy since it reminds her of her first solitary days and weeks as a Chinese accordion student abroad for the first time in Denmark.

She negotiates the twisted turns and sudden bursts of *Jabberwocky*, by Jesper Koch with carnivalesque vigor and finesse. The creepiest number here is *Tears*, by Bent Lorentzen, building to from ethereal suspense to phantasmagorical *Flight of the Bumblebee* clusters, murky low atmospherics and poltergeist accents bursting in from the shadows.

Wang concludes the album with **Svend Aaqvist's** practically fifteen-minute *Saga Night*, which quickly becomes a dissociatively eerie, rhythmically challenging fugue. A heroic theme is alluded to but never hit head-on; then a variation on the opening quasi-fugue makes an enigmatic return. In a way, it's practically a synopsis of the album as a whole. While some of these pieces could conceivably be played on organ or by a string ensemble, nothing beats the plaintive lushness of Wang's instrument of choice.

<https://lucidculture.wordpress.com/2018/10/17/hw/>



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HANZHI WANG, accordion

Praised for her captivating stage presence and performances that are technically and musically masterful, **Hanzhi Wang** is the first accordionist to win a place on the roster of Young Concert Artists in its 58-year history. Ms. Wang's debut opens the Young Concert Artists Series in New York, in The Peter Marino Concert at Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall. Her Washington, DC debut opens the Young Concert Artists Series at the Kennedy Center, co-presented with Washington Performing Arts.

In July 2018, Musical America named Hanzhi Wang "[New Artist of the Month](#)." In August 2018, Naxos released its first-ever solo accordion CD, Ms. Wang's "On the Path to H.C. Andersen." It features music by Danish composers including "The Little Match Girl," written for her by Martin Lohse. Ms. Wang's artistry has been recognized by other contemporary composers, with works dedicated to her by James Black, Martin Lohse and Sophia Gubaidulina, with whom she has worked extensively.

As First Prize Winner of the 2017 Young Concert Artists International Auditions, Ms. Wang won performance prizes with the Candlelight Concert Society in Columbia, MD; the Sinfonia Gulf Coast in Destin, FL; the Tri-I Noon Recitals at Rockefeller University in New York City; the Vancouver Recital Society; Tannery Pond Concerts (NY), the Usedom (Germany) Festival; the Chamber Orchestra of the Triangle (NC); the University of Florida Performing Arts Prize; and at the Krannert Center at the University of Illinois in Urbana. Additional engagements include appearances for IRIS Orchestra in Tennessee, Bravo! Vail Music Festival, and YCA alumnus Alexander Fiterstein's Clarinet Academy in Minneapolis.

Ms. Wang won First Prize in the 40th Castelfidardo International Accordion Competition in Italy, and has served on the jury for the Accordion Competition of Rome and Portugal's International Accordion Festival. To inspire the next generation of young accordionists, she has lectured, performed and given master classes at the Manhattan School of Music, Royal Danish Academy of Music, Tianjin Music Conservatory, Beijing's Capital Normal University, Tilburg and Ghent Music Conservatories (Belgium), and the inaugural 2018 Nordaccordion Festival in Norway.

Hanzhi Wang holds YCA's Ruth Laredo Prize and the Mortimer Levitt Career Development Award for Women Artists of YCA. She earned her Bachelor's degree at the China Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, and her Master's degree at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen as a student of Geir Draugsvoll.

NOTE: When editing, please do not delete references to Young Concert Artists, nor special prizes. Please do not use previously dated biographies.

11/2018



HANZHI WANG, *accordion*

REPERTOIRE WITH ORCHESTRA

- J.S. BACH** Concerto in D minor, BWV 1052 (23 minutes)
- SOFIA GUBAIDULINA** Fachwerk for accordion, strings and percussion (2009 – 31 minutes)
- 7 Words for accordion, cello and strings (1982 – 32 minutes)
(perfect in combination with Joseph Haydn, 7 Last Words)
- Triple concerto for violin, cello, accordion and symphony orchestra
(2016 – 30 minutes)
- GEORG FRIEDRICH HÄNDEL** Organ concerto, Op. 4, No. 6
- ALAN HOVHANESS** The Rubayiat of Omar Khayyam (with speaker) (14 minutes)
- DARIUS MILHAUD** Suite Anglaise (17 minutes)
- ROBERTO MOLINELLI** Il Bosco della musica for accordion, strings and percussion
(2015 – 15 minutes)
- W.A. MOZART** Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K. 466 (31 minutes)
Piano Concerto No. 21 in C major, K. 467 (“Elvira Madigan”) (28 minutes)
Piano Concerto No. 23 in E-flat major, K. 482 (28 minutes)
Piano Concerto No. 26 in C minor, K. 491 (31 minutes)
- ASTOR PIAZZOLLA** Aconcagua (Concerto for bandoneon) for accordion, strings, harp, piano
and percussion (1979 – 22 minutes)
- 5 Tango Sensations (originally for bandoneon) for accordion and
string quartet (or string orchestra) (27 minutes)
- Hommage a Liege doubleconcerto for accordion, guitar and strings or
accordion, cello and strings (17 minutes)
- OLE SCHMIDT** Symphonic Fantasy and Allegro (14 minutes)
- ANATOLIJUS SENDEROVAS** Ad Astra for accordion and symphony orchestra (2007 – 24 minutes)
- VACLAV TROJAN** Fairy Tales (22 minutes)