



RACHMANINOFF

Piano Concerto No. 2

DVOŘÁK

Symphony No. 8

8 NOVEMBER 2025

7.30PM • SOTA CONCERT HALL



ABOUT



NOAH ZHOU

Soloist/Pianist

*"...such a magical touch as if the notes
were just vaporising into the air..."*

- Seen and Heard International

Described as masterful, deeply emotional and dramatic in his pianistic style by BBC Radio, London based British-Chinese pianist Noah Zhou is the first ever British born Laureate of the Rachmaninoff International Piano Competition. He graduated from the Royal Academy of Music, where he was a recipient of the Sir Elton John Scholarship. During his time as a student, Zhou became a prizewinner in over 15 national and international piano competitions.

Since he first came to media attention after being awarded the Royal Philharmonic Society of Great Britain's Duet Prize for Best Young Instrumentalist, Zhou has frequently performed in concerts all across the world, and made his debut recital at London's Wigmore Hall in January 2025.



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AMANDA KYE TAN

Conductor

Amanda Kye Tan is a Singaporean conductor and violinist whose work spans performance, education, and venture. She currently serves as conductor of both the Kids' Philharmonic Orchestra (Singapore) and the Singapore University of Social Sciences Philharmonic. Amanda holds degrees in conducting and violin from the Boston Conservatory at Berklee and the Royal College of Music (London), a recipient of the 2022 Singapore National Arts Council Scholarship (Postgraduate).



Amanda made her conducting debut in 2019 at the Singapore Chinese Orchestra's workshop-concert. The following year, she was appointed Conducting Fellow of the Braddell Heights Symphony Orchestra. Expounding upon her interest in the community, Amanda founded the Last Minute Orchestra, a venture orchestra dedicated to performance and networking opportunities beyond traditional boundaries. Internationally, she has participated in masterclasses with Jorma Panula, Sian Edwards, Neil Varon, and Dianne Wittry, and has assisted in operas such as Chicago Summer Opera's 2023 production of *The Marriage of Figaro*.

During her time in the US, Amanda co-founded the Boston Conservatory Pops Orchestra, leading concerts of film and video game repertoire in collaboration with Berklee College of Music's Screen Scoring Department. Besides freelancing as an orchestral violinist, Amanda is also active as an educator, teaching music history and conducting at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, and writing scripts for the classical duo Twoset Violin.



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Last Minute Artist Orchestra



The Last Minute Orchestra (LMO) is a venture orchestra that unites musicians from diverse backgrounds for an annual musical sprint: one program, one day, one performance.

At the heart of LMO's calendar is its signature annual music camp, during which participants collaboratively select the repertoire and come together to rehearse and perform a full symphonic program, all within a 24-hour period. In addition, emerging young artists and accomplished amateurs are invited to audition for the opportunity to perform a concerto as part of the same concert.

This concert marks the debut of LMO's artistic extension: the Last Minute Artist Orchestra (LMAO). LMAO collaborates with rising industry professionals to present thoughtfully curated programs, offering participants the opportunity to engage with more formal and demanding repertoire beyond the scope of the annual camp.



MORE INFO HERE

Musicians

Violin 1

Jesper Tai**
Adele Teng
Albert Phang
Eric Tan
Jerick Yew
Josiah Ng
Joshua Lee
Li Jiaqi
Lin Lin
Makayla Hu
Melody Soh
Patrina Lim
Wang Shaojun

Violin 2

Samuel Soekarno*
Ashley Tay Ying
Chong Zann
Helene Luyun Zhang Le Gentil
Isaac Lee
Jessica Ng
Michael Tan
Nicholas Lim
Phang Yee Huai
Phee Weiheng
Raymond Tio
Victoria Man

Viola

Lyon Hooi*
Andrew Fung
Chang Zi Yi
Marissa Yee
Michiko Akao
Pearl Ng Mohamad Zurymie

Cello

Kenneth Lee*
Aden Tueh
Chen Yijie
Lavinia Chu
Lee Ying
Peh Xiang Hong
Sharlyn Ng
Tang Si Ting

Double Bass

Lee Hyoseok*
Claire Lim
Zayn Hooi

Horn

Lucas Lim*
Alicia Wong
Krystal Koh
Wilson Kang

English Horn

Nathalie Fu*

Trumpet

Naqib Solihin bin Azman*
Teo Ming Feng

Piccolo

Kenneth Zhong*

Flute

Kenneth Zhong*
Shawn Svento

Oboe

Huang Xingyang*
Nathalie Fu

Clarinet

Lye Yu Feng*
Tan Jing Kai

Bassoon

Syed Ridwan Ahmad*
Li Ruidan

Trombone

Keith Koe Meng Kiang*
Grace Foong
Martin Ong

Tuba

Gabriel Song*

Timpani

Wong Ting Feng*

Percussion

Triston Foo*
Junnevaeh Lim

Legend:

** :Concertmaster

* :Principal

BRYAN SOO

Producer

Pianist | Concert Artist | Pedagogue



Bryan Soo is a Singaporean pianist recognised for his expressive artistry and curatorial vision. A graduate of LASALLE College of the Arts, University of the Arts Singapore, where he received the Distinguished Performers Award, Bryan has performed internationally across Asia, Europe, and the United States in cities such as Bangkok, Jakarta, Seoul, Tokyo, Berlin, and California. Alongside his performances, he is an active pedagogue and organiser, dedicated to nurturing the next generation of musicians and curating high-quality events that connect artists and audiences through shared musical experiences.



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PROGRAMME

Rachmaninoff

**Piano Concerto No. 2
in C Minor, Op. 18**

- I. Moderato
- II. Adagio sostenuto
- III. Allegro scherzando

—*INTERMISSION*—

Dvořák

**Symphony No. 8 in G
major, Op. 88, B. 163**

- I. Allegro con brio
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegretto grazioso
- IV. Allegro ma non
troppo

RACHMANINOFF

Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 18



Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 is considered his breakthrough work, catapulting him to international success as both a composer and a pianist. It is both the most popular and the most critically admired of his concertos.

This concerto was a tremendous personal and musical triumph for Rachmaninoff. It was composed after a three-year period, between 1897 and 1900, during which Rachmaninoff was gripped by a deep depression. This breakdown was triggered by the total failure and critical disaster of his Symphony No. 1 at its 1897 premiere, which caused him a traumatic disappointment and a complete nervous collapse. The composer recalled suffering from "a paralyzing apathy" and found no pleasure in anything; he could not even look at a blank piece of manuscript paper for two years.

Rachmaninoff recovered through the help of Dr. Nicholas Dahl (Dr. Nikolai Dahl), a Moscow physician and specialist in behavioral hypnosis and in gratitude for his recovery, Rachmaninoff dedicated the new concerto to Dr. Dahl.

I. Moderato

The first movement begins with a commanding series of eight bell-tone chords played by the solo piano, building in both volume and tension. The tension then resolves into a sweeping main theme (piano then strings) and a lyrical second theme is introduced by the soloist. The first theme returns in the development section and is driven forward with a propulsive martial rhythm. In the recapitulation, the second theme returns in the French horn before the movement concludes by re-establishing the intense martial mood.

II. Adagio sostenuto

This slow movement shifts dramatically from the previous C minor into the serene key of E major, establishing an immediate and gentle mood. Characterized as a long-limbed, nocturne-like piece, it opens with soft, slow chords played by the strings. The gentle main theme, introduced by the flute and clarinet, is accompanied by the solo piano's running commentary of fleet, poetic arpeggios. The middle section provides a contrasting scherzo-like drama with woodwinds and violas, featuring a cadenza-like passage from the soloist. The movement smoothly resolves, returning to the original serene material for its conclusion.

III. Allegro scherzando

The finale opens in the energetic, martial rhythm established in the first movement. Standing in bold relief to this vigorous start is the lyrical second theme. This theme, a grand inspiration in the fullest Romantic tradition, is one of the best-loved melodies in orchestral literature and is first sung by the violas and solo oboe. For the remainder of the movement, the two contrasting main themes—the martial and the lyrical—alternate, creating dramatic contrast. The pianist leads a passionate development before the lush viola melody reappears with the violins. A brief piano cadenza subtly moves the tonality toward C major, setting the stage for the coda. The coda gathers all the movement's elements together, rising through a finely crafted line of mounting tension to bring the entire concerto to an electrifying, dazzling close.

DVOŘÁK

Symphony No. 8 in G major, Op. 88, B. 163



Dvořák's Symphony No. 8 in G major is a joyous work, filled with admiration for natural beauty and reflections of the composer's fondness for Czech and Slavonic folk music. It serves as a homage to the music of his Bohemian homeland. Unlike Dvořák's sombre 7th Symphony or his famous, cross-pollinating 'New World' Symphony, the 8th is often identified by the words 'folk' and 'Slavic'.

While Dvořák adhered generally to the structure of the classical symphony (four movements with established tempos), he intentionally sought to avoid usual, universally applied and recognized forms. The symphony is not a test of ambition or virtuosity. Rather, it aims to please rather than to challenge. It is characterized by variable moods, moving through pastoral images, dance and march temperaments, and passages of heightened drama.

I. Allegro con brio

The first movement follows a general sonata-form framework, but Dvořák incorporates numerous innovations. It opens with a slow, elegiac theme played by the cellos, which starts in G minor despite the symphony's main key of G major. This theme is repeated almost exactly at the start of the exposition, development, and recapitulation, concluding each time in G major with warm brass. Instead of two themes, the movement uses many, including the actual main theme—a "chirpy," birdlike melody first heard in the flute.

II. Adagio

This movement is notable as Dvořák's most variable slow movement, presenting a veritable kaleidoscope of contrasting moods and rich instrumental imagery. Formally, it might be classified as a free rondo with the structure A-B-A'-C-B'-A'. The movement opens unusually in the key of E-flat major, though the music continually gravitates toward C major. The overall atmosphere is evocative of the Czech's local color, exploring scenes of rural life and natural beauty.

III. Allegretto grazioso

Dvořák replaces the traditional fast scherzo with a Brahmsian, waltz-like movement. The main section is characterized as a lightly melancholic "pensive waltz" featuring a sturdy peasant lilt. For the middle section, or Trio, the melody is borrowed directly from Toník's aria in Dvořák's comic opera, 'The Stubborn Lovers'. This theme is accompanied by extended rhythms and shifting accents that purposefully move away from the waltz's strict triple time. The movement concludes with a short, cheerful coda that surprisingly renders the final theme in duple time.

IV. Allegro ma non troppo

The finale begins with a trumpet fanfare announcing the main theme. This broad, sonorous melody, first heard in the cellos, is taken from the first movement's flute theme and is built simply on the G major triad. The movement masterfully blends sonata form with variational principles (akin to Beethoven's Eroica finale). Starting leisurely, the tempo accelerates dramatically into variations that include hysterical trills and a heavy, Janissary-like march, driving to a rapid, joyful climax.



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