

5 May 2022 | THURSDAY

Nigel Foo Harp Recital

Viktoriya Klyukina (B.Mus4), *flute*

Koh Kaijie (M.Mus1), *piano*

Programme

ALBENIZ

Córdoba, Op. 232, No. 4 (From “Chants d’Espagne”)

MARCEL TOURNIER

Sonatine, Op. 30

I. Allègrement

II. Calme et expressif

III. Fiévreusement

– Intermission 10 mins –

MOZART

Concerto for Flute, Harp and Orchestra

I. Allegro

II. Andantino

III. Rondo – Allegro

About the Performer

Nigel started his musical journey on the piano at 7 and found his love for the harp in his secondary school harp ensemble in his teenage years. He graduated with honours from the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, studying under Gulnara Mashurova, Principal Harpist of the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, and on full scholarship. In 2019, he was invited by the State Philharmonic of Uzbekistan to perform Mozart's Flute and Harp Concerto as the harp soloist in Uzbekistan. Throughout his years as an undergraduate, he has also attended various music festivals in Europe, learning under well-known harpists Fabrice Pierre, and Marie-Pierre Langlamet, principal harpist of the Berlin Philharmonic. He has performed in numerous orchestras in Singapore, including the Orchestra of Music Makers, Musicians' Initiative Orchestra, and Braddell Heights Symphony Orchestra. With his passion in harp ensemble music making, he was led to co-founding The Harp Quarterly in 2020. Spreading the love for the harp has always been something he is passionate about, and he has started this journey of bringing the harp to the masses through his quartet's numerous performances, his own collaborators

performances and through many harp recitals in the conservatory since 2017. He has also co-produced a graduation recital, UNMASK 2021, his first foray into music production. He is now pursuing his master's degree in Yong Siew Toh Conservatory while actively developing his career as a producer and a harpist.

Programme Notes

ALBENIZ

Córdoba, Op. 232, No. 4 (From “Chants d’Espagne”)

Isaac Albéniz was a Spanish composer, conductor, virtuoso pianist, and a leading figure of the Spanish nationalist school of musicians. He was well known for his piano compositions based on Spanish folk musical expression.

Córdoba is the fourth out of the five songs of Chants d’Espagne or Songs of Spain composed by Isaac Albéniz. This work was inspired by two beautiful Spanish places, the fertile Mediterranean island of Mallorca and the great city and province named Córdoba, an Iberian center of Muslim and Jewish culture. Córdoba was one of Albeniz's favorite cities which was

sacred to muslim Moors and later the Catholics. The music begins with a short introduction meant to convey the sound of church bells and a kind of hymn resembling the Christian liturgy. This leads the pathways to the main section of the piece, contrasting in nature. We are able to feel the audible transition from church bells to a flamenco serenade with the usage of Spanish folk rhythms, making its way towards the climax.

MARCEL TOURNIER

Sonatine, Op. 30

I. Allègrement

II. Calme et expressif

III. Fièvreusement

Marcel Tournier was a French harpist, composer and teacher. He was the harp professor of Conservatoire National Supérieur de Paris from 1912 to 1948, training generations of harpists who became prominent harpists and teachers. One of his most notable achievements was his contribution of greatly expanding the repertoire that harpists enjoy today and solidifying the harp's role as a solo instrument. One of these works is the Sonatine, Op. 30, consisting of three

movements which explore the full capabilities of the instrument.

The first movement, *Allégrement* (cheerfully) opens with an evocation of joy and celebration, with its motives reminiscent of Ravel's celebrated *Sonatine* for the piano. In the second movement, *Calme et expressif*, Tournier expertly crafts harmonic material around melodies in the middle register, painting an almost blurry musical portrait. The third movement, *Fiévreusement* (feverishly), brings the listener into the world of arpeggios which constantly build and fade. The joyous motif in the first movement is brought back briefly in a more mysterious veil, before a last burst of energy spirals the whole work to a dramatic finish.

MOZART

Concerto for Flute, Harp and Orchestra

I. Allegro

II. Andantino

III. Rondo – Allegro

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, born in Salzburg, was one of the greatest composers in the Classical period, a musical prodigy and his large

repertoire of works is still greatly admired by musicians now.

The Concerto for Flute and Harp was composed in 1778, during Mozart's trip to Paris. It was commissioned by Adrien-Louis de Bonnières, Duke de Guînes (1735–1806), a flutist, for him and his eldest daughter, Marie-Louise-Philippine (1759–1796), a harpist, who was taking composition lessons from the composer. This was a time when the harp and flute were still in the midst of development, and this instrumentation was unique at that time. The harp that Mozart composed for was likely a single-action pedal harp, whereas the modern harp is a double-action harp. This instrument lacked the capabilities such as the ability to effectively execute glissandos characteristic of the harp today, thus this work does not include any glissandos. In addition, Mozart possibly viewed the harp more like a plucked piano, giving rise to occasional unidiomatic pianistic writing which proves to be a challenge to harpists even today. The flute that he composed for was a recently improved version of the instrument, which had six keys instead of the four-keyed ones before. With that, Mozart managed to explore some of the

capabilities of this newer invention through this work.

The first movement, Allegro, is joyful and light, composed in the conventional sonata form, with two themes which are developed by the soloists throughout the movement. The second movement, Andantino, presents a much lighter mood, allowing each soloist to shine on their own with the melodies, and engaging with playful dialogue with the accompaniment. The calm of the second movement springs into the joyous third movement, composed in the rondo form. Mozart's genius melodic writing especially shines through in this finale.

Programme notes by Nigel Foo.