



BRADDELL HEIGHTS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

proudly presents

German Classics

Leonard Tan, Conductor
Theophilus Tan, Cello



Date: 26 August 2023, Saturday

Time: 7:30pm



Venue: SOTA Concert Hall



Organised by Braddell Heights CCMC, with support from Braddell Heights CACC



People's Association



26 August 2023 (Sat), 7:30pm
SOTA concert hall

German Classics

Ludwig van Beethoven
Coriolan Overture, Op.62

Antonín Dvořák
Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104 B. 191

----- Intermission -----

Johannes Brahms
Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73

Braddell Heights Symphony Orchestra
Leonard Tan *conductor*
Theophilus Tan *cello*

The duration of the performance is approximately 90 mins.

Braddell Heights Symphony Orchestra



The Braddell Heights Symphony Orchestra (BHSO) is one of Singapore's most prominent community orchestras. Founded in 1986 under the auspices of the Braddell Heights Community Club, the BHSO has been home to countless local and expatriate musicians living in Singapore who come from all walks of life, bonded by their love of classical music and performing in an orchestra.

From humble beginnings with only a handful of members, the BHSO grew steadily into a full-sized symphony orchestra under the leadership of Maestro Yan Yin Wing during his 25-year tenure as Music Director. In 2012, the baton was passed on to the late Singaporean conductor Adrian Tan who brought with him innovative ideas that revitalised the orchestra and its role in the community. The formation of The Joy Chorale (TJC) in 2015, under the direction of Khor Ai Ming, was significant in providing opportunities for aspiring singers with little or no training to perform in concerts alongside experienced choristers. This new BHSO-TJC partnership made its debut with a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony which was received with enthusiastic cheers and a standing ovation from a sold-out audience at the Esplanade Concert Hall.

As a community orchestra with the vision of expanding its outreach to a wide audience with diverse tastes, the BHSO's repertoire not only includes symphonic, choral and chamber music from the baroque to music by living composers, but also covers a variety of genres from film music to jazz. As a strong advocate of local music, the orchestra regularly features Singaporean composers in its concert programs. It actively commissions new works and had given world premiere performances of compositions by Americ Goh, Bernard Tan, Low Shao Ying & Low Shao Suan and John Sharpley.

An orchestra of the community and for the community, with its vision "music for everyone" is reflective of its aspiration for inclusiveness and its commitment to making good music accessible for the enjoyment of all, regardless of background or circumstances.

Leonard Tan

Conductor



Singaporean musician Leonard Tan is a prolific conductor with a strong presence in the Singapore arts scene. He has conducted numerous ensembles, including the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Singapore National Youth Orchestra (Principal Conductor), Ensemble de la Belle Musique (Principal Conductor), Philharmonic Wind Orchestra (Music Director), and Indiana University Orchestras.

He earned his doctoral degree from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where he studied orchestral conducting with David Efron, Arthur Fagen, and Murray Sidlin. Additional

conducting studies were with Leif Segerstam and Alexander Polischuk in Russia, where he worked with the St. Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic, and with Johannes Schlaefli, where he worked with Academic Orchestra Zurich.

In demand internationally, he has conducted, adjudicated and taught throughout the United States and Asia. Performances under his direction have been lauded by local and international critics. Singapore's The Straits Times described his performance of Corigliano's Symphony No. 3 as "masterfully helmed," while the American press lauded his "artful conducting." He is an Associate Professor of Music at the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

Theophilus Tan

Cello



Theophilus started learning the cello at the age of 15 under Mrs Herminia A Ilano. He then studied at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music from 2011 - 2015 under Ng Pei Sian. He won the Goh Soon Tioe Award in 2015 and went on to pursue a Masters of Music in Cello Performance at the Conservatorio della Svizzera Italiana in Lugano, Switzerland supported by the Trailblazer Foundation and individual donorship.

He has participated in masterclasses with cellists such as Frans Helmerson, Gustav Rivinius, Arto Noras and etc. He was featured in the local Dutch Newspaper article, “The stars of tomorrow” in Bergen during the International Holland Music Sessions in 2014. He also performed with the Michelangelo String Quartet

Theophilus has been featured with various groups, performing Haydn’s Cello Concerto in D Major with the Braddell Heights Symphony Orchestra in 2014 as well as Vivaldi’s Concerto in D minor RV565 with Resound Collective and Enrico d’Onofrio in 2019

He was the founding cellist of the Concordia Quartet from 2020-2021 and continues to devote his time to teaching and performing with various groups such as Resound Collective, Metropolitan Festival Orchestra, Orchestra of the Music Makers as well as The Philharmonic Orchestra.

Musicians

CONDUCTOR

Dr. Leonard Tan

VIOLIN 1

Lim Shue Churn
Concertmaster
Kelvin Chung
Daniel Ho
Hiroko Nakae
Ng Wei Ping #
Albert Phang #
Tan Bao Jun
Eric Tan
Wu Shuang #
Xu Zhong Hao #
Ye Zhi #

VIOLIN 2

Pearl Yim
Acting Principal
Hoon Tien Hun
Eta Lauw
Leo Yun Fen
Liew Hui Yan #
Elizabeth Low #
Ayako Nakayama
Jessica Ng
Phua Teng Soong
Teo Wi Chian
Zheng Wanying

VIOLA

Andrew Fung
Principal
Michiko Akao
Joe Foley
Akiyama Fumito
Darius Goh #
Goh Eng Han#
Ham Shim Ying
Natasha Lee Xin Yi #
Sherman Soo Thoo #
Clement Yan

SOLOIST

Theophilus Tan

CELLO

Peh Xiang Hong
Principal
Kim Hyejin #
Lee Ying
Lee Yi Xuan Kenneth
Ronale Leong
Min Ng
Toshio Shinohara
Tasya Aditya Rukmana
Xu Wen Xin Clare

BASS

Lee Hyoseok
Acting Principal
Kuek Jia Xin #
Claire Lim Roo Yee #
Tan Si Pei #
Yusuke Yamada

FLUTE

Mohd. Rasull Bin Khelid
Principal
Tan Mei Wah
Assistant Principal

OBOE

Nathalie Fu #
Huang Xingyang #

CLARINET

Tim Raes
Principal
Jessica Wong

BASSOON

Syed Ridwan Ahmad
Yap Keng Peng

TRUMPET

Justin Chia
Acting Principal
Aw Ping Hui

HORN

Kosuke Nakajima
Acting Principal
Stuart Ang #
Megumi Murase
Clement Ng #

TROMBONE

Yuki Tony Tani
Principal
Cheng Peiling

BASS TROMBONE

Koe Meng Kiang Keith

TUBA

Gabriel Song
Principal

PERCUSSION/ TIMPANI

Victor Wong
Principal
Jake Lim

Guest musicians

Musicians listed alphabetically by family names

Programme Notes

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 -1827)

Coriolan Overture, Op.62

Known to most as a symphonist, one might be surprised that the German musical giant **Ludwig van Beethoven** also wrote several overtures. Among these works, the incidental (background music for plays) overtures *Egmont*, *Coriolan*, and *The Creatures of Prometheus* are widely enjoyed in concert halls today as standalone pieces.



Beethoven had a penchant for the dark, stormy C Minor - his Fifth Symphony, Choral Fantasy and *Pathétique* Sonata share the same key as *Coriolan*. True to its tonality, the Overture was written for Heinrich Joseph von Collin's 1804 tragedy. Gaius Marcius Coriolanus (pictured above), a Roman general of the 5th Century, wanted more than his military position. When he was discovered and sentenced to exile, he took revenge by leading an army of his former enemies against Rome. His mother begged him to desist, but it was too late to do so. Full of regret, the sullied general committed suicide. The plot of *Coriolan* is full of traditionalist values popular in Beethoven's era, such as fulfilling one's duty and personal integrity. Modern scholarship of the *Heiligenstadt* Testament (Beethoven's letter to his brothers that details his despair and suicidal thoughts) confirms that the emotionally complex Beethoven may have had more in common with his Roman muse than we think.

Two contrasting themes outline the work, with powerful striking chords interrupting the music flow. The first theme is uneasy and ominous, representing Coriolanus's vengeance and rage. The second theme is lyrical and imploring, as Coriolanus's mother Volumnia pleads for mercy. The music disintegrates at the end of the 8-minute musical turmoil, leaving only soft string pizzicati - signifying Coriolanus's dying heartbeat.

Antonín Dvořák (1841 - 1904)

Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104 B.191

How does a musician go from being a rank-and-file violinist in the orchestra pits of Prague to the Director of the National Conservatory of New York? All it takes is musical talent, hard work, and a personal recommendation from Johannes Brahms! This was what happened to Bohemian (present-day Czechia) composer **Antonín Dvořák**, whose Simrock publications of Slavonic Dances (Op. 46) and *Stabat Mater* propelled him to international fame, eventually leading to his sojourn in the United States from 1892 to 1895. Jeanette Thurber, music patron and founder of the National Conservatory of Music of America, sought Dvořák as her first choice for the school's director. Dvořák readily accepted the position for multiple reasons; a large salary and a passion for the music of Native and African Americans among them. During his three-year tenure, the composer assimilated the music of the New World and completed masterpieces such as the Twelfth String Quartet in F Major, "American", his Ninth Symphony "From the New World", and in his final year in America, his Cello Concerto.



For some time, Dvořák had intended to compose a concerto for his close friend Hanuš Wihan, an eminent cellist as well as the work's dedicatee. Wihan obviously wanted a bravura piece full of technical fireworks, but Dvořák's writing leaned introspective. While composing the work, his sister-in-law, Josefina Kaunitzová (pictured on the left), turned gravely ill. Dvořák had been in love with her when he taught her piano some thirty years ago but married her sister instead. Rekindling his old flame, the composer tributes Josefina by incorporating into the second movement, a quotation from his song "Lasst mich allein" ("Leave Me Alone," Op. 82, No.1), a favourite of the dying lady. Josefina passes away a month after Dvořák returns to Prague - the grieving composer changes the ending of the

work, adding an exquisitely painful coda that quotes the song in a duet between solo cello and solo violin. Wihan, ruffled that his elaborately crafted cadenza was being replaced, forced Dvořák to look for another cellist, and the work was premiered on March 19, 1896, in London, with the composer conducting and Leo Stern as soloist.

Like most concertos, Dvořák's Cello Concerto has three movements. Dvořák starts in the distance, building upon the first theme with successive statements reaching a grand orchestral tutti. The contrasting theme is lyrical, almost vocal. Dvořák had a

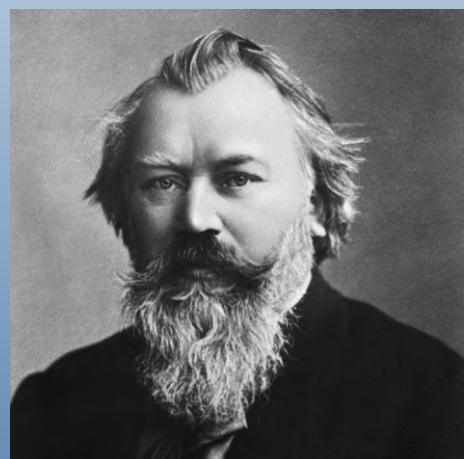
great affinity with this theme, evident from a letter to a friend, admitting that every time he played it, he “start(s) to tremble all over”. The first movement demands emotional mastery upon an already flawless cello technique, with intense development between the two themes and interjected figurative accompaniments by the orchestra. The Adagio is a sincere dialogue between the cello and woodwinds. The woodwind choir quotes the song gently, which is immediately echoed by the cello. A sighing motive in the solo line creates a pensive yet tense atmosphere that climaxes with the full orchestra crying out in anguish. The movement simmers down and ends as quietly as it began. The Finale opens with a march, but the tempo ebbs and flows to accommodate the cello’s reflective energy. Dvořák follows classic rondo form throughout most of the movement but adds a twist at the end, where material from previous movements is recalled. Most poignantly, we hear a whisper of the song from the second movement, in memory of Josefina, the muse that inspired this Bohemian masterwork.

Johannes Brahms (1833 - 1897)

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73

Premiering a symphony is usually a milestone in a composer’s career. Writing a symphony requires thorough knowledge of the instruments of the orchestra, as well as enough stamina and musicality to complete a work that lasts typically forty minutes. So why did German composer **Johannes Brahms** only premiere his First Symphony at the age of forty-two, when others before him (e.g. Mozart, Haydn, Schumann, Beethoven) did so much earlier?

Brahms (pictured on the right) was a perfectionist, and this affected his compositional output in different ways. It took him at least fourteen years to complete his First Symphony, despite shooting to stardom at age twenty when Robert Schumann wrote nothing but praise for him in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, calling him “youth at whose cradle the graces and heroes of old stood guard.” Already a harsh self-critic, Brahms had at that point only written piano works. Burdened by new, heavy expectations, he burned many works he deemed unfit. The several that he did not destroy include audience favourites, like his two Serenades, his First Piano Concerto, and his German Requiem. However, Brahms would not write for orchestra again until 1873.

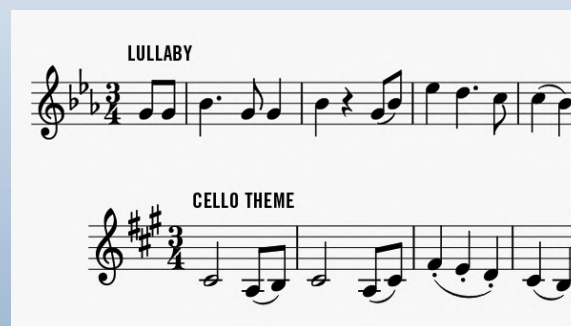


In 1873, the musical world was introduced to the Variations on a Theme of Haydn (also known as the Saint Anthony Variations). In the fifteen years between his last orchestral composition and the Variations, Brahms had amassed a great following

and was known as one of the key figures who stood by the traditional ideals of abstract music. When he finally completed and premiered his First Symphony three years after the Variations, the world recognised and lauded it as the greatest symphony after Beethoven's. Talk about biding one's time! Following the success of his First, Brahms went on to write and complete his Second the following October, while taking a well-deserved vacation in the Austrian Alps.

Referred to as Brahms's "Pastoral" Symphony (a nod to Beethoven's), the Second Symphony is a world away from the First; lyrical, charming, and in jubilant D Major when compared to the stormy, pervasive C-minor First. In typical self-deprecation, Brahms went one step further and referred to his Second as a "little Sinfonia". There is nothing little about the Second Symphony - it is as intricate, cohesive and musically rewarding as its predecessor.

The first movement opens with a three-note motif played by the low strings. This motif will return in various forms throughout the Symphony, binding all four movements together like a musical thread. The second waltz-like theme may ring a bell, as it is very similar to Brahms's famous Lullaby (from *Wiegenlied*, Opus 49, No. 4). (Picture reference is taken from the Houston Symphony's website.)



The second movement weaves between moments of tranquillity and tension while maintaining its lilting rhythm. It follows with a contrasting third movement; spry and full of energy, the woodwinds present melodies reminiscent of the birds in Beethoven's Sixth. The strings reciprocate the atmosphere before the fleeting 5-minute movement concludes with a smile. The breathless Finale explodes from a buildup of joy and optimism that lasts till the end of the work. Hints of the main theme seem to return before they fragment into the intense developmental section. An unexpected *Tranquillo* section featuring the trombones and the tuba deludes the listener's sense of direction, but it starts accelerating, and bearings are restored when at last the music returns to triumphant D Major. The low brass joins in the orchestra festivities, and the movement gallops to its rejoicing end.

Programme notes by Amanda Kye Tan



minds

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Encompassing music of different genres and varied repertoires, BHSO and the Joy Chorale wish to provide the community opportunities to enjoy music along our vision of “Music For Everyone”. We have launched the “**sponsor-a-ticket**” programme since July 2018 to connect sponsors with beneficiaries of charities and welfare organisations.

Below are the list of organisations that have benefitted from this concert:

- Art:Dis
- The Purple Symphony (Community Development Council Central SG)
- Minds

We would like to acknowledge our kind sponsors for raising tickets for this concert:

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- Ham Shim Ying
- Transfingo Pte. Ltd.
- Liew Huiyan
- Mei Tan
- Other individuals who have requested to remain anonymous

Besides our sponsorship program, BHSO is also looking to broaden our outreach by partnering with schools, community organisations and corporations to realise BHSO’s vision at every performance. If you resonate with our vision and would like to inspire the community, please do:

- Be a ticket sponsor for our concerts.
- Bulk purchase (10 or more tickets) at a special price.
- Make a donation (individual or corporate).

Contact us to share your ideas at info@bhs.org

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