

Di Xiao

www.dixiao.co.uk

- Concert Pianist
- Honorary professor Guangzhou Xinghai Conservatory and Shanxi University
- Trustee of the Henry Wood Accommodation Trust
- Tutor and cultural ambassador Birmingham Conservatoire

Described as “a pianist of awesome gifts” by the Birmingham Post, Chinese pianist Di Xiao has built a reputation as a musician and international ambassador for the piano.

For Di, success began at an early age when she won the ‘Most Outstanding Young Musician of Guangdong Province Award’ aged just 16. Since then she has won many national and international prizes including; the Ludlow Philharmonic Concerto Prize in 2005, the Birmingham Symphony Hall Prize in 2006, a Worshipful Company of Musicians Silver Medal in 2007 and, in the same year, first prize in the Brant International Piano Competition.

Di’s international career started at 17 when she played Chengzong Yin’s Yellow River Piano Concerto in Kuala Lumpur for the Malaysian Royal Family. Subsequently Di has been invited to perform as a soloist in many countries including Ukraine, Singapore, India, China and the UK. Her debut at Symphony Hall Birmingham in 2006 was described by the UK Chinese Times as “A *stunning concert!*” and an early performance of the Schumann Concerto prompted respected critic Christopher Morley to say “*In her graceful, dancing finale it was easy to imagine Clara Schumann at the keyboard.*”

Di has performed in some of the World’s leading venues, including The Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Luxembourg Philharmonie, Hamburg Laeishalle, Barcelona L’Auditori, Vienna Konzerthaus Wigmore Hall

(London), St David’s Hall (Cardiff), Colston Hall (Bristol) and THSH (Town Hall and Symphony Hall; Birmingham). Following a Cologne Philharmonie recital, played to an audience of over 1000, the press stated “*Di Xiao presents a demanding programme that takes your breath away.*”

An advocate of local music, Xiao has supported a number of music festivals including Bremen Musikfest (Germany), New Generation Arts Festival (UK), Buxton Arts Festival (UK), Leamington Music Festival (UK) and, in 2010, her home town’s enormous inaugural Classical Music Festival in GuangZhou (Canton).

Di released her debut Album “Di Xiao Presents” in 2008. Her second ‘Journey’ was released in October 2011 and a third is currently in production. Many of Xiao’s live performances have been transmitted on national radio stations across Europe. Other media appearances have included live performances on BBC Radio 3’s In Tune, BBC Radio 4’s Woman’s Hour and Classic FM.

In 2012, Xiao took part in the Chinese–British young leader’s forum. She was selected to lead the team at a Parliamentary Round Table discussion on Creative Industries where the panel included the head of British art council, industry leaders and academics.

An international perspective and a wealth of experience mean that Xiao has become a respected thinker on musical issues and she has published a number of articles in the Chinese Financial Times, Piano Art Magazine and UK Chinese Times. Her 2014 article “*the Chinese piano ‘Great Leap’.*” provoked much debate and has been republished many times.

Xiao recognises that her unique profile forms a bridge between two cultures and makes her an international ambassador for the piano, a role which she takes very seriously. She travels extensively to share her knowledge and experience



with the next generation of aspiring musicians. Di’s 2013/2014 China tours included workshops, master-classes and concerts across 9 cities.

In 2014, Xiao Directed the Birmingham City University (BCU) International Piano Academy (IPA). The exciting 3 week course helps pianists from across the globe to improve their technique and musicianship. The course included performances and master-classes by world-class artists and an exciting programme of musical education and inspiring lectures.

Her contribution to music has been recognised by a number of institutions. She was made an Honorary Professor by ShanXi University (China) 2014, won the Mulan Foundation Award for Contribution to Arts and Culture in 2015 and, in the same year, was made Honorary Professor at Guangzhou Xinghai Conservatory.

Di Xiao collaborates widely and her repertoire reflects a broad spectrum of musical styles from Chinese folk music, through western classical to contemporary piano works. A profound understanding of her art and a deep belief in the universal language of music give a special quality and integrity to her work. Consequently, she builds a strong bond with audiences everywhere.

"She [Di Xiao] has fine technique, wide-ranging repertoire, an extremely pleasant platform manner and the personal qualities and capacity to really engage with an audience."

Andrew Jowett, Director: Symphony Hall/Town Hall Birmingham UK

"The Chinese pianist Di Xiao presents a demanding programme consisting of Beethoven, Chopin, Ravel and Messiaen that takes your breath away".

Kölner Philharmonie

Career Highlights

- Performed "Yellow River Concerto" for Malaysian Royal Family in Kuala Lumpur aged 17
- 2005, Ludlow Philharmonic Concerto Prize
- 2006, Birmingham Conservatoire Symphony Hall Concerto Prize
- First Prize, 2007 Brant International Piano Competition
- 2007, Worshipful Company of Musicians Silver Medal
- 2007, Debut live performance on BBC Radio
- 2008, Debut album 'Di Xiao Presents'
- 2008-2009, UK representative to the European Concert Halls Organisation (ECHO) Rising Star Series
- 2009, Standing ovation for her Amsterdam Concertgebouw recital
- 2009, International Piano Magazine 'Top ten up and coming Chinese pianists'
- 2011, Second album 'Journey'
- 2011, Performed live to 6M BBC Radio 4 Woman's Hour listeners
- 2014, Honorary Professor, ShanXi University
- Adjudicator, 2014 Brant International Piano Competition
- Director, 2014 BCU International Piano Academy
- 2015, Honorary Professor, Guangzhou XingHai University
- 2016, Board member of the Henry Wood Accommodation Trust

"A stunning concert. Di Xiao's playing combined power and delicacy, her exceptional talent received long applause from the audience at [the] Symphony Hall Birmingham."

UK Chinese Times

"A piano recital which began with such a serene entrance from the soloist ended with whoops cheers and a standing ovation. What happened in between was entirely due to the quietly impressive musicianship of Di Xiao."

The Birmingham Post

"In the technically much more difficult »Mirrors« by Ravel and in the selection from Messiaen's »Eight Preludes« we experienced an artist who is absolutely at one with what she is playing. Ravel's »Sad Birds« became a fascinating, finely detailed study of the different tonal colours available on the piano and Messiaen's harmonic »stained glass church windows« glittered flamboyantly under Di Xiao's hands"

Hamburger Abendblatt

"Sparkling finger-work (Tchaikovsky; The Seasons), Brutal (Prokofiev; Sonata No6), a tranquil end to a mature performance (Chinese folk-song; Autumn Moon on a Calm Lake)."

Clive Peacock; Leamington Courier.

"A pianist of awesome gifts ...her imperious opening flourish [Schumann Concerto] announced a capacity for full, rich chording. But there was also flowing, rippling figuration as she revealed her instinctive grasp of this wonderful work. In her graceful, dancing finale it was easy to imagine Clara Schumann at the keyboard, Di Xiao's profile and demeanour uncannily close to those of the great lady herself."

The Birmingham Post

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ECHO