

# COMPO STUDIO B-L DUO RECITAL

4 Sep 2023 (Mon)  
7.30pm

Steven Baxter Recital Studio  
YST Conservatory of Music

Come be wowed by the trailblazers of Singapore's contemporary music scene, **B-L Duo** (Bertram Wee & Lynette Yeo) as they present world premieres by local composers!



# WORKS

## 02. Techno-echo

NG XIN CI

04. oMGgggG  
h0W dAR3  
yo0ouUwUu!!!!1!

JELLAL KOAY

06. To drift,  
float, but never  
land

JOAN TAN JING WEN

## 01. Scares

CHUA ZI TAO

03. merry go  
where?

XIAO WEN

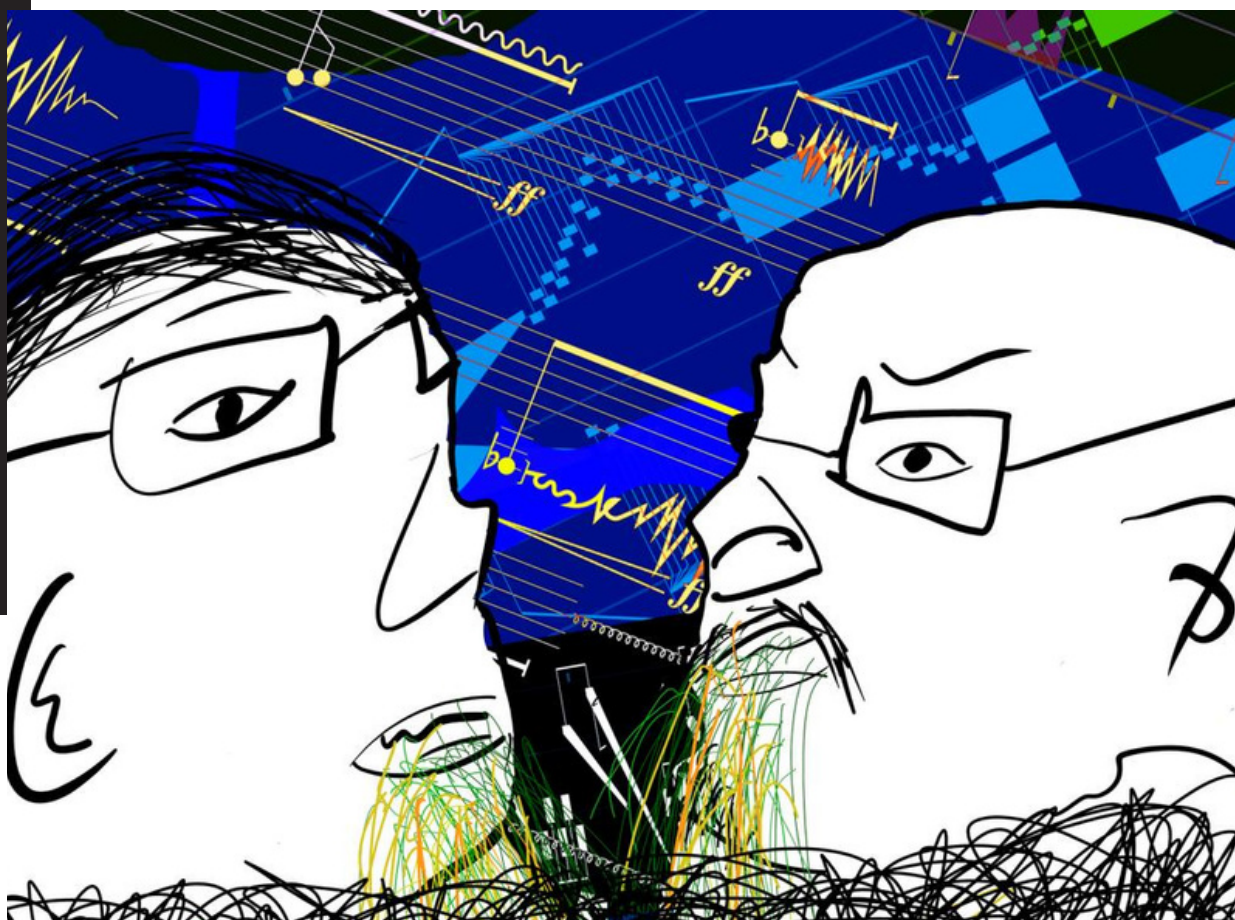
05. On / In Key

TOH YAN EE



# B-L DUO

## About...



Hailed by The Straits Times as “two truly virtuoso players (who perform) death-defying pianistic feats in tandem,” Bertram Wee and Lynette Yeo make up the B-L Duo, which is on a mission to play the creepiest and craziest music they can get their hands on. The duo is driven by the belief that much of the music outside the usual canon (especially stuff on the fringe of “polite” taste) has the potential to create meaningful musical experiences.

Advocates of performing obscure music and contemporary works, their diverse repertoire spans work by genre-defining stalwarts of contemporary concert music (Boulez, Finnissy, Sciarrino etc.) to that of recent musical innovators (de la Cour, Marcoll, Olencki etc.).

The B-L Duo were winners of the prestigious Royal Over-Seas League Competition (Ensemble Category) in 2017.

# OUR COMPOSERS



**Chua Zi Tao**

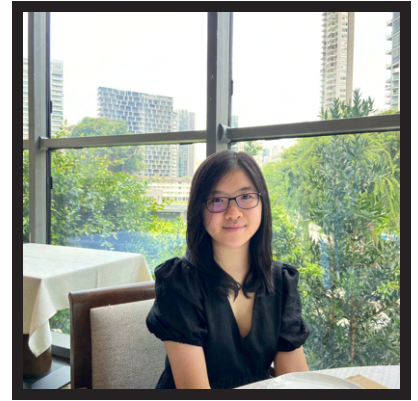
Currently in Italy



**Ng Xin Ci**



Greetings traveller!



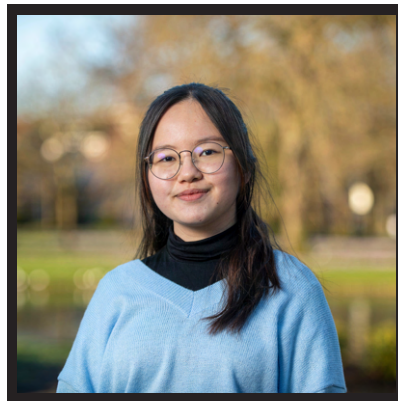
**Xiao Wen**

I make music 🎵



**Jellal Koay**

Passionate about good food



**Toh Yan Ee**

Wandering in the UK



**Joan Tan Jing Wen**

Dreamer and Stuffed Toy  
Connoisseur



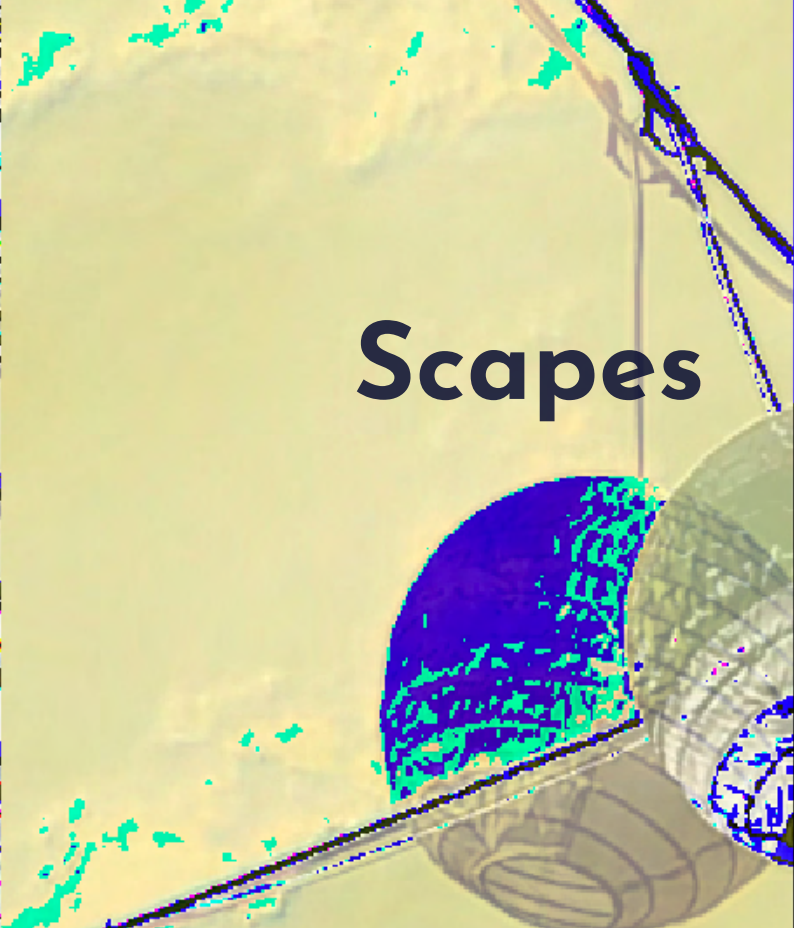
# ABOUT ZI TAO

Zi Tao Chua (b. 1999) is a Singaporean composer and pianist. He is currently pursuing his bachelor's degree in Composition at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music in the National University of Singapore under the tutelage of Peter Ivan Edwards and Chen Zhangyi.



As a composer, Chua explores his musical identity through the balance between science and culture. Several his pieces are influenced by systemic formulae and electronic music, while other pieces infuse cultural elements into the music. All these can be seen as either a reflection or juxtaposition with the current world. His pieces have been performed by various artists, such as Andreas Marinello, Christopher Adler, and Tacet(i) Ensemble. Chua has also been involved with interdisciplinary collaborations, notably with Runaway Co., a Singapore non-profit youth-led theatre group, and also *Exuviation* (2021), a dance piece written for Singaporean choreographer Dan Kwoh. Chua has also demonstrated his flair as a pianist in the Inter-Junior College Vivace Piano Ensemble Competition, achieving Gold with Commendation in 2016 and 2017, and in the Kingsburg International Piano Competition, as one of the six finalists in 2018.





# Scapes

Landscape: A picture representing a view of natural inland scenery

Soundscape: An eclectic mix of musical and non-musical sounds

Juxtaposing the windchime landscape with the sparse texture of the two keyboards, *Scapes* is a piece that combines these elements into a multimedia experience. The sound world is akin to a painting as it sweeps and emerges around the eight channels placed around the audience space over time. *Scapes* also incorporates digital signal processing such as modulation and filtering through MaxMSP for both the two keyboards and the windchimes. These sounds then trigger different events on the video to create various visual effects such as mixing and collage.

This work is the result of a collaboration with the Bertram-Lynette Duo, a new music duo that specialises in performing keyboard music that ranges from conventional two-piano setup to eccentric electronic works. They brought with them their wealth of experience working with the electronic medium, making this piece possible.



# ABOUT XIN CI

Ng Xin Ci (b. 2001) is a Singaporean composer currently studying in Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, pursuing Bachelor's of Music in Composition under the guidance of Peter Ivan Edwards and Martin Jaggi. She was a student of School Of The Arts, Singapore and graduated in 2019 under the International Baccalaureate Career-related Programme. She studied composition with Dr. Kelly Tang from 2016 to 2017 and with Mr. Danny Imson and Sascia Pellegrini from 2017 to 2019 during her years in SOTA.

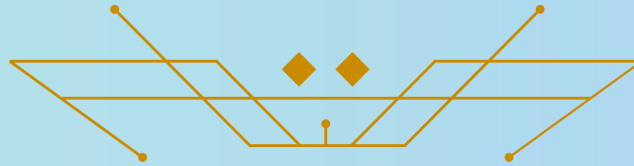


As a composer, Xin Ci often incorporates concepts and techniques of other artforms into her works as she is highly interested in integrated arts. Her goal is to find new ways to enhance music as an experience. Currently, she is focusing on learning, exploring and applying techniques of composition to hone her craft. Furthermore, Xin Ci is often exploring new ways of integrating various field of studies into her music making, such as exploring the relationship between music and psychology.

On top of her music career, Xin Ci is also a Theatre practitioner. She studied Theatre under the close guidance of renown Singaporean Theatre Director Chong Tze Chien from 2021 to 2023. In the span of the two years, Xin Ci performed in two major theatre productions organised by NUS Centre for the Arts. In 2022, she made her debut as an actress in the show "Blackout" during NUS Arts Festival 2022. The motivation for learning Theatre, came from her passion for integrated arts. Xin Ci believes that by personally experiencing theatre as an artform, it would provide her with different artistic perspective which would greatly aid in her music writing.



# Techno-Echo



Techno-Echo took inspiration from deviating the 'contemporary' world, hence the existence of the Electronic Dance Music opening. With the background knowledge of the B-L Duo in mind, the EDM opening serves as an element of surprise within the Modern Contemporary setting of the concert.

The idea is to catch the audiences off guard with a strong EDM opening misleading them from their expectations. Additionally, the piece presents multiple moments of surprises as it evolves, catching attention at different anchoring points. The materialisation of the EDM material was constructed using different Garageband Loop samples.

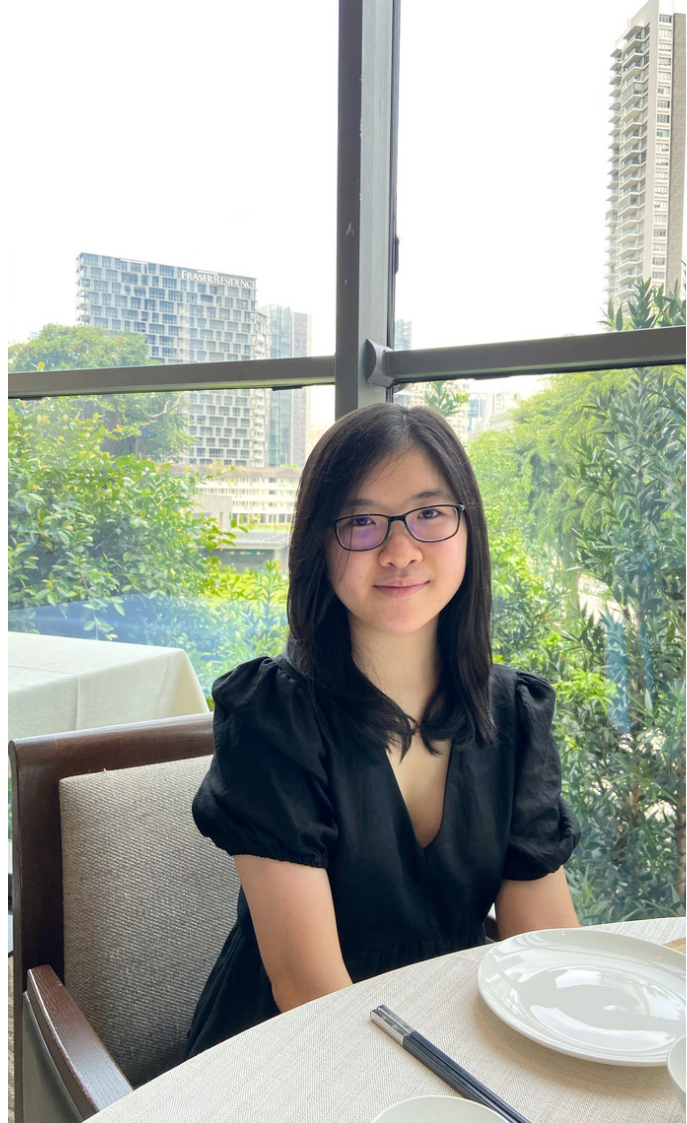
The finished product serves as a singular musical entity that undergoes transformation, exploring the boundaries of its stretchability. Furthermore, the use of an Acoustic Toy Piano serves as a contrasting entity both visually and musically. The instrumentation allows for an interesting juxtaposition of a gigantic electronic music machine against a small puny Toy Piano.

# ABOUT XIAO WEN

Xiao Wen (b. 2004) is a Singaporean composer, currently studying Composition at Yong Siew Toh Conservatory, National University of Singapore (YSTCM). She participated in the Young Composer's Academy 2020 organized by YSTCM and Ministry of Education of Singapore (MOE). She was enrolled in the Young Artist Programme (Composition) in YSTCM (2021-2023), and was under the tutelage of Peter Edwards, Associate Professor and Head of Composition at YST, and Martin Jaggi. Currently, she is studying under the tutelage of Associate Professor Peter Edwards and Dr Tan Yuting. Some of her

most recent premieres include a string quartet titled **ここまで (for now) (2022)** commissioned by Duo Tarena, which was premiered at parts + pieces = a night with Duo Tarena and friends in 2022, as well as **Piece for Wind Quintet (2023)** that was premiered at YST Young Composers' Academy Concert 2023.

Xiao Wen picked up the piano at age three, followed by electone at age seven. She has competed in eight editions of YAMAHA Electone Festival (2011-2015, 2017-2019) and clinched the Grand Prix Award (equivalent to first prize) in the Junior Section 1 category (2014), Junior Category (2015), Junior 3 Category (2017, 2018, 2019). She has also represented Singapore at the Asia Pacific YAMAHA Electone Festival in 2015 (Taipei) and 2018 (Indonesia). Other than classical and contemporary music, Xiao Wen also enjoys pop music. In 2018, she wrote her first pop song 《雨树》 and received first prize in the Songwriting (Creative) Category at the 4th Xin Kong Xia National Schools Xinyao Singing and Songwriting Competition. Subsequently, she has also participated in the 2019 and 2021 editions of SG:SW I Write the Songs Nationwide Mandarin-Pop Song Writing Festival, with 《自己》 performed at the Top 48 Showcase in 2019, and 《平行轨道》 entering Top 10 finals in 2021.





# merry-go-where?

**merry go where?** is an electronics piece written for two keyboards. The MIDI keyboards are connected to an Ableton Live program, where the different sound worlds are created "live" with the help of the performers.

**merry go where?** explores the emotions one might experience when alone on a deserted planet. I composed the piece visualising being in a vast empty space and the experience of being immersed in an unfamiliar environment. Sound appears slowly, and as if observing the planet from a distance, listeners will experience the different soundscapes of this planet. As the music progresses, it leads the listeners to wonder which aspect of the planet they will explore next. The tension that builds up leads the listeners to plunge straight into the climax of the music, where the intensity of the amplifier and the fluctuations of transposition of the wavetable sound are increased dramatically. The music begs the question - where will we go, and how will we get there?

This was the first time I worked with live electronics, and it has sparked an interest in the use of Ableton Live to create more music in the future.

# ABOUT JELLAL

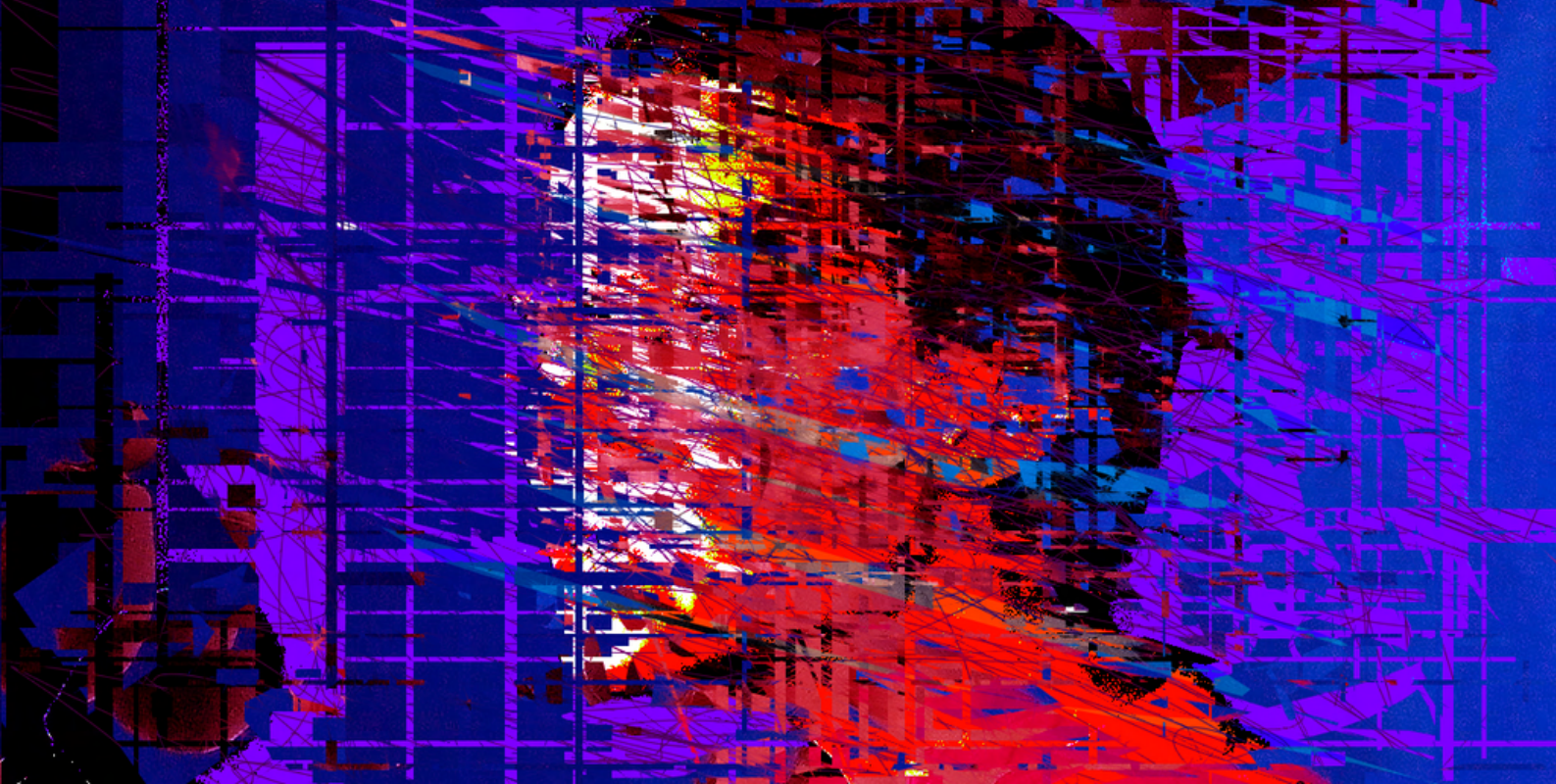
Koay Loong Chuen (better known as Jellal Koay, b. 2001) is a Malaysian composer and accompanist. He has been learning piano under the tutelage of Ms. Kwan Yin Hui since 2012, and later began studying composition with Malaysian composer Dr. Wong Chee Wei in 2019.



As a student composer, he won several awards such as the 1st Prize for Solo Harmonica & Orchestra category in the Hong Kong International Composition Competition for Chromatic Harmonica 2021, 2nd Prize for Brass Trio category at The Diversity Initiative Call for Scores, and selected as one of the winning composers in the Malaysian Patriotic Music Composition Competition 2019 (Choir Category). He had also participated in the Virtual Manila Composers' Lab 2020, Malaysian Young Composers' Workshop 2021 and The Rondo Production's Musical Exchange Programme 2021 (Composition).

Jellal is currently studying music composition at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music under the tutelage of Assoc. Prof. Peter Ivan Edwards and Ms. Adeline Wong.





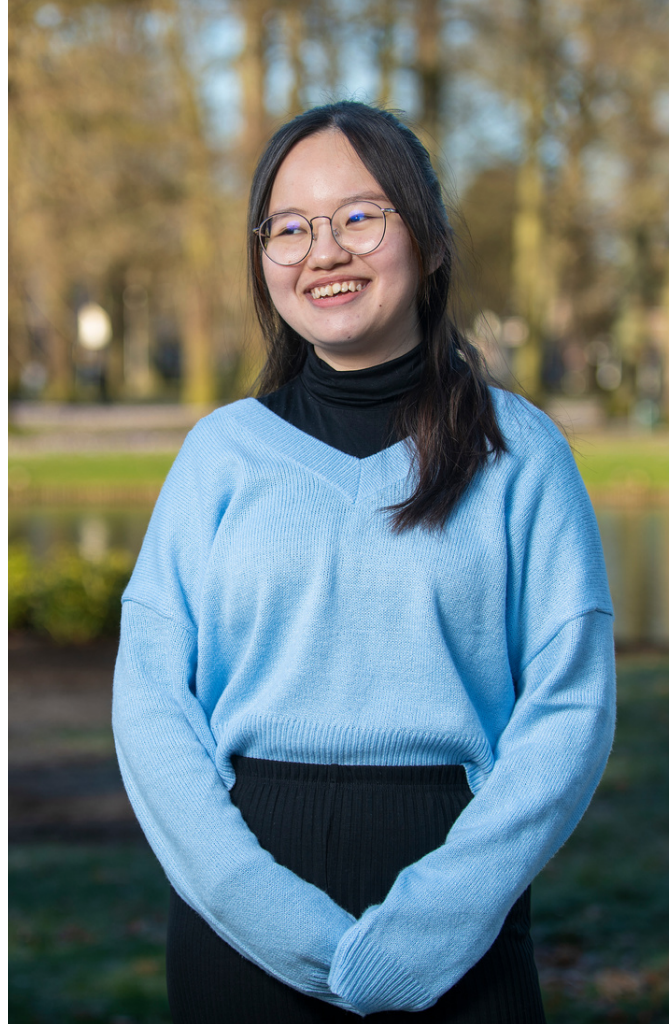
oMGgggG h0W dAR3 yo0ouUwU!!!!!! (2023)  
Artwork by Jellal Koay

oMGggggG h0W dAR3 yo0ouUwU!!!!!!1! is written for the  
Bertram Wee - Lynette Yeo Duo (bl duo), for 2  
players on a Single Keyboard/Synthesizer,  
with the as well as two expression pedals,  
techniques of audio connected to an Ableton  
sampling, as well as audio Live Set. It is a piece  
processing with effects. It is largely of composition  
made out of two simple audio samples, which plays  
processed through a lot of effects in order to  
create the soundscape which contributes to the sonic  
quality which predominates almost the entirety of the piece.



# ABOUT YAN EE

Toh Yan Ee (b.2000) is a Singaporean composer whose music fuses elements of spontaneity and organicity. Her works explore gestures through the amalgamation of timbres and harmonies. Yan Ee's music deals with dichotomies within nature – both the phenomena of our physical world, as well as the nature of things and everyday experiences.



Yan Ee has worked with TACET(i) Ensemble, Orkest de Ereprijs, Salastina, Les Percussions de Strasbourg, ensemble chromoson, Asian Cultural Symphony Orchestra, Ding Yi Music Company, Singapore Chinese Orchestra, and NOISE Ensemble amongst others.

Yan Ee is the winner of the Boston New Music Initiative Young Composer Competition 2022, Concertia Emerging Composers Fellowship 2021–22, Runner-Up of the Black Bayou Composition Award 2021 and International Composition Institute of Thailand Commissioning Prize 2021, and Special Mention prize at AMAT Women Composers Competition 2021.

Besides composing, Yan Ee is a pianist, chorister, and avid arranger. She is also interested in arts management, eager to explore the curation and marketing of projects in the arts.

Yan Ee recently graduated with a Bachelor of Music (Honours) with Highest Distinction from the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, studying with Ho Chee Kong and Adeline Wong. She will be embarking on her Masters at the Royal Academy of Music in London this September.





# On / In Key

Written to be performed on 2 MIDI keyboards, *On/In Key* seeks to connect the act of playing on the keys of the digital piano to recorded sounds associated with keys of the keyboard (which exists in various forms, including the piano and mechanical keyboard) and their surrounding body, of which most material in this piece was sourced from.

*On/In Key* begins from “within” the piano, focusing on sounds produced from small intricate motions on the strings and tuning pins of the instrument. The music grows texturally, with layers of sustained composite sounds building upon one another, towards a climax. This is however short-lived as the sound world abruptly “emerges” from the piano, shifting onto the mechanical keyboard. A range of typing sounds with distinct pitch and tone quality (through experimentation with various keycaps, switches, and keyboards) are juxtaposed and superimposed.

The overarching sonic trajectory of this piece seeks to emulate the chronological development of composing for the keyboard - from ‘conventional’ to more ‘digital’ means.

# ABOUT JOAN

Joan Tan Jing Wen (she/her, b.2000) is a Singaporean composer. She graduated in 2023 with a Bachelor of Music (Hons.) in Composition at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music (YSTCM), under the tutelage of Associate Professor Peter Ivan Edwards and Martin Jaggi.



Every sound triggers a sensory response, engaging one's imagination and evoking emotions through associations. In a world where much sensory input is tuned-out for the sake of every day functioning, Joan seeks to create sonic experiences to encourage close listening, guiding listeners through crafted, auditory experiences that provide momentary escape. The inspiration for her works comes from delving into experiences, both of hers and of others. She believes that everyone has a story, and this manifests itself in the interactions between them and their environments. Joan is also fascinated by psychological phenomena, as well as perceived dichotomies and their co-existence, both in sound and people. These dichotomies oftentimes form the basis of her works.

Joan hopes to travel widely one day, to experience life in societies beyond her own.





"Made a promise to the child who understands, what it's like to drift, float, but never land."

\* \* \*

Where I'm from, people are always moving. It's a fast-paced society; there's a constant need to have a goal and be headed in that direction. To get somewhere, to achieve something, to be someone. Anyone. The fear of going nowhere outweighs everything, as one myopically chases for a destination to land.

This piece goes nowhere. Perhaps, it seems to go somewhere, suggested by constantly shifting sonic spaces and momentum that points towards a movement in specific directions. But it never quite settles, at least, not for long. Zooming in and out plays a significant role. A 4-note motif underpins the entire piece --- simplistic, repetitive, with a child-like curiosity. One may even think it's obsessive. Within passages where this material is built upon in a cellular manner, there are hints of trajectories. Zooming out, however, paints a different picture. Different soundscapes emerge, textures woven with similar materials, rarely with a destination in mind.

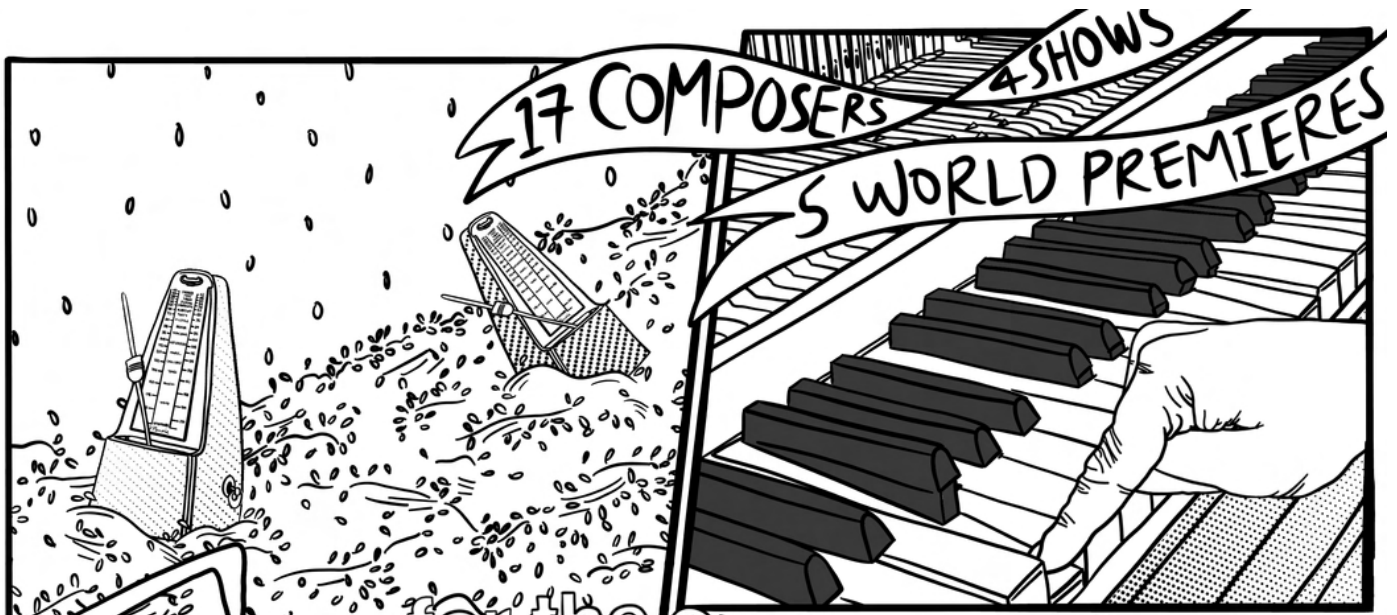
There's a constant return to the cellular treatment of this 4-note motif. I liken it to a safe heaven, as if it's predictable, stable, certain. Yet, each time one returns, something changes. The material slowly loses its identity and eventually falls away.

\* \* \*

"It'll be okay. After all, this is my Neverland."



TO FIND OUT MORE...



for the curious music lover

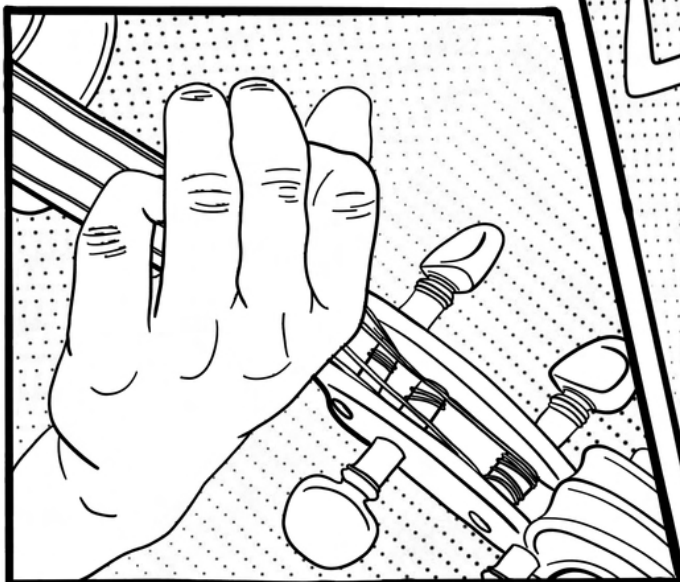
# WAparty.

27-29 october 2023

aliwal arts centre



more details  
on our  
website!



 weirdaftertastemusic



# Thank You!



on behalf of the YST Composition Department  
(not all pictured)

## Acknowledgements



**B-L Duo** (Bertram Wee & Lynette Yeo)

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Calla Lim