

Youth for Youth

A Benefit Concert for BC Society for Educating Girls of Rural China

Since 2005 the EGRC Society has been providing funds for impoverished young women from the Gansu province of China to attend university, and this year marks a milestone because the first class of EGRC-sponsored young women is graduating. **Youth for Youth** celebrates this occasion with a concert featuring several works from the Chinese classical repertoire, performed by young people for young people. Among its many highlights, **Youth for Youth** will feature a performance by one of the graduating class, soprano Zhang Fang Fang, who will travel to Vancouver with two other EGRC graduates to attend the event.

Zhang Fang Fang graduated from the Lanzhou University with a degree in voice. She is from a remote village of Longxi county of Gansu province, where both of her parents are peasants, chronically ill, and have a limited ability to work in the fields. The whole family has struggled to make a basic living and to pay the debts incurred by sending Zhang Fang Fang to high school. EGRC stepped in ensure she attended university.

As part of Youth for Youth, Zhang Fang Fang will perform as soloist with the **Vancouver Children's Choir**, which was founded by Artistic Director, Rupert Lang, in 1983. Throughout their history, VCC has offered excellent vocal training, as well as a wide variety of performance experiences, including a variety of benefit concerts for organisations such as UNICEF and EGRC.

Ali Milner will close the first half of the concert with a selection of jazz pieces. This 18 year old flaming red head, described by CBC radio as "the next Joni Mitchell," has been in residence at the Four Seasons Hotel in Whistler B.C. singing and playing their grand piano. At age 15 she released her debut album and her second CD will be out in early 2009 with the help of an "Emerging Artist Award" from FACTOR, the industry voice.

The second half of **Youth for Youth** features two amazing young soloists, both of them emerging artists in their fields. **Western Summerton** is a student of well-known pianist and teacher, Ken Broadway. Western will perform selections from the **Yellow River Piano Concerto**, with Ken Broadway playing the orchestral part on a second piano.

Winnie Liao is 11 years old and studies violin with one of Canada's most respected teachers, Andrew Dawes. Winnie will play selections from **the Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto**.

Two pieces to be added to the end of the program will be performed by **Jessie Chen** and **Annie Lee**.

The pieces are: Waltz from Suite No. 1, Op. 15 Anton Arensky (1861-1906) and Tarantella from Suite No. 2, Op. 17 Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Anton Arensky and Sergei Rachmaninoff are two of the most well-known Russia composers.

Both made major contributions to the two-piano repertoire. Arensky's Suite No. 1, the first of four, is known

especially for the charming Waltz movement which is one of the most popular in the

repertoire. Rachmaninoff, who was a student of Arensky, composed two suites for two pianos. The Second Suite was composed at the same time as his famous Second Piano Concerto. The Tarantella is the brilliant final movement and is based on an Italian folk song.

Jessie Tzu-Ying Chen was born in 1982 in Taipei, Taiwan. Mentored by her mother, an enthusiastic piano teacher, Jessie discovered the love of her life as a little child at the age of seven. In 1997, Jessie's family immigrated to Canada. She was introduced to the renowned Russian pianist Victor Shevstov whom she studied with for four years and uncovered her path to pursue the piano as her profession. Jessie won numerous awards in different festivals, such as the Vancouver Kiwanis Festival and the Richmond Music Festival. From 2001 to 2007, she pursued her Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in piano performance at UBC. During this time, she had the privilege of studying with Alexander Korsantia, Sarah Davis Buechner and Corey Hamm for solo music, and Kenneth Broadway and Rena Sharon for chamber music. While at UBC, she was also selected to play in master classes with James Tocco, Jerome Lowenthal, and Winston Choi. Now as a professional pianist, Jessie enjoys teaching and collaborating with friends and colleagues.

Born in Taiwan, **Annie Ju-Mei Lee** began her piano studies at the age of 6 and received numerous awards in local competitions after immigrating to Vancouver with her family in 1995. Annie obtained the Performer's ARCT Diploma in Piano Performance and Theory Studies from the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto in 2001. From 2000 to 2004, Annie studied with Alice Enns for solo repertoire, and Rena Sharon and Terrence Dawson for chamber music at the University of British Columbia, where she was also selected to perform in master classes with Anton Kuerti and Dang Thai Son. Further, she was also one of the recipients of the 2003 Karen Bomstead Memorial Scholarship in Piano and the UBC Undergraduate Scholar Program Scholarship. After graduating in 2004 with a Bachelor of Music Degree in piano performance, she pursued her Masters Degree in Music Education also at UBC and completed it in 2007. Annie is currently a chamber performer in Vancouver and a private instructor in piano, music theory, and music history at her studio in Burnaby.

As a duo, Jessie and Annie have studied with Corey Hamm and Kenneth Broadway. In 2008, they participated in *The Paris International Summer Sessions* organized by *The Fondation Bell'Arte* of Belgium under the auspices of the Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris "Alfred Cortot". In Paris, they had the opportunity to work with world-renowned pianists including *Stéphane Lemelin*, *Marina Scalafiotti*, *Nelson Delle-Vigne Fabbri*, *Susan Shu-Cheng Lin*, and *Francesco Bergamasco*. Jessie and Annie will be giving their debut concert as a duo this July at the UBC School of Music Recital Hall.

The language of music speaks across differences, continents, and oceans. Please join EGRC at **Youth For Youth** for this celebration of their first graduating class, which underscores their motto: Educated Women Have Educated Children.