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northrivermusic

The Renee Weiler Concert Hall  
Greenwich House Music School  
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# IIIZ+

## "Pling, Plang, Plung and [ka] Boom!"

**New York, NY - January 29, 2004** - Greenwich House Arts announces concert nine of the North River Music series featuring IIIZ+ (photo: below), a Japanese koto, Chinese zheng, Korean kayagum and changgu ensemble. On **Thursday, February 26 at 8pm**, IIIZ+ presents "**Pling, Plang, Plung, and [ka] Boom!**" with



photo by alejandro dhers

premieres by composers Hiroko Ito and Il-Ryun Chung, as well as existing work by Stefan Hakenberg, Tadao Sawai, Neng Qiang Xu and Shan Liu. Tickets cost \$15 and \$10 for students and seniors. This performance will be held in Greenwich House Music School 's Renee Weiler Concert Hall, which is located at 46 Barrow Street, NYC (between Seventh Ave. South and Bedford St.).

"**Pling, Plang, Plung, and [ka] Boom!**" features two world premieres of freshly commissioned works by Japanese-American composer and Harvard Ph.D. Hiroko Ito from Los Angeles and Korean-German composer Il-Ryun Chung, who is a prominent part of the vital contemporary music scene of today's Berlin. Also on the program is IIIZ+'s title piece *Three*

*Zithers and a Pair of Scissors*, kayagûm sanjo, a koto composition by the late modern koto master Tadao Sawai, and two short zheng solos: one traditional piece and a collaborative contemporary work by Chinese composers Neng Qiang Xu and Shan Liu.

Hiroko Ito: *Goblins' Lagoon* for koto, kayagum, guzheng and changgu:

*Goblins' Lagoon* is written for and dedicated to IIIZ+. Each instrument, from different regions of East Asia, has its own distinctive voice and yet blends well so naturally. The piece attempts to bring out the special characteristics of each instrument, and at the same time, blend the voices as an ensemble. In order to save the traditional spirit of the instruments in my nontraditional composition, traditional fixed tunings are used, with minor adjustments.

*Goblins' Lagoon* is a suite consisting of four short movements in the form of a solo chamber concertino. The subtitles of the movements represent fire, light, time and air, 4 elements that are different and yet exist together and blend naturally. The first movement features kayagum, second guzheng, third changgu and fourth koto.

Il-Ryun Chung: *Bendings* for kayagum, koto, guzheng, and Korean percussion – changgu and ching:

"*Bendings* is a piece for the ensemble IIIZ+: kayagum, koto, guzheng and Korean percussion: changgu and ching. It is inspired by the relationship of the instruments to the human voice singing, especially the zithers, which, though with their short plucks are seemingly far from the voice, are very close to it. Another important part of the spirit of the zithers is their ability to produce all kinds of pitch-bends: glissandi, portati, and vibrati. Three Asian soul-divas singing melodic lines full of bent notes and traditional vibratos — and a drum/gong that ties them to the earth is what came to my mind when writing the piece. A curve or a bent line is also the aesthetic ideal for the form of the whole piece. *Bendings* is meant to be tense — to tighten something that then has to be released."

[over]

Stefan Hakenberg: *Three Zithers and a Pair of Scissors* for kayagum, koto, zheng, and changgu (1998)

”To create this composition, I found recordings of outstanding interpretations of traditional music by the three zither soloists that played the premiere performance. I picked the koto piece, Midare, composed by Kengyo Yatsuhashi; the kayagum sanjo from the Seong Geumryeon School; and the Chinese traditional melodies Lofty Mountains Running Water, Fisherman’s Song at Dusk, The Little Cloud Festival, and The Skirts of Rainbow of the Zhejiang School as recorded by Wang Changyuan. I then cut these original fragments into pieces and arranged them into the five musical montages of *Three Zithers and a Pair of Scissors*. Each of the montages is a representation of a different Bhothisatva. They play in the order of appearance a pair of cymbals, a harp, a drum, a flute and a Lute.”

Formed on the occasion of a performance of German-American composer Stefan Hakenberg’s musical montage *Three Zithers and a Pair of Scissors* commissioned for Harvard University’s Asia Center opening, III Z+ (“three zee plus” in English) features three zithers: Jocelyn Clark on Korean kayagûm, Masayo Ishigure on Japanese koto, Fiona Siang Yun Sze on Chinese zheng, “plus” Il-Ryun Chung on Korean percussion. Becoming known for performances that defy the conventional boundaries of their instruments, III Z+ breaks new ground and offers surprising insights into musical and cultural interactions between China, Korea and Japan in the context of America and Europe (indeed each player — originally from Alaska, Japan, Singapore, and Germany respectively — has a different native tongue). Its focus on the large bridged zither instrument-family makes prominent the archetypical similarities and differences between the individual living music traditions of East Asia, while at the same time creating a potent, vivid, entirely new transnational sound and approach to “chamber,” “world,” and “new” music. III Z+ represents the future of Western art music – a music that more and more reflects and includes the multiplicity of peoples making art music in the West today.

listen outside the box

!All programs and concert dates are subject to change.

!!Please contact Greenwich House Arts or visit [www.gharts.org](http://www.gharts.org) for updates.

!!!All artists are available for interview (radio/print) and photos and recordings can be provided.

**Program\*:**

North River Music 2003-04  
Thursday Concerts at 8pm

**III Z+**

Renee Weiler Concert Hall

Thursday, February 26, 2004 at 8pm

**“Pling, Plang, Plung and [ka]Boom!”**

Two world premieres by Hiroko Ito and Il-Ryun Chung as well as III Z+’s title piece *Three Zithers and a Pair of Scissors*; kayagûm sanjo; a koto composition by Tadao Sawai and two short zheng solos: one traditional piece and a collaborative contemporary work by Chinese composers Neng Qiang Xu and Shan Liu.

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