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**SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY PRESENTS LUNAR NEW YEAR: YEAR OF THE
SERPENT, FEBRUARY 8, 2025, AT DAVIES SYMPHONY HALL**

**THIS YEAR MARKS THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF LUNAR NEW YEAR AT THE
SYMPHONY**

**Francesco Lecce-Chong leads the Orchestra in a program highlighting works by Asian
composers including An-Lun Huang, Huan-zhi Li, Shuying Li, and Tian Zhou**

**Pipa player Wu Man joins Lecce-Chong and the Orchestra to perform Zhao Jiping's
Pipa Concerto No. 2**

**Assistant Principal Cello Amos Yang plays selections from Chen Gang and He
Zhanhao's *The Butterfly Lovers* Concerto**

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—The San Francisco Symphony celebrates the Year of the Serpent with the [Lunar New Year](#) concert and banquet on Saturday, February 8 at Davies Symphony Hall. Lunar New Year, or Spring Festival, is the most important holiday for many cultures in East, South, and Southeast Asia, and is celebrated by people of Asian descent worldwide. This year's celebration marks the 25th anniversary of the Symphony's signature event, which is an elegant commemoration of the Lunar New Year, drawing upon vibrant Asian traditions, past and present. Conductor **Francesco Lecce-Chong** and the Orchestra perform works by Asian composers including An-Lun Huang, Huan-zhi Li, Shuying Li, and Tian Zhou, with guest **appearances** by pipa player **Wu Man**, who performs Zhao Jiping's Pipa Concerto No. 2, and Assistant Principal Cello **Amos Yang**, who plays selections from Chen Gang and He Zhanhao's *The Butterfly Lovers* Concerto.

The celebration begins at **4:00pm** with **preconcert lobby festivities** open to all ticketholders, featuring an array of entertainment and activities, such as lion dancers, dragon's beard candy making, fortune readers, calligraphy artists, and cultural performances.

Lecce-Chong and the Orchestra open the **5:00pm Lunar New Year concert** with **An-Lun Huang's** Saibei Dance from *Saibei* Suite No. 2, which features styles of wind and percussion from Northwest China, and **Tian Zhou's** *Indigo* from Concerto for Orchestra, which received a GRAMMY Award nomination for Best Contemporary Classical Nomination in 2018. Zhou describes *Indigo* as "a musical postcard from a walk in the forest one late summer night." The program continues with the world premiere of a new San Francisco Symphony commission by **Shuying Li**.

Assistant Principal Cello Amos Yang plays selections from **Chen Gang** and **He Zhanhao's** famous *The Butterfly Lovers* Concerto, based on an ancient legend about two people who fall in love but cannot be together, ultimately transforming into butterflies. Pipa player Wu Man joins Lecce-Chong and the Orchestra to perform **Zhao Jiping's** Pipa Concerto No. 2. The pipa is a traditional Chinese plucked instrument that has been played for almost 2,000 years. Concluding the program is **Huan-zhi Li's** energetic and extremely popular Chinese orchestral work *Spring Festival Overture*.

The **postconcert Lunar New Year Banquet** begins at **6:30pm** in Zellerbach Rehearsal Hall, located at 300 Franklin Street at the rear of Davies Symphony Hall, and features a lucky draw and live music, including a special performance. [VIP dinner packages](#) include access to the preconcert Ruby Reception, premium concert seating, and seating at the banquet. The banquet is catered by McCall's Catering & Events, with lighting design by Got Light. The décor for the event features hanging screens that highlight the many ways that Lunar New Year is celebrated across different cultures.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of Lunar New Year at the San Francisco Symphony. The event will honor Margaret Liu Collins and John Chen for their steadfast leadership and generous support over the past quarter century. Collins chaired the Symphony's Lunar New Year celebration three times starting in 2002 and has served on the committee more than 20 times. John Chen has served on the committee 13 times and has supported the event as a leadership sponsor more than 18 times. This year's event is planned under the leadership of an honorary committee made up of a group of past chairs from the event's 25-year history.

In-kind support for Lunar New Year is generously provided by Iron Horse Vineyards and The Caviar Co.

Proceeds from the Lunar New Year celebration support the Symphony's artistic, education, and community programs, benefiting tens of thousands of people each year. This concert is presented in partnership with the San Francisco Arts Commission.

About the artists

Francesco Lecce-Chong was appointed music director of both the Eugene Symphony and Santa Rosa Symphony before he turned 30. With these groups, he has commissioned more than a dozen major orchestral works and built innovative community partnerships. Now in his seventh season leading the Santa Rosa Symphony at the Green Music Center, he has grown the orchestra's reputation as an exciting and important regional orchestra. This season, he becomes artistic partner with the Eugene Symphony, a newly created position which furthers his artistic vision with the orchestra.

During the pandemic, Lecce-Chong and the Santa Rosa Symphony reached more than two million households in the Bay Area through their *Santa Rosa Symphony Presents* TV broadcasts on PBS, which led to the first CD release in the orchestra's history. With both Santa Rosa and Eugene, he led the "First Symphony Project," which consisted of major commissions from the next generation of composers across four seasons, complete with multiple residencies in local communities.

Lecce-Chong has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, Seattle Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Utah Symphony, North Carolina Symphony, Louisville Orchestra, Kansas City Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, and Romanian National Radio Orchestra. He made his San Francisco Symphony debut in June 2019.

Recognized as the world's premier pipa virtuoso, **Wu Man** is a soloist, educator, and composer who gives her lute-like instrument—which has a history of more than 2,000 years in China—a new role in both traditional and contemporary music. She has premiered hundreds of new works for pipa, while spearheading multimedia projects to both preserve and create global awareness of China's ancient musical traditions. She frequently collaborates with the Kronos Quartet, Shanghai Quartet, and the Knights, and is a founding member of the Silkroad Ensemble. She has appeared on nearly 50 recordings, including numerous Grammy Award-winning and nominated albums. This season, Wu toured China with the Philadelphia Orchestra and joins the Juilliard Quartet at Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. She also collaborates with the Verona Quartet and tours as part of the Doos Trio, exploring the ancient traditions of Persia, China, and India.

Born in Hangzhou, Wu studied at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, where she became the first recipient of a master's degree in pipa. In 2023 she was honored with a National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment of the Arts and the Asia Society's Asia Arts Game Changers Award. She is a visiting professor at the Central Conservatory in Beijing and a distinguished professor at the Zhejiang and the Xi'an Conservatories. In 2021 she received an honorary doctorate from the New England Conservatory of Music. She made her San Francisco Symphony debut in April 1993.

Amos Yang joined the San Francisco Symphony in 2007 as Assistant Principal Cello and holds the Karel & Lida Urbanek chair. He was previously a member of the Seattle Symphony and a member of the Maia String Quartet. Born and raised in San Francisco, he was a member of the SF Symphony Youth Orchestra and San Francisco Boys Choir, and earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the Juilliard School. He now serves on the faculty of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and the San Francisco Academy Orchestra.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

Tickets:

Tickets for concerts at Davies Symphony Hall can be purchased via [sfsymphony.org](https://www.sfsymphony.org) or by calling the San Francisco Symphony Box Office at 415.864.6000.

Location:

Davies Symphony Hall is located at 201 Van Ness Avenue in San Francisco.

SPECIAL EVENT

Lunar New Year

Saturday, February 8, 2025, at 5:00pm

Francesco Lecce-Chong conductor

Wu Man pipa

Amos Yang cello

San Francisco Symphony

AN-LUN HUANG Saibei Dance, from *Saibei* Suite No. 2

TIAN ZHOU *Indigo* from Concerto for Orchestra

SHUYING LI New Work [San Francisco Symphony Commission and World Premiere]

CHEN GANG & HE ZHANHAO Selections from *The Butterfly Lovers* Concerto

ZHAO JIPING Pipa Concerto No. 2

HUAN-ZHI LI (arr. **LONG YU**) *Spring Festival* Overture

Tickets: \$49–119

Ticket link: <https://www.sfsymphony.org/Buy-Tickets/2024-25/lunar-new-year>

Preconcert activities: At 4:00pm, there will be preconcert lobby festivities, featuring an array of entertainment and activities, such as lion dancers, dragon's beard candy making, fortune readers, calligraphy artists, and cultural performances. Open to all ticketholders.

VIP packages: VIP dinner packages include access to the preconcert Ruby Reception, premium concert seating, and seating at the postconcert banquet in Zellerbach Rehearsal Hall at 6:30pm. VIP packages can be purchased here: <https://www.sfsymphony.org/Event/Lunar-New-Year>

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