NEIGHBORHOOD MUSIC SCHOOL
presents.

THE 2022
RENÉE B. FISHER PIANO
COMPETITION

Rattling Gourd
by Ulung Tanoto

HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION WORK
Commissioned by the Renée B. Fisher Foundation

To be premiered at the 2022 Winners' Concert

The FISHER
Competition
Rattling Gourd

by

Ulung Tanoto

Written for the High School division of the 2022 Fisher Competition Competition
About the piece

The title “Rattling Gourd” refers to the shaker, a musical instrument which is often played in a 16th-note-pattern. The accents on the shaker play is what makes the rhythm more exciting. This piece is influenced by that constant perpetual rhythm. The ostinato in the beginning should be imagined as one playing the shaker, but then the accents slightly shift over time.

These shakers are important in Africa and South America. Many of their music styles have this “heartbeat” sort of pattern-like the sound of shaker play, while there are all different kinds of patterns playing against it. Such polyrhythm is expected in this piece. Then there are the influence of jazz. There are some idiomatic jazz harmonies, lots of major 7th intervals and leaps, syncopation, and montuno!

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Based on the concept above, it may help the pianist to keep these three words in mind: heartbeat, polyrhythm, and groove. Applicably, the tempo needs to be as constant as possible, and the accents are like the spices that make the music more exciting. Also, watch out for the rhythmical shifts!

There are four sections in the piece, and each section represents a different character: I. Rattling, II. Trembling, III. Jolting, IV. Resonating. Basically, it starts rather calm, then it gets intense before the relieve. Note that the tempo in the ‘Jolting’ section is free. This means the pianist is free to interpret how to express the most intense part of the piece: play it in constant tempo, or be completely free. But make sure to get back to the steady tempo when indicated. Good luck!

About the composer

Ulun Tanoto started his music career as an arranger and multi-instrumentalist in Indonesia. He collaborated with numerous Indonesian leading artists and appeared in TV programs. After scoring an award-winning short film “Dara” (2007), he came to the United States to pursue his Master’s degree in Film Music Composition at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. He continued to score numbers of short films, including an adaptation of Stephen King’s novel, “All That You Love Will Be Carried Away” (2011) which won some awards and nominations at film festivals around the United States. He also won the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Internship Program where he got to work at major film music studios in Hollywood.

In 2015, he attended a doctorate program in music composition at University of Hawaii at Manoa where he focused more on writing for concert pieces, not only for the Western instruments, but also some Asian traditional instruments.

He is currently the music director of Indonesian Kids Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. and a freelance music producer. His works include contemporary and religious songs, concert pieces covering from solos to choir and orchestras, traditional ensembles, corporate jingles, musical theaters, as well scores for films and podcast. His works have been showcased at important venues in the U.S., such as the Kennedy Center for the Arts, Lisner Auditorium, and Dream Works Studio; as well as in other countries, including Australia, South Korea, and Colombia.
Rattling Gourd

Steady Tempo
1. Rattling

\( \text{J} = 64 \) - 76

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[Musical notation image]