

# World Dances



## Lesson – *Call and Response in Traditional Chinese Dance*

Companion Video – *Duo Ye* for chamber orchestra

### Suggested Grade Level

Grades 1-4

### Objective

Students will identify and explore call and response in traditional Duoye song and dance through the music of composer Chen Yi. They will understand how specific instruments are used to represent the human voice in musical compositions and be able to identify this compositional technique through their listening of *Duo Ye*.

### Suggested Materials

- BPO video of Chen Yi's *Duo Ye* for chamber orchestra
- Composer fact sheet (provided)
- YouTube example of Dong ring dance- <https://tinyurl.com/546c26vb>
- YouTube examples of *call and response*
  - Vocal Example (Military)- Time Stamp: 1:15-3:00 - <https://tinyurl.com/mgeu9u4m>
  - Instrumental Example (Jazz)- <https://tinyurl.com/5fwvm2s8>

### New York State Arts Standards

MU:Cr1.1.1a-4a      DA:Pr4.1.1a-4a  
MU:Pr4.2.1a-4a      DA:Pr4.1.1a  
MU:Re7.2.1a-4a      DA:Pr5.1.1c-4c  
MU:Re8.1.1a-4a  
MU:Cn10.1.1a-4a  
MU:Cn10.1.1d-4d

### New York State English Language Arts & Literacy Standards

Speaking & Listening, Standard 1, 2, 4 & 6  
Language, Standard 1, 3 & 6

### Procedure

- 1) In music, a **call and response** is a sequence of two distinct *phrases*, or sentences, where the second phrase is heard as a direct response to the first. Examples of call and response include instruments directly copying each other; a questioning phrase from one instrument, answered by another; or an instrument “answering” the call of another



## Lesson – *Call and Response in Traditional Chinese Dance* (continued)

instrument in a varied way, otherwise known as improvisation. Ask students: Where might you hear examples of call and response? (music and prayers in church, jazz music, drill sergeants in the military, etc.)

- 2) Have students watch the YouTube example of vocal call and response performed by members of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Chorus. Ask students to identify where in the clip they hear how the *response* directly copies the *call*, versus a time in which a *questioning phrase* is *answered differently*.
- 3) We can use our voices to demonstrate call and response, but it can also be demonstrated through our movements. For example, sports fans often shout “Defense!” at game, followed by a rhythmic stomping of the feet or clapping of the hands in response. The rhythmic stomping, or clapping, is a directly copied response to the vocal call, without words, using only the sounds created from movements. Ask students if they can think of other cheers heard at sporting events that are examples of call and response.
  - a. If students can’t think of another cheer, you can use the example of “Let’s Go Buff-a-lo,” in which students would respond by clapping back the rhythmic pattern of each syllable.
- 4) We don’t always use our voices when performing call and response. This technique can also be achieved using instruments. Have students watch the YouTube example of instrumental call and response. Explain that the piano forms the *melodic* call and response (a series of notes are being played together to create a tune), while the drums form the *rhythmic* call and response (the player is using a pattern of movement to create sounds).
- 5) Have students watch the BPO video of *Duo Ye*. As they listen, have them think about what instruments they hear demonstrating the *call* (question) versus what instruments are performing the *response* (answer). Have them identify the instruments or instrument families. Ask students to define the instrument(s) or instrument families responsible for the *melodic* call and response, as well as those responsible for the *rhythmic* call and response.
- 6) Have students read through the Composer Fact Sheet and then watch the YouTube clip of a traditional Dong ring dance. Have them identify characteristics of the traditional Duoye dance-song they see in the video. What vocal elements are recognizable? What dance moves are incorporated?

### Extended Learning

Celebrate with your own *duoye* dance-song! Have students stand together and form a circle around one student “leader.” Have the student leader create their own *call* that can be performed with their voice, or on an instrument. Have all other students echo (*response*) the leader’s call, either with their own voices or on instruments. Students in the circle can slowly walk or sway together to the beat that the student leader creates. Have students take turns being the leader and creating their own, unique *calls* for the class.



## Lesson – *Call and Response in Traditional Chinese Dance* (continued)

### Chen Yi

Chen Yi was born and raised in Guangzhou, China. Her parents were both doctors as well as musicians and both her older sister and younger brother continue to work as professional musicians in China today.

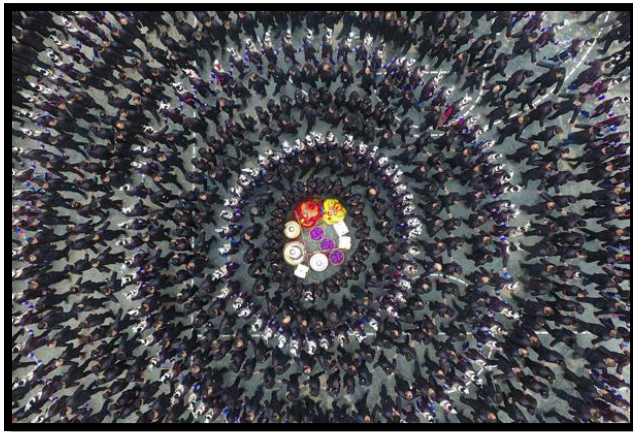
Chen began studying piano at the age of three, heavily influenced by the music of Western composers such as Bach and Mozart. Once the Cultural Revolution began in 1966, Western attitudes and the arts were severely opposed. For ten years, education was nonexistent and people were forced into hard labor in the countryside. Chen was separated from her family when she was 15 years old and was forced to work in the countryside. She was able to continue practicing her violin in secrecy, improvising variations on classical pieces she had memorized. She didn't realize it then, but she was actually composing.

At age seventeen, Chen returned to Guangzhou and began working as concertmaster in the Beijing Opera Troupe orchestra. It was here that she learned to play a variety of Chinese instruments. In 1986, she became the first woman in China to receive a master's degree in composition, and a concert of her music was presented on Chinese television. That same year, Chen left China for New York City to study at Columbia University, where she earned her doctoral degree.

Chen is currently professor of composition at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance. She continues to fuse Chinese and Western influences in her compositions, using Western voices and instruments to call to mind the sound of Chinese vocal music.



## Duo Ye



Duo Ye is a form of traditional song and community dance of the Dong minority in China, in which people stand in a circle with a bonfire in the center, and dance with slow steps towards one direction while singing. Traditionally, women wear their finest embroidered clothing and handmade silver bangles. The words “Ya Duo Ye” are meaningless syllables that the people use in response to the improvisation the lead singer provides. This song and dance is traditionally used as a way to welcome guests or celebrate a happy occasion.



Chen’s inspiration for the piece came from her travels to China with a group of composers in which she was welcomed this way by the Dong and Yao minorities. The original piece was written for solo piano and won first prize in a national competition.

*People of Dong ethnic group attend Duoye, a traditional celebrating activity, in Congjiang county, Southwest China’s Guizhou province, Feb 19, 2018.*