

PRESENTED BY



**NUS Arts Festival 2016**

**11 - 26 March**



## **Reverie**

By NUS Guitar Ensemble (GENUS)

Fri 25 Mar | 8pm | UCC Hall, NUS

MUSIC



# MESSAGE FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to Reverie.

Tonight, GENUS, the Niibori Guitar Orchestra of NUS, is 35 years young! The 34<sup>th</sup> Committee, led by Isaac Lee, has selected an exciting repertoire of some of the most memorable works performed by GENUS in the last decade.

The night begins with the high-spirited *Tristch Tratsch Polka*, and *La Partida*, an exciting Venezuelan waltz with an enchanting melody, which will certainly keep your spirits dancing to the catchy flamenco rhythm.

GENUS continues to champion the works of our founding Music Director and Honorary Resident Conductor Mr Alex Abisheganadan with *Huan Yin - Vanakam*, a piece about interracial friendship that creatively fuses the Chinese erhu and the Indian sitar with the guitars.

Baroque repertoire is represented by a joyful concerto by Vivaldi. The solo part is played by upcoming UK based Singaporean soloist Kevin Loh is also featured in *Michinoku Guitar Concerto*, composed by Hatanaka Yudai after the Tohoku Earthquake of 2011.

GENUS, an ensemble structured on the Japanese Niibori model with soprano, alto, prime, bass, contrabass and guitarron guitars, showcases several other Japanese compositions in tonight's concert repertoire: *Nagashino*, a narrative piece that depicts the eponymous tragic battle of 1575 using the Niibori Rhythm Method (NRM), and *Jounetsu Tairiku*, a rock piece that GENUS brought back from a concert tour to Japan. GENUS's alumni group will also be performing two expressive pieces - *Variations on the theme "Shabondama"* and *Akibare to Chokoreito*.

Not forgetting that ensemble playing is a team effort, GENUS leaves room for smaller ensembles to play in various chamber music formations, such as Habanera from the Carmen suite, a Japanese popular music *Naminori Johnny*, and a medley of *Coup de Cœur & Les Reves Du Matin* which was originally composed for the piano.

On behalf of GENUS, I wish to thank the NUS Centre For the Arts and its Director Ms Sharon Tan, tutors Ng Shu Hann, Gopal Balraj, Ow Leong San, Tan Han Siang, Nogh Kheng Seng, and the GENUS 34<sup>th</sup> Committee.

Enjoy the concert!

Dr. Robert Casteels

# PROGRAMME

*Reverie* features some of the most memorable pieces played by the ensemble over its past 35 years. Like an ephemeral dream, *Reverie* captures the wondrous but fragmentary memories of a music group that has established a unique place in the music community and grown from strength to strength.

## Tritsch Tratsch Polka

Composer: Johann Strauss II  
Arranger: Tan Han Siang

## La Partida

Composer: Fermin Maria Alvarez  
Arrangers: Jan-Olof Eriksson &  
Ng Shu Hann

## Habanera, from Carmen Suite

Composer: Georges Bizet  
Arranger: William Kanengiser

## Naminori Johnny

Composer: Keisuke Kuwata  
Arranger: Kazuyuki Terada

## Coup de Cœur & Les Reves Du Matin

Composer: Paul de Senneville  
Arranger: Hideaki Kobayashi

## Huan Yin Vanakam

Composer: Alex Abisheganaden

## Michinoku Concerto

Composer: Hatanaka Yudai

## Intermission

## Akibare to Chokoreito

Composer: Hatanaka Yudai

## Variations on the theme

“Shabondama”

Composer: Keigo Fujii

## Concerto in A, RV356

Composer: Antonio Vivaldi

## NRM Nagashino

Composer: Ishizuka Masatoshi

## Jounetsu Tairuki - Song of Life

Composer: Taro Hakase

Arranger: Kazuyuki Terada



## DR ROBERT CASTEELS, MUSIC DIRECTOR & RESIDENT CONDUCTOR

Dr. Robert Casteels, Music Director of NUS Guitar Ensemble (GENUS) since 2006, leads a distinguished professional career as a conductor, composer, pianist, educator and arts administrator. 2016 marks the first decade Robert has been with GENUS and the second decade he has been with NUS Centre For the Arts.

Robert is based in Singapore since 1995, where he has held various leadership positions in Singaporean academic institutions, and contributed to numerous arts-related committees and fund raising charity galas. Throughout these 21 years, Robert also has written 29 arrangements and 105 new original compositions out of which 20 incorporate gamelan instruments and another 22 with Asian instruments.

His scientific approach to organology enables him to harmoniously combine instruments from different and seemingly disparate cultures, whilst at the same time respecting each culture. 2015 was a busy year with no less than 14 first performances of new works. His compositions have been selected and credited by the following charters of the Asia Composers League: Singapore in 2013, Malaysia and Japan in 2014, and Philippines in 2015. More information is available at [www.robertcasteels.com](http://www.robertcasteels.com).



## KEVIN LOH KAI WEN

Kevin is an 18 year-old prodigious rising star of classical guitar currently studying at the Yehudi Menuhin School in UK. In February 2011, Kevin gave his debut concert at the Esplanade Concert Hall making him the first-ever Singaporean guitarist to do so. He is also the winner of the prestigious 2012 Guitar Foundation of America's International Youth Competition (Junior) and the 2015 Andres Segovia International Youth Guitar Competition in Germany.

This is the second time Kevin is collaborating with GENUS. He will be featured as the soloist in two ensemble pieces, *Michinoku Guitar Concerto* and *Concerto in A minor RV 356*.



## BALRAJ GOPAL, ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Mr Balraj Gopal, assistant conductor of GENUS for the second year, has been an active GENUS alumnus and the group's tutor since 1999. Balraj is the only Singaporean graduate from the acclaimed International Niibori Academy in Japan presently, holding a specialist diploma in guitar orchestral conducting and management.

Having received a long-time mentorship from the founder of GENUS, Maestro Alex Abisheganaden, Balraj learned the mechanics and working principles of a guitar orchestra. He conducts workshops on technique and leadership skills for students in the NUS orchestra and alongside this, also guides and nurtures the talents of young guitarists in several guitar ensembles in Singapore. He is well versed with the Niibori Guitar Method from Japan, and advocates its pedagogy in classroom lessons.

Balraj also holds a Licentiate of the Royal Schools of Music (LRSM) in Classical Guitar Performance and a Licentiate in music theory from the Trinity-Guildhall Board (LMusTCL). His repertoire on the classical guitar ranges from the standard classical repertory to popular and jazz standards.

## NUS GUITAR ENSEMBLE

Formed in 1981 by Mr Alex Abisheganaden, the NUS Guitar Ensemble (GENUS) is the pioneering Niibori Guitar Orchestra in Singapore and in the region. Under the guidance of music director, Dr. Robert Casteels, the 50-member strong ensemble performs a wide repertoire ranging from classical works to traditional music.

In addition to holding regular performances within the campus and at external venues, GENUS has also won local and international recognition through competitions. Furthermore, the ensemble participated in overseas exchange programmes, such as the recent trip to Japan in May 2014, culminating into a concert collaboration with the Niibori Academy's Ensemble. Starting late 2015, GENUS has been working on producing music videos, bringing music in Niibori guitar style to a wider audience through social media.

# PERFORMERS

## Alto 1

Alex Gan  
Bernice Tan  
Clara Tan (SL)  
Fu Hao  
Gan Su Xuan  
Gu Yuewei  
Isaac Lee  
Ko Jia Yi  
Koh Wai Kit  
Liu Ying  
Sally Choo  
Tan Yu Jia  
Tan Zu Ying  
Wong Hong An (ASL)

## Prime 1

Liu Zhimin (ASL)  
Lo Sheng Hong  
Nicolette Yau  
Ram Janarthan  
Yong Xianbin (SL)

## Guitarron

Chong Jin Jian (SL)  
Lee Chun Yat  
Lim Yong Xiang

## Alto 2

Anabelle Seah  
Claris Loh  
Denise Leong  
Emelyn Goh  
Ho Jean Ying  
Lai Shuo Yu  
Lim Jia Jia  
Ng Yau Xuan  
Sam Tan (ASL)  
Soo Yeong En  
Tan Shu Ting  
Wang Yiqing  
Yeo Teck Kian (SL)

## Prime 2

Han Xiaoru  
Marvina Tan  
Ong Wan Ching  
Sim Xin Yi  
Tang Ying Chong (SL)  
Yap Wen Hao (ASL)  
Yong Teck Hui

## Alumni Performers

Alex Gan  
Amelia Dizon  
Ang Ee Peng  
Anita Kurup  
Heng Zhong  
Jack Lim  
Ma Ruifeng  
Magdalene Lim  
Shruti Tandon  
Yeo Quan Qi

## Bass

Chen Heyang  
Chung Jing Yang  
Ding Ying  
Fiona Phoa  
Huynh Van Tu An  
Randy Chua  
Ravi Shwetha  
Tay Pei Xin (SL)  
Yu Wang Cong  
Zhu Sisi (ASL)

## Contrabass

Abhishek Mhaisalkar  
Ang Ee Peng  
Angeline Chua  
Jasmine See (ASL)

## Percussion

Anna Fernandez  
Bernice Tan  
Chong Jin Jian  
Claris Loh  
Ong Wan Ching  
Sim Xin Yi  
Yu Wang Cong

## Guest Performers

Arrchana Muruganantham (Sitar Soloist)  
Jason Paul (Bassist)  
Keith Yaow (Drummer)  
Kevin Loh Kai Wen (Guitar Soloist)  
Ng Rui Jun (Erhu Soloist)  
Valerie Ng Si Xuan (Flutist)

SL: Sectional Leader

ASL: Assistant Sectional Leader

# CREDITS

NUS Guitar Ensemble wishes to convey their appreciation and thanks to the following for their support:

**Mr Alex Abisheganaden**

Guest of Honour

Founder/Honorary Conductor

NUS Guitar Ensemble

**Mr Jason Paul**

Guest Performer

NUS CAC Amplified

**Dr Robert Casteels**

Music Director & Resident Conductor

NUS Guitar Ensemble

**Mr Keith Yaow**

Guest Performer

Yale-NUS College

**Mr Balraj Gopal**

Assistant Conductor

NUS Guitar Ensemble

**Mr Ng Rui Jun**

Guest Performer

SMU Chinese Orchestra

**Mr Alex Gan**

Student Conductor

NUS Guitar Ensemble

**Ms Valerie Ng Si Xuan**

Guest Performer

NUS Wind Symphony

**Mr Ng Shu Hann**

**Mr Ngoh Kheng Seng**

**Mr Ow Leong San**

**Mr Tan Han Siang**

Tutors

NUS Guitar Ensemble

**Ms Elizabeth Boon**

Emcee

Radio Pulze

**Mr Kevin Loh Kai Wen**

Guest Performer

**Mr Shawn Quek**

Photographer

**Ms Arrchana Muruganantham**

Guest Performer

NUS Indian Instrumental Ensemble

**Mr Yap Hong Wei**

Stage Manager

**Ms Samantha Renaye**

Stage Manager

## 34th GENUS Committee

President Isaac Lee

Vice-President Tang Ying Chong

Concertmaster Sam Tan

Secretary Jasmine See

Treasurer Gu Yuwei

Librarian Liu Zhimin

Property Managers Wong Hong An & Yap Wen Hao

Publicity Secretaries Zhu Sisi & Lim Jia Jia

# ABOUT NUS CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

Established in 1993, NUS Centre For the Arts (CFA) is a vibrant space for the appreciation of the arts and nurturing of the creative and inquiring spirit. It supports student engagement with the arts and the integration of the arts into the life of the University.

NUS CFA encompasses the NUS Museum, NUS Baba House and a Talent and Development arm that oversees 22 student arts excellence groups. Through its myriad of programmes, practices, exhibitions, workshops and outreach, such as NUS Arts Festival and the ExxonMobil Campus Concerts, the Centre enhances and augments the university experience and contributes to the building of knowledge and transformation of students.

CFA also manages facilities such as the University Cultural Centre, with its 1600-seat Hall and 450-seat Theatre, and rehearsal spaces in Runme Shaw CFA Studios and University Town. For more information, visit [www.cfa.nus.edu.sg](http://www.cfa.nus.edu.sg).

## ABOUT NUS ARTS FESTIVAL

As the flagship arts platform of NUS, NUS Arts Festival brings together students and alumni in collaboration with international and local professional artists, inspiring fresh insights and compelling artistic works with unique Asian influences.

This 2016, the Festival theme of WONDER encourages us to consider how our capacity for wonder and imagination is affected as our interactions increasingly take place via mobile screens and computers. We ask "Can fresh discoveries of the world through emerging sciences like quantum physics reawaken our delight in the world and re-ignite wonder?"

**W**[nusartsfestival.com](http://nusartsfestival.com) **f**[nusartsfestival](https://www.facebook.com/nusartsfestival) **g**[#naf16](https://www.instagram.com/nusartsfestival)

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