Controlling THE STRINGS

A former child prodigy, violinist Qian Zhou now chairs a new international competition here that could change the lives of young musicians. AKSHITA NANDA reports.

C4
THE RELUCTANT VIOLINIST

As a child, Qian Zhou wanted to be a dancer, but her parents pushed her to study the violin.

Qian Zhou went on to win prestigious competitions and is head of strings at the Yong Siew Thok Conservatory today.

Qian Zhou, at age 13 (right). After winning the 2007 Singapore International Violin Competition.

My life so far

Qian Zhou, at age 10 (left).

A new student at the Poh Shun Yee Conservatory in the mid-20th century, Chinese-born violinist Qian Zhou planned to become a dancer, not a violinist.

"All that changed when she swept every major prize at the well-recognized Marguerite Long-Jacques Thibaud Competition in Paris in 1997, a feat her father said she never dreamed of, said her father. Qian Zhou won at the competition, which is open to violinists under the age of 28, with no exceptions. She has since taught at music schools in Europe and Asia.

Qian Zhou is now the director of the Yong Siew Thok Conservatory in Singapore, which she founded in 2007. She is also the artistic director of the Singapore International Violin Competition, which she founded in 2007.

Born in the US to a Chinese family, Qian Zhou was raised in Singapore and is fluent in English, Chinese, and Spanish. She is married to a Swiss businessman and they have two children.

Qian Zhou is a former student of Yehudi Menuhin, a famous violinist, and is currently a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles. She has performed at major venues around the world, including the Carnegie Hall in New York and the Royal Festival Hall in London.

Qian Zhou is not only a talented violinist, but also a successful entrepreneur. She founded the Yong Siew Thok Conservatory in 2007, which has produced many successful musicians, including her own daughter, who is now a student at the conservatory.

Qian Zhou is also a successful composer, having written several pieces for orchestra and chamber music. She has also written several books on music education and performance, and her work has been translated into several languages.

Qian Zhou is a tireless advocate for music education, and has worked to establish music schools and conservatories in China and other countries. She is a member of the World Economic Forum's Young Global Leaders Program, and has been awarded several honors and prizes for her contributions to music.