

Blank CANVAS

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

JESSICA CHO

A KEY FIGURE FROM THE YOUNG GENERATION IN THE LOCAL NEW MUSIC SCENE, MUSIC COMPOSER JESSICA CHO, SPEAKS WITH *CALIBRE* ABOUT HER LIFE AS A COMPOSER.



1 TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOURSELF.

I received my Bachelors of Music at Middlesex University, London, majoring in piano performance and my Masters of Music at the University of Sheffield as a research student on composition and modern repertoire for piano. My compositions have been premiered and performed worldwide including in the United Kingdom, Vienna, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Malaysia.

I won a prize at the Asian Composers League young composers' competition in Taiwan in 2012. I also pioneered

Malaysia's first CD album of women composers, *Interweaves*, and started the idea of a piano anthology of contemporary local piano works. The idea bore fruit when the Malaysian Composers Collective published its *Freehand Anthology* in 2020.

2 WHAT MADE YOU BECOME A COMPOSER?

I always wanted to be a concert pianist, but I started piano quite late and didn't receive proper training when I was young. During my diploma studies in Malaysia, I was introduced to contemporary classical

WHAT'S
STREAMING



SHOOTING STARS

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Shooting Stars tells the story of celebrities in the South Korean entertainment industry and the hard-working people behind the scenes. Standing at the forefront of taking care of the artists are the manager of the public relations team, Oh Hanbyul (played by Lee Sungkyung), and her nemesis, superstar Kong Taesung (played by Kim Young-dae).



composing by my piano teacher, Adeline Wong. Hence I started composing music during my undergraduate studies. That was when I received encouragement from professors in the university to pursue my study and research in composition.

3 EXPLAIN YOUR CREATIVE PROCESS.

The process starts with thinking about anything that's related to my life, such as my dogs, my family, and special events happening around me. Then I decide on which instruments to use. I love colours, so whenever I compose music, I think a lot about combinations of different instrumentations and range to create different tone colours in music.

4 DESCRIBE YOUR TYPICAL DAY.

On a typical day, I would start my day with breakfast, then I would be off to work, i.e. teach, and plan for projects, etc. I also enjoy taking photographs of things happening around me.

5 WHAT INSPIRES YOU?

I can be inspired by anything, for instance, my latest piano work published by Schott Music, was inspired by my pet dog, Bear Bear.

6 WHAT HAVE BEEN THE HIGH AND LOW POINTS OF BECOMING A COMPOSER?

I think there are always high and low points for any kind of occupation. Perhaps having my work performed by the Malaysian Philharmonics Orchestra was

one of the high points of my composition journey. Somehow I've not experienced any lows as a composer, because I don't compose for money. I mainly work as a piano teacher; the reason I continue my dream as a composer is because I believe composition is important to be a better musician, and I hope I can inspire my students to be better musicians.

7 WHAT ARE YOUR DREAMS AND ASPIRATIONS?

I hope contemporary classical music can attract more public interest, and our musical culture can be as well developed as those in European countries.

8 WHERE CAN WE FIND YOU?

You can visit my Facebook page at www.facebook.com/jessicacho.co.uk ©



BRAIN TEASERS ANSWERS

Sudoku

9	8	7	3	2	4	5	1	6
3	2	4	6	5	1	9	8	7
5	1	6	8	9	7	3	4	2
2	4	9	1	6	5	8	7	3
7	5	8	9	4	3	2	6	1
6	3	1	7	8	2	4	9	5
1	7	2	4	3	8	6	5	9
8	6	5	2	1	9	7	3	4
4	9	3	5	7	6	1	2	8

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