

E-CONCERT PROGRAMME



"The Goddess of Flute"  
- by The Korea Times

# JASMINE CHOI

PLAYS MOZART'S FLUTE 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.

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# Jasmine Choi Plays

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# Mozart's Flute Concerto

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Sat 20 Jun 2026, 8:00pm

- 02 Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
- 04 Junichi Hirokami, conductor
- 05 Jasmine Choi, flute

## PROGRAMME

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### RAUTAVAARA

*Cantus arcticus*, Op. 61 17 mins

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### MOZART

Flute Concerto No.2 in D major,  
K. 314 (K. 285d) 21 mins

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20-mins intermission

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### BRAHMS

Symphony No.2 in D major, Op. 73 39 mins

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conductor

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# Junichi Hirokami

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Born in Tokyo, Junichi Hirokami studied piano, composition and music under Atsutada Otaka before studying conducting at and graduating from Tokyo College of Music. At 26, he became the winner at the first Kondrashin International Conducting Competition in Amsterdam in 1984.

Since 1990, Hirokami has conducted major orchestras around the world including the Orchestre National de France, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Orchestre Symphonique de Montreal, London Symphony Orchestra, Wiener Symphoniker, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, L'Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi, Saint Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Tchaikovsky Symphony Orchestra of Moscow, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Gewandhausorchester Leipzig.

Apart from guest appearances, he has served as Chief Conductor of Sweden's Norrköping Symphony Orchestra and the Limburg Symphony Orchestra, Principal Guest Conductor of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Principal Conductor of Japan Philharmonic Orchestra and Music Director of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra.

In Japan, he has conducted all the major orchestras including the NHK Symphony Orchestra and Saito Kinen Orchestra. He received great acclaim for his appearance with the Mito Chamber Orchestra. He is prolific in opera, having led celebrated performances of *Un ballo in maschera* and *Rigoletto* at the Sydney Opera House. Other triumphs include *La Traviata* at the Fujiwara Opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Ainadamar* at the Nissay Theatre, and *La Traviata* and *Aida* at the New National Theatre Tokyo.

From 2008 to 2022, he created a golden era as Chief Conductor as well as Music and Artistic Advisor of the Kyoto Symphony Orchestra. In 2015, he received an award at the Suntory Music Award with the orchestra.

Currently, he serves as Artistic Leader of the Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa, Friend of JPO / Artistic Advisor of the Japan Philharmonic Orchestra, and Friendship Conductor of the Sapporo Symphony Orchestra. The City of Kyoto Symphony Orchestra bestowed on him a special title after his name, 'Junichi Hirokami', in recognition of his years of service to the orchestra. He also serves as professor of conducting at Tokyo College of Music. Most recently, he became Music Director of the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra.



*flute*  
**Jasmine Choi**

Jasmine Choi is celebrated worldwide for her extraordinary virtuosity, acclaimed recordings and a robust online presence that reaches more than one million followers across social media. Renowned for pushing the instrument's traditional boundaries, she has become an icon of the flute in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Born in Korea into a third-generation family of musicians, Choi discovered the flute at 9 and, at 16, moved to the USA, enrolling in the Curtis Institute of Music with Julius Baker and Jeffrey Khaner, followed by graduate studies at the Juilliard School. Upon graduation, she served as Associate Principal Flute of the Cincinnati Symphony under Paavo Järvi, and Principal Flute of the Vienna Symphony under Fabio Luisi.

Choi has appeared with leading ensembles including the Vienna and Berlin Symphonies, the Czech and Seoul Philharmonics, and the Philadelphia Orchestra and Salzburg Mozarteum. She has performed across Europe, Asia and North America; her performance of Arirang at the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games remains a cultural milestone. Chamber collaborations include with Martha Argerich, Robert Levin, Kit Armstrong, Julien Quentin, Sumi Jo and the Schumann Quartet demonstrating versatility from intimate recitals to dynamic ensemble projects. Her discography spans Sony Classical releases, solo albums and original arrangements with more than 15 flute concertos composed for her.

Beyond performance, Choi designed her signature flute case, praised for its innovation, and published best-selling educational works and arrangements with Theodore Presser Company and Seoul Music Publishing. She has given masterclasses at the Juilliard School, Curtis Institute of Music, Harvard University and Vienna's Universität für Musik. She currently serves as professor at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music.

## PROGRAMME NOTES

Tonight's concert opens with something unusual: a "concerto" for birds and orchestra," as the composer described it. It's not a concerto in the traditional sense (like the Mozart Flute Concerto that follows) but it does indeed incorporate the sounds of live birds as rendered by recordings. The music is for the most part, gentle, soothing, reminiscent of the pure unspoiled nature of northern Finland. The remaining two works on the programme are both grounded in the key of D major, and were written exactly a century apart (Mozart's concerto in 1777, Brahms' symphony in 1877).

### EINOJUHANI RAUTAVAARA (1928-2016)

#### *Cantus arcticus*, Op. 61 (1972)

- I. The Bog
- II. Melancholy
- III. Swans Migrating

### THE BACKGROUND



Until his death ten years ago, Einojuhani Rautavaara occupied the same position that Jean Sibelius did a century earlier, namely, the most prominent living Finnish composer, at least from a foreign perspective. The Sibelius connection goes further. In 1955, two years before the older composer's death, the Koussevitzky Foundation had given Sibelius a study grant for him to award to a young composer of his choice. Sibelius chose Rautavaara, who used the grant to study in the United States.

Early works by Rautavaara (four syllables, accent on the first) tended to follow one of several widely divergent styles, including neoclassical, parodistic, aleatoric or serial. One of these early works, *A Requiem in Our Time* (1953) for brass and percussion, became one of his most frequently played works. Later compositions evinced a more romantic or even mystical character. "I have often compared composing to gardening," he wrote. "In both processes, one observes and controls organic growth rather than constructing or assembling existing components and elements. Rautavaara's extensive catalogue includes eight symphonies, nine stage works, some sixty choral compositions, and fifteen concerted works, including for harp, organ, double bass and percussion.

## THE MUSIC

*Cantus arcticus* was commissioned by Finland's Oulu University on the occasion of its first doctoral conferment ceremony in 1972, at which the composer received an Honorary Doctorate for his contribution to Finnish music. The composition was premiered on 18 October of that year by the Oulu Symphony conducted by Stephen Portman. The work's subtitle, "Concerto for Birds and Orchestra," reflects its use of recorded bird songs taken from sound effects from Finnish Radio and from actual bird sounds recorded by the composer in Liminka and Oulanka Bays in northern Finland. The score is dedicated to Urho Kekkonen, president of Finland at the time. "Strange and exhilarating," "gratifyingly melodic ... provid[ing] pleasant, comfortable listening, very much like tasteful, high-quality background music written to accompany a travelogue," "a hypnotic liturgy," and "essentially a tone poem in the Sibelius mould" are some of the descriptive comments made about *Cantus arcticus*.

### WOLFGANG AMADÈ MOZART (1756-1791) Flute Concerto No. 2 in D major, K. 314 (K. 285d) (1777)

- I. Allegro aperto
- II. Andante ma non troppo
- III. Allegro

## THE BACKGROUND



Mozart wrote just one flute concerto (K. 313 in G major) but it was only in the twentieth century that we learned the work being called "Flute Concerto No. 2" was in fact originally an oboe concerto. Here's what happened:

In 1777, Mozart wrote a concerto for an oboist named Giuseppe Ferlendis, who had two years earlier left Bergamo to enter the service of Mozart's own employer, the Archbishop of Salzburg. About a year later, Mozart transcribed this concerto from C up to D major, altering numerous details in the process, for the flutist Ferdinand de Jean, and it was in this form that the concerto was first published. We know of performances of the Oboe Concerto in 1777 and 1783, but then the score disappeared. In 1920, the Austrian conductor Bernhard Paumgartner discovered a set of orchestral parts for the concerto in the archives of the Mozarteum in Salzburg. Paumgartner thereupon reconstructed the score, which was finally published in 1948. But down through the years, the version for solo flute has continued to be performed, and is still referred to as Mozart's Flute Concerto No. 2.

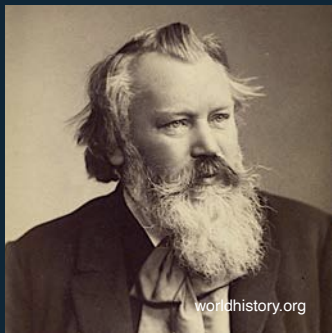
## THE MUSIC

The first movement bears a strange tempo marking: *Allegro aperto*, which translates as “open allegro,” but whose meaning is not clear. Mozart used this same indication in other works during the 1770s, (the Violin Concerto No. 5, for example), but thereafter abandoned it. Following the standard orchestral introduction, the soloist presents its principal themes, which are then tossed back and forth between flute and orchestra. The slow movement is dreamlike and serene, though not profound. Its smooth melodic lines bring it stylistically close to opera. For a finale, Mozart chose the standard rondo form, though the world of opera again peeks through the curtains: the principal theme of this jaunty movement is almost identical to that of Blonde’s aria “Welche Wonne, welche Lust” from the opera *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, composed a few years later.

### **JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)** **Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73 (1877)**

- I. Allegro non troppo
- II. Adagio non troppo
- III. Allegretto grazioso (quasi andantino) –  
Presto ma non assai – Tempo I – Presto ma non assai – Tempo I
- IV. Allegro con spirito

## THE BACKGROUND



After the massiveness and severity of Brahms’ First Symphony, the idyllic, pastoral Second, with its wealth of singable melodies, made a strong popular appeal. Whereas Brahms had toiled for many years over his First Symphony, the Second was written in the space of a mere three months during the summer of 1877. The warmly lyric and relaxed character, the gracefulness of the many melodies, and a positive outlook are all attributable in some measure to the charms of the south Austrian countryside. In its pastoral quality, many listeners find a parallel to Beethoven’s Sixth Symphony which, like Brahms’ Second, followed a grim, darkly serious and heroic symphony in C minor. The first performance was given by the Vienna Philharmonic, led by Hans Richter, on 30 December 1877.

## THE MUSIC

Right from the very opening notes, the listener is caught up in the symphony’s gentle, relaxed mood. The first two bars also provide the basic motivic germs of the entire movement and for much of the material in the other movements as well. The three-note motto in the cellos and basses and the following arpeggio in the horns are heard repeatedly in many guises – slowed down, speeded up, played upside down, buried in the texture or prominently featured. The second theme is one of Brahms’ most glorious, sung by violas and cellos.

The second movement is of darker hue and more profound sentiment. The form is basically a ternary structure (ABA), with a more agitated central section in the minor mode.

The genial, relaxed character returns in the third movement, not a scherzo as Beethoven would have written, but a sort of lyrical intermezzo, harking back to the gracious eighteenth-century minuet. The forces are reduced to almost chamber orchestra levels, and woodwinds are often the featured sonority.

The forthright and optimistic finale derives heavily from the melodies of the first movement, though as usual with Brahms, this material is so cleverly disguised that one scarcely notices.



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## 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.

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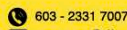
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*The Emigré and  
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**18  
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2026  
SAT 8:00PM**

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra  
Aziz Shokhakimov, conductor  
Makoto Ozone, piano

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**SEP**  
**2026**  
**WED 8:00PM**

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra  
Ahmad Muriz Che Rose, conductor  
The Solianos

Experience a meaningful celebration of Malaysia's musical heritage as the MPO pays tribute to one of the country's greatest cultural icons, Alfonso Soliano. A visionary pianist, arranger and conductor, Soliano is widely known as a pioneer who laid the foundation for the country's music scene especially jazz. Led by Ahmad Muriz Che Rose and with The Solianos as vocalists and instrumentalists, this special performance brings his timeless works back on stage in a heartfelt homage.

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