



YST
Yong Siew Toh
Conservatory
of Music

NEVILLE & CHERIE

THE FINAL RECITAL

SCHUMANN

VOLIN SONATA NO. 1

BRAHMS

VOLIN SONATA NO. 3

WIENIAWSKI

FAUST FANTASY

NOV 23
WEDNESDAY
7.30 PM

NEVILLE

Neville received his bachelor's degree from the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music (Distinction) under full scholarship. To date, he has obtained Associate and Licentiate Diplomas for both the violin and the piano from Trinity College London and ABRSM respectively. He has also obtained a Fellowship Diploma from the former for Violin Performance. Currently, he is pursuing his graduate studies under Associate Professor Zuo Jun, Head of Violin at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music. His previous teachers include Singapore Symphony Orchestra Fixed Chair Violinist, Chan Yoong Han and Concertmaster of The BBC Symphony, Igor Yuzefovich.

As an active orchestral musician, Neville plays principal violinist of the Metropolitan Festival Orchestra. He also performs as a freelancer with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and other local groups such as ReSound Collective and the Wayfarer Sinfonietta.

In his younger days, Neville spent 8 years in the Singapore National Youth Orchestra. Through this national programme, he had the opportunity to perform abroad in cities such as Aberdeen and Berlin. He emerged as the winner in the 2014 SNYO Concerto Competition and made his solo debut with the Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto. He was also selected to participate in the 30th Toyota Youth Orchestra Camp in Tokyo where he collaborated with musicians of the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra.

Earlier in 2018, a formal invitation was extended to him to lead the Jungli Youth Orchestra from Taoyuan City, Taiwan, for a performance in Korea at the KBS Hall. Other notable posts include principal violinist with orchestras such as Musicians Initiative, Yong Siew Toh Conservatory Orchestra, Singapore International Festival of Music Orchestra and the International Festival Chorus Singapore Orchestra.

Between June to August 2022, Neville attended the Aspen Music Festival under scholarship. Subsequently, he attended the World Orchestra Forum in Shizuoka, Japan, as an invited guest speaker. During the forum, he gave a presentation about the impact of music in the lives of young people to an audience that included Japanese Royalty, Princess Takamado. As an invited guest, he was also given the opportunity to perform for the Princess as well.

This recital will mark the end of his formal studies with the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music as a Master's student.

Neville plays on a 1810 Valenzano, Johannes Maria on generous loan from the Rin Collection.

MASTER'S RECITAL
NEVILLE ATHENASIUS ANG (Violin)
DR CHERIE KHOR (Piano)

23 November 2022, Wednesday
Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music Concert Hall

Robert Schumann

Violin Sonata No. 1 in A Minor 18mins
Mit leidenschaftlichem Ausdruck
Allegretto
Lebhaft

Johannes Brahms

Violin Sonata No. 3 in D Minor 23mins
Allegro
Adagio
Un poco presto e con sentiment
Presto agitato

Henri Wieniawski

Fantasia on a Theme from 'Faust' 17mins

Robert Schumann

Violin Sonata No. 1 in A minor, Op. 105

In August 1850 Schumann arrived in Düsseldorf to take up the position of town music director. But soon after in the next season, problems had developed with management and musicians alike, mostly triggered by his progressing mental illness. Nevertheless, he strove to improve the town's musical life by organizing a small select group of singers and a short-lived ensemble of instrumentalists. Thus, in the fall of 1851 he had vocal and instrumental chamber music on his mind. The time was now ripe to act on an 1850 request by Ferdinand David, concertmaster of the Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig for a violin and piano piece. Schumann composed his first violin sonata between September 12 and 16, 1851.

Clara Schumann, her husband's greatest champion and interpreter, immediately learned the piano part and played the first private performance of the A minor Violin Sonata on October 16 with Wilhelm Joseph von Wasielewski, Robert's talented young concertmaster. She wrote in her diary: "We were particularly moved by the very elegiac first movement and the lovely second movement." The third movement, she said, caused them some difficulties, and though they played it through three more times Wasielewski reported that they were unable to convey its "brusque tone" to the composer's satisfaction. The first public performance took place on March 29 at the Leipzig Gewandhaus with David, who had first suggested such a work, and he received the dedication when Schumann published it in 1852. Clara continued to play the piece after her husband's death, most often with the rising young star Joseph Joachim.

Schumann's first movement designated "With passionate expression," sets a mood of quiet unrest with the main theme beginning in the violin's low, throaty range. Throughout the piano does not merely "arpeggiate," but exhibits the distinctive multiple voices and textures that are quintessentially Schumann. A special feature of this movement is the masterful blurring of the border between development and recapitulation that became such a romantic art.

The Allegretto shows the intimate charm of many of Schumann's piano miniatures. Twice he interrupts with contrasting episodes. The first in the contemplative manner of Eusebius, the introverted fictional character of his prose and musical writings, and the second à la Florestan, his happy, extroverted persona.

The finale cavorts like a scherzo, but with a demonic cast, as opposed to the elfin scherzo's characteristic of Schumann's contemporary Mendelssohn. A wonderful major-mode middle episode imparts a lyrical warmth to offset the "brusquer" drive of the main theme. Toward the end Schumann shows his concern for unity across movements by reintroducing the low restless main theme of the first movement before the final fiendish push to the close.

Johannes Brahms

Violin Sonata No. 3 in D minor, Op. 108

For many years, Brahms followed the sensible practice of the Viennese gentry by abandoning the city when the weather got hot. He spent many happy summers in the hills and lakes of the Salzkammergut, east of Salzburg, but in 1886, his friend Joseph Widmann, a poet and librettist of considerable distinction, convinced Brahms to join him in the ancient Swiss town of Thun, twenty-five kilometers south of Bern in the foothills of the Bernese Alps. Brahms rented a flower-laden villa on the shore of Lake Thun in the nearby hamlet of Hofstetten and settled in for a long, comfortable summer. Brahms began the Third Violin Sonata, op. 108, at Hofstetten during the summer of 1886 but composed most of the score during his sojourn two years later. The sonata's premiere was given on December 22, 1888, in Cologne by the composer and the celebrated Hungarian violinist, composer, and pedagogue Jenő Hubay.

Brahms's three violin sonatas are works of his fullest maturity. In 1853, he had written a scherzo for a collaborative sonata (Schumann and Albert Dietrich chipped in with the other movements) for Joseph Joachim, but during the following twenty-seven years, he began and destroyed four further attempts in the genre. It was not until the G Major Sonata (op. 78) of 1880 that he was pleased enough with any of these violinistic progeny to admit one into the world; the Opus 100 Sonata followed in 1886 and Opus 108 came two years later.

The D minor Violin Sonata was dedicated to Hans von Bülow, a musician of gargantuan talent celebrated as both pianist and conductor, who played Brahms's compositions widely and made them a mainstay in the repertory of the superb court orchestra at Meiningen during his tenure there as Music Director from 1880 to 1885. The dedication to the pianist-conductor is especially appropriate for this sonata, since the piano is more thoroughly integrated with the violin than in the earlier two sonatas, in which the keyboard serves largely as accompanist to the string instrument's wordless songs.

Violin and piano share equally the thematic material of the opening movement. The violin presents the principal subject, a lyrical inspiration marked by long notes that give way to quick neighbouring tones; the piano's arching second theme is superbly constructed from a two-measure motive of stepwise motion followed by a hesitant dotted-rhythm gesture. The development section is largely occupied with a discussion of the main theme. A full recapitulation and an ethereal coda grown from the main theme close the movement. The Adagio is one of Brahms's most endearing creations, an instrumental hymn of delicately dappled emotions, touching melody, and suave harmonies that caused Peter Latham to note in his biography of the composer, "Brahms wrote nothing more gracious than these sonatas, in which he never seeks grandeur and woos rather than compels." The third movement replaces the traditional scherzo with an intermezzo of precisely controlled intensity and masterful motivic development. The sonata-form finale resumes the darkly expressive eloquence of the opening movement with its impetuous main theme. A chordal subject initiated by the piano provides contrast, but the unsettled mood of the first theme remains dominant through the remainder of the movement.

Henri Wieniawski

Fantasia on a Theme from 'Faust', Op. 20

Born into a distinguished family of Polish musicians, Wieniawski was the toast of the world of eminent violinists in the middle of the nineteenth century. Today, as with most virtuosos who composed modestly, his name is familiar mainly to violinists, who plays his formidable etudes and salon works.

Recognised early on as a prodigy of startling talent, he was concertizing from an impossible early age, and wangled an exception for admission to the Paris Conservatory at the age of eight. Leaving after a little more than four years there, he began his serious "adult" career, touring with his younger brother in Russia and Central Europe. Wanting to compose, he soon went back to the Conservatory for composition lessons, and then it was off to an extensive career as a traveling soloist. He did settle down somewhat for a while in St. Petersburg, Russia, teaching at the conservatory there, at the behest of Anton Rubinstein. During his twelve years there, he composed most of his best works, including the second concerto, and developed a lasting personal and professional association with the great pianist.

Gounod's Faust is opera in the grand style, complete with dramatic action and tuneful melodies that mirror the action and emotion of the story, so it is no mystery why there are so many musical works that use some of these tunes as the basis of variations and paraphrases. In the tradition of the time, virtuoso performers as well as composers, would use these tunes to attract audiences to concerts and recitals. Two of the most well-known violin virtuosos of the 19th century, Pablo Sarasate and Henryk Wieniawski wrote works based on Gounod's Faust. Sarasate wrote his Concert Fantasy On Themes From Gounod's 'Faust' in 1874, but Wieniawski wrote his Fantasia On a Theme from 'Faust' in 1865 while the initial success of the opera was still strong.

Fantasia On a Theme from 'Faust' is in one continuous movement that consists of five sections, each one incorporating different themes from the opera. The third section includes Méphistophélès's melody *Le veau d'or* (The Golden Calf, a song about the greed of man) and the final section uses the waltz music from the second act.

APPRECIATION

I am especially grateful to the many people who made today possible. Thank you all for coming to my recital and playing such an important role in my growth as a musician and as a human being.

左老师, 谢谢你在我大二的时候收留我进你的 Studio。你这四年半的教导, 让我成为一个自己觉得有思想的小提琴家, 我永远都会记住! 也谢谢你一直都那么有耐心对待我。

Mr Chan Yoong Han, thank you for continuously being my teacher, my mentor, and a friend. Giving me valuable advice and always encouraging me in every aspect of my musical career and my life.

Dr Cherie Khor, thank you for always being so truthful to me in how I can improve and always being a good guidance for me. I've enjoyed every moment playing together with you. Hopefully in the years to come, we will continue to work together!

To my parents, without you guys, I would never have made it this far. I owe it all to you both since the day I was born. Thank you so much Mum and Dad!

All my friends in school throughout my past 5.5 years in YST, you've all made valuable impact to who I have become. Thank you so much for all the fun joy and laughter!

Thank you, Ivan, for making and designing all the posters for me!

And lastly..

HUGE THANKS TO ALL OF YOU WHO CAME TO TODAY'S RECITAL AND BEING A PART OF IT ALL! EVERY SINGLE ONE OF YOU MEAN A LOT TO ME!

**Lots of Love,
Neville Athenasius Ang**

