

M Manhattan
School of Music

LIVES OF THE PIANO | 25TH SEASON CELEBRATION

***The Twelve Chinese Zodiac
Animals Book III***

Lisa Yui (MM '00, DMA '05), Director

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2025 | 7:30 PM
GORDON K. AND HARRIET GREENFIELD HALL

The Twelve Chinese Zodiac Animals Book III

Lisa Yui (MM '00, DMA '05), Director

Panel Discussion: Following the performance, join composer Vincent Ho, director Lisa Yui and the pianists in a conversation about the creation, collaboration, and interpretation of The Twelve Chinese Zodiac Animals.

Dr. Vincent Ho's involvement is generously supported by Walt and Irene DeBoni.

PROGRAM

VINCENT HO
(b. 1975)

The Twelve Chinese Zodiac Animals, Book 1 (2022) and
Book 3 (2025, World Premiere)

Book 1, No. 7: The Happy Foal

Book 3, No. 7: Horseplay

Lisa Yui (MM '00, DMA '05), piano

Book 1, No. 8: Sleepy Lamb

Book 3, No. 8: Drunken Goat

Daria Podorozhnova (BM '27), piano

Book 1, No. 9: Monkey See, Monkey Do

Book 3, No. 9: Monkey Business

Erik Clark (DMA Candidate), piano

Book 1, No. 10: The Dancing Cockerel

Book 3, No. 10: Cock-a-Doodle

Luwla Al Shamlan (BM '23, MM '25, DMA Candidate), piano

Book 1, No. 11: The Wandering Puppy

Book 3, No. 11: In the Doghouse

Youlan Ji (DMA Candidate), piano

Book 1, No. 12: Gentle Piglet

Book 3, No. 12: Celestial Pig

Zicheng Edmund An (DMA Candidate), piano

PROGRAM NOTES

The Twelve Chinese Zodiac Animals, Books I-III

Book 1 of “The Chinese Zodiac Animals” is a collection of solo piano works that depict each animal in their young ages. These works were designed to enrich students’ music education while introducing them to Chinese cultural themes, musical styles, and traditional performance practices in pianistic form. The following Book 2 depicts the animals in their teenage years and presented in the form of preludes and fugues. For Book 3, the animals are depicted in their adult years and are presented in the form of virtuosic concert études. The musical materials from Book 1 are retained in Books 2 and 3 but developed in ways that reflect each animal’s growth and pianistic advancements.

–*Vincent Ho*

About *The Twelve Chinese Zodiac Animals, Book I*

VII. The Happy Foal

A young horse (known as a foal) is happily galloping along in the wilderness. It leaps over bushes and rocks, and eventually jumps onto higher terrains. The use of fists represents the foal’s energetic movements and physical strength.



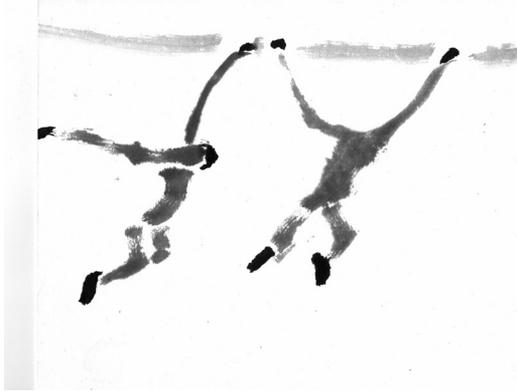
VIII. Sleepy Lamb

A little lamb is quietly falling asleep on a soft bundle of hay. As it drifts away, it gazes at the clouds above, watching them slowly move across the sky during a quiet afternoon. Is it a dream or is it real? It does not matter because the lamb has now fallen asleep.



IX. Monkey See, Monkey Do

Two young monkeys are playing in a tree. One of them is represented by the RH in the form of a playful melody which the other monkey imitates in the LH two beats later. The two of them soon go oK playing on diKerent branches on diKerent trees. They eventually return to their home tree and finish oK with the original theme they started with.



X. The Dancing Cockerel

An exuberant young rooster (known as a cockerel) is dancing around in a carefree manner. Its dancing becomes increasingly excited, eventually leading the cockerel to trip and fall on its face.



XI. The Wandering Puppy

A little puppy decides to wander and explore the neighbourhood. It is shy at first but soon gains confidence as it discovers the world beyond. It eventually feels it has had enough exploring for one day and decides to wander back to the safety of its home.



XII. Gentle Piglet

A little piglet is going about its day while enjoying the warm sunny weather. It happily wanders here and there without a care in the world. Where is it going? It doesn't matter. The little piglet is enjoying its journey...



*Illustrations by Lilith Ohan

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Lulwa Al Shamlan, pianist

Lulwa Al Shamlan is a Kuwaiti-Bulgarian pianist who has appeared as a soloist with the Uzbekistan State Symphony Orchestra, the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Manhattan School of Music Symphony Orchestra, and has given solo recitals at venues including the House of Pianos in Dubai, the Sofia Polish Institute in Bulgaria, and CARA at the Jazz Orchestra of Matosinhos in Portugal. In Kuwait, she was awarded the Gulf Cooperation Council Medal for Creative and Distinguished Youth in 2024 and has performed at the Yarmouk Cultural Centre and the Jaber Al Ahmad Cultural Centre. She is the winner of the Respighi Prize in Piano and will perform as a soloist with the Chamber Orchestra of New York at Carnegie Hall in 2027. Lulwa studied at Wells Cathedral School in the UK and earned her Bachelor of Music (2023) and Master of Music (2025) degrees from Manhattan School of Music, receiving the Roy M. Rubinstein Award, Hugo Kortschak Award, and Helen Cohn Award. She is currently pursuing the Doctor of Musical Arts degree at MSM, studying with Dr. Marc Silverman.

Edmund Zicheng An, pianist

Based in New York City, Chinese pianist Edmund Zicheng An has appeared on stages across Asia, Europe, and the United States, including Xi'an Grand Theatre, Teatro Principal de Burgos, and the DiMenna Center in New York City. Since 2021, he has been a regular collaborator with the Qingdao Symphony Orchestra, performing numerous piano concertos, and his July 2024 performance of Shostakovich's Piano Concerto No. 2 received widespread acclaim. In addition to his performance career, Mr. An is a dedicated educator on the faculty of Opus One Music and an active music critic, having published dozens of concert reviews in the professional magazine *Music Weekly*. He earned his Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from Manhattan School of Music and is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree under the guidance of Dr. Marc Silverman, while serving as a teaching assistant in the Music History and Elective Piano departments.

Eric Clark, pianist

Eric Clark has performed to critical acclaim throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia, with recent appearances as a soloist with the Summit Symphony and the Palisades Sinfonietta. He was a semifinalist and the only American admitted to the inaugural International Chopin Competition on Period Instruments in Warsaw (2018), and a secondprize winner at the 2023

Hartford Chopin Competition. His repertoire spans from Byrd to Ligeti, and he has commissioned new works by Pittsburgh-based composer Christian Kriegeskotte. Eric is currently a Doctor of Musical Arts candidate at Manhattan School of Music, studying with William Wolfram, and previously earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at Carnegie Mellon University, where he studied with Enrique Graf and Sergey Schepkin.

Youlan Ji, pianist

Chinese-born pianist Youlan Ji is known for her dynamic programs and electrifying performances, having appeared in recitals across Asia, Europe, and the United States. Praised by the Florida Keys Concert Association as “a standout performer with impeccable phrasing,” she has performed as a soloist with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, the Aspen Conducting Academy Orchestra, and the Juilliard Pre-College Orchestra, and has appeared frequently in chamber settings at venues including Alice Tully Hall and Harris Hall, as well as on NPR's *From the Top*. Passionate about engaging audiences through interpretive commentary, she has presented lecture-recitals on topics such as The Tales of E.T.A. HoKmann in Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, The Evolution of Chinese Piano Music in the 20th Century, and J. S. Bach's Revolutionary Keyboard Works. She earned her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the Juilliard School under Yoheved Kaplinsky as a Jerome L. Greene Fellow and is currently pursuing her Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Manhattan School of Music, studying with Yefim Bronfman.

Daria Podorozhnova, pianist

Daria Podorozhnova is a Russian pianist based in New York and a prizewinner of numerous international competitions, including Second Prize at the 2025 Olga Kern International Piano Competition, First Prize at the Ann & Charles Eisemann Young Artist Competition (leading to a solo appearance with the Richardson Symphony Orchestra), and First Prize at the Chopin International Piano Competition in Hartford. She has also received Sixth Prize at the 69th Maria Canals International Piano Competition in Barcelona, along with top prizes in Russia and Kazakhstan. In February 2025, she was named a winner of the Eisenberg–Fried Concerto Competition at Manhattan School of Music and will perform Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 2 with the OPUS130 Orchestra. Born in Rostov-on-Don, she began her studies at the Special Music School affiliated with the Rostov State Conservatory and studied with Inna Serebryanskaya and Sergei Osipenko. She is currently pursuing her Bachelor of Music degree at MSM, studying with Alexandre Moutouzkine, and is a recipient of the Harold and Helene Schonberg Pianist Scholarship.

Vincent Ho, Composer

Vincent Ho is a multi-award winning composer of orchestral, chamber, vocal, and theatre music. His works have been described as “brilliant and compelling” by *The New York Times* and hailed for their profound expressiveness and textural beauty, leaving audiences talking about them with great enthusiasm. His many awards and recognitions have included five Juno Award nominations, Western Canadian Music Award’s “Composer of the Year”, Harvard University’s Fromm Music Commission, The Canada Council for the Arts’ “Robert Fleming Prize”, ASCAP’s “Morton Gould Young Composer Award”, four SOCAN Young Composers Awards, and CBC Radio’s Audience Choice Award (2009 Young Composers’ Competition).

During the period of 2007-2014, Dr. Ho has served as the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra’s composer-in-residence and presented a number of large-scale works that have generated much excitement and critical praise. His *Arctic Symphony* has been described “a mature and atmospheric work that firmly establishes Ho among North American composers of note” (*Winnipeg Free Press*). His percussion concerto, titled *The Shaman*, composed for Dame Evelyn Glennie was hailed as a triumph, receiving unanimous acclaim and declared by critics as “Spectacular” (*The New York Classical Review*), “A powerhouse work” (*The Winnipeg Free Press*), and “Rocking/mesmerizing...downright gorgeous” (*The Pittsburgh Gazette*).

Born in Ottawa, Ontario in 1975, Vincent Ho began his musical training through Canada’s Royal Conservatory of Music where he earned his Associate Diploma in Piano Performance. He earned his Bachelor of Music from the University of Calgary, his Master of Music from the University of Toronto, and his Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Southern California. His mentors have included Allan Bell, David Eagle, Christos Hatzis, Walter Buczynski, and Stephen Hartke. In 1997, he was awarded a scholarship to attend the Schola Cantorum Summer Composition Program in Paris, where he received further training in analysis, composition, counterpoint, and harmony, supervised by David Diamond, Philip Lasser, and Narcis Bonet.

Derek Zhi Guang Chiu, Guest Artist

Canadian concert pianist and Steinway Artist Derek Zhi Guang Chiu musical foundation was shaped at Manhattan School of Music, where he earned his Master of Music degree in Piano Performance in 2003. At MSM, he studied with the legendary pedagogue Dr. Solomon Mikowsky and with Dr. Donn Alexandre Feder. His training was further enriched through chamber music studies with Daniel Epstein and coursework in Baroque and Classical performance practices with Dr. Kenneth Cooper.

Chiu maintains an active international performance career as a soloist and collaborative artist. He has collaborated closely with composer Vincent Ho on *The Chinese Zodiac Animals, Book 1*, giving its premiere performances in Canada, Italy, Germany, and the United States, and will present Books 1 and 2 in Tokyo in the summer of 2026. He has performed with notable artists including violist Simone Gramaglia of the Quartetto di Cremona and the late concertmaster of LA Opera, Roberto Cani. Sought after for masterclasses, he has given classes at The Colburn School, The Royal Conservatory, the Vancouver Academy of Music, and the Colorado Music Teachers Association Annual Conference. He is also in demand as a competition jury member, lecturer, and guest artist.

**Lisa Yui, *Lives of the Piano* Series Director,
Interim Associate Dean of Doctor of Musical Arts**

Described as “a musical phenomenon” (*Pianiste*), Yamaha Artist Lisa Yui enjoys a multifaceted musical career as pianist, lecturer, educator, author, and musical director. Since making her concerto debut at the age of seven, she has performed throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. She is the top prizewinner of the Senigallia International Piano Competition in Italy, and has twice been the recipient of a Canada Council Scholarship. Dr. Yui has performed as soloist with prominent orchestras including the Tokyo Symphony, Polish National Radio, Toronto Symphony, and Krakow State Philharmonic. Dr. Yui’s insightful writing on a variety of topics has appeared in numerous publications, and she has worked extensively with cutting-edge music technology through her long-distance remote lessons and performances using the Yamaha Disklavier, an acoustic/digital hybrid player piano. Lisa Yui is on the faculties of Manhattan School of Music, Juilliard Extension, and is a regular guest instructor on the online platform, tonebase Piano. At Manhattan School of Music she received the School’s 2018 President’s Medal for Distinguished Service, and currently is serving as the Interim Associate Dean of Doctor of Musical Arts.

ABOUT MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Founded as a community music school by Janet Daniels Schenck in 1918, today MSM is recognized for its more than 1,000 superbly talented undergraduate and graduate students who come from more than 50 countries and nearly all 50 states; its innovative curricula and world-renowned artist-teacher faculty that includes musicians from the New York Philharmonic, the Met Orchestra, and the top ranks of the jazz and Broadway communities; and a distinguished community of accomplished, award-winning alumni working at the highest levels of the musical, educational, cultural, and professional worlds.

The School is dedicated to the personal, artistic, and intellectual development of aspiring musicians, from its Precollege students through those pursuing doctoral studies. Offering classical, jazz, and musical theatre training, MSM grants a range of undergraduate and graduate degrees. True to MSM's origins as a music school for children, the Precollege Division is a professionally oriented Saturday music program dedicated to the musical and personal growth of talented young musicians ages 8 to 18. The School also serves some 2,000 New York City schoolchildren through its Arts-in-Education Program, and another 2,000 students through its critically acclaimed Distance Learning Program.

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Land Acknowledgment

We want to acknowledge that we gather as Manhattan School of Music on the traditional land of the Lenape and Wappinger past and present, and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. This calls us to commit to continuing to learn how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit as well.



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