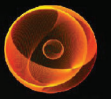


Yong Siew Toh
Conservatory
of Music

YST



DISTANT HARMONIES

J.S BACH O. NUSSIO

PIANIST: LIU JIA

NOV 26 2021, 4:05PM | YST CONCERT HALL

A BASSOON JUNIOR RECITAL BY STEPHEN MAK

Distant Harmonies

a Bassoon Junior Recital by Stephen Mak

Harmony plays an important role in shaping the music of J.S Bach and Nussio. Bach utilized it in a way to create structure and form, whereas Nussio used it to invoke strong moods in the listener's ears. Though this usage of harmonies exists in different eras, it nonetheless infuses the life and emotion in each of these composer's works.

Program

J.S Bach/William Waterhouse

Partita for Transverse Flute, BWV1013, arranged for solo bassoon (12 mins)

Otmar Nussio

Variations on an Arietta by Pergolesi for bassoon and piano (12 mins)

J.S Bach/William Waterhouse

Partita for Transverse Flute, BWV1013, arranged for solo bassoon

Many know Bach for his suites for violin and cello, but do they know the one and only partita for flute? This partita was written while he was Kapellmeister at the Calvinistic court of Köthen. Calvinism forbade excessive flourishes in the music, but that was not going to hinder Bach from producing secular solo and ensemble works for entertainment purposes, as well as instrumental works, including *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and the *Brandenburg Concertos*.

This partita consists of four stylized dances. The first is a reflective Allemande; with flowing phrases that act as both melody and harmony, the player is challenged not only to control their breathing but also to bring out the distinct qualities of both melody and harmony. The second is a virtuosic Corrente; with its stream of 16th notes fueled by passionate energy. The melancholic Sarabande follows, providing a stark contrast to the bustling activity with its solemn and prayerful mood. Bach ends the partita with a rather whimsical English Bourre, with phrases resembling a sarcastic conversation.

Otmar Nussio

Variations on an Arietta by Pergolesi for bassoon and piano

Otmar Nussio (1902-1990) was born in Italy and is of Swiss descent. He studied the flute at the Milan Conservatory and later composition, piano, and conducting at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome. He later became the Chief conductor of the Orchestra della Svizzera italiana in Lugano and during that time made contacts with contemporary composers such as Igor Stravinsky, Zoltán Kodály, and Paul Hindemith.

These ten sets of Variations based on an Arietta by Pergolesi contain picturesque titles that give the variations their distinct mood. From the portrayal of a tambourine player in the third to a fantastical rhapsody in the sixth and finally to a rustic dance with rapidly-changing meters in the tenth, Nussio gave the performer ten unique stories to tell, with the mysterious theme by Pergolesi holding it all together.

(Programme notes written by Stephen Mak)

About the Performers

Stephen Mak, Bassoon



Stephen Mak Wai Soon is an aspiring bassoonist who was born in Selangor, Malaysia. He began his journey with the bassoon at the age of 11 under the tutelage of Alexander Lenkov, principal bassoonist of the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO). At the age of 14, he was accepted into the Malaysian Philharmonic Youth Orchestra (MPYO) where his love for the bassoon and making music flourished. His involvement with the MPYO has opened up doors for him to play in other ensembles in Malaysia, namely The High Winds Ensemble, the Penang Symphony Orchestra, the Penang Philharmonic Orchestra, the Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre (KLPAAC) string orchestra, as well as the Kuala Lumpur City

Opera Orchestra Ensemble.

In 2019, he began his bachelor degree studies in bassoon performance at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music in Singapore under Professor Zhang Jin Min. Notable activities that has spurred his growth as a bassoonist and musician since the commencement of his studies included masterclasses with Christian Kunert, Kittima Molee, Makiko Kunow, and Alban Wesley, as well as performing for the 2019 *Beethoven im Garten* concert held at the Singapore Botanic Gardens. In 2021, he emerged as one of four winners of the annual YST Concerto Competition.

Liu Jia, Piano



A full-time Lecturer of collaborative and accompaniment piano faculty of Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music (NUS), Liu Jia has worked closely with piano, violin, viola, cello, flute, bassoon, clarinet, and french horn studios since 2003, handled spectacular repertoires and collaborated extensively with students, artist faculties, visiting artists as well as world-renowned musicians, such as Vilmos Szabadi, David Takeno, Cho-Liang Lin, Renaud Capuçon, Pierre Amoyal, Midori Koto, Imai Nobuko, Gautier Capuçon, Li-Wei Qin, James Galway, Kim Walker, Barry Tuckwell, Quintette à Vents des Solistes de l'Orchestre de Paris, in masterclass, recitals as well as concerts. Liu Jia was the first Singapore International Violin Competition's official pianist in 2015; as well as official pianist of Singapore International Violin Festival, Qingdao International Cello Festival and Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra International Clarinet Week.

Active in the chamber scene, Liu performs regularly in the Singapore Symphony Orchestra Chamber Series and founded the "Feng Piano Trio" with the other two SSO musicians. Involved in several chamber concert tours in Asia, such as SSO Woodwind Quintet China tour and a series recitals for Flute and Piano in Beijing, Shanghai and cities of Malaysia; present recital of Viola and Piano in Central Conservatory of Music, Beijing; Middle School of Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Sichuan Conservatory of Music in China and Mahidol University of Thailand; YST Conservatory students recital at Hsinchu College, as well as in the 2nd ADRA annual conference and competition at National Chiayi University in Taiwan.

As a special guest, Liu Jia has collaborated with local and international musicians in performances such as Singapore Arts Festival; HSBC Youth Excellence Initiative Awards Ceremony, with President S.R. Nathan as a special guest; Japan-ASEAN Cultural Exchange Program "Ensemble Series"; Buffet Crampon showcase in Singapore; Recitals with Judge of the First National Clarinet Competition in Singapore, Flute Festival 2010 at YST; Guest performer of SSO special concert-Tribute for S.R.Nathan (Ex-President).

As a soloist, she has performed with maestro Lan Shui and Singapore Symphony Orchestra as well as major orchestras in China, including the China Film Symphony Orchestra and Beijing Symphony Orchestra.

She also performs regularly on a freelance basis with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra in concerts and recordings.

At age of 12, Liu Jia entered the Middle School attached to Central Conservatory of Music, China after winning the Best Award in the National Children's Piano Competition, studying with Prof Zheng Li Qin, Wu Ying, Ling Yuan and followed by the Piano Department of Central Conservatory of Music six years later as a scholarship student with Prof Guo Zhi Hong. After receiving her Bachelor's Degree, she enrolled in a two-year Master's course from 1997-1998 (admission of honor by exempted from sitting entrance examinations). She was the only Chinese pianist to be selected to participate in the 3rd Hamamatsu International Piano Academy in 1997 on a scholarship.