



PIANO

Bobby Chen

Jack Price
Founding Partner / Managing Director

Marc Parella
Partner / Director of Operations

John-Andrew Murphy
Marketing Manager

Mailing Address:
520 Geary Street Suite 605
San Francisco CA 94102

Telephone:
Toll-Free 1-866-PRI-RUBI (774-7824)
310-254-7149 / Los Angeles
415-504-3654 / San Francisco

Email:
jp@pricerubin.com
mp@pricerubin.com

Website:
<http://www.pricerubin.com>

Yahoo!Messenger
pricerubin



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Bobby Chen - Biography

Described by International Piano Magazine as: "...an armour-clad player of complete technique, a thinking musician, a natural Romantic. Young bloods come no better", Malaysian Bobby Chen studied at the **Yehudi Menuhin School and the Royal Academy of Music with Hamish Milne and Ruth Nye**. He burst on the scene in 1996 with a sensational season of concerts, which included a British tour with **Lord Menuhin in a performance of Beethoven's Triple Concerto and a recital at the Royal Festival Hall as part of the South Bank Prokofiev Festival**.

Chen has performed under conductors **Lan Shui, Mathias Bamert, Maximiliano Valdés, Sir Neville Marriner, Pierre-André Valade, Giancarlo Guerrero** and with several orchestras including the **Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, Warsaw Sinfonia, Singapore Symphony Orchestra and the London Sinfonietta**. He has recorded for **Jaques Samuel Recordings, the 'Cello Classics' label, Illuminate Records, Toccata Classics and SOMM Recordings**. He has broadcast live for **UK's Classic Fm, Hong Kong's Radio Television Hong Kong and USA's Pianoforte Chicago**.

In recent seasons, venues Chen has played in included **Beijing's Forbidden City Concert Hall, Dublin's National Concert Hall, Singapore's Victoria Concert Hall, USA's Midland Centre of the Arts, Holland's Hermitage Amsterdam, Poland's Antonin Palace, UK's Purcell Room, Bridgewater Hall, Royal Concert Hall, Cadogan Hall, and Wigmore Hall**. He has performed under the special auspices of **Australia's Southern Highlands International Piano Competition, at Brazil's Musica Nova Contemporary Music Festival, Sweden's Lidköping Music Festival, Ireland's Music for Wexford and Wicklow Arts Festival, UK's Worcester Three Choirs Festival, Guildford International Music Festival and Marlborough College Summer School**.

In 2007, Chen gave the world premiere of a new piano concerto in London, celebrating Malaysia's 50th Anniversary as a nation. In 2008, he was one of the pianist selected for the South-East Asian début of the **Complete Beethoven Sonatas Cycle in Singapore at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts**. And in 2009, he represented Malaysia in **The Rising Stars Showcase Performances for the 27th Annual Federation of Asian Cultural Promotion (FACP) Conference**.

In December 2010, Chen founded the **Overseas Malaysian Winter Piano Academy (OMWPA)** which took place at **The Yehudi Menuhin School in the UK**. And in March 2011, he was awarded '**The Brand Laureate-Country Branding Award**' from **The Asia Pacific Brands Foundation**. Performance highlights in 2011 included his full début recital at Fazioli Concert Hall in Italy, his 4th solo recital at London's Wigmore Hall, his first duo London recital with pianist **Leslie Howard**, and performing solo piano concerti for the 5th and 6th times with the **Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, at the Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**.

Bobby Chen- biography

Highlights in 2012 included his full début recital, public masterclass and radio recording in Hong Kong, being appointed a tutor at **UK's Chethams International Piano Summer School 2012**, being elected an **Associate of London's Royal Academy of Music (ARAM)**, and running the **Overseas Malaysian Winter Piano Academy (OMWPA) at the Yehudi Menuhin School** for the 2nd time.

Bobby Chen - Reviews

...Chen is an armour-clad player of complete technique, a thinking musician, a natural Romantic.. His arsenal of gran expressione phrases, thunderbolt octaves and basaltic chords quarried from the deep, Arrau/Russian-descended is imperial, his ability to suggest colour and image through touch, timing and dynamic voicing already masterly.

(International Piano Magazine)

...Chen's touch was masterful, combining the solid enviable technique of the Russian school with the assured elegance of his Claudio Arrau lineage.

(Straits Times - Singapore)

*...The Romeo and Juliet Suite bristles with energy and atmosphere, and Toccata coruscates. *****

(The Independent - UK)

...and an evening concert in which the young Malaysian pianist Bobby Chen made magic with Prokofiev. (The Independent - UK) ...and an evening concert in which the young Malaysian pianist Bobby Chen made magic with Prokofiev.

(The Independent - UK)

...His accounts of the Ten Pieces from Romeo & Juliet Op.75 and the Op.11 Toccata being on altogether a different level of musical understanding and artistic projection...

(Musical Opinion – UK)

Bobby Chen - Solo Repertoire

Bach

Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue
BWV903
Partita No.1 in B-flat Major BWV 825
Partita No.2 in c minor BWV 826
Partita No.4 in D Major BWV 828
Partita No.6 in e minor BWV 830

Bach-Busoni

Toccatina and Fugue in d minor BWV
565
'Awake, the Voice commands' from
Ten Chorale-Preludes
'Now comes the gentiles' Saviour' from
Ten Chorale-Preludes
'Rejoice, beloved Christians' from Ten
Chorale-Preludes
'I call on Thee, Lord Jesus Christ' from
Ten Chorale Preludes

Beethoven

6 Bagatelles Op.120
Sonata Op.2 No.1 in f minor
Sonata Op.2 No.2 in A Major
Sonata Op.2 No.3 in C Major
Sonata Op.13 'Pathetique'
Sonata Op.14 No.1 in E Major
Sonata Op.14 No.2 in G Major
Sonata Op.27 No.2 (Sonata quasi una
Fantasia) 'Moonlight'
Sonata Op.28 in D Major
Sonata Op.31 No.2 in d minor
Sonata Op.53 in C Major 'Waldstein'
Sonata Op.57 'Appassionata'
Sonata Op.81a in E-flat Major 'Les
Adieux'

Brahms

3 Intermezzi Op.117

Britten

Nuttorno (Night Piece)

Buckley

The silver apples of the moon, the

golden apples of the sun

Cant

Turning the Tide

Chopin

Nocturnes Op.9 (No.1,2,3)
Nocturnes Op. 15 (No.1,2,3)
Nocturne Op.27 No.2
Nocturnes Op.32 (No.1,2)
Nocturnes Op.48 (No.1,2)
Nocturne Op.55 No.1
Nocturne Op.62 No.2
Nocturne Op.72 No.1
Ballade No.1 Op.23 in g minor
Ballade No.2 Op.38 in F Major
Berceuse Op.57
Fantaisie Op.49 in f minor
Andante spinto et Grande Polonaise
Brilliante in E-flat Major Op.22
Polonaise Op.40 No.1 in A Major
Polonaise Op.44 in f-sharp minor
Polonaise Op.53 in A-flat Major
Fantasie-Impromptu in c-sharp minor
Etudes Op.25 (complete)
Etudes Op.10 (selection)
Sonata No.3 Op.58 in b minor

Corea

Children's songs (selection)

Debussy

Etudes book 2(complete)
Estampes(complete)
Images book 1(complete)
Feux d'Artifice

Delius

3 Preludes and Toccata

Ferguson

5 Bagatelles

Foster

Voyages (selection)

Goss

Rough Music

Haydn

Sonata in E flat Hob XVI:49
Sonata in C Major Hob XVI:50

Ichianagi

Piano Poem

Koechlin

'Sur la Falaise' from Paysages et
Marines
'Matin Calme' from Paysages et
Marines
'Promenade vers la Mer' from
Paysages et Marines

Liszt

2 Légendes S.175
Ballade No.2
'Rigoletto' Paraphrase
'Gnomenreigen' from 2 Concert-
Etudes
Paganini-Etudes (No.3,4,5,6)
'Sposalizio' from Années de
pèlerinage-Deuxième année: Italie
'Il Penseroso' from Années de
pèlerinage-Deuxième année: Italie
Sonetto 104 del Petrarca from Années
de pèlerinage-Deuxième année: Italie
'Dante Sonata' from Années de
pèlerinage-Deuxième année: Italie
'Ricordanza' from Etudes d'exécution
transcendante
'Mazeppa' from Etudes d'exécution
transcendante
'Wilde Jagd' from Etudes d'exécution
transcendante
4 short piano pieces S.192

Mendelssohn

Variations sérieuses Op.54
Sonata in E-flat Major K282/189g
Sonata in a minor K310/300d
Sonata in A Major K331/300i
Sonata in F Major K332/300k
Sonata in B-flat Major K 333/315c
Sonata in C Major K545
Fantasie in d minor K397/385g

Mussorgsky

Pictures at an Exhibition

Piazzolla

Libertango

Prokofiev

Sonata No.2 Op.14 in d minor
Sonata No.4 Op.29 in c minor
Romeo and Juliet Suite: 10 pieces for
Piano Op.75(complete)
Toccatà in d minor Op.11
Visions Fugitives Op.22(complete)

Rachmaninoff

Prelude op.32 No.5 in G-major

Ravel

Jeux d'eau
Pavane pour une infante défunte

Santiago

Nocturne in e flat minor

Schubert

Impromptus Op.90(complete)
Sonata in a minor Op.164
Fantasia Op.15 'Wanderer'

Schumann

Abegg-Variationen Op.1
Carnaval Op.9
Symphonic Etudes Op.13

Stravinsky

3 Movements from Pétrouchka

Vine

5 Bagatelles

Zhang Zhao

Introduction and 4 pieces in 'Yunnan'
Style

Bobby Chen - Concerto Repertoire

Bach

Concerto for Keyboard and strings and continuo in d minor BWV 1052

Beethoven

Concerto No.1 in C Major Op.15
Concerto No.2 in B flat Major Op.19
Choral Fantasia in c minor Op.80

Brahms

Concerto No.2 in B flat Major Op.83

Chopin

Andante Spianato and Grande
Polonaise in E flat Major Op.22

De Falla

'Nights in the Gardens of Spain'

Franck

Symphonische Variationen for Piano and Orchestra

Frances-Hoad

Concerto for solo piano and orchestra (world premiere 2009)

Gershwin

'Rhapsody in Blue'
Variations on 'I've got rhythm'

Grieg

Concerto in a minor Op.16

Mendelssohn

Capriccio Brilliant in b minor Op.22
Concerto No.1 in g minor Op.25

Mozart

Concerto No.23 in A Major K488
Concerto No.27 in B flat Major K595

Rachmaninoff

Concerto No.2 in c minor Op.18
Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini Op.43
Concerto No.4 Op.40

Ravel

Piano Concerto in G

Prokofiev

Concerto No.1 in D flat Major Op.10

Saint-Saëns

'Wedding Cake' Caprice Op.76
Concerto No.5 Op.103 'The Egyptian'

Schumann

Piano Concerto

Shostakovich

Concerto No. 2 Op.102

Tchaikovsky

Concerto No.1 in b flat minor Op.23

Tajuddin

Concerto for solo piano and orchestra (world premiere 2007)

Xian

" Yellow River" Piano Concerto

Bobby Chen - Chamber Music Repertoire

Violin and Piano

Chopin

Nocturne in c-sharp minor -
posthumous

Foster

Ballade for violin and piano

Piazzolla

Le Histoire du Tango

Dwyer

Movimientos I-IV

Beethoven

Sonata No.5 in F Major, Op.24 'Spring'
Sonata No.1 in D Major Op.12

Delius

Sonata for violin and piano No.3

Franck

Sonata in A Major

Ravel

Sonata for violin and piano

Szymanowski

Nocturne and Tarantella

Schubert

Fantasy Op.159

Messiaen

Phantaisie

Mozart

Sonata KV300

Piano Trio

Mozart

Piano trio in B-flat Major Wo039

Beethoven

Trio Op.70 'Ghost'

Brahms

Piano trio no.3 in c minor

Chopin

Piano trio in g minor

Deane

March Oubliee

Frances-Hoad

My Fleeting Angel

Jadassohn

Piano trio no.1
Piano trio no.2
Piano trio no.3

Martin

Piano trio based on Irish Tunes

Mendelssohn

Piano Trio in d minor
Piano Trio in c minor
Piano Trio in B-flat Major

Deane

Marche Oubliée

Rachmaninoff

Trio

Dohnanyi

Piano Trio

Dwyer

PianoTrio No.1 'Quasi una Fantasia'
PianoTrio No.2 'Preludio and
Passacaille'

Schoenfield
Café Music

Piazzolla
4 Porteños

Ravel
Piano Trio

Schubert
Trio in B flat Op.99 D.898
Notturmo

Shostakovich
Trio No.2 Op.67

Repertoire for Cello and Piano

Frescobaldi
Toccatà

Ginastera
Triste

Klengel
Scherzo in d minor Op.6
Locatelli
Sonata in D Major

Martinu
Variations on a Theme of Rossini

Popper
Dance of the Elves Op.39
Autumn Flowers Op.50 No.5
Happy Recollections Op.64 No.1

Schnittke
Suite in the Old Style

Weber
Adagio and Rondo

The Cross-Eyed Pianist, interview by Frances Wilson, March 5, 2014

Meet the Artist.....Bobby Chen, pianist



Bobby Chen (photo credit: Sussie Ahlburg)

Who or what inspired you to take up the piano and make it your career?

When I was 7 years old, my parents moved into a new neighborhood in a satellite town in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia, and I heard some piano sounds coming from just across the street. I went over, met the lady, had a few informal lessons with her, and felt fascinated by the piano. I never had proper lessons with her, but the fascination remained.

Who or what were the most important influences on your musical life and career?

Firstly, my parents, who had introduced me to the gift of the music and piano. Second, my first teacher in Kota Kinabalu, who played me a recording by Glenn Gould, and travelled overseas with me for extra tuition. Third, to Geoffrey Smith, who was the Regional Consultant in charge of South-East Asia for the ABRSM in 1991, he suggested that I audition for the Yehudi Menuhin School, and guided me through that process. Lastly, my teachers in the UK, who were Ruth Nye, Hamish Milne and Nikolai Demidenko.

What have been the greatest challenges of your career so far?

I can find it easy to lose focus, and to not push myself 100%. This can make me fall away slightly in my pursuit when trying to understand certain works and ways of playing.

Which performances/recordings are you most proud of?

I remembered very fondly: a) touring Britain with Lord Menuhin and the Beethoven Triple Concerto in 1996; b) making my Italian debut recital at the Fazioli Hall in Sacile, Italy in 2011; c) performing at my 4th solo recital at the Wigmore 2011; d) recording an all Prokofiev solo disc for SOMM Recordings in 2009; e) as one of the pianists in the first ever complete Beethoven sonata cycle for South-East Asia in 2008. Also, I am also very proud to have organized my first winter piano course, taking place at the Yehudi Menuhin School. So these were some of my favorite moments!

Which particular works do you think you play best?

Recently, I have been working a lot on Prokofiev's piano music. Also on Debussy and Schubert.

How do you make your repertoire choices from season to season?

If I play Prokofiev in season 2012-13, it is because in 2010, I started to find his music increasingly fascinating. I find it lovely to explore works in this way.

Tell us a little more about your duo partnership with Douglas Finch. What are the particular pleasures and pitfalls of playing duo repertoire?

I got to know Douglas many years ago, when I started to play his works. In 2010, I invited him to come to my winter piano course at the Yehudi Menuhin School. After performing a complete Liszt programme with Leslie Howard at the Wigmore Hall in 2011, Douglas and I

struck up a piano duo partnership.

With 4-hands, the entire keyboard register can be used, the instrument transformed into this amazing orchestra, with exciting possibilities! One major pitfall is that any minute lapses of concentration from one player can be glaringly exposed!

Do you have a favorite concert venue to perform in and why?

I love playing at the Wigmore Hall, the intimacy there is unique. Also Fazioli Hall, so state-of-the-art, and a gorgeous piano there.

Favorite pieces to perform? Listen to?

This season, performing Prokofiev's and Debussy's piano music. I love listening to Fischer-Dieskau singing Bach. I love watching ballet at the Royal Opera House.

Who are your favorite musicians?

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau and Ferruccio Busoni.

What is your most memorable concert experience?

Bernard Haitink and the Berlin Philharmonic live at the Proms in 2011. Incredibly awe-inspiring.

What do you consider to be the most important ideas and concepts to impart to aspiring musicians?

To stay true to your art, and to find all sorts of ways in order to fulfil your musical/artistic ambitions.

What are you working on at the moment?

I am currently learning the Sonatine by Ravel, Impromptus Op.142 by Schubert, and revising the 4 Chopin Ballades.

Where would you like to be in 10 years' time?

Performing music in public.

What is your idea of perfect happiness?

Spending time with family and good friends.

What is your most treasured possession?

My teapot.

What do you enjoy doing most?

I love watching films in cinema, going to concerts and chatting with interesting people.

What is your present state of mind?

Fairly good, I think! Although a bit Prokofiev-ian.

Bobby Chen performs duo piano works with Douglas Finch as part of the Bristol International Piano Duo Festival, 7 March 2014, at the University of Bristol. Full details [here](#)

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