



Dr. Ruxin Michelle Zhao China

Praised for her superb musical sensitivity and brilliant technique, Dr. Ruxin "Michelle" Zhao's piano playing has taken her to venues across continents of Asia, Europe, and North America. In 2014, she gave her concerto debut in the United States under the baton of Professor David Harman with the University of Rochester Symphony Orchestra. She is an active member of the Tri-M music honor society in Kent, Connecticut.

Michelle appears regularly in solo and chamber recitals in Shanghai, China, where she currently resides. As a pedagogue, Michelle devotes herself in teaching students of different stages and backgrounds. During her graduate studies at the Eastman School, she

received Graduate Awards for six years consecutively for assistantships in classroom-piano teaching, primary- and secondary- lesson teaching, as well as studio teaching for piano-major students. Michelle is currently an adjunct piano faculty at School of International Art and a guest piano faculty at Art First Institution in Shanghai, China.

Michelle has served as a jury for many domestic and international music competitions, including the Steinway Young Artist Competition (2023), the Austrian International Piano Competition (2023), the Schimmel China Youth Piano Competition (2022), the Tchaikovsky International Music Selection Competition (2021), the "Steinberg Cup National Youth Piano Competition (2021), and many others. She was invited to present and host workshops in pedagogy conferences in both 2021 and 2023. Many of her students have won top prizes in piano competitions and been admitted to top music schools in China and in the United States.

Michelle earned her Doctor of Musical Arts Degree from the Eastman School of Music, majoring in Piano Performance and Literature with a minor in music theory, under the guidance of Professor Douglas Humpherys. She also holds a Masters of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music and the Bachelor of Art Degree in music with highest honor as well as departmental honor from University of Rochester.

Dr. Michael Low

UK/South Africa

Praised for his innovative approach and passionate insight into piano playing, Dr Michael Low's teaching career in Asia and Africa has spanned almost a quarter of a century. Since 2013, Michael has built an ongoing international collaboration with eminent musicians as well as numerous music institutes in Singapore, Taiwan, Indonesia and South Africa. This resulted in Michael working closely with the next generation of pianistic talent to improve their musical knowledge and performance. The success of Michael's uniquely teaching approach to piano playing, which marries the musical and pianistic cultures of East and West, has expanded to further teaching engagements with future masterclasses scheduled in London, Indonesia, China and Malaysia.



As a performer, Michael made his debut performing Tchaikovsky's B-flat-minor Piano Concerto in the 1999 Guildford International Music Festival as a winner of the concerto competition held by the University of Surrey. He has also been engaged to perform in high profile events such as the Penang Governor's Birthday Gala Celebration Concert, South Africa's celebrity weddings (most recently that of the former Miss Universe and Miss South Africa Demi-Leigh Nel Peters) as well as private performances for Pam Golding. Michael is the founder of the Elvira Ensemble, who specialises in the chamber version of Mozart piano concerti, the success of which has led to the formation of the Lensky Piano Trio.

As a student, Michael studied piano with the current director of the BBC World Voice Programme, Richard Frostick, before enrolling as a member of London's prestigious Centre For Young Musician where he studied piano with the international pedagogue Graham Fitch and composition with the famed English composer Julian Grant. He obtained his Honours at Surrey University under the tutelage of Clive Williamson before completing his Masters of Music whilst studying with Nils Franke and Niel Immelman. An International Scholarship brought Michael to Cape Town where he completed his Doctorate under the supervision of South African greatest living composer, Hendrik Hofmeyr. Michael has also worked with numerous eminent teachers and pianists including, Nina Svetlanova, Frank Heneghan, James Gibb, Phillip Fowke, Renna Kellaway, Carolina Oltsmann, Florian Uhlig, Gordon Fergus Thompson, Francois du Toit and Helena van Heerden.



Dr. Edith Widayani Indonesia

Hailed as one of the most accomplished young pianists in her home country of Indonesia, Dr. Edith Widayani has established herself as performing solo artist, chamber musician, and music educator, with appearances in North, Central, and South Americas, Europe, and Asia.

Recently released two albums - "Imagination" and "Memories" - with the aim of making classical music more accessible through celebrating contemporary composers, telling stories, and sharing inspirations, Edith is currently the President of the World Piano Teachers Association - Indonesia. Partnering with Semesta Akademi, Edith and WPTA Indonesia

launched their Piano Teacher Certification program to empower local piano teachers of Indonesia and create a supportive and encouraging community.

She earned her Doctorate of Musical Arts degree in Performance and Literature with double minors in Chamber Music/Collaborative Piano and Music Theory from the Eastman School of Music - the first Indonesian to earn a doctorate from Eastman. Edith graduated as a *Pi Kappa Lambda* and was awarded the prestigious Henry Cobos Endowed Piano Prize for demonstrating excellence in piano performance. She also holds a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance, *magna cum laude*, from Texas Christian University School of Music and a Master of Music in Piano Performance and Literature from Eastman School of Music.

As laureate of both solo and chamber music competitions, including the 1st Prize Winner at Indonesia International Piano Competition, the 1st Prize and Best Instrumentalist Award at the *Concurso de Música Cámara Ecoparque Trasmiera* in Arnuero, Spain, 1st Prize Winners in the 2014 Kosciuszko Foundation Chopin Piano Competition in New York City, among others, Edith has also received Award of Achievement in International Forum given by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia.

Committed to music education as a young on-demand pedagogue, Edith's students recently have also been admitted to conservatories in the Americas, Europe, and Asia, including the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada, Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music in Singapore, as well as Joseph Haydn Konservatorium in Austria. In the recent years she did both performances and residencies at the *Escuela de Música Victoriano López* in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, and at the *Escuela Superior de Música, Universidad Juárez del Estado de Durango* in Mexico. For more information please visit www.edithwidayani.com