

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ISABELLA  
SEWART GARDNER  
MUSEUM**

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**Gardner Museum Presents Musical *Journey East* in Connection with Current Exhibition**  
*Eclectic program of Chinese and Western classical works showcases pipa and double bass*  
**Sunday, April 12th, 1:30 PM | Ticketed Event**

BOSTON, MARCH 27, 2009 — Visitors to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum will be able to feast their ears as well as their eyes on the treasures of Asia on **Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 1:30pm**, when the museum presents a *Young Artists Showcase* concert of both Chinese and Western classical music performed by two acclaimed Chinese-born musicians.

Featuring the unusual instrumental pairing of the Western double bass with the pipa, a traditional Chinese stringed instrument, the concert offers a musical complement to the Gardner's current special exhibition, *Journeys East: Isabella Stewart Gardner and Asia*, which examines Isabella Gardner's relationship with Asia.

Double bassist **DaXun Zhang**, winner of the 2003 Young Concert Artists International Auditions, is joined by pipa player **Yang Wei** for this unique duo recital. Zhang and Wei are both members of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble and have toured with the group throughout the United States and internationally. The concert at the Gardner will include a performance of Hai-Huai Huang's *Galloping Horses*, a piece they recorded together for the Silk Road Ensemble's most recent CD, *New Impossibilities*.

"We are delighted to present these talented performers as part of the *Young Artists Showcase*, continuing Isabella Gardner's legacy as a passionate supporter of the young musicians of her day," says Gardner Museum *Music Director Scott Nickrenz*. "This concert is especially noteworthy in the combination of Eastern and Western instruments and musical traditions – a fusion that Isabella Gardner, with her love and knowledge of Asian culture, would surely have appreciated."

The concert program covers a wide swath of musical territory, from arranged Western classics by Bach and Handel and traditional Chinese songs, to works by modern composers Huang and Yao Chen designed to showcase this remarkable combination of instruments. The double bass, though key to Western orchestral and jazz music, lacks the range of solo and chamber music repertoire enjoyed by other instruments; while the pipa, one of China's most important traditional instruments, is relatively unknown to Western audiences.

Concert-goers can enjoy a visual prelude or coda to the performance with a visit to the Gardner Museum's current special exhibition, *Journeys East: Isabella Stewart Gardner and Asia*, on view through May 31st. Focused on Isabella Stewart Gardner's relationship with Asia, *Journeys East* explores the complex interaction of travel, collecting, and museum-formation. The exhibition features Isabella Gardner's travel albums and Asian objects, from Japanese screens to Indian jewelry to a monumental bronze Buddha.

Lauded as "an invaluable chamber music destination" (Jeremy Eichler, *The Boston Globe*, 2008), the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum boasts the country's longest-running museum music program, offering chamber music, jazz, and new music performances throughout the season; a free classical music podcast, "The Concert;" and programs with thematic links to exhibitions and the collection. In Fall 2008, the Boston Camerata presented a concert of Italian Renaissance works tied to the Gardner Museum's most recent special exhibition, *The Triumph of Marriage: Painted Cassoni of the Renaissance*.

The Gardner Museum's renowned *Sunday Concert Series*, featuring a mix of established performers and up-and-coming musicians highlighted in *Young Artists Showcase* concerts, continues through May 10<sup>th</sup> with performances by the **Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center** (April 19); pianist **Katherine Chi** (April 26); the **Moët Trio** (May 3); and **Musicians from Marlboro** (May 10).

## **DAXUN ZHANG**

“If the bass is finally to produce a headliner, the instrument can have no better champion,” wrote *The Washington Post* of DaXun Zhang. Born to a family of bass players, Zhang began his musical education in his native China and moved to the United States to continue his studies at the Interlochen Arts Academy and Indiana University. He was the first double bassist to win First Prize in the Young Concert Artists International Auditions, and the youngest artist ever to win the International Society of Bassists Solo Competition. He was recently awarded an Avery Fisher Career Grant – only the second double bassist in the history of this prestigious award – and is currently in residence with Lincoln Center’s Chamber Music Society Two. Zhang has performed through the United States and internationally as a concerto soloist and chamber musician, and as part of Yo-Yo Ma’s Silk Road Project. A former faculty member at Northwestern University, he was recently appointed Assistant Professor of Double Bass at the University of Texas at Austin.

## **YANG WEI**

Born in China, Yang Wei received training in classical Chinese instruments from an early age. He studied with pipa master Liu Dehai and, at age eighteen, was selected to perform as pipa soloist with the Shanghai Orchestra. He has performed throughout Asia, Europe, and the United States as a soloist and a member of the Silk Road Ensemble, and has been an artist-in-residence at the Art Institute of Chicago. Wei is the recipient of the ART Trophy First Prize in the International Chinese Musical Instruments Competition (Young Professional Pipa Section). He has commissioned several new works by Chinese composers and, since moving to the United States in 1996, has pursued his interest in blending his native musical heritage with the Western influences of his new home.

## **TICKETS**

\$23 General Public; \$18 Seniors; \$15 Members; \$10 College Students; \$5 Children ages 5-17 (children under 5 not admitted to concerts). Concert tickets include admission to the museum’s three floors of galleries, including the special exhibition gallery.

Tickets may be purchased by phone through the museum’s Box Office at 617 278 5156 (open Tues.–Sun., 10am–4pm), online via [www.gardnermuseum.org](http://www.gardnermuseum.org), or in person at the museum entrance at 280 The Fenway (Tues.–Sun., 11am–4:00pm) pending availability.

## **PROGRAM DETAILS:**

Sunday Concert Series ~ *Young Artists Showcase*  
Sunday, April 12, 2009 \* 1:30pm

*DaXun Zhang, double bass*

*Yang Wei, pipa*

- Anderson: Four Short Pieces for Solo Double Bass
- Trad. Chinese: Battle Field and Rainbow Dance
- Huang: Galloping Horses
- Bach: Invention Nos. 6 and 11
- Chen: Jun
- Handel/Halvorsen: Passacaglia

## **ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM**

280 The Fenway Boston MA 02115 617 566 1401 [www.gardnermuseum.org](http://www.gardnermuseum.org) • Green Line E train or #39 bus to Museum • Hours: Tue.–Sun., 11 am–4:45 pm • Tickets: \$12 adults; \$10 seniors; \$5 students; FREE members, children 18 & under and all named “Isabella”

Modeled after a 15<sup>th</sup>-century Venetian palazzo surrounding an interior courtyard garden, the century-old Gardner Museum houses one of the most remarkable art collections in the world, featuring works by Rembrandt, Michelangelo, Raphael, Degas and Sargent. Changing exhibitions, the oldest museum music program in the country, evening events, and seasonal courtyard garden displays enrich the collection.

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**EDITORS’ NOTE:** DaXun Zhang, Yang Wei, and Gardner Museum *Music Director* Scott Nickrenz are available for interviews. High-resolution images of the performers are also available upon request.