

# HONENS QUESTIONNAIRE

**HAN CHEN**

## **2018 HONENS INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION**

We asked Han to share some information about himself, here is what he came back with...

**Have you ever been to Canada? To Calgary?**

Yes

No

**Where did you go to University?**

I did my accelerated Bachelor and Master of Music from 2010 to 2015 at The Juilliard School.

**With whom did you study?**

I studied with Prof. Veda Kaplinsky during my college years, with whom I will keep studying with in my upcoming doctoral degree.

**When did you start playing the piano?**

I had my first piano lesson on my fourth birthday as my birthday gift.

**How old were you when you first played in public?**

I started taking local competitions a year or two years after I started playing the piano, so I guess when I was six years old?

**How old were you when you made your orchestral debut?**

When I was fourteen years old, I played the Coronation Concerto by Mozart with the China Symphony Orchestra in Beijing.

**Tell us about something that happened in your childhood that made a significant impact on your life.**

When I was young, I was always excited to go on stage. I loved the crowd, and I loved playing in front of people. I had a friend who was easily nervous on stage, so I was made to give her a big smile from the audience when she walked on stage. As I grew up, I also became nervous and self-conscious. But when I think of my friend, I always remember to give myself a big smile, so that I can run on stage and play music fearlessly like when I was young.

**If you hadn't become a pianist, what would you be doing right now?**

It is hard for me to imagine myself not being a pianist, since I have been playing the piano for my lifetime. However, I would love to become a gallery owner. So, if I am not a pianist, I may go into art-related majors such as art history or art management.

**Default drink / cocktail of choice?**

Mimosa without the alcohol part, and a former host mom of mine named it Hanmosa.

**The historical personalities, both good and bad, that fascinate you the most?**

John Cage is someone when I read about or listen to the music of that I feel totally fascinated. He had such an unusual life and created so many different things those influenced other musicians and artists and thinkers. Sometimes I feel musicians don't get as excited about him as visual artists, and I wonder why. I played his prepared piano concerto and totally loved it.

**If you could board a plane today, where would it be taking you?**

I would love to go to Spain, where I have always wanted to visit but have never been.

**What is your favourite book?**

The Stranger by Albert Camus.

**Other than playing the piano, what other talents do you possess?**

I also love to compose, although I am very slow when it comes to composition.

**What do you like best about being a pianist?**

The best thing of being a pianist for me is that it brings you to so many different places, where you meet different people, have different experiences and taste different cuisines.

**What is the one talent that you wished you possessed?**

I wish I could draw. I took a couple of drawing lessons when I was young, but the only thing I could feel was my sore arm, and probably the lack of talent.

**What musical instrument do you secretly wish you could play?**

I used to play the violin, but not anymore. I wish I can still play it, so that I can play in a quartet. I love the sound of a string quartet.

**What are the top three pieces (or songs) that you could listen to over and over again?**

"Frühlingstraum" from the Winterreise, the Piano Quintet by Thomas Adès, and the Lyric Suite by Alban Berg.