

National Anthems Online

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: Yiyonggjun Jinxingqu

March of the Volunteers

Yiyonggjun Jinxingqu (March of the Volunteers) is not only the national anthem of China but also that of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Macau Special Administrative Region. The lyrics were written in 1934 by the noted poet and playwright Tian Han. The song, with music by Nie Er, was first adopted as the national anthem when the Communists took power in 1949.

During the dark years of the Cultural Revolution, "The March of the Volunteers" was forbidden. Instead, "The East Is Red" became the national anthem. In 1978, after Chairman Mao's death, "The March of the Volunteers" was restored with new words that referred to Mao and the Communist Party. The new lyrics were never popular and caused considerable confusion, with the result that the original 1935 lyrics by Tian Han were eventually restored. In 2004, a provision that the March of the Volunteers be the national anthem was added to the Constitution. The anthem was performed in an official capacity in Hong Kong for the first time following the handover in 1997, and the handover of Macau in 1999. Most people in China just call it the "Zhongguo Guoge" (Chinese National Song).

The composer, Nie Er was born in Yunnan and from an early age displayed an interest in music. In his spare time at school, he learnt to play traditional instruments. Later, he learnt to play the violin and the piano. In June 1931, he entered the *Mingyue Musical Drama Society* as a violinist. He joined the Lianhua Film Studio in November 1932 and in 1934, he not only joined the Baak Doi record company but also founded the Pathé National Orchestra. On July 17, 1935, he drowned while swimming in Japan, at the age of twenty-three. He wrote a total of 37 pieces mostly in the two years before his death. The Introduction may be played as a trumpet solo or soli if required. The anthem is usually played in G major but has been transposed to F major for ease of use.

Nie Er (1912-1935)
Arranged by Colin Kirkpatrick

♩ = 100

In F, C and Bb *f* *mf cresc.*

15

f *mf*

22

f

28

f

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