

Shuann Chai, pianos

Pianist Shuann Chai is a soloist and chamber musician who performs on a wide range of early to modern pianos, bringing the emotional content of music from the past to listeners in the present. Recognised by critics as “a graceful virtuoso”, she has been praised for performances that are “sensitive and communicative, ...full of warmth and emotion.” Recent projects include collaborations with the Dudok Quartet Amsterdam as well as performances in Germany (Göttingen Handelfestspiele, Bachfest Münster, among others), Norway (Gloppen Musikkfest), Japan (Suntory Hall, Izumi Hall, and others), Taiwan (National Concert Hall), and throughout the Netherlands.

The 2024-2025 season started with the highly anticipated CD-release of the Complete Beethoven Sonatas for Piano and Violin with violinist Shunske Sato (Cobra Records). Previous recordings include Extemporize – Schubert’s Impromptus and early fugues (awarded a CHOC from Classica Magazine, 2024); Köhl, nicht lau- works for flute and fortepiano by Beethoven and Kuhlau with flautist Tami Krausz (Ramée Records), and a solo CD of three Beethoven piano sonatas performed on a Rosenberger fortepiano (Postern Park Digital).

Engaging and creative, Shuann is constantly searching for ways to connect music with other forms of art. Working with choreographer Ederson Rodrigues Xavier, she was the co-creator of two multimedia dance projects with music by John Cage and Sergei Prokofiev, produced by Korzo Theater and CaDance Festival (NL). In the realm of arts organization, she was the artistic director and programmer for the Fortepiano Festival Zaandijk from 2010-2019.

Since september 2024 Shuann has been Professor of Piano at Codarts Rotterdam. She has given masterclasses and workshops at institutions such as Temple University (Philadelphia), the University of California at Davis, the Royal Conservatory of the Hague, Conservatorium of Amsterdam, Gulanyu Piano Academy (Xiamen, China) and Central Conservatory in Beijing. Alongside teaching, community outreach has been an important part of Shuann’s musical advocacy; on both sides of the Atlantic she has performed hundreds of concerts in senior living centers, music schools, and libraries.

Shuann earned degrees in music as well as biology from Oberlin College and completed her graduate studies at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. She also had the privilege of working with pianists such as Jack Radunsky, himself a former student of the pianist/composer Percy Grainger; Norma Fisher, Claus-Christian Schuster, Malcolm Bilson, and Anton Kuerti. Shuann is grateful for her three inspiring musical companions: a concert grand Steinway signed by jazz legends Herbie Hancock and Ahmad Jamal; an original Érard piano (1861), and an original 1820 Rosenberger fortepiano, generously provided on permanent loan by the Het Muziekinstrumentenfonds, the national musical instruments foundation of the Netherlands.

Alongside her musical life Shuann is a jigsaw puzzle enthusiast, and considers herself a reasonably capable cook of many cuisines. She lives in The Hague, Netherlands, with her husband and their lovely daughter.

*For versions in other languages (German, Dutch) or abridged versions of this biography,
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For further materials please visit shuannchai.com