

Pualina Lim Mei En Piano Senior Recital

MOZART

Sonata No. 18 in D Major, K. 576

SCRIABIN

Sonata No. 4 in F-sharp Major, Op. 30

SCHUMANN

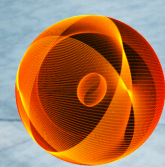
Dauidsbündlertänze, Op. 6



29 April 2021 Thursday 8.15pm

Yong Siew Toh Conservatory Concert Hall

Livestream



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Biography



Pualina Lim Mei En is an award-winning Singaporean pianist pursuing undergraduate studies at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, under the guidance of Associate Professor Albert Tiu. She won 2nd Prize in the Conservatory Concerto Competition 2020 (Piano), and subsequently emerged as Top 3 Prizewinner across all instrument categories. She also clinched the Best Accompanist Award in the same competition. She was concerto soloist performing Gershwin's Piano Concerto in F with the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory Orchestra, under the baton of Principal Conductor Jason Lai. Other achievements include 3rd Prize in the National Piano and Violin Competition 2019 (Piano Senior Category), Top 6 of her category in the 3rd Steinway Youth Piano Competition and 2nd prize in the 2016 Asia Youth Piano Competition (Open Category).

A sensitive musician, Pualina is a passionate collaborative pianist with diverse experience and engagements in chamber, orchestral and choral settings. A fond memory would be when she represented the Conservatory with her clarinet-violin-piano trio (WAN Trio) at Musical Chairs 2020, a chamber music festival organised by McGill University's Schulich School of Music in Canada.

More than just a pianist, Pualina is also a composer and an award-winning electone player. She represented Singapore by performing her compositions at the Asia Pacific Electone Festival 2017 (Singapore), 2018 (Indonesia) and the prestigious Yamaha Electone Concours 2018 (Japan). Pualina is also an active chorister and enjoys exploring pop and jazz in her free time.

Programme

MOZART

Sonata No. 18 in D Major, K. 576

- I. *Allegro*
- II. *Adagio*
- III. *Allegretto*

SCRIABIN

Sonata No. 4 in F-sharp Major, Op. 30

- I. *Andante*
- II. *Prestissimo volando*

- Intermission -

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Dauidsbündlertänze, Op. 6

- I. *Lebhaft*
- II. *Innig*
- III. *Mit Humor*
- IV. *Ungeduldig*
- V. *Einfach*
- VI. *Sehr rasch*
- VII. *Nicht schnell*
- VIII. *Frisch*
- IX. *Lebhaft*
- X. *Balladenmäßig. Sehr rasch*
- XI. *Einfach*
- XII. *Mit Humor*
- XIII. *Wild und lustig*
- XIV. *Zart und singend*
- XV. *Frisch*
- XVI. *Mit gutem Humor*
- XVII. *Wie aus der Ferne*
- XVIII. *Nicht schnell*

Programme Notes

MOZART

Sonata No. 18 in D Major, K. 576

In 1789, **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)** composed the **Sonata No. 18 in D Major, K. 576**. It was during this time that he faced financial difficulty and he had made plans to earn commissions by composing six easy piano sonatas for Princess Friederike of Prussia. However, only this sonata was written and it was not “easy” at all. This sonata was the last that he would write of this genre, and is considered to be one of Mozart’s hardest sonatas due to its contrapuntal nature and challenging counterpoint passages.

Often nicknamed the “Trumpet” or “Hunt” Sonata, the first movement ***Allegro*** opens with a jaunty horn-call, which Mozart later develops as a canon between both hands. This movement is in sonata form and has a lyrical and dolce second theme. The development section goes through a series of modulations and explores different keys, using the lilting rhythm that binds the movement together. The elegant second movement ***Adagio*** presents a singing and richly ornamented melody in the dominant key, A Major. One can find interesting how Mozart reharmonises both themes, with much use of suspensions and chromatic dissonances throughout the movement. In the third and final movement ***Allegretto***, Mozart thrills us with light-hearted runs and athletic polyphonic textures. This movement is built on the theme from the first two bars, and is playful, innocent and jovial in character.

SCRIABIN

Sonata No. 4 in F-sharp Major, Op. 30

Russian pianist and composer **Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915)** composed **Sonata No. 4 in F-sharp Major, Op. 30** in 1903, when he was in his early 30s after he had abandoned his wife and four children and left his teaching position at the Moscow Conservatory. In his early years, Scriabin's writing was more tonal and romantic in style. He was greatly influenced by the music of Frédéric Chopin, famously writing his set of 24 Preludes which modelled after Chopin's. However, in later stages, Scriabin gradually turned to atonality and more dissonant musical language. This fourth sonata marks the beginning of Scriabin's middle period, where Scriabin explores mystical sonorities and tonal ambiguity, as seen in the first movement. This middle period is said to end around the time where he wrote Sonata No. 5, Op. 53 and (1907) and symphonic poem the Poem of Ecstasy, Op. 54 (1905-1908).

This sonata is structured in two movements, with the first movement **Andante** being introspective, ethereal and fantasy-like. It continues straight into the second movement **Prestissimo volando**, with *volando* meaning flying. The sonata culminates in a *focosamente* (fiery) and *giubiloso* (jubilant) restatement of the opening theme from the first movement.

SCHUMANN

Dauidsbündlertänze, Op. 6

Dauidsbündlertänze, or Dances of the League of David, is a group of eighteen pieces composed by **Robert Schumann (1810-1856)** in 1837. The set was named after *Dauidsbündler*, League of David, which was a music society created in the mind of Schumann. It is known that Schumann invented several contrasting artistic personalities, *Florestan* and *Eusebius*, and the two embody Schumann's own dual personality; *Florestan* being more extroverted and bolder, whilst *Eusebius* being gentler and introspective, showing the dreamy side of the composer's imagination. In *Dauidsbündlertänze*, Schumann ascribes each piece to one or both characters, but he later removes these ascriptions and remarks in his second edition.

This League of David was inspired by the biblical David, who fought and emerged victorious from his battle with the leader of the Philistine enemy, Goliath. In the context of this work, however, Schumann was alluding to himself to David, fighting against all the "philistines" in the arts, which represented everything obsolete and backward looking. This fascination with the League of David began even before this set of dances was composed, as he titled the final piece in his *Carnaval*, Op. 9 (1834-1835), *Marche des Dauidsbündler contre les Philistins*, which translates to March of the *Dauidsbündler* against the Philistines.

According to Schumann's diary, *Davidsbündlertänze* was composed on 20th to 31st August 1837. On 21st September 1837, he writes to composer Adolph Henselt, "I have just turned out eighteen *Davidsbündlertänze* – in the midst of my storm-tossed life". He had just entered into a secret engagement with Clara Wieck on 15 August, after months of separation. The work had been inspired by Clara. This could not have been clearer from the opening of the first piece, where Schumann marks "*Motto von C.W.*", borrowing material from a mazurka in Clara's *Soirées Musicales*, Op. 6 (see Figure 1). Writing to Clara on 5 January 1838, he confided that the dances contain "many thoughts of our wedding – they originated in the most splendid state of excitement I can ever recall." Interestingly, Schumann deliberately adapted the opus number of the *Davidsbündlertänze* to match Clara's Op. 6 to the extent that he even assigned higher opus numbers to works which were composed earlier, like the *Carnaval*, Op. 9 and *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12.



Figure 1:
Mazurka in G major, No. 5 from *Soirées Musicales*, Op. 6 by Clara Schumann



Figure 2:
Opening of *Davidsbündlertänze*, Op. 6 by Robert Schumann