

Samuel Cho Lik Heng

Samuel Cho was born a Malaysian citizen in 1996 in Brunei Darussalam. He learnt to read music at the age of 8 from his mother and received his first piano lesson at the age of 11. Within two years, he began taking part in school recitals and gave his first solo recital at the age of 15. Along side the piano, he played the guitar in a rock band formed among his closest friends. To finance his own musical pursuits, he began accompanying fellow students and arranged music for local ensembles, such as a high school production of Disney's *Lion King* and popular music for a string ensemble in his former music school. Upon graduating from high school in 2014, he travelled to Germany to study the language and was accepted in the Musikakademie Kassel in 2015. Having grown up with a multicultural background, he draws influences not only from Malay and Chinese culture, but also from varying musical traditions. He is currently doing a Bachelor of Music studying piano under Michael Kravtchin and composition under Frank Gerhardt.

Arbophillia for piano solo

Written in the summer of 2016, the piece *Arbophillia* (the love of trees) pays homage to nature's most regal beings: trees which resurrect themselves after every winter in reincarnations of lush green. The short piece aims to mirror cyclical processes in nature, such as the shedding of leaves or, on a smaller level, the path a leaf takes when it falls. In this sense, it follows the impressionistic musical tradition, demanding a delicate control of colour from the pianist. *Arbophillia* also tries to encapsulate the romantic notion of love for nature today and imagines what the voices of trees, their massive roots and their crowns would sound like. The lower register of the piano is used to evoke the slowness of trees and the upper register to represent the smaller events that happen on the surface of trees, such as crawling ants or woodpeckers.