

E – CONCERT PROGRAMME

Malaysian
Philharmonic
Orchestra



FAMILY FUN DAY

Vivaldi's Ring of Mystery

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.

Vivaldi's Ring Of Mystery

Sat 19 Sep 2026, 2:30pm

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
Gerard Salonga, conductor
Classical Kids Live!, presenter



Featuring
CHRIS PETSHCLER as Antonio Vivaldi /Giovanni
&
NICOLE HREN as Katarina

Director & Producer
PAUL PEMENT

Series Creator
SUSAN HAMMOND

Playwright & Music Editor
DOUGLAS COWLING

Dramaturge & Timing by
PAUL PEMENT

Classical Kids is partially supported
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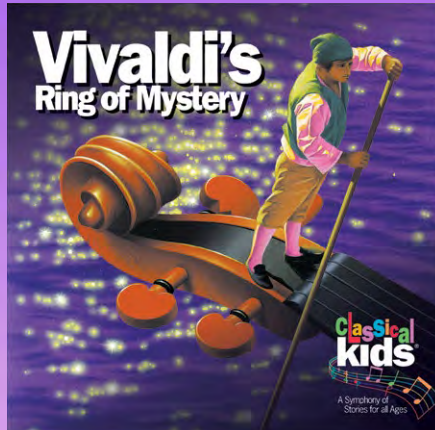


John R. Halligan
Charitable Fund

The theatrical concert version of Vivaldi's Ring of Mystery is an adaptation of the best-selling and award-winning Classical Kids recording. Vivaldi's Ring of Mystery, produced by Susan Hammond. Classical Kids® is a trademark licensed exclusively to Pement Enterprises and produced by Classical Kids Music Education, NFP.

Classical Kids CDs/Merchandise Available at www.ClassicalKidsLive.com
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MUSICAL EXCERPTS

Concerto for Two Trumpets, D Major

String Concerto, RV 121

Spring, The Four Seasons

Piccolo Concerto

Autumn, I The Four Seasons

Guitar Sonata in F Major

Flute theme from Il Gardellino

Piccolo theme from Concerto

Concerto in A minor, I

Winter, II The Four Seasons

Guitar Concerto, III

Il Gardellino flute solo

Trumpet Concerto I

Katarina's Song: Batti, Batti

Sonata for Two Violins, II

Composition Concerto

Concerto in A minor, II

La Notte, I

Summer, The Four Seasons

Il Gardellino

Caldara singers, guitar

Violin Sonata in F major

Piccolo Concert

Trumpet Concerto, III

Double Orchestra Concerto, II

Alla Rustica

The concert will last approximately 60 minutes without an intermission.



conductor

Gerard Salonga

Gerard Salonga is Resident Conductor of the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO), a position held since 2019. He served as Assistant Conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic (2016 to 2018) where he was selected by Jaap van Zweden from 170 international applicants. He was Music Director of the ABS-CBN Philharmonic Orchestra in Manila (2012 to 2020). In 2021, he began his term as the Music Director of the Orchestra of the Filipino Youth (OFY).

He has assisted and covered distinguished conductors such as Jun Märkl, Hans Graf, Yu Long, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Mark Wigglesworth, Junichi Hirokami and Leonard Slatkin, and has conducted the Philippine, South Denmark and Thailand Philharmonics, Shanghai Opera House Orchestra and Chorus, Kunming Nie-Er Symphony, Evergreen Symphony of Taiwan, Queensland Camerata, Orchestra Victoria, Sydney Symphony Orchestra and the Bangkok and Singapore Symphonies. He has conducted in iconic venues such as the Sydney Opera House and Royal Albert Hall.

Gerard conducts a wide range of repertoire covering symphony, ballet, opera, pops and family programme, and the *Harry Potter*, *La La Land*, *Marvel's Infinity Saga*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Star Wars* and *Ratatouille* films in concert series in Asia Pacific and Australia. His orchestral arrangements have been performed by the Boston, Cincinnati and New York Pops, the BBC, the Winnipeg, Indianapolis Malmö, Guangzhou, Sydney and Singapore Symphonies, Royal Philharmonic, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, RTÉ Concert Orchestra, Sinfonietta Riga and Vietnam National Symphony.

Gerard has collaborated with artists such as Lea Salonga, Lang Lang, Sumi Jo, Wang Leehom, Joseph Nolan, Cecile Licad, Tengku Irfan, Paul Archibald, Hacken Lee, Anthony Lun, Elisa Chan, Michael Ball, Blake, Il Divo, Danielle de Niese, TaikOz, Ksenija Sidorova, Shen Yang, Llŷr Williams, James Ehnes, Jan Lisiecki, Charles Yang, Peter Dugan and The Beach Boys.

In 2012, he was honoured as one of The Outstanding Young Men (TOYM), the Philippines' highest civilian award to achievers under 40. In 2021, he was named one of the recipients of the SUDI National Music Awards by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

In 2026, he conducted performances in Shanghai, Singapore, Bangkok and Manila. He made a return visit to the Hong Kong Philharmonic and made his debut with the Melbourne Symphony. He was Artistic Advisor and conductor for the ASEAN Youth Orchestra Festival Kuala Lumpur in June with a landmark performance of Mahler's Symphony No.1 with 85 musicians from seven countries.



PLOT SYNOPSIS

"All silent now, the magic spell is told, All silent now, our mystery tale unfolds..."

Vivaldi, Venice, and violins: all three are celebrated in *Vivaldi's Ring of Mystery*. A gifted young orphan named Katarina is sent to study music at the great Pieta orphanage in seventeenth century Venice. There, she comes under the tutelage of the famous music director and composer Antonio Vivaldi and searches through the thrilling but mysterious atmosphere of Carnival and the Island of the Dead for clues to her past and a vanishing Stradivarius violin. A touching final scene unites Katarina with her Grandfather and together they take Vivaldi's music, its spirit and soul, out into the world.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Based on the highly acclaimed and award-winning Classical Kids recording *Vivaldi's Ring of Mystery*, this theatrical symphony concert is an imaginative way to introduce young audiences and their families to the life and music of Antonio Lucio Vivaldi in a live performance venue. Audiences will enjoy recognizable themes including the Four Seasons, the Violin Concerto in A minor, and the Guitar Concerto.

Classical Kids LIVE! is produced by Classical Kids Music Education, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to furthering classical music education. In combination with the Classical Kids Teaching Edition, Classical Kid LIVE! serves as one of the worlds best educational outreach and community engagement programs contributing to the long-term health of classical music. Having received more awards and honors than any entity of its kind, Classical Kids is proud to say, "We're making a difference!"

"Far And Away the Best for Introducing Children to Classical Music!"
- Boston Herald

"Art Made Accessible: Nobody Does it Better than Classical Kids!"
- Entertainment Weekly

"The Best Way to Unlock the Mind and Heart of a Child to the Wonders of Musical Masterpieces!"
- New York Daily News

Artists biographies

Paul Pement – Director & Producer



Paul serves as Executive & Artistic Director of Classical Kids Music Education, a non-profit arts organization focused on introducing children (and their parents) to the lives and musical masterpieces of the great classical composers. A BFA in theatre from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and professional experience as an actor, singer, dancer, director, choreographer and stage manager have enabled Paul to achieve success with Classical Kids LIVE! programming - the "gold-star" leader in the field for creating theatrical family concerts presented by professional symphony orchestras throughout North America and abroad. Production titles include *Beethoven Lives Upstairs*, *Mozart's Magnificent Voyage*, *Vivaldi's Ring of Mystery*, *Tchaikovsky Discovers America*, *Gershwin's Magic Key*, and the newest in the series, *Saint-Georges' Sword & Bow*.

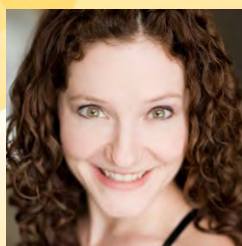
Chris Petschler – Antonio Vivaldi / Giovanni



Chris worked exclusively as a stage actor in Chicago for nearly fifteen years before moving to Los Angeles, where he now works and resides full time. Chris has played many leading roles on stage over his career, including Marc Antony in *Julius Caesar*, David in the world premiere of *Desperate Writers*, and John in *The Cocktail Hour*, among dozens of others. On camera, his work includes several independent short films, performing opposite Ed Helms in a sit-com called *A Credit to the Family*, and playing a small role in Christopher Nolan's blockbuster *The Dark Knight*. And, in addition to occasionally still working out of LA as an actor, Chris also continues to follow his newest passion, entertaining thousands each year as a host and emcee

at international trade shows, live events, and on camera.

Nicole Hren – Katarina



Nicole enjoys touring with Classical Kids in both *Tchaikovsky Discovers America* and *Vivaldi's Ring of Mystery*. Other credits include *Guys and Dolls*, *The Music Man*, *A Chorus Line*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Swing!* at the Marriot Theatre, *The Radio City Christmas Spectacular* in Atlanta, Orlando, and Nashville, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *Hairspray*, at the MUNY Theater in St. Louis, *Funny Girl*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Curtains*, *Sweet Charity*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Camelot*, *Superman*, and *Meet Me in St. Louis* at Drury Lane Theatre, *Joseph*, *A Chorus Line* at the Paramount Theatre in Aurora. Nicole performed for many years with Moraine Valley Theater for Young Audiences

as an artist in residence in the following productions: *The Little Mermaid*, *The Velveteen Rabbit*, *Babes in Toyland*, *Cinderella*, *The Odyssey*, and *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Nicole is the choreographer of *A Christmas Carol* at Drury Lane Theatre, and a proud member of Actors' Equity.

Susan Hammond – Series Creator



Susan has created a whole new generation of classical music fans through her innovative and award-winning Classical Kids recordings. She is the executive producer of a 16-title series of children's classical music recordings known collectively as Classical Kids, selling to date nearly 5 million CDs, DVDs and books worldwide, and earning over 100 prestigious awards and honors. Each story entails its own adventure featuring a unique combination of music, history, and theatricality to engage the imaginations of children. Susan holds the philosophy that, "Where the heart goes, the mind will follow." An accomplished concert pianist and music teacher, Hammond searched for recordings about classical music to share with her young

daughters. One day, she sat reading to her girls with a classical music radio station on in the background and noticed how they responded to the literature in a different way when enhanced by music. The rest, as they say, is history. Susan is the recipient of Billboard Magazine's International Achievement Award and is a member of the Order of Canada for her contribution to the arts.

Douglas Cowling - Playwright / Music Editor



Douglas was a writer, musician, and educator with a lifelong interest in bringing classical music to wider audiences. He was the writer of five Classical Kids audio productions: Mozart's Magic Fantasy, Tchaikovsky Discovers America, Vivaldi's Ring of Mystery, Hallelujah Handel! and Mozart's Magnificent Voyage. He was also associate producer on Daydreams and Lullabies and serves as the principle writer/music editor for the Classical Kids Live! theatrical symphony concert series.

Classical Kids Music Education, NFP

Classical Kids Music Education, NFP was formed for charitable and educational purposes to build pathways for progression in music so that all young people, whatever their background or abilities, have access to the rich and diverse range of influence classical music offers. Reduced funding to the arts has diminished the ability of many symphony orchestras to provide high-quality educational and family programs like the one you are seeing today. It is imperative that more organizations can reach students and families through excellent music education programs in a time when affordable and worthy programming is lacking. Classical Kids Music Education, NFP was created to "bridge the gap" by securing funding for high-caliber projects and, together with individual donor support, help to bring music education into the 21st century by creating more opportunities for young people to be exposed to their interest and develop their talents to the fullest. Please visit www.ckme.org to learn more about how you can help.

Introduction

An appreciation of music rarely begins with a music lesson. It starts with an experience: like hearing an orchestra for the first time, recognising the sounds of musical instruments and discovering a piece of music that resonates with you.

This is why the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra's (MPO) consistency in bringing children and families together means more than just presenting a family-friendly concert. Its efforts help introduce a new generation to the language of music and hopefully, inculcate a lifelong love for it.

Since its inception in 1998, the MPO's family-themed concerts have always been a popular choice for its patrons. Recent concerts such as *Beethoven Lives Upstairs* (2023), *Mission Earth* (2024), *Fables And Fugues* (2025) and *The Incredible Voyage of Alasdair Malloy* (last May) is a testimony that the MPO has continuously made classical music accessible not just to younger audiences but parents, teachers and educators.

Research has consistently shown that childhood arts participation is linked to better social-emotional and academic outcomes. In fact, UNESCO describes culture and arts education as important to holistic learning, creativity and critical thinking.

For many children, Italian composer and violinist Antonio Vivaldi (1678 - 1741) opens that initial curiosity about music. Conductor Gerard Salonga was one of them, saying he has been listening to Vivaldi for as long as he could remember. "My dad loved to listen to classical music and one of my earliest memories was listening to Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* while sitting on his lap."



For young listeners, Vivaldi's music remains timeless and relatable. "It seems simple and easy to grasp but it's not; there's a lot of complexity but it doesn't feel too complex on the surface," he explained.

"I also believe its presence in advertisements and movies has taken the fear away from approaching his music. From *Little Einstein* to *Looney Tunes*, Vivaldi's music has penetrated the many facets of popular culture."

With more than 25 excerpts weaved into a story, Classical Kids LIVE!'s *Vivaldi's Ring of Mystery* is "one of the most completely wondrous examples of children's entertainment ever!" according to *Billboard* magazine.

From script cues that the conductor needs to well thought-out excerpts, Gerard praised the production team for their fantastic execution. "They have nailed down storytelling with music to keep the audience engaged, while providing context and imagery to otherwise abstract tunes."

Gerard said if a child is watching a classical concert for the first time, parents should just encourage them to savour it. "Music is meant to be enjoyed. There is no need to overthink or analyse. Enjoy it for what it does to you as a listener; there is never a wrong interpretation."

He added that music often tells a story, even the ones that the composer did not intend. "I hope young audiences can understand that whatever story the music tells to them, their interpretation is right."

The music moves through a miniature landscape of Vivaldi's music. From the protagonist's arrival to the adventure and resolution of the plot, the sounds provide an audible backdrop that paints scenery and gives emotions to the characters.

For Gerard, a concert's "dramatisation" isn't confined to a children's performance. "I personally like attaching dramatic arcs to music. Musicians use context and imagery to help solidify a point of view and shape musical intentions."

Concert Notes

As one of Vivaldi's most well-known compositions, *The Four Seasons* contains music many children may already have encountered in their life. However, hearing "Spring", "Autumn", "Winter" and "Summer" in this production as parts of a larger story can transform those musical fragments into something meaningful and memorable.



“Spring” provides a cheerful start as the character Katarina arrives in Venice in Spring and is brought to Vivaldi’s orphanage, the Pietà. This popular, sprightly composition establishes the lively atmosphere before the Carnival, with the sounds of chirping of birds and flowing streams. This helps children (who may not know what a Baroque concerto is) understand the vivid sense of the natural world. Together with *Piccolo Concerto*, noted for its sweet tone and fluidity, they establish the colourful and animated mood of Venice.



As the young violinist reaches Pietà, a girls’ orchestra who’s preparing for a performance, is playing “Autumn”. Signifying a celebration of a successful harvest, this composition matches Katarina’s joy as she joins the group. Their instructor, Vivaldi, asks Katarina to play *Violin Concerto in A minor*. Gerard said almost every musician growing up has, at some point, encountered this composition. “In my case, it was to accompany violinist classmates for their exams and many free meals came as a result of that!”



Vivaldi goes on to tell them the Duke of Cremona’s story and the latter’s grief following the loss of his grandchild in a shipwreck. This heartbreaking backstory is weaved with the second movement of “Winter”, delivering a sense of sadness, echoing the Duke’s tragic tale. When everyone has left, Katarina picks up the Stradivarius violin which the Duke sent as a gift to the school, and finds a poem written in the case. *Guitar Concerto* accompanies this scene as she becomes enthralled with the instrument.



When Katarina and the gondola driver (or gondolier) character Giovanni take a trip through Venice, *Il Gardellino* flute solo provides emotions and movements to the scene. One of Vivaldi’s most famous flute concertos, it uses brilliant musical imagery; the bright singing of a goldfinch. From the sounds of an entire aviary against a solo bird to the interrelationship between them, this birdsong is a joyful and mesmerising accompaniment as these friends explore the city. Meanwhile, *Trumpet Concerto* and *Guitar Concerto* paint the Carnival’s ambience as celebration and joy sweep through Venice.



When Katarina goes back to the school after sending the damaged violin to the violin maker, Vivaldi gives an amusing introduction about opera to his students. Then, with *Sonata for Two Violins* playing in the background, Katarina surveys the orphanage at night and sees babies sleeping. She reflects on their – and her – fate; orphans who don't have parents to tuck them in at night. Possibly the saddest scene in this concert, the slow tempo creates a sense of yearning and melancholy.



As Katarina and Giovanni travel at night to the mysterious Island of the Dead, the atmosphere becomes increasingly ominous, eventually erupting into a storm. *La Notte* accompanies the curious characters on their dangerous adventure. The opening movement is infused with a sense of quietude and mystery as strings throb softly while the flute weaves gently. With its distant rolls of thunder, "Summer" punctuates the storm. Philadelphia radio channel WRTI says "Summer" has buzzing lines from the solo violin, that results in a "startling imitation of overhead lightning flashes." As Gerard said, "any time a musician gets to play 'Summer', it feels like rock 'n' roll!"

Later, Katarina has a pivotal conversation with Vivaldi, where more mystery and characters are revealed. The choir of the Caldara singers accompanies Vivaldi's story. As the girls prepare for the concert, *Piccolo Concerto* is played to reflect their excitement and *Trumpet Concerto* depicts the scenery when people throng to watch the show. Finally, when all the clues come together, *Double Orchestra Concerto* and *Alla Rustica* lead the audience toward a beautiful and satisfying finale, proving that music can

transform abstract notes into living landscapes to tell vivid, wonderful stories.



All photos from www.classicalkidslive.com

MALAYSIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Junichi Hirokami

RESIDENT CONDUCTOR

Gerard Salonga

FIRST VIOLIN

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Co-Concertmaster
Ming Goh
Principal
Zhenzhen Liang

Tan Ka Ming
Wong Lu Ee
Sherwin Thia

SECOND VIOLIN

Yunzhi Ling
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Ionut Mazareanu

*Miroslav Daniš
*Keng Xin Tian
*Lisa Chia Xiao Li

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Jebat Arjuna Kee Jia Liang

Ong Lin Kern
Thian Ai Wen
*Fan Ran
*Lau Yew Hann

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Csaba Kőrös
Co-Principal
Dylan Lee Mihn Tang
Assistant Principal
Elizabeth Tan Suyin

Goh Wen Chih
Wong Jun Yuan

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Section Principal
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Jun-Hee Chae
Lin Yi Rou
*Heinz-Peter Graf

FLUTE

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Yukako Emes
Sub-Principal
*Wong Xue Fen

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Niels Dittmann
Sub-Principal
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Matthew Larsen

BASS CLARINET

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Sub-Principal
Stephen Mak Wai Soon

CONTRABASSOON

Principal
Vladimir Stoyanov

HORN

Section Principal
Grzegorz Curyła
Assistant Principal
Sim Chee Ghee

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Section Principal
Jeffrey Missal
Assistant Principal
Matthew Dempsey

Sub-Principal
*Loi Chiang Kang

TUBA

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Tan Shun Zhong

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Sub-Principal
Yap Siu Yan
Ng Lip Sheng

HARP

Principal
Tan Keng Hong

PIANO

Principal
Akiko Daniš

GUITAR

*Ihzwani Omar

Note: Sectional string players are rotated within their sections. *Extra musician.

WHERE EVERY BEAT TELLS A STORY

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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

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RM249 RM299

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Suite:

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**inclusive of light refreshments*

Classical

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WE ACCEPT



MALAYSIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA (1199801007000)



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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**inclusive of light refreshments*

Pops

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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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WE ACCEPT



Malaysian
Philharmonic
Orchestra



A REGAL EVENING WITH STEPHEN HOUGH

**24
OCT
2026
SAT 8:00PM**

PERFORMANCE AT
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
Junichi Hirokami, conductor
Stephen Hough, piano

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 5, 'Emperor'
BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 4

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RM249 RM299
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Every performance begins with a shared belief in the power of music to inspire, unite and transform lives. By supporting the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, you become part of a community that nurtures artistic excellence, develops young talent and brings unforgettable musical experiences to audiences across Malaysia.

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