

# Night of classical rapture

## Review Concert

### CAPRICCIO

Singapore Chinese Orchestra  
SCO Concert Hall  
Last Friday

### Chang Tou Liang

The concept of the Chinese orchestra owes greatly to the model set by Western symphony orchestras from the 19th century. The notion of four orchestral sections and occidental compositional forms has transformed the genre of Chinese instrumental music from its humbler folk origins to the more complex music that is heard in concert halls today.

This concert, conducted by the Singapore Chinese Orchestra's first music director Hu Bing Xu, was a timely reminder of that fact. It even conformed to the age-old forma of overture, concerto, symphony and encore that has delighted concertgoers over the ages.

Beginning with Feng Xiao Quan's Soaring Chinese Music, its slow introduction followed by an invigorating allegro served its function like a Rossinian overture. This was contrasted by Fang Xiao Ming's Cantonese serenade Morning Blossoms And Evening Moon, highlighting the gaohu's lingering legato, which was the palate cleanser before the two concertos.

The first concertante work was Cheng Da Zhao's Four Movements Of Shanbei, which showcased the breathtaking virtuosity of Singaporean dizi expo-

ner Lim Sin Yeo. The sinuous flute melody of Xin Tian You, a Shanxi highland air full of longing and yearning, unfolded with Coplandesque breadth, leading to the animated Village Opera, where the dizi imitated the vocal inflexions of its comedic stage protagonists.

Its slow movement The Past was a Bartokian adagio, haunting and atmospheric, with the dance-like finale building up to a Lisztian climax. The glorious reprise of Xin Tian You to round up was a reliving of the cyclical form.

The second concerto was Wang Yue Ming's Fantasia Of The Western Regions with excellent alto erhu soloist Zhu Lin taking centre stage. It dwelled on Central Asian melodies, the sort Borodin, Balakirev and Ippolitov-Ivanov were so fond of, except that this folk-inspired rhapsody was conceived in Beijing rather than Moscow.

To close the concert were two movements from Zhao Ji Ping's Ode Of Peace, a symphony in memory of the victims of the 1937 Nanjing massacre. No prizes for guessing which Russian composer inspired the funereal passacaglia-like Sorrows Of The River and the equally brooding but defiant finale. Shostakovich, no less. As if that was not enough, the orchestra performed in between the concertos Sim Boon Yew's arrangement of the Malay joget favourite Suriram, an entertaining 10 minutes in the theme and variations form.

The sole encore did not need any disguising, just Mascagni's sublime Intermezzo from Cavalleria Rusticana with huqins doing the honours.

## CONCERTS

### CAPRICCIO

Singapore Chinese Orchestra (SCO) musicians Lim Sin Yeo and Zhu Lin will perform Four Movements Of Shan Bei and Fantasia Of The Western Regions under the baton of maestro Hu Bing Xu. The orchestra will also showcase the third and fourth movements of Ode Of Peace by renowned composer Zhao Ji Ping.

**Where:** SCO Concert Hall, Singapore Conference Hall

**MRT:** Tanjong Pagar **When:** Today & tomorrow, 8pm

**Admission:** \$28 - \$58 **Tel:** 6348-5555

**Info:** www.sistic.com.sg



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