

Sa Chen

Crystal prizewinner at the 12th Van Cliburn International Piano Competition (2005), Sa Chen, has been called “a brilliant pianist” by the prestigious pianist Emmanuel Ax. Her first major performance took place in 1996, when she competed in the final of the prestigious Leeds International Piano Competition aged only 16, with Sir Simon Rattle conducting the City of Birmingham Symphony. The performance was broadcast live on BBC Television, captivating audiences throughout Britain. Since then, she has performed throughout Europe, China, Japan and the United States.

Sa Chen was born in Chongqing, China. She began her musical studies at the Sichuan Conservatory of Music with Dan Zhaoyi, later continuing with him at the Shenzhen School of Arts. After listening to her perform in 1994, Chinese President Jiang Zemin interviewed her together with Dan Zhaoyi. Following her success in Leeds in 1996, she was subsequently offered a scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, where she studied with Joan Havill and obtained a master’s degree in performance. Later, she also studied with Arie Vardi at the “Hochschule für Musik und Theater” in Hanover, and is now living in Germany.



Sa Chen won the first of many major awards and honours at the age of 14, when she received first prize at the 1994 China International Piano Competition. Winning fourth prize two years later at the Leeds International Piano Competition 1996, as the youngest contestant in the competition, marked the beginning of Sa Chen's international career. This was followed by a number of other awards, the most prestigious of which was at the 14th International Chopin Piano Competition in October 2000, when she received the Best Polonaise Performance Award as well as the overall Fourth Prize. Her Crystal award at the 12th Van Cliburn International Piano Competition established her reputation of one of the most outstanding pianists in the world today, and also made her the only pianist in history to have been awarded in all three top piano competitions.

As a soloist, Sa Chen has performed with many celebrated conductors, such as Semyon Bychkov, Edo de Waart, Sir Simon Rattle, Leonard Slatkin and James Conlon. She has received invitations from many orchestras, including: the WDR Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony, Camerata Salzburg, Warsaw Philharmonic, Israel Philharmonic, Strasbourg Philharmonic, China Philharmonic, China National Symphony Orchestra, Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, Bern Symphony Orchestra, Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, as well as the Takács Quartet.

Her solo recitals have taken Sa Chen to many U.S. and

European music centres, including Washington D.C. (Kennedy Center), London (Barbican Centre, Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room and Cadogan Hall), Warsaw (Philharmonic Hall), Milan (the Salla Verdi), Berlin (Broadcast Hall), Zurich (Tonhalle) and Boston (Boston Symphony Hall). Sa Chen has also given concerts in the United States (her U.S. début took place in April 2002), Canada, Asia (including Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Tokyo), Israel (in Tel Aviv) and Australia (Sydney Opera House).

Sa Chen tours regularly in Japan, where she has also performed in the prestigious Tokyo series "The 100 Great Pianists of the Twentieth Century". During the 2003-2004 season, she was invited as performance partner by renowned violinist Gidon Kremer to various festivals.

She appeared in *In the heart of music and Encore!*, film documentaries about the 2005 Van Cliburn Competition which aired on PBS stations across the United States in early October 2005. Gramophone magazine chose Sa Chen as its featured artist for the launch of its Chinese edition. A documentary about her, produced by RTHK, was telecast on Hong Kong satellite TV network and CCTV.

Sa Chen's début disc "Chopin Impression" was released in 2003 on the JVC label, and her second CD in the autumn of 2005 on the Harmonia Mundi label. In the summer of 2008, she signed a long-term, exclusive contract with PentaTone Classics.

For more information, please visit Sa Chen's official website: www.chen-sa.com.

www.pentatonemusic.com

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PTC 5186 341

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All recordings are available as hybrid, multi-channel, surround-sound recordings, played to their best advantage on SA-CD-players. These recordings can also be played on conventional CD-players (although reproduction here will be normal stereo, without the special SA-CD extras).



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