



JUNIOR RECITAL

FAURE Violin Sonata

No. 1 in A Major, Op. 13

Neo Xuan Ling, Elicia
with Kerim Vergazov

25 Nov 2020 4:15PM | *Join us on Livestream*

25 November | Wednesday

Neo Xuan Ling Elicia

Violin Recital

Kerim Vergazov, *piano*

PROGRAMME

GABRIEL FAURÉ
Sonata No.1 in A Major, Op. 13
I. Allegro molto
II. Andante
III. Allegro vivo
IV. Allegro quasi presto

About The Performer

Singaporean violinist **Elicia Neo** started learning the violin when she was five, and pursued Violin Performance in the School of the Arts, Singapore. She has studied with SSO musicians such as Cindy Lee and Edward Tan. She is currently majoring in the newly-established Music, Collaboration & Production, as well as Violin Performance at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, under the tutelage of Ng Yu-Ying from the T'ang Quartet and Assoc Prof Chan Tze Law.

Programme Notes

Gabriel Fauré

Violin Sonata No. 1 in A Major, Op. 13

I. Allegro molto

II. Andante

III. Allegro vivo

IV. Allegro quasi presto

Prior to its premiere, Gabriel Fauré, then known only as choirmaster and teacher, was only able to write music during his summer vacations after term break. Even then, many of his compositions, particularly his *mélodies* or French art songs were sold to publishers for only a few francs a piece. He was hardly making it as a composer. When he first wrote the Violin Sonata in A Major, many a Parisian publisher hesitated to print it, “no doubt unsettled by its then radical combination of classical and romantic elements and bold shifts between chromatic and modal harmonies”. However, Gabriel Fauré’s first Violin Sonata became one of the greatest milestones to his success – catapulting him into fame after its successful premiere in 1877 in a Société Nationale de Musique (National Society of Music) concert. From there, he never looked back.

Fauré is known by many for his ability to weave beautiful harmonies and melodies around a deceptively tranquil, but turbulent undercurrent. The first movement, *allegro molto*, is no exception. It opens with a grand introduction on the piano, in which everything that encompasses the first movement is right there, in the main theme. A storm brews. The waves rise up against the shore – and your shoes overflow with pearls. The violin seeps in, a fleeting cry above the foaming waves. Instances of broken octaves were harshly injected throughout the Neo 2 movement, exchanged between piano and violin. The tension intensifies, abrupt mood switches and transforms between a dreamy purgatory and agitating restlessness. It builds up to a boiling point, a euphoric, sonorous recapitulation of the main theme, in which the violin and piano play in tandem.

In Andante, a barcarolle awaits you. Imagine a gondola, floating on still waters, pushing sluggishly with each stroke of the oar. The short-long pulse incites calm, lethargy, a lazy sort of crawling. Yet something starts to stir, awaken. The boat moves, veers, and finds itself swept into a simmer, long-short introduced, both at odds. Pushing back, and pushing forth. A warm gasps, a forward feel of hands, you reach for...?

A scherzo! knocks you off center. In Allegro vivo, syncopation is thy name! Dotted with sempre leggerissimo, the third movement explores humor and surprise, eighth notes springing between the piano and violin and the piano yet again! The most sprightly thing being the accented upbeat, jaunting you to the side every single time.

We reach full circle with Andante quasi presto, bringing with it a yearning and longing not unlike the very beginning. What is the world below the brine? Dominated by brimming, overarching waves, and oscillating currents, the dialogue between the violin and piano becomes more prominent than ever. The coda reveals the violin and piano at different ends, the violin suspended in leggierissimo at the foam of the tide, the piano breathing sempre dolce from the deep calm of the ocean – yet they tunnel to meet in the sounding sea. And what a meet it was indeed, crashing into a triumphant end!

Programme notes by Neo Xuan Ling Elicia.