

# CHAMBER MUSIC ART FOUNDATION

## PRESENT A RISING CELLO STAR

*Ying Jun Wei*



Ying-Jun Wei was born in China where her family lived in a small suburban town where the cost of living was lower. She began learning cello at the age of 10. For transportation they used an old bicycle that Ying-Jun grandpa had given their family. Every week her dad would put her on the front of the bike, her mom would carry the cello and sit at the back, and her dad would ride for an hour to get in town to her music teacher. They would ride through rain and snow and once even hail, sometimes on the icy roads, where they would fall many times but nothing stopped them and she never missed a lesson. After a year of that, the family moved closer to the city, where, with not much money, they rented a tiny room with no heat, water or a bathroom. They had to go outside for about 60 yards to get water and use a toilet.

At 11 Ying-Jun enrolled at the Wu Han Conservatory of Music and at 13, she won the 3d China Cello Competition and was invited to Beijing for a solo concert. There in the audience was Mr. Curtis Price, the Principle of UK Royal Academy of Music. After hearing Ying-Jun performance he got very excited and invited her to come to UK to study. He arranged for Ying-Jun to be admitted to Purcell School of



Music, UK best music school patroned by Prince Charles with a full scholarship. Ying Jun met world renowned cellist, Yo Yo Ma right before she went off to England. Yo Yo Ma was visiting Beijing in 1998 and Ying Jun was the only one chosen to play for him. She was given only 15min as Yo Yo Ma had to return to the airport. Yo Yo Ma got very excited listening to Ying Jun playing that, despite of his entourage keeping reminding him the time, he went on for about an hour with Ying Jun and had to rush to the airport. Along with him was the principle of the Preparatory Division of New England Conservatory, Mr. Mark Churchill. After coming back to Boston Mark Churchill wrote Ying Jun a letter inviting her to come to Boston to study at New England Conservatory, but Ying Jun had already agreed to go to England.

In 2000, Ying-Jun won the Purcell School Concerto Competition and in 2001, she became a student at the Royal Academy of Music with a full scholarship, where she studied with world famous cellist Colin Carr. After graduating from UK Royal Academy of Music with President's Award she came to US for her graduate studies. In 2008 she received a Graduate Performance Degree from Boston Conservatory and has won a prestigious Artist Diploma Award for Post Graduate education (Ph.D in solo performance) at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, MA. Chamber Music Art Foundation (CMAF) was sponsoring Ying Jun since 2009. Ying Jun has completed her Post Graduate education in 2012. She is playing on an old English cello, circa 1830, which was acquired for her by CMAF. In 2014 Ying Jun has become a permanent resident of United States. Her application was sponsored by Yo Yo Ma, Emanuel Ax and Chamber Music Art Foundation.

Ying-Jun has performed in many concerts as a soloist and has given performances in such venues as Wigmore Hall; The Purcell Room; Buckingham Palace in England and further abroad in Switzerland, China and Japan.