

# Charisse Baldoria, pianist

[CharisseBaldoria.com](http://CharisseBaldoria.com)  
[cbaldori@bloomu.edu](mailto:cbaldori@bloomu.edu)

Philippine-born pianist, composer, and educator **Charisse Baldoria** draws upon Western pianism, her Southeast Asian and Hispanic heritage, and various art forms and fields in her work. Prizewinner of international piano competitions, she has performed as a soloist on five continents and established a career as a musician with multidisciplinary interests. She has collaborated with dancers, visual artists, performance artists, and Hindustani classical performers, performs her own compositions, and explores the art of improvisation.

Her album ***Gamelan on Piano*** features music inspired by Southeast Asian gong chimes, including world premiere recordings of Philippine National Artist Ramón Pagayon Santos's *Gong-An* suite, and compositions by Lou Harrison, Colin McPhee, Gareth Farr, and Claude Debussy. ***Evocación*** showcases music influenced by flamenco and tango, with works by Falla, Albéniz, Piazzolla, Scarlatti, and Filipino composer Francisco Buencamino. Her recently recorded all-Godowsky album features the complete *Java Suite* inspired by pianist-composer Leopold Godowsky's travels to the island of Java in 1923, as well as other pieces inspired by non-Western cultures. Recordings of her song cycles ***Alchemy*** and ***The Kiss***, based on the poems of Denise Levertov and Sara Teasdale, are also being prepared for release.

In line with her interest in Hispanic cultures, she gave a solo recital at the International Festival of Spanish Keyboard Music (FIMTE) in Spain, a series of concerts sponsored by Spain's Ministry of Culture and the Instituto Cervantes, and concerts in Argentina. Awarded a grant by the Cuban Research Institute, Charisse did research at Florida International University's Díaz Ayala Collection, the world's most comprehensive Cuban music collection. Her musical explorations have also taken her to Rio de Janeiro, Havana, Java, and Bali.

She was a prizewinner at the San Antonio International Piano Competition, semifinalist at the Sydney International and Hilton Head Island International piano competitions, first prize winner of the Society for Musical Arts competition, two-time winner of the University of Michigan concerto competition, and first prize winner of several competitions in the Philippines.

Gifted with perfect pitch, Charisse taught herself to play the piano at age four. She begged her parents to buy a piano, and when it was delivered, she immediately sat down and learned how to play, improvising and learning complete songs on her own. She later studied with Philippine piano pedagogue Nita Abrogar Quinto, winning numerous competitions since she was eight.

Recent and current composition projects draw upon poetry as well as elements of improvisation, Impressionism, modern harmonies, jazz, and Latin music. A professional composer-arranger in the Philippines for many years, Charisse wrote the music for TV and radio ads of large corporations and government agencies, such as Philippine Airlines, PLDT telecommunications, the Landbank of the Philippines, the Department of Energy, and others. While at the University of Michigan, she studied composition with Erik Santos and Susan Botti, and electronic music composition with Evan Chambers. Her piece *Throb*, which utilized audio-converted pulsar beats arranged into a Philippine *singkil* rhythm with a techno vibe, was performed at the Electronic Music Microfestival in Ann Arbor.

She studied piano with Logan Skelton at the University of Michigan where she did her master's as a Fulbright scholar and doctorate under full university scholarship. One of her awards was the Barbour Scholarship for Asian women "of the highest academic and professional caliber." She is currently Associate Professor of Piano at Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania where she also teaches at the Honors College.

She loves photography, literature, travel, kayaking, and gardening. She has gone hang-gliding in Rio, skydiving in Pennsylvania, scuba-diving in the Tubbataha reefs, and enjoys fine cuisine and exotic dishes.

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Medium (400 words):

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Short (250 words):

Pianist-composer **Charisse Baldoria** draws upon Western pianism, her Southeast Asian and Hispanic heritage, and various art forms in her work. Prizewinner of international piano competitions, she has performed on five continents and established a career as a musician with multidisciplinary interests. She has collaborated with dancers, visual artists, performance artists, and Hindustani classical performers, performs her own compositions, and explores the art of improvisation.

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