Junior Recitals: Violin

PROKOFIEV
Violin Sonata No. 2 in D major, Op. 94a

I. Moderato
II. Presto – Poco più mosso – Tempo I
III. Andante
IV. Allegro con brio – Poco meno mosso – Tempo I – Poco meno mosso – Allegro con brio

RAVEL
Tzigane

ARISA IKEDA (B.MUS3) violin
GE XIAOZHE piano

SCHUMANN
Violin Sonata No. 1 in A minor, Op. 105

I. Mit leidenschaftlichem Ausdruck
II. Allegretto
III. Lebhaft

HUBAY
Carmen Fantasy

AZIEL VERNER (B.MUS3) violin
GE XIAOZHE piano
**BRAHMS**
Violin Sonata No. 1 in G major, Op. 78

I. Vivace ma non troppo
II. Adagio
III. Allegro molto moderato

ZHANG ZHOU YAODONG (B.MUS3) violin
GE XIAOZHE piano

**RAVEL**
*Tzigane*

**WIENIAWSKI**
*Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 15*

CHUNG CHING-YU (B.MUS3) violin
CHERIE KHOR piano

**KORNGOLD**
Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35

I. Moderato nobile
II. Romance: Andante
III. Finale: Allegro assai vivace

LOH WEI KEN (B.MUS3) violin
KERIM VERGAZOV piano
MOZART
Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major, K 291

I. Allegro aperto – Adagio – Allegro aperto
II. Adagio
III. Rondeau – Tempo di minuetto

KONG XIANLONG (B.MUS3) violin
GE XIAO ZHE piano
Programme Notes

Prokofiev – Violin Sonata No. 2

Sergei Sergeevich Prokofiev was a Russian composer, pianist and conductor. This sonata was written in late period of Prokofiev’s life. Originally it was composed for flute in 1942, but arranged for violin in 1943 when Prokofiev was living in Perm in the Ural Mountains, a remote shelter for Soviet artists during Second World War. Prokofiev transformed the work into a violin sonata with help of his close friend David Oistrakh. This sonata wasn’t changed so much except for 2nd movement which is Scherzo, where he completely changed the tempo. The first published concert was played by David Oistrakh and Lev Oborin on 17 June 1944 in Moscow.

I. Moderato
In this movement, the flowing melody stands out more than rhythm structure, it reminds the flute.

II. Presto - Poco piu mosso del - Tempo I
It is an energetic movement, played with pizzicato, staccato and double stops running on all range of violin sound which presents full of vibrancy that violin can do.

III. Andante
The mood is immediately changed, this movement is sung with a revolutionary flowing melody as a driving force.

IV. Allegro con brio - Poco meno mosso - Tempo I - Poco meno mosso - Allegro con brio
This movement is a dramatic and heroic movement that alternates between melancholic melody and dynamic sounds.

Ravel – Tzigane

Tzigane is a rhapsodic composition by the French composer Maurice Ravel in 1922. It was dedicated to Hungarian violinist Jelly d’Aranyi with whom Ravel fell in love and was inspired by her. The original instrumentation was for violin and piano, later Ravel orchestrated the piano part, and the version for violin and orchestra was first performed in Amsterdam on 19 October 1924. The name of this piece is Tzigane which means gypsy, although it does not
use any authentic Gypsy melodies. There are a lot of influences from features of hungarian
dance which is Czardas. Therefore, Ravel composed the first half as a gradual "Lassan"
tempo, the second half as "Friska" which is a fast dance tempo. The piece starts with a long
cadenza with solo violin. It contains a soft second subject in contrast to the exotic fierce first
subject. There is a mournful melody on double stop, and the scale is also quite large. After
that, piece goes into the main part "Friska" which is a cheerful dance tempo, contrary to
melancholy "Lassan". Ravel composed it with seven variations, spreading his typical elaborate
Romani (gypsy) music.

Programme notes by Arisa Ikeda
Schumann – Violin Sonata No. 1

Robert Schumann’s wrote three violin sonatas between the period of 1851 and 1853, of which only two were published. They reflect the composer’s physical problems and mental torments which started in 1850. Schumann’s late works were dismissed as the ramblings of a diseased mind. However, this soon changed as future generations marveled that these works were once were rejected. His first and second sonata’s had a large influence on the late romantic sonatas.

Schumann's *Violin Sonata No. 1 in A minor, op. 105* was completed in 1850. Schumann’s displays passionate themes, poetic thoughts, rich textures and rhythmic urgency in this sonata.

The passionate opening few bars are expressed due to the use of the rich and intense tone of the violin’s lower range G string. Beginning in the depths of the violin with the passionate piano arpeggios. With it stormy accompaniment, the main theme is unfolded in a single breath and directly goes to the second subject. A similar overlap happens at the beginning of the recapitulation. The music is played like a conversation between the solo violin and the piano part back and forth.

The serene theme in the second movement is quiet enough to allow the essential emotion of the inactivity with the long-held pause followed by the ritardando. The first reprise of the theme provides a way to a quicker tempo whose flowing sound is touchingly interrupted by a violin long-held note behind. This section is also changing from major to minor to emphasize the huge change with the previous section. At the end, before the two pizzicato chords, the gentle murmuring sound disappears into the air.

The main theme of the third movement which is the unstoppable semiquavers imbues not only the movement’s outer sections but also the passionate episode in the center. During the closing section, the violinist inconspicuously slips in the expressive version of the main theme from the first movement with a new triplet rhythm in the piano, a brief interlude in the finale’s agitated motion.
Jeno Hubay – Carmen Fantasy

Georges Bizet’s opera Carmen was one of those works that set other composers’ hearts and minds on fire. Brahms, a hater of all things French, loved it with a passion, and the opera has drawn a large range of composers to make new works by arranging its thematic material for different instruments. The scale of these works is impressive, from Rodion Shchedrin’s 1968 ballet score for an orchestra of strings and percussion to Busoni’s use of the theme from Carmen for his Sonatina No.6 in 1920. The opera’s tangy and dramatic themes have captivated violinists in particular, and the arrangements of themes from Carmen for violin are too numerous to count, including versions by Pablo de Sarasate, Jeno Hubay, Franz Waxman, and many others.

The Carmen Fantaisie Brillante, Op. 3 by Jeno Hubay was written in 1877. Unlike Sarasate’s Carmen Fantasy, Hubay’s Fantaisie is “a relatively unknown work which includes a greater amount of thematic material from the opera by Bizet than Sarasate’s,” intended to be a bright, virtuosic showpiece.

Borrowing the famous melodies from the opera Carmen: the theme of Carmen’s fate, Michaela’s aria from Act III, the famous Habanera and the Toreador Song and March — Hubay combines those sparkles into firework! Multiple stops, daring leaps, dramatic slides, and frenzied bowing forcefully captures the spirit and the emotions of the music. Nonetheless, Hubay does not neglect the piano part. The piano part is virtuosic and supports the solo violin. Lyricism hands back and forth between the violin and the piano in a delicate balance of technical prowess and emotional effectiveness customarily adds the distinctive Hungarian flavor.

Programme notes by Aziel Verner
Brahms – Violin Sonata No. 1

The Violin Sonata No. 1 in G major, Op. 78, for violin and piano was composed by Johannes Brahms during the summers of 1878 and 1879 in Pörtschach am Wörthersee. Each of the three movements of this sonata shares common motivic ideas or thematic materials from the principal motif of Brahms’s two songs “Regenlied” (Rain Song) and “Nachklang” (Echo), Op. 59 Nos. 3 and 4, and this is why this sonata owes its epithet “Regensonate” (Rain Sonata). The dotted rhythm of the opening movement’s first theme dominates the second theme of the central movement and all of the closing movement, and the main theme of the central movement returns in the central section of the closing movement.

The sonata is in three movements: Vivace ma non troppo, Adagio, and Allegro molto moderato. The opening Vivace, significantly slowed by its modifying ma non troppo, is a sweet-tempered movement in sonata form with two lyrical themes. The central Adagio is in ternary form, with a heartfelt main theme full of double and triple stops in the violin. The closing Allegro molto moderato starts with a direct quotation from the opening of Brahms’ “Regenlied”, a melancholic minor-key song recalling the long-lost days of youth. In the Violin Sonata, Brahms likewise starts it in the minor, but with the return of the theme of the Adagio, he returns the music to the consoling tonic major of the sonata. The work ends with a warm, sunset coda of great beauty.

Programme notes by Zhang Zhou Yaodong
Ravel - *Tzigane*

Born in 1875, Ravel was one of the greatest French impressionist composer. However, his compositional style was broader than just impressionism; he also covered from jazz to blues and he was especially fascinated with folk tunes. “Tzigane”, derived from the French word for “gypsy”, was composed in 1924 based on a Hungarian theme. Dedicated to the legendary violinist Josef Joachim, it is a piece that is full of virtuosity. “Tzigane” opens with a cadenza-like violin solo section that explores the violin’s powerful lower register. Follow by introducing the passionate, gypsy-style melody with the piano that develop increasingly intense and energetic. As the music became more and more excited, the violin gradually climbs to the climax by adding various techniques including double-stops, harmonics, and pizzicato-like sounds. The piece ends with a dazzling, expected fireworks for both violin and piano.

Wieniawski – *Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 15*

Henryk Wieniawski occupied a special place in the history not only for his compositions, but also for his violin playing. He was born into a family passionate for music in 1835, that evoke him to become a soloist and even giving a tour among the United States. The Variations on an Original Theme was composed in 1854 that rapidly became a popular show piece during that time. The Variations opens with an extended solo violin introduction marked *Maestoso* that lays out a grand statement of the theme that expresses the violinist’s virtuosity. The piano joins later for the rest of the expressive introduction. While the theme which Wieniawski marks this statement *con grazia* finally appears, it sounds surprisingly innocent that brings out the contrast to the introduction. Follow by the three extended variations that allows the violin to show the brilliant ability and the virtuosity by featuring various techniques. Then the piece goes back to the introduction with the piano and soon it comes to its *Finale* which is a fast waltz and the piece ends with a splendid coda marked *Allegro vivace*.

*Programme notes by Chung Ching-Yu*
Korngold – Violin Concerto in D major

Perhaps one of the most talented film composers in the first half of the twentieth century was Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897-1957), who was considered to be one of the “Godfathers of film music.” In his childhood, he was recognized as a musical prodigy on par with Mozart at the same age. Korngold wrote his first orchestral score at age 14, and completed his first opera, Die tote Stadt, when he was only 23. Like Mendelssohn's ever-popular Violin Concerto, Korngold's Violin Concerto is the late work of a prodigy that denies any thought that its composer lost his flair once his brilliant childhood was past. As a composer, Korngold displayed an unquestioning devotion to full-blooded romantic expression, which is prevalent in the Violin Concerto.

Starting in 1935, Korngold virtually created the field of film music, treating each film as an opera without singing. The scores contained rich melodies that intended to be memorable. After WWII, Korngold turned away from film music so he began to write concert music again, such as this Violin Concerto of 1945. It was dedicated to Alma Mahler, the widow of Gustav Mahler, who had done so much to encourage him as a child prodigy. Jascha Heifetz gave the première of the concerto in 1947, which prompted Korngold to say this: In spite of the demand for virtuosity in the finale, the work with its many melodic and lyric episodes was contemplated for a Caruso than for a Paganini. It is needless to say how delighted I am to have my concerto performed by Caruso and Paganini in one person: Jascha Heifetz. Heifetz's recording with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 1953 is still unsurpassed despite the many fine recordings by young virtuosi that have emerged in recent years.

Korngold accepted the favorite key of most violin concerti (D major) and the customary three-movement scheme. Like many composers before him, Korngold won't allow some of his best tunes go to waste, so he based his Violin Concerto on themes from his film scores. For a mere violin concerto, Korngold included the rather rare contributions of a bass clarinet, contrabassoon, celesta, glockenspiel, xylophone, vibraphone, tubular bells, gong and bass drum. The purpose of this special orchestration is to provide an underlying aural landscape to highlight the lark-like stratospheric singing of the solo violin, giving this concerto a very unique identity. The orchestra rarely occupies the foreground, but the richness of its accompanying colors gives magical support to the soloist. The soloist is required to display an extreme virtuosity throughout, with much of the solo line set in the highest range, where the violin can sing with its pure, angelic voice.
From the start the violin is fully engaged – forget the usual lengthy orchestral introduction of most traditional concerti. In 5 notes, the violin covers 2 octaves which is a very exposed start. Korngold has adopted the regular sonata form for the first movement. The theme of the introduction comes from the film in 1937, *Another Dawn*. The second theme which begins the development section, comes from another film in 1939, *Juarez*. The music moves steadily forward into a faster-moving episode, with constant reminders of the opening ideas and making searching demands on the soloist as a result of its highly rhapsodic style. A short yet unsettled cadenza serves as a bridge to the recapitulation, where the main theme of *Another Dawn* appears once again. The music gradually builds to an exhilarating ending that’s no less thrilling than a roller coaster ride.

The second movement begins with the main theme from the movie *Anthony Adverse* from 1935. We have a complete change of mood from the adventurous spirit of the first movement and we can see the other side of Korngold: the lush Romantic. It has the eloquence of a lover on his knees beseeching his beloved to join him in the life-long adventure of a life together. The theme is never frequently reused, but its rising character recurs throughout the movement. The music has a subtle atmosphere of mystery that goes well with the essence of a romance: one never knows what the journey of love will bring with his or her significant other.

The last movement begins with a staccato jig that is reminiscent of a folk dance. This movement is based on the main motif from *The Prince and the Pauper* (1937). It alternates between periods of unbridled energy and laidback lyricism, giving a somewhat cartoonish character akin to *Tom and Jerry*. The demands on the soloist increase – multiple stopping, extreme leaps, rapid scale runs and the list keeps going even till the very end. This joyful movement serves as a perfect conclusion to a concerto that embodies the ‘Hollywood’ spirit.

*Programme notes by Loh Wei Ken*
**Mozart – Violin Concerto No. 5, K 219**

The Violin Concerto No. 5 in A major, K 219 is often referred to as *The Turkish* and was written by Mozart in 1755, premiered during the holiday season in Salzburg. This concerto is the most popular one of the 5 Violin Concertos that he composes.

The first movement begins with the lively theme first played by the orchestra which is a common practice in concertos of his time. The themes are simple in their first hearing. The soloist then enters uniquely with a beautiful short section, Adagio. This section leads directly to the violin taking up the mood and tempo of the beginning. The second theme with its naïve-sounding repeated notes is also expanded upon by the violin. The rather short development section is followed by the recapitulation. At the end of every movement, soloists are asked to improvise cadenzas as it was a common practice during that period.

The second movement is a slow and graceful music, like a faint reminiscence to the Adagio section in the first movement that sounds like an opera aria for the soloist and orchestra. The violin solo sings throughout the movement with long melodies that slowly unwind with sighs and slight pauses that contribute to the gentleness of the music.

The rondo theme in the third movement is stated by the violin and returns between sections in different keys. Roughly halfway through the movement, the music changes the time signature from 3/4 to 2/4, increases the tempo to Allegro and changes the key to A minor. The new section in this movement is an example of “Turkish” music that was the rage of the times. After a short cadenza played by the soloist, the music returns to the minuet. After the restatement of the theme and some other materials, the slightly altered theme returns and the Concerto comes to an end with an A major arpeggio from the soloist.

*Programme notes by Kong Xian Long*