

## Biography

Samuel Ng is a Year 2 music student in SOTA (School of the Arts, Singapore) under the creating track, which specialises in music composition. He is currently majoring in piano under the tutelage of Dr. Christina Tan. Samuel started learning the piano at age 5 and started to compose by writing short melodies for the piano.

Samuel particularly likes music from the 20th century and modern era. He also enjoys studying music theory as it helps him understand how the piece is constructed, which in turn helps in his composition. Samuel is a recipient of the David Marshall scholarship offered by his school for two consecutive years. He hopes to learn more about different styles and periods of music in his remaining 4 years in SOTA.

## Moonlight Toccata

Alexina Diane Louie (b. 1949)

Moonlight Toccata is one of the nine pieces from Louie's *Star Light, Star Bright*, which is a set of intermediate piano solos based on the theme of astronomy. The piece begins with a series of short, staccato notes typical of a toccata, which comes from the word "*toccare*" meaning "to touch". The staccato notes and soft dynamics is reminiscent of moonlight on a calm evening. The melody reaches a crescendo as the main theme is developed. The motif is then brought back an octave higher and the dynamics returns to pianissimo, before the toccata ends on the highest register of the keyboard.

## Le vent dans la plaine

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

"Le vent dans la plaine" (The Wind in the Plain) is the 3rd of 12 preludes from the first of two books of Debussy's preludes. Unlike Bach or Chopin, Debussy's preludes did not follow a strict pattern of key signatures. It starts off with a single note melody repeated motif with a whirlwind-like idea, accompanied with softly descending chords in the right hand shortly after. A sudden climax in the middle of the piece, with strong and heavy chords resembles a fierce storm, before the whirlwind-like motif then returns and eventually slows down to conclude the prelude.

Sonata No.15 in D major, Op. 28      Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 -  
1827)

### IV. *Allegro ma non troppo*

Beethoven's Piano Sonata No.15 is nicknamed the "Pastoral Sonata" because it is built on the representations of nature. This is especially due to the rustic rhythm in the finale, which is in 6/8 time, together with the rest of the 4th movement. This is similar to the 5th movement of the "Pastoral Symphony" (Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68) also written by Beethoven. The 4th movement of the Pastoral Sonata is written in Rondo Form (A B A C A B A), before the Coda "*Piu Allegro quasi Presto*". Just like the 1st movement, the music starts off with a

dominant pedal, which always comes back every time the A section is repeated. The B and C sections contain polyphony like the texture of a string quartet, contrasting with the simplicity of the nature-related opening theme. Certain parts can be compared to the entire orchestra playing together (*tutti*), as opposed to the solo sections by the violin. The Coda is very much like a “Chassé” meaning “to chase”, it depicts a scene of a group of hunters chasing a deer, which reflects pastoral life and completes this piece of programmatic music.

## We are Singapore - In a modern style

Arranged by Samuel Ng

“We are Singapore” was originally composed by Hugh Harrison for National Day 1987. This has been arranged in a 20th-century style for piano solo to give this piece a new perspective. Some features include cluster chords - which begin and end the piece, metric modulation (meaning change in time signature), and use of the entire range of the keyboard. The piece has been re-harmonised such that it includes chromatically altered chords, and even bitonality (In this case G major against C major). These features bring the piece into the modern era.

Instead of the entire song, this arrangement consists of certain selected sections organised in A B C B form or Verse-Chorus-Bridge-Chorus. The performance direction “Maestoso”, meaning majestic, is used to convey the grandeur and dignity one would feel of his or her country. The original song has the words of the Singapore National Pledge. This is highlighted in Section C which includes chromaticism and bitonality.

Incidentally, “We Are Singapore”, was also arranged for this year’s National Day 2018 with the preface composed by Charlie Lim.