

A MEASURE OF TIME

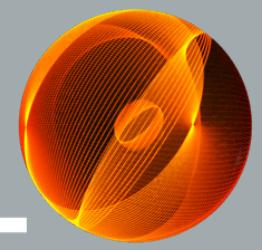
Priscilla Fong, mezzo-soprano

Elizabeth Low, piano

Beatrice Lin, piano

Tan See Huey, soprano

Viktoriya Klyukina, flute



YST
Yong Siew Toh
Conservatory
of Music

April 30 | 7:40 PM

PROGRAM

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL
Mi palpita il cor

ERICH KORNGOLD
Vier Lieder des Abschieds, Op. 14
Sterbelied

Dies eine kann mein Sehnen nimmer fassen
Mond so gehst du wieder auf
Gefasster Abschied

MARK ADAMO
(from *Little Women*)
Couldn't I unbake the breads
Perfect as we are

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
(from *Le nozze di Figaro*)
Via resti servita
(from *Così fan tutte*)
Ah guarda sorella

JAKE HEGGIE
Paper Wings

PERFORMERS

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Priscilla Fong, *mezzo-soprano*

It was the thrill of story-telling and the love for performance that plunged 21 year-old mezzo-soprano, Priscilla Fong, into the world of classical singing at age 16. Since then, she has embarked on a wonderful journey, pursuing her passion for classical music. As a performer, Priscilla was a finalist in the SLO-ASEAN Competition and has worked with many well-known musicians including Roger Vignoles, Masaaki Suzuki, Gerda van Zelm, Caitlin Hulcup through various masterclasses and coachings.

She is also a teacher, emcee, and host, enjoying collaborative work through arts education, curation, and production. She has worked with venues and organizations such as Shangri-La Hotel, Eden School, Very Special Arts Singapore, the German Embassy, and the French Embassy.

Elizabeth Low, *piano*

Elizabeth Low is a 21 year old Singaporean pianist in her final year of the undergraduate degree in piano performance at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, under the musical guidance of Professor Thomas Hecht.

In the National Piano and Violin Competition 2015, Elizabeth was one of the grand finalists of the senior category. She also emerged top 6 in the 3rd Steinway Youth Piano Competition 2016. Her brilliant performance of Mendelssohn's first piano concerto resulted in her clinching onto the 2nd prize in the YSTCM concerto competition 2019, as well as 2nd prize in the Indonesia international piano competition 2019, where she was highly commended by renown French pianist, Pascal Rogé. Besides playing the piano, Elizabeth has a great interest in singing, photography and has a growing hobby in sports.





Beatrice Lin, *piano*

Beatrice was a graduate of the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, the Royal Academy of Music, as well as the Conservatoire de Musique de Genève. Her studies were generously supported by the National Arts Council and the Lee Foundation. She was also awarded the Adolphe Neuman prize from the canton of Geneva in 2010. Performances in Switzerland include collaborations with instrumentalists, singers, choirs as well as contemporary music ensembles in Geneva, Lausanne, Sion and Biel. She was also invited to perform in two live radio broadcasts on the Radio Suisse Romande Espace 2, as keyboardist with L'orchestre de Chambre de Genève and ensemble contrechamps, and as repetiteur for the Concours de Genève.

Tan See Huey, *soprano*

Tan See Huey is a soprano born and raised in Malaysia, and is currently a third year voice major at YST Conservatory of Music. During her study here at the YST Conservatory of Music, she has the opportunity to work with big names such as Masaaki Suzuki, Jonas Nordberg, Allen Henderson, Miah Persson and Paul Weigold.



Viktoriya Klyukina, *flute*

Viktoriya Klyukina was born in Uzbekistan in a family of musicians. She started to learn the flute at the age of six and finished Republic Special Music Academic Lyceum in Uspenskiy, Tashkent, Uzbekistan. During her studies in school, she became a laureate of many regional and international competitions, while playing with many chamber and symphony orchestras as a soloist and participating in TV and Radio records. Currently she is a third year student in YST Conservatory of Music in class of Evgeni Brokmiller.

A MEASURE OF TIME

In this program, we embark on a journey with six very different individuals, each of them meandering through a specific point of time in their lives. Be it full of love, hate, disappointment, regret, thrill or excitement - each character carefully measures their time and reflects on the changes it brings along.

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

Mi palpita il cor

Our story tonight begins with a tormented lover whose heart is torn by jealousy, bitterness, and hatred. An anxious soul, a confused mind and a trembling heart forces the singer to plead for death.

The composer of this cantata is George Friederic Handel, a talented composer, violinist, organist, and harpsichordist born in 1685. As a young composer, Handel would spend some years in Italy, receiving opportunities to further develop his skills especially in the area of vocal music. When opera was banned by papal decree in Rome, Handel followed the example of other composers, opting for another genre which involved similar dramatic and expressive qualities – the cantata. During his time in Italy, Handel may have written over 150 of such works, including ‘cantate con stromenti’, cantatas for one or more solo voices and additional instruments.

Between 1710-1713, Handel wrote at least three versions of the cantata *Mi palpita il cor*. By extending the first syllable of ‘palpita’ into ‘ah-ah-ah’ in the first phrase, Handel successfully echoes the very trembling of the suffering heart itself.

ERICH KORNGOLD

Vier Lieder des Abschieds, Op. 14

Erich Korngold was born in Austria in 1897 and showed exceptional talent from a young age. At age 9, Korngold performed his cantata *Gold* which received praise from Gustav Mahler as well as a recommendation for Korngold to begin tuition at Zemlinsky. Two years later, Korngold would compose the ballet *Der Schneemann* which would be performed at the first Vienna Court in 1910. This prodigy would continue to impress audiences with his prolific writing, with many of his works still being performed around the world today.

The cycle, *Vier Lieder des Abschieds*, is a collection of songs describing the experience of separation and loss between loved ones. With text written by Christina Rosetti, the first song *Sterbelied* establishes a sense of isolation and longing with the use of dissonant harmonies and an aching melody line. Contrasting the melancholic farewell, the second song, *Dies eine kann mein Sehnen nimmer fassen*, features a darker, thicker texture with a sense of foreboding and trepidation. *Mond so gehst du wieder auf* is a prayer to the moon. As the singer asks the celestial body to instruct her on how to yearn no longer for her lost loved one, the harmonies and texture is both profoundly sorrowful and mystical. The song cycle ends with *Gefasster Abschied*, a gentle farewell with a rocking and lulling image in the piano accompaniment, creating a measured sense of peace and tranquility.

For while time is cruel, time can also be kind. The sun will still rise resplendently after the storms, and the moon follows suit, emerging once more over the dark valleys.

MARK ADAMO

Couldn't I unbake the breads

Perfect as we are

Born in 1962, Mark Adamo is an American composer, professor, and librettist. Based on the Alcott novel, *Little Women* is Adamo's début opera, attracting national attention after being introduced at the Houston Grand Opera in 1998. Over the past fifteen years, *Little Women* remains one of the most frequently performed American operas.

Little Women follows the lives of four March sisters - Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy - as they grow up in New England after the American Civil War. The narrative uniquely details each of their journeys from childhood to womanhood. Meg, the oldest of the four, has dreams of marrying and settling into a life of domesticity, mirroring the traditional expectations for the modern 19th century woman. In stark contrast, Jo is hotheaded and adventurous, and dreams of pursuing a career in writing. Vain and beautiful, Amy is an artist who desires elegance and fine society. Beth, the youngest, is kindhearted, always thinking of others and making sacrifices for her family.

In *Couldn't I unbake the breads*, Laurie, their neighbor, has just returned from Paris, bringing news that he has just married Jo's younger sister, Amy. As Laurie's previous love interest, Jo is both surprised and confused. Though putting on a pretence of relief and good cheer, Jo wrestles with accepting this news in scathing self-reproach. In this aria, she mocks the idea of trying to stop time from changing the ones she loves.

Perfect as we are continues this story of time and the changes it brings along. As Jo struggles to rewrite her latest fictional melodrama, "The Curse of the Coventries", she finds herself distracted again and again by the possibility of her sisters Meg and Amy leaving the family due to their marriages with Brooke and Laurie respectively. While she edits her book, she argues that she and her sisters can remain "Perfect as we are" despite the changes in life.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Via resti servita

Ah guarda sorella

A prolific and influential composer of the 18th Century, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart began his music journey composing and performing at the age of 5. Composing more than 600 works which included sonatas, symphonies, masses, chamber music, concertos and operas, Mozart played an instrumental role in shaping the direction of classical music.

Over his lifetime, Mozart composed a total of 22 operas. Among them, *Le nozze di Figaro* might be one of his most widely performed works. Composed in 1786, the opera tells the story of Figaro and Susanna, who despite many challenges and hurdles, succeed in getting married. For example, Figaro owes a large sum of money to Marcellina, an old housekeeper. Due to this outstanding debt, Figaro promises to marry Marcellina if he is unable to return the money at the appointed time.

In *Via resti servita*, Marcellina and Susanna are standing outside a door, leading into a room where Figaro remains. They both realize they are in love with the same man and begin arguing on who should enter the room first, both trying to convince each other with polite insults, insisting it is their place to yield the right of way to each other.

This dynamic of love and excitement between two women is even more apparent in the relationship between two sisters, Fiordiligi and Dorabella in Mozart's opera *Così fan tutte*. In the duet, *Ah guarda sorella*, the sisters are in a garden, gazing at their lockets and praising their lovers. They both make a promise - if they ever change their affection, they will live a life full of pain and regret.

JAKE HEGGIE

Paper Wings

American composer Jake Heggie has composed eight full-length operas, several one-acts, nearly 300 art songs, as well as concerti, chamber music, choral and orchestral works.

First performed in December 1997, *Paper Wings* is a collection of songs based on lyrics written by Frederica von Stade, with overarching themes of growing up, childhood, and innocence. While the cycle is dedicated to von Stade's daughter, Lisa Elkus, all four songs in the cycle are autobiographical in nature.

The cycle opens with a quotation of a lullaby from the *Chants d'Auvergne* before leading into a memory of three-year-old Lisa joining her parents by the fireside on a cold frosty night. *Paper Wings*, the second song, details von Stade's childhood in Greece. She describes how her nanny made paper wings and how as a child, she would imagine herself flying over Athens. The third song, *Mitten Smitten*, is von Stade's memory of Lisa's bewilderment when she encountered her first pair of mittens. The cycle ends with a story of von Stade as a child, being rescued by a fireman after she climbed onto the roof. History repeats itself when Lisa makes the exact same mistake as her mother, showing an interesting image of von Stade's reaction.

TRANSLATIONS

TRANSLATIONS

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

Mi palpita il cor

Recitative

Mi palpita il cor,
Nè intendo perché?
Agitata è l'alma mia,
nè so cos' è.
Tormento e gelosia, sdegno, affanno e
dolore,
da me che pretendete?
Se mi volete amante,
amante son;
ma, oh Dio! Non m'uccidete,
ch'il cor, fra tante pene,
più soffrire non può le sue catene

Recitative

My heart trembles,
and I don't know why!
My soul is anxious,
but I don't know what it is.
Torment and jealousy, scorn, suffering
and pain,
what do you want from me?
If you want me to be a lover,
a lover I am;
but, oh God! Do not kill me,
for my heart, amid such torments,
will not be able to bear its bonds any longer.

Aria

Ho tanti affanni in petto,
che, qual sia il più tiranno,
io dir nol so.
So ben che do ricetto
a un aspro e crudo affanno,
e che morendo vò.

Aria

I have so much suffering in my breast
that a greater oppression
cannot be described.
I know well that I give harbor
to a bitter and cruel torture,
and that I am dying.

ERICH KORNGOLD

Vier Lieder des Abschieds, Op. 14

Sterbelied

Laß Liebster, wenn ich tot bin,
laß du von Klagen ab.
Statt Rosen und Cypressen
wächst Gras auf meinem Grab.
Ich schlafe still im Zwielichtschein
in schwerer Dämmerung -
Und wenn du willst, gedenke mein
und wenn du willst, vergiß.
Ich fühle nicht den Regen,
ich seh' nicht, ob es tagt,
ich höre nicht die Nachtigall,
die in den Büschen klagt.
Vom Schlaf erweckt mich keiner,
die Erdenwelt verblich.
Vielleicht gedenk ich deiner,
vielleicht vergaß ich dich.

Dies eine kann mein Sehnen nimmer fassen

Dies eine kann mein Sehnen nimmer fassen,
Daß nun von mir zu dir kein Weg mehr führ',
Daß du vorübergehst an meiner Tür
In ferne, stumme, ungekannte Gassen.
Wär' es mein Wunsch, daß mir dein Bild erbleiche,
Wie Sonnenglanz, von Nebeln aufgetrunken,
Wie einer Landschaft frohes Bild, versunken
Im glatten Spiegel abendlicher Teiche?
Der Regen fällt. Die müden Bäume triefen.
Wie welkes Laub verweh'n viel Sonnenstunden.
Noch hab' ich in mein Los mich nicht gefunden
Und seines Dunkels uferlose Tiefen.

Requiem

When I am dead, my dearest,
Do not lament.
Instead of roses and cypress,
Grass shall cover my grave.
I shall sleep quietly in the twilight,
In the heavy dusk.
And if you will, remember,
And if you will, forget.
I shall not feel the rain,
I shall not see the dawn,
I shall not hear the nightingale
Lamenting in the trees.
No one shall ever wake me,
All the world has vanished.
Perhaps I shall remember you,
Perhaps I'll have forgotten you.

This one thing my longing can never grasp

This one thing my longing can never grasp,
That now no path leads me to you,
That you walk past my door
Into distant, silent, unknown streets.
Could it be my wish that you should fade away,
Like the sun's brilliance engulfed in mist,
Like a landscape's happy reflection,
Sunk in the smooth mirror of evening ponds?
The rain falls. The tired trees drip.
Many hours of sun fade like withered leaves.
I have not yet come to term with my fate
And the boundless depths of its darkness.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Via resti servita

MARCELLINA

Via resti servita,
Madama brillante.

MARCELLINA

After you,
Gracious lady.

SUSANNA

Non sono sì ardita,
madama piccante.

SUSANNA

I'd not be so bold,
Worthy ma'am.

MARCELLINA

No, prima a lei tocca.

MARCELLINA

No, you go first, pray.

SUSANNA

No, no, tocca a lei.

SUSANNA

No, no, after you.

SUSANNA e MARCELLINA

Io so i dover miei,
non fo inciviltà.

SUSANNA and MARCELLINA

I know my place,
I'd not so presume.

MARCELLINA

La sposa novella!

MARCELLINA

A bride to be first.

SUSANNA

La dama d'onore!

SUSANNA

A lady in waiting.

MARCELLINA

Del Conte la bella!

MARCELLINA

The Count's favourite.

SUSANNA

Di Spagna l'amore!

SUSANNA

The toast of Spain.

MARCELLINA

I meriti!

MARCELLINA

Your qualities.

SUSANNA

L'abito!

SUSANNA

Your dress.

MARCELLINA

Il posto!

MARCELLINA

Your position.

SUSANNA

L'età!

SUSANNA

Your age.

MARCELLINA

Per Bacco, precipito,
se ancor resto qua.

MARCELLINA

I'll fly into a rage
If I stay here any longer.

SUSANNA

Sibilla decrepita,
da rider mi fa.

SUSANNA

Decrepit old witch,
She's a laughing stock.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Ah guarda sorella

FIORDILIGI

Ah, guarda, sorella,
Se bocca più bella,
Se petto più nobile
Si può ritrovar.

FIORDILIGI

Ah tell me sister,
If one could ever find
A nobler face,
A sweeter mouth.

DORABELLA

Osserva tu un poco,
Che fuoco ha ne' sguardi!
Se fiamma, se dardi
Non sembran scoccar.

DORABELLA

Just look,
See what fire is in his eye,
If flames and darts
Do not seem to flash forth!

FIORDILIGI

Si vede un sembiante
Guerriero ed amante.

FIORDILIGI

This is the face
Of a soldier and a lover.

DORABELLA

Si vede una faccia
Che alletta e minaccia.

DORABELLA

This is a face
Both charming and alarming.

FIORDILIGI E DORABELLA

Io sono felice.
Se questo mio core
Mai cangia desio,
Amore mi faccia
Vivendo penar.

FIORDILIGI AND DORABELLA

How happy I am!
If ever my heart
Changes its affection,
May love make me
Live in pain.

I am thankful for the many people who have made today possible.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights."

Thankful for my family for being so supportive during this whole journey.

Thankful for the Conservatory and the amazing production team for providing all the resources, rehearsal venues, and for helping me out throughout the whole process.

Thankful for those who performed alongside me (Elizabeth Low, Beatrice Lin, Tan See Huey, Viktoriya Klyukina), for taking the time to rehearse and for creating music together.

Thankful for REDSEA Gallery for providing the beautiful space and gallery for our photoshoot.

Thankful for you! For coming down and being a part of this evening's concert. You mean a lot!



A
WORD
OF
THANKS