



YST

Yong Siew Toh
Conservatory
of Music

The History of Loving Souls

Featuring works of Ravel | Schumann | Barber

A Junior Recital by:

Jason Suryaatmaja

Baritone

Vernis Chua

Piano



7:40 PM | 27 NOV 2023 | YST Concert Hall

Programme

Robert Schumann

From Der Arme Peter, Op. 53 no. 3

I. Der Hans und die Grete tanzen herum

II. In meiner Brust, da sitzt ein Weh

III. Der arme Peter wankt vorbei

Lehn Deine Wang, Vier Gesänge Op.142

Dein Angesicht, Fünf Lieder und Gesänge Op. 127

Samuel Barber

Dover Beach, Op. 3

Maurice Ravel

From Don Quichotte à Dulcinée

I. Chanson Romanesque

II. Chanson épique

III. Chanson à boire

Program Notes

Robert Schumann

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) was a renowned German composer and pianist of the Romantic era, known for his emotionally expressive works like "Carnaval" and "Kinderszenen." He was also a significant figure in music journalism, co-founding the influential periodical "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik." Schumann's compositions continue to hold a prominent place in Romantic classical music.

Heinrich Heine's poetry explores the deep feelings of love, loss, and mortality with amazing depth and delicacy when combined with Schumann's compositions. Heine depicts a heartbreaking scene of unfulfilled love in "Der Arme Peter," where Hans and Grete celebrate their engagement while Peter is left on his own in despair. The passionate speaker in "Lehn Deine Wang" from Vier Gesänge Op. 142 pleads with his beloved to hold them, weep with them, and feed the flames of their love, fearing that their deep emotions will eventually turn into an intolerable desire. Heine's "Dein Angesicht" emphasizes the fleeting nature of beauty by depicting a lovely but troubled face under the shadow of death.

Der Hans und die Grete tanzen herum

Hans and Grete are dancing about

Der Hans und die Grete tanzen herum,

Hans and Grete are dancing about,

Und jauchzen vor lauter Freude.

And crying aloud for joy.

Der Peter steht so still und so stumm,

Peter stands there speechless and still,

Und ist so blass wie Kreide.

Looking as white as chalk.

Der Hans und die Grete sind Bräut'gam und Braut,

Hans and Grete are groom and bride,

Und blitzen im Hochzeitgeschmeide.

And gleam in wedding finery.

Der arme Peter die Nägel kaut

Poor Peter is biting his nails

Und geht im Werkeltagkleide.

And wearing his working clothes.

Der Peter spricht leise vor sich her,

Peter mumbles to himself

Und schauet betrübet auf beide:

Looking sadly at the pair:

„Ach! wenn ich nicht gar zu vernünftig wär’,

‘If I weren’t such as sensible lad,

Ich täte mir was zu leide.“

I’d do myself some harm.’

In meiner Brust, da sitzt ein Weh

The pain in my breast

In meiner Brust, da sitzt ein Weh,
Das will die Brust zersprengen;
Und wo ich steh' und wo ich geh',
Will's mich von hinnen drängen.

Es treibt mich nach der Liebsten Näh',
Als könnt's die Grete heilen;
Doch wenn ich der ins Auge seh',
Muss ich von hinnen eilen.

Ich steig' hinauf des Berges Höh',
Dort ist man doch alleine;
Und wenn ich still dort oben steh',
Dann steh' ich still und weine.

The pain in my breast
Will burst my heart;
Wherever I am, wherever I go,
It drives me ever onwards.

It drives me to be near my love,
As if Grete could ease my pain;
But when I look into her eyes,
I must hurry away again.

I climb up to the high hills,
For there one is alone;
And when I'm standing still up there,
I stand quite still and weep.

Der arme Peter wankt vorbei

Poor Peter totters past

Der arme Peter wankt vorbei,
Gar langsam, leichenblass und scheu.
Es bleiben fast, wie sie ihn sehn,
Die Leute auf den Strassen stehn.

Die Mädchen flüstern sich ins Ohr:
"Der stieg wohl aus dem Grab hervor."
Ach nein, ihr lieben Jungfräulein,
Der steigt erst in das Grab hinein.

Poor Peter totters past,
So slowly, timid and pale;
Folk in the street almost stop
When they see him passing by.

The girls whisper to each other:
"He must have risen from his grave."
Which is not true, my dear young girls,
He's about to lie in his grave.

Er hat verloren seinen Schatz,
Drum ist das Grab der beste Platz,
Wo er am besten liegen mag,
Und schlafen bis zum Jüngsten Tag.

He has lost his own true love,
And so the grave is the best place
For him to lie and sleep
Till the Day of Judgement comes.

Lehn deine Wang *Rest your cheek*

Lehn' deine Wang' an meine Wang',
Dann fliessen die Tränen zusammen;
Und an mein Herz drück' fest dein Herz,
Dann schlagen zusammen die
Flammen!

Rest your cheek against my cheek,
Together our tears shall flow;
And against my heart press firm your heart,
Together the flames shall leap!

Und wenn in die grosse Flamme fliesst
Der Strom von unsern Tränen,
Und wenn dich mein Arm gewaltig
umschliesst—
Sterb' ich vor Liebesehnen!

And when into that great flame
The river of our tears shall flow,
And when I clasp you in my arms—
I shall die of love's desire!

Dein Angesicht *Your face*

Dein Angesicht so lieb und schön,
Das hab' ich jüngst im Traum gesehn,
Es ist so mild und engelgleich,
Und doch so bleich, so schmerzenreich.

Your face so lovable and fair
Appeared to me in a recent dream,
So mild, it looks, and angel-like,
And yet so pale, so full of pain.

Und nur die Lippen, die sind rot;
Bald aber küsst sie bleich der Tod.
Erlöschen wird das Himmelslicht,
Das aus den frommen Augen bricht.

And only your lips are red;
But death shall soon kiss them pale.
Out will go the heavenly light
That gleams from your innocent eyes.

Program Notes

Samuel Barber

Samuel Barber (1910-1981) was a prominent American composer celebrated for his melodious and expressive compositions. His notable achievements include winning the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 1958 for his opera "Vanessa". Barber's music is renowned for its lyrical and emotional qualities, with works like the "Adagio for Strings" and "Knoxville: Summer of 1915". He is widely recognized as one of the most celebrated American composers of the 20th century.

"Dover Beach," Op. 3, (written in 1931 when the composer was just 21) sets to music the bitter and introspective poem "Dover Beach" by Matthew Arnold. Arnold's poem reflects on the erosion of faith and disappointment in the modern world, beginning with the receding "sea of faith," symbolizing the loss of moral and spiritual certainty. The poem explores the contrast between a tranquil moonlit countryside and the thunderous emotional landscape within a person's heart, conveying a profound sense of loss and hopelessness amid an unstable and changing environment.

Dover Beach

The sea is calm to-night
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits; on the French coast, the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd sand
Listen! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves d'raw back, and fling
At their return, up the high strand
Begin and cease, and then again begin
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery: we
Find also in the sound a thought
Hearing it by this distant northern sea

Dover Beach

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams
So various, so beautiful, so new
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight
Where ignorant armies clash by night

Program Notes

Maurice Ravel

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) was a highly significant French composer in the 20th century and was known for his impressionistic and inventive compositions. His works, including "Pavane for a Dead Princess," "Daphnis et Chloé," and "Boléro," are praised for their expert orchestration, expressive melodies, and complex harmonies that combine elements of Impressionism and Romanticism.

"Don Quichotte à Dulcinée" is a three-song cycle composed in 1932, with lyrics by Paul Morand. Inspired by the character Don Quixote from Miguel de Cervantes' novel, the cycle presents a musical homage to the chivalrous and idealistic spirit of the famous literary figure. Ravel's music captures the essence of Don Quixote's devotion to his beloved Dulcinea, with each song expressing different facets of his love: "Chanson Romanesque" is dreamy and romantic, "Chanson épique" conveys heroism and grandeur, and "Chanson à boire" is a lively, playful drinking song.

Chanson romanesque

Romantic song

Si vous me disiez que la terre
À tant tourner vous offensa,
Je lui dépêcherais Pança:
Vous la verriez fixe et se taire.

Si vous me disiez que l'ennui
Vous vient du ciel trop fleuri d'astres,
Déchirant les divins cadastres,
Je faucherais d'un coup la nuit.

Si vous me disiez que l'espace
Ainsi vidé ne vous plaît point,
Chevalier dieu, la lance au poing.
J'étoilerais le vent qui passe.

Mais si vous disiez que mon sang
Est plus à moi qu'à vous, ma Dame,
Je blêmirais dessous le blâme
Et je mourrais, vous bénissant.

Ô Dulcinée.

Were you to tell that the earth
Offended you with so much turning,
I'd dispatch Panza to deal with it:
You'd see it still and silenced.

Were you to tell me that you are wearied
By a sky too studded with stars -
Tearing the divine order asunder,
I'd scythe the night with a single blow.

Were you to tell me that space itself,
Thus denuded was not to your taste -
As a god-like knight, with lance in hand,
I'd sow the fleeting wind with stars.

But were you to tell me that my blood
Is more mine, my Lady, than your own,
I'd pale at the admonishment
And, blessing you, would die.

O Dulcinea.

Chanson épique

Epic Song

Bon Saint Michel qui me donnez loisir
De voir ma Dame et de l'entendre,
Bon Saint Michel qui me daignez
choisir
Pour lui complaire et la défendre,
Bon Saint Michel veuillez descendre
Avec Saint Georges sur l'autel
De la Madone au bleu mantel.

D'un rayon du ciel bénissez ma lame
Et son égale en pureté
Et son égale en piété
Comme en pudeur et chasteté:
Ma Dame.

(Ô grands Saint Georges et Saint
Michel)
L'ange qui veille sur ma veille,
Ma douce Dame si pareille
À Vous, Madone au bleu mantel!
Amen.

Good Saint Michael who gives me leave
To behold and hear my Lady,
Good Saint Michael who deigns to elect
me
To please her and defend her,
Good Saint Michael, descend, I pray,
With Saint George onto the altar
Of the Madonna robed in blue.

With a heavenly beam bless my blade
And its equal in purity
And its equal in piety
As in modesty and chastity:
My Lady.

(O great Saint George and great Saint
Michael)
Bless the angel watching over my vigil,
My sweet Lady, so like unto Thee,
O Madonna robed in blue!
Amen.

Chanson à boire

Drinking song

Foin du bâtard, illustre Dame,
Qui pour me perdre à vos doux yeux
Dit que l'amour et le vin vieux
Mettent en deuil mon coeur, mon âme!

A pox on the bastard, illustrious Lady,
Who to discredit me in your sweet eyes,
Says that love and old wine
Are saddening my heart and soul!

Je bois
À la joie!
La joie est le seul but
Où je vais droit... lorsque j'ai bu!

I drink
To joy!
Joy is the only goal
To which I go straight... when I'm... drunk!

Foin du jaloux, brune maîtresse,
Qui geint, qui pleure et fait serment
D'être toujours ce pâle amant
Qui met de l'eau dans son ivresse!

A pox on the jealous wretch, O dusky mistress,
Who whines and weeps and vows
Always to be this lily-livered lover
Who dilutes his drunkenness!

Je bois
À la joie!
La joie est le seul but
Où je vais droit... Lorsque j'ai bu!

I drink
To joy!
Joy is the only goal
To which I go straight... when I'm... drunk!

Biography

Jason Suryaatmaja *Baritone*

Jason Suryaatmaja, a baritone from Indonesia, is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music in Singapore. Prior to his studies in Singapore, he received instruction from Yosafat Rannu Leppong in Indonesia from 2020 to 2021, laying the foundation for his musical journey.

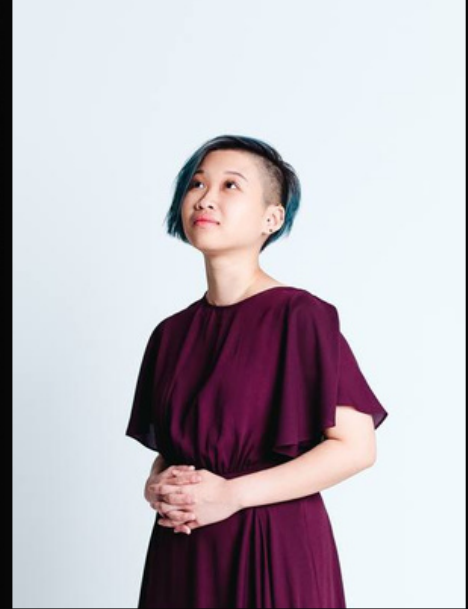


Jason's musical journey has been fortunate to participate in masterclasses and receive coaching from Roger Vignoles, Lynne Dawson, Kevin Thrives, Stephen Robertson, and Paul Weigold. His list of performances includes Brahms' "Ein Deutsches Requiem," Haydn's "Die Schöpfung," and Bach's "Johannes-Passion," where he served as a baritone soloist and others. Jason was fortunate to receive recognition as a finalist in the YST Concerto Competition in 2023 and to participate the Asia Pacific Youth Choir in the same year.

Biography

Chua Kai En Vernis *Piano*

Chua Kai En Vernis is a Singapore pianist currently pursuing a Bachelor of Music at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of music. She is currently under the tutelage of Professor Ning An. Prior to 2022, she was a student of Professor Thomas Hecht since 2020. She had also studied under other piano teachers including Mr Frank Joseph Demeglio and Dr Khoo Hui Ling.



Vernis has won the Silver award for the 2018 Singapore Asia Music competition and was complimented by judge Rita Reichmann in the recent YST Conservatory competition. She has attended masterclasses with pianists such as Professor Gabriel Kwok, James Giles, Yoshikazu Nagai, Li Wei Lung and Henry Sigfridsson. Vernis started taking piano lessons at the age of 5 and was part of the Music Elective Programme in her teens.

Aside from the piano, Vernis also ventures into Symphonic Band music and plays the bass clarinet in her own free time.