

Recognized as the world's premier pipa virtuoso and leading ambassador of Chinese music, Grammy Award-nominated musician Wu Man has carved out a career as a soloist, educator and composer giving her lute-like instrument – which has a history of over 2,000 years in China – a new role in both traditional and contemporary music. Through numerous concert tours Wu Man has premiered hundreds of new works for the pipa, while spearheading multimedia projects to both preserve and create awareness of China's ancient musical traditions. Her adventurous spirit and virtuosity have led to collaborations across artistic disciplines allowing Wu Man to reach wider audiences as she works to break through cultural and musical borders. Wu Man's efforts were recognized when she was named *Musical America's* 2013 Instrumentalist of the Year, the first time this prestigious award has been bestowed on a player of a non-Western instrument.

Having been brought up in the Pudong School of pipa playing, one of the most prestigious classical styles of Imperial China, Wu Man is now recognized as an outstanding exponent of the traditional repertoire as well as a leading interpreter of contemporary pipa music by today's most prominent composers such as Tan Dun, Philip Glass, the late Lou Harrison, Terry Riley, Bright Sheng, Chen Yi and many others. She has been featured on *PBS NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer and in 2011 she was the first Chinese musician featured on *NPR's* Tiny Desk Concert series. She was awarded The Bunting Fellowship at Harvard University in 1998, and was the first Chinese traditional musician to receive The United States Artist Fellowship in 2008. She is also the first artist from China to perform at the White House.

Highlights of the 2013-14 season included a performance with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra for the world premiere of Zhao Jiping's *Concerto for Pipa and Orchestra*. Wu Man then performed the United States premiere of the concerto with the Santa Rosa Symphony, and will go on to perform the piece with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and the San Diego Symphony. She performed Lou Harrison's *Pipa Concerto* with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, and will perform Tan Dun's *Pipa Concerto* with the Fresno Philharmonic and the Illinois Symphony. Wu Man is a featured artist at Cal Performances this season where she performed with the Kronos Quartet in December and a solo recital in January. She will be a featured performer again with the group at Carnegie Hall for the Kronos Quartet's 40th Anniversary Celebration concert in March where she will perform the New York premiere of *Orion: China*, a piece she co-wrote with Philip Glass.

Born in Hangzhou, China, Wu Man studied with Lin Shicheng, Kuang Yuzhong, Chen Zemin, and Liu Dehai at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, where she became the first recipient of a master's degree in pipa.

These performances mark Wu Man's first appearance with the Charlotte Symphony.