# Spring Breeze Flow on Timeless Strings

We invite you to embark on a musical journey through the rich heritage of the GuZheng, performed by Grace Hsiao-Han Chuang. The GuZheng is a plucked string instrument, similar to instruments such as the Japanese Koto, the Arabic Kanun, and the Western Zither. This performance highlights the instrument's unique ability to resonate across cultures and generations.

The program features two traditional pieces, three contemporary compositions, and three pop songs, including two popular Japanese hits and a classic Taiwanese song. We explore the instrument's expansive stylistic range, from the echoes of ancient guqin classics steeped in legend, through contemporary concert pieces that pair the GuZheng with piano, to the vibrant energy of beloved pop songs from Japan and Taiwan. Accompanied by piano and operatic vocals, we bridge the gap between tradition and innovation.

The performance culminates in a groundbreaking multilingual reinterpretation of the Taiwanese folk classic "Longing for the Spring Breeze (望春風)." The German lyrics were written by Te-Jen Pan and adapted by Monika Kertész, with assistance in the Taiwanese language from Grace's father, Shun-Chin Chuang. Join us as we breathe new life into global hearts through the resonance of silk and ivory.

*Performers*
*GuZheng: Grace Hsiao-Han Chuang (*莊曉涵*)* | *Piano: Christine Chou* | *Vocal: Monika Kertész* | *Q&A Interpreter: Tzu-Hsuan Liu*
*Text&Adaptation*
*German Lyrics: Te-Jen Pan (*潘德臻*); English/German Adaptation: Monika Kertész* | *Taiwanese Language Advisor: Shun-Chin Chuang*

# Concert Programme

- Opening: Wishing we last forever / 但願人長久 (Piano: Christine Chou)

## 1. High mountain and floating water / 高山流水

Traditional Zhejiang GuZheng music, inspired by an ancient guqin piece, which dates back approximately 2,500 years to the Spring and Autumn period, is recognised as one of the Ten Great Ancient Chinese Melodies. According to legend, when the musician Bo Ya (伯牙) played this piece in the mountains, a woodsman named Zhong Ziqi (鍾子期) was able to understand the imagery of towering mountains and flowing water conveyed through his music. This profound connection made them soulmates in music. However, after Zhong Ziqi's death, Bo Ya felt that no one could understand his music any longer; in his grief, he broke his instrument and never played again.

相傳為戰國時期的古琴曲，距今約兩千多年，是中國十大古曲之一。故事描述琴師伯牙在山中彈琴，樵夫鍾子期聽出琴聲中「巍巍乎若高山，洋洋乎若流水」的意境，兩人因此結為知音好友。鍾子期去世後，伯牙認為世上再無人能懂他的音樂，便摔琴斷弦、終身不再彈奏。

## 2. Guangling San / 廣陵散

One of the Ten Great Ancient Chinese Melodies and the longest-surviving guqin piece, it was first recorded in tablature (神奇秘譜) in 1425. This piece is traditionally associated with the legendary story of Nie Zheng (聶政), who assassinated the King of Han to avenge his father, as documented in Cai Yong's Qin Cao (琴操). The piece is also notable for its connection to the 3rd-century scholar Xi Kang (嵇康), who is said to have played it just before his execution, lamenting that 'Guangling San is now lost to the world.' The guzheng arrangement of this guqin classic conveys the same tragic, intense, yet solemn and tender character.

中國十大古曲之一，也是現存篇幅最長的古琴曲，最早見於1425年《神奇秘譜》。樂曲相傳取材自戰國時聶政刺殺韓王、為父報仇的故事，風格慷慨激昂、悲壯蒼涼。相傳三國時嵇康臨刑前彈奏此曲，並感嘆「廣陵散於今絕矣」，更添傳奇色彩。古箏版本改編自同名古琴曲，同樣呈現悲壯、蒼勁又不失柔情的意境。

## 3. Chant of the wind chimes / 鐵馬吟

"Iron horses （鐵馬）" are iron pieces hung beneath the eaves of temples that chime together in the wind. Their slow, deep, and solemn melody, reminiscent of the guqin, transports listeners to the tranquil grounds of a Buddhist temple. Wisps of incense smoke rise gently into the air, and soothing chants can be heard drifting in from a distance, creating an auspicious and peaceful artistic atmosphere. This piece was composed by Zhao Deng-shan (趙登山).

「鐵馬」是懸掛於寺廟屋簷下的鐵片風鈴，隨風吹動、彼此碰擊而發出聲響。樂曲旋律緩慢深沉、寧靜悠遠，營造出吉祥安寧的意境，由趙登山作曲。

## 4. Blue heaven overture / 蒼歌引 (Piano: Christine Chou)

"Blue Heaven Overture" is a concerto for guzheng and piano composed in 2014 by the young composer Chen Zhe. The title features the character "蒼" (cāng, meaning "azure/heaven"), which, according to the classical dictionary Erya, links spring with vitality. Originally named 《青韶》 ("beautiful spring light"), the piece draws inspiration from a Tang-dynasty poem by Wei Yuandan. It consists of four sections: a free-tempo opening that reflects the quiet onset of spring, a fast section representing vigorous growth, a slow section echoing hopes for the future, and a rapid finale showcasing relentless striving towards dreams.

《蒼歌引》是青年作曲家陳哲於2014年創作的古箏與鋼琴協奏曲。曲名中的「蒼」典出《爾雅·釋天》「春為蒼天，夏為昊天」，以「蒼」代指萬物欣欣向榮的春天，並非祭天之作。樂曲原名《青韶》，意為「美好的春光」，靈感取材自唐代詩人韋元旦的詩作。全曲由「散板—快板—慢板—急板」四段構成：散板描繪春天悄然而至的靜謐景象，快板展現生機蓬勃的成長，慢板迴盪著對未來的期盼，急板則展現追夢路上不懈的拼搏精神。

## 5. **Sleeve dance fantasies / 袖夢**

One of my favorite songs is composed by the Chinese musician Liu Le (劉樂). The title translates to "Sleeve of Dream." This piece is inspired by the Sleeve Dance, a traditional Chinese folk dance where dancers wear long-sleeved garments. As they move, the sleeves create graceful patterns that can resemble shining circles or blossoming flowers. Liu Le's composition incorporates the rhythms of Tang-dynasty music and a fluid musical style to reflect these movements. The music shifts between joyful passages and tender moments, capturing the varying emotions of a dancer completely absorbed in her routine. The first time I heard this song, its beautiful melody painted a vivid image of a dancer in my mind, even before I knew the story behind it.

這是我最喜愛的曲目之一，由中國音樂家劉樂創作。曲名意為「夢中的衣袖」。樂曲靈感取材自中國古典民間舞蹈「袖舞」——舞者身著特殊的長袖服飾起舞，衣袖翻飛時，時而如圓月流轉，時而如繁花綻放。劉樂運用唐代音樂的節奏與流暢的音樂風格，摹寫舞蹈中的各種動作，時而豪邁奔放，時而婉約柔美，訴說舞者全然沉浸於舞蹈時的種種情感。第一次聽到這首曲子時，我尚未得知其背後的故事，但那優美的旋律已在我腦海中勾勒出一位翩翩起舞的女子身影。

## 6. **Firework / 打上花火**

"Uchiage Hanabi," performed by DAOKO and Kenshi Yonezu, is the theme song for the anime film "Fireworks: Should We See It from the Side or the Bottom?", released in August 2017. The song captures the bittersweet essence of summer and the beauty of fireworks. Originally a 1993 TV drama, the story focuses on young boys and girls in a small town, featuring a time-loop theme as they debate whether fireworks appear round or flat when viewed from the side, which serves as the central thread of the film's exploration of youth and relationships.

《打上花火》為DAOKO與米津玄師合唱的動畫電影《打上花火，從下面看？還是從側面看？》（日語：打ち上げ花火、下から見るか？横から見るか？）主題曲，於2017年8月發行，描繪「夏日淡淡的哀愁與煙火的絢爛」。最初為1993年電視劇，2017年改編為動畫電影。故事以小鎮少年少女的青春與「如果當時……」的時空重來為核心，男孩們為了爭論煙火從側面看是圓的還是扁的而前往燈台，成為貫穿全片的青春幻想引子。

## 7. **Summer / 菊次郎的夏天**

"Summer" is the theme composed by Japanese film-score master Joe Hisaishi for Takeshi Kitano's 1999 film Kikujiro, and it stands as one of his most widely recognised works. Hisaishi's compositional voice grew out of minimalist music before expanding into a richer orchestral idiom, and "Summer" reflects that same layered, richly textured sound world. Its melody is bright, brisk, and instantly hummable, yet carries a quiet undercurrent of nostalgia and melancholy, mirroring the film's own bittersweet tone as its mismatched pair, Masao and Kikujiro, embark on a summer road trip. Within the film, the theme reappears in multiple arrangements, shifting to match each scene's mood.

《Summer》是日本配樂大師久石讓為北野武1999年電影《菊次郎的夏天》創作的主題曲，也是他最廣為人知的代表作之一。久石讓的創作風格由極簡主義音樂出發，逐漸發展至融合管弦樂的個人語彙，《Summer》正體現了這種層次豐富的音響美學。旋律明快清新、朗朗上口，卻又帶著淡淡的懷舊與感傷，恰如其分地烘托出電影中正男與菊次郎這對忘年組合，在公路旅程中笑中帶淚的情感基調。全曲在電影中以多種編曲版本反覆出現，隨場景情緒起伏而變化。

## 8. **Longing for spring breeze / 望春風** (Vocal: Monika Kertész)

"Longing for Spring Breeze" (望春風) is a cherished Taiwanese classic from 1933, composed by Deng Yu-hsien （鄧雨賢）with lyrics by Li Lin-chiu, which beautifully expresses a young woman's shy anticipation of romance. Voted Taiwan's favourite song in a nationwide poll in 2000, it is part of a collection known as the "April Rain" poetic nickname, referring to a medley formed by the first character of four of Deng's most renowned works: "Season's Red," "Moon's Sadness," "Longing for Spring Breeze," and "Rainy Night Flower." The evening culminates in an innovative multilingual reinterpretation of this folk masterpiece, performed in Taiwanese, English, and German, with music adapted by Grace and English and German lyrics adapted by Monika.

《望春風》是1933年一首備受珍視的台灣經典名曲，由鄧雨賢作曲（1906–1944，被譽為「台灣歌謠之父」）、李臨秋作詞，優美地描繪了一位年輕女子對戀愛那份羞怯的期盼。這首歌在2000年的一項全國性投票中獲選為台灣最受歡迎的歌曲，屬於被稱為「四月望雨」的詩意暱稱系列，此名稱源自鄧雨賢四首最著名作品的首字所組成的組曲：《**四**季紅》、《**月**夜愁》、《**望**春風》及《**雨**夜花》。當晚的高潮，是這首民謠傑作以台語、英語及德語呈現的創新多語種重新詮釋版本，其中音樂由 Grace 改編，英語與德語歌詞則由 Monika 改編。