

HK PHIL X TAI KWUN
CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES

港樂 X 大館
室樂音樂會系列
三人行

TRIO RENDEZVOUS

場地伙伴
Venue Partner

大館
TAI KWUN



23
MAY
2022

MON 7:30PM

大館賽馬會立方
JC Cube, Tai Kwun

港樂 X 大館：室樂音樂會系列

三人行

HK PHIL X TAI KWUN: CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES TRIO RENDEZVOUS

場地伙伴 Venue Partner



- P. 1 羅塔 NINO ROTA** 16'
- 為單簧管、大提琴及鋼琴而作的三重奏 (1973)
Trio for Clarinet, Cello and Piano (1973)
- | | |
|-------|--------------|
| 快板 | Allegro |
| 行板 | Andante |
| 極快的快板 | Allegrissimo |
- P. 3 拉赫曼尼諾夫 SERGEI RACHMANINOV** 7'
- 《練聲曲》, op. 34, no. 14 Vocalise, op. 34, no. 14
- P. 4 拉赫曼尼諾夫 SERGEI RACHMANINOV** 5'
- (史安祖改編 arr. ANDREW SIMON)
第二交響曲：慢板
Symphony no. 2: Adagio
- P. 5 布拉姆斯 JOHANNES BRAHMS** 25'
- A小調三重奏，為單簧管、大提琴及鋼琴而作，op. 114
Trio in A minor for Clarinet, Cello and Piano, op. 114
- | | |
|--------|--------------------|
| 快板 | Allegro |
| 慢板 | Adagio |
| 優美的小行板 | Andantino grazioso |
| 快板 | Allegro |
- 史安祖** 單簧管 **Andrew Simon** Clarinet
鮑力卓 大提琴 **Richard Bamping** Cello
李偉安 鋼琴 **Warren Lee** Piano



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演奏期間請保持安靜
Please keep noise to a minimum
during the performance



請留待整首樂曲完結後才報以掌聲鼓勵
Please reserve your applause
until the end of the entire work

1911-1979

NINO ROTA

Trio for Clarinet, Cello and Piano

Allegro

Andante

Allegro



Nino Rota

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Some composers are remembered only for one work. But there are others who aren't even that lucky. You know a tune, but you might go your entire life without knowing who wrote it. Nino Rota was born in Milan – the spiritual home of Italian opera – and he was one of the most astonishing child prodigies of the 20th century. His first opera, *Il Principe Porcaro* (The Swineherd Prince) was premiered in 1926, when he was just 15 years old.

But very few music-lovers realise that Rota went on to write nine more operas, four symphonies and 11 solo concertos. If you're a fan of world cinema, you'll certainly know that Rota composed the music for some of the greatest achievements in modern Italian cinema – *La Strada*, *8½* and *La Dolce Vita* – and that their director, the legendary Federico Fellini, described Rota as “the most precious collaborator I ever had”. But what's certain is that, if you've seen Francis Ford Coppola's *The Godfather*, and been haunted by its world-weary signature tune, you've already got at least one melody by Nino Rota lodged firmly in your memory. That's just one of over 150 film scores that Rota composed between 1933 and 1979 – including such classics as *Death on the Nile* and Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet*.

That gift for capturing a mood or character in music is what made Rota such a great film composer – but it also made him a natural writer of chamber music. In movies, music helps depict each individual character, and it's just the same in chamber music – in which each instrument's unique personality is a vital part of the whole. Rota's natural flair for melody and the elegant clarity of his technique does the rest, though as an Italian composer, the tenor-like nature of both cello and clarinet uncorks a particular gift for singing, characterful melody. He wrote this trio in 1973, and the lilting, waltzing first **Allegro** begins *staccato*, in a mischievous mood that it never quite sheds, spiced with just the faintest hint of menace.

The **Andante** is pure song: a moody love-duet for the clarinet and cello, that never quite emerges from the shadows. And then in the *finale* (marked **Allegrissimo** – or “very cheerful”) Rota summons up the quirky circus spirit of Fellini’s comedies, without ever losing his own natural poise, wit or sense of romance. It’s a Harlequinade: graceful, spirited and effortlessly entertaining. “Look, when they tell me that in my music I am only concerned with bringing a little bit of nostalgia and a lot of good humour and optimism, I think that actually, this is exactly how I would like to be remembered,” said Rota, late in life: “with a little bit of nostalgia, a lot of optimism, and good humour”.



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1873-1943

SERGEI RACHMANINOV

Vocalise, op. 34, no. 14



Rachmaninov

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Sergei Rachmaninov received a formidable musical training. As a teenager, he was a student of the Moscow Conservatoire's fearsome piano professor Nikolai Zverev, who imposed a regime of uncompromising strictness on his pupils (or as he called them, his "cubs"). Zverev taught the Russian and western piano classics (particularly Chopin), and introduced the aspiring virtuosos to Russia's pre-eminent living composers, including Tchaikovsky. But Rachmaninov found himself increasingly drawn to other areas of study. From 1889 he took classes with Stepan Smolensky, Professor of Church Music at the Conservatoire, and director of Moscow's Synodal Choir. Smolensky was patient, kindly and eager to interest young musicians in the Church tradition. He believed that the *znamenny* – the ancient chants of the Russian Orthodox Church – contained both the seeds of renewal, and the essence of something profoundly Russian.

Rachmaninov never forgot that lesson, or the sound of those ancient chants, and throughout his creative life he wrote long, chant-like melodies that feel as if they might carry on forever. In *Vocalise* – the last of his 14 songs op. 34, composed in 1912 – the two extremes of his training find a blissful union. The romantic piano tradition and the spirit of those timeless, singing melodies come together to create something little short of perfection. A "vocalise" is a song without words – like a distant melody drifting on the breeze – and this one unfolds at rapturous length over gently shifting piano harmonies, letting the listeners imagine their own meaning (if there even has to be one). A haunting, indefinable mixture of radiant contentment and aching melancholy, this is a song in which words would truly be superfluous. Originally written for voice and piano, it is easy to imagine that the piece could have been written with the sound of the cello in mind.

1873-1943

SERGEI RACHMANINOV (arr. ANDREW SIMON)

Symphony no. 2: Adagio

Five years earlier, in 1907, Rachmaninov's friends had been astonished to learn in a Russian newspaper that he had completed a new symphony – his second. “It’s true,” he confirmed to his friend Mikhail Slonov, “I finished it a month ago, and immediately put it aside. It was a severe worry to me and I’m not going to think about it anymore.” He’d kept it a close secret, even moving temporarily to the German city of Dresden so he could work undisturbed. But he needn’t have worried. The Second Symphony is a polished, gloriously confident masterpiece, in which Rachmaninov’s inspiration breathes and expands more freely than in any of his previous works, its expansive melodies unfurling effortlessly over huge but perfectly measured musical paragraphs.

More than any of his other orchestral works, the Second Symphony soars on wings of song, and its third movement, **Adagio**, might be the most uninhibitedly romantic music Rachmaninov ever wrote. An ardent, rising motif for the strings introduces the great, almost-endless solo clarinet melody that is the heart of the whole symphony. The spirit of those old Russian chants has become something infinitely expressive and infinitely tender – and at the same time, something as eternal as the melody described by great Russian novelist Ivan Turgenev in his story *The Singers*:

“He sang, and in every sound his voice made there breathed something familiar as our birthright and so vast no eye could encompass it, just as if the Russian steppe were being unrolled before us, stretching away to an endless distance.”

That’s not the whole story, of course. The opening theme returns, still more passionate, and there’s a poignant question-and-answer between short, yearning motifs – as if pleading. But in the end, that great clarinet melody returns, softer and even sweeter than before. The Adagio ends in profound tranquility: student has become master, and in doing so has given us one of music’s all-time great love stories, told in melodies that go too deep for words.

1833-1897

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Trio in A minor for Clarinet, Cello and Piano, op. 114

Allegro

Adagio

Andantino grazioso

Allegro

By the end of 1890 Brahms had decided to retire. On completing his String Quintet op. 111, he polished off a handful of incomplete canons, studies and songs, and then systematically destroyed all his remaining unfinished works. Sketches for a fifth symphony were among the “lot of torn-up manuscript paper” which (in a letter of 12 October 1890) he told his publisher Simrock that he had thrown into the River Traun before leaving his summer resort of Bad Ischl – an elegant spa town high in the forested mountains of the Salzkammergut. The following May, he even drew up his will, appointing Simrock as his executor. And having made these decisions and cleared his mind, his creativity – as creativity will – started to bubble up anew. “I was so happy, felt so free and secure,” he told Simrock, “that the loveliest and most amusing things kept flying into my mind!”

Something had changed. In March 1891, on a visit to Meiningen, Brahms had heard Richard Mühlfeld, the principal clarinetist of the Court Orchestra, perform a Weber concerto and Mozart’s Clarinet Quintet. He was fascinated, and Mühlfeld, whose playing was so soft and expressive that Brahms dubbed him “Fräulein Klarinette” (Miss Clarinet), became the inspiration behind what was to be the final, radiantly autumnal phase of Brahms’ career. The composer returned to Bad Ischl, and by the second week of August 1891, he was already dropping tempting hints to Simrock – “I hope to be able to stalk you with two really decent works.” In fact, he had already sent the manuscript of a brand-new Clarinet Trio for copying and had promised his friend Eusebius Mandyczewski that it would be “the twin to a much greater folly”. That was the Clarinet Quintet op. 115, which he started while still working on the Trio, and finished shortly after. Two further late masterpieces for Mühlfeld (the two Clarinet Sonatas op. 120, nos. 1 and 2) followed in the summer of 1894.

With the Clarinet Trio and the Clarinet Quintet, Brahms was setting out to imitate his beloved Mozart, although it’s typical of Brahms that he opted for the darker, richer textures provided by the cello, rather than the viola that Mozart had used in his *Kege!statt* Clarinet Trio (K. 498) of 1786. Just as four years earlier in the Double Concerto Brahms had written a concerto for cello with a solo violin as “chaperone”, he chose to approach his first major work for



Brahms

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clarinet with the assistance of the familiar cello – an instrument for which he had already written two sonatas (op. 38 and op. 99). But despite Brahms’ own self-deprecating comments, the Trio is a masterpiece, and its four movements are worked out with a confidence, an expressiveness and an economy that could only be the work of a composer in full command of his materials. Its colours are darker and more contrasted than those of its larger cousin, the Clarinet Quintet, and its melancholy is more urgent. If the Quintet is now the more popular work of the two, Brahms – with justice – considered the two works to be equally fine.

The Trio opens with a pensive melody for the cello which might (or might not) have been the opening theme of the lost fifth symphony. In any case, it launches a broad, expressive sonata-movement with a terse development section and a beautifully coloured *coda*. A lyrical **Adagio** follows, its short length containing a remarkable depth and richness of feeling; and then comes an **Andantino** intermezzo – a lilting waltz, reminding us that one of Brahms’ friends (and latterly neighbours) in Bad Ischl was the world-famous “Waltz King”, Johann Strauss II himself (they used to play billiards together at Café Ramsauer). The central section is a very personal homage to Mozart’s Clarinet Quintet, complete with yodelling clarinet (well, we’re in the Alps, after all). The final **Allegro** shifts restlessly between rhythmic patterns, and although there are moments of reflection, there is little time for nostalgia as Brahms pushes the Trio to an uncompromising close.

Brahms presented the Trio and Quintet to Mühlfeld in Meiningen in November 1891 and they tried out the Trio with the cellist Robert Hausman at a private soirée on the 21st. The same three performers gave its premiere in a concert organised by Joseph Joachim at the Berlin Singakademie three weeks later, on 12 December 1891.

All programme notes by Richard Bratby



© Matt Dine

ANDREW SIMON Clarinet

As Principal Clarinetist of the HK Phil (since 1988), Andrew Simon has performed as soloist over 80 times and recorded works by Stravinsky and Baermann with the orchestra. Simon is the first American classical musician to perform in North Korea, and has recently released a CD for Naxos Records. A graduate of Juilliard, he has recently made his New Zealand, Lithuanian and Taiwan concerto debuts. He is also a committed music educator, regularly writing articles, lecturing at conventions, and serving on the faculties of local universities.



© Andrew Ling

RICHARD BAMPING Cello

Richard Bamping has been Principal Cellist of the HK Phil since 1993. He has performed with many of the finest musicians of recent history – Lord Yehudi Menuhin, Leonidas Kavakos, Mstislav Rostropovich, Carlo Maria Giulini, Valery Gergiev, Leonard Bernstein, Lorin Maazel, Sir Colin Davis and Claudio Abbado. He has a great passion for playing chamber music.

Richard's cello, dated 1674, was made in Cremona by Andrea Guarneri and is one of only nine surviving examples of his work.



WARREN LEE Piano

Warren Lee made his televised debut with the HK Phil at the age of six and was the first-prize winner of the 1995 Stravinsky Awards International Piano Competition and Grand Prix Ivo Pogorelich. A Steinway Artist, Warren's discography includes ten acclaimed albums on Naxos and a variety of recordings on Steinway's SPIRIO. He received the Ten Outstanding Young Persons Award in Hong Kong in 2012, an Associateship from the Royal Academy of Music in 2015 and the Ian Mininberg Distinguished Alumni Award by the Yale School of Music in 2017.

Please click onto the name of each artist for a full-version biography.

港樂即將上演的音樂會 HK PHIL UPCOMING CONCERTS

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GLUCK *Orfeo et Euridice: Dance of the Furies*
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RAMEAU *Les indes galantes: Chaconne*
RAMEAU *Platée Selection*
Paul McCARTNEY *Ocean's Kingdom Selection*
Paul McCARTNEY *Liverpool Oratorio: The World You're Coming Into and The Beatles Medley*

卡羅爾，指揮
法克絲·女高音
艾樂珊，主持
Fayçal Karoui, conductor
Valentina Farcas, soprano
Isaac Droscha, presenter

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MAY 2022

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茶館室樂系列：香港管弦樂團——遙聽夜鶯 Tea House Chamber Series: Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra Nightingale in Distance

華夏斯 《密度21.5》
武滿徹 《雨樹》
譚盾 《遙》
龐樂思 《圍棋》(世界首演)
盧凡迪 《夜鶯》，為旁述與七種樂器而作
VARÈSE *Density 21.5*
TAKEMITSU *Rain Tree*
TAN Dun *In Distance*
OZNO *Weichi (Go) (World Premiere)*
LOEVENDIE *The Nightingale, for Narrator and Seven Instruments*

港樂混合小組
何博文·英語旁述
HK Phil mixed ensemble
Jerome Hoberman, narrator

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JUN 2022

SAT 8:30PM
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composersscheme



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曾樂欣 《水景》
甘聖希 《經變——妙法蓮華經：第三，譬喻品》
葉世民 《土豪的生活態度》
翁蔣勳 《芬布爾之冬》
黃子峻 《問天》
何嘉雯 《覓》
Charlotte BRAY *Stone Dancer*
TSANG Lok-yan *Waterscape*
KAM Shing-hei *The Illustration of Buddhist Sutra: Lotus Sutra, III. A Parable*
Simon YIP Sai-man *The Lifestyle of a Nouveau Riche*
Bonnie YUNG Sin-kan *Fimbulvetr*
Adrian WONG Chi-chun *Wail*
Carmen HO Ka-man *Somewhere in Between*

卡羅爾，指揮
貝蕾爾·客席作曲家/評論
陳啟揚，主持
Fayçal Karoui, conductor
Charlotte Bray,
guest composer/commentator
Chan Kai-young, facilitator

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JUN 2022

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港樂@自由空間：譚盾 | 六月雪 HK Phil @ Freespace: Tan Dun | Snow in June

王靖 《小石潭記》
基治 《構造三》
夏利遜 小提琴擊樂協奏曲
譚盾 《悲歌：六月雪》
Jing WANG *Record of the Little Rock Pond*
John CAGE *Third Construction*
HARRISON *Concerto for Violin with Percussion Orchestra*
TAN Dun *Elegy: Snow in June, for Cello & Percussion Quartet*

王亮，小提琴
鮑力卓·大提琴
港樂擊樂小組
Wang Liang, violin
Richard Bamping, cello
HK Phil Percussion Section

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