

Programme notes

Op 13 No. 3: Solo Violin Capriccio No. 3 in E Minor “Elegy”

Celine Cheow

On that morning of 14 August 2017, upon stepping into the anatomy museum for the first time, an overpowering sense of grief swept over and latched on to me for the rest of the day so much that I had to come up with the main melody of this elegy to express it. This piece was eventually composed over a period of more than eight months with many parts added or altered along the way (such as the main harmony and the ending).

Inspiration with regards to its rough structure has been taken from Chopin’s Funeral March, whereby it begins with a solemn first section which moves on to a lighter, carefree second segment before returning, as though awaking back to the present. The piece ends with three long-drawn high G-E sixth chords, with a short pause before the final one. The first chord, in an appassionato manner, depicts the first wave of grief with regards to the deceased; the second chord, a little louder and more grievous than the first, represents remorse of not cherishing the time with them prior to their demise; and a pause, as though catching a breath and a thought, before the last, softest chord to show acceptance that nothing could be changed as death cannot be reversed.

Op 40: Solo Lament for Woodwind (Part 1)

Celine Cheow

This piece is written as a lament to those who had sacrificed their lives in the second world war and is meant for either solo recorder or flute. It begins with a lonely starting melody before altering between strings of rapid triplets or semiquavers and long-drawn sorrowful melodies; just like how the war had alternations between fast-paced dangers and outbreaks of sorrow. It ends with running notes for the first part of this introduction.

This piece was first attempted on 8th March 2018 upon first learning of this festival and was abandoned until 12 June 2018 (due to the composer’s inability to shorten the piece that originally sat in this spot).

Tale of the Merlion City- A Piano Solo

Celine Cheow

This piece was inspired by the history of Singapore, with the segment lengths based on the relative lengths of each significant time period in our history text books. The introductory narration theme was

first came up with on 9 March 2018 and the remainder of the piece was completed over the next few months.

It has the following structure:

Narration, Introduction- A musical narration introduces the story of Singapore with an enigmatic theme.

A Fishing Village- The running notes and dreamy atmosphere depicts that of a fishing village and brings us back to the far past of Singapore.

The British Colonisation- Bombastic and adventurous, it depicts the British coming in to take over Singapore.

World War 2- After the highest point of the British Colonisation, a series of dissonant tumbling chords represents the fall of Singapore. The dissonant running bass is meant to depict the chaos of the second world war.

The Beginning of Singapore- A soft, questioning melody begins as a mark of uncertainty towards the future of Singapore after the war had ended. It soon transitions to a slow, march-like theme that accelerates and transitions to a major key, fast, and dynamic ending that is much like Singapore today.

Narration, Finale- The narrator brings us back to the present. A variation from the second part of the previous narration- now more dynamic and dramatic- takes over and ends with chords and running notes up and down the piano before the 1-2-5 motif (C-sharp, D-sharp, G-sharp), which goes from the lowest octave all the way up to the highest octave, asks an open question as to how Singapore would be like in the future. It ends with a very soft C-sharp octave chord at the low end of the piano to mark the end of the piece without stealing the limelight of the question.