

Brother and sister Cheng2 Duo sure to please audiences at Jan. 19 concert

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Sister and brother Silvie and Bryan Cheng will be performing on Friday, Jan. 19 at Frank Venables Theatre in the South Okanagan Concert Series. They perform under the name Cheng2 Duo. (Uwe Arens photo)

A truly remarkable brother and sister, one a world-class cellist and the other an exceptional pianist, are sure to thrill the audience in attendance at the next South Okanagan Concert Series event.

On Friday, Jan. 19, the dynamic duo formed by 20-year-old cellist Bryan Cheng and his sister, pianist Silvie Cheng, will demonstrate their virtuoso fireworks and impeccable technique at the Frank Venables Theatre stage at Southern Okanagan Secondary School.

Known as the Cheng2 Duo (pronounced Cheng Squared Duo,) they will present a program called Russian Soul that features Prokofiev and Rachmaninoff.

Bryan believes that music is like a layer of glue that holds human spirits together. He and his sister make this easy to believe.

The dynamic siblings, named one of CBC Music's 30 hot Canadian classical musicians under 30, have quickly become an audience favourite wherever they perform.

The obvious affection between the two who have made music together for the past 14 years extends into the music itself.

It is hardly surprising they have established a reputation for being invited to return engagements at prestigious venues including New York's Carnegie Hall.

Silvie and Bryan are quintessentially Canadian. Silvie describes their background as international as do so many Canadians. Born in Tokyo, Japan, she moved to Ottawa as an infant with her parents who are of Chinese heritage. Bryan, seven years younger, was born and raised in Ottawa too.

Both are multilingual.

Silvie now lives in New York, where she performs and also uses advanced video conferencing technology to give weekly lessons to students around the world.

Bryan lives in Berlin where he studies music in German and performs worldwide.

"We are proud Canadians wherever we go," said Silvie.

Surprisingly the siblings, despite living now on different continents, manage to see each other every few weeks. Nonetheless, the present eight weeks of touring in B.C. and Ontario is a luxury of time together for the two.

Bryan was mentored from age eight by Yuli Turovsky, a famed cellist from Moscow who moved to Canada in 1976.

At Turovsky's funeral in 2013, Bryan explained that Turovsky "didn't want an average cellist."

He had Bryan make his orchestral debut when he was eight years old.

"Turovsky told me not to lose my artistic side. For him playing music with your whole heart was important," he said.

Bryan will bring that perspective to the program of Russian music.

Don't miss this exceptional opportunity to peek into the Russian soul and to do it with two amazing young Canadians already recognized for their mature, impassioned musicianship.

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