

Preview

Jieming Tang to make orchestra debut with BlueWater Chamber Orchestra

by Mike Telin



“I’m very excited,” says 16 year old violinist Jieming Tang. “It’s my first time ever to play with an orchestra.” On Saturday, November 16 at 7:30 pm in Plymouth Church, BlueWater Chamber Orchestra, under the direction of Carlton Woods presents a concert that features Jieming Tang in Beethoven’s *Romanze No. 2*. The program also includes Weber’s *Concertino* with clarinetist Amitai Vardi, along with works by Peter Maxwell Davies, John Corigliano and Felix Mendelssohn.

Jieming Tang was born in 1997 in Hefei, China and began his violin studies at age three. When he was eight, he began to study at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, and entered the Conservatory’s pre-college division the following year. In April 2010, Tang came to the United States to be part of the Junior Young Artist Program of the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Tang was asked by BlueWater to choose one of the two Beethoven Romanzes and he chose No. 2 because he has performed it several times before with piano. “I’m glad I picked this one because right now there are so many things going on. I can’t imagine if I would have had to learn a new piece.”

Romanze No. 2 has been part of Tang’s repertoire for the past five years. “The first time I performed it was in 2008 at the National Center for the Performing Arts in Beijing when I was eleven. I was also asked to play it during the grand celebration in 2010 in Bali, Indonesia. It was a really big deal — they invited a lot of celebrities. They put a really big performance tent on the beach. But I can’t wait to play it with an orchestra after all these years.”

Rightfully so, Tang is a little nervous about the first rehearsal. “There are all the unknown things. I’ve asked different people and they gave me different ideas about playing with orchestra. Some say that it’s easier than with piano and some say that it’s harder. I think it is a matter of perspective so I am curious what I will feel. But I hear it is a very good orchestra so I think it will be great.”

Already in his young career Jieming Tang has received many top prizes in national and local violin competitions in China including Second Place at the 2006 “Close to Mozart” national Violin Competition, First Place at the 2007 “Golden Beijing” National Junior Violin Competition, and Fourth Place in the Junior Division of the 9th National Violin Competition in 2009. In April 2012, he was awarded the Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award in the U.S. and this past summer was a prize winner at the Cooper International Violin Competition in Oberlin. Tang is also in his second year as a member of the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra.

After having spent three years in the Junior Young Artist Program at the Cleveland Institute of Music, Tang is currently in his first year in the [Young Artist Program](#) (YAP), something usually reserved for juniors and seniors, and studies with Jaime Laredo. “Mr. Laredo is very kind and I enjoy studying with him a lot. He knows exactly how much to push you. If a teacher demands too much, the student will get discouraged, which is a negative. But if a teacher is always praising you and not challenging you, then you will also not improve. But he knows how to challenge you in just the right way and it makes me want to go home and practice.”

A sophomore at St. Ignatius High School, Tang begins his day with the study of theology before classes begin at 8:00 am. This semester's schedule includes biology, which he says is very challenging, English, honors geometry, Spanish and U.S. History. And, after a quick ride on the Rapid to CIM, Tang’s music theory class begins every day at 1:30. “I do have to get out of school early and I really appreciate that they have accommodated my schedule so I have free periods at the end of the day so that I can leave early.”

Additionally Tang’s YAP studies include [Dalcroze Eurhythmics](#). “You study rhythm, because that is the foundation of all music. I also have a music analysis class with Joel Smirnoff and every other week we listen to and sometimes play music.” The program also has a secondary piano requirement, but Tang was fortunate to have passed out of the class.

In spite of his busy schedule, Jieming Tang remains active at St. Coleman’s where he recorded a CD which sold more than 1,000 copies and raised \$5,700 for the church’s Capital campaign. He continues to play for mass once a month as well as special occasions. He’s also getting some professional experience by playing weddings.

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