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ASCENDING DRAGON ***Music Festival & Cultural Exchange with Vietnam***

**U.S. State Department Grant Creates
Largest Cultural Exchange
In history between Vietnam and the United States**

Celebrates 1000th Anniversary of Hanoi

4 Composers-in Residence / 4 World Premieres in Vietnam

17 U.S. Premieres

U.S. & Asian Premieres of *On Conversing with Paradise*

By 100 year-old Elliott Carter

Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Pasadena & Los Angeles

February 27 – May 3, 2010

Los Angeles – Two-time GRAMMY® Award-winning Southwest Chamber Music, the voice of New Classical Music and a strong advocate for cultural diplomacy, is proud to announce reception of a **prestigious grant from the U.S. State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)** providing major support for **the largest cultural exchange in history between Vietnam and the United States**. The *Ascending Dragon Music Festival and Cultural Exchange* will take place in the United States and Vietnam between February 27 and May 3, 2010. This project marks the second cultural exchange for Southwest Chamber Music with Vietnam after a highly successful series of concerts and master classes in Hanoi in December of 2006.

***Ascending Dragon* is designed to encourage new artistic and creative leadership in Vietnam through people-to-people exchange with the United States,** increasing mutual understanding and relationships between the two countries after a long and complicated history in the 20th century. A festival environment surrounding concerts in both Vietnam and the United States will feature parallel cultural exchange activities involving an impressive array of diplomatic, academic, corporate, and community organizations in both countries. The Vietnam National Academy of Music of Music in Hanoi, the Vietnamese Embassy in Washington D.C. and the ECA Division of the State Department confirm the status of this project as being **the largest cultural exchange in history between the two countries.**

Ascending Dragon is a six-week cultural exchange that will bring **19 Americans to Vietnam between March 2 and March 24, 2010,** and **19 Vietnamese to the U.S. between April 14 and May 4, 2010,** three weeks in each country. The project title, *Ascending Dragon*, is a translation of the Vietnamese words *Thăng Long*, the first name of Hanoi, **celebrating its 1000th anniversary in 2010.**

Partners with Southwest Chamber Music in Vietnam are the Vietnam National Academy of Music of Music (VNAM) and the Hanoi Opera House in Hanoi, the Ho Chi Minh City Conservatory of Music (HCMCC) in Saigon, the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi, and the U.S. Consulate in Ho Chi Minh City. In the United States the ensemble will partner with the Armory Center for the Arts, The Colburn School, Drucker Institute at the Claremont Graduate University, Riordan Volunteer Leadership Development Program, Cal Tech, Pacific Asia Museum, Los Angeles and Pasadena Unified School Districts, and Villa Aurora.

The ensemble was recommended to the U.S. State Department by Congressman Adam Schiff. A portion of required matching funds are secured to date from the James Irvine Foundation, the Schoenberg Family Charitable Fund, the City of Pasadena Arts and Culture Commission, the Cultural Affairs Department of the City of Los Angeles and contributions from private donors to Southwest Chamber Music. A corporate sponsorship from the Hilton Hanoi Opera in Hanoi and Pasadena Hilton will provide rooms for participants.

“My goal is to demonstrate that Vietnam is a country and not a war,” says Founding Artistic Director Jeff von der Schmidt. “There are still strong and passionate emotions for me about this Southeast Asian country. I was shaped, as were so many Americans of my generation, by the double crucible of the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights Movement. Those parallel currents of my youth are mirrored today by two very different realities - the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the election of Barack Obama in 2008. Not only is *Ascending Dragon* appropriate, but it’s timely. I could never have dreamt in the 60s and 70s that I would be part of an ensemble representing the United

States in Vietnam for the 1000th anniversary of the founding of Hanoi. I know that together with our musical friends in Vietnam we will all point the way to a better world, where people make music together to understand each other. Maybe, just maybe, some people will hear what we are saying about reconciliation in this still frightening world. We'll be a living example of how countries move forward to create a better future out of a complicated past.

“My personal motto for *Ascending Dragon* is a proverb of Gandhi. He questioned the notion of Western biblical revenge with the saying “An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.” That’s a challenging statement to confront as an artist, and I understand it as a call to action. I’ve guided Southwest Chamber Music for 23 years towards just this type of State Department project – we’ve got a long history of celebrating classical music in unorthodox places. Ordinary just isn’t my style - this accounts for my being an entrepreneur with Southwest Chamber Music in the tradition-weary world of classical music. I believe we are the voice of *New Classical Music*, combining the wisdom of tradition with the color of diversity.

“I think rehearsals and concerts side-by-side with Vietnamese musicians over a 6-week time period in Asia and North America, with music by Takemitsu, Copland, Debussy, Messiaen, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Cage and Carter as well as numerous works by our featured young composers, will help convince people of the importance of New Classical Music in shaping global human reconciliation in the world. We have to dig deeper in the 21st century.

“I’d also like to thank my long time friend and member of our Advisory Board, Kent Nagano, for all of his help and encouragement about the challenges inherent to programming *Ascending Dragon*. His engagement with this topic was incredibly helpful, and I think it shows in the range of music we’re performing.”

To schedule an interview with two-time Grammy Award winner Jeff von der Schmidt, contact Ms. Thu-Nga Dan at thunga@swmusic.org.

About the *Ascending Dragon Music Festival*

4 Composers-in-Residence / 4 World Premieres / 17 U.S. Premieres

U.S. & Asian Premieres of *On Conversing with Paradise* by 100 year old Elliott Carter

February 27 – May 3, 2010

Ascending Dragon will create a unique experience in international relations through music festivals in the U.S. and Vietnam. Numerous compositions will receive side-by-side performances with Southwest Chamber Music members and guest musicians from the Vietnam National Academy of

Music of Music, creating the *Ascending Dragon Ensemble*. Repertory will include works by Copland, Cage, Debussy, Messiaen, Takemitsu, Schoenberg and Stravinsky as well as an exciting survey of new works from Vietnam and the United States.

Alexandra du Bois and **Kurt Rohde** of the United States and **Vũ Nhật Tân** and **Phạm Minh Thành** of **Vietnam** are the four composers-in-residence selected, each commissioned for a new work to be **world premiered at the Hanoi Opera House on March 19, 2010**. Ms. Du Bois is composing *Within Earth, Wood Grows*, inspired by the poetry of Vietnamese peace activist Thich Nhat Hanh. Kurt Rohde offers *Still Distant, Still Here*, an elegiac threnody. **Vũ Nhật Tân** will invoke the bustling streets of Vietnamese cities with his *Phô* (or *Street*). **Phạm Minh Thành** has settled on an exciting blend of instrumental cultures with a new work for Vietnamese dan bau, strings and percussion. Composer biographies are available on page 10.

In addition, two important Vietnamese composers based in Paris, **Nguyễn Thiện Đạo** and **Tôn Thất Tiết**, will be part of the *Ascending Dragon* programs. Their works will introduce American audiences to a compelling musical continuity for Vietnam that begins in the 1950s with their move to France, extends through the Vietnam War era, and continues with very active careers today.

Southwest Chamber Music is honored to have received the **U.S. and Asian premieres of *On Conversing with Paradise* by 100-year-old Elliott Carter**. Written for Oliver Knussen and the Aldeburgh Festival, this most recent work by Carter is a setting of the *Cantos* of Ezra Pound and received its world premiere in June of 2009. The baritone soloist in both Hanoi and Los Angeles will be **Evan Hughes**, who sang Carter's *Syringa* at Tanglewood in 2008 under Stefan Asbury and at the Carnegie Hall under James Levine on January 10th, 2010. He was *Don Giovanni* under the baton of James Levine in the summer of 2009. He also performed along side Dawn Upshaw at the Carnegie Hall. Mr. Hughes is a member of the Curtis Institute Vocal Program and a recipient of a major award from the Marilyn Horne Foundation. Oliver Knussen, who conducted Southwest Chamber Music in 1992, and Elliott Carter have been members of the ensemble's Advisory Board for over 15 years.

"*Ascending Dragon* has been the most rewarding challenge I've had to program," says Artistic Director and conductor Jeff von der Schmidt. "Any festival is a departure from normal concert life – in a festival all the pieces have to fit together, creating a larger narrative for the audience and musicians. This is even more appealing when you factor in the reality that *Ascending Dragon* is the most ambitious, probably the first, formal festival of contemporary music ever on the Vietnamese cultural scene. One doesn't get the opportunity to create a festival very often! And, we have 17 premieres for our audience here in the United States, so the festival is extremely dynamic.

“Our four composers-in-residence, Alexandra du Bois and Kurt Rohde from the United States and Vũ Nhật Tân and Phạm Minh Thành from Vietnam are a perfect fit. In selecting these four gifted individuals, I was looking for multiple talents: accomplished musical voices, accomplished instrumental talents, and a deep moral character. I dream that these four composers represent the best national characteristics of their respective countries and will work together to bring my vision of New Classical Music, a world where the wisdom of tradition blends with the diversity of the 21st century, as a moving experience for audiences in Vietnam and the United States.

“Another aspect of festival programming is that you have to study a lot of music before you can make compelling programs. Learning as much as I can about Nguyễn Thiện Đạo and Tôn Thất Tiết has been a huge revelation – they are truly the founding fathers of contemporary classical music in Vietnam! In a lot of ways, I hope to right some wrongs by championing their music in the United States. Both Đạo and Tiết live in Paris, and emigrated between 1954 and the 60s. Tiết has some recognition as a film composer, for *The Scent of Green Papaya*, and Đạo studied with Olivier Messiaen. Theirs is a career of exile, which is close to my heart, and close to the cultural conversation of Los Angeles. It’s no accident their stories are compelling to me, as the journey of the exiled artist is a family affair for Southwest Chamber Music – one of our Board Members is E. Randol Schoenberg, the grandson of Arnold Schoenberg. He’ll be part of *Ascending Dragon* and talk about the issues of exile and reconciliation in the broadest sense.

“Finally, we are deeply humbled and honored to receive the Asian and U.S. premieres of 100 year old Elliott Carter’s *On Conversing with Paradise*, which is dedicated to my good friend Oliver Knussen. When I received the score, to my amazement, the work was technically graspable for our Vietnamese friends, and so the idea of playing a Carter premiere in Hanoi side-by-side with our players was hatched. Both Carter and Knussen are loyal members of our Advisory Board, but I never dreamed that we could in fact have premiere status of a new work from Elliott. I’ve learned a lot about Confucian ethics in preparing for *Ascending Dragon*, so the opportunity to impress upon the Vietnamese that we are working on a premiere of a composer 100 years old (who will be 101 by the Asian premiere on March 19, 2010) will speak volumes for new music in Hanoi, as well as celebrate the United States during the 1000th anniversary of the City of Hanoi. I know from Elliott he is thrilled that his music is being played in Vietnam. The title *On Conversing with Paradise* is eye catching coming from a 100 year old composer - this is unprecedented in music history. He can take comfort from the fact he has only 900 years to go to even things out with Hanoi!”

In all, there will be **17 U.S. Premieres** during *Ascending Dragon* in Los Angeles. The premieres are: *Within Earth, Wood Grows* by **Alexandra du Bois**; *Trăng-Moon, Meditation, Green*

Silk Improvisation, Phô, and Ký Ức by **Vũ Nhật Tân**; *A Mi K Giao Tranh, Dôi* for Bassoon & Percussion, and *Au dessus du vent* by **Nguyễn Thiện Đạo**; *Mémoire de la rivière, Les jardins d'autre monde, Niem* and *Poèmes* by **Tôn Thất Tiết**; *Thiên Thai* and *Thăng Long* by **Phạm Minh Thành**; *Still Distant, Still Here* by **Kurt Rohde**; and *On Conversing with Paradise* by **Elliott Carter**.

Ascending Dragon Cultural Exchange

Cultural Leadership Forums / Community & Educational Activities

The *Ascending Dragon Cultural Exchange* portion of this project is designed to create cultural exchange and exposure opportunity for the Vietnamese and American audiences in general, and Southwest Chamber Music, the VNAM and the HCMCC's students, musicians, composers and administrators in particular.

One of the **U.S. State Department's** goals in supporting Southwest Chamber Music with this highly competitive grant is **to identify and encourage a new generation of emerging cultural leaders in Vietnam**. Southwest Chamber Music will accomplish this goal by commissioning and performing new works by Vietnamese and American composers, and by increasing Vietnamese institutional capacity through **Cultural Leadership Forums**. During our planning trip in March of 2009, Southwest Chamber Music's Executive Director spent 90 minutes presenting the project to the VNAM's young faculty members and potential participants for *Ascending Dragon*. All of them expressed a great interest in learning more about "best practices" in arts administration in the United States in general and at Southwest Chamber Music in particular.

During the Exchange from March – May 2010, Cultural Leadership Forums will involve all participants in workshops on "arts administration, leadership, and creativity" to help identify best practices and ways in which cultural leadership can be nurtured and facilitated. Hosted business community forums in both countries will encourage corporate and arts partnerships. These programs will be in collaboration with the **United States Embassy in Hanoi**, the **United States Consulate in Ho Chi Minh City**, the **Drucker Institute** at Claremont Graduate University, and the **Riordan Volunteer Leadership Development Program** in Los Angeles.

Jan Karlin, Founding Executive Director of Southwest Chamber Music, a Grammy Award-winning producer, and a recipient of the James Irvine Foundation's Fund for Leadership Advancement Award, remarks that "*Ascending Dragon* is an opportunity for Southwest Chamber Music to do what only we can do – provide an exciting new music festival in two countries and use new creativity to help build capacity and leadership skills in the arts. In preparatory meetings in Hanoi in March 2009, I

was struck by the enthusiasm of all of the potential participants to have us help them build their arts administrative skills. The musicians and composers asked to join the administrators in learning how to build a concert series, access corporate funding, provide educational activities and community events, and learn about all of the necessary structure. They were very appreciative of the fact that our project is a **new model of cultural exchange**, not just coming through town on a tour with standard repertoire and master classes. *Ascending Dragon* provides dialogue, learning, and capacity building through the celebration of new American and Vietnamese creativity.

“Our past experiences demonstrate the need for dialogue and the encouragement of emerging cultural leadership around the globe. As a mid-size arts organization with a proven track record, Southwest Chamber Music has the ability to effect maximum change with nominal investment dollars. The foreign perception of America needs to include serious artistic accomplishment and in-depth interaction with our global cultural colleagues.”

Here in Southern California, Southwest Chamber Music’s educational and community partners will have numerous opportunities to be involved with the U.S. State Department-sponsored *Ascending Dragon Music Festival and Cultural Exchange*. Educational activities and community outreach programs in Southern California will reflect this historic cultural exchange and include community activities and dialogues at the Colburn School, Pacific Asia Museum, Cal Tech, and the Armory Center for the Arts. Pre-concert talks and post-concert receptions will be available to encourage audience members to meet the Vietnamese participants. There will be visits by the Vietnamese participants to local area high schools, colleges and universities to meet students and peers, and provide learning opportunities about American arts education.

Southwest Chamber Music’s educational activities in 2010 will feature direct involvement by the visiting Vietnamese musicians for *Project Muse* in-school concerts and *Music Unwrapped* Free Family Series. Vietnamese musicians will perform at each of our participating schools in the Los Angeles and Pasadena Unified School Districts with opportunities to meet our young mentored students and interact with them directly. *Music Unwrapped* Free Family Series will repeat these in-school programs for our family audiences and provide direct people-to-people contact for the community.

For questions or to arrange interviews and receive more material, please contact Ms. Thu-Nga Dan at 626.685.4455 or email thunga@swmusic.org.

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SOUTHWEST CHAMBER MUSIC

ASCENDING DRAGON MUSIC FESTIVAL CONCERTS IN THE UNITED STATES AND VIETNAM

All programs and artists are subject to change
SINGLE TICKETS (in U.S.): \$38 (GENERAL), \$28 (SENIOR), and \$10 (STUDENT w/ID)
1-800-726-7147

Saturday, February 27, 2010 at 8 p.m. (Pre-concert Talk at 7:30 p.m.)
Armory Center for the Arts, 145 N. Raymond Ave., Pasadena

Alexandra du Bois	<i>An Eye for an Eye Makes the Whole World Blind</i>
Vũ Nhật Tân	<i>Trăng – Moon / Meditation (U.S. Premieres)</i>
Kurt Rohde	<i>Under the Influence</i>
Nguyễn Thiện Đạo	<i>A Mi K Giao Tranh (U.S. Premiere)</i>
Tôn Thất Tiết	<i>Mémoire de la Rivière (U.S. Premiere)</i>

Monday, March 1, 2010 at 8 p.m. (Pre-concert Talk at 7:30 p.m.)
The Colburn School, 200 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles

Nguyễn Thiện Đạo	<i>Dôi for Bassoon & Percussion (U.S. Premiere)</i>
Olivier Messiaen	<i>Quatuor pour la fin du temps</i>
Tôn Thất Tiết	<i>Les jardins d'autre monde (U.S. Premiere)</i>

Thursday, March 11, 2010 at 11 a.m.
Vietnam National Academy of Music, Hanoi

Alexandra du Bois	<i>An Eye for an Eye Makes the Whole World Blind (Asian Premiere)</i>
Vũ Nhật Tân	<i>Trăng – Moon / Meditation</i>
Kurt Rohde	<i>Under the Influence (Asian Premiere)</i>
Nguyễn Thiện Đạo	<i>A Mi K Giao Tranh</i>
Tôn Thất Tiết	<i>Mémoire de la Rivière</i>

Saturday, March 13, 2010 at 8 p.m.
Vietnam National Academy of Music, Hanoi

Olivier Messiaen	<i>Quatuor pour la fin du temps</i>
Tôn Thất Tiết	<i>Les jardins d'autre monde</i>
John Cage	<i>Atlas Eclipticalis</i>

Tuesday, March 16, 2010 at 4 p.m.
Vietnam National Academy of Music, Hanoi

Vũ Nhật Tân	<i>Ký Ức</i>
Kurt Rohde	<i>Oculus (Asian Premiere)</i>
Nguyễn Thiện Đạo	<i>Au dessus du vent</i>
Toru Takemitsu	<i>Archipelago S. for 5 Ensembles</i>

Friday, March 19, 2010 at 8 p.m.

Hanoi Opera House, Hanoi

Phạm Minh Thành	<i>Thăng Long (World Premiere)</i>
Kurt Rohde	<i>Still Distant, Still Here (World Premiere)</i>
Elliott Carter	<i>On Conversing with Paradise (Asian Premiere)</i>
Vũ Nhật Tân	<i>Phô (World Premiere)</i>
Alexandra du Bois	<i>Within Earth, Wood Grows (World Premiere)</i>
Aaron Copland	<i>Appalachian Spring</i>

Sunday, March 21, 2010 at 8 p.m.

Ho Chi Minh City Conservatory, Ho Chi Minh City

Alexandra du Bois	<i>An Eye for an Eye Makes the Whole World Blind</i>
Vũ Nhật Tân	<i>Trăng – Moon / Meditation</i>
Kurt Rohde	<i>Under the Influence</i>
Nguyễn Thiện Đạo	<i>A Mi K Giao Tranh</i>
Tôn Thất Tiết	<i>Mémoire de la Rivière</i>

Friday, April 16, 2010 at 8 p.m. (Pre-concert Talk at 7:30 p.m.)

Armory Center for the Arts, 145 N. Raymond Ave., Pasadena

Alexandra du Bois	<i>Chanson d'orage for 2 Violins</i>
Phạm Minh Thành	<i>Sonata for Violin & Piano (U.S. Premiere)</i>
Kurt Rohde	<i>Seeing Things for Violin & Piano</i>
Tôn Thất Tiết	<i>Trung dzuong (U.S. Premiere)</i>
Vũ Nhật Tân	<i>Green Silk Improvisation (U.S. Premiere)</i>

Saturday, April 17, 2010 at 8 p.m. (Pre-concert Talk at 7:30 p.m.)

The Colburn School, 200 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles

Claude Debussy	<i>Danse sacrée et danse profane</i>
Vũ Nhật Tân	<i>Phô (U.S. Premiere)</i>
Alexandra du Bois	<i>Within Earth, Wood Grows (U.S. Premiere)</i>
Nguyễn Thiện Đạo	<i>Au dessus du vent (U.S. Premiere)</i>
Toru Takemitsu	<i>Archipelago S. for 5 Ensembles</i>

Saturday, April 24, 2010 at 8 p.m. (Pre-concert Talk at 7:30 p.m.)

The Colburn School, 200 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles

Kurt Rohde	<i>Still Distant, Still Here (U.S. Premiere)</i>
John Cage	<i>Atlas Eclipticalis</i>
Elliott Carter	<i>On Conversing with Paradise (U.S. Premiere)</i>
Aaron Copland	<i>Appalachian Spring</i>

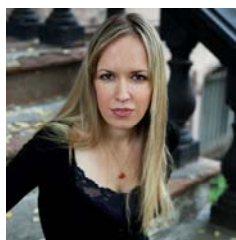
Friday, April 30, 2010 at 8 p.m. (Pre-concert Talk at 7:30 p.m.)
The Colburn School, 200 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles

Maurice Ravel	<i>Ma mère l'oye</i>
Phạm Minh Thành	<i>Thăng Long (U.S. Premiere)</i>
Alexandra du Bois	<i>A Requiem for the Living</i>
Kurt Rohde	<i>Oculus</i>

Monday, May 3, 2010 at 8 p.m. (Pre-concert Talk at 7:30 p.m.)
The Colburn School, 200 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles

Claude Debussy	<i>Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune</i>
Tôn Thất Tiết	<i>Poèmes/Niem (U.S. Premieres)</i>
Arnold Schoenberg	<i>Five Orchestra Pieces</i>
Alexandra du Bois	<i>I Wonder as I Wander</i>
Vũ Nhật Tân	<i>Ký Ức (U.S. Premiere)</i>
Igor Stravinsky	<i>Dumbarton Oaks</i>

Biographical Information
4 Composers-in-Residence for Ascending Dragon
plus Tôn Thất Tiết & Nguyễn Thiên Đạo



“This music attempts to be a conscience in a time of oblivion. She dared, in *An Eye for an Eye*, to counter abuses of moral authority with an internal, personal sound using the string quartet as a witness, a reminder, that music and creativity are part of a continuing web of responsibility. Alexandra du Bois, for one, looked out at the world and heard an urgent, inward sound revered by western composers since 1750 as the repository of some of their deepest thoughts. Alexandra found a voice where many were speechless” - David Harrington, Kronos Quartet

Composer **Alexandra du Bois** discovered music through the violin, playing the instrument from the age of two years old and later began composing at age fifteen. Her music has been performed on four continents at venues including Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, The Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Barbican Hall in London, The Théâtre de la Ville in Paris, among many other. Alexandra du Bois’ music has been commissioned by ensembles such as the Kronos Quartet, Bargemusic, Orchestra of St. Luke’s, The Beaux Arts Trio, Merkin Concert Hall, The Piano Project at the Kaufman Center in New York and many others.

In 2003 Alexandra du Bois was chosen out of over 300 composers from 32 countries as the inaugural recipient of the Kronos: *Under 30 Project* commission. As a result, du Bois wrote *Oculus pro oculo totum orbem terrae caecat* (An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind) for the Kronos Quartet. Alexandra du Bois’ second commission from Kronos Quartet resulted in *Night Songs*. For this work, Alexandra was inspired by the life, journals and letters of the young writer Etty Hillesum (1914-1943), who died in Auschwitz in 1943 and left one of the great moral documents of the 20th century. The Kronos Quartet premiered *Night Songs* at Stanford University and Carnegie Hall’s Zankel Hall in 2006. Southwest Chamber Music will perform several of du Bois’ compositions during the *Ascending Dragon Music Festival* here in Los Angeles and in Vietnam. She is writing *Within Earth, Wood Grows* for the *Ascending Dragon Festival* premiere at the Hanoi Opera House in March 2010.



Composer and violist **Kurt Rohde** lives in San Francisco. His music has been described as being “filled with exhilaration. It’s a mirror of our times. It is dark music, lit up by peckings, clackings, snaps and slides. It sounds eerie, but lyrical; sustained, but skittish; free-form, yet dancing.” San Jose Mercury News, Richard Scheinin. Conductor Kent Nagano has also remarked that “*Kurt Rohde is an artist whose creative talent reminds one of our great personalities of the past. Both a fluent and brilliant solo and ensemble performer, he is also flexible, prolific and a deeply gifted composer.*”

Recipient of the 2008 Rome Prize, Kurt Rohde has also received the Charles Ives Fellowship and the Hinrichsen Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and commission awards from the Koussevitzky Foundation of the Library of Congress, the Fromm Foundation of Harvard University, the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Hanson Institute for American Music. Kurt Rohde was a recipient of the Berlin Prize Fellowship from the American Academy in Berlin. He has served as composer in residence at the Yellow Barn Music Festival, and as guest composer at the Wellesley Composers Conference. He has received numerous commissions from Kent Nagano in both the United States and Europe. Southwest Chamber Music will include his *Oculus for String Orchestra*, *Under the Influence*, and *Seeing Things* in its repertory for *Ascending Dragon*. *Still Distant, Still Here* will have its world premiere at the Hanoi Opera House in March 2010.



Vũ Nhật Tân is a Vietnamese composer of experimental orchestral/-chamber/piano and electro/computer and multimedia works. His compositions have been performed in Australia, Cambodia, China, France, Germany, Mongolia, Switzerland, the U.S., and Vietnam, including the Roaring Hoofs Festival in Ulaanbaatar, and the Louisiana Festival of Contemporary Music in Baton Rouge, among others. Tân studied piano at the Vietnam National

Academy of Music of Music in Hanoi, where he earned a certificate in 1987 and degrees in secondary education in composition and musicology in 1991. He then studied composition and musicology there from 1991-95. He later studied computer music and new music at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Cologne in 2000-01, on a scholarship from the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst. In addition, he studied composition with Chinary Ung at the University of California at San Diego in 2002 as a guest student. His honors include Third Prize in the composition for traditional instruments competition of the Vietnam Composers Association in Hanoi and First Prize in the Saint-Germain-en-Laye competition. Most recently, he received a grant from the Asian Cultural Council which enabled him to research contemporary music and ethnomusicology in the U.S. He is also active in electro/computer music and multimedia performances. His *Phô*, a description of the busy streets of Vietnam, will be premiered during *Ascending Dragon* at the Hanoi Opera House in March 2010.



Phạm Minh Thành was born in 1978 in Hanoi. He studied piano and composition at the Vietnam National Academy of Music of Music under the tutelage of composer Do Hong Quan until 2000. From 2000-2006, Minh Thành studied composition at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory with Professor Konstantin Batashov. His compositions have been performed and broadcast throughout Vietnam, as well as in Moscow. He is currently teaching composition at the Musicology/ Composition/ Conducting Department at the Vietnam National Academy of Music of Music. Minh Thành is honored to be part of the *Ascending Dragon Music Festival*.



Born in Huê in 1933, Tôn Thất Tiết went to Paris in 1958 to study composition at the French National Conservatory of Music. He attended Jean Rivier and André Jolivet classes for composition. Tôn Thất Tiet has written the music of Tran Anh Hung's three films: *The Scent of Green Papaya*, *Cyclo* and *At the Height of Summer*. He has also collaborated with Régine Chopinot on two of her dance pieces: *Parole de feu* (1995) and *Danse du temps* (1999). In 1993, he founded the "France-Vietnam Music Association" to promote the development of music in Vietnam. Southwest Chamber Music will be performing his *Mémoire de la rivière*, *Les jardins d'autre monde*, and *Poèmes* for Flute, Viola, Harp and Vietnamese Instruments during *Ascending Dragon*.



Nguyễn Thiện Đạo was born in Hanoi, Vietnam, in 1940. He arrived in France in 1953, entering the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris in 1963. His decisive meeting with Olivier Messiaen in 1967, in whose class he received the 1st prize for composition, led him to discover the path that would become his own. At first filled with images from his childhood and long meditations on nature, possessed by "celestial and imaginary polyphony", and then Vietnamese and Chinese poetry, he sees himself as "heir to two civilizations; oriental and

occidental". He tried to "work out a synthesis by constructing a music based on micro-intervals, sound colors, rhythmic structure and time duration." Southwest Chamber Music will be performing his *A Mi K Giao Tranh, Doi*, and *Au dessus du vent* for solo harp and 12 strings during *Ascending Dragon*.

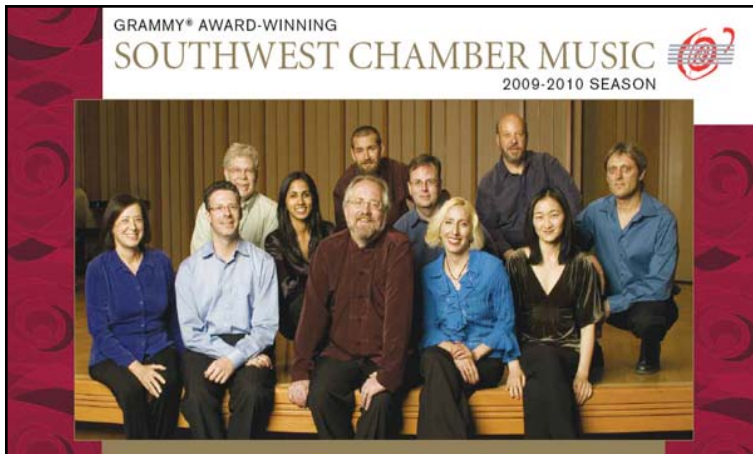


The **VIETNAM NATIONAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC OF MUSIC (VNAM)** is the premier music institution in Vietnam. Founded in 1956, VNAM has over 1800 students in undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels. The majority of its 200-plus teachers are graduates from overseas conservatories. The institution has trained over 7,500 students. The Academy also stages numerous concerts throughout the year in the Concert Hall. It participates in many exchange programs with conservatories abroad, sending its musical ensembles overseas to perform and teach and, in turn,

hosting performances and teaching visits by many internationally-acclaimed orchestras and soloists. In addition to teaching, the VNAM is the home of the Hanoi Philharmonic Orchestra, which regularly performs at the Hanoi Opera House.



The **HO CHI MINH CITY CONSERVATORY** is the center for music education in the southern region of Vietnam. It provides music education in undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate levels. The Conservatory has over 100 teachers, including many famous musicians, composers and researchers, and experienced pedagogues graduated mostly from European conservatories. Apart from its education programs, the Conservatory is the home of the Ho Chi Minh City Symphony Orchestra.



The mission of **SOUTHWEST CHAMBER MUSIC** is to *build musical bridges between cultures*. As the voice of *New Classical Music*, the ensemble combines the wisdom of tradition with the color of diversity in concerts, recordings, and educational programming which reflects the depth of art music from around the world.

Founded in 1987, Southwest Chamber Music is one of the most active chamber music ensembles in the United States, presenting concert series at the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena, The Colburn School in Los Angeles, and a celebrated summer festival at The Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens in San Marino. The ensemble provides weekly music education programs in the Los Angeles and Pasadena Unified School Districts through *Project Muse* in-school concerts and a *Mentorship Program*, as well as *Music Unwrapped* Free Family Series for students of all ages. Southwest Chamber Music takes its name from the Southwest Museum, the oldest cultural institution in Southern California.

The ensemble will celebrate a transformative season in 2009-2010 as international cultural ambassadors for the United States. The U.S. State Department selected Southwest Chamber Music from a highly competitive field to produce the *Ascending Dragon Festival and Cultural Exchange* from March to May 2010, the most significant musical cultural exchange between Vietnam and the United States in the history of the two nations. *Ascending Dragon* will involve six weeks of performances in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), Pasadena and Los Angeles, with performances at the Hanoi Opera House, the Vietnam Academy of Music, the Ho Chi Minh Conservatory of Music, the Colburn School, and the Armory Center for the Arts. In December 2009, Southwest Chamber Music will travel to Mexico, representing our country at the Guadalajara FIL Arts Festival, a festival produced alongside the world's largest Spanish book fair. Guadalajara invites one host country each year, which this year features arts organizations from Los Angeles representing the United States. Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department, Southwest Chamber Music is one of 16 arts organizations in Los Angeles to be selected. Southwest Chamber Music will reunite with the Tambuco Percussion Ensemble of Mexico City in a concert of American and Mexican music. In January and February 2010, the ensemble will collaborate with the Armory Center for the Arts for its 20th anniversary with a series of concerts of music by John Cage performed inside the Amory Gallery retrospective exhibition devoted to 50 works by artist Robert Rauschenberg.

In summer of 2009, the Grammy Award-winning ensemble released a monumental 3-CD set surveying the world of percussion with the *Encounters* by William Kraft. Southwest Chamber Music's ability to energize classical music includes past projects of international cultural significance. In December 2006 the ensemble produced cultural exchange programs with Cambodia's Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh, the 2006 World Culture Expo at the temples of Angkor Wat, and the Vietnam National Academy of Music of Music. The 2006 tour to Southeast Asia featured the music of Grawemeyer Award-winning, Cambodian-American composer Chinary Ung. Southwest Chamber Music also

performed in May 2007 at the UNAM Center in Mexico City with a cycle of five concerts of the complete chamber works of Carlos Chávez, joined by the Tambuco Percussion Ensemble.

The ensemble has also been presented by the Library of Congress in Washington D.C., Cooper Union in New York City, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Getty Center, Orange County Performing Arts Center, Ojai Festival, and Luckman Fine Arts Center. Guest conductors appearing with the ensemble have included Oliver Knussen, Stephen L. Mosko, and Charles Wuorinen. In March 2003, Southwest Chamber Music became the first American ensemble to perform at the Arnold Schoenberg Center in Vienna, Austria.

As a two-time Grammy Award-winner, Southwest Chamber Music has one of the most impressive recorded discographies of any American chamber ensemble, with the release of its 24th recording in 2009. The group has received six GRAMMY® nominations for its four volume cycle of the *Complete Chamber Works of Carlos Chávez* on Cambria Master Recordings. This recognition from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences includes 2003 and 2004 Grammy Awards in the Best Small Ensemble category for Volumes 1 and 2. Three further nominations for Volume 3 are shared with the Tambuco Percussion Ensemble of Mexico City, including Best Classical Album and Best Small Ensemble nominations in 2005, and a Latin Grammy Best Classical Album nomination in 2006. Finally, Volume 4 was honored with a 2007 Latin Grammy Best Classical Album nomination.

Southwest Chamber Music's *Composer Portrait Series* on Cambria Master Recordings received a 2002 ASCAP-Chamber Music America Award for a "landmark set of 12 compact discs featuring American music of our time." The ensemble has also recorded works of Prokofiev and Poulenc on Cambria, as well as the late works of Krenek for Orfeo Records in Munich. The ensemble's recordings are available from Cambria Master Recordings, with world-wide distribution by Naxos. More information about Southwest Chamber Music is available at www.swmusic.org.

For questions or to arrange interviews and receive more material, please contact Ms. Thu-Nga Dan at 626.685.4455 or email thunga@swmusic.org.

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