

Ang Yi Xiang

Saxophone Recital



WED, 29 APRIL 2026, 7:00PM

YONG SIEW TOH CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC
CONSERVATORY CONCERT HALL

Ang Yi Xiang, *Saxophone*

Gabriel Hoe, *Piano*

Eugène BOZZA - Aria

Pierre Max DUBOIS - Concerto

Astor PIAZZOLA - Tango Étude No. 3

Darius MILHAUD - Scaramouche

Tsutomu NARITA - White Field

Free
Admission

PROGRAMME

Eugène BOZZA

Aria (4:00)

Pierre Max DUBOIS

Concerto for Eb Alto Saxophone and Orchestra
(Piano Reduction) (19:00)

1. Lento / Cadenza / Allegro
2. Sarabande
3. Rondo

- Intermission (10 minutes)-

Astor PIAZZOLA

Tango Étude No. 3 (3:30)

Darius MILHAUD

Scaramouche (10:00)

1. Vif
2. Modéré
3. Brasileira

Tsutomu NARITA

White Field - a bird sings an epilogue (8:30)

PROGRAMME NOTES

This recital explores the saxophone as an instrument that moves between two expressive poles: the sustained, singing line and the vitality of rhythm and dance. Across contrasting musical traditions, the programme traces how composers have drawn on both lyricism and motion to shape the instrument's identity. From the vocal-inspired writing of the French repertoire to the rhythmic intensity of tango and the theatrical energy of 20th-century modernism, the works in this recital present the saxophone as both a lyrical voice and a dynamic, rhythm-driven instrument. The programme concludes with a contemporary work that reflects these same contrasts through a more textural language, where melody and rhythm interact in fluid and evolving ways.

Aria (1936)

Eugène Bozza

Eugène Bozza's *Aria* stands as one of the most representative works of the French saxophone tradition, closely associated with the legacy of Marcel Mule. Written in 1936, the piece reflects a style rooted in vocal lyricism, where the saxophone is treated as a singing instrument capable of sustained, expressive line.

The work unfolds in a single, continuous movement, shaped by long, arching phrases and subtle harmonic movement. Rather than dramatic contrast, Bozza focuses on nuance and control, requiring the performer to shape each phrase with careful attention to tone, breath, and direction. The piano provides a delicate harmonic framework, allowing the saxophone line to remain central.

Within the context of this programme, *Aria* represents the "voice" of the saxophone in its purest form — intimate, lyrical, and centred on the continuity of line.

Concerto for Alto Saxophone (1956)

Pierre Max Dubois

Pierre Max Dubois' *Concerto* reflects a later development of the French saxophone tradition, combining clarity of form with rhythmic vitality and technical brilliance. Written in 1956, the work adopts a three-movement structure that balances lyricism with more animated and dance-like writing.

The opening movement contrasts measured, expressive material with more agile passages, while the central *Sarabande* introduces a stylised dance form, characterised by restraint, balance, and expressive depth. The final *Rondo* brings a heightened sense of motion, driven by rhythmic energy and lightness of articulation.

Throughout the concerto, Dubois explores the relationship between sustained melodic writing and rhythmic gesture. The soloist moves fluidly between these contrasting roles, reinforcing the dual character of the saxophone as both a singing and a rhythmically articulate instrument.

PROGRAMME NOTES

Tango Étude No. 3 (1987)

Astor Piazzolla

Astor Piazzolla's Tango Étude No. 3 reinterprets the traditional Argentine tango through a modern, concert-oriented language. Originally written for solo flute, the work has been widely adopted by saxophonists due to its idiomatic phrasing and expressive potential. The étude is built on the characteristic rhythmic tension of tango, where syncopation and accentuation create a sense of forward drive. At the same time, the melodic writing retains a strong lyrical quality, often unfolding in fragmented gestures that suggest both structure and spontaneity.

Here, the distinction between song and dance becomes inseparable. The melodic line is shaped by the underlying pulse, while rhythmic figures carry expressive weight. Piazzolla's writing presents a synthesis of lyricism and movement, where the two elements exist in constant dialogue.

Scaramouche, Op. 165b (1937)

Darius Milhaud

Originally derived from theatre music, Scaramouche is a lively three-movement suite characterised by rhythmic drive and colour. Composed in 1937, the suite reflects Milhaud's interest in rhythm, colour, and popular musical influences, particularly those encountered during his time in Brazil.

The three movements present contrasting characters. The opening movement is lively and playful, while the central movement offers a more lyrical and restrained atmosphere. The final Brazileira is driven by rhythmic vitality, drawing on Brazilian dance idioms to create an energetic and exuberant conclusion. Milhaud's use of shifting tonal centres and rhythmic layering contributes to a sense of constant motion. In this work, dance becomes the dominant expressive force, with rhythmic energy shaping both structure and character. The saxophone is required to combine agility with clarity, bringing out both the humour and brilliance of the music.

White Field - a bird sings an epilogue (2006)

Tsutomu Narita

Tsutomu Narita's White Field presents a contemporary perspective on the relationship between lyricism and rhythm through a more textural approach. The work unfolds through expansive melodic lines that emphasise tone, breath, and sustained expression, placing the saxophone in a reflective, voice-like role. These passages are contrasted by more rhythmically driven and energetic segments that interrupt and propel the musical flow. The interaction between these elements creates a shifting sense of motion, as moments of stillness give way to increased activity and intensity.

Rather than following a traditional formal structure, the piece develops through changes in texture, gesture, and pacing. Within the context of this programme, White Field extends the idea of voice and dance into a contemporary sound world, where the boundaries between the two are fluid and continuously evolving.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my teachers, collaborators, friends, and family for their guidance and support. Special thanks to Gabriel Hoe for his artistry and partnership in this recital.

Thank You!