



YST

Yong Siew Toh
Conservatory
of Music

INTERFERENCES

a Senior Recital by
Stephen Mak
with Liu Jia

25 April | 6.30 PM | YST Concert Hall
Works by Miroshnikov, Hummel, Vivaldi, and Boutry



Interferences

Interferences showcases the different kinds of instrumental dialogues within music – that of passion, joy, nostalgia, and fury.

What are the kinds of dialogues we have in our lives, and how can we see them in the music tonight?

Programme

Oleg Miroshnikov

Scherzo for Bassoon and Piano

Johann Nepomuk Hummel

Grand Concerto for Bassoon and Orchestra

I. Allegro moderato

II. Romanza, Andantino e cantabile

III. Rondo, Vivace

Antonio Vivaldi

Concerto for Bassoon in D minor, RV 481

I. Allegro

II. Larghetto

III. Allegro molto

Roger Boutry

Interferences I for Bassoon and Piano

Stephen Mak, Bassoon

Liu Jia, Piano

Scherzo for Bassoon and Piano, O. Miroshnikov

Miroshnikov's Scherzo is a piece that marries humour and expressiveness.



The piece starts off with a groovy *Allegro Brillante* in G minor containing galloping rhythms, funny chromatisms, and quick bursts of running notes. An *Adagio Sostenuto* in A-flat major follows, showcasing the Bassoon's ability to convey sweet expressiveness in cantabile lines. A short cadenza transitions the

sweetness of the *Adagio Sostenuto* back to the comical *Allegro Brillante*, with a hasty coda that brings the piece to an abrupt end.

Grand Concerto for Bassoon and Orchestra, J.N Hummel

Hummel was a pioneer in the art of piano playing, publishing *A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instruction on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte*, whose technique has inspired succeeding pianists such as Czerny, Chopin, and Liszt. Could he have thought of transferring pianistic virtuosity to the bassoon when writing this concerto?



The *Allegro moderato* begins with the introduction of a noble-sounding main theme with a hoppy second subject. The bassoon eventually enters with the melodious theme after the orchestra modulates through a variety of keys. Hummel gradually introduces exciting licks of increasing difficulty, as if to give the performer space and time to warm up their fingers. The licks are characterised by long streams of 16th notes with wide leaps that gradually

increase in intervals (the largest leap being 2 octaves!). These licks arrest the attention of the audience, and very much so, the performer.

The *Romanza, Andantino e cantabile* follows as the second movement. The delicacy of the bassoon is showcased through a gentle melody.

After going through a series of modulations and moods, a cadenza appears and brings the piece to a lovely conclusion, with the bassoon descending in arpeggios to the depths of the resounding B-flat.

The third movement is a jolly Rondo that makes one forget about the worries of life. Once again, virtuosity is brought back with the bursts of running notes with wide leaps that serve as implied harmony. A distinctive feature of this Rondo is the 2 contrasting episodes within.

The first is forward-moving with a waltz-like characteristic in B-flat major, whereas the second creeps around like a thief at night with a serious tone in D minor. The path eventually leads back to the jolly main theme and a string of running 16ths drives the concerto to an end.

Concerto in D minor RV487, A. Vivaldi

If there was an 18th-century composer who made the bassoon resemble an electric guitar in a rock band, it would be Antonio Vivaldi. The Concerto in D minor is a prime example of that.



Pulsating rhythms and bursts of running notes gives the groove and life of the first movement, with intense dialogues alternating between the orchestra and the bassoon.

The second movement is sombre in tone- with long, soaring phrases and occasional dissonances that speak of reminiscence and nostalgia. A lively and rustic dance-like groove in triple metre can be found in the third movement, with driving triplets that make for good head-bopping material.

Interferences I, R. Boutry

The idea of Boutry's zany named Interferences I, composed in 1972, is a bizarre dialogue between bassoon and piano, in which unexpected rhythmic and metrical irregularities and pitfalls set up musical 'interferences' as the players juxtapose widely contrasted gestures and styles.



This piece contains hints of composition styles evoked from the music of Debussy, Poulenc, and Messiaen (not to mention a disguised reminiscence of the famous bassoon solo at the opening of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*).

The bassoon is nevertheless allowed some frankly lyrical unaccompanied soli in the course of this diverting and imaginative work.

Programme notes by Stephen Mak and Grove Music Online/Kiefer Strickland

