



YST

Yong Siew Toh  
**Conservatory**  
*of Music*

# Lee Yu Ru

## Percussion Senior Recital

27 April 2021, 8.15pm

YST Conservatory Concert Hall

Livestreamed on YST's Youtube Channel



# PROGRAMME

**GENE KOSHINSKI**

**Dance of the Drums (2009)**

Lee Yu Ru, Percussion

Orathai Singhaart, Percussion

**ELLIOT CARTER**

**Eight Pieces for 4 Timpani (1949)**

VII: Canaries

**CALVIN CHIU**

**Ito Guruma (2019)**

Lee Yu Ru, Marimba

Thanaphat Pratjaroenwanit, Marimba

**TOMASZ GOLINSKI**

**Luminosity (2012)**

ii. Furioso

--- INTERMISSION (10") ---

**TOBY FOX**

*arr. Doug Perry*

**Undertale Variations for Solo  
Marimba (2016)**

**NICOLAS MARTYNSIOW**

**Tchik for Solo Snare Drum (2013)**

**ALEXEJ GERASSIMEZ**

**Piazone (2014)**

Lee Yu Ru, Vibraphone

Beatrice Lin, Piano

# PERFORMER'S NOTE

Hello dear viewer listener! This is Yuru here, greetings and salutations to those who've taken the time to come by and enjoy this program that I've put together for my graduating recital! The music that I've chosen to perform for you tonight lies very closely to my heart, as they are either pieces that remind me of my past, or pieces that I've grown to appreciate and love as I've spent some time with them, studying and maturing alongside them in the process.

There are two outcomes that I hope to leave you after my recital tonight. Firstly, I hope my fondness for these works, abstract and atonal as some of them may be (*Tchik* and *Luminosity* I'm looking at you), give you an insight as to why I love these pieces, and by extension, percussion so much. This leads into the second outcome, which is my hope that you would see percussion in a different light. We, as percussionists, are often stereotyped to be the noisemakers of the orchestra, and though I agree to some extent; I mean, I would definitely *love* to play loud in orchestra (imagine crashing cymbals so loud that they *split the sky* (figuratively), generating massive triangle *ding dings* and roaring *thunderously* on the timpani), there are other faucets of classical percussion that exist which are equally important as well! Percussionists, after all, aren't just brazen metronomes who hit stuff; We are musicians, as well as living, breathing, humans too!

Once again, thank you very much for taking the time to come by for my recital. I sincerely wish that you have a great time, and if you do, do leave me a message! Be it on social media, or in person, I would love to hear what are your thoughts on what you've heard and respond to you. Have a great evening ahead!

Yuru Lee  
Fellow Crash Boom Ding Dinger  
YST Class of 2021

# PROGRAMME NOTES

Written by Lee Yu Ru

## **GENE KOSHINSKI**      **Dance of the Drums (2009)**

*Dance of the Drums* is the second of two movements from the series *Song and Dance* written by Gene Koshinski. Unlike the first movement which features metallic sounds, the second movement comes in stark contrast with very primal drumming. With the call from a conch shell reverberating through the halls, interlocking groove-oriented patterns permeate the movement whilst claves resonate and cymbals crash and go, creating an entirely unique soundscape that mustn't be missed!

I chose this work as it reminds me of my past training in Chinese Percussion (and to a certain extent, Taiko drumming). The primal sounds of wood, metal and skin make me reminisce back to the beginning of my percussion journey, where the raw vibrations from drums resonated and enthralled a young 13 year-old Yuru, thus igniting the fervor in percussion that still exists in me till today! As such, I hope to be able to translate this fervor and excitement into this performance of *Dance of the Drums*.

## **ELLIOT CARTER**      **Eight Pieces for 4 Timpani (1949)**

VII: Canaries

As Dr Stuart Marrs puts it, the title *Canaries* has nothing to do with the song of the yellow birds, but rather it comes from one of the optional dances of the Baroque Dance suite, so named, due to its origins from the Canary Islands. Canaries is based on a three note compound figure that is collectively known as the "TIM-pa-ni" rhythm (because of the first movement in Beethoven's 7th Symphony) that gradually dances itself across seemingly different tempos, all linked intricately via precise metric modulation.

This piece is a technical challenge for most percussionists as they would have to juggle mathematical (yes musicians have to do math too!) conversions of tempi while maintaining a light hearted character to the work, on top of juggling between different playing spots on the timpani (dead center, normal spots, rims etc). The end result? An extremely lively dance across a set of 4 large timpani, combined with dexterity, finesse and accuracy.

**CALVIN CHIU**

**Ito Guruma (2019)**

*Ito Guruma* for marimba duet by Calvin Chiu, is an intriguing work that explores the possibilities of the instrument while maintaining an expressive musical character. Inspired by the manufacturing process of artisan “Ai Indigo” denim, “Ito Guruma” is the Japanese term of a spinning wheel that is being used for weaving after the yarn is dyed in Ai Indigo. Composer Calvin Chiu was inspired by the deep thought and dedication behind the process of creating these beautiful handmade products.

This is achieved through sonorous marimba writing involving rolls in the mid-low register of the marimba for both players, which produces a signature warm flourish of sound that just cuddles the listener’s ears. I personally get goosebumps whenever Phat and I play this section due to how beautiful and open the marimbas sound! This eventually picks up into a steady compound rhythm that symbolises the spinning of the wheel; developing and picking up texture until the job is done, the wheel stops spinning thread and comes to a standstill, waiting for the next job to begin.

*Ito Guruma* was commissioned by and dedicated to the Gip Percussion Ensemble in Hong Kong, with funds by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council.

**TOMASZ GOLINSKI      *Luminosity* (2012)**

ii. Furioso

Written for solo marimba across two movements, the second movement of *Luminosity* contains many virtuosic, fast and furious sections which can be a challenge for any marimba performer. It shows new technical ideas such as repeated extremely fast single or double notes creating the background for the melodic material which is gradually building up in combination with rhythmical irregularities whilst utilizing the full range of the concert 5 octave marimba.

Do expect to see me stretch (literally) to my limits while performing this work! *Luminosity*, to me, is a work that is full of oxymorons: Musical yet technically demanding, lyrical yet rhythmical, rapid yet calm, dark yet serene, allowing it encapsulate a delicate balance between opposing thematic forces. *Luminosity* won the first prize of the Universal Marimba Composition Competition 2010 Belgium and it has been selected as a set-piece of the Universal Marimba Competition 2013 Belgium.

**TOBY FOX**

*arr. Doug Perry*

***Undertale Variations for Solo  
Marimba* (2016)**

Released in September 2015, *Undertale* received critical acclaim for its innovative approach to the role-playing game (RPG) genre through its story, narrative and its role-playing. The music of *Undertale* was no exception; although simple in nature, the main theme of *Undertale* is the only leitmotif within the game that goes through various iterations of development, which makes it all the more special when the player hears this theme when facing off against a certain boss of the game while attempting a pacifist run in the game.

As such, when I heard *Undertale Variations* (beautifully arranged by the amazing Doug Perry), it filled me with a sense of determination to programme it. It isn't known to many, but what ignited my passion for music was in fact listening to music from video games, where I would rush to the piano in order to re-experience the magic and beauty once again. After all, all I need to do, according to Sans, is to stay determined, right?

**NICOLAS  
MARTYNSIOW**

## **Tchik for Solo Snare Drum (2013)**

*Tchik* by Nicolas Martynciow is a contemporary snare drum solo that encompasses many dimensions of snare drum writing. This piece utilizes all parts of the snare drum, such as rim clicks, rim shots, stick, crossed rimshots, on top of utilising different implements such as timpani mallets, brushes, fingers and even the player's voice! Furthermore, the piece has various references to the styles of samba, afro-cuban, rudimental drumming and more!

## **ALEXEJ GERASSIMEZ Piazonore (2014)**

Ah, the famous *Libertango* written by Astor Piazzolla. As noted by the composer, Mr Alexej Gerrassimez himself, he originally wanted to write an arrangement for piano and vibraphone, however, during the process he moved away from the primary aim and found himself improvising and restructuring the material of this piece instead. The end result? *Piazonore* came into existence, which was a result of this adventurous process, written in the spirit of Piazzolla's style of music.

A combination of the familiar yet the unfamiliar, this work really *grooves*. Be it with vibraphone shredding, driving syncopation coming from the piano, or even a combination of two, this piece is really groovy and fun to listen to and play! So much so, even Mr Gerrassimez adds in postscript to "not take it too seriously" and to "have fun"!

# PERFORMER'S BIO



Singapore-born percussionist **Lee Yu Ru** has had quite a musical adventure. Having started his musical education since the age of 4 through the piano, Yuru proceeded to enrol in the newly established School of the Arts, Singapore (SOTA) in 2008 with a specialization in piano performance; eventually making the switch to Percussion in 2011. He proceeded to clinch 1st place in the National Chinese Music Competition 2012, under the percussion ensemble category, to mark his explosive start into percussion. Not satisfied with learning just traditional Chinese percussion, Yuru began his foray into orchestral and western classical percussion which has led him to enrol in the YST Conservatory of Music in 2017.



For him, being versatile in many styles is his creed. As such, Yuru is often found freelancing across diverse orchestras and ensembles ranging from the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Metropolitan Festival Orchestra, Orchestra of the Music Makers to Dingyi Music Company, and the Asian-Cultural Symphony Orchestra. An advocate for both the new and traditional alike, Yuru often collaborates with local composers to present world premieres; recent ones being the triple concerto 《三人行》 composed by Dr Chen Zhangyi where he appeared as one of the 3 soloists, *Dr(i)op* by Ding Jian Han and *The Entertainers* by Koh Cheng Jin, written for percussion quartet and mixed ensemble respectively. Yuru also actively engages in performing contemporary music, be it with OpusNovus, the Conservatory's contemporary music ensemble, or externally. His most recent collaborations involve performing Luciano Berio's folk songs with Singaporean opera company "The Opera People", George Crumb's *Makrokosmos III* with the music faculty of SOTA, and Paul Hindemith's *Kammermusik no.1* with OpusNovus, under the baton of Dr Lien Boon Hua.

Yuru is currently in his senior year at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, pursuing his Bachelor's in Percussion (Performance) under the guidance of Singapore Symphony Orchestra's Principal Percussionist, Jonathan Fox. He can be heard on YouTube, under the Conservatory's orchestra as well as OpusNovus, appearing as soloist and percussionist. In addition, Yuru can also be heard on Spotify, as he has done work as a session musician for various artists such as Singaporean instrumental math-rock band Hauste, appearing on keys, glockenspiel and percussion for their albums *Leavings* (2018) and *Patterns* (2020), as well as for Singaporean Artist Bennett Bay, in his albums *Compass* (2017) and *In Memory Of* (2018).

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