



YST

Yong Siew Toh  
Conservatory  
of Music

27th April | 2pm | YST Concert Hall

Livestream: [tinyurl.com/jabenhornrecital](https://tinyurl.com/jabenhornrecital)



# SENIOR RECITAL

JABEN SIM (HORN)  
LUKE CHONG (HORN)  
NICHOLAS LOH (PIANO)

## **Intro**

Jaben Sim is currently a fourth-year performance major at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, under the tutelage of Mr Jamie Hersch, Mr Hoang Van Hoc and Mr Han Chang Chou. As an active performer, Jaben is part of many ensembles such as the Orchestra of Music Makers and the Metropolitan Festival Orchestra. He was also part of the 2019 Asian Youth Orchestra summer camp and Asia tour.

My decision to pursue a career in music performance on the horn lies from the many inspirations in life, that would eventually birth into my aspirations. From the time I had picked up the horn, I was exposed to the likes of great music and horn teachers, some of whom are alumnus of the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music. I aspire to be like them as much as I aspire to be a great virtuosic musician both composers have written their works for. The recital, public performance, is a way to show my efforts to my loved ones who have supported me thus far, namely my family, friends and teachers.

## **Programme Notes**

### **Bagatelle, Hermann Neuling (6')**

While being a composer, Hermann Neuling was also a primarily a low horn musician for several opera orchestras in Berlin. The work I will be performing today is his Bagatelle, arguably his most famous piece of composition.

What is unique about this piece is firstly the fact that it is specified by the composer that it is for low horn and piano, as oppose to every other horn solo repertoire. Secondly, is how the piece is written in such a manner that it comprises of many different characters, as if one was at the opera.

The performer is not only tasked to show a mastery over the large range of the horn, particularly moving downwards, but also their musical ability to wear and change different hats as the piece progresses. In an almost unironic fashion, Neuling himself has put his own musical experiences into a piece of music.

### **Horn Concerto No.5, Giovanni Punto (17')**

Speaking of changing hats within a piece, the next work I will be performing is composed by a virtuoso horn player who literally had to change hats during his lifetime. Although better known as Giovanni Punto, Jan Václav Stich changed his name after fleeing the country to avoid having his teeth knocked out by the Count, an act that would have rendered him useless on the horn afterwards.

Fortunately for Punto, he was successful in keeping his teeth. This meant that he was able to continue showing his mastery of the horn with various audiences. One such audience, was Ludwig van Beethoven, who became inspired to write his only horn sonata, for none other than Punto.

The concerto features the conventional elements of a classical concerto, such as having the standard 3 movements, in the forms of an allegro, adagio and a rondo.

**-intermission 10 mins-**

### **Time and Space for 2 horns and piano, Richard Bissill (10')**

In every recital, one would often find musicians attempting to perform repertoire that isn't very common.

I personally heard this piece first back in 2016, on the way to this school for my major lesson. At that time, I still remembered that it would be such a dream and feat to be able to pull this off one day, and had been twinkling with this idea ever since. The friend that introduced me to this piece, is none other than the friend that would be standing beside me performing this work with me.

Time and space is written for horn duet and piano, a somewhat unusual combination.

The composer is but of course, well known for playing the horn at a very high level. Bissill is however, different from the composers of the previous pieces as he is also known for writing pieces not only for the horn.

### **Fantasia, Franz Strauss (11')**

By now, I believe it has become obvious what the underlying theme of this recital is. Whilst largely unintentional (I mean, I intentionally chose these pieces), the composers of the music I have shared with you today were all composed by horn players.

Franz Strauss was a court musician in Bavaria for more than 40 years. During his long-life time, Strauss had been a composer, conductor, educator, hornist, clarinetist, violist and guitarist.

Coincidentally, the number of musical roles he has played in his life is the number of variations this Fantasia has.

Fantasia is a work for solo horn and piano, and it is largely in the genre of the theme and variation, based on the theme of a Schubert theme. His virtuosity on the horn, coupled with his experience at playing other instruments sparked Strauss's curiosity in curating a work that had pushed the horn to its limits. It is however, not a piece that is difficult for the sake of being difficult, but with much musical meaning that would seek to entice the ears of audiences.

### **Final words**

Since my previous recital, which was more than a year ago, many things have changed. The teacher I originally came to study with in this conservatory has left for greener pastures as I went to the royal conservatory of Den Haag for my semestral exchange. As we all know it, Covid happened and the present situation isn't far greater than in the past. As we struggle to bring classical music to you, some of you will find yourself tuning into this via a livestream instead of being in this hall.

But as the saying goes, life goes on. While it has caused many inconveniences, Covid has given me very memorable experiences. From my first experience of professionally recording in an orchestral setting, to being part of a team that curated a senior concert that I am thankful and proud of being a part of.

Life is the gift that keeps on giving, and I wish to be a gift that keeps on giving to those around me. To my family and my friends, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving me your support over the years. If you know me for who I am, you would agree that without your presences, cruel yet

necessary criticisms, and companionships, I would not be able to be standing here today, graduating from what 15-year-old me would have only started dreaming about.

Where life is going to take us next, is unknown to us all. But I hope that the music I have shared today can always provide you some company when you need it. Till the next time we meet again!