

## Programme notes supplied by Lee Tsang for *Alliance* (2019)

*Alliance* premiere (including 'Hope Shadow' text premiere), Winnipeg Jazz Orchestra, Karly Epp (voice), David Braid (piano), Philippe Côté (conductor), 711 Jefferson Avenue, 18.11.2019.

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***Alliance*** comprises two original songs with texts by Lee Tsang and music by David Braid ("The Hand") and Philippe Côté ("Hope Shadow"). "The Hand" is sung from the perspective of a central character (expressed in the form of a nightingale) who is guided by the Hand, a mysterious force. "Hope Shadow" is a companion piece to "The Hand"; it takes the opposite subject position and is sung from the mysterious force's omniscient perspective. Together these texts express aspects of imagery relating to the human spirit as it deals with its transgressions. They express the world in terms of a necessary interdependent balance, much like the yin-yang concept, which here combines with allusions to Christianity.

**Lee Tsang** is a musical poet, singer, conductor and producer with an insatiable passion for creating, curating and performing new work. His Sinfonia UK Collective has championed the work of major living composers from across the world, and enabled him to explore creative agency and timbre in new music performance contexts. Currently, Tsang's creation of texts and contexts focuses on the chimeric and metamorphic aspects of collaborative crossover, drawing on classical, jazz, indigenous and diasporic musics.

The processes of Tsang's musical poetry are rooted in phonological improvisation. Drawing on his experience as a timbre theory music analyst, Tsang uses a metamorphic process of 'phonological-anchoring', matching vowels to melodic-harmonic sonorities, before proceeding to metaphor layering and narrative development. His contribution to *Alliance* orientates the work's crossover content, structure and frame towards certain Western culture aspects that align with Daoist Wuwei principles. The imagery invokes Wilde, Jung, the Confucian and the Biblical.

Tsang's work has featured on BBC, CBC, Apple Music; at major festivals, including Ottawa International Chamberfest, Festival International Hautes-Laurentides, the Festival of the Sound, UK City of Culture, and the Women of the World Festival; has been commissioned by Arts Council England, Vaughan Williams Charitable Trust, and PRS for Music; and published by Faber Music and Edinburgh University Press, amongst others. Tsang has performed across Europe, Asia and North America and contributed to two albums that have received Juno nominations (K52 and Steinway labels). He is Head of Classical Music Performance at the University of Liverpool, UK.