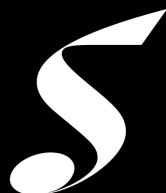


2021

*A concert curated, performed and produced
by the YST class of 2021*

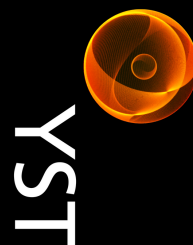
Venue Supported by:

SINGAPORE
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA



Presented by:

Yong Siew Toh
Conservatory
of Music





UNMASK

is a live concert exploring the journeys of graduating YST music students in the *unmasking* of interpersonal, musical and personal revelations over four years.

Driven by the narratives and experiences from students in videos, vlogs and interviews, UNMASK will shed light on their struggles, anxieties, successes, and experiences behind their music.

Join us as we share our lives and stories through music and art.



The journey to pursuing music is far from a comfortable one. For some, it took a lot of sacrifice - be it time away from loved ones, time devoted to their instrument, time away from doing other things they love...

For others, the difficulty comes in deciding if music is sustainable, having to juggle the pressures of life with the pursuit of their passion.

Beginning our studies in YST, many of us were unsure what to expect, and most of us were indeed taken on a wild ride over the next four years.

Through the highs and the lows, the good and the ugly, one thing for sure is that life came a full circle - with the end of our journey steeped in comparable uncertainty as the beginning.

While the recent pandemic leaves many open-ended questions left to be answered in our final year of studies, it also gives us the time and space needed to reflect on our four-year undergraduate journey and see for ourselves how far we have come since the very beginning.

I. Astor Piazzolla - Suite from "Maria de Buenos Aires" (Arranged by Steven Verhelst)

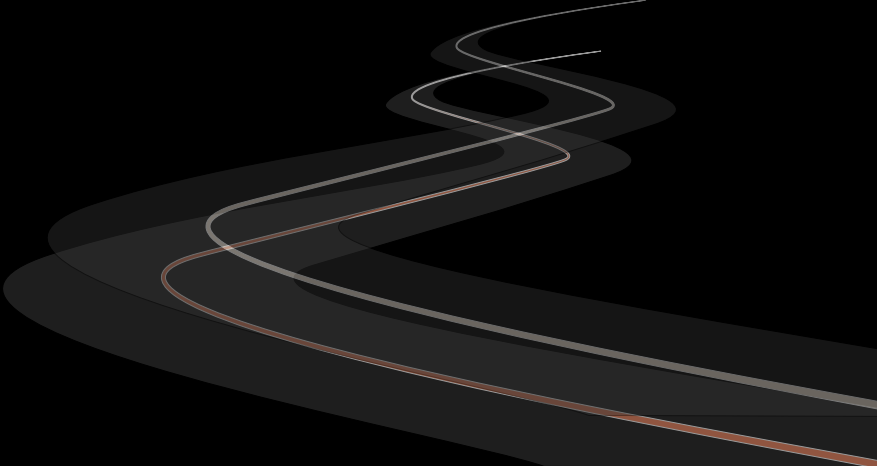
The captivating nuevo tango idiom of Piazzolla really shines through in this piece. Originally a tango opera (or as Piazzolla himself termed it, an "operita"), Maria De Buenos Aires showcases tremendous juxtaposition - as the exhilarating tangos and milongas come together with baroque-like fugal passages and jazzy tunes simultaneously.



II. Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky - Souvenir de Florence

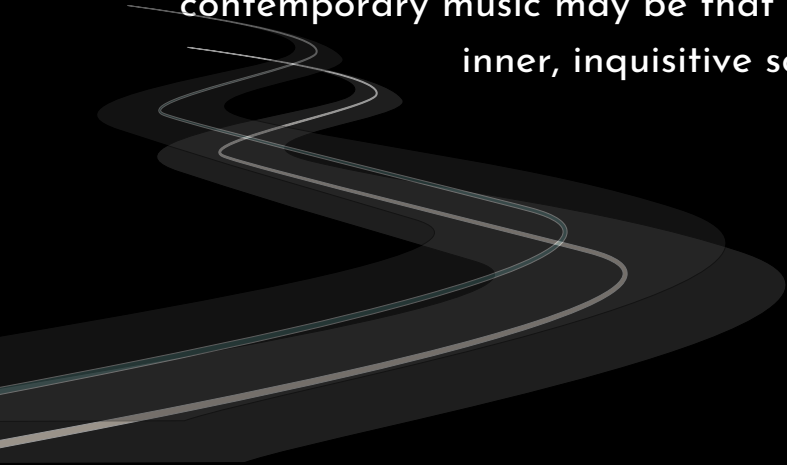
Having adored the city of Florence throughout his lifetime, Tchaikovsky paid tribute to the enchanting town in his sextet Souvenir de Florence. This energetic piece is deeply steeped in the late romantic harmonic idiom, yet the main theme has a rather classical slant which is uncharacteristic of Tchaikovsky. This daring piece features a wide combination of inspirations which can be heard as the piece unravels - a work that showcases the immense versatility of the maestro himself.

As we venture further into our individual pathways, we all soon come to stumble upon musical landscapes and environments that are rather unfamiliar...



It is important to reconcile the fact that the world of music is vast and never-ending. Whether it be through the curriculum presented to us, or the desire to explore various performance options, music students are constantly presented with a wide range of exciting possibilities.

Embracing this diversity and riding on the winds of change are important to our growth as musicians. These opportunities for growth present themselves in many forms:



For some, it could be the opportunity to perform with different musicians and instruments. For others however, the dimension of contemporary music may be that spark of peculiarity that drives the inner, inquisitive soul of the musician.



III. Johannes Brahms - Piano Trio No. 1 in B major, Op. 8

Forging friendships will be integral in intensifying the joy of the musical journey. This is evident in our piano trio group - friends who seamlessly meld together the hard work and the jubilation of music-making.

The music of Johannes Brahms is frequently sought-after till this day - and even more so for this chamber piece. The mystical and expressive *Adagio* is perhaps the most emotionally compelling of all the movements. It is certainly the most peculiar, with its multitude of passing lines suggesting an intricate dialogue across the 3 musicians. The result - soulful poetry at its finest.

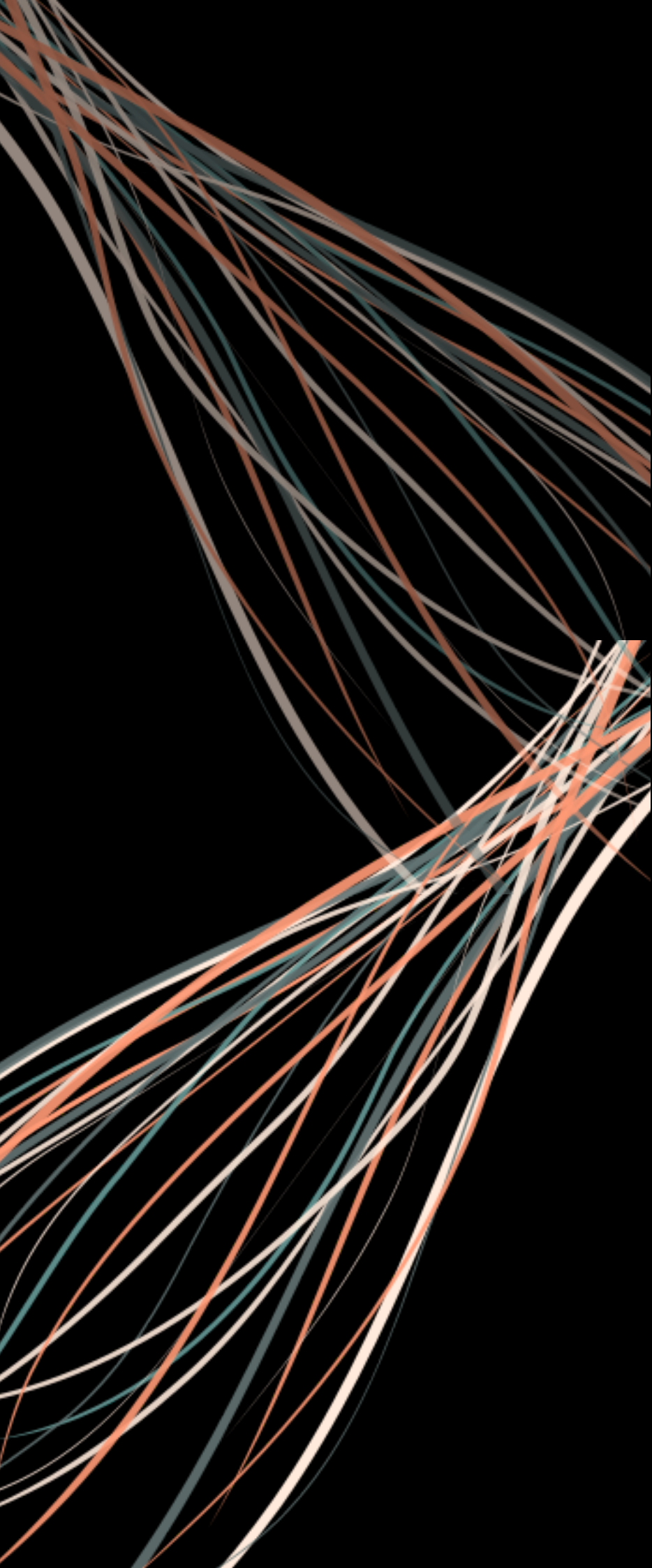
It could be largely coincidental, - but to pick a piece written by Brahms truly reflects the dynamics of this particular group. Each soloist with their own emotional voice, yet juxtaposed with a willingness to be vulnerable with each other creates an inevitable trust that transcends the stage - a trust that ultimately translates to friendship.

IV. Mily Balakirev - *Islamey*: Oriental Fantasy, Op. 18

"It has been said that it was Balakirev, even more than Glinka, who set the course for Russian orchestral music and lyrical song during the second half of the 19th century."

Islamey is a piece for solo piano that is so technically demanding that even the great virtuoso Alexander Scriabin sustained serious injuries to his right hand while practicing it. Balakirev himself described *Islamey* to be unplayable, with other famous figures such as Maurice Ravel having a desire to write a piece that would surpass Balakirev's in terms of difficulty.



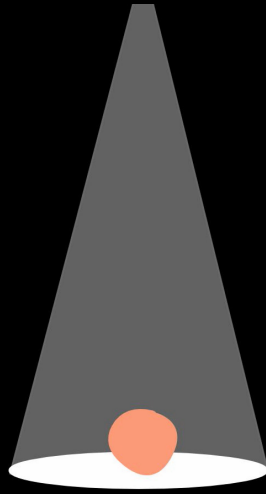


As musicians, our personal journeys encompass never-ending searches, creations and evolutions of *identities*.

Through exposure to different musical styles and genres, fresh colours and textures are constantly being introduced to the musician, encouraging an intrinsic desire for adventure and exploration.

We see these unique identities gradually interact with each other within the musical landscape - often through soloistic, chamber, ensemble, and even orchestral pieces.

From the brave contemporary innovators to the anchoring guardians of music tradition, diversity between and among various musicians never ceases.



V. Garth Knox - Up, down, sideways, round

Up, down, sideways, round, is one of the eight pieces in the *Viola Space* series written by Garth Knox. This series of concert etudes are designed to explore contemporary viola techniques, with this particular one adventuring into the usage of the bow through dimensions which are unusual for standard classical music playing.

While the general audience view contemporary music as "unnecessarily technical" or "unpleasant to the ear"; for the performer, beauty is found between these trials.

VI. Orlando Gibbons - Almighty Everlasting God

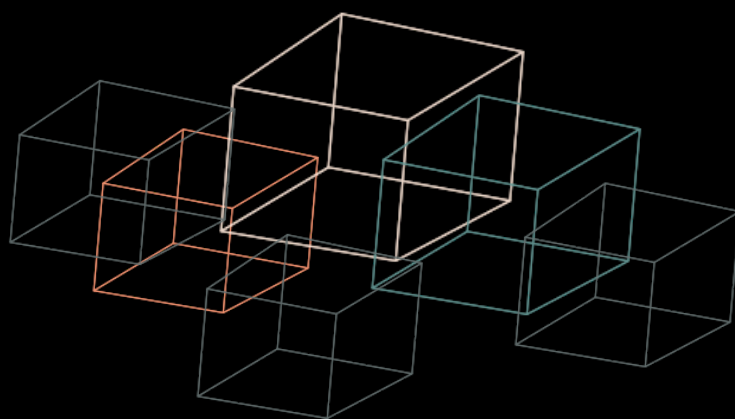
Orlando Gibbons was a composer of note in between the time of William Byrd and Henry Purcell. His compositional style represents the culmination of the English Renaissance school.

The elegant anthem, *Almighty and Everlasting God* showcases the motivic intricacies, expansive phrasing and subtle word painting associated with the English style of Madrigal/Anthem writing. The interplay between voices is refined, conjuring an overall atmosphere that is both reverent, and soothing. The rich cascading figures of the opening portray the power and mercy of God. This gives way to more urgent gestures, which beseech the Lord for protection, amid trials and tribulation. The ending is serene, as the text reemphasises God's providence.

VI. Felix Mendelssohn - Im Grünen

Perhaps best known for his piano and string writing, and musicological work, Felix Mendelssohn was also a prolific composer of vocal music. The combination of classic structural sensibilities with romantic sentiments often gives his compositions a refreshing lightness.

This is amply seen in Im Grünen from Sechs Lieder, Op. 59. This lilting ditty presents the vitality of nature, and beckons one to experience its restorativeness.



VI. Alexander L'Estrange - Lighten Our Darkness

Alexander L'Estrange is a British composer, arranger, multi-instrumentalist and choral animateur of international acclaim. A Master of Arts music graduate of Oxford University, he has been dubbed "the added 9th of choral music," a nod to his consummate fusion of the British choral tradition with jazz.

Lighten Our Darkness is a text sung at choral evensong, and comes from the Book of Common Prayer. This intimate setting is uplifting and peaceful, and is filled with faith and hope. The text setting is straightforward, the adroit shifting of meters providing a spoken quality to the text. Its traditional hymn like structure is enriched by deft harmonies, displaying sensitive dissonances, which underpin the graceful soprano melody.



Im Grünen Translation

Im Grün erwacht der frische Mut,
wenn blau der Himmel blickt.
Im Grünen da geht alles gut,
was je das Herz bedrückt.

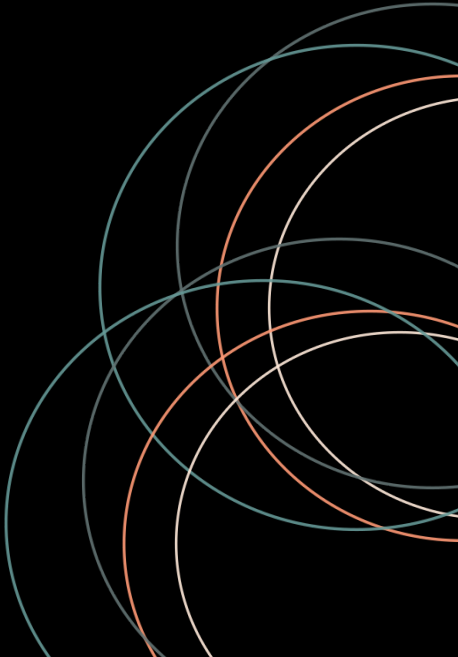
Was suchst' der Mauern engen Raum,
du thöricht Menschenkind?
Komm, fühl hier unter'm Grünen Baum,
wie süß die Lüfte sind.

Wie holde Kindlein spielt um dich
ihr Odem wunderlieb,
und nimmt all' deinen Gram mit sich,
du weisst nicht wo er blieb.

In nature a fresh courage awakens,
When the blue of the sky is revealed.
In nature, everything turns to the good
That has oppressed one's heart.

In nature a fresh courage awakens,
When the blue of the sky is revealed.
In nature, everything turns to the good
That has oppressed one's heart.

Like a sweet young child, around you
Play their wondrous exhalations of love,
And take away all of your suffering,
You know not what has become of it.





In retrospect, the past four years brings with it a sense of warmth and nostalgia.

Every too often, we stand in front of a sea of strangers to perform music we have spent hours practicing, rehearsing, perfecting.

There have been countless times we leave the stage without the audience meeting the face behind the music, and without them hearing the stories and narratives that mould our characters and personalities.

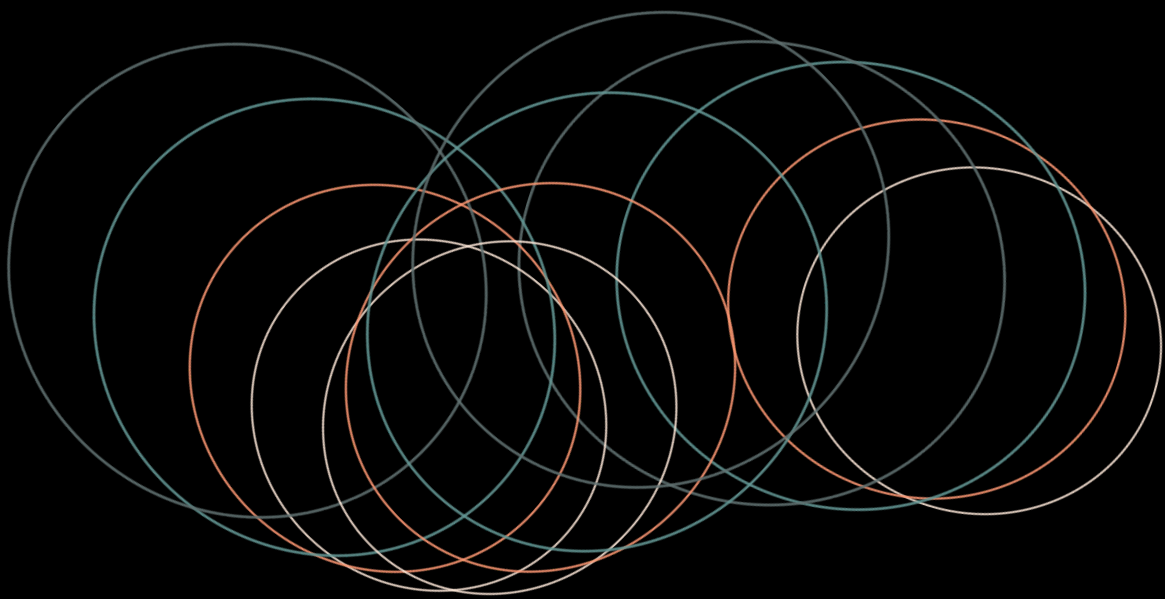
We hope this concert has opened a gateway into our lives as we navigate our way as graduating students. There is much more to explore and still so much of ourselves we have yet to discover.

Indeed, much of the past four years has been shaped through working and knowing each other, and the experiences and memories we have shared are a springboard into the future.

“UNMASK-ing” is only just the beginning.

VII. Chris Hazell - Mr Jums (Arranged by Christopher Sim)

Mr Jums by Chris Hazell was written originally for brass ensemble, but re-arranged and re-imagined by the YST Composition Studio for a woodwind quintet and the harp. This celebratory piece represents the culmination of joy and the sense of achievement of our class of 2021 after 4 grueling yet fulfilling years of pursuing a music degree.



VIII. Maurice Ravel - Bolero (Arranged by Christopher Sim, Ilysia Tan, Kong Tze Shiuan, Lim Wen Liang)

Bolero was intended to be an experiment for Ravel - a play on orchestration, dynamics and rhythm, based on the Spanish dance form, *bolero*. This version of the masterpiece arranged by the YST composition students showcases our formidable instrumentalists, complete with the re-imagination of the iconic solos. Ultimately, our version of *Bolero* represents a collective batch effort that made this concert possible.

Our Musicians

ASTOR PIAZZOLLA

(Arranged by Steven Verhelst)

Suite from "Maria de Buenos Aires"

JID-ANAN NETTHAI (B.Mus4), trumpet

PHAN THANH BINH (B.Mus4), trumpet

NUTTAKAMON SUPATTRANONT (B.Mus2), horn

YANG KATHERINE (B.Mus4), horn

SIM YUN HENG JABEN (B.Mus4), horn

DANILO CONTRERARS OSORIO (B.Mus4), trombone

HENDRIK KWEK (M.Mus1), trombone

LOW XIN HONG (B.Mus3), tuba

LEE YURU (B.Mus4), percussion

LEE CHAEYEONG (B.Mus4), percussion

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Souvenir de Florence

TSENG CHIEH-AN (B.Mus4), violin

LIN YU-CHEN (B.Mus4), violin

LAN SHENG-CHIEH (B.Mus4), viola

HUANG WANXINYI (B.Mus3), viola

JEONG WOO SUK (B.Mus4), cello

LIU YUNBEI (B.Mus4), cello

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Piano Trio No. 1 in B major, Op. 8

III. Adagio

PUALINA LIM (B.Mus4), piano

LIN GUAN-RU (B.Mus4), violin

LI RO-WEI (B.Mus4), cello

MILY BALAKIREV

Islamey: Oriental Fantasy, Op. 18

CHANG YUN-HUA (B.Mus4), piano

GARTH KNOX

"Up, down, sideways, round"

from *Viola Spaces*

DANISH MUBIN (B.Mus4), viola

ORLANDO GIBBONS

Almighty and Everlasting God

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Im Grünen

ALEXANDER L'ESTRANGE

Lighten Our Darkness

CINDY HONANTA (B.Mus4), mezzo soprano

FONG SUE TING PRISCILLA (B.Mus4), mezzo soprano

LIM ZHI LEI GERARD (B.Mus4), baritone

TAY KAI WEN KESTER (B.Mus4), bass

CHRIS HAZELL

(Arranged by Christopher Sim)

Mr Jums

SEE RUI YANG (B.Mus4), flute

TIAN YA-LI (B.Mus4), flute

KIM HYESOO (B.Mus4), oboe

STEPHANIE TAN (B.Mus4), clarinet

SIM YUN HENG JABEN (B.Mus4), horn

NIGEL FOO SHI RONG (B.Mus4), harp

MAURICE RAVEL

(Arranged by Christopher Sim, Ilysia Tan,
Kong Tze Shiuan, Lim Wen Liang)

Bolero

VIOLIN I

Lin Guan Ru
Neville Ang
Lin Yu-Chen
Tseng Chieh-An

VIOLIN II

Boyi Li
Eriko Miyagawa

VIOLA

Danish Mubin
Lan Sheng-Chieh
Hyuna Kim

CELLO

Jeong Woo Suk
Li Ro-wei
Liu Yun Bei

DOUBLE BASS

Lee Si Yuan
Man Gege
Wang Mingyuan

FLUTE

Tien Ya-li
See Rui Yang

CLARINET

Stephanie Tan

OBOE

Hyesoo Kim

HORN

Yang Katherine
Sim Yun Heng Jaben

TRUMPET

Binh Phan
Jid-Anan Netthai

TROMBONE

Danilo Contreras Osorio

TUBA

Low Xin Hong

PERCUSSION

Lee Chaeyeong
Lee Yuru
Thanaphat Pratjaroenwani
Orathai Singhaart

PIANO

Seth Tan

CELESTE

Elizabeth Low



CLASS
of
2021





