



ST PHOTO: LIM SIN THAI

**ALL FOR ONE:** It's just like a family for (from left) Chan Yoong Han, Lim Yan, Chan Weishing, Foo Say Ming and Lim Shue Churn.

## Party of five

**The five musicians behind the Take Five chamber music series are a close-knit group**

**Stephanie Yap**  
ARTS REPORTER

SPEND some time with the piano quintet behind the new Take Five chamber music series, and it feels like you're hanging out with a family.

The five musicians – violinists Foo Say Ming and Lim Shue Churn, violist Chan Yoong Han, cellist Chan Weishing and pianist Lim Yan – trade insider jokes and cheeky banter that reflect their close-knit relationships, some of which are life-long.

After all, the two Chans are actually family. Chan Weishing, 41, is the uncle of Chan Yoong Han, 33, and both belong to a respected local clan of conductors and musicians.

The younger Chan recalls seeing the violinist Lim, 42, a former teen prodigy, perform on television when he was young, and his father was the violin teacher of Foo, 41.

The two Chans and Foo are also alumni of Maris Stella High School.

The four string players, all Singapore Symphony Orchestra musicians, first played as a quintet with Lim when the pianist was invited to play in an SSO chamber music series in January.

Lim, 27, says: "It was an honour for me to play with such established musicians. And we had so much fun that we have decided to do more."

Adds the elder Chan: "We have a history of playing together, and what we all have in common is a love for chamber music."

The as-yet-unnamed quintet will play Elgar's Piano Quintet In A Minor and Franck's Piano Quintet In F Minor at the Esplanade Recital Studio tomorrow.

It is the first of a planned series of five concerts, spaced five months apart, though the musicians say they might end up doing more concerts as they have managed to discover some piano quintet pieces previously unknown to them.

The younger Chan says: "There are about six to seven commonly played pieces, but Lim Yan found out that there are close to 20 or 30 written. Now that we have found them, we can give the genre more exposure."

They also intend to commission and perform works by local composers like Kelly Tang and Joyce Koh.

Adds Chan: "The piano quintet is like the grand dame of the chamber genre. It is symphonic in nature – you can do a lot with a string quartet combined with piano."

Regular concert-goers will also find it a treat to hear Chan on the viola, as he is better known as a violinist.

He says that while the violin is his main instrument, playing the viola is his hobby: "I'm a closet violist. For me, it is not as stressful as playing violin."

Quips Foo, to roars of laughter all around: "You should have told me that earlier."

➤ Take Five is on at the Esplanade Recital Studio tomorrow at 7.30pm. Tickets at \$23 are available from Sistic ([www.sistic.com.sg](http://www.sistic.com.sg), tel: 6348-5555).