

Mei-Ann Chen

Conductor



One of the most dynamic young conductors in America, **Mei-Ann Chen** has recently begun her first season as Music Director of the Chicago Sinfonietta. Appointed in August of 2010 as Music Director Designate, she led the Sinfonietta in a concert attended by over 7,000 people in Millennium Park in August of 2011 to introduce her to the people of Chicago, followed by two highly praised concerts to open the 2011-2012 subscription season. Also Music Director of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, **Ms. Chen's** charismatic podium style, musicality, and personal warmth have helped fuel her meteoric rise to the top ranks of conductors in the U.S.

In great demand as a guest conductor, **Ms. Chen** has appeared with the symphonies of Alabama, Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Colorado, Columbus, Edmonton (Canada), Florida, Fort Worth, Honolulu, National (Washington, DC), Oregon, Pacific, Phoenix, Princeton, Seattle, Toronto, and the Grand Teton Festival Orchestra. Worldwide engagements include all the principal Danish orchestras, BBC Scottish Symphony, Bournemouth Symphony, Graz Symphony, Norwegian Radio Orchestra, Tampere Philharmonic, and the Trondheim Symphony. During the 2011-12 season, she will debut with the symphonies of Jacksonville, Naples, Nashville, Pasadena, Sarasota, as well as the National Symphony of Mexico and the Netherlands Philharmonic at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw.

The first woman to win the Malko Competition (2005), **Ms. Chen** has served as Assistant Conductor of the Oregon Symphony, the Atlanta Symphony, and Baltimore Symphony. Recipient of the 2007 Taki Concordia Fellowship, she has appeared jointly with Marin Alsop and Stefan Sanderling in highly acclaimed subscription concerts with the Baltimore Symphony, Colorado Symphony and Florida Orchestra.

In 2002, **Ms. Chen** was unanimously selected as Music Director of the Portland Youth Philharmonic in Oregon, the oldest of its kind and the model for many of the youth orchestras in the United States. During her five-year tenure with the orchestra, she led its sold-out debut in Carnegie Hall, received an ASCAP award for innovative programming, and developed new and unique musicianship programs for the orchestra's members. She was honored with a Sunburst Award from Young Audiences for her contribution to music education.

Born in Taiwan, **Mei-Ann Chen** has lived in the United States since 1989. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in conducting from the University of Michigan, where she was a student of Kenneth Kiesler. Prior to that, she was the first student in New England Conservatory's history to receive master's degrees, simultaneously, in both violin and conducting. **Ms. Chen** also participated in the National Conducting Institute in Washington, D.C. and the American Academy of Conducting in Aspen.

"Chen, 38, is a musician for whom 'dynamic' and 'electric' seem altogether too limiting. Her entire body is a bundle of podium energy; her keen ear and sharp eyes miss nothing."

Chicago Tribune

"Twenty-first century multiculturalism is global and gender conscious. That's one of Chen's mantras, and her program of works by a Chinese, a pioneering African American, the world's leading film composer, and encore from her native Taiwan as well as Beethoven's Fifth and a distinguished black orchestra principal as a guest soloist in two of the pieces fleshed out her claim."

Chicago Sun-Times

"...Chen's hyperkinetic direction is a wonder to behold. But her podium style is not so much about flamboyant self-display as vehemently urging and inspiring the orchestra members to playing of greater power and intensity."

Chicagoclassicalreview

"Stunning, just stunning. That was the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra's performance of the Tchaikovsky *Pathétique* Symphony. It came at the hands – and thanks to the intellect, fastidious preparation and sheer passion – of guest conductor Mei-Ann Chen. I can't remember a more gripping performance of the piece."

Dallas Morning News