

Vienna Teng – Bio

Vienna Teng [real name Cynthia Shih] is a singer/songwriter/pianist who was born, circa 1978, and raised in California's Silicon Valley. Her parents are Taiwanese immigrants. At the age of five she asked her parents if she could take classical piano lessons and a year later wrote her first melody, "Church Song." Teng composed her first song with lyrics when aged thirteen. The private piano lessons continued until Teng graduated from high school. In high school, and later in college, she was a member of numerous choral groups. Teng grew up in a household where she regularly heard recordings in her parents' collection including works by Paul Simon, Peter Paul & Mary, Don McLean and Elton John. Having initially enrolled at Stanford as a pre-med major, two years later she switched to Computer Science. Concurrently, college acquaintances introduced Vienna to the music of Tori Amos, Sarah McLachlan and the Indigo Girls.

In 2000 she graduated from Stanford University with a degree in Computer Science and immediately went to work as a Java software engineer for Cisco Systems. While at Stanford, Teng would often perform impromptu concerts on the dorm piano. Teng recorded "**Waking Hour**," with Eric Miller as part of his degree course, while still attending Stanford, and self-released the recording in May 2001. The pair had begun recording Teng's songs in the spring of 1998, and soon afterwards – due to student demand - Vienna self-released a limited edition CD of her demos. Post Stanford, during the period 2000/2001 Teng took voice lessons. In the summer of 2002, "**Waking Hour**" was re-released by the Seattle based independent Virt Records, after label president Michael Tarlowe attended one of her shows. In a matter of months she had appeared on NPR's Weekend Edition and she made her television debut on the David Letterman show in January 2003. The song "The Tower" was used in the series "Ed."

Teng's sophomore effort "**Warm Strangers**" was recorded in Nashville, Tennessee and produced by True Tone recording studio owner David Henry [R.E.M., Cowboy Junkies, Josh Rouse]. Where the songs on "**Waking Hour**" were autobiographical, those on "**Warm Strangers**" were based on fiction. "**Warm Strangers**" was released on February 2004, and Vienna went on to appear on the CBS Early Show, and again on NPR Weekend Edition. "**Warm Strangers**" registered on three Billboard sponsored album charts and Teng opened for Joan Baez, Patty Griffin and The Indigo Girls. "**Warm Strangers**" was issued in Europe by Zoe/Rounder Europe in the fall of 2005.

Teng has quoted her current music influences as being an amalgam of "*Afro-Cuban music, jangly guitar rock, madrigals, modern jazz and epic movie soundtracks.*"

Discography : "**Waking Hour**" [2002] ; "**Warm Strangers**" [2004] :

Arthur Wood

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