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LOCAL STORIES JANUARY 27, 2025

Life & Work of composer Lora Chow



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Today we'd like to introduce you to Lora Chow

Hi Lora, can you start by introducing yourself? We'd love to learn more about how you got to where you are today?

My story is a symphony of passion, curiosity, and relentless pursuit for artistic excellence. I now work as a composer, singer, and multi-instrumentalist.

Raised in the bustling financial hub of Hong Kong, I fell in love with opera at a young age, as I was in awe of how opera singers can project their voices in grand opera houses without the use of microphone. This fascination led me to pursue a double major in music and economics at Yale University. Upon graduation, like many of my peers, I took up a job in an investment bank, and later became a hedge fund manager — a role that satisfied my curiosity about different industries and utilized my analytical problem solving skills. The fast-paced investment environment, while rewarding, did not satisfy my creative spirit.

I always hear new music playing in my head, but I did not quite know what to do with this ability. It was during a transformative summer program in film scoring that I discovered the profound joy of composing for an orchestra. This pivotal experience ignited a fire within me, prompting a bold decision to leave behind the comforts of a successful finance career to fully embrace my calling in music.

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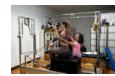
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the enthusiastic responses to my compositions. It was incredibly encouraging to see world-class pianists, violinists and other musicians eager to perform my pieces. Also, the compliments from the audience members about how my music deeply resonated with them have stayed in my heart. Such heartfelt feedbacks have motivated me to work hard to push forward my artistic path.

Over the past year, I have poured my heart and soul into my dream project, an original piano album titled "Reveries on Ivories." This collection of eighteen compositions serves as a music diary, a reflection of my innermost emotions. Each piece tells a story about my self-discovery journey.

I have also been working on creating a groundbreaking fusion opera, *Sleepless Moon*, which is an artistic experiment to blend the elements of Cantonese opera and Western opera, with an orchestra of both Chinese and Western instruments, to create harmony across cultural differences and deepen the understanding of our shared humanity.

I firmly believe in the power of music to transcend boundaries, heal hearts, and create connections that resonate across the globe. In a world often driven by numbers and profit, I always remind myself that true fulfillment lies in the harmony of pursuing one's dreams.

I'm sure it wasn't obstacle-free, but would you say the journey has been fairly smooth so far?

Every artist faces many challenges. One of the biggest hurdles for me has been dealing with difficult people. Whether it's navigating conflicting visions with stakeholders or addressing misunderstandings about my work, those interactions can be really frustrating. But I try to see them as opportunities to educate and advocate for the arts, even when it feels tough. It's challenging, but I find it extremely fulfilling to work with great people who share my vision.

Then there are the practical constraints. Limited rehearsal time with musicians, distracting noises at performance venues, and the constant uncertainty about the future — these are all regular parts of my reality. And let's not forget the pressure of tight deadlines! Sometimes I have to complete a piece of music from scratch within a day. Furthermore, marketing my compositions and self-promotion can be particularly daunting, especially in today's world that is overflowing with options. Yet, I think these obstacles only make me more resilient.

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tasks, and even dealing with public relations and logistics can sometimes dilute my focus and energy. It feels like I am running a business rather than just creating art. There is so much more to being an artist today!

In the midst of all this, I am continually learning new skills — everything from video editing to website design and even human resources management. It is necessary to be well-rounded in today's music industry. Each obstacle I encounter pushes me to adapt and innovate, which is both challenging and rewarding.

Despite it all, I am committed to persevering. My passion for music drives me to carve out my unique space in this ever-evolving landscape, championing the transformative power of music against all odds.

Alright, so let's switch gears a bit and talk business. What should we know about your work?

My work reflects my journey and the depths of human experience. I specialize in composition, and I have a diverse portfolio that spans from orchestral and chamber music to theater scores and film music. I love the versatility of it all — it keeps me on my toes and allows me to explore different facets of storytelling through sound.

One project that I am particularly proud of is my original piano album, *Reveries on Ivories*. I recorded it at the stunning Fazioli Concert Hall in Italy, and it is a collection of eighteen pieces that delve into themes of introspection and healing. Each piece has its own beautiful melody and emotion, and I really aimed to evoke a sense of serenity and sincerity. Several singles are already available on platforms like Spotify and Apple Music, and I am excited for the full album release on 11th April 2025!

I have also ventured into opera with a work titled "Sleepless Moon." The opera is based on a beautiful love story set in Hong Kong, revolving around a Cantonese opera performer and an American Chinese investment banker who dreams of being an opera singer. This piece is a celebration of cultural exchange and harmony, which is so important in today's increasingly divided world. The *Sleepless Moon Medley* was premiered by the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra on 11th January 2025 in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, featuring renowned Cantonese opera singer Miss Alis Lin, operatic tenor Mr. Henry Ngan, Mr Eddie Tam, myself and four Chinese instrumentalists: Erhu, Guzheng, Sheng and

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More recently, I composed “Three Italian Love Poems by Carretti,” which are art songs inspired by a touching encounter with an elderly man I met at a concert in Siena, Italy. He shared poems he wrote in memory of his late wife, and I turned those into art songs. I had the honor of performing them at a Benefit Concert for the Power of Love Charity in January 2025, and the recording is now published on YouTube. The response has been incredibly moving!

I also scored the short film “Of Sound Mind,” released in December 2024, which was another enriching experience that expanded my repertoire.

At the heart of it all, what drives me is the joy of creation and the beauty of music. Whether I am improvising on a piano at home or collaborating with other artists, I believe each note I write tells a story. I hope my dedication not only enriches my life but also inspires those around me, showcasing the transformative power of music. Through my work, I invite people to experience the world through my eyes and feel the profound connections that music can create.

We’d be interested to hear your thoughts on luck and what role, if any, you feel it’s played for you?

Luck has definitely played a role in my journey, but I see it as a blend of hard work and serendipity. I truly believe that when you have a strong determination to pursue your goals, you can attract the kind of luck that opens doors you never knew existed.

For me, luck is not just about random chance; it is about being ready to seize opportunities when they arise and staying grateful and humble in those moments. I always embrace new experiences, and my passion for music has guided me to turn fortunate encounters into significant stepping stones toward my dreams.

I believe in the incredible potential that comes from believing in myself and following my heart. I have faced numerous obstacles, but I have also learned to embrace both the challenges and the unexpected joys that life brings. It is all part of composing my own narrative.

While I may not control every note in my life, I know I can tune myself to the music of opportunity. This perspective allows me to craft a life that is rich with meaning and inspiration, and I hope it resonates with others as well.

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Contact Info:

- Website: <https://lorachow.com>
- Instagram:
<https://instagram.com/@lorachow.music>
- Youtube:
<https://YouTube.com/@lorachowmusic>
- Soundcloud:
<https://www.soundcloud.com/lora-chow>
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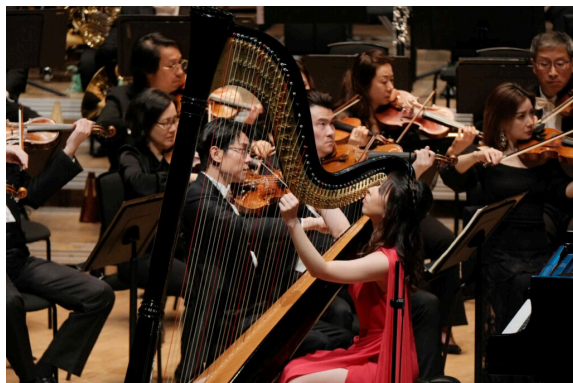




Reveries on Ivories
LORA CHOW
PLAYS LORA CHOW

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a gold sequined dress, is playing a harp. The background is a soft-focus field of pink flowers. The harp has the 'PRIMA CLASSIC' logo on it.

PRIMA CLASSIC

The Spotify logo is on the left, followed by a white waveform graphic on a dark red background.

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