

Nancy Zhou – A Rare Talent



All of us connected with classical music here in Kerrville recognize Ms. Zhou as a prodigy and a phenomenon, and marvel at our fortune for having heard her play with our Symphony of the Hills over several wonderful years. Her virtuosity is known far beyond our stage here in the Cailloux. In March 2009, at the age of 16, Ms. Zhou won First Prize Violin and \$10,000 in the 2009 Johansen International Competition (JIC) for Young String Players (Ages 13-17) held in Washington DC. In addition to winning first prize violin, she also won the Competition's prize for Best Performance of the Commissioned Work. Her appearance in October of this year as soloist with the Prince Georges Philharmonic Orchestra will be in conjunction with her Johansen competition awards.

Ms. Zhou attends the Keystone School of San Antonio, Texas. She has been influenced in music by her father and teacher, Long Zhou, and has regularly been a part of the strings section of the Symphony of the Hills.

Ms. Zhou has been studying the violin since age 4, and played her first recital when she was 5. Since then, she has attended master classes with Nodja Salerno Sonnenberg, Peter Oundjian, Pinchas Zuckerman, and Koichoro Harada of Japan's Toho School of Music. Ms. Zhou has been collaborating with celebrated violinist Anne

Sophie Mutter on tour in venues throughout Europe and will continue to perform on viola through next year.

In 2006, at age 13 and as the youngest contestant, she participated in the 13th Wieniawski International Competition for Violinists Aged 30 and Under, ranking in the top 24 from a pool of 108 applicants. She won the Pearl Amster Concerto Competition in 2003 and 2004, and was awarded a Director's Prize at the Kingsville International competition at age 10. Ms. Zhou has been an active member of the Youth Orchestras of San Antonio, and won the YOSA Concerto Competition, performing with the Philharmonic Orchestra as a soloist. She has participated in the Tuesday Musical Club Competition, ranked in the Bach Circle, the highest level. Nancy has also been to string camps, and has performed at a number of Child Prodigy Concerts.

In addition to competing internationally and nationally, Ms. Zhou has appeared on the national radio show, "From the Top," and has been continuously active with solo performances during school breaks. She was enrolled in the Aspen Music Festival and School, studying with Paul Kantor, and the New School's New York String Seminar, directed by Jaime Laredo. She currently studies with her father, Long Zhou, Concertmaster with the Symphony of the Hills and with conductor Jaime Laredo.

This will be the last of Ms. Zhou's participation in the regular concert season with the Symphony of the Hills. We will certainly be hearing more about her as she pursues continued success on the violin.