

LONDON SYMPHONIA **2024-25** SEASON



A NEW MOON CELEBRATION

FEBRUARY 1, 2025 | 7:30 pm | Metropolitan United

Presenting Partner: *Serenata Music*

Guest Artists

- Rei Hotoda, *conductor*
- Lina Cao, *guzheng*
- Scott St. John, *violin*
- London Youth Symphony, *strings*
- Derek Kwan, *narrator*

London
Symphonia 



**JOSH MORGAN
MAYOR**

October 5, 2024

Dear Friends,

On behalf of London City Council, let me welcome you to London Symphonia's 2024-25 Season. We are honored to have such a distinguished ensemble in our community, and we eagerly anticipate the musical experiences you will bring to our residents.

London Symphonia has long been a shining star in our artistic constellation, and their dedication to excellence in music enriches the lives of residents across all ages. Each performance you deliver resonates deeply, creating cherished memories and fostering a love for the arts.

This season, London Symphonia is excited to present a diverse array of performances that will captivate your senses and enrich your spirit. From timeless classics to contemporary works, there is something for everyone to enjoy. I encourage you to explore the full program and immerse yourself in the magic that only live orchestral music can bring.

As we gather to appreciate the extraordinary talent of our musicians and guest artists, let us also celebrate the power of music to inspire, heal, and unite. I invite you to share in this season's festivities, whether you are a lifelong supporter or a newcomer to the concert hall.

Thank you for your dedication to enriching our lives through the power of music. Here's to a wonderful season ahead!

Kind regards,

Josh Morgan
Mayor, City of London

City of London
Office of Mayor Josh Morgan
300 Dufferin Avenue
P.O. Box 5035
London, ON N6A 4L9

WELCOME to A NEW MOON CELEBRATION!

Thank you for celebrating Lunar New Year with us! What a concert lies in store for you! We are thrilled to present the World Premiere of *Across the Jade Sea* by Kevin Lau; welcome *guzheng* virtuoso Lina Cao and actor Derek Kwan; and welcome back conductor Rei Hotoda, London's own Scott St. John and the rising stars of the London Symphonia strings, in one of the most colourful and dynamic concerts of the season.

We hope you will return to celebrate Black History Month with us on February 22 as we explore the life and music of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. Recognized internationally as a musical genius more than 100 years ago, he became one of Britain's best-kept secrets. His story is a tale that needs to be told.

To all our donors thank you for your continuing belief in our creativity and commitment to bringing the joy and transformative power of music to people of all ages across the community. Your support is vital to London Symphonia's success, not just in bringing performances like the one tonight to life but through our comprehensive education and outreach programs. On behalf of the musicians, staff, and Board of Directors, our heartfelt thanks.


Glorious music and great artistry await you throughout the season. We hope you will enjoy tonight's concert and spread the word to family and friends.

We look forward to seeing you often.

Sincerely,



April Voth
Executive Director



Andrew Chung
Artistic Producer

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Guest Artists

- Rei Hotoda, *conductor*
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- London Youth Symphony, *strings*
- Derek Kwan, *narrator*

Huang Ruo

From *Folk Songs for Orchestra*

- I. *Flower Drum Song from Feng Yang*
- III. *Love Song from Kang Ding*
- IV. *The Girl from the Da Ban City*

Rentarō Taki

Kōjō no Tsuki “*Moon Over the Ruined Castle*”

Ar. Ben Bolt-Martin

- With London Youth Symphony

Huang Haihuai

Racing Horses

Ar. Ben Bolt-Martin from a transcription by Ming Chen

- With London Youth Symphony

Kevin Lau

Across the Jade Sea

World Premiere. London Symphonia commission

Alice Ping Yee Ho

From *Silk Road Fantasy*

- I. *On A Nomadic Plain*
- II. *The Trade*

Rui Wang

Waves of the Sea

Claude Debussy

Clair de Lune

Li Huanzhi

Spring Festival Overture

- With London Youth Symphony

The program runs approximately 85 minutes long with no Intermission.



MEET REI HOTODA, THE GUEST ARTISTS AND LONDON SYMPHONIA MUSICIANS AFTER THE CONCERT

Join us in the Great Room behind the stage and speak with the musicians.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

London Symphonia wishes to acknowledge and honour the land on which we are meeting as the traditional territory of the First Nations peoples: the Chippewa of the Thames First Nation (part of the Anishinaabe), the Oneida Nation of the Thames (part of the Haudenosaunee) and the Munsee-Delaware Nation (part of the Leni-Lunaape). Let us reflect on how we as individuals and as a community can carry this spirit of gratitude into everything we do to honour the work that all the First Nations peoples of the Turtle Island have done, and continue to do, for the land that supports us all.



TONIGHT'S MUSICIANS

*London Symphonia Fellows from Western University

London Symphonia

Violin 1

Mikela Witjes
Andrew Chung
Sarah Wiebe
Chia-Hsuan Chen*
Calvin Tsang

Violin 2

Michelle Dumoulin
Jessica Elliotson
Alyssa Stevenson
Yanet Campbell-Secades*
Sheilanne Lindsay

Viola

Marie-Eve Lessard
Tasman Tantasawat*
Jacqueline Milne
John Wiebe

Cello

Ben Bolt-Martin
Sonya Nanos
Sarah Cupit*

Bass

Joe Phillips
Iris Leck*

Flute

Laura Chambers
Tristan Durie

Oboe

Jennifer Short
Paul Goeglein

Clarinet

Graham Lord
Timothy Tse

Bassoon

Spencer Phillips
Oskar Martinez

Horn

Ron George
Kate Stone

Trumpet

Shawn Spicer
Scott Harrison

Trombone

Mike Polci

Percussion

Dave Robilliard
Dan Morphy

Timpani

Tim Francom

London Youth Symphony Strings

Violin

Arin Oh
Aidan Choi
Anna Choi
Emma Choi
Kai Church, *Concertmaster*
Philip Corscadden, *Associate Concertmaster*
Rachel Hu
Martin Jiang
Claire-Marie Ling-St Antoine
Edwin Maslen
Yuna Noh, *Principal Second Violin*

Kiko Oya
Yeonoo Song
Rayna Wu
Sarah Wu
Jenny Yang
Yang Yu

Viola

Theo Brown
Robbie Lee, *Principal*
Essya Sanatani
Jookwang Youn

Cello

Rachel Chen
Sofia Menelaou, *Co-Principal*
Yerin Lee, *Co-Principal*
Tobias Sass

Double Bass

Claire Fletcher
Vienna Jordan
Julie Kim

BIOS



Conductor **Rei Hotoda** has been hailed as an “inexhaustible dynamo” with a deep commitment to reimagining the 21st century concert experience. Her vision can be seen through her thought-provoking programming, passionate allyship to marginalized artists, advocacy for arts education, and an unwavering commitment to presenting many of today’s most notable American composers. Indicative of this, she recently made her Carnegie Hall debut conducting the American Composer’s Orchestra in a compelling program that featured two world premieres by John Glover and Tonia Ko as well as the New York premiere of “Clans” from Jerod Impichchaachaaha’ Tate’s *Lowak Shoppala*.

Serving as the Music Director of the Fresno Philharmonic since 2017, Rei’s 24/25 season marks an important milestone in her tenure with the orchestra. Together they will undertake their largest project to date, Cultural Crossroads, a new multi-season series of commissions exploring and celebrating the diverse cultures of the Fresno region. A central aspect of the vision for Cultural Crossroads is collaboration with community-based organizations, artists, and culture bearers in the presentation of new works by emerging California composers.

As a guest conductor, Rei has appeared with several prestigious orchestras, including the Symphony Orchestras of Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Winnipeg, and Kansas City, among others. Rei’s repertoire represents a diverse community of living composers alongside masters of classical canon. She has performed works by Gabriela Lena Frank, Jessie Montgomery, Damien Geter, and Guillaume Connesson as well as those by Mahler (as part of a multi-season exploration entitled Mahler Here and Now with the Fresno Philharmonic), Shostakovich (Symphony No. 8), Beethoven (Symphony No. 9) and Britten (War Requiem).

An active and critically acclaimed pianist, Rei embraces her time conducting from the keyboard. One of the highlights of her 2024 Carnegie Hall debut was leading the American Composers Orchestra from the piano in George Antheil’s *A Jazz Symphony*. Moreover, she recently conducted the Fresno Philharmonic (Poulenc’s Concerto for Two Pianos), the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra (Mozart’s Concerto for Two Pianos, K365) and the Wintergreen Festival Orchestra (Jessie Montgomery’s Rounds) from the keyboard as well.

Rei is the proud recipient of several prestigious awards, including the 2006 Taki-Alsop Conducting Fellowship, created by Marin Alsop to mentor women conductors.



Lina Cao is a world-renowned *guzheng* virtuoso celebrated for her profound contributions to Chinese traditional music and her visionary approach to blending Eastern and Western musical traditions. Spanning continents, Lina has redefined *guzheng* artistry, breaking cultural boundaries and establishing herself as one of the most influential figures in contemporary Chinese music.

Beginning her *guzheng* studies at the age of five, Lina demonstrated exceptional talent from a young age. Lina trained under China's top masters, including Wang Wei, Ren Jie, Yanai Hua, and Li Meng, and earned degrees from the Nanjing University of the Arts and the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. Combining tradition with modern expression, Lina's performances have graced prestigious stages worldwide, including Carnegie Hall in New York, Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto and the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, captivating global audiences.

Throughout her career, Lina has collaborated with premier ensembles such as the China Broadcasting Film Symphony Orchestra, the Atlanta Youth Wind Symphony, London Symphonia, the Canadian Children's Opera Company, the Toronto Chinese Orchestra, and the Canadian Arabic Orchestra. Lina has worked with renowned conductors like Pang JiaPang, Wang Aikang, Teri Dunn, Kira Omelchenko and Matthew Poon. She

has also worked with renowned composers like He Zhanhao, Alice Ho, Sandeep Bhagwati, and Andrew Stainland, premiering critically acclaimed works that push the boundaries of *guzheng* performance.

Lina's accolades include double gold prizes for solo and ensemble *guzheng* at the Singapore International Chinese Arts Festival (2008) and China's highest honors, the "Golden Bell Award" (2012) and the "Wenhua Award" (2008). Lina also received the "World Peace International Appreciation Award" at the Sino-Japanese Friendship Concert and was nominated for "Outstanding Chamber Performance" at the 40th Dora Mavor Moore Awards in Canada (2017). Lina's performances have been broadcast by CBC Music (2020) and Chicago's WFMT Radio Network (2014). In 2024, she received funding from the Canada Council for the Arts.

As the founder and music director of the Toronto Guzheng Ensemble, Lina has led the group to premiere numerous innovative works at prestigious venues, including Carnegie Hall and the Isabel Bader Theatre at the University of Toronto. Through performances and recordings, she has elevated *guzheng* chamber music to new heights.

Lina is also a dedicated educator, serving as the first *guzheng* instructor at Wilfrid Laurier University and frequently lecturing at institutions such as the music faculties of University of Toronto and York University. Using music as a cultural bridge, Lina continues to infuse new vitality into *guzheng* artistry, solidifying its place on the global stage.



Scott St. John, violin soloist, lives in London, Canada with his wife Sharon Wei and daughter Julia. Scott was a member of the St. Lawrence String Quartet and faculty member at Stanford University for seven years, from 2006 to 2013. From 1999 to 2006, he was Associate Professor of Violin at University of Toronto, and founded the Felix Galimir Chamber Music Award for U of T students.

Currently Scott coaches chamber music at Western University (Canada), plays chamber music at the Marlboro Music Festival (Vermont), and plays concertmaster of the ROCO Chamber Orchestra in Houston. Scott is a partner in the Rebelheart Collective at London's Aeolian Hall, an innovative chamber orchestra and youth mentorship program connected with the El Sistema movement.

A recent recording of Mozart's Symphonia Concertante with his sister Lara St. John won a JUNO Award for Best Recording: Solo with Orchestra. Working with composers has been important throughout his career; Scott has worked with John Adams, Charles Wuorinen and Oswald Golijov in the US, and Arsenio Giron, Gary Kulesha, Elizabeth Raum and many others in Canada.

Scott began his violin studies at age three with Richard Lawrence, in London. He is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music where he studied violin with David Cerone, Arnold Steinhardt, and chamber music with Felix Galimir. Current non-musical activities include serving on the

boards of the London Organic Food Co-op and Transport Action Ontario. Scott also supports HanVoice, a lobby organization for North Korean refugees in Canada.



Derek Kwan is an actor, singer, and theatre creator working at the intersection of theatre, music and movement in a number of forms including opera, clown, and puppetry. His performing career has taken him across Canada and the globe, from London, England, to performances in the Czech Republic, Mexico, Japan, Thailand, Taiwan, and China. Derek was nominated for four Dora Mavor Moore Awards for his work in theatre and received the Toronto Theatre Critics Award for Best Supporting Actor in a Musical for his role in *Mr. Shi and His Lover*.

Derek is also passionate about therapeutic clowning, as well as clown, puppet and mask in all contexts. He is the Artistic Director of Common Boots Theatre. He also works as a director of theatre, dramaturg, and teacher/lecturer on theatre, diversity and representation, and clown.

Favourite projects: serving the community as a clown at MabellePANTRY (MABELLEarts); premiering a new Canadian opera about Chinatown in Vancouver in English and Toisanese, *Chinatown* (City Opera Vancouver); puppeteering on *Old Man and the River* (WeeFestival), a table-top puppet show for children 3+; a Deaf/hearing integrated production

of *The Tempest* (Citadel Theatre); an apocalyptic animal cabaret *The Cave* (Luminato/Toronto, BC tour); an immersive, site-specific production of *Sweeney Todd* (TIFT/Barrie) in London, England; a Mandarin-language adaptation of the children's classic *The Blue Bird* (Theatre de la Sardine, Taipei); an outdoor, site-specific Winter promenade show *Tails From the City* (Common Boots Theatre); Lorca's *Blood Weddings* (Aluna Theatre/Modern Times); *Fritz & Magda*, an improvised promenade mask show (he was Magda), and *Mr. Park vs Dale*, a 1-person/2-character masked outdoor opera he wrote for tenor and viola da gamba (LabCab); a story-telling residency in kindergarten classes (*Firefly Project* – Theatre Direct); creating theatre for children with autism (*Red Kite Project* – Theatre Direct); exploring physicality and Schubert's *Winterreise* with choreographer William Yong at McMichael Gallery (Luminato).



One of Canada's most versatile and sought-after composers, **Kevin Lau** has been commissioned by some of Canada's most prominent artists and ensembles, and his work has been performed abroad in the USA, UK, Denmark, Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Hong Kong, and Korea. A prolific composer of orchestral, chamber, ballet, opera, and film music, Kevin served as Affiliate Composer of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra from 2012 to 2015; to date, he has produced eight works for the TSO.

Additional composer residencies include the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra (2020-2023) and the Niagara Symphony Orchestra (2018-2019). He has composed three original ballets for companies including the National Ballet of Canada (*Le Petit Prince*), National Arts Centre (*Dark Angels*), and Bravo Niagara! (*Kimiko's Pearl*). His seven string quartets are championed globally by internationally renowned quartets such as the Viano, Poiesis, Tesla, Dior, and Afiara Quartets. His recent hour-long symphonic work, *The Spirit Horse Returns* (produced in partnership with Indigenous artists), has been a staple of orchestral family concerts across Canada since 2022.

Kevin's music can be found on 13 commercial recordings, including two JUNO Award-winning albums. His solo album, *Under a Veil of Stars*, features exclusively his chamber music (performed by the St. John-Mercer-Park Trio), and was hailed as "a wonderful discovery" (La Scena). His music-and-text adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's fable *The Nightingale* was published in 2023 as an illustrated children's book by the Houston-based River Oaks Chamber Orchestra (ROCO) and Silversmith Press.

Kevin's creative output, often inspired by the fantastical lens of childhood, is unified by a fascination with flow, and the search for deep connections amidst surface diversity – connections that serve as a metaphor for the reconciliation of seemingly fundamental differences.

LONDON YOUTH SYMPHONY

For more than 60 years, London Youth Symphony has provided students in London and area with educational opportunities that enhance university,

public school, conservatory, and private music learning. Young musicians collaborate and create in a learning environment where fundamental skills like leadership, self-confidence, teamwork, and resilience are developed. With professional musician faculty and conductors, LYS encourages and empowers young musicians so they may pursue personal excellence both on and off the stage. LYS is affiliated with London Symphonia whose musicians provide significant mentoring and coaching, and partners with many local learning institutions. Learn more at londonyouthsymphony.net.



Alice Ping Yee Ho 何水颯 is a distinguished Chinese Canadian composer acclaimed for her versatile and innovative body of work. Renowned for her eclectic style, she seamlessly blends genres such as opera, orchestral, chamber music, dance, and theatre. Her compositions, celebrated for their originality, emotional depth, and cross-cultural influences, have garnered numerous awards and accolades.

Ho's honors include the 2024 Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music, the 2022 Symphony Nova Scotia Maria Anna Mozart Award, and the 2022 Barlow Endowment Commissioning Award. She is also the recipient of the 2019 Johanna Metcalf Performing Arts Prize and the 2013 Dora Mavor Moore Award for "Outstanding Original Opera" for *The Lesson of Da Ji*. Additional accolades include the Boston Metro Opera International

Composition Competition, the Prince Edward Island Symphony Composers Competition, the 2014 Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Friendship Orchestral Composition Competition, the Louis Applebaum Composers Award, the K.M. Hunter Artist Award, and the Luxembourg Sinfonietta International Composition Prize.

Her music has been performed internationally by esteemed ensembles and orchestras, including the Finnish Lapland Chamber Orchestra, China National Symphony, Shanghai Philharmonic, Taiwan National Symphony, Luxembourg Sinfonietta, Estonia's Ellerhein Girls' Choir, and Polish Radio Choir. In Canada, her works have been showcased by leading groups such as the Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Nova Scotia, and Kitchener-Waterloo Symphonies, Esprit Orchestra, Art Choral Canada, and New Music Concerts. She has collaborated with renowned soloists and ensembles, including the Penderecki String Quartet, TorQ Percussion Quartet, Duo Concertante, violist Rivka Golani, pianists Christina Petrowska Quilico, Philip Chiu, and Katherine Dowling, percussionists Sumire Yoshihara, Evelyn Glennie, and Beverley Johnston, and flutists Robert Aitken, Patrick Gallois, and Susan Hoepfner.

A two-time JUNO Award nominee, Ho has released 10 solo albums that reflect her artistic range. Highlights include *Ming* for percussion, *Glistening Pianos* for two pianos, and *The Lesson of Da Ji*, featuring her Dora Award-winning opera. Other recordings include *Mysterious Boot* for flute, cello, and piano; *The Monkiest King*, showcasing her children's opera with the Canadian Children's Opera Company; *Venom of Love*, a recording of her electronic ballet music; *A Woman's Voice* for female voices and piano; and two solo piano albums, *Blaze and Awake* and

Dreaming, featuring Christina Petrowska Quilico and Katherine Dowling. Her catalog also includes a full-length recording of her opera *CHINATOWN*, commissioned by City Opera Vancouver with Madeleine Thien and a Hoisanese co-writer.

Ho's operas, including *The Lesson of Da Ji*, *The Monkiest King*, and *CHINATOWN*, transcend cultural boundaries, reflecting her Chinese heritage while connecting with global audiences. These works exemplify her ability to blend diverse musical traditions into powerful narratives.

She holds a Bachelor of Music from Indiana University and a Master of Music from the University of Toronto, having studied with John Eaton, Brian Ferneyhough, and John Beckwith. An accomplished pianist and advocate for contemporary music, she has premiered works such as *Tan Dun's Traces II*.

Now based in Toronto, Alice Ping Yee Ho continues to captivate audiences with her groundbreaking compositions and unique artistic voice.



Rui Wang, PhD in Composition from the Central Conservatory of Music (China) and Lecturer at the Tianjin Conservatory of Music is a recipient of the 2019 National Arts Fund "Young Talents in Artistic Creation" Grant.

Born in 1990 in Qingdao, Wang began his musical journey with piano studies at an early age. In 2009, he was admitted to the Composition Department of the Central Conservatory of Music

in Beijing, where he studied under esteemed professors Hao Weiya and Li Binyang.

Demonstrating exceptional academic performance, he was admitted to the master's program under the guidance of Professor Liu Kanghua and continued his studies as a PhD candidate in 2017. After earning his doctorate in 2020, he joined the Composition and Conducting Department at the Tianjin Conservatory of Music.

As a composer, Wang's works span a wide array of styles and genres. He has collaborated with numerous renowned conductors, performers, and leading orchestras in China, producing commissioned works that have garnered critical acclaim. His compositions, such as *Waves of the Sea*, *Chants of the Mountains and Rivers*, *Flourishing Blossoms*, and *Impressions of the Mountain Lilies*, have been performed at prominent venues and integrated into the curriculum for traditional Chinese instrumental music education at conservatories.

As a scholar, Wang is deeply engaged in research on compositional techniques and related disciplines. His academic contributions include multiple papers published in prestigious journals such as *Chinese Music* and *Tian Lai*, where he explores the development of Chinese music and offers insights aimed at advancing the field of music theory.

As an educator, Wang is committed to innovation in teaching methods, focusing on bridging creative theory with performance practice. He actively fosters platforms for artistic practice, nurturing a new generation of students with comprehensive professional skills and a strong sense of cultural confidence.

PROGRAM NOTES

Kevin Lau

Across the Jade Sea, 2024. World Premiere

Across the Jade Sea marks the first time I have been able to unite my twin passions – composing and writing – under a single roof. In essence, this is a double concerto for two narrators: one a storyteller, the other a solo violinist who serves as the soul of the narrative.

While the text follows the general shape of a children’s fable, and abounds with familiar iconography derived from Chinese mythology (dragons, phoenixes, and water serpents all make their appearance), the story itself is a product of my own imagination.

After a curtain-raising opening, we are introduced to Popo: a boy who fears nothing and is determined to save his village from a deadly drought. His journey takes him across the Jade Sea, where he confronts the legendary Phoenix. In an inversion of the typical hero’s tale, Popo’s inability (or refusal) to fulfill the terms of his quest – namely, to kill the Phoenix – becomes the transformative, redemptive act that provides the story’s resolution.

There is a lush, cinematic aspect to the musical language that has its roots in Western narrative opera and ballet, complete with what I hope are memorable themes for the central characters, themes that have been imbued with the potential to transform in various ways. But there is also an elusive quality – one might describe it as *flow* – that suggests a more Eastern sensibility, and that I have tried to cultivate ‘between’ the notes. On a technical level, the music is characterized by expansive modulations, edgeless transitions, and an organic dialogue between soloist, narrator,

and ensemble that aims to create a fluid and immersive experience.

Philosophically, the music harbours a fundamental tenderness that reflects the story’s themes of compassion and restraint – one that I hope will resonate with modern listeners, especially during times of strife, rigidity, and grief.

In November of 2024, my son received a life-saving liver transplant (with my wife as the donor!) after being diagnosed, at only two months of age, with end-stage liver disease. The soaring melody that emerges at the very end of the piece, during the story’s celebratory finale (my own spin on the origins of Dragon Boat racing), was composed during the darkest hours of my son’s hospitalization in an attempt to transcend the pain we were experiencing. I have dedicated this work to Robin, and I hope that he—along with many other children like him—will find this journey an inspiring and uplifting one.

Alice Ping Yee Ho

Silk Road Fantasy, 2019.

Silk Road Fantasy reflects on the history of the ancient trade route that connected the East and West of Eurasia and opened a door to cross-cultural trade and communication. The composition is written in three linked movements: *On A Nomadic Plain*, *The Trade*, and *The Great Crossing*.

Music travels through time and geography from the dawn of the Nomadic Empires to the imaginary trade adventures connecting China with the Middle East and Europe, dramatizing human experiences and the exchange of languages and cultures.

Silk Road Fantasy celebrates the human spirit through the history of exploration and cross-cultural connections. The composition keeps the musicians on stage busy with rhythmically challenging tutti sections for the strings as well as showcasing timpani and percussion.

Ho has had a dynamic career in the Canadian orchestral scene. After completing her masters' at the University of Toronto, she received her big break when she was awarded two prizes at the Winnipeg Symphony Canadian Composers' Competition in the mid-1990s. She has since had the opportunity to cross artistic boundaries while collaborating with opera, dance and theatre organizations. She cites composers Bach, Ravel and Ann Southam amongst her favourites while also drawing inspiration from popular artists David Bowie and Yoko Ono.

When it comes to composing, Ho says finding a subject that appeals to her can be the most challenging aspect. She deep dives into topics with research and sketching to fully understand the story she is going to tell.

"I think the attitude of players towards contemporary music is greatly affected by the leadership and vision of the artistic director," says Ho. "It is always not easy to be pushed out of one's comfort zone to deal with the unfamiliar. However, the audience is always more intelligent than we think. I believe any artist and musician has the tools and responsibility to introduce new works that will inspire and reflect on our society, and at the same time offer challenges and excitement to the audience."

Silk Road Fantasy was commissioned by the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra.

Rui Wang

Waves of the Sea, 2018.

Waves of the Sea originates from the poetic phrase "*Waves of the Sea, Ruggedness of the Mountains*" in *Poetry in Twenty-Four Styles* and was composed in 2018 when Rui Wang was young. As a composer born in a coastal hometown, Wang expresses deep sentiment and admiration for the sea in this piece. The imagery of seagulls soaring and waves crashing against the shore serves as a vivid and unforgettable memory, embodying the composer's deep attachment to his hometown.

This composition was awarded the Gold Prize for Original Guzheng Works at the 2018 "Splendid Guzheng" Competition.

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February 22, 2025

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Friday, February 14, The Musicians from Marlboro at von Kuster Hall, Don Wright Faculty of Music, Western University

Saturday, April 5, Beethoven and Sibelius with Kerson Leong, with London Symphonia at Metropolitan United

Information on concerts in the London area is available at serenatamusic.com, serenatamusic@gmail.com and 519-433-8332.



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Join poet/actor Roy Lewis and discover Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's triumphs, tragedies, ingenuity and brilliant music.

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April 5, 2025

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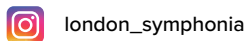
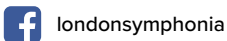
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