

E-CONCERT PROGRAMME

Malaysian
Philharmonic
Orchestra



2025 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. With the initial search for outstanding musicians involving a worldwide audition tour, the MPO today is made up of many talented Malaysian musicians and musicians from other nations, a beautiful example of harmony among different cultures and nationalities.

With each new season, the MPO continues to present an exciting programme of orchestral music drawn from over three centuries, as well as the crowd-pleasing concert series. Its versatility transcends genres, from classical masterpieces to film music, pop, jazz, traditional, contemporary and commissioned works.

Among renowned Malaysian artists who have mesmerized audiences with the MPO include SM Salim, Sheila Majid, M.Nasir, Siti Nurhaliza, Jamal Abdullah, Ella, Dayang Nurfaizah, Aishah, Jaclyn Victor and Aubrey Suwito.

A host of internationally acclaimed musicians have performed with the MPO including Lorin Maazel, Sir Neville Marriner, Yehudi Menuhin, Joshua Bell, Harry Connick Jr., José Carreras, Andrea Bocelli, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Chris Botti, Branford Marsalis and Judika, many of whom have praised the MPO for its fine musical qualities and vitality.

The MPO regularly performs in major cities of Malaysia such as in Alor Setar, George Town, Ipoh, Johor Bahru, Kuantan, Kota Kinabalu, Kuching and many more. Internationally, it has toured Singapore (1999, 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2018), Japan (2001, 2009 and 2017), Korea (2001), Australia (2004), China (2006 and 2019), Taiwan (2007) and Vietnam (2013). The MPO has also released 21 CDs.

The MPO remains steadfast in its mission to be the premier Malaysian orchestra, providing the ultimate music experience through the power of live music that educates, entertains and inspires. Its main benefactor is PETRONAS, and its patron is YABhg. Tun Dr. Siti Hasmah Haji Mohd Ali.

Chopin Festival II

Sat 11 Oct 2025, 8:00 pm

- 03 Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
05 Rune Bergmann, conductor
06 Martín García García, piano

PROGRAMME

SIBELIUS

Finlandia Op.26 10 mins

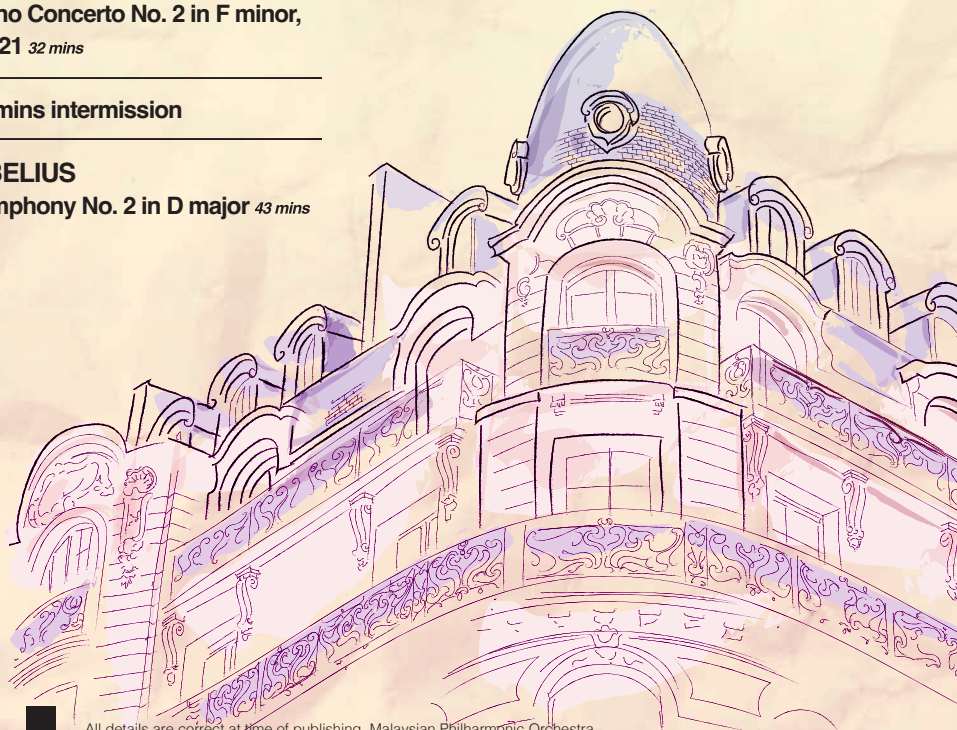
CHOPIN

Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor,
Op.21 32 mins

20-mins intermission

SIBELIUS

Symphony No. 2 in D major 43 mins



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conductor

Rune Bergmann

Norwegian conductor Rune Bergmann is currently Music Director of Canada's Calgary Philharmonic, Chief Conductor of Switzerland's Argovia Philharmonic, and Music Director of the Peninsula Music Festival in Wisconsin, positions he has held since the 2017/2018, 2016/2017 and 2022/2023 seasons respectively. He served as Artistic Director & Chief Conductor of Poland's Szczecin Philharmonic from the season 2016/2017 to 2023/24 and has been Artistic Director of Norway's innovative Fjord Cadenza Festival since its inception in 2010.

While being a regular guest performing with the Baltimore, Colorado, Utah, Houston, Pacific, Buffalo Symphony Orchestras in North America, he has collaborated with the Oslo Philharmonic, Norwegian National Opera Orchestra, Bergen Philharmonic, Beethovenorchester Bonn, ADDA Simfonica, Orquesta de Valencia, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, Staatskapelle Halle and Wrocław Philharmonic as well as the symphony orchestras of Malmö, Helsingborg, Kristiansand, Stavanger, Trondheim, Karlskrona, and Odense.

Bergmann has also led performances of *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *La traviata* at the Norwegian National Opera, and made his US operatic debut in Yale Opera's production of Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as staged by Claudia Solti.

He has been collaborating with some of today's most acclaimed soloists including Truls Mørk, Leif Ove Andsnes, Yefim Bronfman, Yo-Yo Ma, Mischa Maisky, Renée Fleming, Joshua Bell, Itzhak Perlman, James Ehnes, Branford Marsalis, Ole Edvard Antonsen, Albrecht Mayer and Anna Fedorova.

2018 saw the release of Bergmann's first recording with the Szczecin Philharmonic, which featured the "Resurrection" Symphony in E-minor by Mieczysław Karłowicz, a work that has since become a major focus of Bergmann's repertoire. He has also released recordings with the Argovia Philharmonic, including Ravel's G-Major Piano Concerto and Mozart's Bassoon Concerto.

Earlier in his career, Rune Bergmann served as First Kapellmeister and deputy-Music Director of the Theater Augsburg, where he led performances of numerous operas, including *La Traviata*, *Der fliegende Holländer*, and *Die Fledermaus* and was Principal Guest Conductor of the Kaunas City Symphony.

Rune Bergmann studied choir and orchestra conducting under Anders Eby, Jin Wang and Jorma Panula at Sweden's Royal College of Music. He graduated with high honours from the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Finland, where he studied conducting under Chief Conductor Emeritus of the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra and former principal conductor of the Vienna Radio, Finnish Radio, and Danish National symphony orchestras, Leif Segerstam.



piano

Martín García García

Born in Gijón, Spain, in 1996, Martín García García is considered one of the pianists with the greatest international projection, captivating audiences at some of the world's most prestigious venues across Europe, America and Asia. Praised by luminaries such as Vladimir Krainev, Dmitri Alexeev, Arcadi Volodos, Dimitri Bashkirov, Joaquín Achúcarro and Tatiana Copeland, Martín's artistry continues to rise to new heights. His remarkable career trajectory includes top honours at international piano competitions, most notably first prize at the 2021 Cleveland International Piano Competition and third place at the 2021 International Chopin Piano Competition where he also received the Warsaw Philharmonic National Orchestra's special award for the best concerto performance.

Martín's musical education laid the foundation for his success. He graduated from the Reina Sofía School of Music where he studied under Professor Galina Eguiazarova, earning the title of Most Outstanding Student from Her Majesty Queen Sofía. He further honed his craft with a Master's degree from the Mannes School of Music in New York, studying with the renowned pianist Jerome Rose. His journey began at five under the guidance of Natalia Mazoun and Ilyá Goldfarb.

Martín has solidified a reputation as a leading pianist of his generation, collaborating with orchestras such as the Symphoniker Hamburg, Warsaw Philharmonic, Orquesta Nacional de España, OBC, Sinfonia Varsovia, Tokyo and Seoul Philharmonic Orchestras, NHK Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta de Brasília and the Lithuanian National Orchestra. His performances have been conducted by renowned maestros including Mikhail Pletnev, Vasily Petrenko and Andrey Boreyko.

In the 2024/2025 season, Martín embarked on his sixth tour of Japan where his concerts drew a total of 25,000 attendees. This season also sees him performing in Korea, Taiwan and Colombia. In Europe, he will participate in the Rostock, Rheingau Festival, and in Cologne, performing with the Wiener Kammerorchester, Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra and Tokyo Symphony Orchestra.

Martín's discography continues to expand with the release of his 2025 album, following the success of his 2022 album *Chopin and His Master* and 2024's *Even-Tide* which garnered widespread acclaim. His commitment to his craft is evident not only in his recordings but in his approach to 'live' performance. With a deep sense of responsibility and a commitment to serving humanity, he approaches each concert with a profound purpose, believing in the power of music to offer something meaningful to every listener, regardless of the size of the venue or the audience.

PROGRAMME NOTES

Two of Sibelius' most famous works frame a beloved concerto, one of two by Chopin forming part of the MPO's Chopin Festival. Sweetly lyrical themes combine with a quality of improvisation in the concerto, composed by a young man not yet 21. The concert opens with a glowing hymn of faith and love for one's country (*Finlandia*) and closes with one of the mightiest pillars of the symphonic repertory, Sibelius' Second, a glorious, fifty-minute journey of striving, motivic development, and ultimate triumph.

JEAN SIBELIUS (1865-1957)

Finlandia, Op. 26 (1899)



Few works in the orchestral repertory have had the political impact of Sibelius' *Finlandia*. In 1809, the rule of Finland passed from Sweden to Russia. Under Tsars Alexander I and II, the Finns were allowed an extraordinary amount of self-government. But upon his accession to the throne in 1894, Nicholas II began imposing highly repressive measures, attempting to Russianize Finland completely. Feelings of patriotism ran high, and resistance was offered on many fronts. On 4 November 1899, a series of six historical and legendary scenes entitled *Tableaux of the Past* was presented in Helsinki. Sibelius composed music for these tableaux, the last of which was called *Finland Awakes*. The composer's friend and conductor Robert Kajanus suggested that the name be changed to *Finlandia*.

Finlandia soon became a concert work, but was eventually banned because of the intense patriotic fervour it aroused. In other lands its name was changed to *Vaterland* (Germany), *La Patrie* (France) and *Impromptu* (Russia). This glowing, inspiring expression of love for one's homeland is as bold and rugged as the country it mirrors. Critic Olin Downes reported that *Finlandia* "was said to have done more than a thousand speeches and pamphlets to promote Finnish independence."

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810-1849)

Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21 (1829)

- I. Maestoso
- II. Larghetto
- III. Allegro vivace



THE BACKGROUND



In July of 1829, the nineteen-year-old Chopin spent three weeks in Vienna. The publisher Haslinger encouraged him to give a recital, which was so well received that a second was quickly arranged and proved equally successful. Upon returning to Poland, Chopin realised that if he were going to pursue a career as a concert pianist (a career move he soon abandoned), he would need some major display pieces of his own in his repertory. To this end he soon set about writing the F-minor concerto, which he premiered in Warsaw on 17 March 1830 to great acclaim. Hence, Chopin's Piano Concerto in F minor, the so-called No. 2, was actually his first, preceding the E-minor concerto by about a year. The reversal in numbering came about because the orchestral parts of the F-minor concerto were lost before it was published, and by the time they were recopied, the E-minor concerto had been published.

THE MUSIC

The first movement's two main themes are stated in the opening orchestral exposition – a strongly rhythmic idea with a quasi-military flavor (a rhythm also found in so many Italian operas of the period) and a more lyrical, *bel canto* subject announced by the woodwind choir, the first of several felicitous uses of woodwind colour in this concerto.

The *Larghetto* is a nocturne of heavenly beauty and midnight poetry. The central episode of this ternary form (ABA) movement momentarily disturbs the placid waters, but the mood of quiet reverie is restored well before the movement ends.

The finale is a rondo imbued with the spirit and rhythm of the mazurka, a Polish country dance in triple meter with a characteristic accent on the third beat.

JEAN SIBELIUS

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 43 (1901)

- I. Allegretto
- II. Andante, ma rubato
- III. Vivacissimo
- IV. Finale: Allegro moderato



THE BACKGROUND

Sibelius composed his Second Symphony in 1901 and conducted the first performance a year later in Helsinki. It has become the most frequently performed of Sibelius' seven symphonies and is the longest as well by a good margin. As a structure in sound, the symphony ranks as one of the most magnificent creations in the orchestral repertory. In the tensions arising from opposing elements of the score, the contrasts of mood, the continuous control of pace, the fusion of its component parts into an organic whole, and the vast sweep of its trajectory from humble beginnings to mighty apotheosis, the Second Symphony embraces a symphonic world of towering strength. Sibelius conducted the Helsinki Philharmonic in the first performance on 8 March 1901.

THE MUSIC

The first movement opens with softly throbbing chords in the lower strings. This and several motifs heard in rapid succession make up the first theme group. Sibelius is concerned not so much with long, broadly-arched themes as he is with arranging small fragments into a coherent whole as the movement unfolds. A second, contrasting group begins with an oboe solo consisting of a sustained note followed by a flourish at the end. The commentaries of numerous distinguished musical analysts differ widely in their interpretation of this movement's form; perhaps it is best simply to let Sibelius' own comment serve to work on a subliminal level. He once described the symphonic process as follows: "It is as if the Almighty had thrown down pieces of a mosaic from Heaven's floor and asked me to put them together."

The second movement is drawn in sombre colours. A chant-like theme given initially to two bassoons in octaves over a pizzicato bass accompaniment is answered by a complementary theme for oboes and clarinets. Among the many themes and fragments Sibelius uses in this movement is a highly characteristic effect consisting of a loud chord (often in the brass) which diminishes in strength and ends with a mighty crescendo to even greater volume than before.

The Scherzo might best be described as a whirling blizzard of sound. The central Trio section provides the greatest possible contrast in its idyllic, pastoral melody sung by the oboe. The furious Scherzo is then repeated in modified form, followed by a return of the Trio, now shortened, which acts as an extended bridge passage to the Finale. As in Beethoven's Fifth, the two final movements are directly connected; out of the transition material arises the Finale's noble, majestic first theme. Sibelius covers much emotional territory in this movement. In contrast to the optimistic, affirmative opening, a distinct mood of gloomy turbulence is created at several points by darkly swirling ostinatos in the lower strings. Resolution, triumph and glory inform the massive final pages of the symphony as the brass intone the magnificent chorale theme for the last time.

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

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DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA



Malaysian
Philharmonic
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SEASON 2026



JOURNEY INTO A WORLD OF SYMPHONIES

Music is not just a moment, it is a movement. Each note marks a milestone, each piece unfolds a journey. Experience the brilliance of Malaysian and international maestros on a stage where musical excellence resonates.

PERFORMANCES AT DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS



Symphony of the Seven Scrolls

Malaysian
Philharmonic
Orchestra



Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
Gerard Salonga, conductor

**18
OCT
2025
SAT 2:30PM**

PERFORMANCE AT
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PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Step into a world where folklore meets symphony in an exciting concert themed *Symphony of the Seven Scrolls*, a lively and educational journey made possible by the unwavering support of our community. This immersive concert will introduce young audiences to classical orchestral repertoire through seven emotional chapters. The concert experience will be enhanced with a storytelling by a narrator and dances that spark the imagination. Infused with newly-arranged familiar Malaysian folk tunes, this concert is set to be a cultural bridge between past and present, and a joyous celebration of tradition and shared purpose.

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Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO) 11/11/2023

Malaysian
Philharmonic
Orchestra

Karen Gomyo

Plays Mendelssohn

**25
OCT
2025**

SAT 8:00PM

PERFORMANCE AT
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
Olari Elts, conductor
Karen Gomyo, violin

MENDELSSOHN A Midsummer Night's
Dream: Overture

MENDELSSOHN Violin Concerto
in E minor

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Symphony No. 4

**08
NOV
2025**
SAT 8:00PM

PERFORMANCE AT
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
Junichi Hirokami, conductor
Hera Hyesang Park, soprano

ROSSINI
ROSSINI
ROSSINI
ROSSINI
ROSSINI
ROSSINI

MAHLER

Barber of Seville: Overture
Barber of Seville: Una voce poco fa
L'assedio di Corinto: Giusto Ciel!
Guillaume Tell: Overture
Guillaume Tell: Sombre foret
Il Turco in Italia: Non si da
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Malaysian
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Orchestra

GUITAR SERENADE BY

José María Gallardo
del Rey

22
NOV
2025
SAT 8:00PM

PERFORMANCE AT
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
John Axelrod, conductor
José María Gallardo del Rey, guitar

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV
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PADMA BHUSHAN
KS CHITHRA

LIVE WITH THE MALAYSIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

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Gerard Salonga, conductor
K.S. Chithra, vocals
Madhu Balakrishnan, vocals
Sathyaprakash, vocals
Anamika P.S., vocals

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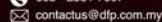
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Ballet
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SWAN
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05 | 06
DEC | DEC
2025 | 2025
FRI 8:00PM | SAT 8:00PM

PERFORMANCE AT
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Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
Stanislav Kochanovsky, conductor
Ballet Stars of Moscow

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Malaysian
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Ballet Festival THE NUTCRACKER

12/13
DEC DEC
2025 2025
FRI 8:00PM SAT 8:00PM

PERFORMANCE AT
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
Stanislav Kochanovsky, conductor
Ballet Stars of Moscow

Relive the magic of Tchaikovsky's iconic work, *The Nutcracker* as the MPO continues its Ballet Festival and brings you this classic tale on stage. With each note, pirouette and leap, the MPO, together with dancers from the Ballet Stars of Moscow, paints a picture of elegance and power that will leave you spellbound. Be transported to a magical land of toys and sweets as Clara embarks on a fantastical adventure. With striking music, breathtaking choreography, exquisite costumes, and powerful performances, witness ethereal beauty and grace, in a journey through time and emotions bringing a beautiful finale to the MPO's glorious season.

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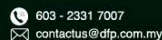
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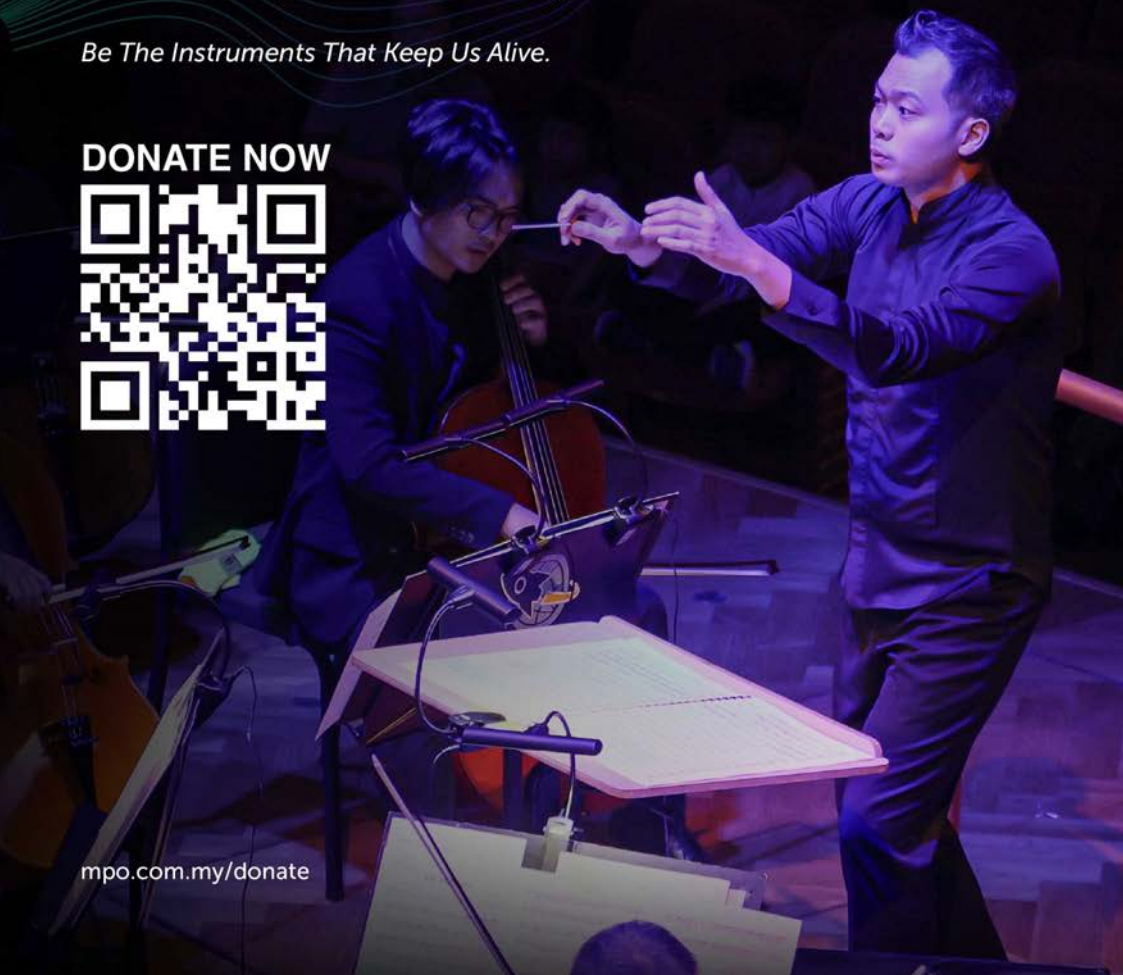
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