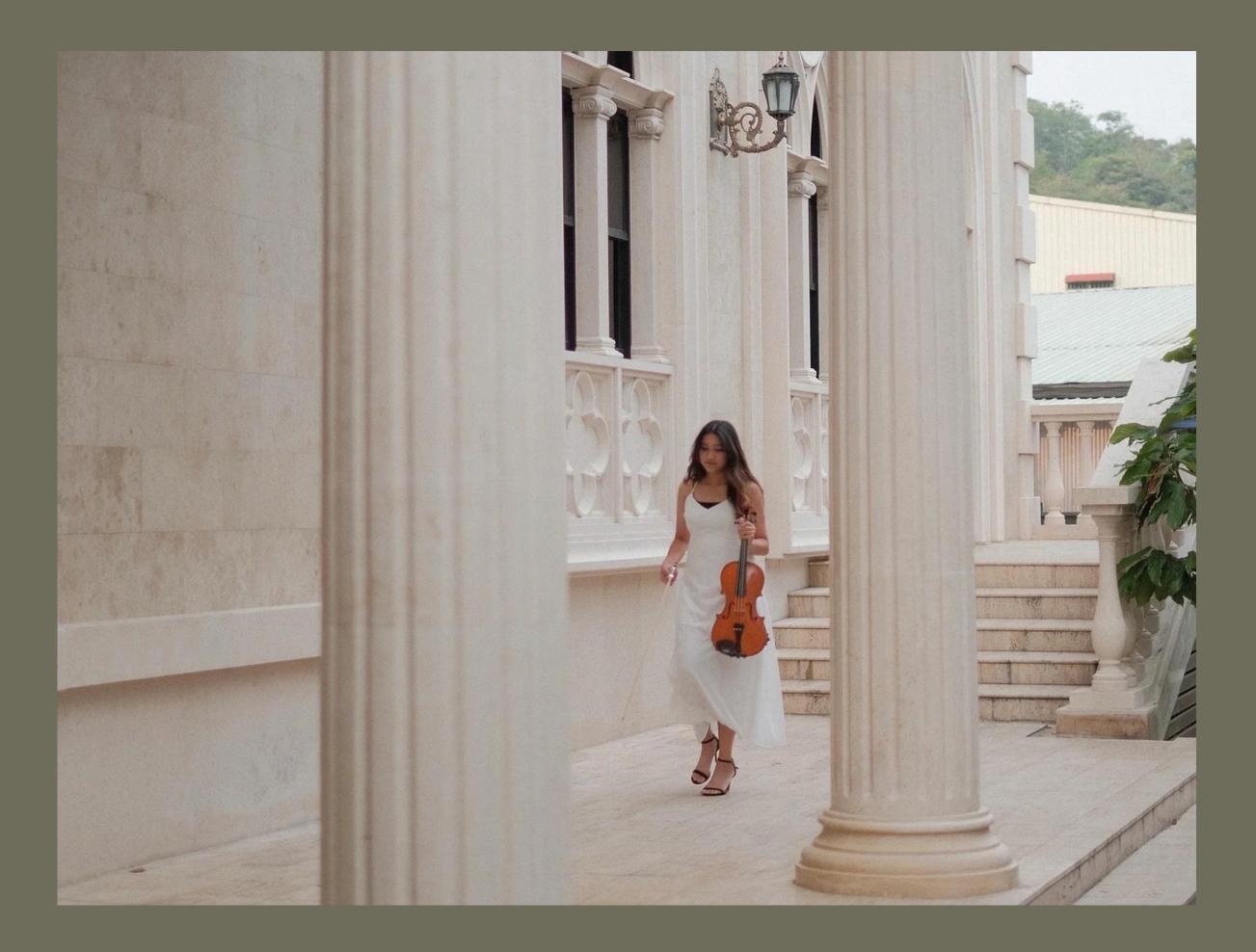


# HUANG YI VIOLA SENIOR RECITAL

PROGRAM NOTES



# Biography



Huang Yi (Naomi) began her musical journey with the violin at the age of five, under the guidance of Mulie Miao-Wen Liu. At fifteen, she shifted her focus to the viola. Throughout her musical education, she has benefited from the mentorship of Manchin Zhang, Mulie Miao-Wen Liu, Anna Chi-An Tsai, and Stephanie Dai-Fen Tsai. Naomi has gained extensive live performance experience in diverse venues, including the Kagoshima Prefectural Culture Center, Suntory Hall, Matsushima Culture and Tourism Exchange Hall, National Concert Hall, Taipei Eslite Performance Hall, Kaohsiung Music Hall, Puli Arts and Culture Center, Miaobei Art Center, Esplanade Concert Hall, and the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory Concert Hall. As the student viola principal of the Puli Butterfly Symphony Orchestra, a well-known regional orchestra, she represented the ensemble at international events such as the 9th Kagoshima Asian Youth Arts Festival and the Japan Earthquake Tsunami 311 Commemoration Concert 2017. Driven by her pursuit of excellence, she has attended masterclasses with esteemed musicians including Nobuko Imai, Lech Antonio Uszynski, Honggang Li, Tim Frederiksen, Jennifer Stumm, Mikhail Zemtsov, and Julia Dinerstein. Currently, Naomi is a fourth-year viola major student in Professor Manchin Zhang's studio at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory, where she continues to refine her artistry and musical proficiency. She aspires to contribute meaningfully to the world of classical music through performance and collaboration.

# Bruch Romanze Op. 85

Prokofiev Romeo and Juliet Op.64 (arr. Borisovsky)

Intermission

Bax Sonata for Viola and Piano

# Bruch Romanze Op. 85

Max Bruch (1838-1920), a composer often overshadowed by his famous G minor Violin Concerto, crafted a wealth of beautiful and expressive music. His "Romanze" for viola and piano, Op. 85, stands as a testament to his lyrical gifts and his understanding of the viola's warm, resonant voice.

Composed in 1911, late in Bruch's career, the "Romanze" is a work of serene beauty and tender emotion. It eschews virtuosic display in favor of intimate expression, allowing the viola's inherent warmth and singing quality to shine. The piece is characterized by its flowing melodies, rich harmonies, and a sense of quiet introspection.

The "Romanze" unfolds in a single, continuous movement, displaying a clear and elegant structure. The piano provides a supportive and evocative backdrop, allowing the viola's melody to soar and resonate. The piece is imbued with a sense of nostalgic longing, reminiscent of a romantic ballad or a heartfelt song without words.

- Key Features:
  - The piece is known for its lyrical melodies.
  - It highlights the warm and expressive tone of the viola.
  - It conveys a sense of romantic nostalgia.
  - The piano part is very supportive and allows the viola to sing

Bruch's "Romanze" is a cherished gem in the viola repertoire, a work that captures the essence of romantic expression in its purest form. Its enduring popularity stems from its ability to touch the listener's heart with its simple yet profound beauty.

# Prokofiev Romeo and Juliet Op, 64 (arr. Borisovsky)

Sergei Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet," Op. 64, stands as a towering achievement in 20th-century ballet. Its vivid orchestration and dramatic intensity have captivated audiences worldwide. However, the work's inherent musical richness has also inspired numerous arrangements, among them the remarkable transcriptions for viola and piano by the esteemed Soviet violist Vadim Borisovsky (1900-1972).

Borisovsky, a founder of the Beethoven String Quartet, possessed a deep understanding of the viola's potential. His arrangements of excerpts from "Romeo and Juliet" not only showcase the instrument's lyrical warmth and dramatic power but also reveal the essence of Prokofiev's score in an intimate chamber setting.

Today's performance features a selection of movements, carefully chosen to convey the ballet's emotional arc:

- Movements 1, "Introduction."
- Movements 2, "The Street Awakens."
- Movements 3, "Juliet as a Young Girl."
- Movements 5, "Dance of the Knights."
- Movements 7, "Mercutio."

### Highlights:

- These movements take us through the begining of the story, from the tension of the street fights, to the youthful innocence of juliet, and then to the more well known "Dance of the Knights" and the playful Mercutio.
- Borisovsky's arrangements highlight the viola's ability to express a wide range of emotions, from delicate lyricism to powerful drama.
- The "Dance of the Knights" (movement 5) in particular, is a very well known and powerful movement, and the transcription for Viola and piano, highlights the power of the viola.

Borisovsky's work allows us to experience Prokofiev's masterpiece in a new light, revealing the inherent beauty and drama of the score through the unique voice of the viola.

## Bax Sonata for Viola and Piano

Arnold Bax (1883-1953), a composer deeply immersed in the landscapes and legends of Ireland, infused his music with a distinctive romantic and often mystical spirit. His Viola Sonata, completed in 1922, stands as a testament to his lyrical gifts and his profound understanding of the viola's capabilities. This sonata, dedicated to the renowned violist Lionel Tertis, reflects the composer's characteristic harmonic language, rich textures, and evocative melodies. While not explicitly programmatic, the work conjures a sense of atmosphere, drawing on the emotional and sonic possibilities of the viola and piano partnership.

The sonata unfolds in three movements:

### I. Molto moderato - Allegro:

The opening movement begins with a contemplative and atmospheric "Molto moderato" section, where the piano establishes a shimmering backdrop for the viola's warm, expressive lines. The music gradually builds in intensity, leading to a more animated "Allegro" section, characterized by flowing melodies and moments of passionate fervor.

### II. Allegro energico, ma non troppo presto:

The second movement is a dynamic and energetic "Allegro," imbued with a sense of restless energy. This movement has been described as containing elements that could be likened to wild irish dances. Bax uses rhythmic drive, and complex interplay between the viola and piano, to create a sense of dramatic tension.

### III. Molto lento:

The final movement, "Molto lento," is a deeply introspective and poignant exploration of the viola's lyrical qualities. The music is characterized by its expressive melodies, rich harmonies, and a sense of quiet reflection. There is a return to themes from the first movement, which provides a sense of cyclical unity to the work.

Bax's Viola Sonata is a work of profound beauty and emotional depth, showcasing the viola's ability to convey a wide range of emotions, from tender lyricism to passionate intensity. It remains a significant contribution to the viola repertoire, a testament to Bax's unique voice and his mastery of the instrument.