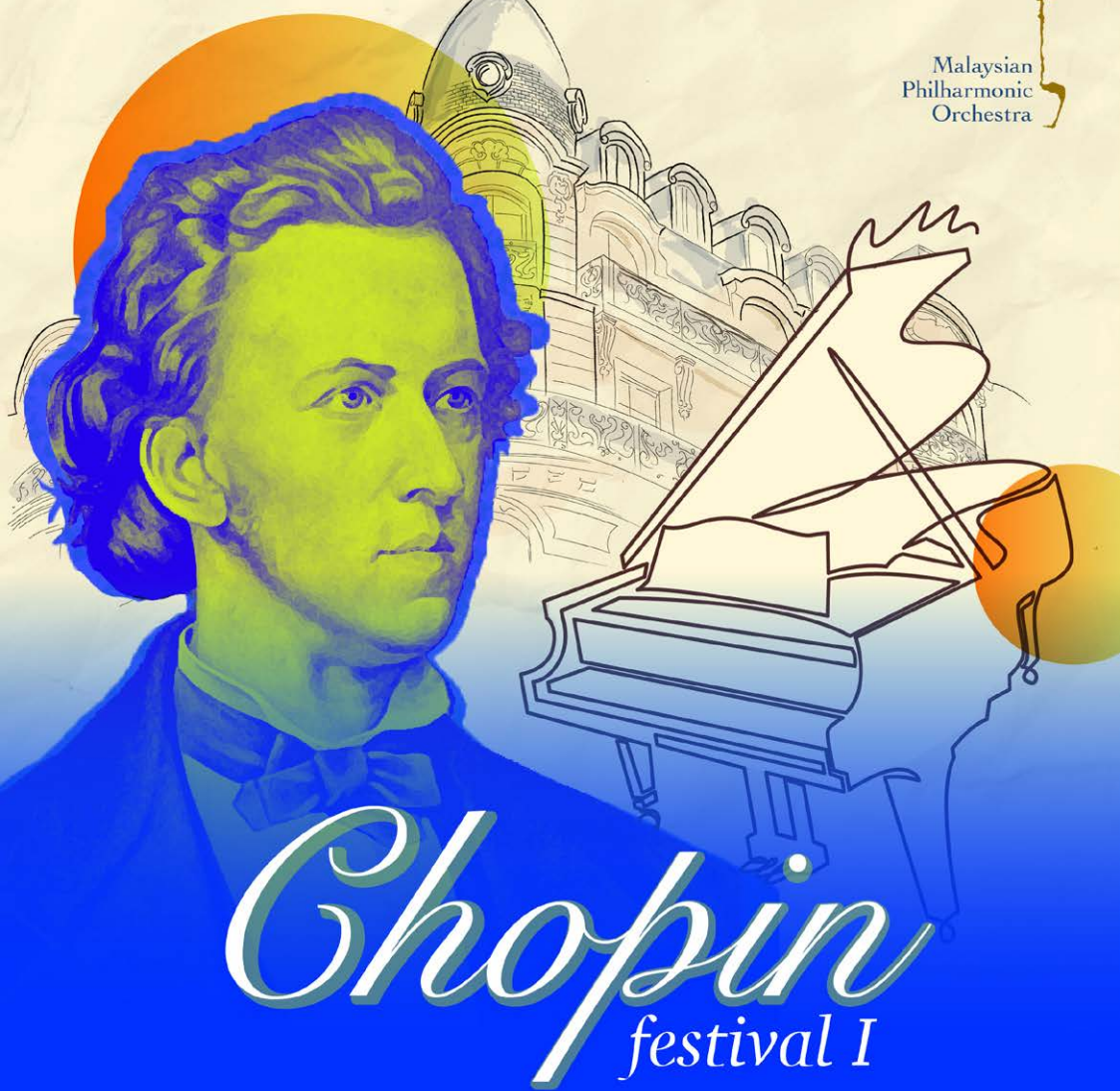


E-CONCERT PROGRAMME

Malaysian  
Philharmonic  
Orchestra



**2025 SEASON**

PERFORMANCE AT  
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS



# FRONT ROW

MPO DIGITAL CONCERT

Malaysian  
Philharmonic  
Orchestra

The background image features three women in traditional Borneo attire. The woman on the left wears a black top with gold embroidery and large hoop earrings. The woman in the center has her hair in a bun and wears a black top with a gold necklace. The woman on the right wears a blue top with a yellow sash and a yellow beaded headband. A large, ornate wooden instrument, possibly a sarung, is positioned behind them. The background is a warm, golden-brown color with intricate patterns.

## Sounds of Borneo

Celebrate Pesta Kaamatan  
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## 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 Abdillah, 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 I

Sat 16 August 2025, 8:00 pm

- 03 Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra  
05 Junichi Hirokami, conductor  
06 Melody Quah, piano

## PROGRAMME

### Negaraku

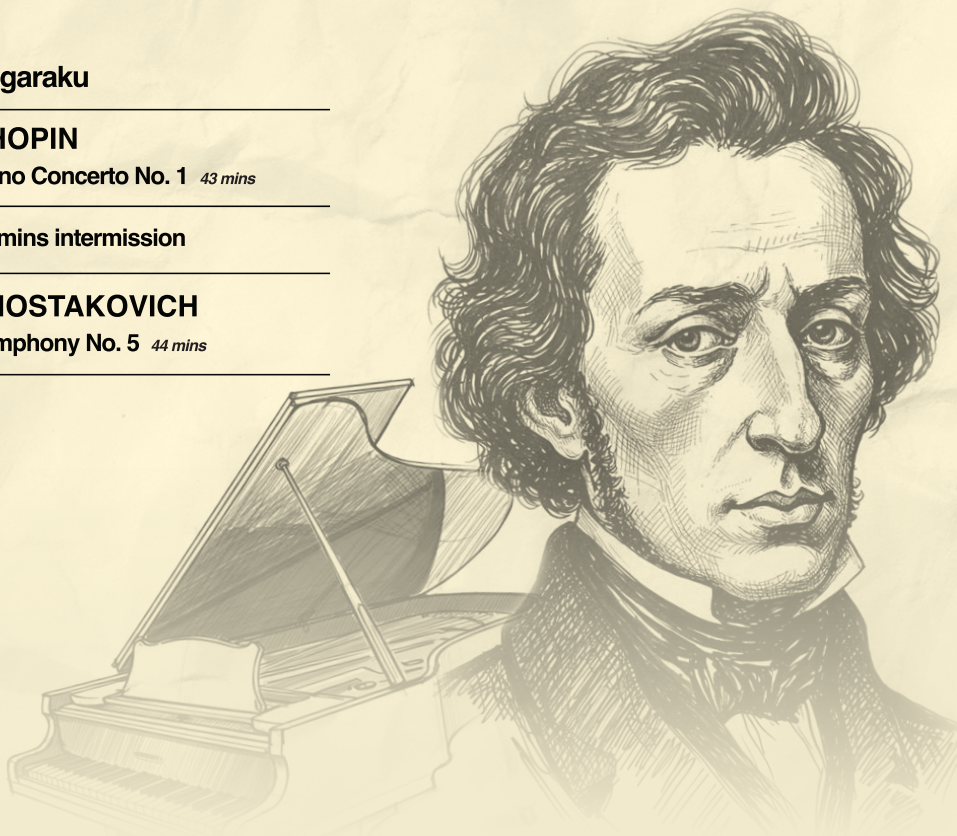
#### CHOPIN

Piano Concerto No. 1 *43 mins*

20-mins intermission

#### SHOSTAKOVICH

Symphony No. 5 *44 mins*



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A portrait of Junichi Hirokami, a middle-aged man with a bald head and a warm smile. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a white turtleneck sweater. A red pocket square is visible in his jacket. The background is dark and out of focus.

music director

# Junichi Hirokami

Born in Tokyo, Junichi Hirokami studied piano, composition and music under Atsutada Otaka before studying conducting and graduated at 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 appeared as guest conductor with major orchestras throughout 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 major orchestras including the NHK Symphony Orchestra and Saito Kinen Orchestra. He received great acclaim for his appearance with the Mito Chamber Orchestra.

Hirokami 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.

From 2008 to 2022, he achieved a golden era in Kyoto 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 Kyoto Symphony Orchestra.

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

# piano

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## Melody Quah

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Described as a “poet with titanium fingers” by the *Vancouver Sun*, Malaysian pianist Melody Quah has performed extensively on stages across Asia, Europe, Australia and North America. Her multifaceted career spans solo and collaborative performances, chamber music, education, adjudication and artistic direction.

A prizewinner of the 7<sup>th</sup> International Paderewski Competition in Bydgoszcz, Poland, she has appeared in recital at Carnegie Hall’s Weill Hall, and as chamber musician at the Kennedy Center’s Terrace Theatre. She has appeared as a soloist with orchestras worldwide including the Ku-Ring-Gai Symphony and Central Coast Symphony in Australia; the Pomeranian Philharmonic in Poland; and various ensembles in Canada and the USA such as the Richmond Philharmonic, Academy Philharmonic, Vancouver Philharmonic, Vancouver Symphony, West Coast Symphony, Penn’s Woods Festival Orchestra, Williamsport Symphony and Altoona Symphony Orchestras. In Malaysia, she has performed with the MPO at DFP.

Quah has premiered more than two dozen works by living composers, and has commissioned works for solo piano by Adeline Wong and Tazul Tajuddin (Malaysia), Parisa Sabet (Iran/Canada), Sidney Boquiren (the Philippines), Marisa Hartanto (Indonesia), Emily Koh (Singapore) and Piyawat Louilapprasert (Thailand). She has recorded music by Tom DeLio and Baljinder Sekhon.

Currently an Assistant Professor of Piano at Penn State University, Quah has served as Artist Faculty at the Nanyang International Piano Academy (Singapore) and Euro Arts Festival (Poland). She has presented masterclasses at University Sedaya College International and Universiti Teknologi MARA (Malaysia), Medan Musik School (Indonesia), Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (UK) and various universities across the USA. An active adjudicator and presenter, she contributes regularly to the Music Teachers National Association and the College Music Society. She is the current President of the Pennsylvania Music Teachers Association.

Quah earned the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University as well as graduate degrees from the Yale School of Music and The Juilliard School. She received her Bachelor of Music from the Vancouver Academy of Music and completed her high school education at the Australian Institute of Music in Sydney, Australia. Her teachers included Boris Slutsky, Peter Frankl, Matti Raekallio, Lee Kum Sing, and Snezana Panovska.

Quah is a Yamaha Artist.

## PROGRAMME NOTES

“The piano bard, the piano rhapsodist, the piano mind, the piano soul is Chopin,” wrote the Russian composer Anton Rubinstein. “Tragic, romantic, lyric, heroic, dramatic, fantastic, soulful, sweet, dreamy, brilliant, grand, simple: all possible expressions are found in his compositions, and all are sung by him upon his instrument.” This we hear in Chopin’s two piano concertos, both of which the MPO is playing this year as part of its Chopin Festival. Tonight we hear the First, and, on 11 October, the Second.

After the intermission, in Shostakovich’s towering Fifth Symphony we experience masterly grasp of symphonic growth – how volume, density, weight, and above all, tension build over long spans, so that when a climax arrives the effect is shattering. One might compare the process to traversing a mountain range, with the highest peaks providing the most stunning views. In performing this mighty symphony, the MPO commemorates the death of its composer, who died fifty years ago on 9 August 1975.

### FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN (1810 - 1849)

#### Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11 (1830)

- I. Allegro maestoso
- II. Romance: Larghetto
- III. Rondo: Vivace

### THE BACKGROUND

Between 1827 and 1831, Chopin wrote several works for piano and orchestra, including two piano concertos. The first of these was the one we now call No. 2 in F Minor; written prior to the E-Minor Concerto but published later. The E-Minor Concerto, now known as No. 1, followed. After the *Grand Polonaise* of 1830-1831, Chopin never again composed music involving the orchestra. The E-Minor Concerto received a highly successful premiere in Warsaw on 11 October 1830, with the 21-year-old composer as soloist. It was dedicated to the composer and pedagogue Friedrich Kalkbrenner, whom Chopin had long admired but only later met in Paris in 1831.

### THE MUSIC

The three movements follow the standard classical concerto format. The first opens with an orchestral introduction that presents the two principal thematic ideas – the first vigorous and sturdy, the second gentle and flowing. Both are heard initially in the violins. The orchestral introduction is expansively laid out, but once the soloist enters, the orchestra plays a decidedly subordinate role for the remainder of the movement except for a few brief interludes to reaffirm the principal themes. In the slow movement, the soloist spins out a long, quasi-improvisatory melodic line of classical elegance and beauty. A somewhat agitated central episode disturbs the tranquil atmosphere. Chopin described this movement as being “of a romantic calm and rather melancholic character. It is intended to convey the impression which one receives when the eye rests on a beloved landscape that calls up in one’s soul beautiful memories, a kind of reverie in the moonlight on a beautiful spring night.” The Finale follows without pause. It is rhythmically related to the *krakowiak*, a popular Polish dance said to have originated near the city of Krakow.



**DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906 -1975)**  
**Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 47 (1937)**

- I. Moderato
- II. Allegretto
- III. Largo
- IV. Allegro non troppo

**THE BACKGROUND**



Many of the works we today hail as masterpieces suffered difficult birth pangs. But Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony sprang into the world fully accepted. The first performance was given on 21 November 1937 in Leningrad (as St. Petersburg was called at the time), with Yevgeny Mravinsky conducting the Leningrad Philharmonic. It is a big, sturdy symphony cast in the traditional four-movement mold, lasting about three-quarters of an hour, written in a more or less familiar, easily accessible style. As such, it has become a foundation stone of the entire orchestral repertory, a symphony as important and essential as one by Beethoven, Brahms, or Tchaikovsky.

In his Fifth Symphony, the composer managed to please two entirely different, in fact, diametrically opposed, ideological fronts simultaneously: 1) Soviet officialdom, which was demanding from Shostakovich music free of "formalistic perversion," (that is, music easily intelligible to the Soviet masses) 2) those who believed in the mandate that a creative artist should produce only according to the dictates of his aesthetic impulses and personal convictions. Shostakovich subtitled his symphony "A Soviet Artist's Reply to Just Criticism" as a palliative to the heavy-handed government critics who had mercilessly criticized his opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, the ballet *The Limpid Stream*, and other works. Further for the benefit of Soviet officialdom, Shostakovich claimed that the symphony had as its theme "the making of a man. I saw man with all his experiences in the center of the composition. ... The finale is the optimistic solution of the tragically tense moments of the first movement."

Highly-placed critics and government officials swallowed the hypocrisy. The composer's true feelings were revealed to the public, at least in the West, only years later: "I never thought about any exultant finales, for what exultation could there be? I think that it is clear to everyone what happens in the Fifth. The rejoicing is forced, created under threat, as in *Boris Godounov*. It's as if someone were beating you with a stick and saying, 'your business is rejoicing, your business is rejoicing,' and you rise, shaky, and go marching off, muttering 'our business is rejoicing, our business is rejoicing.' What kind of apotheosis is that?" Lending support to this assertion is the generally accepted fact that the "exultant" finale, especially its coda, is the weakest part of the symphony.

Occupying a middle ground between the forces of the exhilarated and the bitter is the Soviet writer G. Orlov, who believes that here “Shostakovich turned to the age-old theme of man’s assertion of himself in the difficult and stubborn combat with hostile forces in the sublime theme of struggle for high ideals, for the optimistic and active perception in its contradiction and complexity.” This conforms closely to the traditional romantic view of a big symphony as a generalized portrayal of conflict and struggle leading to triumph, as seen in such works as the Fifth Symphonies of Beethoven, Tchaikovsky and Mahler.

## THE MUSIC

The symphony abounds in extended but easily recognizable and memorable themes that lend themselves to fragmentation and development. There are passages of haunting beauty (the closing pages of the first movement especially, described by one critic as “strange spatial loneliness”); pressing intensity (the inexorable build-up to the climax of the third movement); mordant wit (the cumbersome, grotesquely ponderous effect of the opening of the second movement, set off by squealing high woodwinds a moment later); strident militarism (the sardonic march in the first movement or the principal theme of the finale); and an almost unlimited number of imaginative and inventive orchestral effects: fanfares, extremes of range (the finale’s coda begins with horns in unison playing the lowest note but one ever written for the instrument), prominent use of piano and celesta, wide leaps with mischievous effects, unexpected contrasts of high/low and loud/soft, and chamber-music delicacy contrasted with massive *tutti*s. Regardless then of the ideological, philosophical or musical preconceptions and attitudes one brings to bear on Shostakovich’s Fifth Symphony, the music has shown itself capable of both absorbing and transcending them all, and in so doing, has secured for itself a secure niche in the pantheon of the world’s greatest and most popular symphonies.



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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.

# MALAYSIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA



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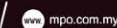
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A Cosmic Symphony



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**SAT 8:00PM**

PERFORMANCE AT  
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Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra  
Tokyo Symphony Orchestra  
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Dames of Harmonia  
Junichi Hirokami, conductor  
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**HOLST** The Planets

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**08  
OCT  
2025**

**WED 8:00PM**

PERFORMANCE AT  
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PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

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Tengku Irfan, conductor  
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**LEE SI YUAN**  
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**SIBELIUS**  
**DVOŘÁK**

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Overture  
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Symphony No. 8

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# Chopin

## festival II

**11  
OCT  
2025  
SAT 8:00PM**

PERFORMANCE AT  
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS  
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra  
Rune Bergmann, conductor  
Martín García García, piano

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Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra  
Gerard Salonga, conductor

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 including *Melody of Legends* and *Eternal Heritage*. 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.

Normal:  
RM98 RM118  
RM128 RM138

Suite:  
RM148/Seat\*  
RM158/Seat\*

*\*inclusive of light refreshments*

**Family Fun Day**

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

PERFORMANCE AT  
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS  
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

f i X d y e i n / www mpo.com.my / 603 - 2331 7007  
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**WE ACCEPT**



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MAC/ARTS/2025/MPO/SALONGA/18OCT/2025/001

# Karen Gomyo

Plays Mendelssohn

**25  
OCT  
2025**

**SAT 8:00PM**

PERFORMANCE AT  
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS  
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra  
Anna Rakitina, conductor  
Karen Gomyo, violin

**MUSSORGSKY** Khovanschina: Dawn  
on the Moscow River

**MENDELSSOHN** Violin Concerto  
in E minor

**PROKOFIEV** Romeo and Juliet  
Suites - Selections

**Normal:**  
**RM229 RM279**  
**RM329 RM379**

**Suite:**  
**RM439/Seat\***  
**RM499/Seat\***

*\*inclusive of light refreshments*

**Classical**

**Violin**

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**SPECIAL DISCOUNT**

**10%** MyKad Holder: MYKAD10 / **\*Student:** RM140 / **15%** for Senior Citizen: SENIOR15

**WE ACCEPT**



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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

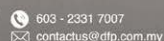
Barber of Seville: Overture  
Barber of Seville: Una voce poco fa  
L'assedio di Corinto: Giusto Ciel!  
Guillaume Tell: Overture  
Guillaume Tell: Sombre foret  
Il Turco in Italia: Non si da  
folia maggiore  
Symphony No. 4

Normal:  
RM229 RM279  
RM329 RM379

Suite:  
RM439/seat\*  
RM499/seat\*

*\*inclusive of light refreshments*

**Classical**



## SPECIAL DISCOUNT

**10%** MyKad Holder: MYKAD10 / **\*Student:** RM140 / **15%** for Senior Citizen: SENIOR15

## WE ACCEPT



WHERE EVERY BEAT TELLS A STORY

Malaysian  
Philharmonic  
Orchestra



# GUITAR SERENADE BY

## Miloš Karadaglić

**22**  
**NOV**  
**2025**  
**SAT 8:00PM**

PERFORMANCE AT  
DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS  
PETRONAS TWIN TOWERS

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra  
John Axelrod, conductor  
Miloš Karadaglić, guitar

**RIMSKY-KORSAKOV**  
**RODRIGO**  
**RAVEL**

**RAVEL**

Capriccio espagnol  
Concierto de Aranjuez  
Pavane for a Dead  
Princess  
Mother Goose

**Normal:**  
**RM229 RM279**  
**RM329 RM379**

**Suite:**  
**RM439/Seat\***  
**RM499/Seat\***

*\*inclusive of light refreshment*

**Classical** **Guitar**



### SPECIAL DISCOUNT

**10%** MyKad Holder: MYKAD10 / **\*Student:** RM140 / **15%** for Senior Citizen: SENIOR15

### WE ACCEPT



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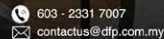
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# 20%

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minimum purchase of 3 concerts.

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\*Terms & conditions apply



WE ACCEPT



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# Don't Miss a BEAT

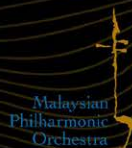
These discount set the stage for an unforgettable symphonic experienced



**JOIN THE OVATION,  
indulge in the CELEBRATION!**

\*Terms & conditions apply

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*Why we go extra miles.*

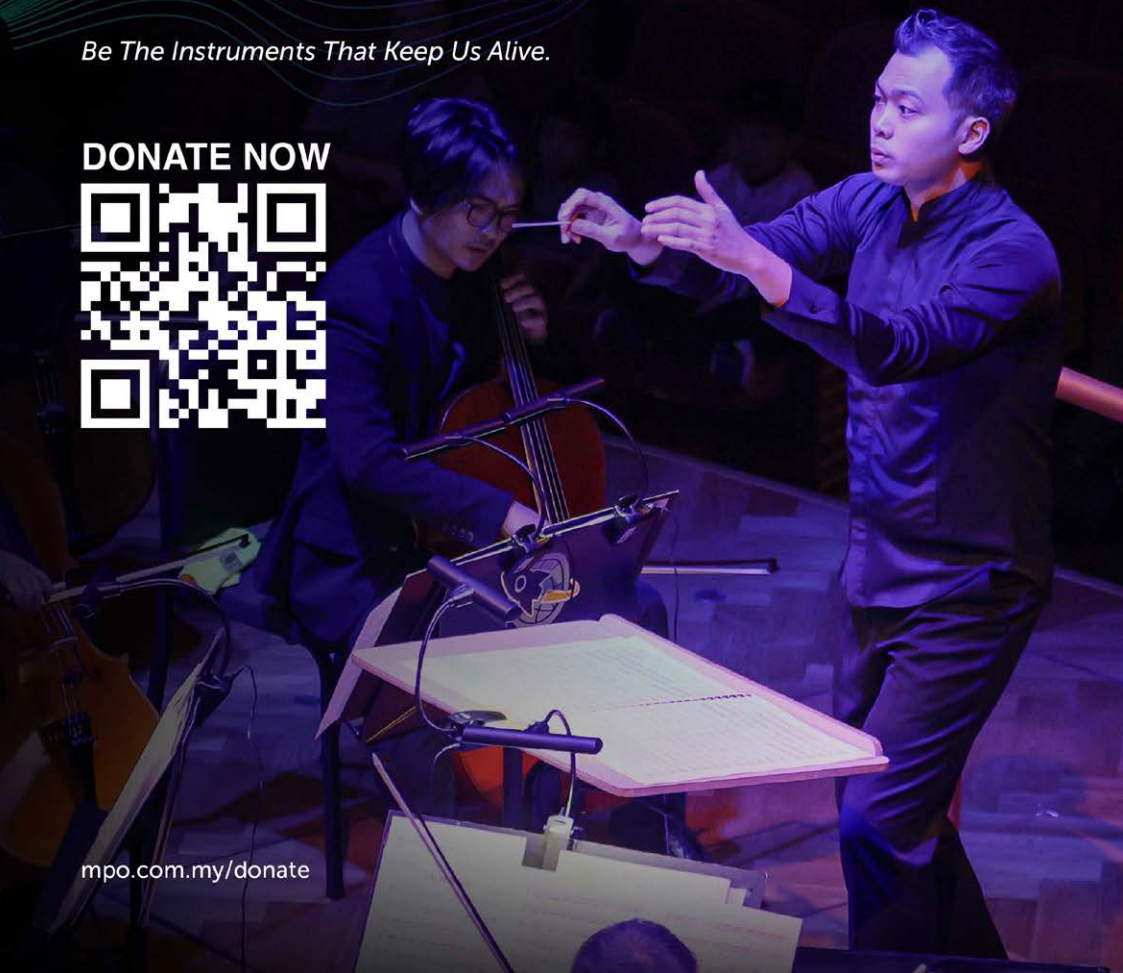
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DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS  
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

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DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS  
KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

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