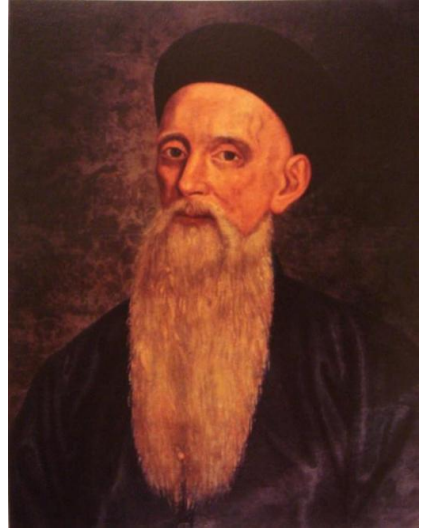
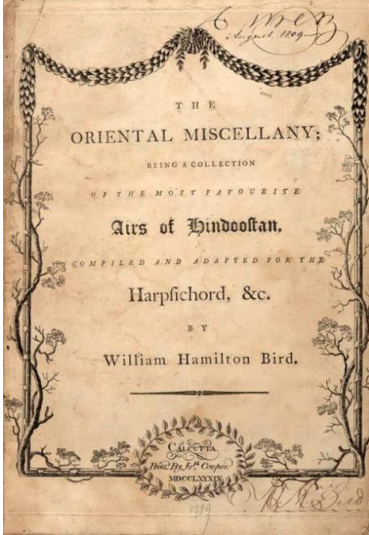


# First Encounters

Musical Journeys from the Dawn of the Global World

Yeo Yat-Soon: Harpsichord

Agnes Chin: Guzheng



This series of concerts explores music which spanned the continents of Europe and Asia in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, including music from the Ming and Qing dynasties played on the Chinese guzheng and harpsichord. The programmes include Chinese melodies transcribed by Jean Joseph Marie Amiot (a French Roman Catholic missionary and resident of Beijing - above right). They also include Indian Hindustani Aairs arranged for harpsichord by William Hamilton Bird (an Irish musician and resident of Kolkata), and the music of Jean-Philippe Rameau (a French composer whose works were performed in Beijing).

## Concert dates 2022:

**Thursday 22 September at 12.30:** Music on Thursdays - Leatherhead Methodist Church, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 8AY [www.musiconthursdays.org](http://www.musiconthursdays.org)

**Friday 7 October at 1.00:** Barber Lunchtime Concert Series - Elgar Concert Hall, University of Birmingham, B15 2TT, <https://barber.org.uk/concerts/lunchtime-concerts/>

**Saturday 8 October at 7.30:** Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare, Hampton, Surrey, TW12 2EJ [www.lokimusic.co.uk](http://www.lokimusic.co.uk)

**Saturday 12 November at 7.30:** (with the baroque ensemble Follia): St Mary's Parish Church, Hampton, TW12 2EB [www.lokimusic.co.uk](http://www.lokimusic.co.uk)

**Monday 14 November at 7.30:** Fitzwilliam College, University of Cambridge, CB3 0DG [www.fitz.cam.uk](http://www.fitz.cam.uk)

**Thursday 8 December at 4.00:** Hear it Live! Horniman Museum, London SE23 [www.horniman.ac.uk/event/hear-it-live/](http://www.horniman.ac.uk/event/hear-it-live/)



European keyboard instruments first reached Imperial China when the Italian Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci (far left) brought the Ming Dynasty Emperor Wanli the gift of a clavichord in 1601. A generation later travellers reported that the Qing Emperor Kangxi (left) had “harpichords and spinets in great numbers in all his palaces”.

In 1750, the another Jesuit, Jean Joseph Marie Amiot arrived in Beijing, where he would spend the remaining forty three years of his life.

As well as being was an important literary translator and scholar of Chinese history, Amiot wrote an extensive *Memoire* on Chinese music, performed French Baroque music in the Forbidden City and transcribed extensive Chinese melodies into European notation.

At around the same time, the Irish-born musician William Hamilton Bird, who lived in India, transcribed and arranged for the harpsichord an extensive collection of *Airs of Hindoostan* which he published in Calcutta as *The Oriental Miscellany* in 1789.

British-Chinese harpsichordist Yeo Yat-Soon and Malaysian-Chinese guzheng player Agnes Chin will be exploring this fascinating repertoire from these early years of cross-cultural artistic contact, including music which has probably not been heard since the 18<sup>th</sup> century.



**Yeo Yat-Soon** was born in London to Chinese parents. He studied Music and Historical Musicology at King’s College London, and Harpsichord and Conducting the Guildhall School of Music, where he won the prestigious Raymond Russell Prize for Harpsichord. He performs widely as a solo and ensemble harpsichordist. He plays with the ensembles Follia, The Stanesby Players and Camerata Berolinensis (Berlin). He also specializes in baroque opera and has conducted for London Baroque Opera, City of London Festival and Opéra de Baugé. He has broadcast for BBC1 and Channel 4 television, BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM. Yat-Soon has had a long association with music education, having been Director of Music at St Paul’s Girls’ School and the Lady Eleanor Holles School. He currently teaches harpsichord and lectures on Historical Performance at the University of Birmingham.

**Agnes Chin** was born in the Cameron Highlands, Malaysia. She began learning the guzheng at the age of six. She took examinations with the China Central Academy of Fine Arts. She continued her guzheng studies at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Agnes also studied piano and flute at the Malaysian Institute of Arts in Kuala Lumpur. She has taught at the Ellen Music Academy in Subang Jaya and the Partita Music Academy in Kuala Lumpur. She is currently studying for a master’s degree in Piano Performance at the University of Birmingham.



For further details see: [www.yeoyat-soon.org](http://www.yeoyat-soon.org)

To watch promotional video please click the link: [First Encounters on YouTube](#)