



LOOKS MATTER
COSMETICS GIANT'S
ASIAN PUSH, P21



HIGH NOTES
CHINESE VIOLINIST
TURNS HEADS, P28

CHINA DAILY

中國日報
**EUROPEAN
WEEKLY**
MARCH 11 - 17, 2011

People

www.chinadailyuk.com

£2 • €3 • 5 SF

HITTING THE RIGHT NOTE

CHINESE VIRTUOSO VIOLINIST'S DISTINCTIVE STYLE TURNS HEADS IN LONDON

By ZHANG HAIZHOU AND ZHANG CHUNYAN

Virtuoso violinist Analiza Ching makes heads turns and instantly wings your heart when she walks into the room. Not only is her music captivating and breathtaking, she is also a head-turner who dresses fashionably. With several stunning performances to her credit, the young Chinese musician is redefining the way the violin is played and giving it a more contemporary feel.

Ten years ago when Ching first came to London to study music, she was just an ordinary teenager who wanted to make a mark in the music world.

She joined the Royal Academy of Music (RAM), but found that the road was not smooth. She was alone in an alien city, with no friends or family members, and very little money.

"To make matters worse, her language proficiency was just the bare minimum.

"I could only speak words like 'hi' and 'how are you'. Coming to the UK was certainly a big adventure," says Ching.

But driven by the desire to make a mark on the music scene, Ching refused to give up and continued her quest.

Apart from practicing music for eight hours daily, Ching supplemented her meager earnings through performances in shows and by giving private tuitions for neighboring children.

That hard work seems to have paid off. Ten years later, Ching has several solo performances to her credit.

Sitting in the China Tang restaurant in the Dorchester, one of London's best-known hotels, Ching says she plans to launch her first music album, *The Shadow of Love*, later this year.

"*Shadow* lends a bit of mystery, while love is what everybody wants and needs," she says in clear British English about the album, sipping a cup of jasmine tea.

On her left forearm, she wears a red beaded bracelet, a symbol of luck in Chinese culture.

Ching says that she co-composed with her producers all the 13 tunes in the album. "The music is rich and comes with a lot of passion. It is not just beautiful and relaxing music, but very beautiful, exciting and relaxing classical music," she says.

Ching has performed twice for the royal family and also on several important occasions like the recent concert to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Beatles at the Royal Albert Hall, the mecca for musicians.

On that occasion, she played the legendary Liverpool band's classic tune *Yesterday*, in her own distinctive style along with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Ching also performed at the opening ceremony of the London Fashion Week 2011 last month.

Local magazines and publications consider her "one of the most out-

standing new musical personalities seen for a long time", while the audience who watched her play term her an "emerging talent" and "dramatic violinist".

Different notes

In the world of contemporary music, Ching is best known for her riveting performances that incorporate vigorous dances that rock the audiences.

Violin is a classical string instrument dating back to the 16th century and most performers play the instrument in long dress or with a tuxedo.

But in a sign of the times, performers like Ching are giving it a little bit of the oomph factor that makes it appealing to the younger audiences, too. Ching normally wears high-heel shoes, low-neck dresses, and sometimes short skirts; and often dances fast to the tune of her own music.

Ching's royal connection began after she performed a classical recital for Prince Edward and other royal family members in 2007 at the Windsor Castle. It was a crowning moment for her when she was introduced to Prince Andrew.

"He shook hands with me, thanked me for my performance, and enquired about my life in the RAM, and said he had never heard any violinist who could play as fast as me," Ching says.

"Music was always in my blood," she says recollecting her early days in China.

Born to a musical family in Liuzhou of the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region in South China, Ching got her first violin as a birthday gift from her mother at the age of four.

Her father was her first violin teacher, and her mother, the dance teacher.

Her first public performance was a rendering of a children's song *The Groundhog* for Chinese air force personnel based in Liuzhou.

"I don't remember the number of people who turned up for that event, but it was certainly a crowd," she says. "Such was the response that soon I ended up performing the same song to a group of American visitors."

To some extent that was her first international performance.

Realizing his daughter's exemplary skill with the violin, Ching's father decided to give her intense training. "Unlike other children, I did not



Analiza Ching is a favorite with the British royal family and has played at Windsor Castle.

PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

have much time for games after my classes," she says.

"I was asked to practice on the violin for two hours every day. On hot summer days, I had to continue the practice inside nets, so that the mosquitoes did not intrude.

"I was very unhappy in those days as I could not play like normal children. I used to argue a lot with my father and on several occasions felt like throwing away the violin," says Ching.

Luckily, Ching resisted the temptation and went on to make her own mark in the music world. "Without my father's push, I would not be what I am today," she says.

After garnering some publicity in Guangxi, Ching joined a two-year program at an academy in Beijing to gain more professional violin training.

During those days, her father chanced upon an admission advertisement of RAM and sent them a videotape of Ching. She was just 14 when she got admitted to RAM.

Handicapped by her inability to communicate in English at the beginning, Ching took refuge in her passion - music.

Two years later, she managed to impress a local couple by a performance at a church.

The couple offered her free accommodation in their home and looked after her like their own daughter.

Living in a host family not only helped Ching save money, but also helped improve her English and understanding of the British society. Like several of her peers, she is also an ardent fan of networking sites

and has more than 1,000 friends on Facebook.

Home roots

Though she speaks fluent English, in her heart she still remains a young Chinese girl. "I have always been wearing this red beaded bracelet," she says.

Ching also has a dream of one day performing in China along with other local musicians. That dream of the orient is very visible when she talks about beautiful Chinese classics and many tunes like *The Butterfly Lovers* that are not just music, but beautiful tales.

"Chinese culture and songs are a big influence on my career. I want to add Chinese classic songs to my album. My dream is to become a world-renowned violinist," she says.