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[Arts and Cultures] Rising star Ching-Shan Chang composes "Images of Kaohsiung" for Weiwuying's 3rd anniversary

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Wen-Pin Chien will be conducting the Evergreen Symphony Orchestra in the concert (provided by Weiwuying)

[Phone-interviewed abroad by Mei-Hsueh Lin and organized by Yu-Fan Lin]

National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts (Weiwuying) will be celebrating its 3rd anniversary in October since its first day of operation. They commissioned composer Ching-Shan Chang, who has recently won "The Golden Eye" in the 8th International Film Music Competition held by Zurich Film Festival, to compose a new orchestral piece *Images of Kaohsiung - "Cangue of Freedom."* The world premiere will take place on October 9th for the audience to take a closer look into the world from young generation's point of view.

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Ching-Shan Chang's new orchestral piece *Images of Kaohsiung - "Cangue of Freedom"* will be premiered at Weiwuying (Stock photo, taken by Mei-Hsueh Lin)



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綠蒂 / 我的文學啟蒙——父親的漢文私塾

我的學前教育，五歲時就學於父親開設的漢學私塾——尚修書房。父親終生喜愛花藝詩棋，我亦追隨，至今詩學棋藝略有所成，均係源自父親的庭訓。



Evergreen Symphony Orchestra will be performing at the concert (provided by Weiwuying)



Ching-Shan Chang is currently residing in Los Angeles, and has just joined the team of famous Hollywood composer, Tom Holkenborg (aka. Junkie XL) this year. She started writing and arranging for films and has soon risen to an important role in the team. She has been majoring in classical composition and has showed her creativity and talent since a young age. At her graduation concert in high school, she was the first in history to assemble a wind orchestra with 35 people, conducting some iconic program as well as her own composition *El Carnaval Español*. She then studied at Eastman School of Music, majoring in composition and minoring in piano performance for her bachelor degree. In 2016, she won the first prize and several special prizes at the 7th International Antonín Dvořák Composition Competition before she began devoting in writing music for films.

"*Images of Kaohsiung - "Cangue of Freedom"* is not only a meaningful piece of concert music to me, it also connected me with Wen-Pin Chien and the people of Kaohsiung" Ching-Shan said. She flew back to Taiwan for the premiere of her musical *Once Upon an Island* in March, and made a stop in Kaohsiung before she returned to America. "The whole conversation with Wen-Pin Chien started with my ignorance about the city of Kaohsiung, regardless, I did remember learning about the Kaohsiung incident at school. Brining up this politically sensitive matter on a celebratory day might be tricky, but I think it's important that people are reminded of how crucial the city of Kaohsiung stands in the progress or process of democracy; it's definitely an invaluable milestone that the Taiwanese people should always keep in mind.

To flash back at the long road of democracy in Taiwan

The entire piece is structured around the melody of "The Song of Formosa," the very foundation of the music. Ching-Shan gave a thorough breakdown of the process "I have actually done a great deal of research about the incident: from reading up all the details on the internet, watching documentaries, to looking at every single black and white picture from the time. The entire piece is composed as if writing a score to a documentary with a clear timeline. It starts with the time of Martial Law when the society was rather suppressed. It then progressed to the White Terror period when the society was unstable and the tension between the people and the government rose high." She then continued "With the establishment of Formosa Magazine, it caught the attention from the government. The authorities started interfering that later led to numerous conflicts between the people and the police force (not sure if the military was involved). It was a total chaos, and I want to reflect what happened truthfully through my music." She added "I hope the melody from The Song of Formosa carries weight on what I am trying to express through my music. I also hope that the melody symbolizes not only the bloody sacrifice people have made, but also a celebration of the beginning of true democracy for the Taiwanese people."



"Surprised but honored to be among the same program as Beethoven's music"

The concert will also feature famous repertoire such as Beethoven's Piano Trio in C major op. 56 and Richard Strauss's Don Quixote op.35, but "Cangu of Freedom" will be the opening piece for the program with Evergreen Symphony Orchestra, under the baton of Wen-Pin Chien. Ching-Shan said "I was surprised when I saw the program as I thought there would be other newly composed music in the program, but instead, the program made me feel as if I was standing next to Beethoven and Strauss shoulder to shoulder." She added "it was a lot of pressure but I am also grateful the trust and confidence that Wen-Pin Chien has in me. Regardless, it was already too late when I found it out as the program was already all over the internet and posters on walls."

"The last time I composed a complete orchestral piece after the Dvořák Composition Competition should be my collaboration with National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra, the musical titled *Once Upon an Island*. It has been a long time since I've composed and released an orchestral piece of concert music; therefore, I feel extremely delighted that such opportunity arose. I was happy to reflect my growth as a person, as a musician through the process of writing this piece."

Ching-Shan pointed out that she was especially thankful for Wen-Pin Chien, for the opportunity he was willing to provide to the younger generations. The preciousness of this very opportunity also makes her hope that she doesn't disappoint the audience with her comeback after so many years.



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