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THE MPO ANNOUNCES THE APPOINTMENT OF RENOWNED CONDUCTOR JUN MÄRKL AS THE NEW MUSIC DIRECTOR!

The Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO) is pleased to announce the appointment of Jun Märkl as its new Music Director. Maestro Märkl will commence his tenure from the beginning of the 2021 Season and his appointment will usher in a new era for the MPO.

A highly respected interpreter of Germanic symphonic and operatic repertoire, Märkl is renowned for his refined and idiomatic explorations of the French Impressionists. His long-standing relationships with the Vienna State Opera, the Bavarian State Opera Munich and the Semperoper Dresden led to his being offered the Music Director posts of the Orchestre National de Lyon, the MDR Symphony Orchestra Leipzig and the Basque National Orchestra.

He has an extensive discography of 50 CDs; among them are the complete Schumann symphonies with the NHK Symphony; Mendelssohn and Wagner with MDR; and Ravel, Messaien and a highly acclaimed Debussy set with the Orchestre National de Lyon. He is currently working on a cycle of works by Saint-Saëns, Richard Strauss and Hosokawa.

Prior to the appointment, Märkl made his debut with the MPO in 2018, returning as guest conductor in 2019 on two occasions and in March 2020 conducted MPO's *Beethoven: The Early Symphonies* concert. (shortly before the Movement Control Order (MCO) was announced). Through his new position, Maestro Märkl seeks to continue the MPO's mission in presenting the best classical music performances for the Malaysian audience and enriching the lives of the community through music.

Commenting on his appointment, Märkl said, "It is with great joy and excitement that I am accepting the honour to lead the MPO through the next years to come. I am delighted to begin the journey of a closer relationship with an organization I feel a close affinity to already - both warmly with the musicians of the orchestra and also with the extraordinary management team".

He added, "Even though these are difficult times and the shadow of a worldwide crisis can be particularly demanding for live music, I am excited that we are able to shape our future

performances to be much more flexible and creative in ways that allow us still to reach the public effectively. One important effort which we will achieve this will be through a much more extensive digital media presence that I am excited to be part of in the near term”.

With regards to the programme line-up for Season 2021, Märkl said, “Since very few of us can easily travel as we used to, we shall offer concert programmes that allow us all to travel musically to many countries, to explore their musical attractions and to allow us to stay connected with the world. In times of crisis, music can provide tremendous consolation and hope, and this, most importantly, is what we aim to give to our audiences and to the country and the world right now”.

Upon hearing Märkl appointment, the Resident Conductor of the MPO, Gerard Salonga said, “I’m thrilled that Maestro Märkl will be the new MPO Music Director, he is a first-rate musician and conductor. We at the MPO, Dewan Filharmonik PETRONAS (DFP), as well as our audience in and out of Malaysia, are fortunate that he is joining our musical family and will be guiding the artistic direction of our wonderful orchestra”.

On the appointment, the CEO of MPO and DFP, Mr Sareen Risham said, “On behalf of the musicians and the team, I am delighted to welcome Maestro Jun Märkl into the MPO family as the next Music Director. In him, I see someone of great calibre with the ability to build upon the legacy of all the great conductors whom we have worked with in the past, especially that of Conductor Laureate Kees Bakels, who was our founding Music Director. I look forward to the fruitful and rewarding years to come and seeing the growth of MPO to a new height under his leadership”.

As Music Director, Märkl will lead an organisation which includes the Malaysian Philharmonic Youth Orchestra (MPYO) and will work closely with the Management on artistic planning, programming and music education activities.

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