

LUKE CHONG

Senior Recital

with Nicholas Loh

5th May
.50pm

YST Concert Hall

featuring works by

BACH
REYNOLDS
NEULING
BISSILL

5 May 2022 | THURSDAY

Luke Chong Khi Sian
Horn Recital

Nicholas Loh, *piano*

Programme

J.S. BACH
Cello Suite No. 1 in G Major
III. Courante

VERNE REYNOLDS
Partita for Horn and Piano
I. Malinconia
II. Caccia
III. Aria
IV. Alla Marcia

– Intermission 10 mins –

HERMANN NEULING
Bagatelle for Low Horn and Piano

RICHARD BISSILL
Song of a New World

And So It Was

About the Performer

Family, Friends, Music, and Food. 4 words that sum up **Luke Chong**. Luke had his first encounter with music at the age of 7, when he followed his elder brother to band practice. Ever since then, music has played an immensely influential role in Luke's life. Participating in the Symphonic Band as his Co-Curricular Activity in both primary and secondary school, Luke began to develop his appreciation and love for music. This eventually led him to join the Singapore National Youth Orchestra(SNYO) in 2014, and be enrolled in the Young Artist' Programme at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music that same year. Since then, Luke served as Principal Horn of the SNYO from 2015 to 2018, and has participated in the Verbier Festival as a part of its Junior Orchestra in 2017. He has also performed with groups such as the Orchestra of the Music Makers, Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra, and Orchestra Collective. In 2020, Luke was 1 of 5 young Asian horn players chosen to go on a tour across Asia and Europe with the Asian Youth Orchestra. However, due to the outbreak of covid-19, the tour was postponed. Luke is currently a recipient of the S R Nathan Music Scholarship, a scholarship that he was awarded for his final year of undergraduate studies at YST.

Prior to that, Luke had been on the NAC-Conservatory of Music scholarship for his years in the Young Artist Programme to his Junior year at YST. Since his enrollment into YST, Luke has had a keen interest not only in honing his craft as a horn player, but also developing holistically as an artist through informed interpretations and performances, as well as further studies into music history and its influences and impacts on other art forms and on society. In his free time, Luke enjoys spending time with his family and friends. He particularly enjoys an enervating game of badminton, and as a true-blue foodie, he loves trying out new foods and going on food adventures. He also loves playing with his girlfriend's dog, a toy poodle named Timon. (Yes, just like Timon and Pumbaa from the Lion King)

Programme Notes

J.S Bach – Cello Suite no.1 (Courante)

Arguably one of the most influential composers in history, Johann Sebastian Bach's music is one that has been studied and researched on extensively. Today I will be presenting the *Courante* from his first Cello Suite. This piece of music has been played by many instruments, and I will be presenting it on the horn. It's interesting to know that it's not only common for horn players to perform and practice Bach's cello suites, but also that specific movements in his suites are tested at auditions as well. To me, the true challenge of playing Bach's music on the horn is to remain calm whilst navigating the various tessituras, dynamics, and articulations on the instrument.

Verne Reynolds – Partita for Horn and Piano

Well known as a prolific Composer, Pedagogue, and Horn player, Verne Reynolds was the former Principal Horn of the Rochester Philharmonic, and Professor of horn at both Indiana and Eastman Universities. Most commonly known amongst horn players for his book of 48 Etudes,

Reynolds had written his Partita for Horn during a period where his compositional style was very much influenced by Hindemith. It was also at this juncture that he began experimenting to write 12-tone compositions. His Partita is presented in 4 movements. The *Malinconia* is a free lament in which the performer experiments with feelings of uncertainty. It then moves straight into the *Caccia*, a movement which is very much influenced by the original hunting horn. The *Aria* allows the performer to explore the lyrical and tender characteristics of the horn, sharing and trading fragments of the melody with the piano. The piece ends with the *Alla Marcia*, a movement which recalls material from previous movements, and displays dialogue between the horn and piano.

Hermann Neuling – Bagatelle for Low Horn

Now a staple in Low Horn repertoire, Hermann Neuling's *Bagatelle for Tiefes(Low) Horn* first came to its prominence after it was tested during a 2nd Horn audition for the Berlin Philharmonic in the mid 1980s. The piece explores the extreme low registers of the horn, and many today attribute the writing of music within that register of the horn to Neuling. This piece challenges the performer not only to perform within that

seemingly uncomfortable tessitura of the horn, but also to do so with lyrical qualities and virtuosic flourishes. On top of that, Neuling also writes acrobatic leaps and jumps within various ranges for the horn, further challenging the performer.

Richard Bissill – Song of a New World

Currently a professor at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, Richard Bissill has also performed as a soloist and horn player with groups such as the London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House. He is also a composer and arranger.

Song of a New World is a piece written for Sarah Willis, a current member of the Berlin Philharmonic horn section. She is also a champion for many things, one of which is a movement for Low Horn. As such, this piece also highlights the possibilities and capabilities that the horn has in its low registers. However, contrary to the Bagatelle, this piece has influences from Blues and Jazz. I feel that it therefore further pushes the boundaries of what defines and is low horn playing.

Richard Bissill – And So It Was

And So It Was is another piece written by Richard Bissill. I chose to perform this piece as a way to share with everyone how my journey at YST has been. Now that this journey is about to end, I look back upon the countless memories shared with the people within these 4 walls. From strangers to friends, and now to family. As much as this piece helps me reflect upon my own journey, I would also like to dedicate the performance to my friends and teachers, and to thank everyone whom I have met along this journey.

Programme notes by Luke Chong Khi Sian.