



Composer Donald Yu

Composer, Pianist, Conductor

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Contents:

- Biography
- Reviews
- Catalogue of Work
- Discography

Complete artist information including video, audio and interviews are available at www.pricerubin.com

Biography

Man-Ching Donald Yu (b.1980) is a prolific and versatile composer whose music has been actively performed internationally. The style of his recent music is characterized by the blending of post-impressionistic gestures, micropolyphonic techniques, and Chinese colors while being acclaimed by Fanfare Magazine as "forming an arresting and personal intermixing of tonal and atonal languages, with the musical colors and gestures of his native country infiltrating the mix." His orchestral works are described as "powerful," "passionate tones," "textures show a highly skilled hand at work, and the dramatic thrust is palpable," and "taut new symphonic voice."

Yu studied piano, composition, and conducting at an early age. He earned his B.Mus. degree in piano performance and composition from Baylor University (U.S.), studying piano with Bulgarian pianist Krassimira Jordan (in the heritage of the Russian Piano School of Emil Gilels). Later he received a scholarship to further his composition study with Ichiro Nodaira at the Internationale Sommerakademie der Universitaet Mozarteum Salzburg in Austria. Subsequently, he was awarded his Ph.D. in composition and music theory under a full postgraduate research assistantship at Hong Kong Baptist University where he worked with Christopher Keyes on his composition and theory portfolio.

Yu's versatile compositional oeuvre ranges from chamber, vocal, electroacoustic, and Chinese instrumental works to opera, concerti, choral works, and symphonies. Most of the works have been selected for premiere at various festivals and venues throughout the North and South America, Europe, and Asia such as The International Festival of Modern Art Two Days and Two Nights of New Music at the Odessa Philharmonic Theater (Ukraine), the Delhi International Arts Festival (India), the International Spring Festival at the Manoel Theatre (Malta), the International Summer Academy Mozarteum (Austria), the St. George International Music Festival (Greece), the Chernivtsi Philharmonic Hall (Ukraine), the Lugansk Philharmonic Hall (Ukraine), and the Uzhgorod Philharmonic Hall (Ukraine). Yu has also received commissions and/or performances from the Uzhgorod Philharmonic Orchestra (Ukraine), the

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Chernivtsi Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra (Ukraine), the Lugansk Philharmonic Orchestra (Ukraine), the Opera Hong Kong Chorus, the Transcarpathian Honored Academic Folk Choir (Ukraine), the Choral Fellows of the Harvard University Choir (U.S.), the New Score Chamber Orchestra (U.S.), the Onondaga Civic Symphony Orchestra (U.S.), Equinox Trio (Malta), MusicOrba (France), Duo 46 (U.S.), the Hong Kong Youth Choir, and the Hong Kong Chamber Orchestra.

Since 2007, Yu has received numerous awards, scholarships, grants, and funds from various organizations for both his academic and composition achievements including those from the Sir Edward Youde Memorial Council, the Culture Institute of Macau, and ASCAP, etc. Yu's music has been published by Edizioni Sconfinarte (Italy), Helm & Baynov Verlag (Germany), Scherzo Editions (Netherlands), Wehr's Music House (U.S.), and Zimbel Press (U.S.). His music is recorded on Zimbel Records (U.S.), the 2006 first album "Illusion" and the 2014 third album "Nine Dragons", and on Albany Records (U.S.), the 2012 second album "Surrealistic Soundscapes." As a music theorist, his music theory papers have been presented at various international music theory conferences and selected for publication in various scholarly book and peer reviewed international journals including New Sound (Serbia).

Apart from mainly being a composer, Yu remains an active performer. Since an early age, he has performed a diverse repertoire and at the age of 16 he made his debut as a concert pianist with Pan Asia Symphony Orchestra with two engagements and also earned a Licentiate Diploma (L.R.S.M.) in piano performance from the Royal Schools of Music. He has also collaborated with numerous vocalists and instrumentalists, premiering his own compositions as a pianist on stages locally and overseas. His interpretation of his own pieces is acclaimed by critics as "prowess at the keyboard" (Fanfare). Recently, Yu also appeared as a conductor, leading various ensembles, orchestras and choirs in public. As of fall 2012, he is the co-director of the HKIEd Orchestra. As a lecturer, since 2007 he has taught music theory and composition at various tertiary institutions including the Hong Kong Baptist University, the Community College of the City University of Hong Kong, and the Hong Kong Institute of Education.

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Reviews

"Yu's style forms an arresting and personal intermixing of tonal and atonal languages, with the musical colors and gestures of his native country infiltrating the mix..."-Fanfare

"I recommend this disc most heartily to those who find themselves absorbed in the music of our time"-Fanfare

"Yu's orchestral textures show a highly skilled hand at work, and the dramatic thrust is palpable: here is a composer with something to say and the means to say it." -Fanfare

"Yu's Octet for Strings is a succinctly structured, compelling composition, and could find a place as the ideal 21st century companion to the Mendelssohn Octet on a concert program." -Fanfare

"Yu's piano pieces display Yu's prowess at the keyboard....." -Fanfare

"Yu's First Symphony is a powerful work, and rather dark in timbre....." -Fanfare

"Yu's From the Depth, like the symphony, is a powerful one, even in its quieter moments, although it is cut from a more tonal cloth than is its predecessor." -Fanfare

"Yu's Disintegration for piano and electronics are all extremely evocative and effective, all the more so if you know the original Dali painting, which if you know anything about his work, you very likely do." -Fanfare

"In From the Depth, Yu hammers his point home with passionate tones."-Fanfare

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Catalogue Of Works

Donald Yu, Selected Compositions from 1999 to 2013

Orchestral Works:

- *Third Symphony "Heavenly Justice"* for large winds ensemble, organ and piano (2013)-18'
- *Blossoms* for brass ensemble (2012)-5'
- *Second Symphony "World"* for chorus, soloists and orchestra (2011)-20'
- *First Piano Concerto* for piano and chamber orchestra (2011)-25'
- *Air* for chamber orchestra (2011)-9'
- *From the Depth* for mixed chorus, soprano solo, and orchestra (2010)-11'
- *Apocalypse* for orchestra (2009)-8'30"
- *First Symphony* for orchestra (2008)-20'
- *Organ Concerto* for organ and chamber orchestra (2007)-16'
- *Reflections* for trombones choir for trombone Choir (2006)-10'
- *The Persistence of Memory* for orchestra (2006)-5'30"
- *Concert Overture "Hong Kong Night Scene Sketch"* for orchestra (2006)-3'
- *Symphonic Poem: Dreamscape* for orchestra (2002)-7'
- *Essay* for orchestra (2002)-10'
- *Black Hole* for orchestra (2002)-10'
- *Concerto* for horn and orchestra (2001)-15'

Chamber Works

- *String Quartet No. 2 "Head on Vortex"* (2013)-9'
- *Calligraphic Motion* for trombone (2013)-6'
- *In-between Play and Pluck* for pipa, Yanqin, and sanxian (2013)-7'
- *Buiseonrando* for trombone and piano (2013)-7'
- *Queen of the Night's Purple Sky* for cello and piano (2013)-8'
- *The Great Wall* for clarinet, bassoon and piano (2012)-5'
- *Spring Flower* for flute, clarinet, and bassoon (2012)-8'
- *Resurrectional Vision* for organ and trombone (2012)-5'
- *Fishing in Snow* for trumpet and piano (2012)-4'
- *Sign of Spring* for double bass and piano (2012)-6'
- *Flaming Passion* for flute, cello and piano (2012)-7'
- *Sunset in My Motherland* for clarinet, violin and piano (2011)-10'
- *Bloom* for Chinese dizi trio (2011)-4'30"
- *On Phoenix Terrace* for xiao and piano (2011)-6'
- *On Hearing a Monk from Shu Playing His Lute* for dizi, zheng, pipa, sanxian and erhu (2011)-7'
- *Breeze* for solo flute (2011)-3'
- *Secret* for solo violin (2011)-4'

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- *Fancy* for solo violin (2010)-8'
- *Chun (Spring)* for erhu, xiao, and qin (2010)-10'
- *Wind and Rain* for erhu and piano (2010)-5'30"
- *Recede and Surge* for clarinet and piano (2010)-8'30"
- *The Vermilion Bird* for violin and piano (2010)-7'
- *Primordial* for piano quintet (2009)-24'
- *Piano Trio No.1 "Moody Rain"* for flute, cello and piano(2009)-8'
- *Lamentation* for cello and piano (2009)-5'
- *The Maximum Speed of Raphael's Madonna* for flute and piano(2009)-5'
- *Duo* for cello and piano (2009)-7'
- *Octet* for strings (2009)-9'
- *Three Bagatelles* for violin and organ (2008)-10'
- *Memories* for brass quartet (2009)-6'
- *The Refraction of Shadow* for trombone and piano (2008)-7'
- *Brilliant Variations and Fantasy on a Chinese Folk Tune* for violin and piano (2008)-10'
- *Autumn Elegy II* for guitar, violin and piano (2006)-5'
- *Frankenstein* for organ/cello and piano (2006)-5'
- *Sonata "Echo"* for oboe solo (2006)-8'
- *Imaginary Conversation* for violin and piano (2005)-6'20"
- *Recalling from Dream* for trumpet and piano (2005)-4'
- *Duet "Argument"* for violin and cello (2004)-4'
- *Illusion* for oboe and piano (2003)-5'25"
- *Dark Rhapsody* for cello and piano (2003)-4'22"
- *In the Dark Mist* for clarinet and piano (2002)-6'
- *Apparition* for string quartet (2002)-8'30"
- *Choral: Recalling* for brass quintet (2002)-5'
- *String Quartet No.1 "Four Seasonal Sketches"* (2001)-9'
- *Fuga* for string quartet (2001)-4'
- *Four Souvenirs* for wind quintet (2001)-10'
- *Concert Rhapsody* for violin and piano (2001)-8'
- *Autumn Elegy* for violin and piano (2001)-5'
- *Dialogue* for two violins (2000)-10'

Arrangements:

- *Two Hymns Arrangements: The Gift of Love, Jesus Loved Each Little Child* for orchestra (Rearrangement) (2012)-6'
- *Jubilee Song* for orchestra (Rearrangement) (2010)-4'

Instrumental Solo and electro-acoustic Works

- *Divertimento "Chromatic Fantasy"* for organ (2013)-4'
- *Emotional Wave* for Piano Duo (2012)-7'
- *Tunneling* for piano and electronics (2012)-5'

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- *Quantum Mysticism* for piano (2011)-4'
- *Clouds in My Dream* for piano and electronics (2011)-7'
- *Contemplation* for piano (2010)-9'
- *Revelation Fantasy* for chamber organ (2010)-7'
- *Nine Dragons* for piano(2010)-7'
- *Three Sketches* for piano (2009)-6'
- *Disintegration* for piano and electronics (2008)-7'
- *Hallucination* for piano (2008)-15'
- *Three Characteristic Pieces* for piano duet (2007)-6'
- *Organic Synthesis* for piano (2007)-6'
- *Explosion* for piano (2007)-4'
- *In Memoriam of J.S. Bach* for harpsichord (2007)-4'15"
- *Twelve Preludes* for organ (2006)-15'
- *Mystical Aria* for organ (2006)-3'
- *Meditation* for organ (2006)-3'
- *Toccata Fantastique* for organ (2006)-3'
- *Etude "Birds"* for piano (2006)-3'
- *Shivering* for double bass (2005)-3'
- *Ode* for flute (2005)-3'
- *Two Pieces* for clarinet (2004)-6'30"
- *Four Little Piano Pieces* or piano (2004)-6'
- *Uncertainty* for piano (2004)-4'30"
- *Fantasy on "The Lady of Shalott"* for piano (2003)-6'41"
- *Ten Variations on a Chinese Folk Song "Home-sickness"* for piano (2003)-9'
- *Sonata No.5 "Ionization"* for piano (2003)-4'
- *Toccata* for piano (2003)-3'11"
- *Hell and Heaven* for piano (2003)-6'26"
- *Sonata No.4 "Chaos"* for piano (2002)-4'35"
- *Five Miniatures* for piano (2001)-5'
- *Sonata No.3 "Aggressive"* for piano (2001)-7'
- *Song without Words* for piano (2000)-4'
- *Sonata No.2 "Humoresque"* for piano (2000)-10'
- *Sonata No.1 "Grand Concert Fantasy"* for piano (1999-2000)-9'
- *Brilliant Humorous Waltz* for piano (2000)-3'
- *Cantabile* for violin (1999)-9'

Vocal, Choral Works and Opera

- *Ballades of Four Seasons* for soprano and chamber orchestra (2013)-10'
- *An One Act Opera "The Harmfulness of Tobacco"* (2012)-16'
- *Grass* for erhu, countertenor and piano (2012)-3'
- *Three Tang Poems* for a cappella choir (2012)-8'
 - *Parting Wish*
 - *Loneliness*
 - *A Moonlit Night*

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- *Drinking Alone Under the Moon* for mezzo-soprano and piano (2011)-4'
- *Hymn of Praise* for children choir (2011)-4'
- *Two sacred songs* for soprano and piano(2010)-6'
 - *God's Glory in Creation*
 - *The Law of the Lord*
- *Requiem Mass* for SATB mixed Choir, soprano solo, mezzo-soprano solo, tenor solo, bass solo, and piano (2009)-45'
- *A Chamber Opera in One Act "The Death of the Hired Man?"* for mezzo-soprano, tenor and piano (2009)-18'
- *Three Sensual Love Poems* for mezzo-soprano and piano (2009)-7'
 - *Love's Draft*
 - *Summer Doorway*
 - *Ancient Egyptian Lyric*
- *Oculus Non Vidit* for a cappella SATB mixed Choir (2008)-3'
- *Four Dramatic Chinese Poems* by Wong Kin Kwok for tenor and piano (2008)-12'
 - *Praying*
 - *The Shadow of My Dream*
 - *Tomorrow*
 - *The Creation*
- *Five Poems* by Yosano Akiko for soprano and piano (2008)-7'
 - *Tiny Golden Bird*
 - *Crossed My Mind*
 - *In the Soft Darkness*
 - *Not Speaking of the Way*
 - *Left On the Beach*
- *Five Poems* by Ya Hsien for baritone and piano (2007)-15'
 - *Zao Chen "The Morning"*
 - *Ge "Ode"*
 - *De Ceng Yin "The Recitation of the Stratum"*
 - *Si Wang Hang Xing "The Voyage of Death"*
 - *Yuan Yang Gan Jue "The Feeling of the Far Ocean"*
- *Four Lyrical Chinese Poems* by Wong Kin Kwok for soprano and piano (2007) 9'
 - *yang ming shan ye you "Wandering at the Yang Ming Mountain"*
 - *Wen Tian "Inquiring the Sky"*
 - *Qiu zhi shi luo "The Suffering in Autumn"*
 - *Xin Yu "The Deepest voice of My Heart"*
- *Five Love Poems from Ancient to Modern times* for soprano and piano (2007)15'
 - *Starlight*
 - *I used up this body*
 - *With a Flower*
 - *Collect Beads of Night*
 - *The Morning*
- *A Polish Poem "Everything"* for soprano and piano(2007)-4'

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- *Two Chinese Poems by Ya Hsien* for baritone and piano (2007)-6'
 - *Autumn Song*
 - *The Blue Well*
- *O Virtus Sapientiae* for a Capella (2007)-3'
- *Zwei Lyrisches Intermezzi* for soprano and piano (2006)-6'
 - *Ein Juengling liebt ein Maedchen*
 - *Du liebst mich nicht*
- *An Anthem: Our Father* for a Capella SATB choir(2006)-2'
- *Psalm No.63* for chorus SSA and piano (2005)-5'
- *Sonnet No.104 by William Shakespeare* for mezzo-soprano and piano (2003)-3'
- *Two Dramatic Art Songs* from Shakespeare and Byron for soprano and piano (2002)-8'
 - *Death from Measure for Measure III*
 - *I Saw Thee Weep*
- *Five Japanese Lyrics* for soprano and piano (2001)-15'
 - *Human Life*
 - *Snow*
 - *In a Beautiful Night*
 - *On the Shore of the Nagara River*
 - *Swallow*
- *Zwei Rosen* for baritone and Piano (2000)-3'
- *Ode on Nature* for soprano and piano (2000)-3'

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Discography

Donald Yu – Discography

Label: *Surrealistic Soundscapes* (Nov. 2012), TROY 1378, *Albany Records*, New York.

- *First Symphony* for orchestra (Lugansk Academic Philharmonic Orchestra)
- *From the Depth* for soprano, chorus and orchestra (Opera Hong Kong Chorus, Hong Kong Chamber Orchestra)
- *Octet* for strings (Ukraine Octet Players)
- *Sunset in My Homeland* for violin, clarinet, and piano (Equinox Trio)
- *Disintegration* for piano and electronics (pianist: Donald Yu)
- *Explosion* for piano (pianist: Donald Yu)
- *Two Poems by Ya Hsien* for baritone and piano (pianist: Donald Yu; baritone: Caleb Woo)
- *Breeze* for flute (flute: Edwin Yu)
- *The Maximum Speed of Raphael's Madonna* for flute and piano (pianist: Donald Yu; flute Bonnie Chun)

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