



Yeo Yat-Soon

Solo Harpsichord Recitals Sample Programmes

www.yeoyat-soon.org



Prize-winning harpsichordist Yeo Yat-Soon uses his rich experience as a performer, teacher and scholar to present programmes of harpsichord music with informative and entertaining introductions drawing on the diverse artistic, cultural and historic links with the music.



The Glories of the Harpsichord:

A guided tour through three centuries of music from across Europe introducing the wonderfully rich repertoire of the harpsichord from the high Renaissance Italy to the eve of the French Revolution. It includes music by J S Bach, Scarlatti, Byrd, Frescobaldi and Francois Couperin. From the majestic to the virtuosic, the programme ranges from gentle reflections of intimacy to elaborate displays of musical plumage.



Soaring Aloft into the Clouds - William Byrd and Music of the English Golden Age:

The golden age of the arts under the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I included not only the works of Shakespeare, but also an extraordinary flowering of keyboard music, pioneered by William Byrd, one of the greatest English composers. This programme explores this period through the music of Byrd and his contemporaries, Hugh Aston, John Bull, Orlando Gibbons and Thomas Tompkins. It opens with the jaunty optimism of the pre-Reformation court of Henry VIII and concludes with the desolation of the English Civil War.



A Dance to the Music of Time - French Harpsichord Music from the Grand Siècle:

The long reign of Louis XIV saw French arts and culture reach a pinnacle of ornate opulence. The great tradition of French harpsichord music from this period includes some of the most exquisite and sophisticated music of the age, gently intimate yet resonating with grandeur. The programme includes music by Louis and François Couperin, Chambonnières and D'Anglebert, all closely associated with the French royal court.



Melancholy and Introspection - Music from the Age of Vermeer:

What music might Vermeer's celebrated lady seated at the virginal be playing? This fascinating programme uses some of the rare pieces of evidence from Vermeer's life to draw links to some of the most profoundly moving and personal musical expressions of any age. The composers Johann Jakob Froberger and Louis Couperin are little known today, but their music provides a fitting sound world to the intricate introspection of their artistic contemporary Johannes Vermeer.



A Tale of Two Cities - Music in 18th Century London and Paris:

Two events mark clear watersheds in the history of Britain and France in the 18th century: the loss of the British colonies in America in 1776 and the French Revolution in 1789. This programme looks at the music of this fascinating period and contrasts the cultures of the two leading European cities of the time through the music of Handel, Arne, Johann Christian Bach, Rameau, Duphy and Balbastre.

Yeo Yat-Soon: Biography



Yat-Soon was born in London of Chinese parents and studied Music at King's College London from where he has a master's degree in Historical Musicology. He continued with postgraduate studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama studying harpsichord with Christopher Kite and conducting with Harry Newstone. Whilst there, he won the prestigious Raymond Russell Prize for harpsichord.

After a successful career in music education during which time he has been Director of Music at The Lady Eleanor Holles School and St Paul's Girls' School (where his predecessors included Gustav Holst and Herbert Howells), Yeo Yat-Soon has now returned to his first love – playing the harpsichord.

Yat-Soon gives regular solo harpsichord recitals and lecture recitals. He specializes in performing in historic venues including the Handel House Museum, The Chapel Royal at Hampton Court, Strawberry Hill House, the Horniman Museum, Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare, Finchcock's Musical Museum, Burgh House, The Lovekyn Chapel and the Octagon Room at Orleans House. He also teaches harpsichord, coaches chamber music and lectures in performance practice at the Centre for Early Music Performance and Research at the University of Birmingham.

Yat-Soon works widely as an ensemble harpsichordist. He has performed regularly at the South Bank and St John's Smith Square in London and Musikinstrumenten Museum and Friedenau Kammersall in Berlin. He has broadcast for BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM. He is a member of the Berlin-based *Camerata Berolinensis* with whom he has recorded chamber music by Stamitz and Gluck and the London-based groups *Follia*, *The Stanesby Players*, *The Purcell Players* and *The Lovekyn Consort*. He also has a regular baroque violin and harpsichord ensemble *Duo Follia* with violinist Diane Moore.

As a conductor, Yat-Soon has specialised in baroque opera and vocal music. He has conducted widely acclaimed productions for London Baroque Opera and the City of London Festival. He has been musical director with *Opéra de Baugé* in France for whom he has conducted Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Handel's *Theodora* and, most recently, Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* in 2016.

In his long involvement with music education Yat-Soon conducted school orchestras of national repute which have performed at the Royal Festival Hall and Royal Albert Hall, toured internationally to China and the USA and broadcast for BBC 1, BBC4 and Channel 4 television.

Reviews:

"The main effort was rightly concentrated on the music, crisply played by the orchestra and very well sung... Yeo Yat-Soon conducted in exemplary style from the harpsichord."

(Winton Dean, *The Musical Times*)

"...the cadenza to the 5th *Brandenburg Concerto* gave Yeo Yat-Soon the opportunity to display his virtuosity as a harpsichordist. It was a dazzling performance and appropriate that such music was performed in the baroque splendour of King Charles Church."

(*The Kent and Sussex Courier*)

"Special credit is due to the girls from the Chamber Choir of St Paul's Girls' School (where Holst was the first Director of Music), especially their vitalising conductor Yeo Yat-Soon.

(Roderic Dunnett, *The Church Times*)

