

Raffles Institution String Ensemble

Who are we?

A family first, and a CCA second.

Founded in 2001, the Raffles Institution String Ensemble (RISE) has provided many Rafflesians with the unique opportunity to develop their musical talent.

Currently consisting of 43 members, RISE is led by a dedicated team of three teachers, four Executive Committee members, and five Section Leaders.

We encourage Rafflesians with any sort of musical background to try out for RISE. The school will loan string instruments to those who do not own one, free of charge.



Our tutors

RISE invites accredited and well-established professionals to tutor its musicians. They are, from left to right:

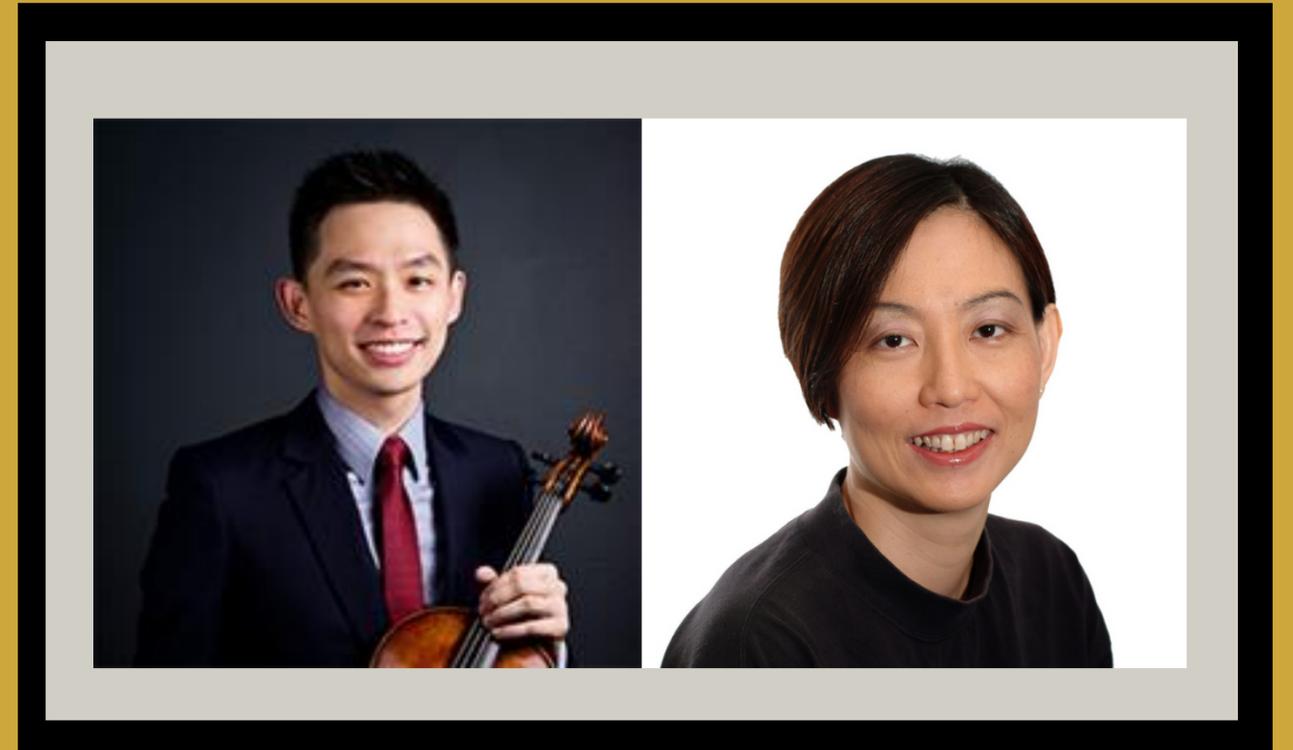
- Mr Lin Juan, our Conductor and Cello Sectional Tutor. Mr Lin is the Associate Conductor of the Singapore National Youth Orchestra (SNYO) and is also an Adjunct Lecturer at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA).
- Ms Janice Tsai, the Artistic Director of the Training Ensemble and the Violin Sectional Tutor. Ms Tsai is the Principal Study Lecturer at NAFA.



Our tutors

RISE invites accredited and well-established professionals to tutor its musicians. They are, from left to right:

- Ms Karen Yeo, the Double Bass Sectional Tutor. Ms Yeo has played in the SSO for almost thirty years and is its Fixed Chair Double Bass.
- Mr. Jeremy Chiew, the Viola Sectional Tutor. Mr Chiew is the Assistant Artistic Director and General Manager of New Opera Singapore. He is also an Adjunct Lecturer at NAFA and tutors the String Ensembles of many other secondary schools.



Our Achievements



SYFs



We have maintained high standards since the CCA's founding in 2001, obtaining the highest honors in almost every Singapore Youth Festival.

Overseas Trips

2017: Music Exchange Trip to Hong Kong



Concerts

2018: Concordia @ Victoria Concert Hall



A joint performance with The Philharmonic Orchestra allowed us to showcase Sibelius: Finlandia, Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5, and several National Day songs.

Concerts

2019: Serenade @ Raffles Performing Arts Centre



As an ensemble, we performed Schubert's Four Songs for Strings and Dvorak's Serenade for Strings.

VIA Activities



RISE went to Alexandra Hospital in 2019, where our members formed smaller groups and performed classic Chinese songs.

Primary School Camp



The Primary School Camp is an annual RISE initiative, where we reach out to Primary School musicians and give them the opportunity to play in an ensemble.

Our methods

A uniquely Rafflesian string ensemble.

RISE (and most other String Ensembles) is composed of members who play 4 different instruments: the violin, the viola, the cello, and the double bass.

It also contains 5 Sections - in other words, 5 groups of musicians, who play 5 unique parts.

Here in RISE, our Executive Committee members and our Section Leaders readily provide personalised guidance to all budding musicians, facilitating growth both as a musician and as a Rafflesian.



Our process

Crafting the musical Rafflesian.

Upon joining RISE, all Y1s will be initiated into the Training Ensemble, where they will develop the communication, coordination and teamwork skills necessary to play in an ensemble.

Following their first year in RISE, they will join their Y2-4 seniors by being inducted into the Main Ensemble, where they will flourish as musicians. Main Ensemble musicians will have the chance to perform and take part in VIA activities.

Musically gifted Y1s will bypass the Training Ensemble, directly entering the Main Ensemble.

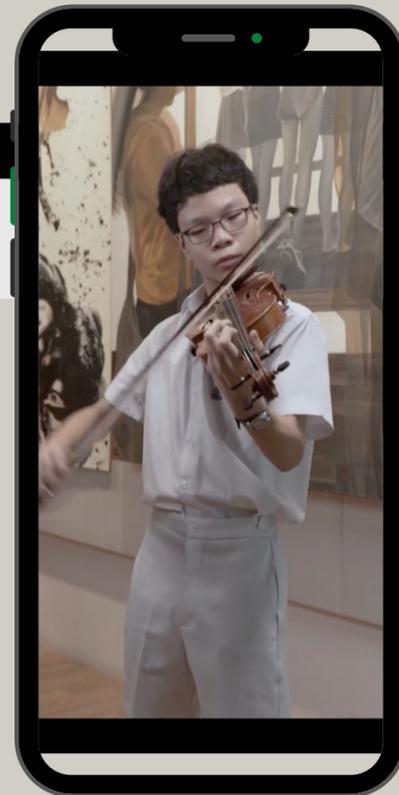


A showcase of our talent

IAN DAN YUET PLAYS BACH'S CELLO SUITE NO. 6 IN D
MAJOR: PRELUDE



LOW PENG GUAN PLAYS YSAYE'S SONATA NO. 2: 1ST
MVMT



Our environment

A diverse and holistic CCA.

RISE is an extremely diverse CCA. We have musicians who had little experience with instruments prior to entering RISE, and we also have musicians who are part of the SNYO, or who have earned ABRSM/Trinity Diplomas.

What ties all of us together? It is simply our common RISE identity, fostered by our CCA's friendly and warm atmosphere.

In RISE, we believe in family, we believe in community, and we believe in taking care of our own.



Our expectations

Maintaining the high standards of RISE.

As the virtuoso violinist Pablo de Sarasate once said, *“For 37 years I’ve practiced fourteen hours a day, and now the public calls me a genius!”*

RISE musicians are expected to find time to practise their instruments on a daily basis. We believe in the benefits of practice. Technical skill can only be developed through hard work and dedication.



Further details

The where, the when, and the how.

CCA sessions take place in the first floor of the ArtSpace, within facilities specially designed for music practice.

RISE conducts sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays, from 4:00pm to 6:15pm.

Mondays are *tutti* sessions, where the entire ensemble gathers together and plays as one, while Wednesdays are sectional sessions, where each Section gathers to practice its individual part.

A handful of our musicians are new to playing an instrument. In such cases, the school will loan an instrument of good quality to the student in question. He will have to be responsible for his own instrument.





Resilience: How we adjusted to Covid-19

Covid-19 Measures

Adapting to a new era.

✓ We shifted our training sessions to the online medium of Microsoft Teams.

✓ Our seniors independently conducted online training sessions with our juniors.

✓ Our Exco created practice guides and infographics to inform us about the context of our pieces.

✓ When face-to-face CCA started, we changed seating arrangements and provided all RISE members with a personal music stand.

✓ We made sure that all chairs and music stands were wiped down with disinfectant every CCA session.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is there a minimum grade to enter RISE?

No, there is not! As previously mentioned, all Rafflesians with a musical background are welcome to audition for RISE. We will warmly welcome all potential applicants.

Are pianists allowed to try out?

Yes, they are! Upon entry to RISE, they will be loaned an instrument for free, which they will have the chance to learn over the course of their 4 years in RISE.

Is RISE stressful?

When newcomers first enter RISE, they might find the unfamiliar ensemble setting rather intimidating. However, after adjusting themselves to CCA life, they will find that RISE is one of the least stressful CCAs in the school. In fact, many musicians find that playing their instruments is a good outlet to relieve stress.



"There is no top. There are
always further heights to reach."

- Jascha Heifetz, virtuoso violinist

