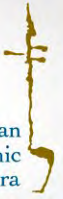


E – CONCERT PROGRAMME

Malaysian  
Philharmonic  
Orchestra



# THREE By *Three* Beethoven's Triple Concerto

**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.

# Three By Three:

## Beethoven's Triple Concerto

Sat 3 Oct 2026, 8:00pm

- 02 Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
- 04 Michał Nesterowicz, conductor
- 05 Low Zi Yang, violin
- 06 Bennett Tsai, cello
- 07 Tony Yike Yang, piano

### PROGRAMME

#### ARNOLD

*The Roots of Heaven, Overture* 5 mins

#### BEETHOVEN

Concerto for Violin, Cello and Piano  
in C major - Triple Concerto 34 mins

20-mins intermission

#### VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Symphony No. 5 in D major 42 mins

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*conductor*

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**Michał**

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**Nesterowicz**

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Michał Nesterowicz has consolidated his position as one of the most recognisable Polish conductors on the international scene. The esteem of orchestral musicians, audiences and critics alike has led to engagements with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Konzerthausorchester Berlin and Tonkünstler Orchestra in Vienna.

He was the winner of the Cadaqués Orchestra European Conducting Competition in 2008 and a prizewinner at the 6th Grzegorz Fitelberg International Conducting Competition in Katowice.

He has appeared with the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, Münchner Philharmoniker, Orchestre Philharmonique de Nice, National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. He has also collaborated with the WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Gulbenkian Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Kyoto Symphony Orchestra, Copenhagen Philharmonic, Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine and Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana.

He has held several key positions: first Guest Conductor of the Sinfonieorchester Basel (2016–2020), Chief Conductor of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Tenerife (2012–2016), Artistic Director of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Chile (2008–2012) and Artistic Director of the Gdańsk Philharmonic (2004–2008). He is currently Principal Guest Conductor of the Arthur Rubinstein Philharmonic Orchestra in Łódź.

In the 2025/26 season, he will make his debuts with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Orchestra del Teatro Regio di Parma, Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano, Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini, Dutch Philharmonic Orchestra, Amadeus Chamber Orchestra of Polish Radio and Cavatina Philharmonic Orchestra. He will also return to the Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Malmö Symphony Orchestra, Phion Orkest van Gelderland & Overijssel, Hague Philharmonic and Musikalische Akademie des Nationaltheater-Orchesters in Mannheim.



violin

## Low Zi Yang

Born in Malaysia, violinist Zi Yang Low is an artist whose musical life moves between the intimacy of chamber music and freedom of the solo stage. His playing is driven by a search for individuality, expressive depth and a direct connection with the music, with a particular interest in the dialogue between musicians.

In 2023, he received second prize and the Jury Prize at the Trondheim International Chamber Music Competition with Trio Tokava. He is a Grand Prize winner of the GSF Singapore Festival, and a first prize winner at competitions including the Virtual International Competition Malaysia, Ipoh Music Festival, Brilliant Talent Discovery Awards International Music Competition, Malaysia Youth Music Festival, EuroAsia Violin Competition and Singapore Raffles International Music Festival.

As a soloist, he made his debut playing Ravel's *Tzigane* with the Malaysian Philharmonic Youth Orchestra and has since appeared with the MPO, Colburn Orchestra and Selangor Philharmonic Orchestra. He has collaborated with conductors including Carlos Miguel Prieto, Gerard Salonga and Naohisa Furusawa.

A dedicated chamber musician, Zi Yang participated in the Ravinia Steans Music Institute, IMS Prussia Cove, Lumières d'Europe, Heifetz International Music Institute, Meadowmount School of Music, Singapore Violin Festival, APEC Music Festival and Miyakojima Youth International Music Festival. His collaborators include Ettore Causa, Anne Gastinel, Jonathan Brown, Marc Coppey, Tatjana Masurenko and Paul Watkins.

Photo by (c) Ettore Causa.

He began violin studies at four and studied with Ming Goh and Małgorzata Potocka. A Kohl Scholar of the Colburn Music Academy, he completed his undergraduate studies with Martin Beaver at the Colburn Conservatory.

Zi Yang performs on a Francesco Ruggieri violin, generously loaned by the Rin Collection in Singapore. Since 2026, he is an Artist in Residence at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel under the direction of Augustin Dumay.



cello

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## Benett Tsai

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In the 2026/27 season, Benett performs across North America, Europe, Asia and Australia. Highlights include his premieres of Hindson's "Rockstar" cello concerto with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and Göttinger Symphonieorchester, and a return to the Queensland Symphony Orchestra. He appears in recitals at Hong Kong City Hall with Aristo Sham and The Phillips Collection with Radu Ratoi as well as at the Carnegie Hall and Chamber Music San Francisco.

He has performed with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonia Lahti, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Kammerphilharmonie Metamorphosen Berlin and Australian Chamber Orchestra Academy, and with conductors such as Esa-Pekka Salonen and Umberto Clerici. He has appeared in recitals at the Kennedy Center, Berliner Philharmonie, Shanghai Oriental Arts Center and La Jolla Music Society. Notable appearances include at Lincoln Center with Emanuel Ax and in the 2020 film, *The Way Forward* with pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet.

Praised for his "electrifying" artistry (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*), Australian cellist Benett Tsai, has gained recognition as a compelling soloist and chamber musician on major stages worldwide. He came to international attention at the 2022 Grand Prix Emanuel Feuermann in Berlin. He then joined the roster of Young Concert Artists for management upon winning first prize and the Stern Young Artist Award at the 2023 YCA International Auditions in New York. *New York Classical Review* listed his recital as "one of the best debuts of 2024". Recently, he was awarded the 2026 Prix Jean-Nicolas Firmenich at the Verbier Festival.

Born in 2003, Benett began playing the cello at five under the guidance of his uncle, Thomas Tsai. He currently studies with Clive Greensmith at the Colburn School, Los Angeles, with mentors Ralph Kirshbaum and Steven Isserlis. He plays on a 1719 Giuseppe Guarneri 'filius Andreae' cello on loan from a generous benefactor. He is a VC Artist on The Violin Channel and an alumnus of the Lausanne-based Classeek Ambassador Programme.



## piano

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# Tony Yike Yang

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Tony Yike Yang is an internationally acclaimed pianist who rose to global prominence in 2015 at 16 and became the youngest laureate in the history of the International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw. He has appeared in Carnegie Hall, Warsaw National Philharmonic, Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre, Seoul Arts Center, Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, Osaka Symphony Hall, Severance Hall (Cleveland), Esplanade Singapore, the Athenaeum (Bucharest), Dubai Millennium Amphitheatre, Guangzhou Opera House, Museo Teatrale alla Scala (Milan), Gürzenich Köln and Salle Cortot (Paris). Yang has appeared with the Cleveland, Ontario and Basel Proms Orchestras, Orchestre Métropolitain, the Hohhot and Warsaw Philharmonics, the Edmonton, Hilton Head, Fort Worth, Chongqing and Changsha Symphony Orchestras, the Jakarta and Toronto Sinfoniettas, and Symphony Nova Scotia. His repertoire ranges from the core classical concertos to the works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century while his recital programmes range from Bach, Beethoven, Liszt, Ravel and Gershwin to contemporary music. He was praised for his “mercurial spirit” and “pulverising power” by Singapore’s *The Straits Times* while the *Chopin Courier* called him “an absolute revelation” for his ability to combine the characteristics of a true virtuoso with those of a genuine artist.

Founder of the Yike Academy of Music in Toronto, Yang gives masterclasses and workshops at universities and conservatories. A frequent juror at piano competitions and festivals, he has performed at international world expos and forums. Since 2018, Yang has served as Youth Cultural Ambassador for the City of Guangzhou and performed for royalty and heads of state. Since 2022, he has been a featured artist of Looking at the Stars, performing in correctional and care facilities in Canada, Lithuania and the USA. He also works regularly with Chamber Music Kenya and UN-affiliated organizations in China.

Born in Chongqing and raised in Toronto, Yang studied at the Royal Conservatory of Music and the Juilliard School’s Pre-College Division before graduating from Harvard University with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics. He received Harvard’s Robert Levin Prize for Musical Performance and has been a fellow at the Ingensund Piano Center in Sweden and the Oberlin-Lake Como International Piano Academy.

Yang has released two albums and is Artist-in-Residence at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen.

## PROGRAMME NOTES

Tonight's programme is based on the time-honoured concept for an orchestral concert consisting of three works – specifically an overture, a concerto and a big symphony. But wait! There's something unique about each of the particular works the concertgoer will encounter tonight. The overture was written as a standalone work to introduce the release in New York City of the blockbuster film with which it is associated (it does not introduce the film itself). The concerto is for *three* soloists (not just one, as is usually the case) and it is the only one of its kind by a famous composer featuring piano, violin and cello as a unit. The big symphony is by Vaughan Williams, who wrote nine symphonies like Beethoven. His all-too-rarely-heard Fifth is music of mostly pastel hues and pastoral sentiment – much like Beethoven's famous Sixth.

**(SIR) MALCOLM ARNOLD (1928 - 2016)**  
***The Roots of Heaven, Overture (1958)***

### THE BACKGROUND

Malcolm Arnold belongs in the company of Ralph Vaughan-Williams, Edward Elgar, William Walton, Benjamin Britten and Gustav Holst as one of England's greatest composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although his music is infrequently encountered outside of the British Isles, it is, in the words of David Mason Greene, "jovial and extrovert; he simply lets it flow in an outpouring of tunefulness and wit, untroubled by systems or notions of musical progress." In addition, it is invariably rhythmically vital and brilliantly scored for the brighter spectrum of instrumental colours. Arnold's extensive catalogue includes nine symphonies, twenty concertos (including for recorder, harmonica, guitar, harmonica and two pianos three hands), eleven overtures and a stage work called *Sweeney Todd* long before Stephen Sondheim thought of it. There are also well over one hundred film scores, 62 of them for feature films including *Bridge on the River Kwai*, for which he won an Oscar.



One of those feature films was *The Roots of Heaven* (1958), a big-budget Hollywood production (20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox). The story upon which it was based, Romain Gary's bestselling prize-winning novel *Les Racines du ciel* (1955), is set in 1950s French Equatorial Africa (parts of today's Congo, Cameroon and Chad). It portrays the missionary zeal of environmentalist Morel to protect the region's elephants from mindless slaughter and extinction by profiteering man, a mission Morel sees as a symbol of freedom and of the last remaining "roots of heaven," namely, dedication to a higher cause, to man reconnecting with nature.

## THE MUSIC

Arnold wrote the five-minute standalone Overture for the film's New York release on 15 October 1958. One of the Overture's features is a realistic orchestral rendering of a herd of screaming elephants thundering across the African plain – awesome and terrifying. Paraphrasing the composer's own remarks, an elephant-herder's song is used as the main theme of the film. A fragment of this theme is played by the trumpets at the very beginning of the Overture; at the end it is played in full. This is an overture in the old operatic sense featuring all the themes heard in the score.

### LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770 - 1827)

#### Concerto for Violin, Cello and Piano in C major, Op. 56 (Triple Concerto)

- I. Allegro
- II. Largo
- III. Rondo alla polacca

## THE BACKGROUND

Beethoven wrote his Triple Concerto, the first of its kind, in 1803-04, a period that brought forth many of his most famous masterpieces like the *Eroica* Symphony, the *Waldstein* Sonata and the opera *Fidelio*. Yet it remains something of a black sheep among Beethoven's large-scale works. Nevertheless, it is attractive, well-constructed, and offers a master's solution to a highly interesting and unusual problem: how to incorporate a chamber ensemble, the piano trio (for which much repertory already existed, including by Beethoven), into the context of a symphonic concerto. Among the difficulties to be overcome were how to give each soloist enough thematic material to play without expanding the formal layout to absurd lengths, and how to keep the dark, low voice of the cello from becoming submerged in the overall sonority. Beethoven solved the latter problem by writing most of the cello's part in the upper register of the instrument and by giving it "first shot" at most of the themes.



Much of the appeal of the Triple Concerto results from the various interactions and juxtapositions of a) three different solo instruments, b) three different possibilities for duets, and c) the full trio, all with and without orchestral support. Yet, no famous composer besides Beethoven has written a work like it. He conceived the concerto for his sixteen-year-old piano student Archduke Rudolph, the violinist Carl August Seidler and the cellist Anton Kraft.

## THE MUSIC

The first movement has two fully worked out exposition sections, the first for the orchestra, the second for the soloists, who introduce additional themes as well. The *Largo* is more of an interlude than a full movement, lasting but five minutes and based on a single theme. The finale is dominated by the polonaise rhythm, and ends with a rush of ascending scales for the soloists and an exciting conclusion.

## **RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872 - 1958)**

### **Symphony No. 5 in D major (1938 - 1943)**

- I. Preludio (Moderato – Allegro – Tempo I)
- II. Scherzo (Presto)
- III. Romanza (Lento – Animato – Tempo I)
- IV. Passacaglia (Moderato – Allegro –  
Tempo primo – Tempo del Preludio)

## THE BACKGROUND

When Vaughan Williams' Fourth Symphony appeared in 1935, its harshness and violence were interpreted as prophetic of the coming war. So too, the tranquil beauty and gentle radiance of the Fifth, which was first performed during the darkest days of World War II, were seen as prophetic of a new age, when peace and joy would again reign in the world. But the facts confound the theory. Vaughan Williams began working on his Fifth Symphony in 1938, well before the war even began, and he even incorporated ideas from music written as far back as 1906. The first performance was conducted by the composer at a Promenade Concert in London on 24 June 1943. Response from both critics and audience was highly favourable. It has been called the "Symphony of the Celestial City" (Michael Kennedy) and a "message of heavenly consolation" (Simona Parkenham).

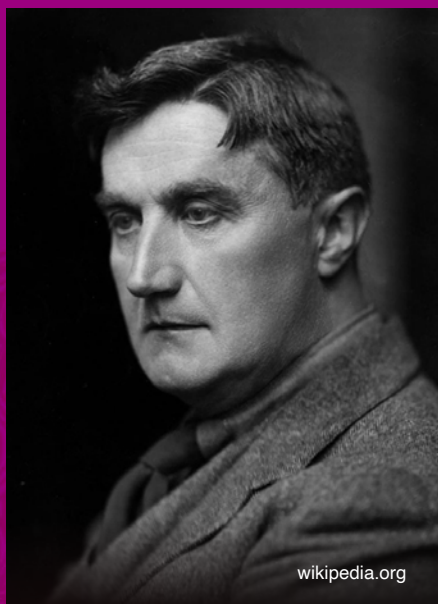
## THE MUSIC

The symphony opens in a mood of utmost serenity, yet it is propelled by a subtle sense of motion generated by the gentle oscillation between C major and D major. Cellos and bases sound a deep pedal point on C, over which horns call faintly in D major, followed by a short motif in the violins in C major. From these mere scraps of musical mortar Vaughan Williams builds an entire movement,

The Scherzo is all quicksilver, poured out in music of dark mystery bespeckled with strange glints of light. “It is like music for a ballet of hobgoblins, gargoyles and other fantastic creations,” writes Michael Kennedy.

The slow movement, though entitled “Romanza,” is nevertheless heavily weighted with resignation, contemplation, and religious devotion. The solemn, ravishingly beautiful theme, first played by the English horn, recurs periodically throughout the movement. The central episode becomes restless as an anguished cry is raised in the woodwinds.

The finale is a passacaglia – a steadily recurring melodic pattern in the bass line over which other voices embellish it, develop variations on it or add new themes. The sense of arriving home again is unmistakable in the return of the symphony’s opening horn call, now proclaimed *fortissimo* by the full orchestra. From this climactic moment the tension subsides, and the symphony slowly fades into a realm of serene radiance and peaceful meditation.



## ABOUT THE WRITER

Formerly a horn player in the Montreal Symphony, Robert Markow has been writing programme notes for more than forty years for musical organizations in Canada, the USA, Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia and Singapore. He taught at Montreal's McGill University for many years, and as a Wagner specialist, has lectured at the Bayreuth Festival and the Wagner Society of New York. He writes regularly for the journals *Fanfare*, *Der neue Merker* (Vienna), *The Strad*, *Strings*, *Opera* (UK), and the website *classicalvoiceamerica.org*. Extra-musical interests include travel, film, literature and decadent desserts.

# MALAYSIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

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## RESIDENT CONDUCTOR

Gerard Salonga

## FIRST VIOLIN

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Tan Ka Ming  
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Sherwin Thia

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*Principal*  
Akiko Daniš

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

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Siti Azlina Abd Latif

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Siti Azlina Abd Latif

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Farah Diyana Ishak  
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Shireen Jasin Mokhtar  
Amin Mikhail Ahmad Zabidi

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#### BUSINESS & STRATEGIC RELATIONS MANAGEMENT

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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:**  
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# 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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# 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

**Normal:**  
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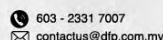
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MALAYSIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA (199801007000)



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# ALENA MURANG WITH THE MPO

**31  
OCT  
2026**  
**SAT 8:00PM**

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PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra  
Jurichi Hirokami, conductor  
Alena Murang, sape

Journey from Ravel's elegant *Le Tombeau de Couperin* to the dramatic intensity of Mozart's *Symphony No. 40*. The programme's centrepiece is the premiere of a groundbreaking new concerto for sape and orchestra by Vivian Chua, performed by the renowned Alena Murang, the first work of its kind ever commissioned. A cultural milestone programme bridging tradition and innovation.

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**Soloist**



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# As If She Were Here: Chen Xia Sings Teresa Teng

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Francis Kan, conductor  
Chen Xia, vocals

The MPO is proud to present the return of Chen Xia, celebrated as one of the foremost vocalists who captures the sublime spirit and silken tone of the legendary Teresa Teng. Featuring songs such as Sweet As Honey (甜蜜蜜), Walk The Road of Life (漫步人生路), Evening Primrose (夜来香), Ocean Rhyme (海韵) and more, experience the rare opportunity to hear these cherished songs performed with stunning authenticity.

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