

Please note pronunciations: Minghuan Xu:  
Ming-Hwan (Hwan is pronounced as one syllable) Shoo

For immediate release

DUO DIORAMA  
WITH VIOLINIST MINGHUAN XU AND PIANIST WINSTON CHOI  
TO MAKE ITS WEILL RECITAL HALL AND NEW YORK CITY DEBUT  
ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2006, AT 5:30 P.M.

WINSTON CHOI IS THE SECOND LAUREATE OF THE 2003 HONENS  
INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION AND WINNER OF FRANCE'S  
2002 CONCOURS INTERNATIONAL DE PIANO 20E SIÈCLE D'ORLÉANS

Duo Diorama, the violin-piano ensemble with Chinese violinist Minghuan Xu and Canadian pianist Winston Choi will make its Weill Recital Hall debut (at Carnegie Hall, 57th Street and 7th Avenue), which is the Duo's New York City debut, on Sunday, February 12, 2006, at 5:30 p.m. Mr. Choi is a laureate of the 2003 Honens International Piano Competition and winner of France's 2002 Concours International de Piano 20e siècle d'Orléans. Duo Diorama was the winner of Artist International Presentations' 2005 Chamber Music Award. The concert is being presented by Artists International Presentations with the assistance of Honens International Piano Competition.

Tickets for the Weill Recital Hall concert are \$25 (general admission) available by calling CarnegieCharge at 212/247-7800; at the main Carnegie Hall Box Office starting mid-December, or at the Weill Hall Box Office one hour before the performance.

The program is as follows:

Olivier Messiaen -- Theme and Variations  
Ianno Xenakis -- Dikhthas  
Daniel Weymouth -- Unexpected Things (world premiere)  
Intermission  
Mischa Zupko -- Shades of Grey (world premiere)  
John Corigliano -- Sonata for Violin and Piano

The first half of the program explores the influence of Messiaen on Xenakis, and Xenakis on Weymouth (in a work for violin, piano, and tape which will receive its world premiere). The second half of the program features American composers John Corigliano and Mischa Zupko; the latter's work was commissioned for Duo Diorama by the Barlow Endowment for Music and will be premiered at the Weill Hall concert.

About Duo Diorama

Duo Diorama is a partnership that goes beyond music: Minghuan Xu and Winston Choi met as students at Northwestern University in Chicago and married in the summer of 2005. They are champions of new music and have premiered commissions of works by Marcos Balter, M. William Karlins, Andrew List, Mischa Zupko and others.

Duo Diorama regularly tours the U. S., performing both standard repertory as well as works by living composers. It has frequently been featured on National Public Radio (NPR). The Duo was named the inaugural recipient of The Banff Centre's Rolston Fellowship in Music, and is Ensemble-in-Residence at Tufts University for 2005-2006.

The name "Duo Diorama" is inspired by the visual arts, where a diorama is a scene or story reproduced on cloth transparencies with various lights shining through to produce different effects. While there is no cloth in music, the scores can tell stories. Xu and Choi believe a musician's interpretation to be the shining light that changes the music's story and, ultimately, the listener's response.

A native of Beijing, China, Minghuan Xu began playing violin at the age of five. She has received numerous awards for her artistry, including top prizes at the Midland-Odesa National Young Artist Competition, the Samuel & Elinor Thaviu String Scholarship Competition, and the Northwestern University and Interlochen concerto competitions. Ms. Xu performs extensively as soloist and chamber musician in China and across the U. S. She is in the doctoral program at Stony Brook University.

Laureate of the 2003 Honens International Piano Competition and winner of France's 2002 Concours International de Piano 20e siècle d'Orléans, Canadian pianist Winston Choi is one of today's most dynamic young artists. His CD debut of the complete piano works of Elliott Carter received a rave review from BBC Music Magazine, and, in 2006, he will release a disc of music inspired by the French greats of the impressionist era for Canada's Arktos label. Mr. Choi earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees at Indiana University, studying with Menahem Pressler, and is currently a doctoral student at Northwestern University studying with Ursula Oppens.

#### About Winston Choi

Winston Choi is an inquisitive performer whose fresh approach to standard repertory, and masterful understanding, performance and commitment to works by living composers, make him one of today's most dynamic young concert artists. Mr. Choi has performed in recital and with orchestras across North America and Europe, and tours regularly with violinist Minghuan Xu as Duo Diorama. While he is very much at home with standards of the piano literature, he is a champion of works by living composers, and has collaborated with artists including Leslie Bassett, William Bolcom, Elliott Carter, Brian Ferneyhough, George Flynn, William Karlins, Sven-David Sandstrom, Bright Sheng, Christian Wolff and John Zorn. Mr. Choi gave the North American premiere of Boulez's 2001 version of Incises and the South American premiere of Berio's 2001 Sonata for Piano. He recently completed the last of three recordings of the piano works of French composer Jacques Lenot. A disc of music from the late 19th and early 20th centuries for Canada's Arktos label will be released in 2006.

In recent seasons, Choi has appeared in recital at the National Arts Centre of Canada, Glenn Gould Studio in Toronto, The Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., throughout Germany, and at festivals throughout North America and Europe, including Canada's Festival of the Sound, France's prestigious Agora and Messiaen Festivals, and Rockport Maine's Bay Chamber Concerts Summer Music Festival. As collaborator, he has toured throughout the eastern United States with Duo Diorama, was in residence at Tufts University with contemporary music ensemble "Brave New Works," and has performed with violinist Malcolm Lowe, Concertmaster of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and clarinetist James Campbell, with whom he is becoming a regular collaborator. In 2005 he performed Ligeti's challenging piano concerto with the Northwestern University Contemporary Music Ensemble in Chicago, and with orchestra in Kitchener-Waterloo and Calgary. He makes his CBC Radio Orchestra debut in 2006, as well as his Weill Recital Hall debut with Duo Diorama.

Winston Choi began piano studies in Toronto with Vivienne Bailey and James Tweedie. He earned his Master and Bachelor Degrees at Indiana University, studying with Menahem Pressler. Today he is a doctoral student at Northwestern University, where he also received his Certificate in Performance. He studies with Ursula Oppens.

#### About Minghuan Xu

Minghuan Xu has delighted audiences with her passion, sensitivity, and charisma. She made her debut as a soloist with the New York Youth Symphony Orchestra and has since performed with the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra, Interlochen Arts Academy Orchestra, Manchester Symphony Orchestra, Midland-Odessa Symphony Orchestra, Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra, Northshore Chamber Orchestra, Lakeshore Symphony Orchestra, and Oak Ridge Symphony Orchestra. Her latest recital and chamber music performances have brought her to venues all over North America, while upcoming performances will bring her to Germany, Hong Kong, China, Argentina, Chile and Brazil. Her previous studies were at The Curtis Institute of Music and Northwestern University. Her principal teachers were Julia Bushkova, Victor Danchenko, Almita Vamos and Roland Vamos. Currently she is working with Pamela Frank and Ani Kavafian in the doctoral program at Stony Brook University.

#### About Honens International Piano Competition

Founded in 1992, Honens International Piano Competition has grown to be one of the world's great music competitions, known for its pursuit of the "complete artist" – not only an accomplished soloist, but a musician whose interpretations reflect a wide cultural context, whose well-balanced programs are designed with knowledge and imagination, and who excels in chamber and ensemble performance. Every three years, 21 pianists between the ages of 20 and 30 of all nationalities and all parts of the globe, compete for more than \$100,000 CAD (approximately \$84,000 USD) in cash prizes, including a comprehensive, three-season Artistic and Career Development Program for the laureates, preparing them for the rigors and realities of a professional life in music. This includes arranging performance engagements, production of recordings, residencies at the Banff

Centre for the Arts, promotional and publicity support, professional development opportunities for self-management, and networking opportunities with potential presenters and artist managers. Honens searches for musicians whose talent, in the credo of the Competition, "inspires the heart and engages the intellect," whose understanding of his or her art will stem not only from knowledge of a particular composition itself but also from a wide knowledge of related music, of musical literature as a whole, of the other arts, the humanities, and of contemporary culture. Honens is not a series of tests, but rather, a compelling festival of music.

The Competition is named for Esther Honens, born in Pittsburgh and educated in Calgary, who became a successful businesswoman. She married John Hillier, who died in the 1970s, then Harold Honens, with whom she developed real estate holdings in Calgary. In 1991, Esther Honens made a capital gift to establish the international piano competition. She died five days after the first competition in 1992. After four Competitions in twelve years, Honens has distinguished itself as one of the most prominent competitions of its kind, worldwide. Additional information is available on-line at [honens.com](http://honens.com).

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For additional information, interview access, or photographs, please contact:

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