

A portrait of a young man with dark, spiky hair, wearing a black tuxedo jacket, a white dress shirt, and a white bow tie. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an indoor setting like a concert hall or a piano room.

David Fung  
Evening Conversations

Chopin  
Tan Dun  
Rachmaninov  
Schumann  
Scarlatti

 YARLUNG RECORDS  
BOB ATTIYEH, PRODUCER

David Fung <i>Evening Conversations</i>		<b>82:39</b>
1	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Fantasie in C Minor, KV 475	<b>12:15</b>
2	Frédéric Chopin, Nocturne in C# Minor, Opus posth.	<b>4:07</b>
3-10	Tan Dun, <i>Eight Memories in Watercolor</i> , Opus 1	<b>14:46</b>
	<i>Missing Moon</i>	2:06
	<i>Staccato Beans</i>	1:19
	<i>Herdboy's Song</i>	1:40
	<i>Blue Nun</i>	1:13
	<i>Red Wilderness</i>	2:10
	<i>Ancient Burial</i>	2:49
	<i>Floating Clouds</i>	2:00
	<i>SunRain</i>	1:27
11-15	Sergei Rachmaninov, Preludes 8-12, Opus 32	<b>15:10</b>
	<i>Vivo</i>	1:48
	<i>Allegro Moderato</i>	2:45
	<i>Lento</i>	5:35
	<i>Allegretto</i>	2:32
	<i>Allegro</i>	2:28
16	Robert Schumann, Arabesque, Opus 18	<b>6:43</b>
17-29	Robert Schumann, <i>Kinderszenen</i> , Opus 15	<b>19:49</b>
	<i>Von fremden Ländern und Menschen</i> (From Foreign Lands and People)	1:46
	<i>Kuriose Geschichte</i> (Curious Story)	1:03
	<i>Hasche-Mann</i> (Blind Man's Bluff)	0:32
	<i>Bittendes Kind</i> (Pleading Child)	1:12
	<i>Glückes genug</i> (Happiness)	1:05
	<i>Wichtige Begebenheit</i> (Important Event)	0:52
	<i>Träumerei</i> (Dreaming)	2:50
	<i>Am Kamin</i> (At the Fireside)	1:03
	<i>Ritter vom Steckenpferd</i> (Knight of the Rocking Horse)	0:39
	<i>Fast zu ernst</i> (Almost too Serious)	2:07
	<i>Fürchtenmachen</i> (Frightening)	1:54
	<i>Kind im Einschlummern</i> (Child Falling Asleep)	2:18
	<i>Der Dichter spricht</i> (The Poet Speaks)	2:22
30	Nocturne in C Minor, Opus posth.	<b>3:15</b>
31	Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata KP34/L7 (Minuet)	<b>1:37</b>
32	Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata KP141/L422 (Toccata)	<b>1:55</b>
33	Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata KP32/L423 (Aria)	<b>3:00</b>

David Fung first released *Evening Conversations* in 2006. This recording was hailed as the “Best Piano recording I have ever heard” by John Casler. And in the year-end **American Record Guide** review of new piano recordings, James Harrington says of David Fung’s playing:

“My reviewing process has produced an overall favorite, and that is David Fung. Consistently good from start to finish, his playing impressed me for its phrasing and musicality.... It is clear that Fung’s heart and soul belong in the romantic era. The variety of his touch and articulation is well displayed in this music.... I shall return to this recording many many times and will watch for future releases from this talented artist.”

After hearing *Evening Conversations*, Jeffrey Kahane invited David to play the Ravel piano concerto and make his Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra debut as part of the orchestra’s prestigious Fortieth Anniversary season. A review by Alicia Kibbey in the following morning’s *Los Angeles Times* reads:

“David Fung is exceptionally good. After having heard Martha Argerich perform the Ravel Concerto with the [Los Angeles Philharmonic] last month, I was sure Fung would appear lackluster [in comparison] to our beloved Martha. Instead, his performance outshone hers in rhythmic excitement, orchestral ensemble... and in the nuancing of the solo passages throughout. I must add, however, that Martha had the same youthful exuberance as the 25 year-old [David Fung.] There are few young pianists that have the unassuming charisma, charm and natural talent of Fung, and he will certainly be welcomed back by his audience in Los Angeles.”

I heard David’s performance with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and he was every bit as magical as reported in the *Los Angeles Times*. Performances with orchestras in the United States, Europe, the Near East, Asia, and Australia followed David’s legendary concerts in Los Angeles, including a cycle of Mozart concertos with the Israel Camerata Orchestra. And while David triumphs in solo recitals and concerto performances in major concert halls the world over, he enjoys playing chamber music with friends just as much. Especially memorable to him are David’s many chamber music performances at Music@Menlo which he gave at the invitation of Wu Han and David Finckel, as well as at Galleria Nazionale della Puglia in Italy.

For this new pressing of *Evening Conversations*, we use virgin polycarbonate and our special alloy in this German audiophile pressing to bring you sound as close to the live magic in the concert hall as possible.

Our most hearty thanks to our friends Larry and Christine Davanzo. They generously underwrote the new design, mastering, pressing and printing of this new release. Larry and Christine loved the first pressing of this recording and helped us give it new life. Thank you!

Bob Attiyeh, producer  
April 4th, 2011

The eighteenth-century antecedents of the modern concert grand – the harpsichord, clavichord, and fortepiano – were instruments well suited to the intimacy of the chamber, to small gatherings and candle-lit interchange. It was an age of conversation. And music, modeled on this principal pastime, was a medium for wit, sentiment, and rhetorical flourish. Mozart’s fantasy and Scarlatti’s sonatas, which bracket this recital by David Fung, remind us why the keyboard was considered such an ideal vehicle for a composer’s flights of fancy. Here, alone, the thinking musician could freely engage the listener’s ear with the allure of the musical idea.

These four works, all in a minor key, are a reminder that ruminative introspection was every bit as characteristic of this “enlightened age” as sparkling repartee. Scarlatti’s over five hundred sonatas, written around mid century for the Spanish court, are pioneering works for the harpsichord. Their succinct form, sharply etched individuality, and technical brilliance proved influential upon several generations of keyboard composers. Among Mozart’s solo keyboard works, the C Minor Fantasy (1785), no doubt conceived for the fortepiano, holds a special place in the composer’s output for its dramatic turbulence and harmonic daring, qualities that anticipate a Romantic age that Mozart, dead at 35 in 1791, would not live to see.

In the nineteenth century, as candle light gave way to gas, the piano, whose frame was now reinforced with iron, virtually replaced all earlier keyboard incarnations. Something of the eighteenth-century drawing room survived in the salon, where a fading aristocracy mingled with an ascendant bourgeoisie. This was the world of Frederic Chopin, the Polish composer and pianist who was fêted by Europe’s social elite. But while his nocturnes contain echoes of the pensive side of Scarlatti and Mozart, these works are thoroughly Romantic in their inspiration. Here, conversation has turned to conjuring, the artist has become a magician, invoking through his singing tone the languid charm of the operatic cantabile.

Thanks to the manufacturing and marketing innovations of this burgeoning industrial age the piano had become a ubiquitous fixture in middle-class homes, the pride of the parlor where family and friends gathered in the comforting warmth of the tiled stove. This is the cozy world of Robert Schumann, who, like Chopin, was also a conjurer, but his subject matter was the lyric self, that special preserve of *bürgerlich* fantasy. In Schumann’s hands the piano became an instrument of poetic utterance that could encapsulate a whim, a mood, or an arabesque in the few deft strokes of a character piece. The thirteen miniatures of *Scenes from Childhood* (1838) are masterpieces of this genre. In their simplicity these two- and three-part structures recall the straightforward directness of Scarlatti’s sonatas, which in all but name were character pieces of an earlier time. And like Mozart’s fantasies, Schumann’s works have the spontaneity of the sketch and the improvisation. But these childhood memories are more ingratiating than their eighteenth-century predecessors, less the stuff of discourse than of story-telling.

By the end of the nineteenth century the warm glow of the gas flame was giving way to the cold glare of electric light. The piano had reached the peak of its development as the powerful concert grand, an instrument capable of haranguing the multitudes with resources that were orchestral in scope, the instrument of thundering giants like Sergei Rachmaninov. But this taciturn Russian also knew how to reign in the piano’s power and explore more contemplative terrain. Though his solo works ranged from études and variations to sonatas, Rachmaninov is perhaps best remembered for his preludes, works that have the kind of improvisatory air that suggests a late night post-concert performance for friends. Of the thirteen preludes of Opus 32 (1910) five are recorded here, ranging in mood from the mercurial (No. 8) to the passionate (No. 9) and the reflective (No. 10). There is a hint of Chopin in the fluttering texture and long-breathed melody of No. 12 in G# Minor, and No. 11 in B Major, delightful in its rhythmic and harmonic instability, seems at times like a wistful look back at the lost world of Schumann.

Something of Schumann lives on in Tan Dun’s *Eight Memories in Watercolor* of 1978. These, too, are character pieces with fanciful titles that are evocative of childhood. The composer captured these memories as a homesick conservatory student in Beijing, employing both folk songs from his native Hunan (in numbers 2, 3, 4, 8) as well as original material (in numbers 1, 5, 6, 7) that reflected influences from the West. And like Schumann and Scarlatti, Chopin, Mozart, and Rachmaninov before him, Tan Dun was learning to master the secret of the miniature – a compositional form he has likened both to zen calligraphy and to the watercolor: “capturing essences with the minimum of gesture.” This is a fitting epigraph for this collection of short pieces, jewels of the composer’s craft and worthy tests of a performer’s taste and skill.

Christopher Hailey

### **Original Producer's Notes**

It is with great pleasure that Yarlung Records presents David Fung's second album, *Evening Conversations*, which we recorded on March 27th, 28th and 29th, 2006, in Zipper Hall in Los Angeles. For David's first album, *A Journey from Hubris to Humility*, we used the legendary C-24 stereo microphone, and made full use of the warm ambience of the hall and the natural decay in this wonderful acoustic space. For *Evening Conversations*, however, we chose two Neumann U-47 tube microphones, and used a more intimate perspective for the microphone setup. In contrast to the mid-hall perspective we wanted for David's first album, this is more intimate music, and we wanted the sound to complement this more introspective repertoire. As before, we recorded directly to two tracks through our specially-modified tube microphone preamplifiers and custom cables. We recorded analog tape, as well as high definition 24-bit PCM digital media at 176,400 samples per second. I hope you enjoy these performances and the sound.

One of Yarlung Records' missions is to record and support young international-caliber artists at this stage in their concert careers. Happily, this mission is working. I understand that Sir Brian McMaster heard David's first album, and based on that representation of David's talent, hired him for his debut this summer in Queen's Hall at the venerated Edinburgh International Festival. Thank you Brian, and thank you David for giving us so much to celebrate.

At the time of this pressing, David is on concert tour in Spain, France, The Netherlands and Ireland. It is a pleasure to work with an artist like David, whose musical interpretations are rich and fresh without being eccentric, and always completely sincere.

I wish to dedicate this album to my friend and mentor Gustavo Hidalgo, who was born in Montevideo in 1952, and died in Santa Monica in 2006. In addition to being a great friend, Gustavo was ceaseless in his quest for great music captured with ever-more-perfect recording techniques. His support of my recordings, as well as his unwillingness to accept compromise, served as one of my great challenges and inspirations as an engineer and producer. Thank you Gustavo.

Bob Attiyeh, producer

July 8, 2006

### **David Fung, Biography**

Praised as having "undoubted talent" by the Los Angeles Times and described as being "impossibly virtuosic" by the Edinburgh Guide, young Australian pianist David Fung continues to impress audiences with his pure poetry, artistry, and elegance. David has performed with leading orchestras around the globe, including the Israel Philharmonic, the Israel Camerata, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the Melbourne Symphony, the Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa of Japan, the Queensland Orchestra, the San Diego Symphony, and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. He has also been invited to give recitals at international festivals such as the Aspen Music Festival, Goslar Festival (Germany), Der Internationaler Klaviersommer (Germany), Music@Menlo, the Sarasota Music Festival, and the 2006 Edinburgh International Festival Queen's Hall Series, where Fung was acclaimed as being "prodigiously talented... and probably [doing] ten more impossible things daily before breakfast," by Jonas Green in the Edinburgh Guide.

In 2008, David was a top prizewinner at the 12th Arthur Rubinstein Piano International Masters Competition in Tel Aviv, where he was awarded the Prize for Best Classical Concerto, and Best Performance of Chamber Music. He won 2nd Prize and the Audience Prize in the 3rd Lev Vlassenko Piano Competition, and was the grand prizewinner of the 2002 ABC Symphony Australia Young Performer of the Year Award. In 2007, Mr. Fung was honored by the City of Los Angeles for his contribution

to the cultural life of the city, and was recently named the recipient of the Charles S. Miller Prize awarded to an outstanding pianist by the Yale University.

After departing the University of New South Wales medical school in 2003, David began studies at the Colburn Conservatory in Los Angeles with John Perry. David holds a Bachelor of Music and Artist's Diploma from the Colburn Conservatory, and a Master of Music at the Yale University. Mr. Fung has also worked closely with world-class pianists such as Emanuel Ax, Boris Berman, Alfred Brendel, Yefim Bronfman, Leon Fleisher, Claude Frank, Peter Frankl, Andràs Schiff, and Arie Vardi.

David has made two solo albums with Yarlung Records and has so far collaborated on two additional Yarlung titles, *Dialoghi* and *Inner World*. Yarlung released David's first U.S. album in 2005, which included works by Liszt and Ravel. David has also recorded the complete violin and piano works of American composer Lawrence Dillon, with violinist Danielle Belen, which Naxos released in 2011.

Mr. Fung has been featured in many radio and television programs by the Australia Broadcasting Corporation Television and Radio (ABC), Sydney's Special Broadcasting Services Television and Radio (SBS), the UK's BBC 3, Radio Scotland, Aspen's KAJX, Los Angeles' KMozart and KUSC, the "Music of Friends" series with the Radio and Television Hong Kong (RTHK4), the Israel Broadcasting Authority, Israel's "Voice of Music" radio station, MEZZO (Europe), and Cleveland's WCLV 104.9 FM.

Mr. Fung's fascination with other art forms has led him to explore relationships between visual art and music with audiences. He has presented music in tandem with exhibitions at numerous galleries and art spaces, including the Art Gallery of New South Wales. A champion of contemporary music, Mr. Fung has premiered and recorded numerous new works of living composers, and has also performed with contemporary music ensembles such as eighth blackbird and New Music New Haven. A strong communicator, and an advocate for music education, Mr. Fung presents a series of masterclasses and lecture-recitals at the Galleria Nazionale della Puglia in Italy, as well as masterclasses in the United States and Australia. In 2010 his lectures in Italy featured Schubert's keyboard works, and early performance practice in the works of Mozart. David is currently pursuing doctoral studies at Yale University. David Fung is a Steinway Artist.







## David Fung

### *Evening Conversations*

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- 2 Chopin Nocturne in C# Minor Opus Posth.
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- 16 Schumann Arabesque Opus 18
- 17-29 Schumann *Kinderszenen* Opus 15
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- 31 D. Scarlatti Sonata KP34, L7 (Minuet)
- 32 D. Scarlatti Sonata KP141, L422 (Toccata)
- 33 D. Scarlatti Sonata KP32, L423 (Aria)

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Producer & Recording Engineer: Bob Attiyeh

Assistant Producer: Jacob Horowitz

Monitoring Equipment: Elliot Midwood

Mastering Engineers: Steve Hoffman & Bob Attiyeh

Steinway Technician: Michael Jackson Pianos

Design: Eron Muckleroy

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Yarlung Records

10920 Wilshire Boulevard 150-9162

Los Angeles, California 90024

[www.yarlungrecords.com](http://www.yarlungrecords.com)



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