



Singapore International Violin Competition announces 2021 Commissioned Work, *Before Daybreak* by Koh Cheng Jin

Selected in SIVC's first-ever open call for works, the piece is infused with Chinese music elements and will be performed by all 12 semi-finalists in January.

The Singapore International Violin Competition is pleased to announce that it has selected its 2021 Commissioned Work, *Before Daybreak* 《孤燈挑盡》 by Koh Cheng Jin. Selected in the Competition's first-ever open call for works that was open to all Singaporean composers, it will be performed live by all competition semi-finalists, challenging their interpretative skills across a range of repertoire.

Before Daybreak pays homage to solitude and loss, and is inspired by Chinese poet Bai Juyi's *Song of Everlasting Sorrow*. A violinist and Chinese instrumentalist herself, Koh connects elements of Chinese music such as *erhu* (Chinese fiddle) technique with her work for solo violin, in a "musical poem dedicated to all forms of yearning". An alumna of the School of the Arts Singapore and subsequently The Juilliard School, where she is also currently continuing her graduate studies, Koh's works have previously been commissioned by the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, members of the Singapore Chinese Orchestra, as well as Dingyi Music Company, among others.

Violinist Qian Zhou, Artistic Director of the competition, noted, "The chosen work effectively combines Western violin writing with Chinese instrumental writing, building on the composer's strong understanding of both styles and seeking to evoke the deep colours and emotions from Bai Juyi's poem. This year's open call submissions presented an imaginative range of musical explorations, and we thank all who have taken the time to send in their compositions." Composer Dr Ho Chee Kong who was on the Commissioned Works jury shared, "Koh's piece, beginning with the title, evokes programmatic images through idiomatic writing for the violin and unfolds an interesting narrative through musical and instrumental gestures. We are excited to showcase Singaporean composition talent through this platform."

Reflecting on being selected, Koh shared, "What an immensely humbling experience to share my voice through this prestigious event in my home country. As my first violin solo work, it contains my own personal reflection of our troubled times and the desire for light. Hearing twelve outstanding premieres will be unimaginably overwhelming and beyond gratifying."

The 2021 Commissioned Work and Best Performer of the Commissioned Work prize are supported by the Kris Foundation which was founded by Ms Kris Tan, recipient of the Distinguished Patron of the Arts award. Ms Kris Tan shared, "The Kris Foundation is delighted to support new works for the violin and help showcase the artistry of both Singaporean composers and SIVC's violin candidates. We look forward to seeing the stellar performances at the competition."

The previous commissioned works were *Clara-Luna* by Dr Chen Zhangyi (2018) and *kilo<byte>* by Dr Emily Koh (2015).

Learn more about the Singapore International Violin Competition (17-29 January 2021) [here](#).

Competition applications are now open until 15 September 2020. Learn more [here](#).



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