


AN ESPLANADE COMMISSION

ILLUMINATIONS

SINGAPORE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



A programme of *In New Light – A Season of Commissions*,
in celebration of Esplanade's 20th anniversary.



LIEN BOON HUA
CONDUCTOR



ABIGAIL SIN
PIANO



LOH JUN HONG
VIOLIN



JONATHAN SHIN
COMPOSER | PIANO



PHOON YU
COMPOSER | ORGAN

SINGAPORE SYMPHONY CHORUS • SINGAPORE SYMPHONY YOUTH CHOIR
SINGAPORE SYMPHONY CHILDREN'S CHOIR

5 NOV 2022, SAT, 7.30PM
ESPLANADE CONCERT HALL

PROGRAMME NOTES

About Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

Esplanade is Singapore's national performing arts centre. It hosts a year-round line-up of about 3,500 live performances and activities presented by Esplanade, its partners and hirers. Esplanade also brings the arts virtually to audiences in Singapore and beyond, through its diverse range of digital programmes on *Esplanade Offstage*, an all-access backstage pass to the performing arts and guide to Singapore and Asian arts and culture, with videos, podcasts, articles, quizzes and resources.

As an arts centre for everyone, Esplanade also creates opportunities for seniors, youth, children and underserved communities to experience the arts. More than 70% of the shows that take place each year at the centre are free for all to enjoy.

The centre works in close partnership with local, regional and international artists to develop artistic capabilities and content, push artistic boundaries and engage audiences. Esplanade supports the creation of artistic content by commissioning and producing new Singapore and Asian work for the international stage. It also develops technical capabilities for the industry nationally.

Turning 20 in 2022, Esplanade marks the occasion with a year-long celebration themed *20 and Beyond: Keeping the Lights On*. In addition to the presentations of its year-long festivals, programme series, and special initiatives and events, there will also be a season of new works by Singapore and Asian artists specially commissioned for the arts centre's 20th anniversary and official opening of its newest venue, Singtel Waterfront Theatre.

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay is operated by The Esplanade Co Ltd (TECL), which is a not-for-profit organisation, a registered Charity and an Institution of a Public Character. The Charity Council awarded TECL the Charity Governance Award – Special Commendation for Clarity of Strategy in 2016, and the Charity Transparency Award for four consecutive years since 2016. Esplanade is Singapore's first Dementia-Friendly Arts Venue and a certified Dementia Go-To Point, as well as a Guide-dog Friendly centre.

TECL receives funding support from Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and its Community Programmes are supported by Tote Board Family, comprising Tote Board, Singapore Pools and Singapore Turf Club.

Visit Esplanade.com for more information.

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CEO MESSAGE

Humans are creatures of habit. We fear changes that disturb our sense of self and our sense of belonging to a home or community. Yet we constantly crave the new. New tastes, sights, and experiences that excite and inspire us. These two contradictory impulses also underlie *In New Light – A Season of Commissions* as Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay marks its 20-year journey as an arts centre for everyone.

Presented from 12 Oct to 31 Dec 2022, *In New Light's* commissions celebrate 20 years of artistry and collaborations that have made Esplanade a home for the arts, and the arts an integral part of Singapore's cultural identity and diverse communities. *In New Light* also presents new works and a new venue. In a world still experiencing the aftershocks of the pandemic and existential crises on ecological, technological and other fronts, these commissions hope to provide new lenses through which we can better question, heal, and ultimately, create our future.

Since we opened in October 2002, Esplanade's iconic domes have glowed like lanterns in the Marina Bay. In October 2022, we open a new Waterfront Theatre with a façade that reflects daylight and glows at night. Both then and now, the steadfast support of artists, crew, staff, audiences, as well as our partners, sponsors, donors and funders has helped us to not only keep the lights on, but to entertain, move, inspire and transform lives through the arts. On behalf of the Esplanade team, I thank you. And as we look beyond to the future, we welcome everyone to experience *In New Light*.

Yvonne Tham

CEO

The Esplanade Co Ltd

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL SPONSOR



Lam Soon Singapore has continuously supported the arts and culture scene through our various outreach and CSR efforts. This time round, one of our brands, Homesoy is proud to be a Principal Sponsor of *In New Light's* commissions to celebrate the 20 years of artistry and collaborations that have made Esplanade a home for the arts, and arts an integral part of Singapore's cultural identity and diverse communities.

Through *In New Light's* commissions, we hope everyone can come together to celebrate Singapore's arts and culture history across generations, galvanise the nation and spur our way forward.

We hope you will enjoy *In New Light's* commissions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wang Shang Ying'.

Mr. Whang Shang Ying

Executive Chairman
Lam Soon Singapore Pte Ltd.

PROGRAMME

Grażyna Bacewicz

Overture (1943)

Felix Mendelssohn

Concerto for Piano, Violin & Orchestra
in D minor, MWV O4 (1823)*

~ Intermission ~

Jonathan Shin & Phoon Yu

Illuminations – Symphony for Organ,
Chorus, and Orchestra (2022)**

An Esplanade Commission & World Premiere

Boon Hua Lien, conductor

Abigail Sin, piano*

Loh Jun Hong, violin*

Jonathan Shin, piano**

Phoon Yu, organ**

Singapore Symphony Chorus**

Singapore Symphony Youth Choir**

Singapore Symphony Childrens' Choir**

Singapore Symphony Orchestra

Eudence Palaruan, Choral Director**

Wong Lai Foon, Choirmaster**

(1hr 40mins, including 20mins intermission)

PROGRAMME NOTES

Grażyna BACEWICZ (1909 – 1969) ***Overture (1943)***

Unlike the romantics, Grażyna Bacewicz did not believe in the necessary expression of human emotion through music, and classified herself as a believer in determinism. Regarding the premiere of her sinfonietta (1935), she said, “Frankly, I listened to that piece as though it weren’t mine at all, but written by some very wise composer. I can’t believe I wrote it. It’s so extremely lively and cheerful and witty, with not a single second of waffle. I can’t understand, in truth, how such an embodiment of pessimism as myself could write such merry music.”

On the contrary, Bacewicz’s life and music are often considered the opposite of her description of self —it was exactly her music’s uncompromising optimism and sheer willpower that allowed Bacewicz to shine a brilliant light through the political chaos that took effect on her home country.

Bacewicz’s Polish Roots

Known as the “First Lady of Polish Music”, Bacewicz played a prominent role in the proliferation of Polish music in the 20th century, incorporating modernist techniques (influenced by her Parisian teacher, pioneer female composer Nadia Boulanger, who also taught the likes of Leonard Bernstein and Aaron Copland), whilst remaining steadfast to her roots of the Polish folk song (following the footsteps of Polish composer, Karol Szymanowski). She was amongst those who

kept her country relevant internationally amidst the tumults of war and socialist repression.

Bacewicz's musical life was always disrupted yet inspired by turbulent forces of history. Born in Łódź, Poland to a bi-national family, she was taught music at a young age by her Lithuanian father. In her formative years, she shared a close personal and musical bond with her siblings and enjoyed playing chamber music with them. In 1923, Bacewicz's family was suddenly broken when her father illegally crossed the border to Lithuania with her second brother, hoping that his family would follow suit. However, Bacewicz, together with the rest of her family, chose to stay behind in Warsaw, where she majored in piano, violin and composition at the conservatory.

The Wartime Musician

The advent of the Second World War threatened to put a halt to her musical pursuits. By the 1930s, Bacewicz had already developed into an outstanding violinist, staging concerts throughout Europe, emerging as a prize-winner at the 1935 Wieniawski Competition and serving as the principal violinist of the Polish Radio Orchestra from 1936 – 1938. During the Nazi occupation, Bacewicz was the epitome of tenacity and defiance as she chose to remain in Warsaw, where she continued to compose music. Whilst tending to a wounded sister and taking care of her family, she was actively involved in secret underground movements that fought to keep the Polish culture alive. She premiered her new music at private concerts, including her *String Quartet No. 2*, her *Symphony No. 1* and one of her most enduring pieces—her **Overture** for orchestra.

After the Warsaw Uprising, which saw the obliteration of her city, Bacewicz and her husband tried to flee with their two-year-old daughter but were held captive in Pruszków.

It was again, a close shave. They were lucky to avoid being thrown into labor camp, when they fought for their release on the premise of their young child. At the end of the war, with Bacewicz in attendance, her *Overture* was finally played for the very first time, during the Krakow Festival of Contemporary Music in 1945. There and then, it joined the ranks of war music that pay tribute to the timeless and indomitable human spirit, as exemplified by Bacewicz herself.

A Petite Force to be Reckoned With

Based loosely on the Italian overture model (***allegro—andante—allegro***), Bacewicz's *Overture* is a bite-sized treat that packs the punch of a much larger symphonic work. It possesses an inextinguishable quality that first begins discreetly with a rhythmic timpani pattern, reminiscent of the "fate motif" Ludwig van Beethoven used in his *Symphony No. 5*, heavily used by the BBC Radio during the war. This motif is regarded by many as a musical message of hope, with the Morse code for 'V', symbolising Victory—dot dot dot dash. In another work written during the occupation, Andrezej Panufnik included a similar motif in his *Tragic Overture* from 1942. It is not clear if this was a quotation by both Polish composers whom, like many during the war, actively avoided any references in their music. In any case, Bacewicz's chosen motif appears with relentless intention throughout her music, beaten out on the timpani and passed around the instruments throughout the piece, and one cannot help but ponder the likelihood of her drawing inspiration from the broadcasts' signal.

After the raw strokes of open strings, the *Overture* scorches into the ***allegro*** section, driven by a busy, perpetual motion from the strings based on quick "pendular" sets of semiquavers. Bold declarations from the brass soon punctuate the texture in short staccato stabs, amidst woodwind

interjections. Tension builds up over and over again across the orchestra, before leading to a horn and flute interlude, bringing a moment of respite, with the introduction of the second theme-group.

The ***andante*** section is led primarily by the woodwinds, with solo melodies that interweave and then dissipate, never to be reprised again beyond this segment of the work. Here, Bacewicz utilises a completely different sound texture, with unusual orchestration and the distant sound of delicate bells. The strings accompany with a lush texture, sustaining an air of mystery, perhaps evocative of past peace and joys. This is juxtaposed against the mellow *expressivo* of the violas and the noble sounds from the first horn, in a Wagnerian-style cantabile, creating a pastoral soundscape.

This calmness proves too good to be true, as the violins violently hijack the status quo, reclaiming the pressing tempo of the opening ***allegro***, this time played *energico*. Bacewicz's inclusion of brass fanfares builds up a fighting spirit, constantly trying to break the perpetual motion of the strings. The brass and percussion lend their heroic energy towards the relentless rush, building up a palpable amount of tension, only perpetuated by groups of wind instruments entering even more impulsively each time. Like bugle calls, they repeat incessantly, increasing the density of the texture, until a full *tutti* proclaims the end of the work with a powerful, singular and sustained D note. A great sense of adrenaline, with a pounding heartbeat, drive the work forward till this very point. Composed in a time of darkness, this is music set ablaze with light.

Felix MENDELSSOHN (1809 – 1847)

Concerto for Piano, Violin & Orchestra in D minor, MWV 04 (1823)

Besides being a brilliant piano virtuoso, young Mendelssohn's sheer quality and output of compositions was far beyond his years. By the age of 11, he had written a trio for strings, a violin and piano sonata, two solo piano sonatas and the beginning of a third, three piano sonatas for four hands, four sonatas for organ, three lieder, and a cantata. In the period when his first concertos were composed, Mendelssohn also wrote 12 string symphonies. He was considered by many to be an astonishing prodigy, comparable only to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Artistry in the Mendelssohn Household

The seeds of Mendelssohn's dazzling ability were sewn by at least two generations of exceptional achievers. It would be folly to attribute Mendelssohn's musical success solely to his family's material wealth, although he did get a fine start to life with it. Mendelssohn's family never lived ostentatiously, encouraged hard work in all endeavours, and most importantly, lived with an artistic and broadminded outlook. Mendelssohn's grandfather, Moses Mendelssohn, was a prominent Jewish philosopher in the Age of Enlightenment in Germany. His father, Abraham Mendelssohn, was a philanthropist, and his mother, Lea Salomon, was from the Itzig family, which made considerable impact on the German and Jewish social and cultural history. Salomon was both a literature lover and an excellent pianist, having learnt from a student of Bach's.

Determined to give their children a good education, Mendelssohn's parents frequently invited artists, musicians

and scientists to their household, amongst them poets Heinrich Heine, the philosopher Hegel, and the scientist Alexander von Humboldt. It was said that “Europe came to their living room”, and it was in this enlightened environment that Mendelssohn grew up in—it is undeniable how in his own way, he acquired his family’s light, passed down from generation to generation.

A Musical Maturity Far Beyond His Years

Barely entering his teens, the 14-year-old Felix Mendelssohn composed the charming and sentimental **Concerto for Piano, Violin & Orchestra in D minor**, as a logical step (an upsized!) following two of his compositions completed in the previous year—his very first concerto, the *Piano Concerto in A minor*, and the subsequent *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in D minor*. Also known as the *Double Concerto in D minor*, the work is considered one of Mendelssohn’s best adolescent masterpieces. The two solo instruments might seem almost incompatible, but one must bear in mind that the pianoforte of Mendelssohn’s time was gentler and lighter than today’s concert grand. Mendelssohn’s knowledge of the two instruments’ respective qualities is evident in the way they mimic and dialogue with one another, each taking turns to accompany the other, whilst given virtuosic spotlights of their own.

Mendelssohn’s Labyrinth of Influences

Having briefly studied with Johann Hummel when he was 12, Mendelssohn most likely took inspiration from Hummel’s own *Concerto for Piano, Violin, and Orchestra in G Major*, although he was also likely influenced by Beethoven’s *Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Piano in C Major*, and two of Carl Maria von Weber’s works—his *Konzertstück in F minor* and *Concerto No. 2 in E-flat Major*, amongst other works. Mendelssohn’s

multifaceted influences for the work are first revealed in the ***allegro***, a movement with so much musical material, it spans more than half of the entire piece. It features a double exposition for soli and orchestra, with cadenzas for both soloists. Despite keeping the movement to a classical sonata-allegro form, Mendelssohn also borrowed elements from the baroque *ritornello* concerto, reminiscent of Bach's style, with a strict counterpoint and clear harmonic structure. A second, more lyrical theme whisks us back into the romantic period, before returning to the contrapuntal style of the first theme.

After an empathic opening from the orchestra, the piano and violin solos then take turns to be in the foreground, with the violin mimicking the piano friskily. Running passages and demanding arpeggios from both *soli* lead towards the second lyrical theme, played by the violin with the piano accompanying. As the orchestra plays a brief reprise, the solo instruments close the exposition with a duet packed with imitation and playfulness. The development section begins abruptly with a sharp turn into a new tonal center, with a recitative section devoid of orchestral accompaniment. Here, the piano takes over the role of the orchestra, mimicking the orchestral tremolo beneath a singing violin on the soprano line. It is clear that Mendelssohn is alluding to Mozart's operas, as well as a similar passage in Weber's *Grand Duo Concertant*. The orchestra re-enters, marking the end of the recitative, and the remaining development is filled with demanding passages from both instruments, with the piano's high-octane arpeggios and octave passages and the solo violin's challenging string crossings. After revisiting the exposition, the recapitulation ends with a virtuosic cadenza, with both solo instruments playing a combination of lyrical melodies and counterpoint that explicate their musical relationship.

The orchestral *tutti* then begins the **adagio** with a beautiful melody that foreshadows Mendelssohn's *Lieder ohne Worte*, to be written six years later. The main theme is then treated and ornamented separately by the two solo instruments, during which the orchestra waits in a reverential silence. The theme is first taken up by the piano, with the violin only entering later, and both engage in an extended, almost operatic dialogue thereafter. The middle section again sees the violin leading with the piano accompanying, exploring different keys together, before the orchestra returns with the primary theme and the soloists close the movement peacefully.

The energetic **allegro molto** is a rondo filled with post-Mozartian charm. The piano kicks off the finale, with main theme presented in a helter-skelter manner, accompanied by a leaping bass line. The solo violin then chimes in, again in an imitative style, until the orchestra bursts into the scene in a blistering unison. Both soloists then engage in an intensive dialogue of thematic exchanges in quick 16th note passages, before the piano abruptly disengages, launching starkly into a quiet, Bach-like chorale. The piano segues into a running counterpoint, this time partnering the orchestra, as the solo violin takes over the chorale melody. The music propels towards an arresting conclusion with double octaves from the piano, double-stops from the solo violin, and fiery chords from the orchestra.

The concerto serves as almost like a time capsule of musical styles, with its baroque anecdotes and a deft use of the classical form yet, it also bears a progressive outlook characteristic of early romanticism. It is in this work that Mendelssohn establishes himself as a torchbearer of the many bright sparks that have influenced not just his own life, but that of music history.

Jonathan SHIN (b. 1992) & PHOON Yu (b. 1990)
Illuminations - Symphony for Organ, Chorus,
and Orchestra (2022)

An Esplanade Commission & World Premiere

Collaborative music composition is a rare occurrence in classical music, as compared to its popular music counterpart. Notable collaborations in history include the first English opera, *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656), with vocal music by Henry Lawes, Matthew Locke, and Captain Henry Cooke, and instrumental music by Charles Coleman and George Hudson. The late 19th to early 20th century saw the proliferation of the Spanish lyric-dramatic genre, the *zarzuela*, typically written by two or more composers. Besides operas, other collaborative compositions in classical music ranging from ballet and orchestral to vocal and piano works. It is not necessary for collaborators to know each other well, although family and friends did often work together in some instances, as in Robert and Clara Schumann's set of 12 love songs (*Gedichte aus Liebesfruhling*, 1840), Josef and Johann II Strauss' *Pizzicato Polka* (1870), and the collaboration between Paul Sacher's 12 composer friends for his 70th birthday, which included Benjamin Britten, Pierre Boulez and Witold Lutosławski.

The Dynamic Duo

Composer-organist Phoon Yu and composer-pianist Jonathan Shin first got acquainted with each other at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, Singapore. Their friendship blossomed especially in 2014, over a common passion for late-night suppers, poetry, Monty Python sketches and of course, music. Over the years, the duo has actively supported and performed each others' works, most recently, with Shin on the piano for Phoon's *Fantasia on*

Lenggang Kangkung, a potpourri of entangled themes on the popular Malay folksong, and with Phoon on the organ for Shin's bluegrass jazz take on Bach, *Postlude to Allein Gott in der Hoh sei Her (After J. S. Bach)*. They also collaborated on the scriptwriting for the digital production, *The Senate of Birds*, a multidisciplinary five-part online series co-produced by Phoon.

Phoon and Shin's distinctive styles make their collaborations all the more compelling. Collectively, they bring to the table a powerful array of influences. For Phoon, whose main muse is Johann Sebastian Bach, polyphony is an integral part of his compositions. Shin, whose works reveal an attention to color and dramaturgy, takes inspiration from Benjamin Britten, Dmitri Shostakovich, Henri Dutilleux, James MacMillan, Lili Boulanger and Maurice Duruflé. Both musicians value a certain *je ne sais quoi* in each of their works and performances—a turn, or an idiosyncrasy that draws the audience in, connecting them with the composer or performer's sound world. It is befitting that a new work about the intricacies of human connection and collaboration be borne through a collective spark between these two young craftsmen, whom, despite being close friends and having experienced countless musical relationships, had yet to meld both of their exceptional minds into a singular work.

Down Memory Lane: A Meta Approach

Illuminations pays tribute to how Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay literally and metaphorically shines a light on its artists, audiences and surroundings. Besides understanding the ways in which light interacts with Esplanade and its surroundings, Phoon and Shin recalled their own memories at the centre, not just from being on the stage, but also off it—from the bubbling backstage adrenaline, to quiet moments

in the library; from contemplative strolls at the Roof Terrace, to gregarious post-concert dinners at Makansutra Gluttons Bay. The composers pondered upon the significance of these shared experiences, connecting all who have encountered the centre in one way or another.

To represent the sheer magnitude of these individual and collective energies past and present, *Illuminations* is a seven-movement choral symphony, carrying a sublimity reminiscent of Gustav Mahler's famous words, "A symphony must be like the world. It must contain everything." Written the structure of a palindrome guiding the flow and form of its movements, Phoon and Shin took inspiration from their favorite poets like Emily Dickinson, Louise Glück, Seamus Heaney and Theophilus Kwek, describing the metaphysicality of people giving and receiving light at Esplanade, over two electrifying decades and counting.

I. flicker

A lone violin melody rises slowly above a near-white canvas of sound. The flicker motif is introduced, and the orchestra blooms in preparation for the choirs' entry.

II. coruscating | strand

"Break the earth, and shatter sky!" - the chorus sings the construction of Esplanade: millions of tons of earth, of silt and sand are shifted. This is music of movement, of massive collaboration. A literal and metaphorical bridge between ground and sky is hewn into existence.

III. shimmering

Rivulets of virtuosic organ-playing run against the gentle strains of the orchestra. The music depicts the 10,000-odd shimmering aluminum plates that clothe the two halls.

IV. *iridescent* | *electric*

The imaginative eyes of children see many wondrous things we adults miss. Here, the skyscrapers around the bay tower and watch over the river like steel giants; the myriad colors they reflect in the waters at night flash and flick like fishes.

V. *incandescent*

In the afternoon sun the city-island pulsates with heat and light. The piano takes on a soloistic role in a fierce and busy dialogue with the orchestra.

VI. *glow*

Our indomitable spirit glows strong in dark times. The chorus sings at the height of the symphony "Keeping The Light!"

VII. *aurora*

Inspired by the terrifying stories and myths of old civilizations when they witnessed the aurora before the advent of science, the finale captures a sense of reverential respect, mixed with both fear and wonder. The orchestra emanates an aurora of hope, love, and awe, drawing *Illuminations* to a close.

Lyrics

II. Coruscating

Break the earth and shatter sky
Turn out sediment, redraw
The veering lines of land

To carve new memory of shore,
of soil, rock, of stone and sand.

[break; turn; shatter; carve; redraw]

Write over palimpsest
Of garden and city and strand
Shape the quickening bay

that rushes to meet the sea.
Steel, brick, wood, clay—
Thousands of hours, thousands of hands

A symphony rises into the air
made real by our dreaming

Clothed in glass,
and crowned to shimmer
silver in sun.

IV. Iridescent | Electric

Look!

Look?

There!

Where?

Look there!

Look!

Look?

There!

Where?

There!

Look where?

What flash of fin that zips through the sea?
What colourful tail, so fierce and free,
And silent, slipping soundless, sliding
Smooth, so swift, a school of fish
Slick on the shimmering surface of sea!

Loom, terribly tall, they loom
A gathering of giants around the quay
Hundreds of tons of marble feet

Still, unyielding,
They tower over the water
Their heads scraping the skies
Watching the world with shining eyes
To cast their colors upon the bay

And fleck the foam with slivers of gold
And gleaming silvers on crimson folds
and dazzling dashes of blue and white,
Electric reds on a neon night

(Look!)

Whizzing and fizzing, the photons are flying

(Look there!)

They shoot through the air at a speed quite bewildering

(What flash of fin!)

Crashing, unerring, a-dancing and skimming the waves

Skim the waves, the glittering waves,

The fish delight in the darting light!

Such flash of fin that zips through the sea!

Such colourful tail, so fierce and free,

And silent, slipping soundless, sliding

Smooth, so swift, a school of fish

(What fish, such fish, what fish)

Slick on the shimmering surface of sea!

(Sea! Sea!)

VI. Glow

Soft, this gentle flame
In quiet darkness glows
And spreads its boundless wing

Long was the night, and moonless,
The stars, a distant memory
And days cloaked in shadow,
Silenced, cold.

Slow, this gentle flame
In quiet darkness grows
And spreads its boundless wing

A sweeping wave
A rushing tide
Of tender warmth and light!

Rushes along the walls
In unfettered flight
Flutters and fills—

The distant corners
This gentle flame that grows,
Keeping the light!

BIOGRAPHIES



LIEN BOON HUA
Conductor

Lien Boon Hua is the artistic director of Wayfarer Sinfonietta, and former assistant conductor of the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra in Katowice. He is on faculty at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music in Singapore and leads its contemporary music ensemble, OpusNovus. He was selected to be on the 2019/20 Peter Eötvös Foundation Mentoring Program and served as assistant conductor to the Richard-Strauss-Festival 2018 in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

Highlights of Lien's recent seasons include debuts with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Hong Kong Sinfonietta, Jakarta Simfonia Orchestra, NFM Wrocław Philharmonic, Polish Baltic Philharmonic, Kraków Philharmonic and Transylvania State Philharmonic Orchestra; and has led productions of operas by Britten, Rossini, Mozart and Salieri in Singapore. He has made appearances at the Singapore International Festival of Arts, Gdańsk Music Festival and International Mozartiana Festival, and has participated in masterclasses with distinguished conductors at prominent festivals such as in Lucerne, Pärnu, Tanglewood, Seoul and Colorado.

Currently based in Singapore, Lien holds conducting and performance degrees from Yong Siew Toh Conservatory

of Music, University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and Eastman School of Music, where he was awarded the Walter Hagen Conducting Prize for his outstanding achievements.



ABIGAIL SIN

Piano

Abigail Sin is a prize-winning Singaporean pianist who has performed in venues across Asia, Europe and North America as a concerto soloist, collaborative musician, and solo recitalist. She is the co-founder of the More Than Music concert series, which won acclaim for its engaging, innovative presentation of classical chamber music. In 2020, More Than Music recorded the complete Beethoven violin sonatas, along with educational outreach content.

Sin studied with Prof Thomas Hecht at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, National University of Singapore, and Joan Havill at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where she won the Guildhall School's Romantic Piano Prize. She won top prizes at the Lagny-sur-Marne International Piano Competition (France), the Norah Sande Award (UK), the Royal Over-Seas League Competition (UK), and was a quarter-finalist in the Honens International Piano Competition (Canada). As a chamber musician, Sin won the Guildhall School's Ivan Sutton Chamber Music Award and was a finalist

in the St Martin's-in-the-Fields chamber music competition and the Royal Academy of Music's Patrons Award.

Sin is an alumnus of the prestigious Verbier Festival Academy and Yellow Barn Festival. Her artistic outlook has also been shaped by masterclasses with Leon Fleisher and coaching from composers including Thomas Adès, Jörg Widmann and Brett Dean.

A recipient of the Lee Kuan Yew Scholarship, Sin completed a PhD at the Royal Academy of Music, under the supervision of Dr Briony Cox-Williams and Prof Christopher Elton. In 2018, she joined the faculty of the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music. Recent research projects include her doctoral work on Charles Griffes, explorations of transcription and performer agency in Ravel and Kirchner, and a multimedia collaboration confronting and reconceptualising the Orientalist fantasy of Ravel's *Asie*.



LOH JUN HONG
Violin

Singaporean violinist, Loh Jun Hong is an esteemed artist in Singapore's classical scene. Together with pianist Abigail Sin, Loh co-founded More than Music, a concert series that brings music, performer and audiences together in an informal and intimate manner. Some of its notable projects include an animated music film based on a short story by Haruki Murakami, a complete recording of Beethoven's 10 Piano &

Violin Sonatas and its popular More than Music and Wine concerts which have pushed the boundaries of classical performance.

Before returning to Singapore, Loh was a regular at the Verbier Festival (Switzerland) where he led the festival orchestra in numerous concerts as concertmaster and associate concertmaster under the baton of Charles Dutoit, Daniel Harding, Valery Gergiev, and Gianandrea Noseda. Loh's performance history ranges from performances at Lincoln Center (New York), premieres of the violin transcriptions of Scarlatti's Sonatas for publishing company Ries & Erler, as well as recital tours in Asia, France, Germany, New Zealand, UK and USA.

A Master of Music graduate from the Juilliard School, he studied under the tutelage of Glenn Dicterow (concertmaster of New York Philharmonic), Joseph Lin (first violin Juilliard Quartet), and Sylvia Rosenberg (pedagogue). He also lectures part-time at his alma mater, Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, National University of Singapore, where he studied with Prof Qian Zhou (Head of Strings).

Over the years, Loh has won numerous awards, notably Top Outstanding Young Person Award for Cultural Achievement by Junior Chamber International, First Prize at Gisborne International Music Competition, First Prize and Audience award at the Atlantic Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition, First Prize at the Singapore National Piano and Violin Competition (Senior), Third Prize at the 13th Andrea Postacchini International Competition, Fifth Prize at the Canetti International Violin Competition, and the best Singaporean Award at the Singapore International Violin Competition.

He has performed numerous solos with leading orchestras such as the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Tokyo Festival Orchestra, Orchestra Wellington, City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong, Shenzhen Grand Theatre Philharmonic Orchestra, Manila Symphony Orchestra, Yong Siew Toh Conservatory Orchestra, SIFOM Orchestra, as well as the Singapore Festival Orchestra. As a chamber musician, he has collaborated with fellow artists such as Kam Ning, Chan Yoong Han, Ng Yu-Ying, Ng Pei-sian, Qin Liwei, Zhang Manqing, Melvyn Tan, Albert Tiu, Abigail Sin, Lim Yan, Louis Schwitzgebel, Drew Peterson and Kevin Loh.

He has recorded two CDs, *Utopia Symphony* with London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Jurowski at Abbey Road Studios and an EP featuring Spanish and Brazilian works with guitarist Kevin Loh. In his earlier years, Loh was featured in Channel NewsAsia's documentary series *Asia's Wonder Kids*.

Delving into the film, music, and theatre scene, he was cast as one of the leads in Toy Factory Productions' *7 Sages of the Bamboo Grove* at the Esplanade Theatre, as part of Esplanade's *Huayi – Chinese Festival of Arts 2020*. He also recorded the violin solo soundtrack for the movie *7 Letters* produced by seven of Singapore's top directors, and film scored by Ricky Ho, a Golden Horse Award recipient.

Adhering to his strong belief in giving back to the community, Loh has performed in numerous charity fundraising concerts and actively leads numerous workshops and masterclasses for the younger generation. He served as part of Re:Sound Collective's artistic committee and was co-director of Singapore International Festival of Music in 2015.



JONATHAN SHIN

Composer | Piano

Jonathan Shin is a Singaporean composer-pianist who performs extensively as a soloist and chamber musician and improvises across multiple genres. He has won prizes for his piano performances in North American and European competitions, as well as awards in

all age categories at Singapore's National Piano and Violin Competition. Shin's music has been described by *The Straits Times* as "supremely confident and comfortable in its own skin." His first commission *The Other Merlion and Friends*, was critically reviewed as "probably the most compelling and worthwhile new work from any Singaporean composer in recent years."

Shin's chamber, orchestral, and dramatic works have premiered and been performed across Asia, Europe and North America. He is also a founding member of the Lorong Boys, a multi-genre group.



PHOON YU

Composer | Organ

As an organist and composer, Phoon Yu is active in Singapore and the United States. He performed solo in the Victoria Concert Hall Organ Series from 2015–2022, as well as at multiple venues in Singapore, the Netherlands, and the United

States. Recent concerts include his performances at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine and Marble Collegiate Church in New York City, St. David's Episcopal Church in Baltimore, Hitchcock Presbyterian Church in Scarsdale, New York, as well as at St. Andrew's Cathedral and the Concert Hall at Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay in Singapore. His first album, *SEVEN – Organ Music of Singapore*, features the solo works of up-and-coming Singaporean composers and was released by Centaur Records in April 2022.

Yu's performance career as an organist is supplemented by his composing ability. His composition premieres include works for various solo instruments and chamber groups across various venues in China, Singapore and the United States. Notable premieres include his 2013 solo piano piece *Prelude (Chorale Prelude on Singapura, Oh Singapura)*, his chamber work *Elegy for Violin, Piano and String Quartet* (2014), his *Sonatina for Dizi Quintet* (2016) for the Dicapella Dizi Ensemble, *Piece for Organ and Trumpet* (2017), and his *Prelude and Fugue on Wynne's Theme* for solo organ (2017). Notable arrangements include *Munnaeru Vaaliba* and *Home* (2015) for Singapore Sounds' inaugural gala

concert, his medley for about 200 violinists for World Strings Day organised by Tong Ming Xi Gallery, as well as for pieces in Spot Pocket Opera Theatre's *The Silent Front project* (2020). Yu's *Three Organ Anthems* was released by Muziksea, a Southeast Asian publisher specialising in choral music, in 2020.

Yu was previously a C. V. Starr Doctoral Fellow at the Juilliard School, pursuing his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in organ performance under the tutelage of Paul Jacobs. For his dissertation on Handel and Porpora's settings of *Siroe, re di Persia* in connection to Jacobitism, Yu was awarded the Richard F. French Doctoral Prize. He did his Bachelors of Music in music composition at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music under full scholarship and participated in the partnership between the Conservatory and the Peabody Institute during his undergraduate studies as a member of their joint degree programme. He then did his Masters of Music in organ performance at the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University and was awarded the Bruce R. Eicher Prize at the conclusion of his studies. His teachers included Professor Donald Sutherland and Dr Evelyn Lim (organ) and Associate Professor Ho Chee Kong and Dr Oscar Bettison (composition).



SINGAPORE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Since its founding in 1979, the Singapore Symphony Orchestra (SSO) has been Singapore's flagship orchestra, touching lives through classical music and providing the heartbeat of the cultural scene in the cosmopolitan city-state.

In addition to its subscription series concerts, the orchestra is well-loved for its outdoor and community appearances, and its significant role educating the young people of Singapore. The SSO has also earned an international reputation for its orchestral virtuosity, having garnered sterling reviews for its overseas tours and many successful recordings. In 2021, the SSO clinched third place in the prestigious Orchestra of the Year Award by *Gramophone*.

In July 2022, the SSO appointed renowned Austrian conductor Hans Graf as its Music Director, the third in the orchestra's history after Lan Shui (1997-2019) and Choo Hoey (1979-1996). Prior to this, Graf served as Chief Conductor from 2020, leading the SSO in keeping music alive during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The SSO makes its performing home at the 1,800-seat state-of-the-art Esplanade Concert Hall. More intimate works, as well as outreach and community performances take place at the 673-seat Victoria Concert Hall, the Home of the SSO. The orchestra performs over 60 concerts a year, and its versatile repertoire spans all-time favourites and orchestral masterpieces to exciting cutting-edge premieres. The SSO launched its digital concert hall, *SSOLOUNGE*, in 2021. Bridging the musical traditions of East and West, Singaporean and Asian musicians and composers are regularly showcased in the concert season.

Beyond Singapore, the SSO has performed in Europe, Asia and the United States. In May 2016, the SSO was invited to perform at the Dresden Music Festival and the Prague Spring International Music Festival. This successful five-city tour of Germany and Prague also included the SSO's second performance at the Berlin Philharmonie. In 2014, the SSO's debut at the 120th BBC Proms in London received critical acclaim in the major UK newspapers *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph*. The SSO has also performed in China on multiple occasions.

The SSO has released more than 50 recordings, with over 30 on the BIS label. The most recent critically acclaimed albums include a Rachmaninoff box set (2021), Richard Strauss'

Rosenkavalier and Other Works (2020), and three Debussy discs *La Mer, Jeux* and *Nocturnes*. A *Four Seasons* album and a complete Mozart violin concerto cycle with Chloe Chua and Graf will be released in the near future.

The SSO has also collaborated with such great artists as Vladimir Ashkenazy, Gustavo Dudamel, Charles Dutoit, Joe Hisaishi, Neeme Järvi, Okko Kamu, Hannu Lintu, Andrew Litton, Lorin Maazel, Martha Argerich, Ray Chen, Diana Damrau, Stephen Hough, Janine Jansen, Leonidas Kavakos, Lang Lang, Yo-Yo Ma, Gil Shaham and Krystian Zimerman.

The SSO is part of the Singapore Symphony Group, which also manages the Singapore Symphony Choruses, the Singapore National Youth Orchestra, and the VCH presents chamber music series, the Singapore International Piano Festival and the biennial National Piano & Violin Competition.

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GK Goh Chair

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Associate Concertmaster

Chan Yoong-Han²

Fixed Chair

Cao Can*

Chen Da Wei

Duan Yu Ling

Foo Say Ming

Jin Li

Kong Xianlong

Cindy Lee

Martin Peh[^]

Karen Tan

William Tan

Wei Zhe

Ye Lin*

Zhang Si Jing*

SECOND VIOLIN

Tseng Chieh-An

Principal

Michael Loh

Associate Principal

Nikolai Koval*

Sayuri Kuru

Hai-Won Kwok

Chikako Sasaki*

Margit Saur

Shao Tao Tao

Wu Man Yun*

Xu Jueyi*

Ye Tian^

Yeo Teow Meng

Yin Shu Zhan*

Zhao Tian*

VIOLA

Manchin Zhang

Principal

Guan Qi

Associate Principal

Gu Bing Jie*

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Joyce Huang

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Marietta Ku

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Karen Yeo

Fixed Chair

Olga Alexandrova

Julian Li^

Ma Li Ming^

Jacek Mirucki

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PICCOLO

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CLARINET

Ma Yue

Principal

Li Xin

Associate Principal

Liu Yoko

Tang Xiao Ping

BASS CLARINET

Tang Xiao Ping

Assistant Principal

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Zhao Ying Xue

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Principal

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Christian Schiøler
Principal

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Jonathan Fox
Principal

Mark Suter
Associate Principal

Mario Choo

Derek Koh[^]

Lim Meng Keh
Sng Yiang Shan[^]

HARP

Gulnara Mashurova
Principal

*With deep appreciation to the Rin Collection for their generous loan of string instruments.

¹ Kong Zhao Hui performs on a J.B. Guadagnini of Milan, c. 1750, donated by the National Arts Council, Singapore, with the support of Far East Organization and Lee Foundation.

² Chan Yoong-Han performs on a David Tecchler, Fecit Roma An. D. 1700, courtesy of Mr G K Goh.

[^] Guest musician



SINGAPORE SYMPHONY CHORUS

The Singapore Symphony Chorus (SSC) represents the pinnacle of choral excellence, bringing passionate choristers together in symphonic choral singing at the highest level.

Since its first performance on 13 June 1980, the SSC has established itself as one of the finest symphony choruses in the region. The chorus has performed with renowned conductors including Okko Kamu, Lan Shui, Lim Yau, Masaaki Suzuki and Sofi Jeannin – amassing a wide repertoire such as Rachmaninov's *The Bells*, Arvo Pärt's *Te Deum*, Britten's *War Requiem*, and Bach's *St John Passion*, amongst others.

In August 2019, the SSC lent their vocals to *Truly, SSO*, a digital album of National Day Classics jointly released by Warner Music Singapore and the Singapore Symphony Orchestra. In 2020, the SSC also added its voice to various digital projects including Mediacorp's *Stronger as One – We Will Get There*.

SOPRANO

Karen Aw
Claire Byrne
Janice Chee
Kaitlyn Kim
Fumiko Ogasawara
Wendy Lim
Ng Beng Choo
Sarah Santhana
Lian Kim Selby
Stacey Wang Espera
Sarah Tang
Patricia Teng
Gladys Torrado
Agnieszka Veriga
Yeo Mui

ALTO

Grace Angel
Kelly Cooke
Susan Kurniawati
Dorothy Lee-Teh
Lin Wei
Dorcas Lo
Sharon Low
Shoumin Low
Daisy Natalia
Natividad Solaguren
Ratna Sutantio
Elsie Tan
Tan Seow Yen
Wang Jiunwen

TENOR

Jean-Michel Bardin

Chng Chin Han

Jeroven Marquez

David Maund

Ronald Ooi

Rac Roldan

Ian Tan

Ben Wong

Ariel Yncierto

BASS

Ang Jian Zhong

Vincent Chiu

Winsen Citra

Arthur Davis

Andy Jatmiko

Joseph Kennedy

Wong Hin Yan



SINGAPORE SYMPHONY YOUTH CHOIR

Comprising Singapore's finest young choristers aged 17 to 28, the Singapore Symphony Youth Choir is an energetic ensemble inaugurated in 2016 to complement the Singapore Symphony Orchestra with a chorus of vibrant voices.

Exploring the best of different musical worlds and styles, the Youth Choir has performed Scriabin's *Prometheus*, Puccini's *La bohème*, and recorded Borodin's *Polovtsian Dances* and Mahler's *Symphony No. 2*. In its past seasons, the Youth Choir has had opportunities to perform with world renowned conductors and tour with the Singapore Symphony Choruses and Singapore Symphony Orchestra, to present at the Dewan Filharmonik Petronas in Kuala Lumpur. In 2021, at the height of the pandemic, the Youth Choir continually challenged and overcame performing limitations to produce its own digital production, *Where I Belong*.

SOPRANO

Laura Lee
Ellissa Sayampanathan*
Carine Tan
Jasmine Towndrow

ALTO

Chan Li Ting
Goh Chen Xi
Elizabeth Goh
Ong Sherlyn
Tan Yulin
Amelia Yeo

TENOR

Cris Bautro
Alfonso Cortez
Tan Hee

BASS

Leonard Buescher
Bryan Carmichael
Jon Loh
Loy Sheng Rui
Wong Zhen Wei

*Choral Fellow



SINGAPORE SYMPHONY CHILDRENS' CHOIR

Formed in 2006, the Singapore Symphony Children's Choir has established itself as the leading children's choir in Singapore. With over 200 members aged nine to 18, the choir enriches young singers through holistic choral training that nurtures artistic growth and personal development.

The Children's Choir has performed great choral masterpieces with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and with distinguished conductors such as Lim Yau, Claus Peter Flor, Sofi Jeannin, François-Xavier Roth and Julie Desbordes. It has toured and performed at the Philharmonie de Paris in collaboration with Maîtrise de Radio France, as well as at Dewan Filharmonik Petronas in Kuala Lumpur with the Malaysian Philharmonic Youth Orchestra in concert.

In Singapore, the Children's Choir has an active performing calendar. It has sung at the Istana, shared the stage with critically acclaimed The King's Singers, and presented at the 33rd ASEAN Summit. The choir actively commissions and performs works by Darius Lim, Zechariah Goh, and Cultural Medallion recipient Kelly Tang, amongst many others.

Riyan Ballesteros-Pattanayak

Lisa Chang

Myrna Chantarapaparp Johnston

Kendra Cheah

Halyn Cho

Dylan Francis

Colleen Fung

Naomi Heng

Emily Hia

Charlotte Ho

Abigail Ho

Rachael Jong

Emma Lee-Goh

Melina Leong

Zoe Li

Liu Felix

Lu Kaixuan

Megan Kate Montefrio

Annaleigh Ng

Hayley Ng

Ng Yi Poh

Jing Fei Pang

Suri Rao

Evangeline Sim

Navya Singh

Emily Tan

Tan Pin Fei

Tan Caewyn

Germaine Teo

Matthew Wong

Zhang Haoran

Zhang Yixuan



Eudenice PALARUAN

Choral Director

Eudenice Palaruan studied at U.P. College of Music, majoring in composition and choral conducting. After finishing his Bachelor's Degree, he took another four-year study at the Berliner Kirchenmusikschule, Germany, majoring in choral conducting.

He was the resident composer/arranger and assistant choirmaster of the Philippine Madrigal Singers. He performed with the World Youth Choir and the Berlin Monteverdichor. In addition, he was the principal conductor of the San Miguel Master Chorale. For the past years, he has been the resident conductor of the International Bamboo Organ Festival. With his active involvement in the *choralization* of Philippine and other Asian indigenous music, he premiered a significant volume of new Asian choral works. In addition, he was often invited to give lectures on non-Western vocal aesthetics.

Eudenice taught composition and choral conducting in several institutions such as the University of the Philippines College of Music, the Asian Institute for Liturgy and Music, and St. Paul University College of Music and the Performing Arts. Currently, he teaches at the Singapore Bible College School of Church Music and directs the SBC Canticorum.

During the extended lockdown, Eudenice continued skill development programmes to maintain the vocal and artistic upkeep of the Singapore Symphony Chorus. Through hybrid online-physical rehearsals, he gave vocal training to its

members, rehearsing chamber ensembles and developing repertoire breadth for equal voices. In addition, as a composer and arranger, he wrote new choral works for The SSC Affair, an outreach programme of the Singapore Symphony Chorus that trains choral music enthusiasts around Singapore.



WONG Lai Foon
Choirmaster

Armed with a passion to inspire choral excellence in children and youth, Wong Lai Foon has been a driving force behind the development and growth of the Singapore Symphony Children's and Youth Choirs. A founding conductor of the Children's Choir (SSCC) at its inception in 2006,

Wong was appointed Choirmaster in 2015, and led in the formation of the Youth Choir (SSYC) in 2016.

She has prepared both ensembles in a wide range of performances that have drawn praise for the choirs' beautiful tone and polished delivery. Highlights of past collaborations with the SSO include Britten's *War Requiem*, Bizet's *Carmen*, Puccini's *La bohème* and Mahler's Second and Third symphonies. In addition, the SSCC has shared the stage with the celebrated ensemble, The King's Singers, the Maîtrise de Radio France at the Philharmonie de Paris, and has performed for local and world heads of states at state functions. The SSYC is featured on the SSO's CD, *Russian Spectacular*.

Wong has commissioned and premiered works by local composers in an effort to grow the body of local compositions for treble choirs. Her efforts to educate and inspire extend into the community through workshops, talks, as well as adjudicator, chorus-master and guest-conductor roles. Some ensembles that she has worked with include The Philharmonic Chamber Choir, Singapore Symphony Chorus, Singapore Lyric Opera, Hallelujah Singers, and Methodist Festival Choir. She holds a master's degree in choral conducting from Westminster Choir College, USA.

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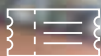
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arts... it is absolutely life-changing. Five stars.

”

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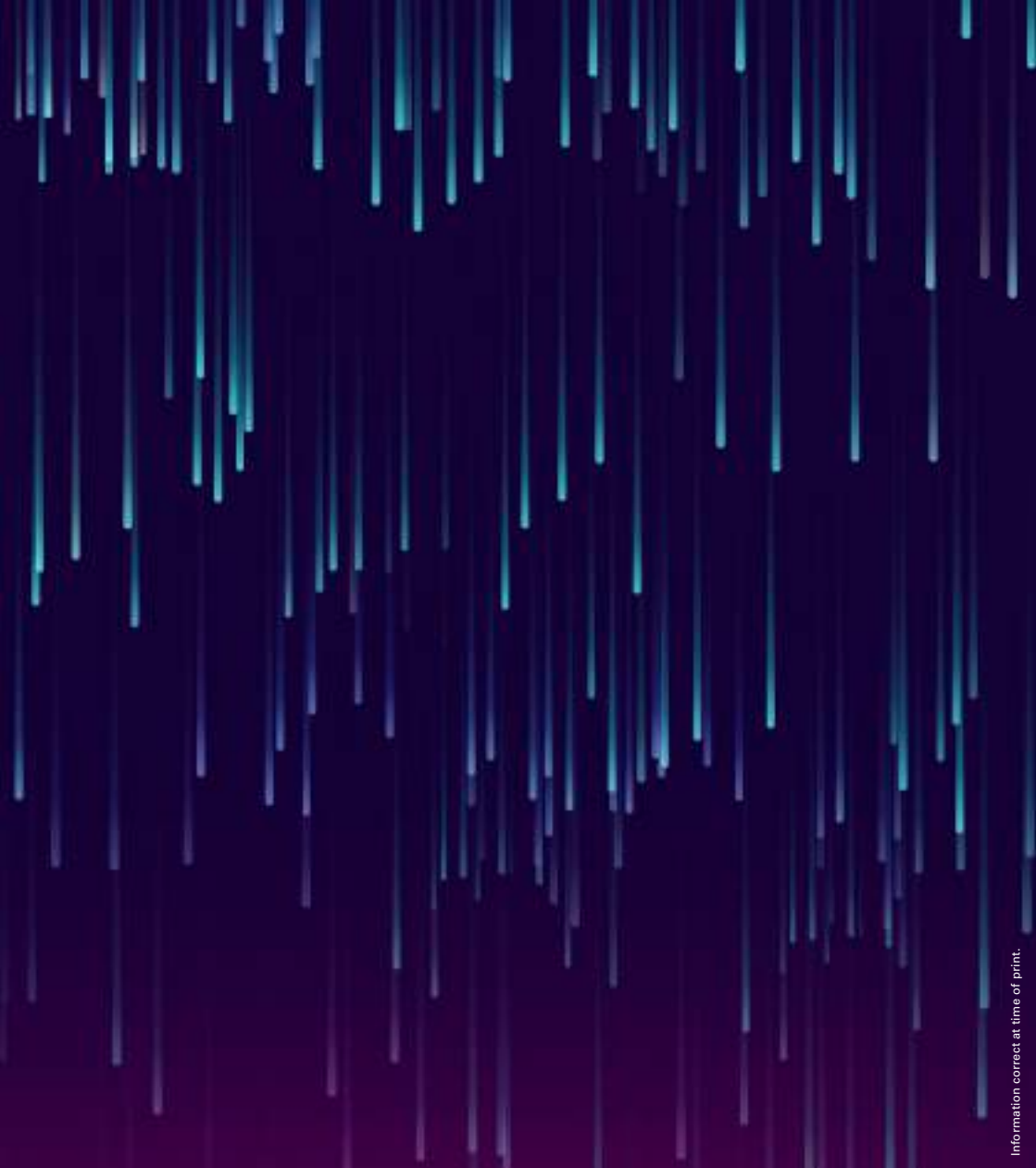
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