

Cheryl Toh



Cheryl is a Singaporean pianist with 13 years of experience since picking up the art at the age of 6. She was awarded the Certificate of Distinction for both the Associate of Trinity College London and Licentiate of Trinity College London Diploma in Music Performance. She was also awarded a gold medal twice for both the 2015 and 2017 biennial Mandeville Music Festival Competition where she performed at Alliance Francaise and The Japanese Association respectively. Additionally, she has taken part in masterclasses with prestigious musicians such as Trinity's Head of Keyboard, Deniz Arman Gelenbe and Founder of Dalcroze School, USA, Dr Jeremy Dittus.

Having taken music as a formal subject for six years in both secondary school and junior college, she also had many opportunities to perform such as the annual Music Elective Programme Concert “@rtikulation” which took place at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music (YSTCM) Orchestra Hall and the Esplanade Recital Studio in the years 2016 & 2017 respectively. Cheryl was also a recipient of the Ministry of Education Music Elective Scholarship, consecutive years 2016-2017. She also received a subject book prize for H2 Music for displaying academic excellence in the field of music as seen by how she was top in her school's year 1 promotional examination.

Moreover, she was an active member of her secondary school and junior college band. From 2014-2015, she was the concert mistress of her secondary school and helped lead and conduct them. She also participated in the 2013, 2015 & 2017 biennial Singapore Youth Festival where the band was awarded certificate of Distinction. She has performed in many band concerts in the Esplanade Concert Hall and YSTCM Concert Hall such as Limelight in 2012, 2014 & 2015, MUSE in 2016 & 2017 and LegACy in 2017. Additionally, she performed as part of the Music Elective Programme orchestra in 2014 & 2016 at YSTCM Concert Hall and at Esplanade Concert Hall in 2016 for the 4th Wind Bands Association of Singapore Youth Band Festival. She also gained exposure through taking part in two band overseas trip - UK in 2011 and Japan Osaka in 2016.

Apart from the above, Cheryl is also a skilled accompanist that takes part in many competitions with her brother who is a violinist. A recent competition would be the 12th ZhongSin International Music Competition 2018 (open category) where they were awarded 1st prize. Cheryl is also an accompanist for violinists taking graded ABRSM examinations and recently accompanied students in their 2018 examination.

Program notes

Beethoven Sonata No. 30 in E major, Op. 109 (II: Prestissimo)

Composed in 1820, the Sonata was commissioned by the Berlin publishing house of A. Schlesinger and dedicated to Maximiliane Brentano, the daughter of Antonie and Franz Brentano. Beethoven had become acquainted with the family after meeting Antonie Brentano in Vienna in 1810. One of Beethoven's last sonatas, the Op. 109 is noteworthy for its divergence from the traditional sonata form. As compared to the large-scale piano sonata 'Hammerklavier', Op. 106 (composed in 1817-1818), the piano sonata Op. 109 is much more intimate.

The second movement of Beethoven's sonata Op. 109 titled "Prestissimo" in E minor is the only instance in the sonata which seems to show hints of fury. It is in a sonata form and begins with a strong motif in fortissimo. As in his later works, the second movement contains hints of Baroque musical traits such as through Beethoven's fixation with contrapuntal development and usage of circle of fifths as well as imitation.

Granados No. 4 from Goyescas Op. 11, 'Quejas, o La maja y el ruiseñor'

Composed by Spanish composer Enrique Granados in 1911, '*Quejas, o La maja y el ruiseñor*' (*The Maiden and the Nightingale*) is the fourth piece of the piano suite *Goyescas*, '*Los majos enamorados*' (*The Majos in Love*). Although these pieces have often been said to have been inspired by the painter Francisco Goya, it has yet to be proven. The *majos* in the title of Granados' work refer to the Spanish society's working-class level. *Goyescas* has also been adapted into an opera in 1915 under the encouragement of American pianist Ernest Schelling. The opera tells the story of four characters: Rosario a female aristocrat, her lover Fernando as well as a man named Paquiro and a woman named Pepa. A love triangle ensues between Rosario, Fernando and Paquiro. This results in a duel between Fernando and Paquiro with the opera ending with the defeated Fernando dying in Rosario's arms.

'*Quejas, o La maja y el ruiseñor*' (*The Maiden and the Nightingale*) is by far the most popular of all Granados' pieces. It incorporates Spanish music elements and is heavily ornamented. It opens with a lyrical and mournful theme which is taken from a folksong in Valencia. The theme appears to be sung by the maiden and appears several more times during the piece. In the opera, the maiden refers to Rosario and she sang this sorrowfully to a nightingale before Fernando set off to duel Paquiro. The piece ends off with the sound of the nightingale 'answering' her song as trills are executed on the piano.