

# cosmophony

Rachel Kiyo Iwaasa, piano  
Biography



Hailed in the press as a **"keyboard virtuoso"** (Georgia Straight) with the **"emotional intensity"** to take a piece **"from notes on a page to a stunning work of art"** (Victoria Times Colonist), pianist Rachel Kiyo Iwaasa has performed as soloist and chamber musician in Canada, the United States and Germany. Known for bold and innovative concerts, Rachel combines her warmth and curiosity to touch the hearts and minds of audiences, whether she is playing Beethoven and Schumann or Ligeti and Saariaho.

Rachel has appeared for Music TORONTO, Vancouver New Music, CONTACT contemporary music (Toronto), New Works Calgary, Groundswell New Music (Winnipeg), the Victoria Symphony, the Aventa Ensemble (Victoria), Music on Main, Redshift, the Western Front, the Little Chamber Music Series That Could and Vancouver Pro Musica. She has been broadcast on CBC Radio, and has shared the stage with such esteemed performers as Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Susan Naruki and Judith Forst. Rachel has a shameless passion for contemporary music, and has performed numerous premières, including pieces written especially for her by Rodney Sharman, Jeffrey Ryan, Jocelyn Morlock, Emily Doolittle, Alexander Pechenyuk, and many other Canadian composers. Rachel's debut solo CD, *Cosmophony*, piano music inspired by the cosmos, was released in June 2010 on Redshift Records. Praised by the Vancouver Sun as **"brilliant"** and **"unforgettable"**, *Cosmophony* features the Canadian premiere recording of Geroge Crumb's *Makrokosmos, Volume II* and no less than nine commissioned works by Canadian composers.

Rachel is one half of the flute/piano duo *Tiresias* with Mark McGregor. Their debut CD, *Delicate Fires*, was nominated for a 2008 Western Canadian Music Award. *Delicate Fires* was produced with the generous assistance of the Barbara Pentland fund, and features the first commercially released recordings of her *Sonata Fantasy* for solo piano and *Trance* for flute and piano. It also presents the premiere recordings of works commissioned by *Tiresias* from Canadian composers Rodney Sharman, Jennifer Butler, and Jocelyn Morlock. In 2010, *Tiresias* will release a second all-Canadian CD, *Trade Winds*, pairing the music of established composer Jean Coulthard with lesser-known and emerging composers Paul Douglas and Christopher Kovarik.

Rachel's major teachers include Jane Coop, Menahem Pressler, and Robin Wood. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of British Columbia, a Master of Music from Indiana University, and a Bachelor of Music from the University of Victoria, where she earned the Victoria Medal as the top graduating student in Fine Arts. She was also a two-time recipient of the prestigious Annual Grant from the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) for graduate studies at the Hochschule für Musik "Hanns Eisler" Berlin. Other awards include grants from the Canada Council, the BC Arts Council, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, and the Alberta Heritage Foundation. Rachel is currently on the faculty at UBC, and the Salina Cheng Music Academy. She is also currently editing new scholarly editions of Jean Coulthard's late solo piano works for Avondale Press.

Meet Rachel online at [www.iwaasa.com](http://www.iwaasa.com).