

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE PRESENTS  
The Five Star \* \* \* \* \* Event of the Summer

## Stilettoes in the Key of G

" A play within a concert... a concert within a play "

**When** Monday 20th July, 8 pm  
**Where** Memorial Hall, Marlborough College, Marlborough, Wilts. SN8 1PA  
**Category** Play / Concert / Exhibition  
**Tickets** £5 at the door  
**Other facts** **Stilettoes in the Key of G** premièred in Oxford in May and was awarded five stars by the Oxford Times. The show will move to London after the Marlborough performance.  
**Other dates** **Last chance** : Exhibition by the same title & artist runs May to 29th July

**Artists** BOBBY CHEN (piano) and PIA de RICHEMONT  
**Conceived & written by** PIA de RICHEMONT  
**Directed by** PETER CHAMPNESS



The pianist Bobby Chen's Hands @ Pia de Richemont

### 1. THE STORY

What happens when two artists from different fields - Music and Sculpture - find themselves face to face ? Can a Muse be refused ? Can a Muse be shared? ***Stilettoes in the Key of G*** recounts the happen-chance encounter between a pianist and a sculptor at a concert. The meeting provokes powerful feelings to emerge as - through the music - memories resurface, revealing the fragility and strength of each protagonist within their chosen calling.

### 2. THE CONCEPT

Award-winning artist Pia de Richemont and world-class concert pianist Bobby Chen have joined forces to push the boundaries of their respective fields, creating 'a *play within a concert... a concert within a play*'. Here, musical notes and the spoken word are inextricably entwined. Every chord struck and every word uttered supports and enhances the other as, together, they give birth to a story, offering a rare and startlingly honest glimpse into the inner workings of life as a musician and life as an artist.

### 3. THE BACKGROUND

Pia de Richemont wrote ***Stilettoes in the Key of G*** while attending a Creative Writing Course at the 2008 Marlborough College Summer School. Bobby Chen gave a recital

one evening and the following day Pia wrote a story. Her fellow class-mates and teacher encouraged her to have it published, but once home, Pia had another idea. She re-worked the text and, after consultation with Bobby, it was agreed that they perform ***Stiletto in the Key of G*** as a joint recital : '*a play within a concert... a concert within a play*'. The show opened as a run of public rehearsals in London, Oxford and later Paris. Each time, audiences from a cross-section of society were invited to comment on the performance, so that the show is the result of careful fine-tuning and audience response. BBC director Peter Champness happened to be at the second rehearsal, and by the end of the evening had become part of the team. Audiences have been consistently enthusiastic. Theatre-goers not in the habit of attending concerts say it is the first time they are listening to classical music and actually enjoying it, while melomanes are moved to tears by the pathos of the story.

#### **4. THE RESPONSE SO FAR**

**Awarded Five \*\*\*\*\* Stars by the Oxford Times.**

*"Whimsical, sensual, witty, intriguing... **Stiletto in the Key of G** is all of these things, and the result is a powerful, gripping and extraordinary drama" - "Intoxicating" - "Incredibly romantic" - "An intimate but powerful performance" - "An unexpected pleasure, enormously satisfying" - "Fabulous, sexy and full of energy" - "Life affirming and joyous" - "Take someone you fancy ! " - "So moving that I cried" - "A brilliant musician" - "One doesn't want it to finish."*

#### **5. THE TEAM**

**Bobby Chen** (Piano)

Described by International Piano Magazine as "*an armour-clad player of complete technique, a thinking musician, a natural Romantic* ", Bobby burst on the scene in 1996 playing a British tour with Lord Menuhin and the Warsaw Sinfonia, and a recital at the Royal Festival Hall as part of the South Bank Prokofiev Festival. He has since recorded five discs and performed with conductors Matthias Bamert, Maximiliano Valdes, Lan Shui, Sir Neville Marriner, and orchestras such as the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, London Sinfonietta, Singapore Symphony Orchestra and Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra. Tours have led to appearances at the Bridgewater Hall, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Purcell Room, Wigmore Hall and in Asia, Australia, the USA and Europe. Bobby is currently recording two new labels (with SOMM Recordings and Toccata Classics). His solo piano disc featuring Prokofiev's piano works and including the Romeo and Juliet Suite for piano was launched in June.  
[www.bobbychen.org](http://www.bobbychen.org)

**Pia de Richemont** (Writer and Performer)

An Oxford graduate, Pia's unbounded creativity and talent encompass domains as varied as photography (Magnum Photos), cinema (Columbia Pictures), advertising, publishing, postulancy with the Carmelites, humanitarian work with *Médecins sans Frontières*, writing, painting and sculpture. In New York, she was dubbed "*the Dante of sculpture... for she tackles death and love, pain and ecstasy, with the same amazing depth of insight, as though she herself had been to Hell and Heaven, and back*" (J.Weller). Within the first year of training, she won a place on the prestigious National Sculpture Society of America, year 2000, travelling exhibition. David Sylvester was a regular visitor to her studio and among those who actively encouraged Pia to pursue both her art and writing (she had written several short stories). The artist has held exhibitions and won awards and commissions in Paris, London, Oxford, New York, Sydney and at the European Heritage Days. ***Stiletto in the Key of G*** showcases her wit, spirituality and the crevasses of the heart that are her Muses. Pia constantly uses her vast range of experience in innovative ways, breaking boundaries and creating links between different fields. It was at her initiative that this show came into being. Future plans include a production which aims to blend drama with sport. ***Stiletto in the Key of G : the Exhibition***, featuring Pia's sculpture and other work inspired by music, is on show at St Hilda's College, Oxford, until July 29. Full details at [www.piaderichemont.com](http://www.piaderichemont.com) .

## **6. RELATED EVENT : ART EXHIBITION**

The photo above, entitled *The Pianist's Hands*, is part of *Stiletto in the Key of G* : THE EXHIBITION, currently on show at the Jacqueline du Pré Building, St Hilda's College, Cowley Place, Oxford. Open 10am - 4pm. Ends 29th July. FREE EVENT

The play is complemented by an exhibition featuring over fifty works by Pia de Richemont inspired by music, including her strikingly sensuous and witty *Musical Agora* sculptures, lyrical paintings from her *Sounds of Silence* series and photos of the pianist Bobby Chen's hands. Further details and images on [www.piaderichemont.com](http://www.piaderichemont.com).

## **7. PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME : Stiletto in the Key of G, Mon 20th July**

### **ACT 1**

#### **SCENE 1**

*Sandakan, Malaysia*

HAYDN                      *SONATA IN C MAJ, XVI, ALLEGRO*  
CHOPIN                     *BALLADE No.2 Op.38 IN F MAJOR*

#### **SCENE 2**

*A Midsummer evening. A concert-hall, deep in the English countryside*

STRAVINSKY                *PETROUCHKA ( DANSE RUSSE )*  
SCHUBERT                 *IMPROMPTU IN G FLAT MAJOR, Op.90, No.3*

#### **SCENE 3**

PIAZZOLLA                 *LIBERTANGO*  
PROKOVIEV                *ROMEO AND JULIET ( VI )*

#### **SCENE 4**

LISZT                        *THE LEGEND OF ST FRANCIS AND THE BIRDS*

### **INTERMISSION**

### **ACT 2**

#### **SCENE 5**

MUSSORGSKY              *PICTURES FROM AN EXHIBITION, 16*

#### **SCENE 6**

CHOPIN                     *Op. 10, No.12*

#### **SCENE 7**

CHOPIN                     *NOCTURNES Op. 9, No.2*

#### **SCENE 8**

*Sandakan, Malaysia — The Opera House, Paris*

LISZT                        *LIEBESTRAUM*  
RACHMANINOV             *PRELUDE IN G MAJOR Op. 32, No.5*

#### **EPILOGUE**

STEPHEN GOSS            *A specially commissioned adaptation*

## **8. PRESS CONTACTS**

For quality JPEGs, images of the performers or interview opportunities, please contact : Tess Tracy – [stiletto@orange.fr](mailto:stiletto@orange.fr) / tel. 00 336 771 471 08