

## Vivien Chong Qing Li



A 19 year old pianist, Vivien has been learning the piano since the age of 5. Her interest in music turned into a passion, which she has been pursuing through participation in various competitions, putting up performances and taking up music as her core subjects of study throughout her past 6 years of schooling. She has also achieved stellar results at the Trinity College of London's Licentiate Level Performance Diploma, earning a Distinction. Seeking to improve her musical skills, she has performed in masterclasses conducted by Professor Deniz Arman Gelenbe, in 2016, Dr Lee Pei Ming, in 2017,

Professor Thomas Hecht and Associate Professor Albert Tiu, in 2018, as part of the 3-day Piano Academy held at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music (Singapore).

She has performed at various occasions and events, such as competitions and festivals, namely, the National Piano and Violin Competition 2013 (Singapore) and the 6th Singapore Performers' Festival & Chamber Music Competition 2016. Additionally, she has performed at the Victoria Concert Hall, in conjunction with her Junior College's String Ensemble annual concert, Kronos!, as a concerto soloist, performing Mozart's 17th Piano Concerto in G Major, 1st movement. This was due to her attaining her Junior College's Music Elective Programme's Young Performer Award in 2017. Other public performing opportunities that her Junior College has given her were the concerts @artikulation in 2016 and 2017; where she presented as a duet partner in the former year and as a soloist in the latter year. Aside from these large-scale performances, she has also performed at her previous music school's music festivals: the Mandeville Piano and Violin Festival 2013 and the Mandeville Music Festival 2015, both of which she was awarded the Gold medal.

Other than performing as a soloist, Vivien has performed with chamber group in her previous music school's biannual concert, in 2017, and has picked up other instruments in her Primary School (Saxophone), Secondary School and Junior College (Clarinet). With her Secondary School Symphonic Band, she participated in an exchange trip to the United Kingdom, and with her Junior College Concert Band, she attended multiple exchanges with school bands in Osaka, Japan. Along with her Primary School Symphonic Band, she achieved the Gold award at the Singapore Youth Festival (SYF) in 2009 and 2011. Joining the Symphonic Band in her Secondary School, she proceeded to aid in the band's achievement of the Certificate of Distinction at the SYF in 2013 and 2015. The band also put up performances at the Esplanade Concert Hall annually, from 2012 to 2015, under the "Limelight" series. Subsequently, with her Junior College's Concert Band, she achieved the Certificate of Distinction at the SYF Arts

Presentation. On top of that, they put up their annual performance, MUSE, in 2016 and 2017, at the Esplanade Concert Hall, in the latter year they played to a full house. And in 2017, they performed in Victoria Concert Hall as part of the programme of the alumni's annual concert, LegACy.

Her passion for music has driven her to pursue it further through enrolling into a conservatory and furthering her studies in music in order to sharpen her performance skills and enhance her musical ability.

Today, she will be presenting 2 pieces of very contrasting styles: Chopin's Scherzo No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 31 and Prokofiev's Etude in C Minor, Op. 2, No. 4.

## **Scherzo No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 31**

Frederic Chopin (1810-1849)

Composed and published in 1837 in Leipzig, this work was dedicated to Countess Adèle Fürstenstein. Before Chopin's Scherzos (which he composed 6 of them), the most famous Scherzos were by Beethoven and Mendelssohn, which served as Chopin's models. As his compositional style matured, his later Scherzos only preserved the 3/4 meter and the ternary (ABA) form, which he embellished on as he saw fit. In this scherzo, the great extension and harmonic foray into distant keys create tension that is resolved with the reprise of the opening material. This work was constructed on the principle of thematic unity, which was a typical feature of "Germanic" works of that time.

Although the piece opens in B-flat minor, most of the work is written in D-flat major. The mysterious opening motif of the piece consists of two arpeggiated pianissimo chords, marked *sotto voce*, short and almost inaudible. It is followed by a loud and majestic statement of a set of fortissimo chords. These two phrases are said to represent a sort of question and answer. This exchange happens numerous times before we get to the vibrant flowing melody that is repeated with variation throughout the piece. In the B section, things become quieter and more contemplative, building up in confidence when it is repeated and leads back to the return of the opening section before the piece ends with a tumultuous coda.

## **Etude in C minor Op. 2, No. 4**

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

As a cocky 18-year-old virtuoso pianist, Prokofiev wrote this to showcase his great technicality on the piano and also to develop his compositional style. These 4 etudes was considered to be in his mature style, though only composed in 1909, unlike the First Piano Sonata which shows influence of Russian romantics, Rachmaninov and Scriabin, composed in 1910. They take an oblique view of life, subjecting standard material like scales and arpeggios to provocative deformation.

Etude No. 4, as with the first etude in this set, bustle with brittle energy and evokes a sense of breathless with it's left hand ostinato-like figure in octaves. It is abundant in sarcastic wrong notes interjections, typical of Prokofiev's mature compositional style and makes up for the overblown ending of the first study (where the clear C major key of the piece suddenly throws the piece into a D minor ending). Written in an altered binary form, this etude consists of 4 sections: A B A B. The first B section starts in E minor, and the expected starting key for the second B section is C minor. However, the second B actually begins in D minor, thus prolonging a sense of anticipation of the tonic. After a sustained dominant preparation on G, C minor reappears in the final four bars, leading to a dramatic flourish at the end.