

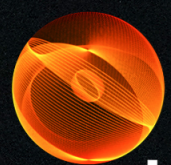
LEE YAN LIANG

SENIOR RECITAL

24 April 2023, 6.10pm @ YST Concert Hall

Nicholas Loh, Pianist

L. Sinigaglia | R. Strauss | R. Bissill



YST

Yong Siew Toh
Conservatory
of Music

About the Performer

Lee Yan Liang first encountered the horn at the age of 13, in his school Concert band as part of the Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) and began his studies at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music in 2019 with Han Chang Chou, Jamie Hersch and Hoang Van Hoc. Being an avid and passionate musician since his secondary school days, he has performed with groups such as The Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchestra of the Music Makers, Metropolitan Festival Orchestra and Asian Cultural Symphony Orchestra. He was selected as a finalist in the Singapore Brass Festival in 2019 and has participated in masterclasses led by Hoang Van Hoc, Ben Jacks, William VerMeulen, Andrej Žust and Christian Friedrich Dallmann. During his free time, Yan Liang enjoys spending time with his family, meeting up with friends over beer and traveling around the region in search of scrumptious food and delicacies.

Programme Notes

Leone Sinigaglia - 2 Stücke, Op. 28

Leone Sinigaglia (1868 – 1944) was an Italian composer and mountaineer. A lover of literature and mountaineering from an early age, the young Sinigaglia spent many holidays in or near Cavoretto, just outside the city, a place that would provide him with much inspiration. He was a close friend of Antonín Dvořák and learnt from him the ability to apply classical techniques to the arrangement of popular songs.

The first movement, titled 'Lied' begins with a slow, lyrical and beautiful aria-like melody which is interchanged between the horn and piano. The next theme is introduced by the piano which is more animated and sounds a little frantic. The opening theme returns as a reprise and the movement ends with a beautiful coda. The second movement, titled 'Humoreske' is very scherzo-like and portrays a vastly different mood from the first movement. The theme is introduced by the horn and has a very quasi-hunting horn character. The middle section is similar to a waltz, very lyrical just like the first movement of the piece. The beginning theme is repeated once again and the piece ends off with a rousing finish.

As a composer born in the same era as some of the great Romantic composers such as Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Sinigaglia's works are relatively less well-known to the public. This piece is not performed frequently in the horn repertoire, however I do believe it is a hidden gem that should be heard and recognized by more people. Through performing this lovely piece, I hope to be able to showcase the elegant and lyrical side of horn playing as well as its original hunting horn nature.

Richard Strauss - Horn Concerto No. 2 in E-Flat major, TrV 283

Richard Strauss (1864 – 1949) was a German composer, conductor, pianist, and violinist. He was considered a leading composer of the late Romantic and early modern eras. His father, Franz Strauss was a well-known horn player and composer, hence Strauss was heavily influenced by his father's horn playing during his early days and wrote many prominent horn parts in his works as a result. The second horn concerto was dedicated to his father, and was written in 1942, nearing the end of his career. The piece was of great significance to R. Strauss as it symbolizes his impressions of his father, his personality as well as his fond memories for him. By the time he completed this work, his compositional abilities had matured significantly and there is a reminiscence to his earlier works. Some of the themes and motifs employed in the 1st and 3rd movements bear a close resemblance to his famous tone poems such as Ein Heldenleben and Till Eulenspiegel respectively. One could say listening to this concerto is like revisiting his older pieces.

The first movement begins with a hunting horn call by the solo horn, but quickly delegates into a sweet pastoral tune with murmuring accompaniment from the strings. It is written in a very chamber-like orchestration and features several dialogues between the solo horn and woodwinds. The second movement is a very tranquil and beautiful lullaby, which is introduced by the woodwinds and later answered by the horn. The rondo finale alternates between rustic, galloping hunting calls from the horn at the beginning, and longer sweeping lines. The ending section of the finale, where the solo horn comes in with the tutti horns resembles Beethoven's Eroica symphony.

This piece is considered a staple in the horn repertoire and is used as a competition piece in the final round of the prestigious annual ARD competition (every 4 years for horn category), as it showcases not only the performer's technical capabilities but also musicality. Through performing this incredible work, I hope to be able to display the heroic nature and also the expressive side of horn playing.

Richard Bissill - Song of a New World

Richard Bissill is currently a professor at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. Both a horn player and pianist, Bissill has performed with the London Brass, London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House. He has also collaborated with leading jazz artists such as Quincy Jones, Lalo Schifrin, Wynton Marsalis, Michel Legrand and many others. In addition, he is a composer and arranger, and is the author of 'Good Brass Guide' for horn.

This piece is written for his friend, Sarah Willis, a member of the Berlin Philharmonic horn section. She is an advocate for many things but is most well-known for being a fabulous low

horn player. The piece has several elements of Jazz and Blues and begins with the horn playing a cadenza and the opening theme of the piece. Bissill wrote many acrobatic leaps and jumps for Sarah to showcase the virtuosity of low horn playing, as such this piece pushes the limits and boundaries of what a low horn player can do. It is a huge pleasure to perform this challenging, yet fun and wonderful work.