

About the Composers



Cung Tiến

Cung Tiến was born on November 27, 1938 in Hanoi. He first studied music at Nguyễn Trãi High School in Hanoi and Chu Văn An High School in Saigon. While pursuing Economics at New South Wales University in Australia from 1975-1963, he enrolled in Sydney Music Conservatory, taking classes in piano, harmony, counterpoint, and orchestration. While on a British Council Fellowship to study Economic Development at Cambridge and East Anglia Universities in the United Kingdom from 1970-1973, he took history, musicology, and contemporary music theory.

Besides songs, Cung Tiến's works include an orchestral suite entitled *Chinh Phụ Ngâm*, which was inspired by Đoàn Thị Điểm's 18th century poem. His composition for voice, harp, and strings called *Lơ Thơ Tơ Liễu Bông Mành* draws on a North Vietnamese music and drama genre called chèo. He currently is working on other works, *Tổ Khúc Bắc Ninh* (The Bắc Ninh Suite), which is inspired by Northern Vietnamese folk songs, and a vocal and chamber ensemble called *Tà Về* with lyrics drawn from poems by Tô Thủy Yên.

He has received an Artist-in-Residence award from The Schubert Club of St. Paul, Minnesota, an organization established in 1882, and a \$30,000 grant from The Saint Paul Companies in Minnesota to do research on Vietnamese folks songs. He served as a member and later a Board Member of the American Composers Forum from 1992-98.

Under his pen name Thạch Chương, Cung Tiến has written numerous literary essays for various publications and forums. While living in Vietnam before 1975, he translated from English into Vietnamese and published the internationally acclaimed *Notes from the Underground* by Feodor Dostoevsky and *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. Cung Tiến currently lives in Minnesota in the United States.



P.Q. Phan

Professor Doctor P.Q. PHAN was born in 1962 in Đà Nẵng, Vietnam. He taught himself to play the piano, compose, and orchestrate since 1976 while studying architecture. In 1982, he immigrated to The United States and began his formal musical training. He earned his DMA in Composition from University of Michigan, where he also earned a second Masters degree in Ethnomusicology.

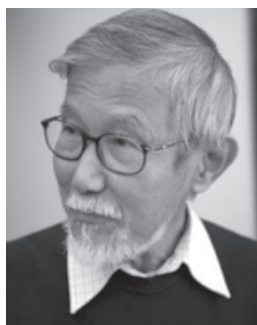
During his more than 35 years of composing, P.Q. Phan, a Rome Prize winner, has written more than 100 works which includes two grand operas, a requiem, more than 10 symphonic works, 6 concertos, 10 works for chamber orchestra, a large song cycle for mezzo soprano and chamber orchestra, etc. Phan's music has been performed throughout the globe, including the United States, Canada, Mexico, England, France, Austria, Italy, Holland, Norway, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Estonia, Lithuania, Russia, Denmark, Sweden, Israel, Turkey, Australia, New Zealand, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Japan. His music was performed in most prestigious halls in the world such as Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Hall, The Concertgebouw, Tchaikovsky Hall, Theatre de la Ville Paris, Santa Cecilia di Roma, Teatro Colon, Royal Hall of the Great Britain, Sydney Opera Hall, Takemitsu Opera Hall, Hà Nội Grand Hall, etc.

Phan has received numerous commissions, including from the American Composers Orchestra, Ensemble Alternance, the Cleveland Chamber Symphony, the Greater East Lansing Symphony, the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Indiana University, the Kronos Quartet, the Samaris Piano Trio, the First Music 8 - New York Youth Symphony, La Sierra University, etc.

His recent premiere of his grand opera *The Tale of Lady Thị Kính* by the IU Opera Production has been hailed as "With its touchingly composed and sung duets

during the second act, this first-of-its kind operatic retelling of Our Benevolent Buddha Thị Kính, *The Tale of Lady Thị Kính* can be compared with a finely cut gemstone whose beauty reveals itself through the eye of the beholder." "Phan's *The Tale of the Lady Thị Kính* at the IU Opera Theater is a creative, bold and largely successful grand opera." His recent premiere of *A Vietnamese Requiem*, a 35-minute large scale work for 4 vocal soloists, 8-part chorus and chamber orchestra, which employs Vietnamese Buddhist text has been praised: "The score holds fascinating development and touches that open one's ears to music that bridges Western and Asian, specifically Vietnamese, traditions." This work is dedicated to the approximate 10 million Vietnamese victims of wars in the 20th century.

A frequent guest composer and lecturer in Asia, Dr. P.Q. Phan is Professor of Music in Composition at Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University. He had taught at University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign and Cleveland State University. He is the founder and President of the Vietnamese American Society for Creative Arts and Music (VASCAM), a national not-for-profit organization to cultivate, nurture, and promote creative works by Vietnamese Americans.



Tôn-Thất Tiết

Born in Huế in central Vietnam in 1933, Tôn-Thất Tiết came to Paris in 1958 to study composition at the Paris Conservatoire. He attended Jean Rivier and André Jolivet classes for composition. He was at first drawn to the serial technique but from 1966 on, he turned to another mode of inspiration.

Tôn-Thất Tiết's music has a special language in which both oriental and occidental trends are fused, although the inspiration and thoughts are drawn basically from oriental sources. This is obvious in many of his works such as *Kiểm Ai (Universal Love)*, (1978) for choir and orchestra, *Le Jeu des Cinq Éléments (The Game of the Five Elements)*, (1982–1990), or *Prajna paramita* (the basic sutra of Buddhism) for 6 voices and instrumental ensemble, (1988) and *Chu Ky*, a series of seven instrumental pieces.

Tôn-Thất Tiết composed the scores for Trần Anh Hùng's three feature films: *The Scent of Green Papaya* (1993), *Cyclo* (1995), and *The Vertical Ray of the Sun* (2000), and has also collaborated with French choreographer Régine Chopinot on two of her dance pieces: *Parole de feu* (1995) and *Danse du temps* (1999).

In 1993, he founded the France-Vietnam pour la Musique an Association aiming at promoting the development of traditional music in Vietnam.

More recent works include *L'Arbalète Magique – The Magic Bow* (2007) a chamber opera set to a libretto by Tâm Quy, *Où trouver la Couleur de la Vacuité* (Where to find the Colour of Vacuity) (2010) for 12 voices and small orchestra, as well as a second cello concerto entitled *Du Haut de la Montagne* (2006).

About the Artists



Cơ Bội Nguyễn

Conductor

Ms. Cơ Bội Nguyễn has been on the faculty of the University of Redlands School of Music since 2006, serving as music director of the University of Redlands Orchestra. In this capacity, Ms. Nguyen conducts the University Orchestra in two full concerts and one fully staged opera annually. At the same time, Ms. Nguyen also serves as Assistant Conductor of the Redlands Symphony Orchestra. Besides conducting subscription concerts, her other duties include being a member of the Symphony's artistic team and developing programming for the organization's various music outreach and education performances. From 2005 to 2007, Ms. Nguyen was conductor and faculty member of the C.W. Post Chamber Music Festival at Long Island University, New York, while she also worked as assistant conductor to Oscar-winning composer Tan Dun. In December 2015, Ms. Nguyen participated in seminars and master classes hosted by the Dallas Opera, designed to foster and support women in the conducting field. Ms. Nguyễn was appointed principal conductor of VASCAM in the fall of 2016. She earned Master of Music degree from the Mannes College of Music and is a graduate of the conducting programs at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and the Juilliard School in New York.



Bích-Vân

Soprano

Vietnamese-American singer-actress-songwriter Bích-Vân is one of the most sought-after Vietnamese vocalists in her genre. She has performed with Asia Entertainment and is also performing in Opera, Musical Theater and stage productions and concerts all over the world at prestigious venues such as Roy Arias Theater – Off Broadway (NY), Kennedy Center (Washington, D.C.), Rainbow Room at the Rockefeller Center (NY), Segerstrom Center for the Arts (CA), Carpenter Performing Arts Center (CA), La Mirada Theater (CA), Rachel Schlesinger Concert Hall (VA), Marie Stéphane Concert Hall (Montreal), National Music Conservatory (Vietnam), Yoido Full Gospel Church (South Korea) among others.

Notable roles include the Lead in the World-Premiere Monodrama *Count To Ten*, the Muse (Lead) in the Off-Broadway musical *A World Without Harmony*, Tuptim in *The King and I*, Marian in *The Music Man*, Kim in *Miss Saigon*, Cleopatra in Handel's *Giulio Cesare*, Nannetta in *Falstaff* among others.

Bích-Vân has released 9 studio albums, most recent are *Simply Love*, *Seasons Of Love* and *Kiếp Nào Có Yêu Nhau*. Bích-Vân holds a Master of Music from New York University. Besides actively performing with an intense touring schedule, she teaches piano and voice, coaches and music directs, with over ten years of teaching experiences, including two years in the Faculty of New York University.



Teresa Mai

Soprano

Teresa Mai (aka Sangeeta Kaur) is a Vietnamese American trained opera singer, mantra artist and an international Kundalini Yoga teacher.

Teresa was musically trained at California State University of Long Beach Music School where she earned her Bachelors' in Opera Performance and also at The Boston Conservatory of Music where she earned her Master's in Vocal Performance. She spent several years in Europe participating in intensive Opera Studies with companies such as American Institute of Vocal Studies in Graz, Austria, International Institute of Vocal Arts in Chiari, Italy and for two years she continued her Italian language studies in Venice, Italy.

She has performed many different operatic roles throughout the US and Europe. She has performed with the New England Philharmonics, Harmonia Opera in New York, Lyric Opera of Los Angeles, Long Beach Opera, Huntington Beach Symphony, Vietnamese American Philharmonics and many more. Teresa also participates in numerous concerts, benefits, charities and events in the Vietnamese community throughout the US.

Teresa released her first spiritual solo album in 2012 and appears on several others. She will release her second solo spiritual / classical / crossover album early 2016.



Brian Arreola

Tenor

Tenor Brian Arreola has been featured with The Minnesota Opera, Opera Carolina, Toledo Opera, American Opera Theater, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Grachtenfestival (Netherlands) and others. His Riccardo in Iford Opera's (UK) 2015 *Ballo* was called, "passionate and tortured," by *The Fine Times Recorder*, and *Bachtrack* said, "Arreola is a delightful Riccardo...giving him charisma, confidence and a sense of infectious chimerical joy, as well as strong and lyrical singing." Of his 2016 Toledo Opera debut *The Blade* enthused, "Tenor Brian Arreola created a Roméo whose persona churned from petulant adolescent to ardent lover, and finally impetuous hero. His voice was rich, lyric, and particularly expressive in the final death duet." Dr. Arreola is Associate Professor of Voice-Opera Workshop at The University of North Carolina at Charlotte.



Hoàng Nguyễn

Piano

Hoàng Nguyễn enjoys a musical career as classical performing artist, jazz musician, and university professor in Orange County, California. Born in Hanoi, Vietnam, Nguyễn studied at the Hanoi National Conservatory and made his orchestral debut at the age of thirteen with the

Vietnam National Symphony Orchestra. One year later, Nguyễn went on to pursue his musical studies in France and in the United States receiving degrees from Versailles and Paris National Conservatories (Premier Prix - Diplome Supérieur de Musique); Indiana University (Performer Diploma); California State University, Fullerton (Master); and currently a Doctoral Candidate of Musical Arts at Claremont Graduate University. His mentors include professors Desire N'kaoua, Olivier Gardon, Evelyn Brancart, Eduardo Delgado, Dang Thai Son, Stewart Gordon, and Grace Fong. Nguyễn has played solo recitals and concertos with orchestras internationally in Paris, Nice, Flaine, Guerande, Normandie (France), Perugia (Italy), Lausanne (Switzerland), and Bytom (Poland). He is devoted to his music to make a contribution to the artistic Vietnamese community in Orange County with performances for Thúy Nga PBN Productions and Ngàn Khôi Chorus.

As a jazz musician, Nguyễn studied with Grammy Winning Pianist Bill Cunliffe and played in various venues throughout Southern California. Nguyễn H. Hoàng has taught at California State University, Fullerton and is currently a music professor at Santa Ana College where he teaches applied music, class piano and keyboard harmonization. Nguyễn serves as Director of Musicians Affiliation for VASCAM (Vietnamese American Society for Creative Arts and Music), a national non-for-profit society to cultivate, nurture, and promote creative arts and music by Vietnamese Americans.



Thi Nguyễn *Violin*

Thi Nguyễn is the leading Vietnamese violinist of his generation. He was introduced to the violin by his father Mo Nguyễn. After his family immigrated to the United States, his studies continued with Leo Reynolds, Dorothy Delay, Endre Granat, Zakhar Bron, and Cho Lan Lin. At the age of fifteen, he was the youngest concertmaster of

the Philharmonic Orchestra during the Aspen Music Festival. As a teenager, Thi has won the Rotary Club, ASTA, the NCTA national Violin Competitions, the Victor International Violin Competition, Finalist of the Wieniawski International Competition, City of Houston Award for his performance in Wortham Hall.

Hollywood musicians being a strong influence, Thi has broadened his performance experience from being a soloist in the film "The Phoenix Effect" as well as concertmaster for Monterey Symphony, Mozart Classical, Fresno Philharmonic, and the Modesto Philharmonic, to name a few. His concertmaster work also crosses into commercial music with Michael Bolton, Smokey Robinson, James Taylor, Tony Bennett, Johnny Mathis. Thi also has well over 80 motion pictures and television scores to his credit.

With a flare for being entrepreneurial, Thi formed the Del Gesu Quartet, Irvine Chamber Orchestra and the Irvine Chamber Music Festival. Recently, Thi built the Fresno Grand Opera Orchestra as well as bridging over to be Associate Director of the Opera Company. Also acting as Concertmaster, the new orchestra was an instant success and performed with Andrea Bocelli on his 2009 Christmas Tour.



Veronica Jensen *Mezzo-Soprano*

Mezzo-soprano Veronica Jensen has gained recognition as a versatile and compelling singer, engaging audiences with her commanding stage presence, alluring vocal tone, and sincere expression. Coming from a rich background of theater, musical theater, jazz, and classical studies, Ms. Jensen has a diverse palate with which she creates her vocal and dramatic art.

A Master's graduate from Indiana University, Ms. Jensen studied with Heidi Grant Murphy. In 2015, Ms. Jensen enjoyed performing Isabella in Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri* and in 2014, was honored to create the titular

role in *The Tale of Lady Thi Kinh* by PQ Phan. Concert repertoire performances from 2013-2015 include Mahler's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, Bach's *Magnificat*, Mozart's *Requiem* and she premiered PQ Phan's *Vietnamese Requiem* as a soloist with orchestra. As a student of Western Washington University, she performed Ravel's *Shéhérazade*, the title role in Massenet's *Cendrillon*, Zerlina in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and Edith in *Pirates of Penzance* by Gilbert and Sullivan.

Recent engagements include: Dorabella from Mozart's *Così fan Tutte* with conductor George Stelluto with Peoria Symphony, Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Maestro Jose-Luis Moscovich with West Bay Opera. In the spring Ms. Jensen will join West Bay to sing Frugola and The Moniter in Puccini's *Il Trittico*. This summer, she will make her West Edge Opera (Oakland, CA) debut singing the role of Justine in Libby Larsen's *Frankenstein*. Ms. Jensen was also engaged Des Moines Opera Summer festival and was seen as Octavian, Orfeo and Mercedes in the scenes festival. Ms. Jensen was a recent recipient of the "Encouragement Award" and "Audience choice" at the Metropolitan Opera Iowa District competition.



Angela Yoon

Soprano

Coloratura soprano, Angela Yoon, is a native of South Korea. She is currently pursuing her Doctor of Music degree at Indiana University studying under Heidi Grant Murphy, where she was an Assistant Instructor in the Voice department and earned a Master's degree studying with Robert Harrison. Her Bachelor's degree is from Baylor University, where she studied with Robert Best. Prior to Baylor she studied at McLennan Community College with Lise Uhl. Yoon has been named as a winner and finalist in various competitions including MTNA, Classical Singer's Competition, Texoma NATS, and TMTA.

Yoon has performed roles in operas and scenes including Kitty (*The Last Savage*), Thj Mâu (*The Tale of Lady Thi Kinh*), Fairy Godmother (*Cendrillon*), Frasquita (*Carmen*), Madame Goldentrill (*Impresario*), Königin der Nacht (*Die Zauberflöte*), Sandman (*Hansel and Gretel*), Plaintiff (*Trial by Jury*), and Mabel (*The Pirates of Penzance*).

As a soprano soloist, Yoon has been featured in the premier performance of Phan's *A Vietnamese Requiem*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Handel's *Esther*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Willcock's *Magnificat*, Allegri's *Miserere*, Bach's *St. John Passion*, Perez-Velazquez's *Ídolos del Sueño*, Goodall's *Eternal Light*, and Haydn's *Missa Brevis St. Joannis de Deo*. Yoon was also personally invited as a guest artist by McLennan Community College to open the All-Steinway Concert Series as well as a recitalist in South Korea and South Carolina, and was requested to perform a full recital at the Dallas Steinway Hall. In the upcoming spring season, she will feature as a guest artist with Ozark Festival Orchestra, Missouri Southern State University, MUSCO concert series, and Rice Music House Steinway Hall concert series.

Ngân Khôi Chorus

Ngân Khôi Chorus, a Southern California-based not-for-profit organization, was established in April, 1989 for the purpose of promoting choral singing among Vietnamese Americans. Ngân Khôi believes that choral singing nurtures both spiritual growth and social responsibility. Using one's own voice as an instrument, a singer gains a profound sensation caused by the vibration of the vocal chords and the physiological and psychological impact of the sound. In the choral environment, a singer interacts with others to achieve a state of perfect sensation by the sheer synchronization of vocal sounds. Choral singing leads to a balanced sensitivity, which contributes to harmonious living.

Ngân Khôi Chorus has been on the forefront of producing and promoting the appreciation of folk and classical music in the Vietnamese American community in an effort to bring about a consonant blend of Vietnamese and Western music traditions. In this way, the music speaks as an ambassador and acts as a cultural bridge between the Vietnamese and other American diverse cultures.

Ngàn Khơi Chorus

SOPRANO

Thúy-Hằng Vũ

Lệ-Thanh Lâm

Sương Vũ

Thanh-Thanh Hồ

Thiên-Nga Ivie

Ngọc Hà Vũ

Thiên-Hương Phạm

Mê-Linh Phạm

ALTO

Nhuận Nguyễn

Diệu-Trâm Hồ

Thùy-Dung Trịnh

TENOR

Tài Nguyễn

Việt-Hải Ngô

BASS

Tín Trần

David Hiển Vũ

VASCAM Ensemble

Ellen Jung, *first violin*

Yu Eun Kim, *second violin*

Michael Chang, *viola*

Michael Kauffmann, *cello*

Michelle Matsumune, *flute*

Kathryn Nevin, *clarinet*

Yuri Inoo, *percussion*

Tomoko Sato, *harp*