

Media Release (For Immediate Release)

## String A Legacy: Raising the Next Generation of Musicians



8PM · 27 NOVEMBER 2017  
**ESPLANADE CONCERT HALL**

**MIN LEE**  
**SAMUEL TAN**  
**STRING A LEGACY**

with THE WOLFGANG SINFONIETTA ORCHESTRA  
conductor: JUAN FELIPE MOLANO

MEDELSSOHN VIOLIN CONCERTO  
WIENIAWSKI / GOUNOD FAUST FANTASIE  
MOZART · BIZET · BEETHOVEN

GUEST ARTISTE  
**SEIA LEE**

A Benefit Concert

in support of

co-organised by

  

**Singapore, October 24, 2017** – A musical legacy will be handed down this coming November in a concert titled *String A Legacy* featuring Singapore’s internationally renowned violinist Min Lee and her protégé 12-year old Samuel Tan making his debut at Esplanade Concert Hall.

Samuel, the youngest winner of the prestigious 2014 Andrea Postacchini International Violin Competition in Italy at the age of nine and among United Kingdom’s favourite classical radio station Classic FM’s top ten list of child prodigies in 2016, has been under Min Lee’s mentorship since he was seven years old.

Centered around the theme of legacy, *String A Legacy* will also see Samuel continuing the violin lineage from his mentor, Min Lee.

Min Lee came to public prominence in the early 1990s and was a protégé of one of the most eminent violinists of the 20th century, Erick Friedman whom she studied with at Yale School of Music. Friedman himself in turn was a protégé of two legendary violinists: Jascha Heifetz and Nathan Milstein, and Jascha Heifetz was the protégé of the legendary Russian violinist and pedagogue, Leopold Auer.

On his role as a protégé of Min Lee, Samuel says: “It is amazing for any young violinist to be part of a musical lineage that can be traced back from Auer to Heifetz, to Friedman and to Min Lee. When I listen to their CDs, I know I have big shoes to fill, but I am really glad to be able

to be schooled by Min Lee in this tradition as it means a lot to me. Someday too, it may be my turn to teach the next generation."

Min Lee will perform Mendelssohn's well-known and attractive Violin Concerto in E Minor while Samuel will perform two popular virtuosic works in the violin repertoire, Sarasate's Introduction and Tarantelle, Op. 43 and Wieniawski's Theme and Variations.

*String A Legacy* was conceived with the goal of celebrating, inspiring and supporting young Singaporeans in their pursuit of the arts. As part of her vision to groom the next generation of classical musicians, Min Lee's hope is for Samuel to be a source of inspiration and encouragement for his peers.

Shares Min Lee of her thoughts on nurturing young music talents, "'Generation Next' has to be the single most meaningful process for the human race. Passing on the baton ensures the sustainability of the art and we are lucky if we have suitable young ones to pass knowledge to. In this, I am fortunate to be able to mentor Samuel and a handful of other young talents – at the Wolfgang Violin Studio."

Samuel is also a student at the Wolfgang Violin Studio, co-founded by Min Lee and her mother Ms Annie Lee, with a pedagogy program guided by Min Lee. Here, she hopes to identify more young Singaporean talents from the age of three so that the process of regeneration will continue.

Keeping in the spirit of the concert, the two violinists will perform with the Wolfgang Sinfonietta Orchestra, an orchestra initiated by the Wolfgang Violin Studio, which will also be making its Esplanade debut. The orchestra, an inspiring get-together of professional musicians, each of them with a passion for making music, will be conducted by Maestro Juan Felipe Molano. Vitek Chody from Prague will play as concert master with the orchestra.

To add to the high notes of the evening, the Wolfgang Young Artists Orchestra will present some of the Wolfgang Violin Studio's young promising students who are between the ages of four and 15. In total, a 100 violinists and cellists will play for the audience.

Japanese mezzo soprano Seia Lee will also give a guest appearance at the concert singing operatic favourites from Bizet's Carmen.

Jointly organised by Ming Classics and The RICE Company Limited, the concert is a fundraiser for The Business Times Budding Artists Fund (BT BAF). BT BAF provides arts education for children and youth aged six to 19 from financially disadvantaged families to train in music, dance, theatre and visual arts.

Says Mr Tan Tee Tong, Director of The RICE Company Limited, a not-for-profit arts organisation that manages the BT BAF, "On behalf of the beneficiaries of BT BAF, we thank Min Lee, Samuel and the *String A Legacy* team for supporting our mission to enable arts and creative opportunities for all. We believe in nurturing the creative and artistic talents of our beneficiaries, which also fosters their resilience and confidence."

*String A Legacy* is held at Esplanade Concert Hall on 27 November, 2017 at 8pm. Tickets are priced at \$18 (student), \$25, \$35, \$55 and \$80 and can be purchased on SISTIC at <https://www.sistic.com.sg/events/cstring1117>. Charity tickets are available at \$120, \$200 and \$300 which are eligible for tax deduction and can be obtained at [http://bit.do/string\\_a\\_legacy](http://bit.do/string_a_legacy).

The programme can be found in **Annex 1** and performers biographies can be found in **Annex 2**. High Resolution photos can be downloaded from: <https://we.tl/xvXTkMVgYX>

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<b>Event:</b>	<b><i>String A Legacy</i></b>
<b>Date:</b>	27 November 2017
<b>Time:</b>	8pm - 10pm
<b>Venue:</b>	Esplanade Concert Hall, 1 Esplanade Drive, Singapore 038981
<b>Synopsis:</b>	<p>A musical legacy will be handed down this coming November in a concert titled <i>String A Legacy</i> featuring Singapore's internationally renowned violinist Min Lee and her protégé 12-year old Samuel Tan making his debut at Esplanade Concert Hall. This benefit concert will see Min Lee perform Mendelssohn's well-known and attractive Violin Concerto in E Minor while Samuel will perform two popular virtuosic works in the violin repertoire, Sarasate's Introduction and Tarantelle, Op. 43 and Wieniawski's Theme and Variations. The Japanese mezzo soprano Seia Lee will sing operatic favourites from Bizet's Carmen.</p> <p>Keeping in the spirit of the concert, the two violinists will perform with the Wolfgang Sinfonietta Orchestra, an orchestra initiated by the Wolfgang Violin Studio, which will also be making its Esplanade debut. The orchestra, an inspiring get-together of professional musicians, each of them with a passion for making music, will be conducted by Maestro Juan Felipe Molano. Vitek Chody from Prague will play as concert master with the orchestra.</p> <p>To add to the high notes of the evening, the Wolfgang Young Artists Orchestra will present some of the Wolfgang Violin Studio's young promising students who are between the ages of four and 15. In total, a 100 violinists and cellists will play for the audience.</p> <p>This concert will raise funds for The Business Times Budding Artists Fund to nurture the artistic talents of financially-disadvantaged children and youth in Singapore.</p>

Tickets:	<p>Tickets are available at \$18* (student), \$25*, \$35*, \$55* and \$80* (*excludes booking fee)</p> <p>All SISTIC Channels <a href="https://www.sistic.com.sg/events/cstring1117">https://www.sistic.com.sg/events/cstring1117</a></p> <p>Charity Tickets are also available at \$120, \$200 and \$300 or make a donation. Charity tickets and donations (above \$20) are eligible for tax deduction.</p> <p><a href="http://bit.do/string_a_legacy">http://bit.do/string_a_legacy</a></p>
Contact Person(s):	<p>The RICE Company Limited: Faith Leong (9173 0246), Waiying Sum (9222 3548)</p>

### **About The RICE Company Limited**

The RICE Company Limited (TRCL) is a not-for-profit organisation that harvests the potential of the arts and culture for the development of human lives and connects communities in Singapore with the world. TRCL's core areas of expertise lies in enlivening places and spaces through place making and content creation; building cultural capital through the engagement of arts with business; and developing linkages with communities around the world.

TRCL currently manages two social funds (The Business Times Budding Artists Fund and Sing50 Fund), three creative spaces (The Little Arts Academy, 10 Square at Orchard Central and The Pavilion at Far East Square) and two subsidiaries (Global Culture Alliance and Millet Holdings). For more information, visit [www.therice.sg](http://www.therice.sg).

### **Ming Classics**

Ming Classics (Formerly known as Centerstage Consultants) has been committed to presenting arts events in Asia and Singapore artistes overseas. Ming Classics has accumulated a handsome portfolio of arts events and arts education presentations in music, dance and drama.

Artist groups presented include Prague Chamber Orchestra Singapore and Malaysian tour, Prague Philharmonic Children's Choir, Singapore and Malaysian tour, Canadian Children's Dance Theatre, Singapore and Malaysian tour, Prague Wind Quintet, The China Beijing Opera, Philharmonia Orchestra of London with Vladimir Ashkenazy. For more information, visit, <http://mingclassics.com>.

### **About The Business Times Budding Artists Fund**

Initiated in 2004 and adopted by The Business Times in 2005, The Business Times Budding Artists Fund (BT BAF) originated from a conviction that no child with the strong interest and potential in the arts should be denied the opportunity to develop his or her talents due to a lack of financial resources. Since 2005, BT BAF has reached out to more than 15,000 financially-disadvantaged children and youth, between the ages of six to 19 years old, through a variety of programmes including a structured arts training programme, arts camps, workshops and signature events. BT BAF supports two arts training centres, The Little Arts Academy and 10 Square @ Orchard Central, and is managed by The RICE Company Limited.

## **Annex 1 – Programme**

STRING A LEGACY

27 November 2017 | Monday

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**EDVARD GRIEG**

'Prelude' from *Holberg Suite* 4:00

WOLFGANG YOUNG ARTISTS ORCHESTRA

**HENRYK WIENIAWSKI\***

Variations on an original theme Op. 15 12:00

SAMUEL TAN | violin

**GEORGES BIZET\***

'Habanera' and 'Seguidilla' from *Carmen* 9:00

SEIA LEE | mezza soprano

**PABLO DE SARASATE\***

'Introduction' and 'Tarantelle' Op. 43 5:00

SAMUEL TAN | violin

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Intermission  
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**WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART**

'Overture' from *Der Schauspieldirektor* 4:00

WOLFGANG SINFONIETTA ORCHESTRA

JUAN FELIPE MOLANO | conductor

**FELIX MENDELSSOHN\***

Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64 28:00

MIN LEE | violin

**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN**

(arr. Juan Felipe Molano)

'Ode to Joy' from Symphony no. 9 in D minor Op. 125 4:00

WOLFGANG YOUNG ARTISTS ORCHESTRA

WOLFGANG SINFONIETTA ORCHESTRA

*\*with Wolfgang Sinfonietta Orchestra conducted by Juan Felipe Molano*  
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CONCERT DURATION: 2HR 30MIN (with 20 minutes intermission)

ALL TIMINGS INDICATED ARE APPROXIMATE

## **Annex 2 – Performers Biographies**

### **SAMUEL TAN**



12-year-old Samuel Tan has already been Included in London’s Classic FM’s list of “Astonishing Child Prodigies” in 2016.

He started playing the violin at three and came to the Wolfgang Violin Studio’s “Trailblazer Young Talent” program at five years old. A year later, Min Lee took him under his mentorship. In line with Min Lee’s achievements, he blazed through his Grade 8 exam with Distinction at eight years old and in that same year, won the Outstanding Performer Award at the National Violin Competition.

At the age of nine, Samuel became the youngest first prize winner and Laureate awardee at the Andrea Postacchini Competition in Italy.

### **MIN LEE**



Since her mother gifted her with a violin at the age of two, Min Lee has been inseparable from music.

She was eight years old when she won the Best Performer Award at the National Music Competition of Singapore. Her talent was spotted by the adjudicator Professor Stephen Shipps and he initiated a Young Musician’s Program at the University of Michigan for the nine- year- old Min, directed by the great pedagogue Josef Gingold. Min Lee left Singapore for the

University of Michigan at the age of nine. At the age of 11, she started working with Professor Vaclav Smitl at the Prague Academy.

Min Lee made her debut with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra when she was 12 at the inaugural President's Young Performers Concert. At 14, Min Lee became the youngest student to be admitted for graduate studies at the Yale University, where she was schooled by the late, eminent violinist Erick Friedman, himself a protégé of the legendary violinists Jascha Heifetz and Nathan Milstein. They were, in turn, protégés of Leopold Auer and Min Lee proudly carries on the violin lineage.

Min Lee graduated in 2000 at 17 and in that same year, she made her London debut at the Wigmore Hall followed by performances at the Royal Festival Hall with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Since then, Min Lee has appeared in concerts with orchestras including the Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Prague Chamber Orchestra, Prague Radio Symphony, the NHK, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony, Auckland Symphony, the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, San Diego Symphony and the Russian National Orchestra, under the baton of conductors such as Charles Dutoit, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Peter Oundjian, Jahja Ling and Mikhail Pletnev.

Min Lee has released two albums under Universal Music Group – debut with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Tchaikovsky Prokofiev Concerto No. 2 with Vladmimir Ashkenazy.

A prolific fundraiser and youth ambassador for her favourite charities, Min Lee has raised some \$6 million has over the years to benefit various charitable organizations, including the Princess Diana Aids Benefit, Red Cross Society in Hong Kong, Children with Renal Failure in China, the NAFA fund, Viva Foundation for Sick Kids and the BT BAF.

In 2000, Min Lee was the first to receive the HSBC Youth Excellence Award. She proceeded to take her second Masters programme at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, and upon graduation was appointed a Young Global Leader for the World Economic Forum.

Min Lee is now happily married to Mr Loh Lik Peng, and they have two children, six-year-old Conor and two-year-old Cassidy.

## **WOLFGANG YOUNG ARTISTS ORCHESTRA**

The Wolfgang Violin Studio (WVS) was set up in 2009, with the vision of growing excellence in the strings in Singapore. With programmes for violins and cellos developed by Min Lee, it has grown quickly since. The "Trailblazers" program is an important part of the WVS, set up to identify talented young string players and to nurture them to the highest of their abilities. As these young musicians grew in their skills and talents, it became a natural progression for them to be part of the Wolfgang Young Artists Orchestra (WYAO).

This concert in November is the debut of the WYAO. It represents a defining moment for the WVS as it provides a platform for these young artistes to showcase their musical talents.

Concert Mistress Anne Tong is 14 years old, and has been studying the violin with Min Lee for the past five years. She is presently also the concert mistress of the Singapore Chinese Girls' School Orchestra.

## **WOLFGANG SINFONIETTA ORCHESTRA**

The Wolfgang Sinfonietta Orchestra (WSO) is made up of many passionate musicians in Singapore to share their love for music and past performing experiences. The WSO has been

brought together by Min Lee to support the many rising stars in Singapore. The orchestra concertmaster Vitek Chody is an avid chamber musician who presently teaches advanced and talented children at the Wolfgang Violin Studio.

## **JUAN FELIPE MOLANO**

Graduated with special honours as an orchestral and opera conductor from the Vienna Conservatory, Juan Felipe Molano was appointed in 2014 as the conductor for Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA). Molano was also appointed in 2016 as Resident Conductor of the American Youth Symphony and Conductor of the Claremont Young Musicians Orchestra.

He served five years as Music and Artistic Director of the Yucatan Symphony Orchestra, conducting an eclectic symphonic repertoire from early music to contemporary works and a list of opera productions including Rigoletto, Madame Butterfly, L'Elisir d'Amore, and Bastien und Bastienne.

He has collaborated with artists such as Plácido Domingo, Gustavo Dudamel, Cuarteto Latinoamericano, Eric Aubier, Joseph De Pasquale, and Ryu Goto. He has also conducted top orchestras including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Slovak Radio Symphony, Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela, Youth Orchestra of Americas, Monterey Symphony Orchestra, the Jove Orquestra de la Generalitat Valenciana, the Bogota Philharmonic, the Colombian National Symphony, among many others. For five years, Molano held the position of National Director of Orchestras at the Batuta Colombian System of Youth Orchestras (El Sistema – Colombia). He has been also the conductor of the Colombian Youth Philharmonic, the Take a Stand Festival Orchestras 2016, El Sistema Salinas, and El Sistema San Rafael in California.

He has participated in several international conferences, workshops, and seminars as a speaker, including the International Teaching Artist Conference (Norway), the 2016 International Community Orchestras Forum (Korea), the National Conference for Youth Orchestras (Argentina), the Take a Stand International Symposium 2012/2014/2015 (Los Angeles, California), YOA Leaders International Seminar and the Batuta Teachers training program (Colombia).

## **SEIA LEE**

A respected mezzo soprano, Seia was born in Tokyo Japan. Following her completion of her undergraduate studies in Japan, Seia furthered her studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London.

In past seasons, Seia has performed solo recitals in major languages such as Italian, French, German, Japanese, Korean and English. She has also collaborated with renowned performers including saxophonist Kenny G. In 2012, Seia performed with the celebrated Japanese composer and violinist, Taro Hakase for a charity concert held at Cadogan Hall in London.

Seia brought the world of wine making and opera together in her performance with Tadashi Agi, Japanese manga author of "The Drops of God" for Le Marriage De Opera. Her 2015 album "Venere" recorded at the legendary Abbey Road Studios has garnered much critical success. In 2016, Seia marked her 10th anniversary as a performer with a concert at Suntory Hall in Japan.