

ANAM RECITAL: PO GOH (PIANO)

Po's Piano Party

THURSDAY 12 JUNE 11AM

ROSINA AUDITORIUM, ABBOTSFORD CONVENT

Po GOH (b. 1998) <i>Who will come?</i> (2025)	7'
Louisa TREWARTHA (b. 1989) <i>Fork in the Road</i> (2025)*	7'
Josh TAYLOR (b. 1998) <i>Prelude and Etude</i> (2025)	6'
GOH <i>Prelude and Fugue with an ill-tempered clavier</i> (2025)	6'
Carl VINE (b. 1954) <i>Piano Sonata No. 2</i> (1998)	21'
GOH <i>Rhapsody Under the Sea</i> (2021)	6'

Po Goh[#] (VIC) piano

Jasmine Milton[#] (SA) violin

Lili Stephens[#] (QLD) violin

Angelina Kim[#] (QLD) viola

Jack Overall[#] (SA) cello

Tom Allen[#] (VIC) horn

Reuben Johnson (alum) piano

Approximate duration: 60 minutes

ABOUT PO GOH

It was close to the end of high school when Po Goh realised that most things in life are dull when compared to making music. This unshakeable yearning compelled him to pursue music study at both Monash University and the University of Melbourne, where he received guidance from an array of tutors, including Dr Kristian Chong, Dr Aura Go, and Dr Kenji Fujimura. Po is currently in his third year at ANAM under the tutelage of Timothy Young, and was awarded the Gwen Nisbet Encouragement Award in 2024.

Po is sponsored by the Tallis Foundation and further supported by ANAM Syndicate donors Gina Fox, Max Garrard, Robyn Harris, Janet Limb AO, Kim Low.

[#] Denotes ANAM musicians supported by ANAM Syndicate donors or foundations

* World premiere of 2025 ANAM Set commission supported by the Anthony and Sharon Lee Foundation.

ANAM respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands spread across Australia on which we work and live. We uphold and honour their continued relationship to these sites, we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

PROGRAM NOTES

Australia's unofficial national anthem opens the show (with a tiny bit of Australia's official one as well): this take on *Waltzing Matilda* is a theme and variations for string quartet. It loosely follows the tragic story of the "jolly swagman", who steals a sheep, gets chased by the police, and commits suicide by drowning, after which his ghost lives on to retell the story. I played with the idea of the "waltz" (even though the song has nothing to do with dances in triple time, but rather "waltz" in Australian slang simply meaning to travel by foot), with the melody fed through a barrage of different grooves, including a kind of "drunken waltz" where the viola and cello stumble around underneath the patient singing of the violins.

Fork in the Road is a reflection on Fate and how life takes us down certain paths, often beyond our own control. In *Fork in the Road*, there are six points in which the performer has to flip a coin, the outcome of which determines the next section of music to play, one of two possible life events. Like in life, the performer tries to be prepared for all possible life events, even though some will not occur. Compositionally, Trewartha ascribes each pair of life events with the same musical idea, so interestingly the audience cannot hear the variation on each theme, but can only imagine what life might have been like down the other path.

Prelude and Etude is a testament to the joy of Western harmony. Throughout much of this piece we hear a core note, which constantly changes its colour with the kaleidoscope of chords circling around it. Passages with truncated bars (the fourth beat of each missing a semiquaver) give the music a lilt in its step, while full bars of 4/4 cruise along, with the scent of smoky jazz clubs in the air. However, rhythm is not a priority for Josh - scurries of notes beg for the stretching of time and dramatic changes in dynamic invite us to hold our breath in anticipation. *Prelude and Etude* also nods to the notion of possibility by granting the performer the free choice between one of two codas at the end.

Prelude and fugue with an ill-tempered clavier is my nod towards Johann Sebastian Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, the two famous collections of 24 prelude-fugue pairs of the 1700s. This prelude borrows the theme from Bach's first prelude from the set, moving harmonically in a Baroque style for a while, before eventually breaking free from "Baroque's shackles". The fugue uses a disjointed theme in an octatonic scale, a kind of contemporary view of the original word "barocco", which meant "misshapen pearl". Each instrumentalist presents the theme before they start fighting for final say amidst the continuous snaking of countermelodies.

Carl Vine's second piano sonata was commissioned by Michael Kieran Harvey, one of Vine's most trusted performers as the musician for whom his first piano sonata and piano concerto were also written for. The first of the sonata's two movements shows off Vine's neo-romantic style, with an insistence on melody, sweeping arpeggiated runs, and a final section that seems frozen in time, using the extremes of the piano to create bell-like sonorities. Vine is known for using metric modulation to build tension and he does so at length in the second movement: note values change their meaning between bars, causing time warps and shifts in gear. Motoric drive is always present, even through a dreamier middle section that gives the listener some repose before a raucous ending.

The concert ends with another take on a familiar tune, one where a certain crab is trying to convince a certain mermaid that the ocean is the place to be. With the mermaid's insistence on going on land to find her true love, the crab gradually descends into madness in this rhapsody as he realises he cannot change her fate.

Thank you to Jasmine, Lili, Angie, Jack, Tom and Reuben for all the time and energy you've put into these pieces, and being wonderful to work with. Thank you to my teacher, Tim, for your constant encouragement and always pushing me further.

Written by Po Goh