

Jessie & Friends

BIOGRAPHIES



JESSIE CHANG

Jessie Chang is admired for her beautiful tone, spectacular virtuosity, and deep musical sensitivity. She fell in love with the piano when she was 3 1/2 years old and urged her parents to enroll her in the Yamaha Music School in Hsin Chu, Taiwan. Her family immigrated to the US when she was nine. Having been in the States for just one year, she was discovered at a talent show competition and made her TV debut, appearing on Taiwan Central Television in Los Angeles. Five years later, she made her concerto debut with the California State University Orchestra.

Ms. Chang attended the Manhattan School of Music with a full scholarship, where she studied with Constance Keene. At the age of nineteen, she earned her Bachelor's degree in Piano Performance and Master's degree two years later. She was the recipient of the "Best Female Pianist" award at both commencements.

She has received top honors in more than thirty distinguished piano competitions of national and international stature, including First Prizes in the Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition, the Music Teachers Association of California State Solo Competition, the Los Angeles Liszt Competition, and the Southern California Junior Bach Festival. The Grand Prize was awarded to Ms. Chang in the Music Teachers Association of California Young Artists Guild, and additional top honors were received in the Los Angeles Music Center Spotlight Competition, the IBLA International Competition, and the International Young Artists Piano Competition, as well as four gold medals at the US Open Music Competition.

Among the highlights of her career, Ms. Chang appeared at the Blossom Festival with The Cleveland Orchestra playing Mozart's double concerto with her duo-partner and husband, Jahja Ling. Ms. Chang was also invited by composer/conductor, Tan Dun, to perform his piano concerto "the Banquet" and the triple concerto with the Macao Symphony Orchestra under the composer's direction.

Ms. Chang has been featured at Carnegie Hall's Isaac Stern Auditorium, Pasadena's Ambassador Auditorium and in front of 28,000 people at Bung Karno stadium in Jakarta. She has performed with various orchestras including the Taipei Symphony Orchestra, the San Diego Symphony Orchestra, the Rochester Philharmonic, the Florida Orchestra, the Rhode Island Philharmonic, the Westchester Philharmonic Orchestra, the Malaysian Philharmonic, the China Philharmonic, the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, the Jakarta Symphony Orchestra, and the Guangzhou Symphony.

Ms. Chang regularly performs chamber music with musicians from the Cleveland Orchestra and the San Diego Symphony, as well as renowned artists, including Augustin Hadelich, Lang Lang, Che-Yen Chen, and the Formosa Quartet.

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MARTHA AARONS

Martha Aarons' professional career began with her appointment as principal flute of the North Carolina Symphony. Subsequently she played with the Cleveland Orchestra for 25 years.

After becoming a freelancer in 2006, she performed often with the Philadelphia Orchestra. During this time she also appeared as guest principal flute with the Metropolitan Opera, Minnesota Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony, San Diego Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Mostly Mozart Festival, Jakarta Sinfonia, and with the World Orchestra for Peace. Ms. Aarons served as Artist Faculty with the Aspen Music Festival for 19 years, and has participated in the Grand Teton Festival in addition to festivals in Cuba and Italy. Among her teaching credits are the Cleveland Institute of Music, Duke University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and Oberlin College. She was Filene Visiting-Artist-in-Residence at Skidmore College and taught and performed as visiting artist and instructor at the Shanghai Conservatory. In 2002 she was guest assistant professor at the Eastman School of Music.

She has been soloist with the Cleveland Orchestra, North Carolina Symphony, Aspen Chamber Symphony, and Ohio Chamber Orchestra. In 2003 Ms. Aarons performed the Aspen Music Festival premiere of the Flute Concerto by Christopher Rouse. Her first CD, *The History of the Tango*, is recorded on the Azica label. It additionally features pianist Frances Renzi and Grammy-winning guitarist Jason Vieaux. She is also featured in an album entitled "Last Silence" with violinist Lev Polyakin and pianist Frances Renzi, released by Azica in Feb..., 2021. Martha is also an avid runner who will be participating in her 4th consecutive Boston Marathon next month.



LEV POLYAKIN

Lev Polyakin was appointed co-concertmaster of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra at age 21. In that position he was regularly featured as soloist. In the U.S. he served as assistant concertmaster of the Cleveland Orchestra, as well as concertmaster of the American Academy of Conducting in Aspen Music Festival. He has also performed in festivals in Italy and elsewhere.

Lev has won several prizes in international violin competitions, including the Beethoven Prize in Carl Flesch in London, and Gold Medal and Special Prize in Brescia, Italy. In addition to his solo performances with the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, he has appeared as soloist with the London Mozart Players, Royal Philharmonic, and Cleveland Orchestra. Recording credits include Melodia, BBC, National Public Radio, and Decca. He is prominently featured on an album entitled "Cafe Music" comprising chamber music by Paul Schoenfield, which was nominated for a Grammy.

Lev has a special interest in jazz and has recorded three CDs with his group "Russian Blue." The albums are entitled *Russian Blue*, *The Other Side of the Road*, and *Christmas Kaleidoscope*.

He is also featured in an album released by Azica Records in Feb. 2021, entitled "Last Silence", with flutist Martha Aarons and pianist Frances Renzi.

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LING YAN

Ling Yan is a Cellist and a dedicated music teacher. She began her cello studies at age 6 with her father and then studied at the Tianjin Conservatory and the Central Conservatory in Beijing. In 1985 she was first-prize winner in the All-China Music Institute Cello Competition. In 1986 she came to the U.S. and won first prize in the La Jolla young Artists Competition. She then hold the Performance Award, earned Bachelor and Master of Music degrees at Boston University as a student of Leslie Parnas. She also participated in the Brandies University Summer Music Festival. Boulder Bach Festival, and Colorado Music Festival. And later the Two Crane international music festival.

Her music career also includes being the principal cellist at the Boulder Philharmonic, Four Seasons Chamber Orchestra, Denver Chamber Orchestra, and Colorado Ballet orchestra in Colorado. And as a member of The Opus chamber orchestra, the Pacific Symphony Orchestra and the Long Beach Symphony Orchestra in California.

Ling has been given solo recitals throughout United State, and solo appearance with Tianjin Symphony Orchestra, China, and La Jolla Civic Symphony Orchestra in California.

Ling is a founder and long term member of the Harmonium Trio. With this Chamber ensemble, they've been giving concert throughout California, and touch a pound repertories of every genre.