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Symposium for Contemporary Music to Feature Orchid Ensemble

BLOOMINGTON, ILL. – The musical group Orchid Ensemble will be the featured guests at Illinois Wesleyan University School of Music's annual Symposium of Contemporary Music. The Symposium will be from Nov. 8 to Nov. 9 and is free and open to the public.

Established in 1952, the Symposium of Contemporary Music brings prominent guest composers or performers to campus for a two-to-three day residency. The Symposium's goal is to involve students directly in performing new compositions while recognizing contemporary composers. Over the years, guest composers have included Aaron Copland (1958), Iain Hamilton (1968), Halim El-Dabh and Olly Wilson (1970), Jean Eichelberger Ivey (1986), Arvo Part (1998), Libby Larson (2000), William Bolcom and Joan Morris (2001) the New York New Music Ensemble (2006), and composer Roderik de Man and harpsichordist Annelie de Man (2008).

Orchid Ensemble is a musical ensemble based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The group is led by Lan Tung from Taiwan and supported by Gelina Jiang from China and Jonathan Bernard from Canada. Orchid Ensemble blends traditional music with world music, new music, jazz music and musical improvisation. They give about 150 performances a year including music festivals, community concerts, primary and secondary school presentations and university and college performances. Recent appearances include The John. F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington D.C., the Canada Day Celebrations and the National Gallery in Ottawa, the Vancouver International Jazz Festival and Toronto's Harbourfront Centre.

Orchid Ensemble actively commissions new compositions by Canadian and U.S. composers and regularly collaborates with musicians from a wide variety of cultures and musical backgrounds. The group's recent projects include many different artistic styles. In 2005 "Road to Kashgar" featured interactive media arts by Donna Szoke with Chinese calligrapher Yukman Lai and Dervish dancer Raqib Brian Burke. In 2006, "Café de Chinitas" incorporated Flamenco rhythms with Mozaico Flamenco Dance Theatre, and in 2007 "Triaspora" featured choreographers and

dancers Jessica Jone and Chengxin Wei. The ensemble has produced two CDs. Their first, “Heartland” came out in 2000 and was nominated for Best Instrumental Music and best World by the 2001 West Coast Music Awards. Their second album, “Road to Kashgar,” came out in 2004 and was nominated for World Album of the Year by the 2005 Juno Awards.

Schedule of Events:

* Saturday, Nov. 8 — An improvisational concert followed by a performance with Orchid Ensemble at 7:30 p.m. in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall (1210 N. Park St., Bloomington).

* Sunday, Nov. 9 — A concert presenting the music of John Sharpley featuring the world premiere of *A Dream Within a Dream*, with the Orchid Ensemble and the IWU Collegiate Choir, at 3:00 p.m. at the Second Presbyterian Church (313 N East St., Bloomington).

For additional information, contact the School of Music Office at (309) 556-3061.