



# Violin Yang Liu



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Complete artist information including video, audio and interviews are available at [www.pricerubin.com](http://www.pricerubin.com)

## Yang Liu – Biography

Violinist Yang Liu combines outstanding technical command and sublime musicality in performances that have earned him numerous accolades in Asia, the United States and Europe. He is a former prize winner of the Twelfth International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow and a first prize winner of China's National Violin Competition. The newspaper Beijing Tonight called him "The best of the billion!" Mr. Liu plays a Guarneri made in 1741 on a generous loan from Stradivary Society and Bein and Fushi Rare Violins. His repertoire ranges from baroque to the most contemporary of works.

Yang Liu made his North American debut with the Atlanta Symphony orchestra, earning three nights of standing ovations for his performance of Paganini's First Violin Concerto. This success was followed by performances with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Robert Spano; Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra; Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra; Hagen Symphony Orchestra, Germany; and with the Odense Symphony Orchestra, Denmark, under Maestro Christoph Eberle in a highly successful tour throughout China of which a Chinese newspaper commented: "...The Carl Nielsen concerto was soloed by Chinese violinist Yang Liu who gave an absolutely sensational performance which touched the deepest spot of our hearts... Such a musician has been rarely heard for the past ten years..." His recent engagements include concerto performances with the Orquesta Filarmonica de Bogota, Colombia performing Barber's Violin Concerto under Maestro Amadio. He also completes a 5-city tour in China performing the Butterfly Concerto with Qingdao Symphony Orchestra, as part of the China-US cultural exchange initiated by Secretary of State of the US John Kerry, and chairman of the cultural department of China Mr. Luo. Orchestras repeatedly engage him for his appealing musicality and persona. He has performed multiple times with Ospa State Orchestra in Brazil, Qingdao Symphony Orchestra in China, East Oregon Symphony Orchestra. Under Maestro Alan Heatherington, he has performed the Brahms concerto with the Lake Forest Symphony Orchestra and the Nielsen and Sibelius concertos with the Ars Viva Symphony Orchestra.

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## Yang Liu – Biography

A highly sought after guest artist and teacher, he performed and taught for many years in Aspen Music Festival, Oficina Music Festival and Sesc Music Festival in Brazil, and the Great Wall Music Festival in China.

Yang Liu's earlier concert highlights included his solo appearances at the Algave International Music Festival in Portugal and at the prestigious Sala Sao Paulo in Brazil and in the US the Aspen Music Festival and the Ravinia Festival. He also toured in China with his wife. As one of the most successful international performing artists of Chinese origin, Yang Liu was honored to be chosen to be filmed for a documentary called "String of heart--Yang Liu" which features Yang's artistic life. This production was aired throughout China starting in February 2011. . His debut recording, "Song of Nostalgia," was released to critical acclaim. The CD represents his broad interest in music, including some of the most difficult repertoire written for violin and traditional Chinese music. This recording, along with many of his live performances, is frequently heard on National Public Radio.

Born in Tsingtao, China, Yang Liu made his concert debut at age 10 performing Sarasate's Zigeunerweisen with the NHK Orchestra in Tokyo. He also performed the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in a nationally televised live concert with the Central Philharmonic Orchestra in Beijing, which drew attention of the renowned violin pedagogue, Yao-Ji Lin. He began to study with Lin at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, and soon afterward, began to concertize as a soloist internationally. In pursuit of further musical development, Yang moved to the USA and continued his studies with Kurt Sassmannshaus and Dorothy DeLay at College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati. During his student years, he has been a frequent soloist at the Aspen Music Festival and with the Cincinnati-based Starling Chamber Orchestra, with which he toured China twice. He also was a featured performer in Starling's Emmy Award-winning educational video, Classical Quest concert tours have led him to Hong Kong, Taiwan, Germany, Denmark, France, Switzerland, Austria, Russia, Greece, China, Egypt and America.

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## Yang Liu – Press

*"Liu Yang wowed the opening-night audience with a scorching performance of Sarasate's Carmen Fantasy..."*

– The New York Times

*"Liu Yang, from China, with his dazzling talent, the audience cheered as Liu fired off a few rockets of his own...."*

– The Washington Post

*"The Nielsen brought the debut of an outstanding young Chinese violinist, Yang Liu. The concerto calls for an interesting mixture of virtuosity and expression, and Yang delivered on both counts. Technically incredibly adept, he made a strong impression. Yang and Spano seemed to have good rapport with each other and the orchestra."*

– St. Louis Post-Dispatch

*"Unbelievable... Yang, near the end of the third movement, he broke a string. Finishing a run, he turned to concertmaster, traded violins and finished the piece playing with incredible accuracy on a borrowed violin. The concerts here were Yang Liu's first in North America. He is amazing and will certainly be playing to rave reviews. We're quite lucky to have seen him and Gil Shaham in the same year."*

– Atlanta music critic

*"Leonhard Bernstein's 'serenade', ambitious, deep spirited work rather than one of the virtuoso standards. Yang, a violin wonder with racing fast fingers. He meets the depth and the tension, he jazzes and sings, masters the highly virtuosic attacks and integrates the complex rhythms to a richly felt musical confession. The orchestral musicians truly enjoy the dialogue with the sympathetic soloist..."*

– Kulture, Germany By Monika Willer

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## Yang Liu – Press

*"World-class violinist enravishes Audience to Thundering Applause. What makes Yang Liu's violin playing so fascinating? It penetrates the artist, for whom technical problems are not an issue, to the tips of the toes. He forms a unit with his valuable Amati and brandishes the bow like a swordsman does his foil. Dynamics are entirely unpretentiously built up to excess."*

– Westfälische Rundschau

### Qingdao Daily News

After intensive rounds of almost half a month, the winner of the fifth national violin competition in Shanghai goes to Central Conservatory student Yang Liu. At the closing ceremony, Yang Liu shows of his impeccable technique performing Tchaikovsky concerto, at the same time, demonstrate superb understanding of the piece. His playing received raving reviews and stunned the entire audience. This competition held every three years is the most prestigious competition. This year there are participants from 18 provinces, with 79 people entering the final round.

### Beijing news

After the competition, professor Lin congratulates his student Yang Liu who is the winner this year. Professor Lin has taught many who won numerous competitions in China and Abroad. He comments that, the competition this year is of the highest level and most participants. He believes Yang Liu has the talent and great potential. The jury is impressed with Yang Liu's sweet sound, pure musicality and impeccable technique. Yang Liu said, "he owes this all to his teacher, the school and his mother", he continues, "I will work harder and participate in international competitions"

### Zhu Hai regional newspaper

Virtuoso violinist Yang Liu will perform with world renowned Danish orchestra, the Odense Symphony Orchestra tonight in Zhu Hai concerto hall. Yang Liu resides in the US and performs more with the orchestras in the US. This is his first collaboration with the top orchestra of Denmark, the Odense Symphony

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## Yang Liu – Press

Orchestra. They will perform violin concerto by Danish composer Nielsen. He is very excited with this collaboration, performing piece with the same origin as the orchestra. Yang Liu also comments that “the orchestra and I have built the most incredible rapport”.

Regarding violin education for the young, Yang Liu emphasizes on keeping the children interested, and focuses on musical cultivation, instead of just going through repertoire. He contrasts between the Asian culture and the western, where as the latter concentrates more on children’s self motivation, well rounded education that leads to inspiration.

Elle magazine:

A Stradivarius violin “the Lady Tennant” was sold at record high of 1.3 million in 2005 at an auction in New York. The buyer dedicates this violin to Yang Liu, who describes this violin “with soul, needs time to get to know her to play out the best of her”

Yang Liu fell in love with violin at age 4, entered Beijing Central Conservatory at 9, when he was 10 he already astonished the audience of Tokyo. He went to US to study at 23, by the of 30 he has won numerous awards. He believes violin is his calling. Ever since he was four, when he heard the violin playing in the neighborhood, he insists on taking lessons and becomes a violinists. He would cry until he gets his way. To be able to continue with violin studies, it takes a lot of support from family, especially financial commitment. At the time, Yang Liu lived in an underprivileged environment. A bottle of pop drink is 1/10 of their monthly rent. His mother rewarded him a bottle at the last final exam at the conservatory. He saved it and finished the drinks in 3 settings. His hard work and talent finally gave path for him to study in the US. Since then, he has appeared as soloist with many orchestras. He said, “fame is not something that I pursue. Even if I do not make a career, I would still love playing the violin. The more I perform, the more I realize the vastness of the sea of music. The more I should work hard and cultivate”.

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MAX MAGAZINE COVER STORY



# Symphonic union

Couple to perform classics at Bodenhamer Auditorium

By Aniesa Holmes • Daily News Staff

**H**usband and wife duo violinist Yang Liu and pianist I-Hsuan Tsai combine romance and harmony when they present their unique classical concert performance on Oct. 17 at 7:30 p.m. in Coastal Carolina Community College's Bodenhamer Auditorium.

The performance, which will consist of arrangements from great composers such as Mozart, Felix Mendelssohn, Chopin, Franz Schubert and Antonin Dvorak, will offer an evening of several short yet whimsical pieces.

"Our concert is a nice addition to the already few numbers of classical music happenings in Jacksonville," Tsai said in an e-mail. "This year in particular, we are preparing a program that is easier to listen to — but certainly not easier to play — which includes arrangement of familiar classical tunes, virtuosic and showy pieces."

Tsai felt that the free concert would also introduce new audiences to a style of music that she has known all of her life.

"We are hoping that the program will provide a nice evening for those who are rarely exposed to classical music," she said.

Liu and Tsai first met while both were students at the University of Cincinnati in 2003. They married in

### Want to go?

The Yang Liu and I-Hsuan Tsai classical concert will take place on Oct. 17 at 7:30 p.m. in Coastal Carolina Community College's Bodenhamer Auditorium. The concert is free and open to the public. For more information, call 910-938-6315.

2004 in Jacksonville while Tsai was teaching piano classes at Coastal, and they performed their first concert together locally that same year.

"Music collaboration in a way really is like a friendship or even marriage," Tsai said. "A good performance is when two people think like one, and you breathe together and agree on the same things, if not, that's when rehearsals come into place to work things out."

Born in QingDao, China, Yang Liu made his concert debut at age 10, performing with the NHK Orchestra in Tokyo. He moved to the United States at age 22 and has performed throughout Asia, Europe and Africa. He has also won China's National Violin Competition and the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow.

Tsai, who was born in Taipei, Taiwan, said that she has admired classical music since she was a child.

"I started piano lessons when I

was 6," she said. "My older sister started hers when she was 6, and I just liked to do what my sister does and I enjoyed seeing her perform on stage and dreamed of myself doing the same thing one day."

Tsai received her Bachelor of Music degree in 1996, and Master of Music in piano and bassoon at Indiana University in Bloomington in 1999. She also earned her Doctor of Musical Arts degree in piano at University of Cincinnati. Tsai said that her years at Coastal were some of her most memorable times as a piano instructor.

"When I was teaching in Jacksonville, I was amazed with the support of art and music from the Fine Arts Department," Tsai said. "It is hard to believe that many colleges still do not have as good a grand piano as the one CCC has."

Tsai said that she and Liu will share future performances in Chicago, where they currently live, as well as Brazil and Portugal. With their vast musical backgrounds and love for classical music, Tsai said that she enjoys the advantage of mixing her music with her marriage.

"The best thing about performing with my husband is that we get to travel to places together," she said. "We can rehearse anytime we want — which can be both a good or bad thing."

MAX ENTERTAINMENT MAGAZINE • Oct. 9-15, 2009 • [www.maxmag.com](http://www.maxmag.com)

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## Musicians return to city where they fell in love with a new reason to perform

By ANIESA HOLMES  
Daily News Staff

It was more than 8 years ago when classical musicians I-Hsuan Tsai and Yang Liu first met and fell in love in Jacksonville. The couple has experienced many exciting new changes since then, but their love for providing education and entertainment to the community remains a favored tradition. The couple will return to the area on March 18 for a special concert at 3 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church in Jacksonville. With Tsai on piano and Liu on violin, the concert will feature classical works by Ravel, Mozart, Gluck, Sarasate, Wieniawski, Beethoven, and Rachmaninoff.

Now the parents of 3-year-old Julian and 1-year-old Isaac, their focus on music has shifted, but they look forward to introducing residents of all ages to the beauty and complexity of classical music.

"Performing in Jackson-



Pianist I-Hsuan Tsai, left, and violinist Yang Liu are renowned classical musicians as well as husband and wife. The two first met in Jacksonville more than eight years ago, and were married here as well.

ville is always a special trip for us because Yang and I got married there and we had a lot of memories there," Tsai said in an email. "The memories continued to build each time we returned. We also felt special because it is not a place that a lot of people are familiar with, let alone be to."

Each visit to Jacksonville creates new memories for the couple, and they now bring their sons and parents along for the experience. Although it is a privilege to perform together, Tsai said it also comes with challenges.

"Performing with one's

spouse is never as easy as one might think," Tsai said. "It is difficult to separate personal issues from the professional activities. But each time we mature and gain more understanding with each other and in music."

Tsai said that Liu continues an active career traveling the globe as soloist, recently performing with a Danish orchestra in China tour and has performed and taught in music festivals in Brazil. The two will also perform in China again in summer. She still teaches full time in VanderCook college of Music, while Liu remains at Roosevelt Uni-

### WANT TO GO?

I-Hsuan Tsai and Yang Liu will perform in concert on March 18 at 3 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church. Admission is free and open to the public. Coastal's music department faculty invite individuals to apply for participation in a special Violin Master Class with Liu on March 19 from 7 to 9 p.m. at Bodenhamer Auditorium. The deadline date for applications is March 9. Applications are available by e-mailing nakamaea@coastalcarolina.edu. Applicants will be notified of selection for participation on March 12.

versity and has taken a new position as head of string department of Columbia College of Chicago, preparatory division. Tsai said that in even in the midst of their busy careers, she is pleased to say that her family and faith always come first.

"Two things have shifted my priorities. One is becoming a mother and one is becoming a Christian," Tsai said. "I put career and music first before and feel that this is the most meaningful thing to do, but now, God and family comes first, and I'm less active in performing and gladly so. Making music should be all about serving people and pleasing God, rather than seeking personal glory and pride."

In conjunction with Coastal Carolina Community College's Music Department where Tsai formerly worked, Liu is also inviting aspiring musicians to apply for participation in a special Violin Master Class on March 19 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the college's Bodenhamer Auditorium. Applications

for participation will be accepted until March 9 and applicants will be notified of selection for participation on March 12.

"There are a few ways to share music, one is to perform and another one is to educate. That is how the master class came about," Tsai said. "Young musicians get to have the opportunity to play for professionals who then offer advice and guidance. The students can have a different point of view and maybe some inspirations from this."

As they have aspired for the past 8 years, Liu and Tsai will continue to make music together and build a relationship between the community and art of classical music.

"Our expectation for the recital is merely enjoyment of music, meeting old friends and building happy memories," Tsai said.

Contact Aniesa Holmes at 910-219-8473 or aholmes@freedomenc.com. Visit jdnews.com to comment.

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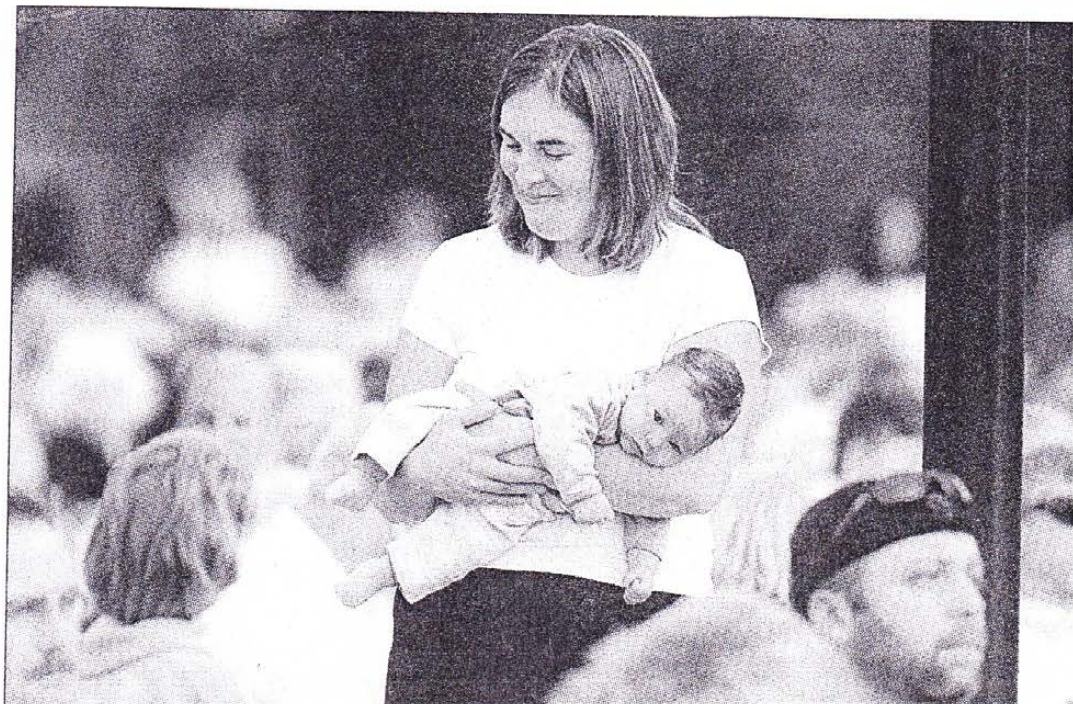
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## THE MAGIC OF MUSIC



**ABOVE:** Yang Liu and his "soul mate," a \$2 million Stradivarius violin, bring Wieniawski's Violin Concerto No. 2 in D Minor, Opus 22, to the crowd at the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra Concert in the Park at Sauk Trails Plaza on Wednesday. The violin, on loan to the Chinese musician, is the most expensive instrument ever purchased at auction.

**LEFT:** Treena Hoffman of Madison rocks her 2-month-old son, Tyler, to the strains of a Verdi overture on a mild summer night.



will discuss the fall  
12:30 to 1 p.m.

# A&E

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THURSDAY, MAY 30, 2002 **E3**

Next Wave | Who's up and coming

## Tchaikovsky competitor comes from China, with talent



MIKE SIMONS for The Cincinnati Enquirer  
**Violinist Yang Liu**, who lives in Clifton, on the campus of the University of Cincinnati.

By Janelle Gelfand  
*The Cincinnati Enquirer*

He's been called "the best of a billion."

When Chinese violinist, Yang Liu, came to the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music to study, he had already performed the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in a live televised concert for an audience of millions, played concerts in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Europe and Russia, and won first prize in China's National Violin Competition.

By this time next week, Mr. Liu, 26, will be in Moscow competing in the Rolls Royce of contests, the 12th International

Tchaikovsky Competition.

What makes him so good is what Kurt Sassmannshaus, his teacher at CCM, calls a complete package: "A stupendous technique, a great personal flair onstage, and really sublime musicality. The musical ideas he comes up with are very unique and always very polished by the time he presents them."

Mr. Liu has worked for this moment since age 7.

"My mother warned me that to be a musician, you're going to have a very hard life. But I made my decision anyway," he says with a quiet laugh. "I knew right away I wanted to go to Central Conservatory, one of the best conservatories in

China."

He was born in Qingdao. His mother, a musician whose own career was interrupted by the Cultural Revolution, handed her son a violin when he was 4. But, unable to find a tiny quarter-size violin small enough for a toddler, it was a half-size violin.

"It was too big. It hurt my hand. So when I was 7, I started again," Mr. Liu says. He was instantly smitten. When he was 8, the family moved to Beijing so he could study with a renowned teacher, Yao-Ji Lin.

At age 10, he performed Sarasate's showpiece, *Zigeunerweisen* with the

Now he's being noticed in the United States. In January, he made his American debut performing Paganini's Violin Concerto No. 1 with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. In October, he'll perform the Nielsen Violin Concerto with Robert Spano and the St. Louis Symphony. Modest and serious, he has a fun side, too, one that likes to play pool (his favorite game is snooker) and go out for Chinese food.

He hopes for a career in both the U.S. and China — "Because I really cannot live without Chinese food!" he says.

E-mail

## PERFORMING ARTS

### Yang Liu

The buzz at the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage concert by violinist Yang Liu wasn't necessarily for the player — it was for the instrument. The Lady Tennant, a violin by Antonio Stradivari, is the most expensive instrument ever sold at auction, going for \$2,032,000 at Christie's in April. The anonymous buyer gave it to the Stradivari Society, which then lent it to Liu.

Liu had the instrument for only three weeks when he took the stage Wednesday evening, and it seemed the two had not yet found their perfect fit.

The balance between violin and piano was a little off, particularly during Beethoven's "Spring" Sonata. The violin lines were clearly articulated, but sometimes overpowered by the piano.

Liu had a tendency to be overly meticulous. Everything was clean, but there was little feeling of spontaneity. The Bach Chaconne in D Minor was lovely, but Prokofiev's Second Violin Sonata was the best example of the capabilities of both the player and the instrument. The fast second movement was more vibrant than the earlier repertoire, and the violin responded beautifully to the strident playing necessary for Prokofiev.

Stradivarius instruments are remarkable, but the player and the violin still must get to know each other. This was the first performance for Liu and his Lady Tennant, but it certainly won't be the last.

— Claire Marie Blaustein

### Joss Stone



KENNEDY CENTER

Yang Liu performed with a Stradivarius on the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage.

join in on the choruses and exclaimed, "It's really not that hard to sing!" If that were truly the case, then perhaps another, more seasoned performer should have taken Stone's place onstage.

— Catherine P. Lewis

### Harmonia

The sixth annual Washington Jewish Music Festival concluded on Wednesday evening with a celebratory concert that looked not

### Jimmy Buffett

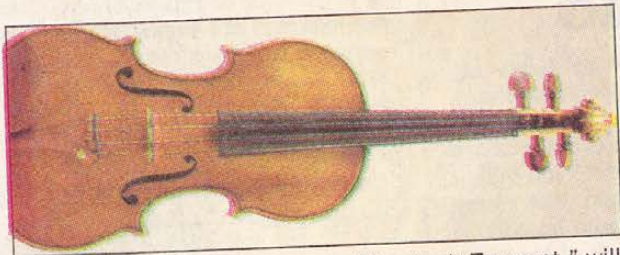
The giant airborne shark that meandered into Nissan Pavilion on Wednesday night is an apt metaphor for Jimmy Buffett and the Coral Reefer Band: oversize, goofy and entertaining.

What the flying fish didn't have in common with the 58-year-old troubadour: It meandered. Buffett and his cast of more than a dozen performers presented a spectacle as tightly scripted as "Cats" — complete with enough local references to make it clear the man does his homework between tanning sessions. Every song was announced, one way or another (in the case of "Fins," by shark balloon), giving the Parrotheads that much more time to wriggle their grass skirts in anticipation.

Buffett's voice has lost none of its workmanlike efficiency over thirty-odd years. But if he's a good guitarist, it's hard to tell, since the sound of his acoustic was engulfed by the merry, melodic din, which included such tropical touches as steel drum and ukulele.

He's a brilliant musical ethnographer, though. The show included not only his own famous tales of boozing, boating and bronzing, but also like-minded songs by others, from Crosby, Stills and Nash's "Southern Cross" to Van Morrison's playful "Brown-Eyed Girl." A range of songs from his 1974 album "A-1-A" to his 2004 "License to Chill" showed his impressive consistency. The only real surprise was a video tribute to Johnny Carson, featuring Buffett reminiscing about his appearances on Carson's show.

Come to think of it, Carson's a better analogy for Buffett than that shark was. The concert provided cozy reassurance to people



This Stradivarius violin, known as "The Lady Tennant," will be played for the first time in 25 years by Yang Liu.

## 'Best of a billion' gets rare \$2 million violin

By Janelle Gelfand  
*Enquirer staff writer*

When he came to the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music in 1999, violinist Yang Liu, 29, was known as "best of a billion" in China, his native country. Now the Cincinnati-trained virtuoso will be playing one of the best violins in the world.

A \$2.03 million Stradivarius known as "The Lady Tennant," the most expensive musical instrument ever purchased at auction, will go to the former UC student who came to the United States to study with Kurt Sassmann-



Liu

shaus and Dorothy DeLay.

In April, an unidentified American collector purchased the rare 1699 masterpiece at

an auction at Christie's for the record-breaking price.

On Friday, the Chicago-based Stradivari Society chose to bestow Liu with the instrument, which is on loan indefinitely.

"I was very surprised and happy," says Liu, who moved to Chicago eight months ago.

See **VIOLIN**, Page **C5**

The Topeka Capital Journal 4/15/2014

# Violin-piano duo closes community concert season

## Tuesday night's performance will mark end of 83rd season

By Bill Blankenship  
bill.blankenship@cjonline.com

As it closes its 83rd season with a performance Tuesday night by a violin-and-piano duo, the Topeka Community Concert Association will begin selling subscriptions to season No. 84.

Yang and Olivia Liu will perform a mix of classic repertoire and distinctive Chinese compositions at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in White Concert Hall on the campus of Washburn University.

Violinist Yang Liu is an internationally acclaimed soloist and winner of Moscow's prestigious Tchaikovsky Competition. Olivia Liu is an award-winning

concert pianist and scholar. A chance meeting when he served as her page-turner at a concert led to romance, a wedding and a career of duo performances at renowned venues, including the Ravinia Festival in Chicago, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., the Oficina Music Festival in Brazil, the Algarve Music Festival in Portugal and throughout China.

In addition to concertizing, both Lius teach at the college level, he at Roosevelt University's Chicago College of Performing Arts and she at the VanderCook College of Music, also in Chicago.

Non-season subscribers who want to attend Tues-

day's concert can purchase a single ticket at the door for \$35. Washburn students are admitted free with valid ID.

Those attending Tuesday's concert also can purchase tickets for the just-announced 2014-15 season of five concerts:

■ Sept. 28: Hector Olivera, an Argentina-born concert organist who has performed around the world.

■ Oct. 19: Umi Garrett, a 13-year-old piano prodigy who performed on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" at age 8.

■ Jan. 9, 2015: Alex DePue, a classically trained violinist, and Mexican guitarist Miguel De Hoyos.

■ Feb. 6, 2015: WindSync, a Houston-based wind quintet known for incorporating costumes and choreography



SUBMITTED

A concert by the piano violin duo of Yang and Olivia Liu at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at White Concert Hall will close out the 83rd season of the Topeka Community Concert Association performances.

into its performances.

■ April 11, 2015: Four Celtic Voices, four women who sing Celtic songs while accompanying

themselves on harp, whistle and other instruments.

All of the concerts will begin at 7:30 p.m. in White Concert Hall.

A regular season subscription is \$75, with an early-bird special of \$71 available through May 31.

Seniors 65 and older can buy a season ticket for \$57 through May 31 or \$60 thereafter. Students age 5 to 21 pay \$15 with a \$1 discount for early purchase.

There also are two types of family membership. For \$155 (\$147 through May 31), two adults and all students in the household can attend all five concerts. A single family membership, good for one adult and all of the household's students, costs \$76 through May 31, then \$80.

For more information about season subscriptions, go to [www.topekacca.org](http://www.topekacca.org) or call Gary Johnson at 267-7913.

Contact **Bill Blankenship** at (785) 295-1284 or @TCJ\_AandE on Twitter.

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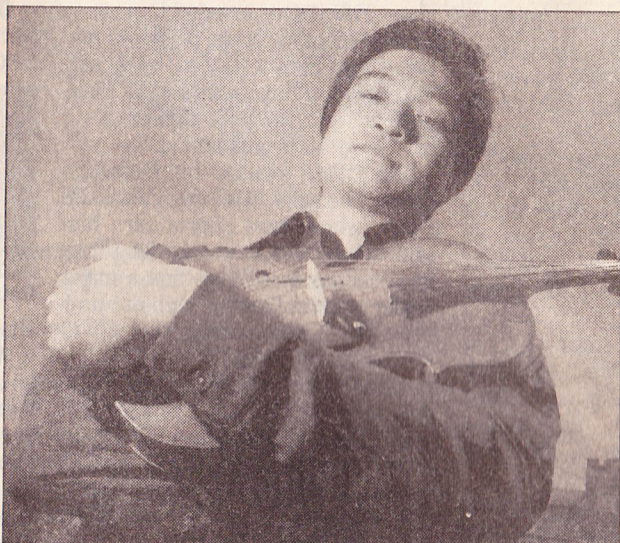
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THURSDAY, MAY 30, 2002 **E3**

Next Wave | Who's up and coming

Cincinnati Enquirer

## Tchaikovsky competitor comes from China, with talent



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By this time next week, Mr. Liu, 26, will be in Moscow competing in the Rolls Royce of contests, the 12th International

Tchaikovsky Competition.

What makes him so good is what Kurt Sassmannshaus, his teacher at CCM, calls a complete package: "A stupendous technique, a great personal flair onstage, and really sublime musicality. The musical ideas he comes up with are very unique and always very polished by the time he presents them."

Mr. Liu has worked for this moment since age 7.

"My mother warned me that to be a musician, you're going to have a very hard life. But I made my decision anyway," he says with a quiet laugh. "I knew right away I wanted to go to Central Conservatory, one of the best conservatories in

China."

He was born in Qingdao. His mother, a musician whose own career was interrupted by the Cultural Revolution, handed her son a violin when he was 4. But, unable to find a tiny quarter-size violin small enough for a toddler, it was a half-size violin.

"It was too big. It hurt my hand. So when I was 7, I started again," Mr. Liu says. He was instantly smitten. When he was 8, the family moved to Beijing so he could study with a renowned teacher, Yao-Ji Lin.

At age 10, he performed Sarasate's showpiece, *Zigeunerweisen* with the NHK Orchestra in Tokyo.

Now he's being noticed in the United States. In January, he made his American debut performing Paganini's Violin Concerto No. 1 with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. In October, he'll perform the Nielsen Violin Concerto with Robert Spano and the St. Louis Symphony.

Modest and serious, he has a fun side, too, one that likes to play pool (his favorite game is snooker) and go out for Chinese food.

He hopes for a career in both the U.S. and China — "Because I really cannot live without Chinese food!" he says.

E-mail  
jgelfand@enquirer.com

letter will discuss the fall  
Com 12:30 to 1 p.m.

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eds

MIKE SIMONS for The Cincinnati Enquirer  
Violinist Yang Liu, who lives in Clifton, on the campus of the University of Cincinnati.

STYLE

Washington Post

# PERFORMING ARTS

## Yang Liu

The buzz at the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage concert by violinist Yang Liu wasn't necessarily for the player — it was for the instrument. The Lady Tennant, a violin by Antonio Stradivari, is the most expensive instrument ever sold at auction, going for \$2,032,000 at Christie's in April. The anonymous buyer gave it to the Stradivari Society, which then lent it to Liu.

Liu had the instrument for only three weeks when he took the stage Wednesday evening, and it seemed the two had not yet found their perfect fit.

The balance between violin and piano was a little off, particularly during Beethoven's "Spring" Sonata. The violin lines were clearly articulated, but sometimes overpowered by the piano.

Liu had a tendency to be overly meticulous. Everything was clean, but there was little feeling of spontaneity. The Bach Chaconne in D Minor was lovely, but Prokofiev's Second Violin Sonata was the best example of the capabilities of both the player and the instrument. The fast second movement was more vibrant than the earlier repertoire, and the violin responded beautifully to the strident playing necessary for Prokofiev.

Stradivarius instruments are remarkable, but the player and the violin still must get to know each other. This was the first performance for Liu and his Lady Tennant, but it certainly won't be the last.

— Claire Marie Blaustein



Yang Liu performed with a Stradivarius on the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage.

join in on the choruses and exclaimed, "It's really not that hard to sing!" If that were truly the case, then perhaps another, more seasoned performer should have taken Stone's place onstage.

— Catherine P. Lewis

## Harmonia

The sixth annual Washington Jewish Music Festival concluded on Wednesday evening with a celebratory concert that looked not

## Jimmy Buffett

The giant airborne shark that meandered into Nissan Pavilion on Wednesday night is an apt metaphor for Jimmy Buffett and the Coral Reefer Band: oversize, goofy and entertaining.

What the flying fish didn't have in common with the 58-year-old troubadour: It meandered. Buffett and his cast of more than a dozen performers presented a spectacle as tightly scripted as "Cats" — complete with enough local references to make it clear the man does his homework between tanning sessions. Every song was announced, one way or another (in the case of "Fins," by shark balloon), giving the Parrotheads that much more time to wriggle their grass skirts in anticipation.

Buffett's voice has lost none of its workmanlike efficiency over thirty-odd years. But if he's a good guitarist, it's hard to tell, since the sound of his acoustic was engulfed by the merry, melodic din, which included such tropical touches as steel drum and ukulele.

He's a brilliant musical ethnographer, though. The show included not only his own famous tales of boozing, boating and bronzing, but also like-minded songs by others, from Crosby, Stills and Nash's "Southern Cross" to Van Morrison's playful "Brown-Eyed Girl." A range of songs from his 1974 album "A-1-A" to his 2004 "License to Chill" showed his impressive consistency. The only real surprise was a video tribute to Johnny Carson, featuring Buffett reminiscing about his appearances on Carson's show.

Come to think of it, Carson's a better analogy for Buffett than that shark was. The concert provided cozy reassurance to people

COMMUNITY CONCERT

The

# Association brings husband-and-wife duo Yang and Olivia Liu to Cullman

STAFF REPORTS

Hal Linden's well-attended September season opener for the Cullman Community Concert Association ought to be a hard act to follow.

But that's why organizers scheduled husband-and-wife powerhouse, Yang and Olivia Liu, for the season's second performance.

The Lius, already decorated musicians in their native China before meeting up and eventually marrying after a stint at the University of Cincinnati, will bring their virtuosic onstage rapport to the Betty Leeth Haynes Theater this Tuesday at Wallace State Community College to mark the concert association's second performance of the still-young 2013-2014 season.

Known for their joyful and technically flawless performances of both classical and traditional Chinese music, violinist Yang Liu and his wife, pianist Olivia, decided as students to team up in life and in making music together.

Their mutual love of music has carried them through appearances at the Kennedy Center, the Oficina Music Festival in Brazil, the Algarve Music Festival in Portugal and other major venues and festivals throughout the world. Yang has also had success as a soloist and recording artist, with his critically-acclaimed debut *Song of Nostalgia*. Both he and Olivia are also professors at Chicago-area colleges.

While in school, each won gold medals in Chinese national competitions; Yang also earned honors in the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. Each is a versatile and accomplished musician. But together, said Community Concert Association board president Kathy Scruggs, the Lius create something special.

"Part of what our members appreciate about the Cullman



Yang and Olivia Liu

CONTRIBUTE

Association is our longstanding roots; our commitment to bringing the very best of the classical performing arts to Cullman," said Scruggs.

"As in recent years, we're bringing an incredibly diverse lineup to our area this season, so that people can experience the kind of music and artistry that they'd otherwise gladly travel much greater distances for a chance to see. But Yang and Olivia Liu represent the

Community Concert Association, of bringing top-tier classical musicianship into our community.

"It's something that doesn't come around often, which makes it that much more of an honor to be able to share artists like the Lius with Cullman."

Yang and Olivia Liu will perform at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Betty Leeth Haynes Theater on the campus of Wallace State Community College.

Association's 2013-2014 season including information on concerts, dates, season subscriptions and single-concert ticket pricing, visit [www.cullmancommunityconcertassociation.com](http://www.cullmancommunityconcertassociation.com). Students with a valid ID can obtain tickets for half price at the door, and for \$20 below the regular \$55 adult price for the season. Unless sold out, tickets can be purchased on-site at the time of each concert. Credit and debit cards are accepted.

# Classical 'duo' returns to Coastal

Former CCCC music instructor and his wife will perform Friday

FROM COASTAL CAROLINA

Coastal Carolina Community College will welcome back pianist I-Hsuan Tsai and violinist Liu Yang for a performance Friday at 8 p.m. in Bodenhamer Auditorium.

Tsai, a former music instructor at Coastal, and Yang, performed at the college last April. The talented duo will perform pieces by Fritz Kreisler, Eugene Ysaye, Franz Schubert, Henryk Wieniawski, Johannes Brahms and Sergei Prokofiev. The concert is free and open to the public.

A lot has happened with Tsai and Yang since the spring of 2004. In addition to moving, getting new jobs teaching, and touring, Tsai and Yang have become a "duo" in the real sense of the word. They got married in December.

In an e-mail, Tsai recalled some of the professional highlights of the past year. The couple moved to Chicago, where Tsai is an assistant professor at Vandercook College of Music, an institution specifically for training music teachers. Yang is a professor of the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University, a prestigious

**WANT TO GO?** Pianist I-Hsuan Tsai and violinist Liu Yang will perform Friday at 8 p.m. in Bodenhamer Auditorium at Coastal Carolina Community College. The show is free and open to the public.

music school where members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra teach. He is working side by side with several world-renowned violinists.

Yang has founded a Rare Violin Concert Series in which he and Tsai play together once or twice a month, introducing different rare violins provided by the Stradivari Society. Born in 1644, Antonio Stradivari is still considered one the finest violin makers in history. Nearly all of his violins are still in use today and the most expensive one is valued at up to \$6 million.

Yang is currently playing an Amati (Stradivari's teacher) violin, which was made in 1630 and is on loan from the Stradivari Society. He will be playing the Amati during his concert at Coastal.

Yang and Tsai appeared live on WFMT, the classic music radio station in Chicago, and performed in Dame Myra Hess Concert Series, a classical concert series in Chicago's cultural center. They toured in Mexico and performed the opening concert at the America Film Festival in Puerto Vallarta. They also gave a recital at Roo-

sevelt University in Chicago. Yang has performed with the Highland Park String Orchestra and the Chicago Ensemble, and he spent two weeks as a faculty member and soloist at the International Festival in Brazil.

Future plans include a performance by the duo at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., which will be broadcast live on NPR. They will also perform during a music concert series at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago, and during a lecture recital "Zen and Music," part of the Fazioli Piano Series. Fazioli is another extremely exquisite instrument made in Italy. It's the most expensive kind of piano. Tsai prefers the sound of the Fazioli to the Steinway, but said the price is sky high.

Yang and Tsai will spend this summer on the faculty at the Musicorda Summer Music Festival at Mount Holyoke College. Yang will also be a guest artist at the Great Wall Music Festival in Beijing, the International Violin Competition in QingDao, China, where Yang was born, and with the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra.

But it's not all work and no play for the duo. Since moving into their apartment in downtown Chicago, Tsai and Yang have taken up ping pong as a leisure activity and frequently visit Chinatown, where Tsai says they eat too much.

For more on the show, call Coastal's public information office at 938-6792.



**Two of a kind**  
I-Hsuan Tsai, a faculty member and soloist at Coastal Carolina Community College, and violinist Liu Yang will revisit Jacksonville for a rare performance.

The Strad  
Oct 2005

V.116 no. 1386

Launch Pad

THE STRAD'S PICK OF UP-AND-COMING MAKERS AND MUSICIANS



NICOLAS GILLES  
KATIA ORAY



MARTLOU WHIZ  
YANG LIU

**AT THE AGE OF 28, LUTHIER NICOLAS GILLES ALREADY HAS** a handful of illustrious commissions. He has made a violin for Vadim Tchijik, the young Russian soloist who teaches at the Paris Conservatoire. 'He will make a CD on my violin next year, a disc of Prokofiev chamber pieces for Lyrinx.' Honggang Li, violist with the Shanghai Quartet and judge at the 2004 Violin Society of America (VSA) competition, commissioned an instrument from Gilles because he was so impressed with his award-winning viola. 'He likes the quality of the sound,' says Gilles. 'It's a very dark sound for a viola.'

A prize-winning classical guitarist when he was younger, Gilles was seized with the idea of becoming a luthier when he went to see a maker to buy a new guitar. 'I had always loved woodwork, and this seemed like a good way of mixing my two passions. There was only a school for making violins, not guitars, in France, but I fell in love with the shape and the sound of the violin. And it's so nice to build up a relationship with the musicians who play my instruments.'

Gilles's violas are based on an Andrea Guarneri, the 1676 'Conte Vitale'. 'I do have my own styling, though – the scroll is smaller so that the viola is less heavy. It makes it easier to play.' For violins, he turns to the instruments by 'del Gesù' of around 1735 and he uses a Gofriller model for cellos. 'My instruments all bear the features of the models I use, but if you look more closely you can see my personality in the shape and the sound. That's very important.'

Gilles sources maple for the tops of his instruments from the Italian Alps, the Val di Fiemme, north of Milan; the back, ribs and neck he makes from maple from the Balkans. 'It's a very responsive wood, very elastic – it gives back all the energy from the top of the instrument.' He makes all the varnishes himself. 'My workshop has a very tall chimney which makes this possible – it takes a week to cook them and it means I can get on with instrument making while I'm cooking up the varnish.'

Catherine Nelson

**NINETEEN-YEAR-OLD VIOLINIST YANG LIU'S LAST INSTRUMENT** was a Nicolò Amati. However, it was a bit large for him, so now he has a Strad instead. And not just any Strad. Earlier this year he was loaned, by an American collector, the 'Lady Tennant', which was auctioned at Christie's New York in April for over \$2m, the highest price ever paid for a musical instrument at auction.

The loan was brokered by the Stradivari Society, which was also responsible for the Amati, and which represents, says Liu, one of the main reasons for his move last year to Chicago from China. Another was his post as professor of violin at Roosevelt University. 'The Stradivari Society not only provided me with great instruments,' says Liu, 'it also gives me opportunities to meet conductors and give concerts.'

I feel a responsibility to play music they have never heard. They may not like it the first time but they will the second

Liu currently gives 30 to 40 performances a year, in the US, Europe and China. He is keen to bring Chinese music to the West and has a fruitful collaboration with the composer and pianist Gao Ping, who has written two concertos for him. 'Chinese music is very different. It focuses more on philosophy than technique. I am very influenced by Zen. I have given lecture recitals on Zen and music.' He is also introducing Western music to China. 'Classical music in China has really opened up, but the repertoire is limited. I feel a responsibility to play music they have never heard. They may not like it the first time but they will the second.'

Tully Potter

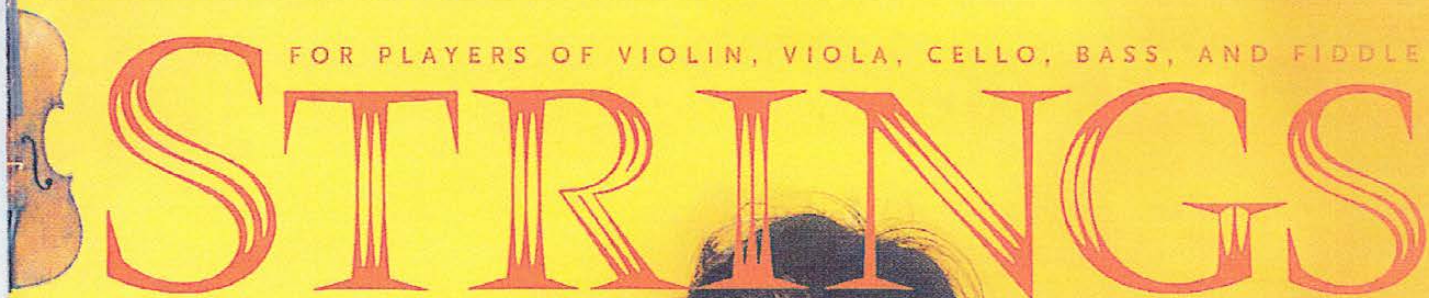
**BORN** Montpellier, France, 1977  
**STUDIED** Ecole Nationale de Lutherie, Mirecourt, France; Newark School of Violin Making, UK  
**PRIZES** VSA competition in 2004: gold medal for quartet of instruments; gold for viola; silver for cello workmanship

**BORN** Qingdao, China, 1976  
**PRIZES** China National Violin Competition 1993: first prize; Tchaikovsky Violin Competition 2002: prizewinner  
**DEBUT CD** *Song of Nostalgia*, featuring Western and Chinese music (Starling Project Foundation, www.starling.org)

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FOR PLAYERS OF VIOLIN, VIOLA, CELLO, BASS, AND FIDDLE

# STRINGS



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**Strange Stand Partners**

The **ST. LAWRENCE STRING QUARTET** at press time was scheduled to join Flux and special guest artist **KIRK HAMMETT** of the heavy-metal band Metallica at a September 15 benefit gala for the Morrison Artists Series, a San Francisco-based chamber-music organization that for the past 50 years has offered concerts free of charge. The season's first regular concert, on November 6 at San Francisco State University, features the **KALICHSTEIN-LAREDO-ROBINSON TRIO**.



ST. LAWRENCE

**Da Vinci Decoded**

After almost a quarter century of making chamber music in the Colorado Springs and greater Denver area, Naxos recording artists the all-female **DA VINCI QUARTET** has decided to disband. "In the world of chamber ensembles, 24 consecutive seasons is a very successful run," says **JERILYN JORGENSEN**, first violinist. "We have no regrets. But the combination of ongoing financial challenges and related personnel instability finally caught up with us." Cofounders Jorgensen and cellist **KATHARINE KNIGHT** have had to adjust to frequent turnover in the quartet's second violin and viola positions during the past few years. Earlier this month, **SUSAN JENSEN**, second violinist since 2003, resigned in the midst of the hiring process for a new violist. "A string quartet requires an intimate connection among the players," says Knight. "But that's a relationship dynamic that can't be developed overnight."

**Purple Rhapsody**

NEUBAUER

**PAUL NEUBAUER** will perform the world premiere of Joan Tower's viola concerto *Purple Rhapsody* on November 4 with the Omaha Symphony conducted by JoAnn Falletta at the opening of the Holland Performing Arts Center in Omaha, Nebraska. Tower is the first woman to win the prestigious Grawemeyer Award in Composition.

**Creative Kids**

The **OREGON SYMPHONY**, which recently received the coveted MetLife Award for Excellence in Community Engagement, is sponsoring a new composition contest called Creative Kids. Eligible applicants must be residents of Oregon or southwest Washington, must not yet have completed high school (or the equivalent),

**Lady Tennant Gets a New Bow**

The Lady Tennant Stradivari, which changed hands for a cool \$2,032,000 at Christie's this spring, has been presented to violinist **YANG LIU** by the Stradivari Society on an indefinite loan. On June 15, he gave the violin's first public performance in 25 years at the Kennedy Center.

Liu, winner of the 2002 International Tchaikovsky Competition, previously had a Nicolo Amati violin on loan from the society. Fine as it was, Liu says, the grand-pattern instrument was "not the perfect fit." **GEOFFREY FUSHI**, chairman and founder of the society, called one day and invited Liu to try out another instrument without mentioning what it was.

Liu was completely surprised to find himself holding the most expensive instrument ever sold at auction. And he's more than thrilled that he gets to keep it—even for a little while.

"It's a very rare Strad," says Liu, during a phone interview, having just returned from a concert tour in China, where he performed the Brahms Concerto with the Beijing Symphony. "People from the back of the hall, in the very back row, said they heard every note, nothing blurry, nothing missing. It's not louder, but it carries all the way to the back of the hall."

He has a very definite taste in sound, which the 1699 Strad delivers. "I like the sound to be airy, puffy, a big sound, but not harsh," says Liu, "like a good singer, relaxed but with a strong bone inside of the sound."

Liu was born in Qingdao, China, in 1976. At age nine he was accepted into the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing and received an invitation to play Pablo de Sarasate's *Zigeunerweisen* with the NHK Orchestra in Tokyo at the age of ten. He moved to the United States six years ago to study with



NEW SUITOR: Yang Liu holds the record-setting Lady Tennant.

**KURT SASSMANNSHAUS** and **DOROTHY DELAY**, and now lives in Chicago where he is professor of violin at Roosevelt University's College of Performing Arts. "The violin section is very strong," says Liu, citing many renowned players among the faculty. "It's a pleasure to be in this community."

The Stradivari Society was founded in 1985 by Fushi and Mary Galvin with the goal of identifying the world's most promising young artists and uniting them with superb Italian instruments to help launch and sustain their professional careers.

At press time, Liu and the Lady Tennant were scheduled to appear at Chicago's Ravinia Festival on October 28, and November 1 with Phil Simmons before he returns to China for concerts in November and December.

—Erin Shrader

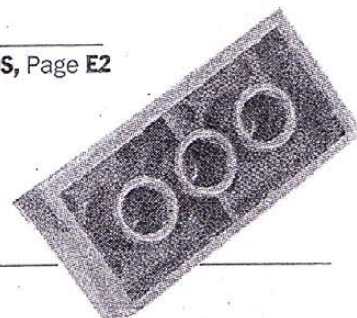
**R**...ly because of a lack of Legos. But that's never a problem at Architecture Lego Camp, held recently at Drake Science Center in Norwood. About half a million of the brightly colored plastic pieces are available for day-campers to assemble into bridges, dams, towers, and other structures. And yes, each project is completed in a day.

A pyramid? No problem. It's just a mat-

and that piece goes there, and hmmm ...

"Guys, this is not going to work. We have to destroy this wall," 10-year-old Alex Masson of Anderson Township is saying. His partners in the pyramid project, Bennett Paradis, 11, of Highland Heights and Justin Goldstein, 8, of Hyde Park, agree. But it's only a minor setback.

See **LEGOS**, Page **E2**



## Inside

Education and Technology Foundation programs reach 30,000 kids annually, **E2**

Cincinnati Enquirer 8/03/04  
Concert review

# Orchestra ends season with bangs

By Janelle Gelfand / Enquirer staff writer

The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra said farewell to summer on Sunday evening with a blockbuster all-Russian program that climaxed with an explosive *1812 Overture*, complete with perfectly timed cannon fire.

The picture-perfect evening and the fireworks display that followed were a festive conclusion to the orchestra's 20th anniversary season at Riverbend, its summer home.

In a surprise announcement, the orchestra also bid farewell to its principal timpanist of 37 years, Eugene Espino, who was playing his final performance before retiring. The timpanist received two standing ovations from the good-sized crowd, as he was

honored by both symphony and Pops.

The retirement – for personal reasons, the orchestra said – caught symphony management off guard. No plans are in place yet to hold auditions for his replacement. Replacing such a superb musician won't be easy.

On the podium, Cincinnati Pops conductor Erich Kunzel was an energetic presence, despite the fact that he was conducting for his third consecutive evening (he led the Pops on Friday and Saturday).

Kunzel's program was exotic and tuneful, with bold swashes of color, fanfares and processions.

See **ORCHESTRA**, Page **E5**



Enquirer file

**Violinist Yang Liu** impressed the Riverbend audience in his Cincinnati Symphony debut.

**Inside** New assistant conductor named; orchestra's next season, **E5**

## Dip balm in blush to put color on lips

The Associated Press

Women like playing with makeup, trying new products and new looks, but they are incredibly loyal to their lip balm, says Leslie Blodgett, CEO of Bare Escentuals.

She offers this idea to those who want color on their lips but don't want to give up their nourishing balm: Dip the balm into a loose powder blush or eye shadow, covering the tip with color. The moistness of the balm will al-

low the color to spread smoothly on the lips – and the balm will deliver moisturizer and SPF.

Some of Blodgett's other tips:

**Wearing blue eye shadow:** "It's a myth that certain women can not wear bright colors, such as blue on their eyes. Remember that less is more. Take a thin eyeliner brush and create a line starting toward the outer edge of the eye, above the lash line and around the edge to underneath the eye forming a triangle."

**Applying mascara:** "Try using an eyeliner and create a very thin line at the base of the lash. This fills in the lashes and makes them look thicker. Then apply at least two coats of mascara and use a lash comb when finished."

**Faux tanning:** "Make sure to exfoliate beforehand and use a fake tanner that is tinted going on so you can see where you have applied it. Then use an exfoliator or sea mud soap to remove the fake tanner from your hands."

1 Lacey, 13, of Amberley age, carries a structure built at Architecture 30 Camp.

Disney's Arabian adventure ring Viggo arrives today, her film critic is Jennifer comedy 13 acked with tion, The Gidget, Gidget Goes to actresses en played the films.

it i. Bank Arena, adway, down- 562-4949. — Rob Bucher



# Strung together

STORIES OF SUBURBAN IMMIGRANTS

Third in a series

## Violin binds Chinese masters, students across the globe

STORY BY TARA MALONE

PHOTOS BY PATRICK KUNZER

**E**rik Malmquist raises his violin, glancing at the sheet music as he tucks the instrument beneath his chin.

He pauses for a moment, then one more.

The 18-year-old Roosevelt University freshman lifts his bow and begins to play.

A Tchaikovsky concerto drifts through the rehearsal room, drowning car horns along Chicago's Congress Parkway nine stories below.

Malmquist stands straighter as his music climbs to a crescendo, his thick fingers dancing across violin strings and his legs planted wide in a stance reminiscent of his days on Hampshire High's football squad.

Across the room, Yang Liu listens to the concerto, pinning his gaze to the student's bow. An open notebook and water bottle go untouched.

Only when Malmquist lowers his bow does Liu rise.

One of China's premier violinists who performed in concert halls from Moscow to Madison, Wis., the 30-year-old Liu faces his newest challenge: teaching Tchaikovsky.

Liu demonstrates the quick bow strokes and handwork demanded by the concerto in D Major.

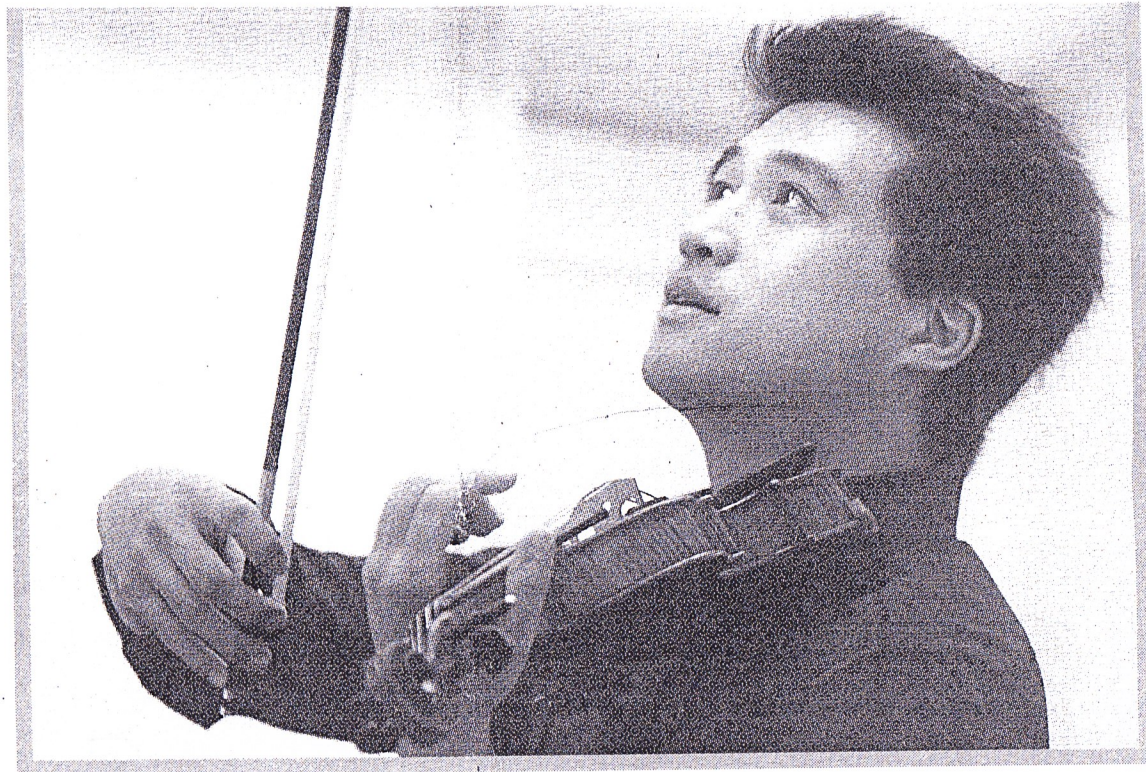
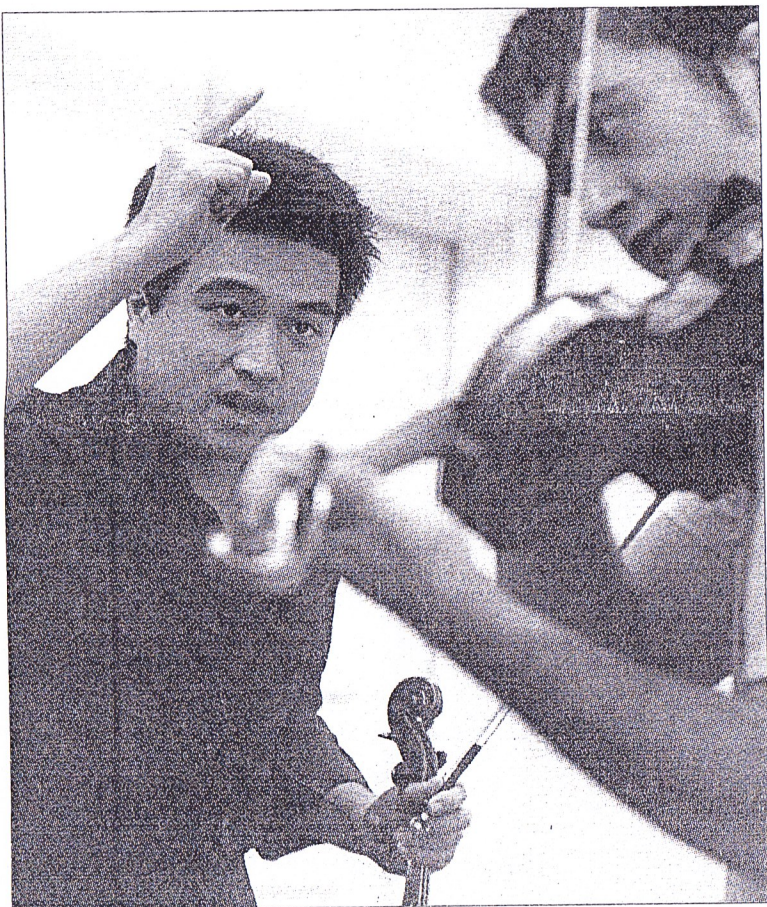
"Here, it should be strong, bold, like Chairman Mao," Liu says, punching his right fist in the air to underscore the point. "Here, it should be soft, gentle," he whispers, moving his arms as if playing a piano.

"Erik, try to make all the sound connect," Liu says. "In a way, every concerto, every piece of music is one life, one picture. You can't have too many breaks."

For an hour every Tuesday in Room 957 of Roosevelt's Auditorium Building, Liu coaches Malmquist to master concertos, sonatas and caprices.

His method of teaching — interpretive, bold, full-bodied and unlike anything Malmquist has seen before — is rooted in a Beijing rehearsal room thousands of miles away. Now it blossoms here in the

ssor Lin Yaoji, 68, has shaped a generation of Chinese violinists in his room, teaching them to play with discipline and inner calm.



Violinist Yang Liu, 30, above, performs in concert halls around the world, an opportunity he owes to teacher Lin Yaoji back in Beijing. Liu, left, coaches Erik Malmquist of Hampshire through a Tchaikovsky concerto in a rehearsal room at Roosevelt University in Chicago.

### Wednesday in Food

Reporter Kara Spak finds much to love about real Chinese food

## ef' tries to steal itself a second season

out caper stories endlessly intriguing

parate characters mer to form a unit- intricate planning second timing ull off a scam or t but certainly not ay the villainous s to divide a view- liance. had people trying



Ted Cox  
TV/Radio

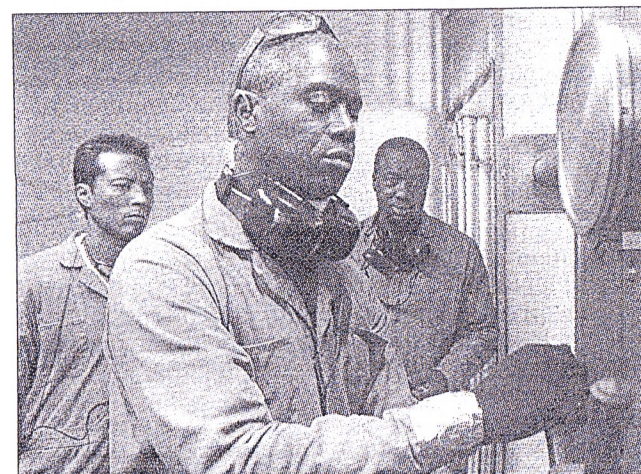
even as one knows it's wrong.

It's been a very good year already for caper programs on TV. NBC has produced the playfully stylish "Heist," and AMC has

the top provider of first-run series on basic cable since replacing "The Shield" at 9 p.m. Tuesday.

"Thief" stars the great Andre Braugher as the leader of a New Orleans crew of criminals. Yet it doesn't just focus on the crew, even though that would be enough to keep most TV shows occupied, between Braugher and the fine work provided by his supporting cast: Malik Yoba,

"Thief" also delves into their private lives. From the opening moments of the pilot, when Braugher's Nick Atwater had to field a call from his wife about the arrest of his stepdaughter — while in the middle of a bank heist — "Thief" has obsessed over complications between the personal and the professional. In the key development of the series so far, Nick's wife died in a car accident, placing his step-



# Violin: A shared devotion to music of the masters

Continued from Page 1

## 'Like pearls on jade'

Beijing, 2005 — His slipped feet skim the floor.

Sinking into the living room couch with his arms crossed over an orange Tommy Hilfiger sweater, Lin Yaoji smiles as the opening strands of a familiar concerto fill apartment No. 701.

It is Nicolo Paganini. The Italian composer is one of Lin's favorites.

Wrestling through the operatic score written more than 150 years ago is Wang Liang, a 20-year-old student at China's Central Conservatory of Music.

The shifting melody draws the 68-year-old Lin to his feet.

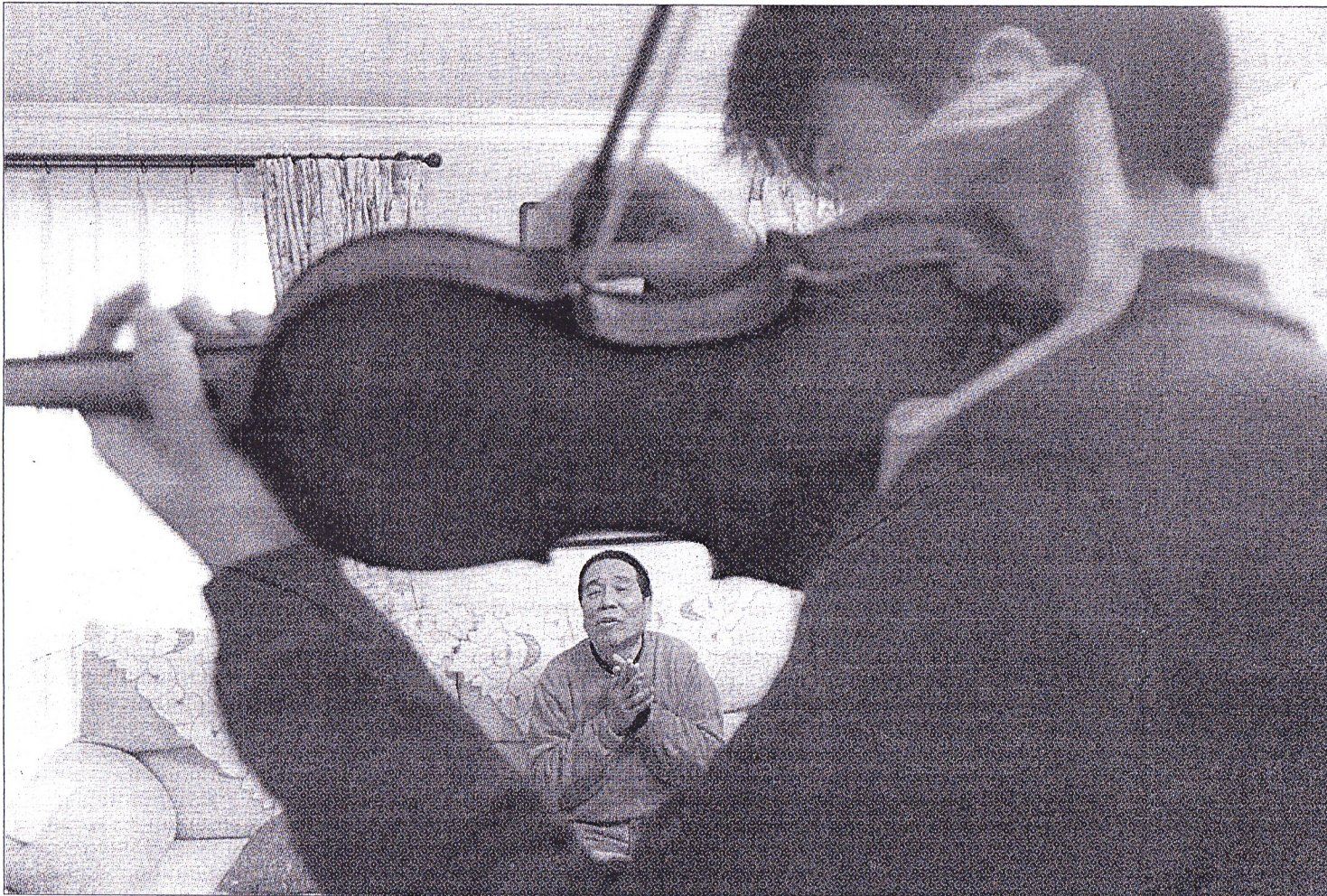
"Hurry up here," Lin says as he grips Wang's shoulder. The fingers on his right hand twitch as if he is holding a violin.

"Just like singing opera, you should control the rhythm. Ch-ch-ch-cha," he chants, giving voice to Paganini's composition.

"Dra, dra, dra, drah," Lin continues, humming with Wang's bow strokes.

"Make sounds just like people laughing, ha, ha, ha, ha," Lin shouts, doubling over with the effort. "It's like pearls falling down on a jade plate. You can imagine the sound like that."

A generation of Chinese violinists have sweated through



PHOTOS BY PATRICK KUNZER/DAILY HERALD  
Lin Yaoji listens from the living room couch of his Beijing apartment as his student, Wang Liang, plays a passage by Nicolo Paganini. Now 68, Lin has taught some of China's most accomplished violinists during the past three decades.

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Paganini, Bach and Beethoven under Lin's watchful gaze. Yang Liu — who now trains young violinists in the Chicago area — was among them.

Lin drilled Liu and some of China's most accomplished violinists to play with the discipline of a kung fu master and the serenity of a Buddhist monk. The combination is rooted in China's Taoist tradition, which teaches harmony between man and nature.

This cornerstone of Lin's music philosophy emerged during China's decade-long Cultural Revolution, when music ground to a stop.

What history books call the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966 came as a response to dissent within the communist party.

Its purpose? To eradicate any hint of Western elitism.

To play the violin — an instrument performed in royal European courts by Mozart, Bach and Beethoven — was to risk imprisonment.

The Central Conservatory of Music closed its doors. Lin put down his violin for 10 years.

This, after Lin spent two years studying with one of the Soviet Union's renowned violinists. Lin had earned the honor with his success during the Second Moscow Violin Competition in 1960. High blood pressure kept Lin from pursuing a career as a concert violinist. Teaching proved a better fit.

"It was a hard time for me because I learned so much when I studied in Russia," Lin recalls, the edge of any resentment curbed by time. "I wanted to teach students this knowledge, but because of political reasons, the music stopped."

Cloistered in his Beijing apartment on the conservatory grounds, Lin studied away a decade. He researched how

A cacophony of classical *erhu*, violin, piano and opera again spilled from closed studio doors into long, dimly lit conservatory corridors.

Lin dusted off his violin and resumed his role as teacher, testing his newly minted philosophy on 13-year-old Hu Kun. Four years later, the teen became the first Chinese violinist to win honors at an international competition in Finland.

More international prizes accrued as Lin recruited more students, including Yang Liu. When Liu received three nights

### Chinese dictionary

*erhu* = traditional two-string Chinese fiddle.

of standing ovations during his 2002 American debut in Atlanta, the honor was not his alone.

Liu's accolades — as well as those of other violinists who honed their talents under Lin's guidance — boosted the teacher's standing among the musical pedagogues of his time.

"First you can see much talent," Lin says of his proteges, "but after training, you can find more and more talent like in a mine when you dig deeper, you go deeper."

### Yearning to play

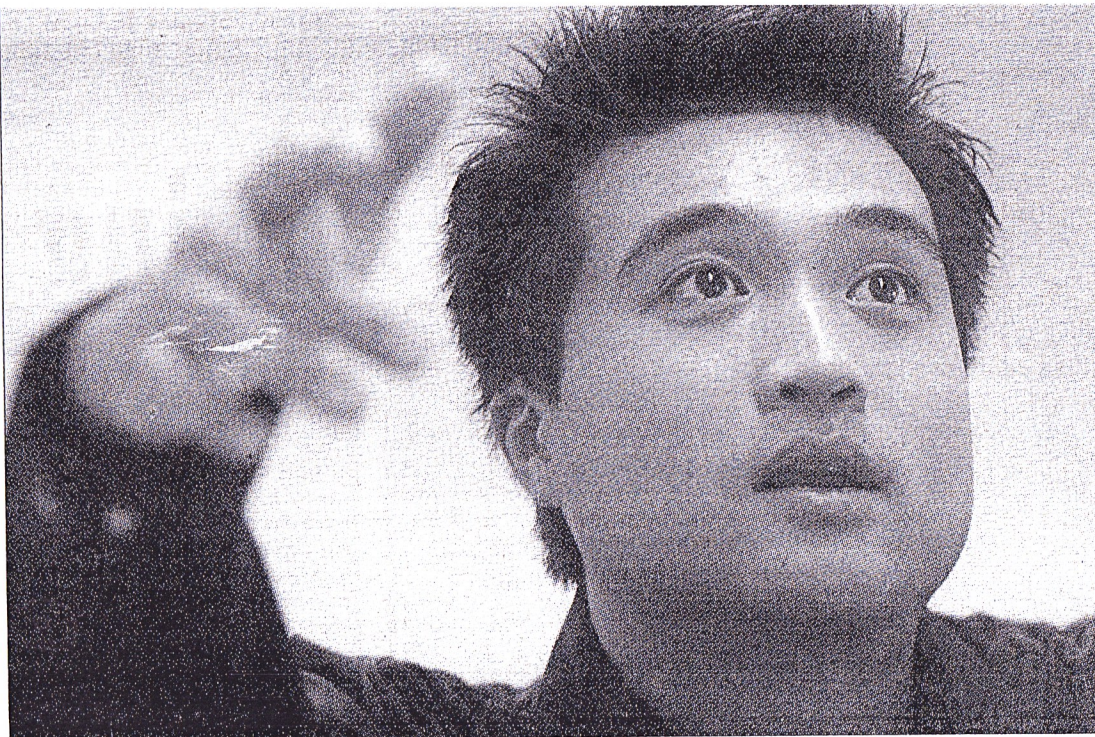
*Qingdao, 1980* — Liu's journey to center stage began in the seaside city of Qingdao on China's eastern coast.

There, through muffled windows and padded doors — a testament to the fear and political unease that gripped China during the Cultural Revolution — a young Liu heard a neighbor playing violin. He was hooked.

Just 4 years old, Liu begged his mother for a violin.

Her reply was a decisive no.

The violent backlash against anyone or anything with Western trappings that occurred during the Cultural Revolution



Chinese violinist Yang Liu divides his time between performing and teaching students at Roosevelt University's music conservatory.

His grandfather was dead, killed by his own hand in 1970 as the Cultural Revolution dragged on.

"My father had seen people who owned a book by Mark Twain get into jail and eventually disappear," Liu says.

In 1981, the architects of the Cultural Revolution were arrested and brought to trial. China's economic opening inched forward, the country began to relax and Liu's mother changed her mind.

A year later, 6-year-old Liu picked up a violin. With guidance from his mother, Guo Chunxia, he learned to hold the instrument, position the bow and play scales.

Liu played well enough for his mother to move with him to Beijing, home to the Conservatory of Music, China's version of "Fame."

After only a year of study and

was told I could not play the violin anymore, and my parents were hurt because they were hoping I would make this a career. They think this is where my talent is, this should be my life."

Defeated, Liu prepared to return home to Qingdao. Until Lin knocked on his door.

Lin would take young Liu as his own student. He had heard Liu play before and recognized his talent. But Lin's offer came with a condition: Liu must start at the beginning.

If he resented the remediation, Liu never complained.

"We felt our lives were saved," Liu recalls.

For eight hours a day, Liu practiced drills he first learned as a 6-year-old. He learned how to hold a bow. He learned to play the violin anew, Lin's way, with a mindfulness and inner calm rooted in the Taoist tradi-

the violin.

As the son of an Elgin Symphony Orchestra musician and the brother of an aspiring one, Malmquist's life was full of music long before he came to the conservatory classroom in Chicago.

Only after a run of sport studying and scholarly adventures did Malmquist devote himself to the instrument he first heard as a child.

Half a world away, another boy born to a family of musicians resisted the pull of the violin.

Wang Liang's father, a Chinese teacher, offered the only reprieve in a family filled with concert violinists — his mother's grandfather, uncles and cousins all played. He would too, Wang's concert-master mother told him.

Wang relented, eventually. "When I was very little I

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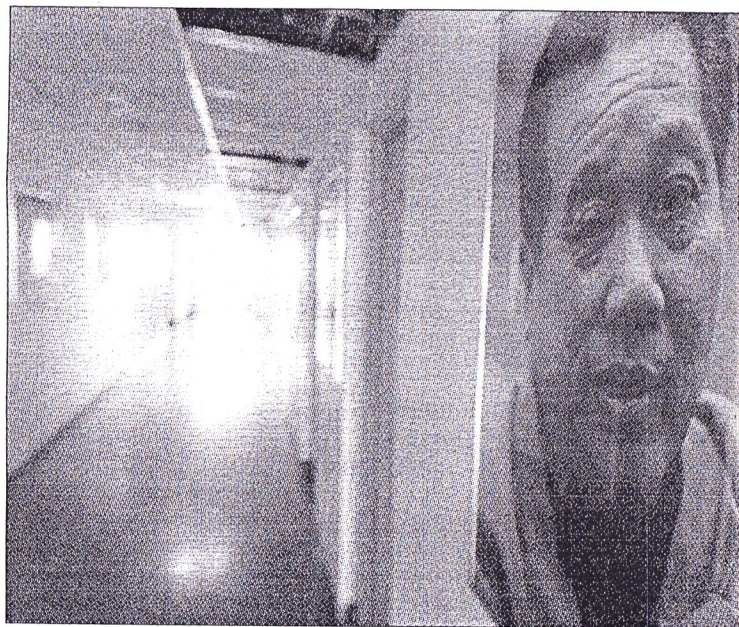
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By then, the Cultural Revolution  
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Liu's mother worried a  
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Liu's family had been targeted  
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His university-educated  
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A portrait of professor Lin Yaoji hangs in Beijing's Central Conservatory of Music, where many of China's premier musicians study.

"Fame."

After only a year of study and  
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The little boy who pleaded to  
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"Very soon," Liu remembers,  
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## Teaching Liu

Beijing, 1989 — At 13,  
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The young virtuoso, who at  
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"He's very smart and has  
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The professor dropped Liu as  
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It paid off.

When he was 17, Liu took  
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At 25, Liu made his American  
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"I had standing ovations each  
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Liu recalls, his tone subdued. "It  
was very nice."

Liu came to his own class-  
room at Chicago's Roosevelt  
University last year. He divides  
his time between teaching and  
performing around the country,  
a privilege Liu attributes to his  
old professor.

"If I didn't meet him in my  
life, I would never get where I  
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## Taming Tchaikovsky

Chicago, 2006 — Erik  
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Wang relented, eventually.

"When I was very little no  
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love."

Neither Wang nor Malmquist  
ever begged to play, like Liu.

Neither Wang nor Malmquist  
ever feared studying violi-  
could cost him his freedom, like  
Lin.

But a passion for the violi-  
binds them to the two men who  
will mold them each as musi-  
cians, as people.

"Just to think the way I'  
being taught is not just th-  
random way, but it has so muc-  
to do with his teacher and h-  
teacher's teacher," Malmquist  
says of Liu. "All their life exper-  
ence is getting poured into their  
devotion to the music."

Such devotion brings respor-  
sibility, a duty Liu takes  
seriously.

Just as the man he still cal-  
Professor Lin changed his life:  
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# Strung together

**Crossing China**

*daily Herald*

STORIES OF SUBURBAN IMMIGRANTS

4/28

*Third in a series*

## Violin binds Chinese masters, students across the globe

STORY BY TARA MALONE

PHOTOS BY PATRICK KUNZER

**E**rik Malmquist raises his violin, glancing at the sheet music as he tucks the instrument beneath his chin.

He pauses for a moment, then one more.

The 18-year-old Roosevelt University freshman lifts his bow and begins to play.

A Tchaikovsky concerto drifts through the rehearsal room, drowning car horns along Chicago's Congress Parkway nine stories below.

Malmquist stands straighter as his music climbs to a crescendo, his thick fingers dancing across violin strings and his legs planted wide in a stance reminiscent of his days on Hampshire High's football squad.

Across the room, Yang Liu listens to the concerto, pinning his gaze to the student's bow. An open notebook and water bottle go untouched.

Only when Malmquist lowers his bow does Liu rise.

One of China's premier violinists who performed in concert halls from Moscow to Madison, Wis., the 30-year-old Liu faces his newest challenge: teaching Tchaikovsky.

Liu demonstrates the quick bow strokes and handiwork demanded by the concerto in D Major.

"Here, it should be strong, bold, like Chairman Mao," Liu says, punching his right fist in the air to underscore the point. "Here, it should be soft, gentle," he whispers, moving his arms as if playing a piano.

"Erik, try to make all the sound connect," Liu says. "In a way, every concerto, every piece of music is one life, one picture. You can't have too many breaks."

For an hour every Tuesday in Room 957 of Roosevelt's Auditorium Building, Liu coaches Malmquist to master concertos, sonatas and caprices.

His method of teaching — interpretive, bold, full-

sands of miles away. Now it blossoms here in the minds of musicians like Malmquist.

See **VIOLIN** on **PAGE 4**

Professor Lin Yaoji, 68, has shaped a generation of Chinese violinists in his classroom, teaching them to play with discipline and inner calm.



Violinist Yang Liu, 30, above, performs in concert halls around the world, an opportunity he owes to teacher Lin Yaoji back in Beijing. Liu, left, coaches Erik Malmquist of Hampshire through a Tchaikovsky concerto in a rehearsal room at Roosevelt University in Chicago.

## Wednesday in Food

Reporter Kara Spak finds much to love about real Chinese food

# Violin: A shared devotion to music of the masters

Continued from Page 1

## 'Like pearls on jade'

Beijing, 2005 — His slipped feet skim the floor.

Sinking into the living room couch with his arms crossed over an orange Tommy Hilfiger sweater, Lin Yaoji smiles as the opening strands of a familiar concerto fill apartment No. 701.

It is Nicolo Paganini. The Italian composer is one of Lin's favorites.

Wrestling through the operatic score written more than 150 years ago is Wang Liang, a 20-year-old student at China's Central Conservatory of Music.

The shifting melody draws the 68-year-old Lin to his feet.

"Hurry up here," Lin says as he grips Wang's shoulder. The fingers on his right hand twitch as if he is holding a violin.

"Just like singing opera, you should control the rhythm. Ch-ch-ch-cha," he chants, giving voice to Paganini's composition.

"Dra, dra, dra, dra," Lin continues, humming with Wang's bow strokes.

"Make sounds just like people laughing, ha, ha, ha, ha," Lin shouts, doubling over with the effort. "It's like pearls falling down on a jade plate. You can imagine the sound like that."



PHOTOS BY PATRICK KUNZER/DAILY HERALD

Lin Yaoji listens from the living room couch of his Beijing apartment as his student, Wang Liang, plays a passage by Nicolo Paganini. Now 68, Lin has taught some of China's most accomplished violinists during the past three decades.

A generation of Chinese violinists have sweated through Paganini, Bach and Beethoven under Lin's watchful gaze. Yang Liu — who now trains young violinists in the Chicago area — was among them.

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Only after a run of sports, studying and schoolyard adventures did Malmquist devote himself to the instrument he first heard as a child.

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Her reply was a decisive no.

The violent backlash against anyone or anything with Western trappings that occurred during the Cultural Revolution ended in 1976. Still, fear lingered. Liu's mother worried a violin would make him a target for communist officials looking to make an example of someone.

Liu's family had been targeted before.

His university-educated father with degrees in English and Chinese literature was relegated to the countryside for what communist officials called "re-education."

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Liu played well enough for his mother to move with him to Beijing, home to the Conservatory of Music, China's version of "Fame."

After only a year of study and countless tutoring lessons, Liu auditioned to get into the school. Seven out of 64 violinists made the cut. Liu, then just 9 years old, topped the list.

The little boy who pleaded to play violin was on his way. The conservatory would lead him to Lin who, in turn, would groom him for performances in concert halls around the world.

"Very soon," Liu remembers, "I became a little star in school."

## Teaching Liu

*Beijing, 1989* — At 13, though, Liu was a has-been.

The young virtuoso, who at 10 had played with Tokyo's NKH Symphony Orchestra, lost the skill that distinguished him from others at the conservatory.

"He's very smart and has good talent," a violin professor told Liu's mother. "But sometimes talent is not enough, sometimes talent fades. He's that case."

The professor dropped Liu as a student, effectively ending his career as a concert violinist. Liu had plateaued as a musician. In the competitive halls of China's premier music conservatory, charged with grooming a new generation of musicians, that was tantamount to a death sentence.

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"We felt our lives were saved," Liu recalls.

For eight hours a day, Liu practiced drills he first learned as a 6-year-old. He learned how to hold a bow. He learned to play the violin anew, Lin's way, with a mindfulness and inner calm rooted in the Taoist tradition.

It paid off.

When he was 17, Liu took first place in China's National Violin Competition, a victory that led him to concert halls around the world.

At 25, Liu made his American debut in Atlanta Symphony Hall. Like an old friend, Paganini led Liu through the familiar tricks and turns of the same concerto he'd practiced in the Beijing classroom years earlier with Lin guiding him through the coquettish passage.

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Liu came to his own classroom at Chicago's Roosevelt University last year. He divides his time between teaching and performing around the country, a privilege Liu attributes to his old professor.

"If I didn't meet him in my life, I would never get where I am," says Liu, who is expected to play New York's Carnegie Hall next year. "I would probably be a mediocre violinist playing in a mediocre orchestra in China. I am quite certain of that."

## Taming Tchaikovsky

*Chicago, 2006* — Erik Malmquist could not escape

nese teacher, offered the only reprieve in a family filled with concert violinists — his mother, grandfather, uncles and cousins all played. He would too, Wang's concert-master mother told him.

Wang relented, eventually.

"When I was very little no child wants to study every day with violin," Wang says in faltering English. "Now I feel music in my heart. Music is my only love."

Neither Wang nor Malmquist ever begged to play, like Liu.

Neither Wang nor Malmquist ever feared studying violin could cost him his freedom, like Lin.

But a passion for the violin binds them to the two men who will mold them each as musicians, as people.

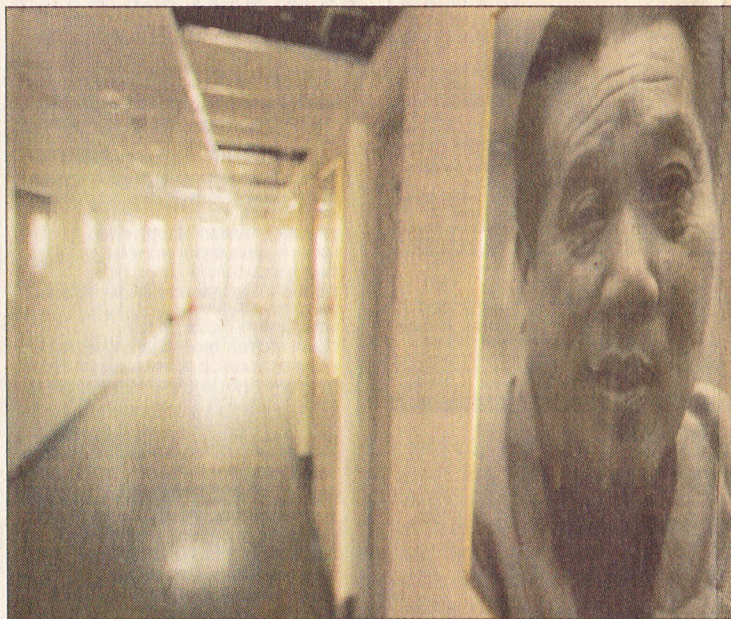
"Just to think the way I'm being taught is not just this random way, but it has so much to do with his teacher and his teacher's teacher," Malmquist says of Liu. "All their life experience is getting poured into their devotion to the music."

Such devotion brings responsibility, a duty Liu takes seriously.

Just as the man he still calls Professor Lin changed his life as a musician, as a person, Liu hopes to shape a new generation of musicians in the Chicago area.

And in his classroom a world away, Lin does the same.

"If you want to play well, he is willing to do everything to make you go wherever you want to," Liu says. "That's what I like to give to people in the audience, in the class, that positive energy."



A portrait of professor Lin Yaoji hangs in Beijing's Central Conservatory of Music, where many of China's premier musicians study.

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# max

ENTERTAINMENT MAGAZINE

October 9, 2009 • VOL. 18, NO. 427





# ROMANCE

# HARMONY

A husband and wife duo will roll out classical tunes for a concert at Coastal Carolina Community College.

See the story  
on page 8.

**MAX MAGAZINE COVER STORY**



*Symphonic union*

Couple to perform classics at Bodenhamer Auditorium

## Couple to perform classics at Bodenhamer

By Aniesa Holmes • Daily News Staff

**H**usband and wife duo violinist Yang Liu and pianist I-Hsuan Tsai combine romance and harmony when they present their unique classical concert performance on Oct. 17 at 7:30 p.m. in Coastal Carolina Community College's Bodenhamer Auditorium.

The performance, which will consist of arrangements from great composers such as Mozart, Felix Mendelssohn, Chopin, Franz Schubert and Antonin Dvorak, will offer an evening of several short yet whimsical pieces.

"Our concert is a nice addition to the already few numbers of classical music happenings in Jacksonville," Tsai said in an e-mail. "This year in particular, we are preparing a program that is easier to listen to — but certainly not easier to play — which includes arrangement of familiar classical tunes, virtuosic and showy pieces."

Tsai felt that the free concert would also introduce new audiences to a style of music that she has known all of her life.

"We are hoping that the program will provide a nice evening for those who are rarely exposed to classical music," she said.

Liu and Tsai first met while both were students at the University of Cincinnati in 2003. They married in

### Want to go?

The Yang Liu and I-Hsuan Tsai classical concert will take place on Oct. 17 at 7:30 p.m. in Coastal Carolina Community College's Bodenhamer Auditorium. The concert is free and open to the public. For more information, call 910-938-6315.

2004 in Jacksonville while Tsai was teaching piano classes at Coastal, and they performed their first concert together locally that same year.

"Music collaboration in a way really is like a friendship or even marriage," Tsai said. "A good performance is when two people think like one, and you breathe together and agree on the same things, if not, that's when rehearsals come into place to work things out."

Born in QingDao, China, Yang Liu made his concert debut at age 10, performing with the NHK Orchestra in Tokyo. He moved to the United States at age 22 and has performed throughout Asia, Europe and Africa. He has also won China's National Violin Competition and the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow.

Tsai, who was born in Taipei, Taiwan, said that she has admired classical music since she was a child.

"I started piano lessons when I

was 6," she said. "My older sister started hers when she was 6, and I just liked to do what my sister does and I enjoyed seeing her perform on stage and dreamed of myself doing the same thing one day."

Tsai received her Bachelor of Music degree in 1996, and Master of Music in piano and bassoon at Indiana University in Bloomington in 1999. She also earned her Doctor of Musical Arts degree in piano at University of Cincinnati. Tsai said that her years at Coastal were some of her most memorable times as a piano instructor.

"When I was teaching in Jacksonville, I was amazed with the support of art and music from the Fine Arts Department," Tsai said. "It is hard to believe that many colleges still do not have as good a grand piano as the one CCCC has."

Tsai said that she and Liu will share future performances in Chicago, where they currently live, as well as Brazil and Portugal. With their vast musical backgrounds and love for classical music, Tsai said that she enjoys the advantage of mixing her music with her marriage.

"The best thing about performing with my husband is that we get to travel to places together," she said. "We can rehearse anytime we want — which can be both a good or bad thing."

# Yang Liu – Repertoire

With orchestra

**Bach**

*Concerti-- all*

**Barber**

*Violin concerto*

**Beethoven**

*Violin Concerto*

**Bernstein**

*Serenade*

**Brahms**

*Violin concerto*

**Bruch**

*Violin concerti--all*

**Chen Gang**

*Butterfly concerto*

**Glazunov**

*Violin concerto*

**Khachaturian**

**Korngold**

*Violin concerto*

**Lalo**

*Violin concerto*

**Mendelssohn**

*Violin concerto*

**Mozart**

*Violin concerti--all*

**Nielsen**

*Violin concerto*

**Paganini**

*Violin concerto No. 1*

**Ravel**

*Tzigane*

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## Yang Liu – Repertoire

### **Saint-Saen**

*Violin concerti-all*

### **Sarasate**

*Tziganeweissen*

### **Shostakovich**

*Violin concerto no. 1*

### **Sibelius**

*Violin concerto*

### **Tchaikovsky**

*Violin concerto*

### **Vieuxtemps**

*Violin concerti-- all*

### **Vivaldi**

*Four Seasons*

### **Wieniawski**

*Both concerti*

Solo

### **Bach**

*All sonata and partitas*

### **Kreisler**

*Recitative and Scherzo-Caprice Op.6, for solo violin*

### **Paganini**

*24 Caprice*

### **Prokofiev**

*Sonata Op. 115*

### **Ysaye**

*Sonata*

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**Yang Liu – Repertoire**

Sonata with Piano

**Beethoven**

*All sonata*

**Brahms**

*All sonata*

**Debussy**

*Sonata*

**Franck**

*Sonata*

**Grieg**

*All Sonata*

**Mozart**

*All sonata*

**Nielsen**

*Sonata*

**Poulenc**

*Sonata*

**Prokofiev**

*All sonata*

**Saint-Saen**

*All violin sonata*

**Schubert**

*All violin sonata*

**Schumann**

*Sonata in A minor*

**Strauss**

*Violin sonata*

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**Yang Liu – Repertoire**

Show pieces

**Kreisler**

*Selected compositions and transcriptions*

**Heifeiz**

*Selected arrangements*

**Wieniawski**

*Poloanise brillante*

**Tchaikovsky**

*Waltz-Scherzo*

*Selected Chinese transcriptions*

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# Yang Liu – YouTube Links

Nielsen violin concerto 1st movt pt1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZMRqKt7Zfc>

Sibelius Violin Concerto - 1st mov

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWBayqMacyM>

Encore after Sibelius concerto--Gavotte by Bach

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNhsLQj4mvE>

Bach Chaconne.m4v

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yr8CZQ9-1nU>

Nielsen violin concerto 3rd movt

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wB048veKHeg>

Nielsen violin concerto 2nd movt

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dV8HtbuTTZE>

Sibelius Violin Concerto - 2nd and 3rd mov

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NvH1BYEmQoE>

Violin Concert Fragment

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JYSHR6n5hCw>

Beethoven.mov

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLCM0fG9tag>

Mr. & Mrs. Liu.mov

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4aIgNhoQmmc>

2017 Chinese New Year TV

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73GBz7OTIYQ>

Artist Website: [www.YangLiu.org](http://www.YangLiu.org) & [www.YangandOlivia.com](http://www.YangandOlivia.com)

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## Yang Liu – Photo Gallery



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