

Autobiography of Alex Chen

15-year-old Alex Chen is a sophomore at Marquette High School in St. Louis, MO. Alex has been learning piano for 10 years and is currently a student of Zena Ilyashov. Alex has competed and won top prizes in many competitions. Alex's recent accomplishments include being selected as one of 12 semi-finalists at the West Virginia International Piano Competition and Festival in March 2020 (later canceled due to COVID-19), being the gold medal winner of St. Louis Young Artist Piano Competition Division II in 2019, the winner at the MTNA Junior Piano Competition state round in 2018, the winner of the 2018 Stars of Tomorrow Concerto Competition, the 1st prize winner of Young Artist I division at the 2018 Chicago International Music Competition, the gold medal winner of St. Louis Young Artist Piano Competition Division I in 2017, and the Artist of the Year, Best Tchaikovsky, and Best Beethoven Performance for Division III at the Great Composers Competition 2017-2018. Alex is a multi-year winner of the Missouri Music Teachers State Piano Competition.

In 2019, Alex was selected as a finalist to perform on NPR's "From the Top" radio show. His performance of Rigoletto Concert paraphrase (Verdi-Liszt) was aired on Kids on Keys Live Radio - WWFM Classical on July 6th, 2019. In 2018, Alex made his orchestral debut with the Belleville Philharmonic Orchestra in a performance of the Schumann Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 54 as the winner of the Stars of Tomorrow Concerto Competition.

In 2020, although many concerts and festivals were canceled due to COVID-19, Alex kept the spirit alive and remained active in the young pianist community. In April, Alex joined other young pianists to launch the H.O.P.E. (Harmonies of Pianists Everywhere) initiative. The goal of H.O.P.E. is to spread the joy of music to the community through collaborative projects. Alex serves as Vice President and HR Coordinator of H.O.P.E. He has led and participated in many H.O.P.E. projects including collaborative playing, webinars, the Beethoven's 250th Anniversary Sonata project, and directing their collaborative video series. In the same month, Alex joined the Back to Bach national association as the Missouri director. Alex has been actively working on recruiting young musicians from the local area to join the program, launching their first project in August of 2020.

Alex plays cello in his school orchestra and regularly performs with them at community events. In addition to his musical pursuits, Alex enjoys playing tennis, building model rockets, listening to musicals, and tutoring math.