

E-CONCERT PROGRAMME

Malaysian
Philharmonic
Orchestra



A Tribute to
ALFONSO SOLIANO

2026 SEASON

PERFORMANCE AT
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS



MALAYSIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO) gave its inaugural performance at Dewan Filharmonik PETRONAS (DFP) on 17 August 1998 and has since provided the ultimate concert experience through music that entertains, educates and inspires.

Today, the MPO is made up of talented musicians from Malaysia and other nations, a beautiful example of harmony among different cultures and nationalities.

With immaculate versatility that transcends genres, the MPO continues to present classical masterpieces, film music, pop, jazz, traditional and contemporary works including anime music.

The MPO's artistry and vitality have been lauded by acclaimed international luminaries such as Lorin Maazel, Sir Neville Marriner, Joshua Bell, Harry Connick Jr., José Carreras, Andrea Bocelli, Kiri Te Kanawa, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Chris Botti and Branford Marsalis. Renowned local artists who

have performed with the MPO include S.M. Salim, Sheila Majid, M Nasir, Siti Nurhaliza, Jamal Abdillah, Ella, Dayang Nurfaizah and Aishah.

Affirming its stature in the Asian region, the MPO has performed in Singapore, Japan, Korea, Australia, China, Taiwan and Vietnam besides national tours around Malaysia. The MPO has also released 21 CDs.

Through its talent development programme, the MPO is dedicated in nurturing an appreciation among the young generation through its knowledge and skills transfer to the Malaysian Philharmonic Youth Orchestra. This initiative is supported by contributions from the public.

Beyond its concert schedule, the MPO expands its services to commercial purposes such as musician hire, tours, education and outreach programme and beneficial partnerships.

The MPO remains steadfast in its mission to share the depth and power of great music for all walks of life. Its main benefactor is PETRONAS and its patron is YABhg. Tun Dr. Siti Hasmah Haji Mohd Ali.

A Tribute to Alfonso Soliano

Wed 2 Sep 2026, 8:00pm

02 Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
04 Ahmad Muriz Che Rose, conductor
05 The Solianos

PROGRAMME

Negaraku *2 mins*

Arranger: Dato' Johari Salleh

Dawn to Darkness *6 mins*

Arranger: Luqman Aziz

Pacita Blues *7 mins*

Arranger: The Solianos

Mimpiku Semalam *7 mins*

Arranger: The Solianos

Malam *3 mins*

Arranger: Azhad Sulaiman

Airmata Berderai *4 mins*

Arranger: Jenny Chin

Rindulah Rindu *3 mins*

Arranger: Gerard Salonga

Medley: Medina / Terkenang / Kenangan Abadi *8 mins*

Arranger: Gerard Salonga

20-mins intermission

Prelude to Canggung – A Homage to Alfonso Soliano *8 mins*

Arranger: Dato' Johari Salleh

Ku Kan Kembali *7 mins*

Arranger: The Solianos

Blues For Bangkok *7 mins*

Arranger: The Solianos

Tunas Kasih *4 mins*

Arranger: Ahmad Muriz

Kasih Sayang *3 mins*

Arranger: Dato' Johari Salleh

Ku Puja Alam *3 mins*

Arranger: Luqman Aziz

Renungan Malam *3 mins*

Arranger: Leonard Yeap

Medley: Manjaku / Kesal / Surya Pagi *7 mins*

Arranger: Luqman Aziz

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conductor

Ahmad Muriz Che Rose

Hailing from Penang, Ahmad Muriz Che Rose excelled in music since his school days in Penang Free School where he performed with the school's military band and Penang Combined School Symphonic Band. He completed his compositional studies at The Boston Conservatory, obtained his Bachelor's Degree in Music from Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) and Berklee College of Music, majoring in Film Scoring. His professional music career and exposure started in 1992 with the PETRONAS Performing Arts Group with performances ranging from corporate dinner shows to musical & dance dramas. On the international front, he has performed in various festivals in Indonesia, Singapore, France, Barcelona, Amsterdam, Japan and the USA. In 1993, he led a local jazz fusion group Tamingsari at the KL International Jazz Festival. In 1994, Muriz performed alongside Shirley Bassey as part of her Asian Tour.

Notable accomplishments include appointment as Associate Music Director for Saidah Rastam's *M! The Opera*, the first production of Malaysian opera, staged at Istana Budaya. Muriz has conducted and arranged orchestral works for the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO) ever since 2003 and collaborated with prominent Malaysian artists which includes Dato' Jamal Abdillah, Dato' M. Nasir, Dato' Sheila Majid, Aishah, Datuk Zainal Abidin, Ella, Rachel Guerzo, Dayang Nurfaizah, Dato' Sri Siti Nurhaliza, Elvira Arul, Jaclyn Victor and Aubrey Suwito.



A collaboration between KRU Studios and the MPO saw the epitome of Muriz's compositional career as he and Vivian Chua was given the privilege to arrange the music score for the epic movie *Hikayat Merong Mahawangsa* in 2011. In 2014 and 2015, he was Music Director for the memorable *Malam Terang Bulan* showcases at DFP, a narrative musical theatre about the history behind the National Anthem – *Negaraku*. In February 2020, a unique collaboration with fashion designer Dato' Rizalman Ibrahim saw a large scale performance offering tribute to Malaysian heritage in both fashion and old Malay 'classic' repertoire, entitled *Kesuma Jiwa*.

Later that year, he spearheaded a collaboration of three orchestras namely Orkestra RTM, Orkestra Simfoni Kebangsaan and the MPO to produce the official song for the nation's 2020 Independence Day celebration, entitled *Malaysia Prihatin*. In 2021, he was commissioned by Cendana to be the Music Director for Sensorii of Inversion/Immersion 2021 – a digital media showcase in collaboration with four digital media artists which mesmerised audiences in a 360-degree art immersive experience.



The Solianos

The Solianos is one of Malaysia's most distinguished family jazz ensembles, celebrated for its exceptional musicianship, artistic versatility and enduring contribution to the nation's music landscape. Representing multiple generations of the renowned Soliano family, the group has become synonymous with music excellence, seamlessly blending jazz with influences of Latin, pop, funk and contemporary music to create performances that are both sophisticated and engaging.

The family's remarkable musical legacy was established by the late Alfonso Soliano, an acclaimed pianist, composer, arranger, educator and mentor whose influence helped shape the development of jazz and contemporary music in Malaysia. His lifelong dedication to musical excellence continues to inspire generations of musicians and remains the cornerstone of The Solianos' artistic identity.

The current ensemble's core line-up features Tristano Soliano on piano and vocals, Isabella Soliano (vocals), Condrado Soliano (trumpet/flugelhorn) and Don Soliano Guerzo (bass). Together, they bring a wealth of individual artistry and collective experience to the stage, delivering performances that reflect both technical brilliance and a deep sense of musical connection.

Over the years, The Solianos has appeared at prestigious concerts, festivals, corporate events, and collaborative productions, captivating audiences with its refined musicianship and vibrant stage presence. Its repertoire spans timeless jazz standards, original compositions and imaginative interpretations of contemporary classics, showcasing the ensemble's versatility while remaining rooted in the rich traditions of jazz.

As custodians of the family's musical heritage, The Solianos continue to honour the legacy of Soliano while forging its own artistic path. Through passion, innovation and commitment to excellence, the ensemble remains dedicated to sharing the spirit of jazz with audiences across generations, further cementing their place among Malaysia's most respected musical families.

In 2014, the Malaysian Book Of Records inducted The Solianos as The Longest Performing Group (Family).



Alfonso Soliano
25 February 1925 - 16 June 1990



Biography

Alfonso Soliano was a musician, songwriter, composer, educator, mentor and orchestral conductor who pioneered the advancement of Malaysia's music industry. He was born on 25 February 1925 in Singapore. At seven, he began working as a professional pianist for the Grand Jubilee Bangsawan troupe. During the 1930s, he grew up across Malaya where his entire family was involved in the bangsawan theatre.

By 1940s, as the popularity of bangsawan began to decline, Alfonso turned his attention to jazz. In his early twenties, he performed at the Selangor Club, Griffin Inn and The Harlequin Club. At 23, he introduced the bebop rhythm which was considered ahead of its time. From 1949, he gained a wider exposure through 'live' broadcasts on Radio Malaya (now Radio Televisyen Malaysia, RTM) with the Orkes Tiga Serangkai trio.

In 1951, he joined Radio Malaya as a full-time musician and was tasked in establishing the country's first orchestra, Orkes Radio Malaya. He trained musicians to form a full-fledged orchestra which include saxophonists Tan Sri Dato' Sri Ahmad Nawab and Taib Osman, trumpeter Dato' Johari Salleh and violinist Hamid Kassim. In 1960, he was officially appointed as the head of Orkes Radio Malaya.



He also composed and recorded hundreds of songs for radio and television, blending traditional Malay rhythms with swing, chacha, rumba and bossanova. He also played an instrumental role in shaping the careers of Tan Sri SM Salim and Zain Azman (who hailed Alfonso as the 'Father of Modern Malay Music').

Alfonso also transformed the landscape of traditional asli music by arranging it in symphonic form. Asli music was heard symphonically for the first time in a landmark concert, *Malam Irama Melayu* in 1959.

Nonetheless, his modern approach to traditional Malay music for contemporary audiences attracted criticisms; the newspapers described his compositions as overly Westernised. In 1965, he resigned from his position and moved to Bangkok, Thailand. There, he led a band at the American Officers Club, accompanying performers such as Sarah Vaughan, Pat Boone and Billy Daniels. He was also invited to perform at the Ruhr Jazz Valley Festival in Germany. In 1971, his contributions were recognised by the Thai Music Association through awards bestowed by the King of Thailand. At the request of the late Tun Muhammad Ghazali Shafie, Alfonso returned to Malaysia in 1973 and resumed his career at RTM as a composer and senior musician.



In 1966, he was awarded the Ahli Mangku Negara (A.M.N.) by the Malaysian government. In 1979, he produced *Lela Manja* (under EMI), a monumental album of traditional Malay songs that elevated the country's cultural arts featuring Biduanita Negara, Datuk Sharifah Aini and renowned violinist Hamzah Dolmat. For this album, Alfonso received the Best Song Arranger award from Seniman (Artists Association of Malaysia).

Alfonso retired from RTM in 1980 but was later offered a role as an advisor by Ahmad Dasilah, RTM Music Director, in 1985. He passed away from a stroke on 16 June 1990 at 65.



PROGRAMME NOTES

Introduction

A concert typically celebrates a composer or a performer. But this evening's presentation honours something larger – a legacy that has helped shaped the sound of a nation.

A Tribute to Alfonso Soliano is the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO)'s homage to one of Malaysia's most pivotal music pioneers and a showcase of the country's rich musical heritage. It also reflects how the MPO has grown over the years in terms of identity and nation-building. While the MPO remains rooted in classical tradition, it has steadily championed local sounds and national legacy.

From the music of the Tan Sri P. Ramlee and Datuk Sharifah Aini to the modern sounds of Belle Sisoski and Alena Murang, the MPO's wider repertoire epitomises the preservation of classical excellence while also advocating the music that belongs to its people.

And that sense of identity is what Alfonso Soliano – affectionately known as Nonong – is also known for. For conductor Ahmad Muriz Che Rose, this concert is timely and fitting. "Alfonso gave Malay songs symphonic arrangements for the first time. This concert honours what he started and the lasting footprint he left behind," he said.



In the late 1950s, Alfonso founded the Orkes Radio Malaya (which later became the RTM Orchestra) and almost single-handedly established the standards for professional orchestral and studio music at a time when musicians were not formally taught.

For Muriz, Alfonso, who attained his pedigree musicianship from his musician parents, is “a genius”. “By age seven, he was playing music for the bangsawan troupe. He went on to do film scoring, was a pianist and a composer. And he has always loved and promoted Malay music,” he said.

For modern Malay music, almost all roads lead back to Alfonso. “From the very beginning, he was the one who established the country’s first orchestra, who taught non-reading musicians and coached independent musicians from all over the country to come together in an orchestra,” Muriz said.

Throughout his life, Alfonso arranged, composed and performed music that drew from different cultures without losing its local identity. Later on, musicians who shaped Malaysia’s music industry learned from him or were influenced by the standards he set as a bandleader and educator.

Former RTM Music Director Dato’ Dr. Johari Salleh remembered Alfonso as a highly-talented and kind man who was generous with his knowledge. “I am thankful to him; if it was not for him, I won’t be who I am now,” said the esteemed composer whose career spanned over five decades.

“I was 22 when I started working with him at Orkes Radio Malaya. He had the foresight to discover people’s talents. He is a brilliant pianist; when he played the piano, his fingers flowed like water across the keys ... so pleasant and fluent!” Johari said.

“He may not be Malay but he spoke like one. His soul was also entrenched in Malay music and this connection drove him to elevate the standard of Malay songs, enriching the country’s music heritage.”

“Alfonso’s legacy lives on through his children and grandchildren, who are continuously performing and have embraced the responsibility of preserving his legacy,” Johari added.

Alfonso’s seventh child, Isabella Soliano said music has always been part of the family and in many ways, he has set his children up for a life in music. “At home, there were so many music instruments, from bass, guitar to clarinet - it was like a music store! Every Monday, there was a gathering of musicians who came to practise. The house was always filled with music. I suppose that was why all of us gravitated towards it,” she said.



Alfonso married bangsawan performer Pacita Tirona and the couple had 10 children. "My father was very smart. He gave one child one instrument to play so we have a complete the band in the house!" she added.

Isabella used the word "nurture" instead of "teach" to describe her father's teaching style. "He showed us the correct ways to play for a group. He always said that 'there's room for improvement' and his choice of words were very important in cultivating that interest, not merely 'pushing' us," she said.

Isabella said when she was young, famous artistes came to her house to meet her father. "I didn't quite understand why. But now that we are older, we appreciate his upbringing, dedication and ultimately, his rich legacy," Isabella said.

Alfonso's grandson, Don Guerzo said, as a child, he never realised the stature of his grandfather. "More than music, he taught me what we needed to know about life, such as the importance of hard work and being kind."

"His sharpness in music is second to none. I remember when someone hit a wrong note on the piano, I heard my grandfather's voice calling it out from the upper floor. He wasn't even near the piano!" he quipped.

Concert Notes

For the arrangers in this concert, their works are rooted in the initial steps taken by Alfonso. "What we're doing now is the continuation of what he started which makes this concert a rare, music spectacle," Muriz said.

The concert starts with *Dawn To Darkness* (arranged by Luqman Aziz), a composition that serves as an instrumental benchmark of Alfonso's work. It is one of the songs played in the 1961 edition of *Malam Irama Melayu* concert in Kuala Lumpur. Muzik Nusantara YouTube channel describes it as Alfonso's depiction of a typical Malayan scene that began with the dawn call to prayer, followed by the hustle and bustle of the day, the panorama of beautiful twilight before ending with evening dances.

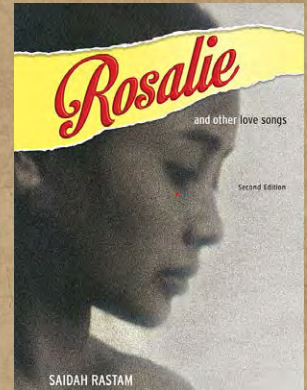
Pacita Blues (arranged by The Solianos), is a deeply personal jazz piece named after Alfonso's beloved wife. Isabella said, her mother was her father's righthand person in music. "She was the one behind him and knew what he wanted (out of us). I think her background in bangsawan attributed to that music acumen."



Mimpiku Semalam (arranged by The Solianos) appeared in the RTM vinyl album called *Jazz Dari Angkasapuri*, produced in 1974. The song is in bossa nova style, blending the rhythmic feel of traditional samba with jazz-inspired harmonies.

Malam (arranged by Azhad Sulaiman) was originally recorded by Asiah Tuah. A hauntingly beautiful composition, local singer-songwriter Bihzhu also covered it in *Alfonso 25*, a tribute compilation album released in 2015 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of his passing.

Airmata Berderai (arranged by Jenny Chin) was first performed by singer Zain Azman, who was Alfonso's frequent collaborator and lifelong friend. In the book *Rosalie: And Other Love Songs* written by Saidah Rastam, Zain described him as the Father of Modern Malay Music. "While the country was still into keroncong and lagu asli, Alfonso brought in the big band and orchestrated traditional numbers into modern Malay songs and projected them to the world."



Rindulah Rindu (arranged by Gerard Salonga) is considered a masterpiece for its use of beautiful Malay phrasing, with highly poetic, classical lyrics written by Zainal Abu. Alfonso's granddaughter and jazz musician Rachel Guerzo covered the song in the *Alfonso 25* album. According to Gerard, "It is a complex interpersonal relationship behind a simple musical framework and I try to express this in the orchestration as well: transparency with a drop of complexity and some 'hanging' progressions to help amplify the feelings of hope and hopelessness that are typical of unrequited love."

Medina / Terkenang / Kenangan Abadi (arranged by Gerard Salonga) is a sentimental medley that is deeply nostalgic with contemplative and emotional undertones. Isabella said *Medina* was written for her younger sister. To Gerard, these are practically jazz standards. "We have a hot band on stage so let's just let them stretch their legs. Swing, rhythm, drive and lots of energy!"



Prelude to Canggung – A Homage to Alfonso Soliano is Dato' Johari Salleh's tribute to Alfonso. More than a celebration of a personal mentor, it reflects Alfonso's lifelong vision of elevating Malay music through innovation, artistry and cross-cultural dialogue. Inspired by the idea of 'East meets West', a concept deeply championed by Alfonso, Johari reimagines the traditional Malay musical gestures and rhythmic characteristics within a broader orchestral framework, allowing both musical languages to converse as equals. The title references *canggung*, a traditional musical and dance form, serving as a symbolic bridge between heritage and contemporary expression.



Ku Kan Kembali (arranged by The Solianos) appears on the officially licensed reissue of *Tiga Trombone* vinyl of 11 songs composed by Alfonso originally released only in a run of a few dozen copies for radio broadcast.

Blues For Bangkok (arranged by The Solianos) is one of his compositions while he was living in the Thailand capital. It was written in 1967 during his jam sessions at the Cat's Eye Bar in President Hotel. According to Isabella, the original handwritten score, notated on weathered Orkes Radio Malaya manuscript paper, was preserved by the family and was commemorated during regional jazz and blues events.

Tunas Kasih (arranged by Ahmad Muriz) is regarded as one of Alfonso's emotional melodic ballads with a blend of latin jazz influences, traditional Malay music style with lush chord progressions, which is highly advanced for its era. Sung by Datuk Paduka Julie Sudiro and Kartina Dahari, it was re-recorded for the *Alfonso 25* album by Ronnie Hussain and Wan Gigi.

Kasih Sayang (arranged by Dato' Johari Salleh) is a jazz love song that has seen multiple arrangements from the days of Zain Azman in the 1970s to the smooth sounds of The Guerzos, a group comprising Alfonso's grandchildren; siblings Rachel, Don, Dado and Daniel, children of Francisca Soliano and Salvador Guerzo.

A melodious song depicting nature's beauty, *Ku Puja Alam* (arranged by Luqman Aziz) was a hit in its time. Singers of this song include Kartina Dahari and Peggy Tan, and was often performed by contestants of a singing contest programme, *Bintang Radio Malaya* (later *Bintang RTM*).

Renungan Malam (arranged by Leonard Yeap) also appears in *Alfonso 25*. Rachel singled out her brother Daniel's performance in her producer's note, describing it as "heartfelt", befitting the project as proof of Alfonso's timeless music.

The *Manjaku / Kesal / Surya Pagi* medley (arranged by Luqman Aziz) wraps up the concert on a light and upbeat note, an apt celebratory closure to a musical journey of an icon.

Today, the MPO honours the country's own melodies as they return to the DFP concert stage, reminding Malaysians that a nation's musical heritage is something that continues to grow richer every time it is heard, shared and passed on.

The Solianos

Isabella Soliano, vocals
 Tristano Soliano, piano & vocals
 Condrado Soliano, trumpet & flugelhorn
 Don Alfonso Soliano, bass
 Eddie Kismilardy, alto saxophone
 Arthur Kam, drums

**Moments during the media interview
at Dewan Filharmonik PETRONAS on 5 August 2026.**



MALAYSIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA



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Alto 2
*Farid Izwan Muhibbuddin

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Tenor 2
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VOCALS

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MAURICE STEGER'S

Nature Concerti

**12
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2026
SAT 8:00PM**

PERFORMANCE AT
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
Maurice Steger, conductor & recorder

- | | |
|----------|--|
| TELEMANN | Sinfonia TWV 50:1 in G major
"Cricket Symphony" |
| TELEMANN | Violin Concerto TWV 51:A4 "The Frogs" |
| VIVALDI | Concerto for Flute Op.10 No.2
RV439 "La notte" |
| VIVALDI | Concerto for Flute Op.10 No.3
RV428 "Il Gardellino" |
| SCHACHER | Fairy Tale Pictures for Recorder and
Symphonic Orchestra |
| VAN EYCK | Flute's Pleasure Garden: Engels
Nightingale for Recorder Solo |
| VIVALDI | Concerto for Diverse Instruments in
C major, RV 558 |

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Vivaldi's Ring of Mystery

**19
SEP
2026
SAT 2:30PM**

PERFORMANCE AT
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
Gerard Salonga, conductor
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Calling all parents and children! An exciting concert awaits you at DFP.

Based on the highly acclaimed Classical Kids' recording of Vivaldi's Ring of Mystery, this theatrical symphonic concert is an imaginative way to introduce young audiences and families to the life and music of composer Antonio Lucio Vivaldi. The programme includes familiar music such as The Four Seasons, Violin Concerto in A minor and the Guitar Concerto.

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MALAYSIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA (19901107700)

Malaysian
Philharmonic
Orchestra



THREE By *Three*

Beethoven's Triple Concerto

**3
OCT
2026
SAT 8:00PM**

PERFORMANCE AT
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
Michał Nesterowicz, conductor
Low Zi Yang, violin
Benett Tsai, cello
Tony Yike Yang, piano

ARNOLD

The Roots of Heaven

BEETHOVEN

Overture

VAUGHAN-WILLIAMS

Triples Concerto
Symphony No. 5

Normal:

RM249 RM299

RM349 RM399

Suite:

RM449/Seat*

RM499/Seat*

**inclusive of light refreshments*

Classical

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MALAYSIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA (199801007000)

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THE MUSIC OF QUEEN LIVES ON!

**10
OCT
2026
SAT 8:00PM**

PERFORMANCE AT
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
Brent Havens, conductor
Windborne Music

Bridging the gulf between rock n' roll and classical music, the MPO, led by Brent Haven, presents Windborne's The Music Of Queen, a programme scored to extend the listening experience of Queen's exceptional tunes. Amplified with a full rock band and a vocalist, this concert captures Queen's distinct sound while presenting some familiar and new musical colours.

Normal:
RM399 RM449
RM499 RM549

Suite:
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RM649/Seat*

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Pops



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MALAYSIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA (199801007900)

Malaysian
Philharmonic
Orchestra



Jaclyn Victor

Gemilang

BERSAMA MPO

17
OCT
2026
SAT 8:00PM

PERFORMANCE AT
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
Ahmad Muriz Che Rose, conductor
Jaclyn Victor, vocals

The MPO continues to spotlight outstanding, homegrown music stars and this time, Malaysian Idol champion Jaclyn Victor takes to the stage. Expect fresh arrangements and emotional depth in a soul-stirring evening that blends orchestral refinement with contemporary Malaysian music. Helmed by Ahmad Muriz Che Rose, Jaclyn's voice, lifted to new heights by the MPO, promises a rich, moving experience that will resonate with everyone in an evening celebrating her musical journey of two decades.

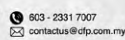
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RM349 RM399

Suite:
RM449/Seat*
RM499/Seat*

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Locals

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WE ACCEPT



HOME ALONE

IN CONCERT

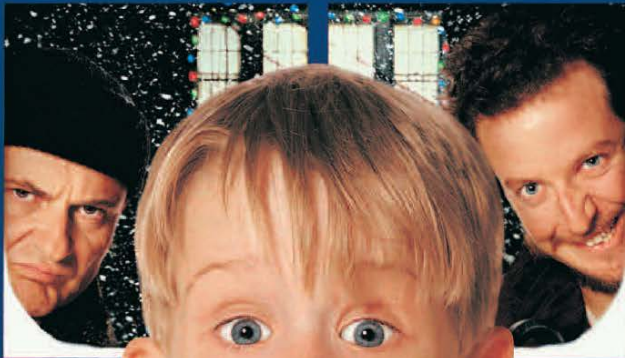
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Gerard Salonga, conductor

12 December 2026

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