

**Nathan Cho**

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*Wind Song*, Kotaro Oshio and *Seventh #9*, Sungha Jung

## Performance Statement

In my performance, I have chosen to play two stylistically contrasting works demonstrating the range of my ability. *Wind Song* by Kotaro Oshio is a fingerstyle guitar piece that illustrates the wind. The free-flowing movement and the slow tempo create a melancholy atmosphere. To effectively portray this in my performance, I have examined several performance videos to find one that I wanted to emulate. Ultimately, I favoured the composer's rendition because I admired his technique and his manipulation of dynamics and rubato. I will begin my work by plucking the strings on the neck to produce a lighter and softer timbre. This will allow me to build the dynamics and tension as the performance progresses. The free-flowing element will be explored especially in the last repeat of the main idea where I exaggerate this technique to meet a gradual end to *Wind song*.

*Seventh #9* is also a fingerstyle contemporary guitar work. Written by Sungha Jung, this work is a harmonic exploration of the seventh sharp 9 chord. The work also explores the extended techniques of the guitar. I watched many video recordings of Jung's performance and examined his technique as the application of harmonics and percussive techniques like tapping and slapping proved to be mechanically challenging. These methods of playing provide a new sound to the audience that distinguishes my performance to the norm. To further attract the listener, I will play with high level of energy to add excitement to my playing. Dynamics will also be considered during the performance to create an interesting journey. My guitar teacher provided guidance that constant practice to a metronome was the key to success when performing complex works like this and prompted me to manually develop muscle memory. Another key method of practice that my teacher provided was to take the work slow as he explained that playing fast can hide my flaws, whilst playing slow will expose every note. Ultimately, approaching the work in a slowed down manner greatly improved the accuracy in my playing.

Technology will be used to enhance my performance as I will be playing with an effects pedal and an amp. This will add reverb to the sound that my guitar produces. The echo-like sound this provides will effectively support *Wind Song* as the reverb gives a sense of the presence of wind. *Seventh #9* will also benefit from this effect as the reverb will fill the empty space in-between notes.

## *Wind Song*, Kotaro Oshio and *Seventh #9*, Sungha Jung

### Reflective Statement

To extend my repertoire I chose to perform two contrasting works and thus demonstrate my ability to play different styles.

Preparing for a performance is physically and cognitively challenging and specific practice strategies are necessary to successfully interpret stylistic elements, master technique and realise the meaning of the works.

*Wind Song* is not a mechanically difficult work; I was able to learn the notes in a short period of time. The most effective method of practice was to analyse Oshio's performance of the work and examine the finger placements and notes played by watching his video on YouTube. I identified his manipulation of tone control by playing on different areas of the guitar. With this understanding, I explored techniques that control the timbre my guitar produced – playing on the neck of the guitar. There is a main idea repeated throughout the work and, with my teacher, we explored ways of presenting this idea so that it remained fresh. I experimented with changes to the tempo control like rubato and I explored a variety of dynamics.

Specific methods of practice were required for me to learn *Seventh#9*. The complex rhythms and fast tempo proved to be technically challenging. I examined Jung's performance to determine finger patterns and playing techniques, specifically noticing that the silent notes were played by muting the strings with his left hand, whilst plucking these strings with his right thumb and pointer finger. Realising the difficulty of the work, I manually developed muscle memory through constant practice – developing psychomotor skills. My teacher advised me to start at a slower tempo and use a metronome to enhance the accuracy of my playing. I broke the works down into different parts allowing me to set achievable goals of learning the parts rather than approaching the entire work at once.

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