

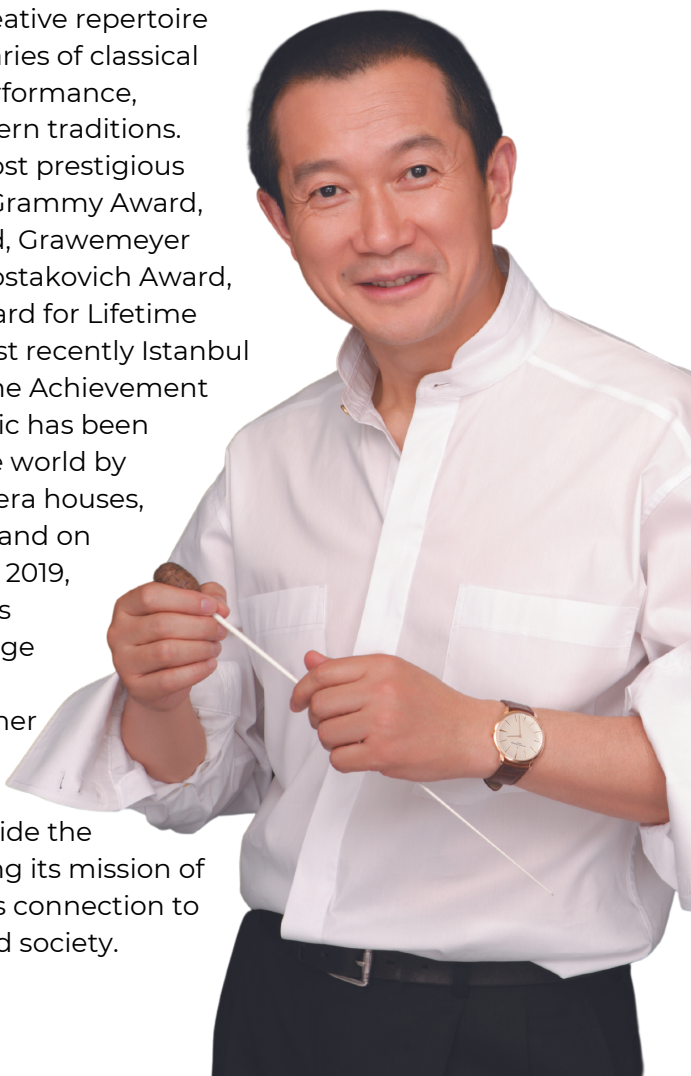
OLYMPIANS & TITANS

Program Notes

TAN DUN (1957 - present)

The world-renowned artist and UNESCO Global Goodwill Ambassador Tan Dun has made an indelible mark on the world's music scene with a creative repertoire that spans the boundaries of classical music, multimedia performance, and Eastern and Western traditions.

A winner of today's most prestigious honors including the Grammy Award, Oscar/Academy Award, Grawemeyer Award, Bach Prize, Shostakovich Award, Italy's Golden Lion Award for Lifetime Achievement, and most recently Istanbul Music Festival's Lifetime Achievement Award, Tan Dun's music has been played throughout the world by leading orchestras, opera houses, international festivals, and on radio and television. In 2019, Tan Dun was named as Dean of the Bard College Conservatory of Music. As Dean, Tan Dun further demonstrates music's extraordinary ability to transform lives and guide the Conservatory in fulfilling its mission of understanding music's connection to history, art, culture, and society.



Tan Dun's individual voice has been heard widely by international audiences. His first Internet Symphony, which was commissioned by Google/YouTube, has reached over 23 million people online. His Organic Music Trilogy of Water, Paper and Ceramic has frequented major concert halls and festivals. Paper Concerto was premiered with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the opening of the Walt Disney Hall. His multimedia work, The Map, premiered by YoYo Ma and Boston Symphony Orchestra, has toured more than 30 countries worldwide. Its manuscript has been collected by the Carnegie Hall Composers Gallery. His Orchestral Theatre IV: The Gate was premiered by Japan's NHK Symphony Orchestra and crosses the cultural boundaries of Peking Opera, Western Opera and puppet theatre traditions. Most recently, Tan Dun conducted the premiere of his new oratorio epic Buddha Passion at the Dresden Festival with Münchner Philharmoniker. The piece was co-commissioned by New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and the Dresden Festival, and has since premiered worldwide, and will continue with upcoming premieres in London, Hamburg, and Amsterdam.

Tan Dun records for Sony Classical, Deutsche Grammophon, EMI, Opus Arte, BIS and Naxos. His recordings have garnered many accolades, including a Grammy Award (Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon) and nomination (The First Emperor; Marco Polo; Pipa Concerto), Japan's Recording Academy Awards for Best Contemporary Music CD (Water Passion after St. Matthew) and the BBC's Best Orchestral Album (Death and Fire). Tan Dun's music is published by G. Schirmer, Inc. and represented worldwide by the Music Sales Group of Classical Companies.

WWW.HARRISONPARROTT.COM/ARTISTS/TAN-DUN

CROUCHING TIGER CONCERTO (2000)

"My music is to dream without boundaries. Tonight, with you, I see boundaries being crossed. As a classical music composer I'm thrilled to be honored here. 'Crouching Tiger' bridged East and West, romance and action, high and low cultures..."



**WATCH TAN DUN'S ACADEMY
AWARDS ACCEPTANCE SPEECH**

Composer Tan Dun and film director Ang Lee's individual bodies of work have focused on the meeting of East and West cultures, and the fascinating hybrid that results — something no longer wholly Eastern or Western. Tan Dun's four Orchestral Theater works explored the ways in which a classical Western orchestra can generate music that is neither classical nor Western. He has likewise sought to re-imagine and re-invigorate the Western concert experience through the integration of traditions from Chinese opera, Asian theater, ancient ritual, and the addition of film and live video.

The Crouching Tiger Concerto is highly reflective of Tan Dun's current interest in the historical cultures of the Silk Road. Woven into the film score and concerto are instruments, their performing techniques and articulations, and melodies native to the cultures which intermingled along the Silk Road in China's Xinjiang province.

Of particular interest is the cello melody in the third cadenza which is a folk song from this region. Indigenous instruments of Silk Road cultures heard in this concerto are the tar (a North African frame drum) and the bawu (a bamboo, copper-reed flute which came into China from Southeast Asia). The rawap (a high-pitched, plucked string instrument native to the Uygur culture of the Taklimakan area) is prominent in the film score, and represented in melodies and articulations transcribed to the cello and the orchestra. The erhu (a Chinese bowed string instrument which has its roots in India) is evoked throughout the concerto in the melodic contours and sonorities called for in the cello's melodies and cadenzas. Additional instruments from the Silk Road can be heard throughout in the gestures and timbres that Tan crafted into the scoring of this Western orchestra.

The Crouching Tiger Concerto was written for and inspired by Yo-Yo Ma. The work received its world premiere on September 30, 2000, at London's Barbican Centre Festival: Fire Cross Water, of which Tan Dun was artistic director.

The movie "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon", was directed by Ang Lee, and features Academy Award®-winning actor Michelle Yeoh ("Everything Everywhere All at Once"), Zhang Ziyi, Chow Yun-fat and Chang Chen.

The title "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" is a literal translation of the Chinese idiom "臥虎藏龍" which describes a place or situation that is full of unnoticed masters, or simply means *"talented or extraordinary people hidden from view."* It is from a poem of the ancient Chinese poet Yu Xin (513–581) that reads "暗石疑藏虎，盤根似臥龍" which means *"behind the rock in the dark probably hides a tiger, and the coiling giant root resembles a crouching dragon."* The movie refers to a legend that says *"Anyone who dares to jump from the mountain, God will grant his wish."*



GUSTAV MAHLER (1860-1911)

Gustav Mahler was a late Romantic composer, as well as one of the most important conductors of all time. As a composer, Mahler is considered the lynchpin connecting the Romantic era to early 20th-Century Modernism.

Born in 1860 in Bohemia (at that time part of the Austrian Empire and now part of the Czech Republic), he was the second of 12 siblings. Coming from humble beginnings, Mahler struggled with the sense of never feeling he belonged. He wrote

"I am three times homeless: a native of Bohemia in Austria; an Austrian among Germans; a Jew throughout the world."

SYMPHONY NO. 1 in D Major (1888)

This Symphony was first presented as programmatic music; music that tells or was inspired by a story. In this case, Mahler was inspired by his favorite author, Jean Paul, and his novel named "Titan".

Based on the Hero's Journey, this multi-volume novel follows the protagonist's development from youth to maturity, exploring the inherent challenges within German Idealism as well as providing a satirical look at the contemporary manners and mores of the time. As a university student, Mahler was intrigued by the subjects of literature and metaphysics, and took a keen interest in German philosophy, threads of which are often found woven throughout his works.

Mahler changed the symphony's title numerous times. It evolved from "Titan' a Tone Poem in Symphonic form" to "Form" and then "Symphony" with the additional title of "Titan" by the third performance. From the fourth performance onwards, Mahler dropped all program notes, describing the work simply as Symphony in D major.

For its first performances, Mahler used the following program notes:

Part I: From the days of youth, "youth, fruit, and thorn pieces".

1. Spring and no end. This introduction describes the awakening of nature at the earliest dawn.
2. Flowerine Chapter (Andante).
3. Set with full sails (Scherzo).

Part II: Commedia umana (Human Comedy).

1. Stranded. A funeral march in the manner of Callot.
2. Dall'inferno al Paradiso (From Hell to Heaven), as the sudden expression of a deeply wounded heart.

Nowadays we only refer to movements as their mood and/or the speed at which they should be performed. For example: Movement I: Langsam. Schleppend (Slowly. Dragging.). And despite Mahler's decision to not use a subtitle for his Symphony, his First Symphony is still referred to as "The Titan".

WHY OLYMPIANS AND TITANS (FROM ALEX!)

During the OSO Music Director Search, the candidates were asked to build a season of concert programs. We were given all the information we needed, including a detailed list of what the OSO had ever performed in its entire existence! I was surprised when I realized the orchestra had not performed any of Mahler's Symphonies. It was time to perform one of his masterworks, but which one?

There is a chapter in Greek Mythology called "The Titan Wars" or "The Battle of the Titans." The Titans ruled Mount Othrys, and the Olympians would rule Mount Olympus. The Titans and the Olympians fought to decide who would rule the universe. In the end, the Olympians, led by Zeus, won.

As Olympians, it is time to conquer our Titans, and so Mahler's Symphony No. 1 was the perfect choice. Combined with Tan Dun's Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon, this concert program brings together a beautiful metaphor of believing in ourselves, showing the world our amazing talents, being brave to jump the mountain and believe our dreams will come through.

*Program notes written by Alexandra Arrieche and Renée Zimmerman,
edited by Renée Zimmerman*