

Composer: Jianjun He
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Title of the composition: Yangge (秧歌)
Duration: 2:18

Program Notes...

A popular out-door dance performed in holidays, Yangge (Chinese: 秧歌) is one of the most representative folk arts in China. When perform Yangge, dancers dress up in colorful costumes and swing the body to music played by drum, gong, and other instruments. In different areas Yangge is performed in different styles, but all express happiness and comicality. In this piece, the composer tried to musically depict the scenes of Yangge performance where people are dancing, singing, amusing, and laughing. The materials are, in many aspects, related to traditional Chinese music. For example, the melody is roughly based on Yu Mode, one of the five Chinese pentatonic modes; the frequent use of grace notes comes from Chinese instrumental music; the double stops imitate the sonority of Chinese percussion instruments; etc. Although the Chinese heritage is obvious, there is no direct quotation from original folk music. Synthesizing Western compositional techniques with Chinese musical elements, this piece sounds "old and new." It shows the fusion of different cultures and reflects the diversity of today's music.