

New Music Forum



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ER YENN CHWEN

Er Yenn Chwen was 12 when he passed the LRSM (performing) examination and remains the youngest person in Singapore to have obtained this qualification. Together with this distinction, Er's many triumphs include winning (at age 11) the Best Award and Outstanding Performance Award in the Second Singapore Junior Original Concert, the second prize in the violin solo (senior section) of the Seventh Music Competition in Singapore, the Dominion Trust Gift and Rowsby Woof Violin Prize. These last two awards were obtained when he was a student at the Royal Academy of Music in London, studying under Madam Carmel Kaine and the late Frederick Grinke.

FRANCISCO F. FELICIANO

Francisco F. Feliciano, Filipino composer and conductor, studied with internationally famous conductors as Arthur Weisberg and Martin Behrmann, and with noted com-

posers Krystof Penderecki, Isang Yun, Heinz Werner Zimmermann and Jacob Druckman.

His compositions have won prizes in international competitions. They include *Pokpok Alimpako*, for Best Composition in Contemporary Music at the 1981 International Choral Festival in Italy and the 1990 International Choral Festival in Germany; *Salimbayan*, a composition for woodwind quarter, which won Second Prize in the International Composition contest in West Germany (1976). Feliciano was also recipient of the John D. Rockefeller III Fund Award in Music Composition (1977), the Cultural Award for Music from the City of Manila (1983), and the Outstanding Composition Student Award from Yale University.

Feliciano has composed over 30 major works, including *The Transfiguration*, a piece for orchestra, chorus, and narrator; *Pokpok Alimpako* for mixed choir; *Variation Uber Ein Gestalt*, *Die Verklaerung Christi*

and *Fragments* for large orchestra: *Isostasie III* for strings and woodwind.

In 1984, Feliciano created a three-act Filipino opera, *La Loba Negra*. Another major work, the ballet *Yerma*, has been performed by the Moscow State Symphony Orchestra, the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, all conducted by Feliciano himself, and the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, with Jean-pierre Jacquillat conducting.

Feliciano has conducted, besides the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra of which he was Principal Conductor for eight years, the Taipei City Symphony Orchestra, the Yale School of Music Contemporary Ensemble, and artists such as Gyorgy Sandor, Bela Siki, Paul Badura-Skoda, Daniel Adni, and the Philippines' own pianist, Rowena Arrieta.

At present, Feliciano is the Director of the Asian Institute for Liturgy and Music.

PHOON YEW TIEN

Phoon Yew Tien graduated from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music in Brisbane in 1983 with a double degree in Music Instrumental (Flute) and Music Composition. Phoon had studied under Mr Leong Yoon Pin, prior to his overseas training.

Phoon's compositions have won numerous awards. These are the Dulcie Robertson Prize in 1980, 1981 and 1983, presented by the Queensland Conservatorium of Music for the most outstanding student work, and the Yoshiro Irino Memorial Prize awarded by the Asian Composers' League in 1984.

In addition, he has received music commissions from the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Youth Orchestra and People's Association Chinese Orchestra. His music included works for drama and music groups premiered at the Asean Festival of Arts and the Singapore Festival of Arts.

Phoon's work, *Dialogue*, a piece for

the Oboe and Chamber Orchestra, was premiered at the *New Music Forum* at the FOA 1990. He also composed the incidental music for *Lao Jiu*, a Chinese play. Other major works are *Nu Wa*, the dance drama music premiered at the Singapore Festival of Arts 1988 and music for the cultural tableau, *Many People, One Nation* at the National Day Mass Display in 1988.

Phoon's works have also been performed by various orchestras and performers in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, England, France and Italy.

TAN CHAN BOON

Tan Chan Boon studied the violin with Mr Ho Boon Thiam and was a member of the Singapore Youth Orchestra for six years. He was also a student of Mr Shalom Ronly-Riklis and Mr Leong Yoon Pin.

In 1986 he entered the Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris, studying composition under French com-

posers Jacques Castérède and Michel Merlet. Tan was a recipient of the Comité Albert-Roussel Scholarship from this Institute for two years. He obtained his first award in 1988, and in 1989 he was awarded the 3^{ème} cycle de Perfectionnement en Composition Musicale.

He also studied Musicosophia with Mr George Balan.

During the years in France, Tan was actively involved in the research and promotion of the Music of Anton Bruckner and Gustav Mahler. He has been a member of the Bibliothèque Musicale Gustav Mahler in Paris since 1987.

In 1989, Tan conducted a workshop on the interpretation of Anton Bruckner at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts. From March to June 1991, he also conducted a series of conferences at the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris at the Fondation Biermans-Lapôtre.

In March, 1991, he was made a

member of both the International Bruckner Society and the Mahler Society. He was also invited to the prestigious conference of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna.

Tan is presently a part-time lecturer at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts.

LIM YAU

Since his debut in 1983, Lim Yau has conducted more than 100 concerts with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and Singapore Symphony Chorus to critical acclaim. A graduate of the London Royal College of Music and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, his teachers include Sergiu Celibidache and Franco Ferrera.

Besides concert engagements, Lim Yau also regularly conducts opera, ballet and contemporary music.

For his contribution to the field of music, he was awarded the 1990 Cultural Medallion by the Ministry of Information and the Arts.

SINGAPORE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (SSO)

The Singapore Symphony Orchestra was established in 1979 and in the years that followed, the orchestra has steadily grown in maturity and virtuosity. An ensemble of 90 musicians performing over 100 concerts each year, the SSO is a major force in the cultural life of Singapore.

From Baroque to 20th century works, the SSO stretches its versatility and imagination under the baton of Music Director and Resident Conductor, Choo Hoey. The multinational group of musicians has also impressed audiences in European and Asian capitals and its tours to Europe in 1988 and 1991 were received with critical acclaim.

At home, the Orchestra is also in demand by visiting performing groups and has accompanied companies like the Sadler Wells Ballet, Le Grand Ballet Canadien, the Houston Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Ballet Du Nord. Distinguished soloists who have performed with the orchestra include Pierre Amoyal,

Pascal Roge, Simon Preston, Dimitri Sgouros and Placido Domingo.

COMPOSER'S NOTES

OUVERTURE – NEW WINE IN AN OLD WINEBAG

Er Yenn Chwen

“Overture” is French for “Suite”, which incorporates the baroque dance spirit in dance movements with an opening overture and an ending Toccata.

The *Overture*, the largest work that Er Yenn Chwen has written, is a typical French overture with a slow opening full of dotted rhythms. It leads to a fugato section in which a theme (subject) is being passed around. The slow section returns at the end.

The *Allemande* is a walking dance to usher the dancers into the ballroom. A fair amount of dotted rhythms and ornamentations is used. They are all embellishments to the stately pulse of the dance.

The *Corrente* is a fast dance with lots of skipping, running and jumping. It begins with a fugato and

develops into a perpetual moving dance.

The *Sarabande* has a strong first beat and a stressed second beat. The rhythm is first introduced in the cello and bass section and develops into some sort of ostinato, above which spins a contrapuntal and later homophonic texture in the upper strings.

The *Minuet* is a moderately fast dance in 3. The dance is followed by a Trio which features only solo strings.

The *Toccata* closes the piece with dashing semiquavers and complicated metre changes to show off the many aspects of string playing.

VOICES AND IMAGES

Francisco F. Feliciano

Voices and Images is dedicated to all widowed mothers.

The mother's VOICE is heard in the form of a lullaby – sweet, melancholic, yet full of fear and anxiety. This is set in stark contrast to that of another VOICE, the military – oppressive, belligerent. The lullaby is drawn into

the myriads of voices and images. It is sometimes heard, sometimes blurred, sometimes lost.

In the mother's moment of solitude and loneliness, can one really describe the IMAGES that tear her body apart, devour her mind, and consume her soul?

The melody for the lullaby is taken from the composer's setting of Rolando Tinio's poetry, *Sleep Through the Night*.

KALEIDOSCOPE

Phoon Yew Tien

This piece of work is analogous to kaleidoscope with its constant changes of images and symmetrical patterns. It is characterised by continuous development, variation and improvisation.

Phoon Yew Tien's work uses the pentatonic scale and its eleven versions along with some "Characteristic" motives and musical effects (such as accelerated or retarded rhythmic patterns and variations of glissandi etc). This piece is written

for a chamber orchestra of three percussionists, one pianist, one harpist and sub-divided string players.

AUTUMN

Tan Chan Boon

Autumn reflects Tan Chan Boon's memory of his stay in Paris. The work is written in three parts with the first and last parts reflecting reality and the second part reflecting the reminiscence.

The ABA structure of this musical piece starts off with a dirge comprising single lined *pizzicati* in the base and cello. It appears mythical, like a chant with a definite rhythm yet a certain sense of restlessness underlies the whole. The entrance of the harp solo takes it from reality into the realm of fantasy.

The middle section, *Langsam*, reflects memories of intense human experience and emotions. The extremes of joy and sorrow, of beauty and the grotesque, culminate in an inevitable sigh. Reality slowly returns in the last section.

RECORDING INFORMATION

Tone Master: Yan Hui-chang
Producer/Rec. Engineer: Kovan Goh
Asst. Rec. Engineer: Jackie Neo &
Sha'aban Yahya

EQUIPMENT: RECORDING SESSION

A series of AKG MIC.
D & R Netherlands Series 300
MAC II Mixer (Made in Holland).
Sony DTC-1000ES
England-Modified DAT Machine
Sennheisser HD-560
Ovation Monitor Headphone

MASTERING SESSION

Akai Digital DD1000
Magneto Optical Disk Recorder
Sony PCM-2700 DAT Machine

DIGITAL MASTERING/EDITING:

Kovan Goh & Yan Hui-chang

RECORDED IN VICTORIA CONCERT HALL, SINGAPORE

New Music Forum

SINGAPORE
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COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

DDD



New Music Forum

Autumn	19' 20"
Overture – New Wine in an Old Wine Bag	
Overture	3' 11"
Allemande	4' 09"
Corrente	2' 34"
Sarabande	5' 48"
Minuet	2' 11"
Toccatà	4' 14"
Voices and Images	17' 39"
Kaleidoscope	14' 46"

Singapore Symphony Orchestra
Lim Yau, Conductor



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