

Born in 1974, JONATHAN CHEN's work includes composition, improvisation, and installation. His work has been performed or installed in cities in the U.S., Europe and China. As a violinist and/or electronicist he has performed as improviser at highly visible venues and festivals in the U.S. and internationally and has collaborated with many notable artists.

Chen's music career began as an undergrad where he played classical violin in paying orchestras while working on his studies. During those years he was equally at home with electronics, spending many hours creating sound works in recording studios. Chen moved to Chicago in 1997 for graduate studies in violin performance at Northwestern University, Evanston, IL where he completed the 2 year masters program with emphasis on chamber music, small ensemble and orchestral works. His interest in contemporary music grew and he began working closely with other musicians in the Chicago experimental and improvised music scenes.

From 1999 through 2003, not satisfied creatively with the role of interpreter, Chen's work shifted to involve composition, improvisation, and installation. With those areas in mind, he decided he wanted to study with Alvin Lucier and Anthony Braxton, so in 2004 he moved from Chicago to Middletown, CT to enter the masters program in music composition at Wesleyan University on a full ride. While there, he was also fortunate enough to be able to work with Ron Kuivila, completing his degree in 2006 and subsequently moving to Germany.

In 2007, he completed a one-year fellowship in Karlsruhe, Germany on a Baden-Württemberg Stipendium where he took courses in media arts and philosophy at the Hochschule für Gestaltung. He is currently a fully funded PhD Candidate in Electronic Arts at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, where his committee includes Curtis Bahn, Michael Century, Pauline Oliveros, and Igor Vamos.

Chen's work can be heard on Asian Improv, Interval, and Striking Mechanism among others.