



The Sounds of China: An Introduction to Chinese Musical Instruments

Chi Li
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This presentation introduces the rich diversity of Chinese musical instruments and their roles in Chinese musical culture. It begins with the ancient *ba yin*, or “Eight Sounds,” classification system, which categorizes instruments according to the materials from which they are made, followed by modern classifications based on performance techniques, including wind, bowed-string, plucked-string, and percussion instruments. Representative instruments—including the *qin*, *zheng*, *erhu*, *dizi*, *xiao*, *hulusi*, and *ruan*—will be introduced, along with highlights of traditional and contemporary performances from UCLA’s Music of China program. The presentation also explores traditional Chinese music notation and includes live demonstrations of selected instruments.

Professor **Chi Li** is a distinguished *erhu* virtuoso and educator of Chinese music. A faculty member in UCLA’s Department of Ethnomusicology since 1997, she directs the Chinese Music Ensemble and teaches major Chinese instruments. A graduate of the Conservatory of Chinese Music in Beijing, she served as an *erhu* soloist with the National Traditional Orchestra of China. In the United States, she has performed at prestigious venues including Madison Square Garden and Lincoln Center. She was also the *erhu* soloist featured in the 2019 Academy Award-winning animated short film *Bao*.

November 19, 2026
4:00-5:30 pm
Mendenhall Lab 125

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this in-person talk.**



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