

Charis Cheung

Charis was awarded a CCSF scholarship for 2010-2011 and was the recipient of the Belle Shenkman Award for the Arts while studying for a Masters in Music: Advanced Piano Performance at the Royal College of Music, London. Her previous degree, BMus Piano Performance, was obtained at the University of British Columbia. Charis is studying musical history, performance practices, and editorial procedures specializing in solo and ensemble repertoire.



I would first like to thank the Canadian Centennial Scholarship Fund for their support through the Belle Shenkman Award for the Arts. This award has been invaluable and has made it possible for me to further pursue my dreams. Two years ago, I decided to move to London, because I wanted to pursue a degree that was more performance oriented, over another academic degree. The award has alleviated financial anxiety and time for me to explore, discover and experience different performing opportunities.

Not only have I had many opportunities to perform conventional concert programmes at prestigious venues as St. James Picadilly, Deal Festival of the Arts, Chester Music Society, but I also have had the privilege to innovate, collaborating with a photographer to illustrate the concept of 'hommage'.

In College, I have had the great privilege of studying with one of the most eminent teachers, Ruth Nye, one of Claudio Arrau's finest students. Through her tutelage, I have been refining my art, learning and discovering new sounds, textures and repertoire. I have been a great advocate of Canadian music, giving a European Premier of Canadian Composer, Jeffrey Ryan. Furthermore, I was awarded the prestigious John & Jean Redcliffe-Maud Prize at the Royal College of Music with the performance of Canadian composer, Alexina Louier's Scenes from a Jade Terrace. Apart from being a soloists, I have also collaborated with many other musicians. My pride and joy from these two years has been being one of the founding members of the Jacquin trio, comprising of clarinetist Jessica Grimes and violist Zoe Matthews. The College has provided a platform for us to perform and to move beyond the four walls, giving us tools to seek for further opportunities.

In March 2011, we, the Jacquin Trio, were awarded a place on the Live Music Now! Scheme, which gives us a two year contract to deliver concerts and workshops to children with disability, the elderly and prisoners. In addition, we were awarded an Honorary Mentioned by the jury in the finals of the 19th International Chamber Music Competition, Thessaloniki.

The past two years have truly been amazing and memorable. Although my initial plan was to return to Canada upon the completion of my studies, I have decided to remain in London for two more years to teach and perform. On 1 July 2011, I will be embarking on a two month journey to Mumbai with the Worldwide Appreciation of Music Scheme, to teach piano privately, importation, music history and theory at two music schools. I am excited and eager to see what lies ahead in future months and years. Thank you again to CCSF for help making this a wonderful year.

- Charis Cheung, June 2011