



CHORD OF LIFE

A master of music and martial arts, Elaine Kwon doesn't stop there

STORY BY GRACE RONG WANG | PHOTOS BY JACKIE HO

Pritz-winning pianist Elaine Kwon made her orchestral debut with the Washington-Mabo Symphony at age 13 and has performed solo, concerto, and chamber music concerts throughout the U.S. and internationally. As a violinist, she received standing ovations at her 2008, 2010 and 2011 Carnegie Hall concerts, as well as in her solo concerto performances with the Slovak Sinfonietta, Toronto Philharmonic Orchestra, Finger Lakes Symphony and the New York Chamber Virtuosi. As chamber musician, she toured regularly for 10 years as part of the Hebert/Kwon piano duo, and performed as a member of Forecast New Music Group, Light and Sound Water Trio, Sapphire Ensemble and OCTET. As composer, she created an original score for the acclaimed Shakespearean play, *Coriolanus*, which premiered in Buffalo, N.Y., was showcased in Carnegie Hall, toured through Ireland and is being made into a feature film. Her recording of the Rabinowitz Piano Concerto No. 4 with the Slovak Sinfonietta was released on Artist's Choice Recordings in December 2011.

Elaine received a Doctorate of Musical Arts from Boston University, a Master of Music from New England Conservatory with highest honors and the Distinction in Performance Award, and a Bachelor of Music from University of Texas in Austin with highest honors and the Academic All-American award. She is now a Lecturer/Affiliated Artist at NYU where she teaches music theory and piano lab.

As an avid martial artist, Elaine holds a second-degree black belt in taekwondo and is a five-time U.S. National Taekwondo champion in Traditional and Creative Forms (1994, 1997, 2000). Presently she studies Shaolin Kung Fu. She was chosen to represent Nike in the 2003 Asia campaign as a martial artist and has appeared in numerous magazines, advertisements and videos. She hosted the 2006 action-adventure host-wrap show *The Lounge—Shaolin's Survival* on Imagine-Flex TV.

She has been a featured guest on the Oprah Winfrey Show and was honored as a "Power Woman" of New York. Elaine was the subject of a documentary for the Arirang TV series, *Dragon II*, which was broadcast internationally to 89 million households. Elaine lives in New York City, where she continues to find ways to combine and communicate her passion for music, martial arts, food, wine, and optimal living. **K**

Grace Rong Wang is a full-time consultant in a management consulting company in New York City. She writes ad-hoc for NMAAP Charities. Grace is also an amateur violinist, playing for symphonies in her spare time.