Dearest listener,

Greetings and a warm welcome to you. Thank you for joining me on this journey through time this evening. We’ll be hitting a few pit stops along the way: the experience of making a memory, the longing for that memory and finally, looking on forward beyond that memory.

The making of a memory. The last set of suites composed by Bach, Partita No. 1 in B-flat Major, BWV 825, walks us through the experience of a delightful memory; its innocence, charm and curiosity makes one relive memories as a child taking a walk through trails on the forest floor. The Partita begins with a tender lyricism in the Prelude, before being bathed in sunshine in the lively Allemande. The Courante, though lively, is lighter and more playful than the Allemande with its dotted rhythms. Following the Courante is the Sarabande, with its gentle serenity and thoughtful introspection. After which, though contrasting, the two Minuets lend a certain charm and grace to the work - the first being more exuberant in spirit, the second more lyrical and chorale-like. The Gigue concludes the partita in a whirl of blinding energy and high spirits. All too quickly, the Partita is over, leaving us yearning for more of its mesmerising positivity. This yearning for more soon transforms into a longing for the past:

Nostalgia. More often than not, the past seems to call out to us and we frequently view bygone memories through rose-tinted glasses. Certainly, the good associated with the past would make most long to rewind time and to re-live such memories, including Ravel. Ravel’s Pavane pour une infante defunte, or Pavane for a Dead Princess, is a piece that expresses just that - it was written not as a tribute to any particular princess, but rather, out of nostalgia for past Spanish customs and sensibilities. Its form is almost like that of a rondo (ABACA); the main theme of A reminisces a past memory, calm, yet bittersweet. Each return of the A section only presents itself to be more wistful than the last, especially in contrast to the more plaintive and sentimental B and C sections. Alas, the magic of the pavane comes to a halt with large, resolute chords, seemingly as if a large, heavy door has been closed, sealing off this portal into the otherworld.
Perhaps we should not set our eyes on things of the past, letting it dictate our every move, but rather look towards -

The future. Dohnanyi’s *Rhapsody No. 3 in C Major* seems to be the epitome of a fantastical, exciting future, showing us the myriad of possibilities life has to offer. This rhapsody appears to form the basis of a movie soundtrack, the opening of the piece mimicking the opening of a stage curtain, before the main characters of the film take over with their excitable chatter. The large spectrum of moods moves from soaring bouts of inspiration to more sinister themes (reminiscent of the movie *Jaws*), drawing one into a marvellous world of endless possibilities. In this way, Dohnanyi’s *Rhapsody* most certainly seems to equip us with the imagination for us to go forth and write our own fantastical future amidst all the uncertainty.

And with that, I leave you to continue on your own journey, dear listener. Look forward into the future instead of looking back and dwelling on the past. Go forth, and I wish you the very best as you continue writing your story.

Programme Notes by Shayna Yap