

Listen to his music ...

By Zhang Kun (China Daily)

Shanghai

The name David Garrett may not ring a bell for many in China, but when he starts playing He's a Pirate, it suddenly dawns on listeners that he is the one who wrote the music for the Johnny Depp blockbuster Pirates of the Caribbean.

"David is a musical genius, a fashion icon, a public idol," says He Qian from Shanghai Shining On Culture, the company who is sponsoring his tour. "He's a super artiste and the only person to have topped both the classical charts and Billboard pop lists at the same time."

Garrett will debut in China at the Shanghai Concert Hall on Feb 27.

"I hope I can bring some different music to Chinese audiences and pass on some happiness through music," Garrett says in an e-mail interview.

"It is said that Chinese audiences are extremely enthusiastic. We hope the concert may trigger special excitement."

Garrett graduated from The Julliard School in New York in 2004, where he studied under maestro violinist Itzhak Perlman.

As a teenager, Garrett had already played with the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Zubin Mehta at the 50th anniversary of India's independence, with the Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester in Berlin, and at Expo 2000 in Hannover.

He was recognized by the Guinness World Records as the world's fastest violinist, with his presentation of The Flight of the Bumble-Bee by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.

A big fan of rock music as well as classical music, Garrett did his part to interest young people in classical music. He released the album Rock Symphonies in 2010, which contained arrangements and compositions of rock and pop music hits, such as a medley of Michael Jackson's Smooth Criminal.

That song will be on the play list when he performs in Shanghai, as well as his signature He's a Pirate commissioned for the film. He will be accompanied by keyboard, guitar and drums.

"Rock music and classical music, both with powerful rhythms and sense of accuracy, are closely related to each other," Garrett says. "For me, the two are not that distinct.

"Each composition involves a different interpretation. This is also the case with popular music and rock music. I believe the rock symphony is absolutely a brand-new trial in the circle of music, with a style of its own."

The concert program will also include classical sonatas and technically challenging pieces such as The Flight of the Bumble Bee.

"Try to cross the boundaries, and let your audience appreciate every aspect of wonder. This is analogous to creating a bridge between different kinds of music. Only in this way can you win new audience," Garrett says.

Garrett was born in Aachen, Germany, to an American ballet dancer mother and a German lawyer father. He started to play in public at the age of 7. He used to study at the Royal College of Music in London, but left after the first semester.

"Some courses offered by the school didn't accord with my growth in music. I want to tell children that learning is actually a very wonderful process ... We should enjoy music, even if the process is a bit painful and rigid. Don't freak out because of your parents. Be sure not to lose your interest - you know that's where the music lies."

You may contact the writer at zhangkun@chinadaily.com.cn.

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IF YOU GO

David Garrett "Rock Symphonies" concert
7:30 pm, Feb 27
Shanghai Concert Hall,
523 Yan'an E. Road, near Jinling Road
021-6386-2836