

# Quynh T. Nguyen

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## Biography

Pianist Quynh Nguyen was selected as one of the "19 young stars of tomorrow" by *Musical America*. *The Boston Globe* has praised Quynh as "a musical and expressive player who commands a flexible, singing sound" and went on to say that "she is sensitive and poetic...(and) excels in everything that requires elegance, proportion, balance..." For her Carnegie Hall performance, the New York Concert Review commends: "She is a real artist, a wonderfully communicative performer ...What a compendium of intellect, sophistication and taste!"

Ms. Nguyen has performed extensively throughout the United States and Europe, including Hungary, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and France, in notable concert venues such as Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center, McEvoy Auditorium and the Freer Gallery at the Smithsonian in Washington D.C., and the Berlin Konzerthaus. As a concerto soloist, she has performed with the Berlin University Orchestra, the San Francisco Concerto Orchestra, the Bellflower Orchestra, the Brentwood-Westwood Symphony Orchestra, the Hanoi Symphony Orchestra and the Regional Wind Orchestra of Paris. She has also distinguished herself as a prizewinner in various piano competitions such as the Artist International Presentation Competition, the Bellflower Orchestra Competition, the Artists of Tomorrow Competition of the Brentwood-Westwood Symphony Orchestra, and the International Piano Concerto Competition in San Francisco. In addition, she has been featured on numerous radio stations throughout the United States including WGBH in Boston, WQXR and WNED-FM in New York, WFYI in North Indianapolis, Virginia Public Radio WHRO-FM, North Carolina WDAV Public Radio, and Voice of America Radio as well as television programs such as Channel KMTV 15 "Grand Piano," Japanese Television Fujisankei and Vietnamese Television.

Born in Hanoi, Vietnam, Quynh Nguyen was admitted to the Hanoi Conservatory of Music at the age of six. She performed her first recital when she was eight years old and had her orchestral premiere at age eleven, performing Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor, K. 466. In the same year, she performed a recital in Moscow. At age thirteen, she received a scholarship to study piano performance at the Gnessin Institute in Moscow.

Ms. Nguyen is a graduate of The Juilliard School and Mannes College of Music, where she studied with Bella Davidovich and Jerome Rose respectively. She received her Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Graduate Center of City University of New York in 2009. She has performed in master classes given by world-renowned artists including Tatiana Nikolaeva, Jeffrey Swann, and Andras Schiff. Her dissertation titled *An Analysis of Olivier Messiaen's Last Piano Solo Work: Les Petites Esquisses d'oiseaux* won the Barry Brook Dissertation award from the Graduate Center. Additionally, she is the recipient of several highly prestigious scholarships and awards, including the United States Presidential Academic Excellence Award and a Fulbright Fellowship to study music in Paris, France with Yvonne Loriod Messiaen.

Ms. Nguyen currently serves on the faculty of Hunter College and the International Keyboard Institute and Festival at Mannes College of Music in New York City.

# Quynh T. Nguyen

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## 🌀 Press Quotes and Reviews 🌀

*"I listened to you with great pleasure and I find that you are an excellent pianist! Clear playing, expressive, distinguished, perfect technique, I congratulate you!"*

– Yvonne Loriod Messiaen

*"Ms. Nguyen's pianism and music making are graced with beauty and exuberance. She is a real artist; a wonderfully communicative performer. What a compendium of intellect, sophistication and taste!"*

– New York Concert Review

*"She is often sensitive and poetic, ... she knows how to make (the music) dazzle with lively rhythm, piquant inflexions, and dashing virtuosity. Her playing of Ravel's "Tombeau de Couperin" was marvelous: she excels in everything that requires elegance, proportion, balance, taste, and wit..."*

– Boston Globe

*"Rarely does one hear a young artist with such a naturally flowing sense of melodic line - vivid and unforced - that permits the music to breathe uninhibited. This flexible way of playing allows poetry and emotion to expand organically. Quynh Nguyen is already a major talent of the younger generation of keyboard artists."*

– International Piano Magazine

*"She captures impressive and splendid characterization of musical creation through intensive animation and flexibility. With filigree technique, she charms everyone present with her music. . . [and] the listeners gave this musical romantic a wonderful reception. This pianist understands and has mastered the dramatic, lyrical and introvert nuances in Chopin compositions, and for this she received the biggest applause."*

– Wadern Newspaper, Germany

*"She is an excellent pianist . . . we are proud of her great accomplishments..."*

– Alvin Mills, Conductor and Music Director, Brentwood-Westwood Symphony Orchestra

*"Her pianistic ability is beyond question; proven by her many concerts, reviews and recordings. She demonstrates in her performances a unique combination of virtuosity, poetry and passion. It is always a joy to be in the audience when she performs . . . [She is] a brilliant pianist and is a truly wonderful artist, she is extraordinary in every way . . . there is a loveliness and strength to her playing and true qualities that make her a superb performer of Chopin."*

– Jerome Rose, Pianist. Faculty of the Mannes College of Music, Founder and Director, International Keyboard Institute & Festival.

# The Boston Globe

Tuesday, October 7, 2003

## Music Review

### Past is present for expressive pianist

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#### **Nguyen Thuy Quynh**

Presented by: the Vietnamese  
Culture Society  
At: Pickman Auditorium in the Longy  
School of Music, Saturday

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CAMBRIDGE - The Vietnamese pianist Nguyen Thuy Quynh, 27, studied in her native country, Russia, and New York, and has won the unqualified admiration of some knowledgeable critics and connoisseurs.

Saturday night, she made her local debut, and it was easy to understand why even people who are hard to please like her so much. She is a musical and expressive player who commands a flexible, singing sound. She is often

sensitive and poetic, and when she should dazzle with lively rhythm, piquant inflexions, and dashing virtuosity - as in Chopin's "Andante spianato and Grand Polonaise brillante," or in the Chopin waltz she offered as an effervescent encore - she knows how to.

Quynh opened with an unusual Sonata in F Minor by Muzio Clementi, which she played in an operatic and romantic style. Her playing of Ravel's "Tombeau de Couperin" was marvelous: she excels in everything that requires elegance, proportion, balance, taste, and wit.

Schumann's "Kreisleriana" was almost too beautifully played, with subtle interplay of inner voices...

**By Richard Dyer**  
GLOBE STAFF

## Emotions Run High in Lang Hall

*Professor Quynh T. Nguyen tells stories through music*

YULIYA KOZACHENKO  
Contributing Writer

Quynh T. Nguyen, an adjunct professor of music at Hunter College, gathered a full house for her recital on Apr. 1.

A musical prodigy, Nguyen had her first recital at eight and has won numerous competitions and scholarships since. Nguyen graduated from The Juilliard School, Mannes College of Music and the CUNY Graduate Center before teaching music courses at Hunter.

After a few moments of hushed tension in the packed Lang Recital Hall, Nguyen broke the spell with the melancholic opening notes of Beethoven's Sonata No. 26 in E-flat major, "Les Adieux." From the beginning chords, Nguyen was completely absorbed in the piece. Beethoven dedicated the sonata to a friend who was forced to flee Vienna upon the arrival of the French, and in her performance, Nguyen seemed to be lamenting the loss of a dear friend as well.

The main three-note motif, spelling out the word "Le-be-wohl" ("Farewell"), was manipulated to create a wide range of moods and emotions. Themes of absence and eventual reunion expressed by Beethoven over his lost friend were keenly interpreted by Nguyen in her performance.

The emotional journey continued with the next piece: Chopin's Sonata in B-flat minor. Nguyen, who lists Chopin as one of her favorites, seamlessly glided from the turbulent opening theme to the anxious enthusiasm of the second-movement scherzo to the disconsolate sadness of the famous march and into the finale's relentless, almost frantic octaves. Transfixed by Nguyen's sharp and clean opening, the audience was hushed by her incredibly tender rendition of the funeral march. Her frequent gazes to the ceiling relayed the authenticity of her emotion.

Following an intermission, the recital continued with selections from Olivier Messiaen's *Vingt regards sur l'Enfant - Jesus*. Nguyen, a former student of Yvonne Loriod - Messiaen (the second wife of the famous composer), expressed that interpreting Messiaen's complex pieces and "extra musical meanings" was difficult. Working with his second wife improved Nguyen's performance of Messiaen's work as she was able to delve deep inside the composer's private life through his letters and his wife's stories.

Indeed, Nguyen's connection with the music is indisputable strong during the renditions of Messiaen's pieces. The first one, "Le baiser de L'Enfant-Jesus" (The Kiss of the Infant Jesus), mesmerized the audience as well as Nguyen herself with slow contemplating chords that grew louder, faster and more chaotic as the piece progressed.

In his foreword for the piece, Messiaen writes, "this music, which wishes no more than to be as tender as the heart of Heaven itself." Nguyen comes close to fulfilling the composer's wish.

The second Messiaen piece, "Regard de l'Eglise d'amour" ("Gaze of the Church of Love") is equally laden with religious themes, and caused Nguyen to lift her eyes to the sky. Playing loud, blocky chords and dazzling running notes, she transfused the piece with her intensity and confidence before concluding with a passionate, long coda of Messiaen's "Themes of God".



*Pianist and adjunct professor Quynh T. Nguyen*

Nguyen chose those two Messiaen works to demonstrate the impressive range of his genius.

She finished with another Chopin treat: Ballade No. 3 in A-flat major. In line with the nature of the other pieces, the Ballade is said to be inspired by a poem from Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz. After a lengthy and indulgent introduction, Nguyen took the audience on an uplifting journey. Her performance captured the joyous elegance of the main theme and mastered the expressive thrills of the second movement. When the main theme reappeared in C sharp minor, the emerging agitation turned palpable thanks to Nguyen's remarkable ability to emote. Tidal waves of emotion washed over the audience in a series of rising octaves and chords leading to the piece's climax.

Nguyen concluded her performance with the much-requested encore and an ebullient show her gratitude to her audience.

A similar sentiment was expressed when asked why she has such great love for the piano. "It is a part of me," she says with a smile, "it speaks to me, moves me and gives me power to move the audience and sway emotion."

Nguyen explains that the pieces in the program all share a sense of story, and believes interpreting the individual stories to the audience gives more meaning to the music she is playing.

*Quynh T. Nguyen will have another recital during the Fall 2011 semester, and will be participating in Hunter College's Chopin vs. Liszt Marathon on Thursday, May 12.*

# MUSICAL AMERICA

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# INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORY OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

from the **publisher**

As we look ahead to the coming year, we at *Musical America* are especially pleased to celebrate a group of artists that is representative of the vast range and variety of music in the international performing arts today: jazz, contemporary, choral conducting, classical and Baroque styles.

...We are also very pleased to announce what we hope will be two new continuing series of articles: one that will focus on young artists and a new column called "Trends", in which music -industry notables shed new light on ideas and concerns that effects us all. This year, Harris Goldsmith selects 19 young stars of tomorrow...

Stephanie Challener, Publisher

## YOUNG ARTISTS

### The Thrill of Discovery

**M**any are called, and few are chosen," the old saying goes. When I began writing music criticism, first as a record reviewer for *High Fidelity* in 1960 and later hearing live concerts for *Musical America*, I had the honor to cover the debuts of Martha Argerich, Itzhak Perlman, Tamás Vásáry, Ivan Moravec, Peter Serkin, Murray Perahia, Pinchas Zukerman, András Schiff, and Yo-Yo Ma, among many others. In selecting the young artists for this article, it was sobering to realize that former *wunderkind* Evgeny Kissin, whose most recent recording is an exhilarating Brahms recital for RCA, is now an "old master" of 31. Violinists Sarah Chang and Hilary Hahn are well within the "under 30" category, but both, though still developing, are "overqualified" for our purposes. (Chang has just come forth with a superb Dvořák Violin Concerto and Piano Quintet for EMI; Hahn's first recording for Deutsche Grammophon is a vibrant new Bach Concerto CD.)

Competition is fierce, but there is always an honored place for burgeoning potential superstars if they have the dedication and self-criticism to develop their considerable gifts. The young Chinese pianist Lang Lang has been wowing audiences around the world lately and at his tender age may be forgiven for displaying callowness along with virtuosity. Suddenly, however, a fellow countryman, Yundi Li, also 22, has debuted with recitals of works by Chopin and Liszt for Deutsche Grammophon that are infinitely more subtle. Recalling great artists who cruelly were taken from us prematurely—Dinu Lipatti, William Kapell, Ginette Neveu, and Guido Cantelli, to name a few—it is comforting to make the acquaintance of a new generation's "horn of plenty."

### Quynh Nguyen, piano



Andrew England

Quynh Nguyen has had a cosmopolitan musical background. She studied at the Hanoi Conservatory, Moscow's Gnessin Institute, and later at the Juilliard School and Mannes College of Music. Her delightful Weill Hall recital in March 2001 offered renditions of Bach's G-minor English Suite (with a witty suggestion of a tambourine in the *Gavotte*), Schubert's D-major Sonata, D. 850, and vernal, lyrical accounts of Chopin's E-major Scherzo and late E-flat Nocturne (Op. 55, No. 2). Likewise memorable was her fleet, crystalline Ravel *Tombeau de Couperin* at a later Merkin Hall concert.

# NEW YORK

## CONCERT REVIEW<sup>®</sup>

Vol. 8 No. 2 8<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SEASON SUMMER 2001 🍏 \$2.<sup>50</sup>

"A New York debut of exceptional distinction was Weill Hall as part of Artists International's Debut Vietnam to a family of musicians, played her first orchestral debut performing Mozart's Concerto a recital in Moscow, and at 13, received a full Moscow. She continued her studies as a Mannes College of Music, where she received her currently enrolled in the DMA program at CUNY. Bella Davidovich, Alexander Paley, Jacob Lateiner adds, "she has performed in master classes given Morrison, Pavlina Dokovska, Peter Frankel, credentials are indeed impressive, and little piano competitions and gained extensive concert Switzerland, Austria, and the United States.



played by pianist Quynh Nguyen on March 3<sup>rd</sup> at Winners Series. Ms. Nguyen, who was born in recital at the age of nine, and at eleven made her No. 20 in D minor, K. 466. That same year she gave scholarship to study at the Gnessin Institute in scholarship student at the Juilliard School and at the Bachelor's and Master's degrees respectively. She is Her teachers include Oleg Mussorin, Robert Turner, and Jerome Rose. And, as her bio for the recital by Tatiana Nicoleiva, Garrick Ohlsson, Bryce Richard Goode, and András Schiff". Ms. Nguyen's wonder that she has distinguished herself in various experience worldwide—in Hungary, Germany,

But even my fondest hopes and expectations dream of a recital. Ms. Nguyen's pianism and music making are graced with beauty and exuberance. She is a real artist; a wonderfully communicative performer obviously intoxicated with the joy of living her music and sharing it with those lucky enough to hear it spring from her soul. What a compendium of intellect, sophistication and taste! And she is also (in her unobtrusive way) an accomplished virtuoso, equipped to dispatch even some of the most difficult and subtle compositions on her program (J.S. Bach's English Suite in G minor BWV 808, Schubert's Sonata in D major, Op. 53, D. 850; and three of Chopin's most rarified masterworks, his Scherzo No. 4 in E major, Op. 54; his late Nocturne in E flat major, Op. 55 No. 2; and earlier but demanding Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise, Op. 22).

The Bach Suite took wing with infectious brio. Her propulsive way with the opening Preludium may have initially seemed too dangerously precipitate but the rhythmic control was secure and admirable steady. The ensuing Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Gavotte and Gigue all likewise shared that same lustrous singing tone. The Sarabande was especially modest and eloquent, and she brought a delightful sense of humor to her fleet delivery of the Gavotte (with the tambourine-like repeated bass notes in its second strain deliciously and tastefully emphasized; and the almost Schumannesque maggiore central Trio poignantly savored).

The first movement of the Schubert Sonata took wing at an almost wicked clip. Here, if there is any room for reservation, Ms. Nguyen might have allowed for just a hairbreadth more tonal solidity and breathing space to make the most of this extremely Beethovenian writing. But, no matter, the potentially quirky crossing of hands and such were admirably under rhythmic control (no Schnabel-like desperation this time!). And how Ms. Nguyen's spot-on sense of color and timing kept the potentially repetitious Con moto second movement airborne. (All of the myriad variations of filigree were splendidly creative and engaging and never once did interest flag). For once, there were no "editorializing" of rhythm in the Allegro vivace Scherzo (again that "Tradition" established almost reflexively by that famous old Schanbel recording), and in retrospect it was a pleasant and unpretentious departure from precedent. The Rondo: Allegro moderato, taken a bit more rapidly than usual, delectably recreated the nursery-rhyme "Sing a Song of Six Pence" quality in this fleet and lovely version.

And so it was with the Chopin group heard after intermission: the Fourth Scherzo had an almost Mendelssohn-like gossamer quality. Filigree was impishly tossed off, the octaves sonorously in place, and the central Trio section again achieved without fuss or contortion. The Nocturne was, if anything, even better: the absolute highpoint of the afternoon: I have never heard it played more eloquently, by Ignaz Friedman, Perahia, Horowitz, Rubinstein—or anyone whose interpretations linger in the mind's ear. (Yes, this performance was truly sublime.) The Andante Spianato had a classical simplicity and proportion, and the following Grande Polonaise—a brilliance and swagger—with some effective left hand anticipations and octave amplifications making the proceedings all the more stylish and effective.

We will, no doubt, be regularly hearing much more from Quynh Nguyen: Remember her name!"

# PIANO

INTERNATIONAL PIANO

November/December 2002  
£4.95 UK \$9.95 US

**Schubert** Piano Sonata No.17 in D, D850.  
**Chopin** Scherzo No.4 in E, Op.54.  
Nocturne in E flat, Op. 55 No.2.  
Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise, Op.22.  
**Quynh Nguyen** (pf). Price: \$12.00 (*including shipping and handling for US orders, plus shipping and handling for international orders, available on the web site [www.quynhnguyen.com](http://www.quynhnguyen.com)*).

The Hanoi, Vietnam-born pianist Quynh Nguyen, now an American citizen, was born in 1976 and studied at the Juilliard School and Mannes College of Music, after debuts in Hanoi and some early training at the Gnessin Institute in Moscow, studying with Oleg Musorin. In New York her teachers have included Martin Canin, Jerome Rose, Jacob Lateiner, Bella Davidovich, and Robert Turner. She has concertised in Hungary, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and the US. She is gifted with a tender musicality, allied with a dazzlingly deft balance between the hands that makes her performances of Schubert and Chopin, as heard on this new disc, irresistible. In Chopin's Nocturne in E flat, her trills have a poignancy that is entirely suited to the music, while she expresses the joyous dash needed for the same composer's showpiece: the *Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise*.

When Nguyen made her New York recital debut last year at Weill Hall, she was greeted by a

rave notice from the usually judicious keyboard connoisseur Harris Goldsmit, who exclaimed, 'Ms Nguyen's pianism and music-making are graced with beauty and exuberance. She is a real artist; a wonderfully communicative performer obviously intoxicated with the joy of living her music and sharing it with those lucky enough to hear it spring from her soul. What a compendium of intellect, sophistication and taste!' True enough, Nguyen's Schubert is fresh and fleet, with a kind of poetic approach allied with digital dexterity in the tradition of the late Russian virtuoso Yuri Egorov, although more pliant and endearing than the splashy Egorov generally sounded.

Now living in New York, Nguyen lists among her piano concerto repertoire Beethoven's Second and Fourth (she might well add the Third to that list), Schumann's, and both Chopin concertos. It would also be interesting to hear her in Mozart and Mendelssohn. Rarely does one hear a young artist with such a naturally flowing sense of melodic line - vivid and unforced - that permits the music to breath uninhibited. This flexible way of playing allows poetry and emotion to expand organically. Quynh Nguyen is already a major talent of the younger generation of keyboard artists, to be placed alongside Klara Wurtz and Irina Rees.

**Benjamin Ivry**