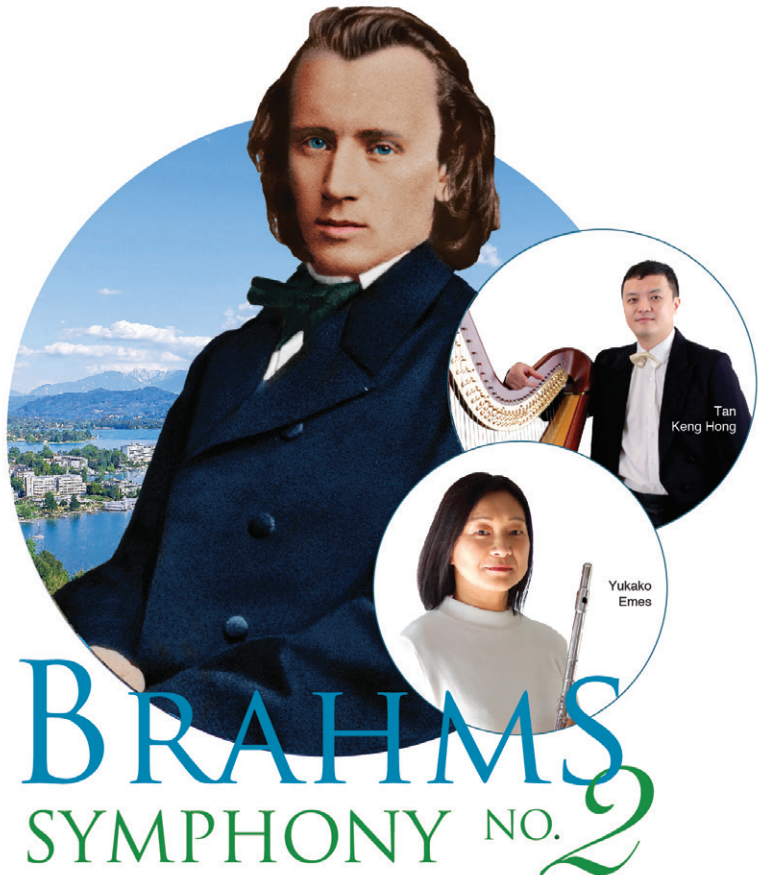


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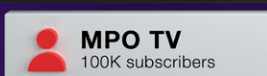
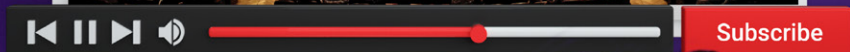
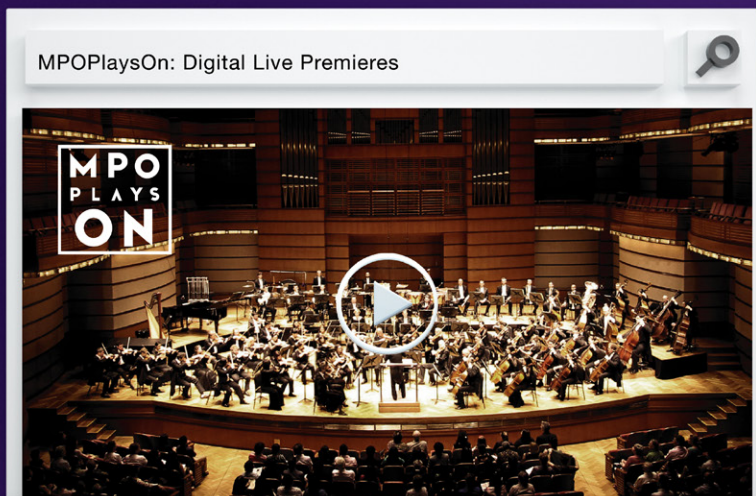


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MALAYSIAN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

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 mesmerised audiences with the MPO include SM Salim, Sheila Majid, M. Nasir, Siti Nurhaliza, Jamal Abdillah, Ella, Faizal Tahir, 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 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.

Brahms

Symphony No. 2

Tue 6 Dec 2022 8:30 pm

- 03 Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
05 Naohisa Furusawa, conductor
07 Yukako Emes, flute
07 Tan Keng Hong, harp

PROGRAMME

TONG

Ikigai (World Premiere)

C.P.E. BACH

Flute Concerto in D minor

DEBUSSY

Danse sacrée et Danse profane

20 mins intermission

BRAHMS

Symphony No. 2

Duration: Approximately 90 mins

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conductor

Naohisa

Furusawa

Naohisa Furusawa has been a member of the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO) double bass section since 2003. Born in Tokyo in 1973, he started to play the violin when he was 4 and joined his junior high school orchestra as a double bass player at 12. His first conducting experience was with this orchestra. Later, he studied double bass with Prof. Nobuo Shiga and conducting with Prof. Kazue Kamiya at Toho Gakuen School of Music (Tokyo, Japan), and with Prof. Frank Reinecke at the Mozarteum University in Salzburg.

Furusawa has performed as a double bass player with the NHK Symphony, Yomiuri Nippon Symphony, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony and other orchestras, under the direction of conductors such as Seiji Ozawa, Kazuyoshi Akiyama, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Horst Stein, Lorin Maazel, Herbert Blomstedt, Charles Dutoit, Fabio Luisi, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Mstislav Rostropovich, Paavo Järvi, Pierre Boulez and Valery Gergiev.

He conducted many youth ensembles including the MPO's Encounter Training Ensemble and the Miri Tutti Project in East Malaysia as part of the MPO's Education and Outreach Programme and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony nine times with the MAX Philharmonic Orchestra (Tokyo, Japan). In 2015, he conducted Mahler's Second Symphony with the MAX Philharmonic to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of Second World War.

Furusawa was Resident Conductor of the MPO from 2016 - 2019 and Principal Conductor of the Malaysian Philharmonic Youth Orchestra (MPYO) from 2020 - 2021. He also serves as the cover conductor for Mark Wigglesworth, Roberto Abbado, Stéphane Denève, Jun Märkl and Vladimir Ashkenazy.

The MPO, under his baton, kicked-off its 18th season in September 2016 with four sold-out concerts themed A Musical Journey in Anime featuring the works of acclaimed Japanese composer Joe Hisaishi at Dewan Filharmonik Petronas (DFP).

He conducted Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in DFP as well in August 2017 for the 60th Anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Malaysia and Japan with a combined choir consisting of choirs from The Dithyrambic Singers (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), The Choir of Gonville and Caius College (Cambridge, the United Kingdom), and The MAX Philharmonic Choir (Tokyo, Japan).

His first conducting tour with the MPO and Malaysian Pianist Tengku Irfan was in Japan at the Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall for the Asia Orchestra Week (AOW) in October 2017, a festival under Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs. He also conducted the "Side by Side" Orchestra with the MPO and Kansai Philharmonic Orchestra (Osaka, Japan) as part of AOW at the Iwaki Performing Arts Center.

He made his debut with the MPYO in the International Youth Orchestra Festivals at the Esplanade (Singapore) in December 2017, Hong Kong Cultural Centre (Hong Kong) in December 2018, and Taman Ismail Marzuki (Jakarta) in September 2019.

Furusawa and the MPO toured to Kota Kinabalu and Kuching in June 2018, Johor Bahru and Melaka in September 2018, and Dalian (China) in November 2019.



YUKAKO EMES CO-PRINCIPAL FLUTE

Yukako Emes started playing the flute at age 12. She studied flute at the Kyoto City University of Arts in Japan where she holds a Bachelor and a Master's degree. She regularly attended William Bennett's Masterclasses in Kusatsu, Japan. She pursued further studies in England with Trevor Wye for 2 years at "The Studio" and after graduating, she worked with him presenting his masterclasses and concerts in Japan as an interpreter as well as an assistant teacher and a performer. In 1998, she joined MPO as Co-Principal Flute. As one of the founding members, she has been living and working in Malaysia for 24 years.

TAN KENG HONG PRINCIPAL HARP

Born to musician parents, Tan Keng Hong played the violin and electone at 4. His harpist mother taught him to play the harp when he was 10. In just 3 years, he won the first prize at the second Malaysian Harp Competition and became the leader of a harp ensemble which performed in Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan.

Tan's first successful recital was held in the Nanyang Auditorium in Kuala Lumpur in 1993. Since then, he has performed at many charity concerts. In 1995, he pursued his studies with Professor Frank Sternefeld at the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) in the UK. He won the Yamaha Music Foundation of Europe Scholarship Competition in 1998 in London, the RNCM Saloon Prize in Manchester, and was the finalist in the Franz Josef Reinl International Harp Competition in Vienna.

Currently, Tan is the Principal Harp of the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO). With the MPO, he has collaborated with numerous international artists including conductor Lorin Maazel, soprano Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and violinist Joshua Bell. He has also performed with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and the West Australian Symphony Orchestra as a guest harpist. In August 2019, Tan performed as MPO's soloist under conductor Maestro Jun Markl.

Other than performing, Tan is exploring healing music. In 2005, he attended the Lyon & Healy Harp Therapy Conference in Salt Lake City, USA. He has given talks on healing music to companies such as PETRONAS, ExxonMobil Corporation and Mitsubishi Corporation.



PROGRAMME NOTES

Tonight's concert comprises music from four different centuries. From the eighteenth, we hear a delightful flute concerto by one of Johann Sebastian Bach's most talented sons, Carl Philipp Emanuel, who wrote in a style more like that of Mozart or Haydn than of his father. Next comes a big romantic symphony from the nineteenth century, the Second of Brahms, one of his sunniest works. From the early twentieth century we hear music of Debussy featuring the harp, and from our own century, a work by Malaysian composer Eugene Tong receiving its first performance at this concert.

EUGENE TONG (b. 1994)

Ikigai (2021)

Malaysian composer Eugene Tong comes from Sabah, where he studied music at the Sabah Institute of Art. He is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in composition and arranging at the Academi Seni Budaya dan Warisan Kebangsaan. Tong grew up playing the trumpet in various bands, in which capacity he twice won the Jazz Talent Search (2013, 2014) with his bands Jazz United and Goofy Groovy. He currently plays in the RTM big band. As a composer, his submission for the 2015 ASEAN Theme Song Competition was shortlisted as one of the top ten finalists.



The title of the work we hear tonight is derived from two Japanese words, *iki* (生き), meaning alive or life, and *gai* (甲斐), meaning value or worth. Together they embody the concept of “that which gives your life meaning, purpose, or worth”. Inspired by the film music of Japanese composers like Takashi Yoshimatsu, Ryuichi Sakamoto, Joe Hisaishi, Yoko Kanno, and Hiroyuki Sawano, Tong explains that “the flow of the music [in *Ikigai*] resonates in creating an image of how this composition would sound with the idea of *ikigai*. The music captures the urge to find the right answer through self-reflection, to overcome life's obstacles, and to motivate oneself always to remember how precious and important life is”.

CARL PHILIPP EMANUEL BACH (1714-1788)

Flute Concerto in D min

- I. Allegro
- II. Un poco andante
- III. Allegro di molto

Carl Philipp Emanuel was the fifth child and second surviving son of Johann Sebastian. He proudly claimed to have had no other teacher in composition and performance than his celebrated father. His first major appointment was at the court of Frederick the Great in Berlin (1740-68), from where he moved to Hamburg for the last twenty years of his life.

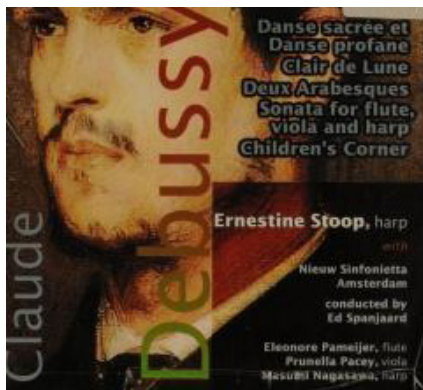
Like his father and many other composers of the day, C.P.E. Bach often recycled his music. Hence, the “flute” concerto we hear tonight was originally one of the composer’s many (about fifty!) keyboard concertos, dating from 1747. However, it is not certain whether Bach himself created the flute version or whether it was done by another hand. Obviously, certain adaptations had to be made to accommodate the single-line melody instrument - matters of embellishment, harmony, and rhythm, among others. Some measures were added, others deleted. But overall, we find a work that delivers an unusual level (for its time) of heroic stature and expansiveness in the first movement, harmonic adventures and finely decorated cantabile writing in the second, and fiery virtuosity in the third.



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CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862-1918)

Danse sacrée et Danse profane for harp and strings (1904)



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In 1897, the Parisian piano maker Pleyel sought to simplify the rather complicated mechanism of the so-called “double-action” pedal harp. Pleyel’s invention was the “chromatic” harp, consisting of a separate string for every pitch and no pedals. In 1904, Pleyel commissioned Debussy to write a test piece for students of this instrument at the Brussels Conservatoire. Debussy responded with the *Danse sacrée et Danse profane*, two short pieces to be played without pause. As the harp is one of the oldest of all instruments, Debussy attempted to preserve its ancient association by using modal harmonies and evoking perhaps some of the dignified rituals of Classical Greece.

The first performance was given in Paris on 6 November 1904 at the Concerts Colonne with Lucille Wurmser-Delcourt soloist. The dedication went to Gustave Lyon, the actual designer of the chromatic harp. The chromatic harp was not deemed a success, and it became obsolete within two decades. But the exquisite *Danse sacrée et Danse profane* has survived, and is now a repertory favourite played on the standard pedal harp.

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 -
- IV. Allegro con spirito

After the massiveness and severity of Brahms's 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's 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.



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, sped up, played upside down, buried in the texture or prominently featured. The second theme is one of Brahms's most glorious, sung by violas and cellos as only these instruments can sing.

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 (B) 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. The coda calls for special comment. Brahms usually made scant use of trombones and tuba, writing for these instruments not only with skill but also with reserve. Yet from time to time, he calls upon them for striking effects, and one such moment occurs in the Second Symphony's coda, a passage as thrilling for audiences as it is for trombonists, every one of whom looks forward to a role in bringing this joyous work to its blazing D-major conclusion.



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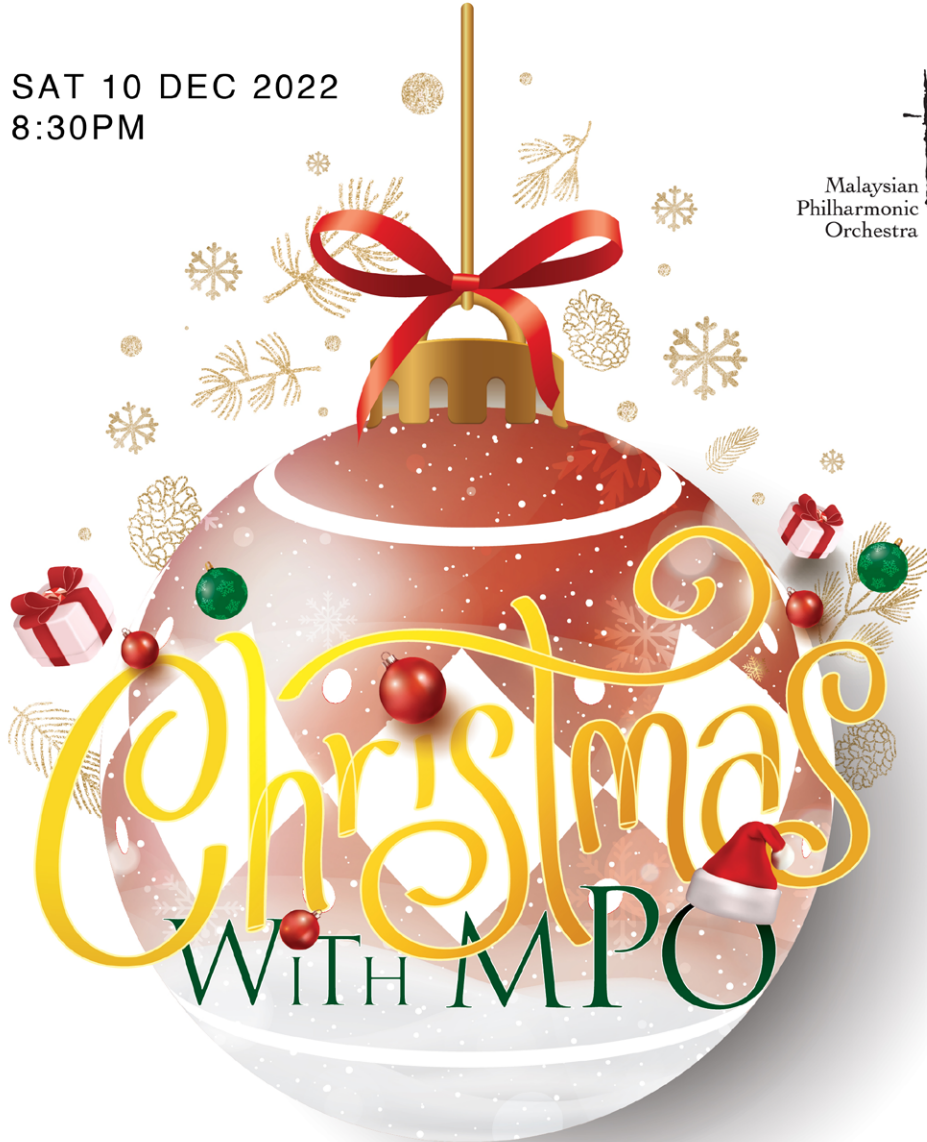
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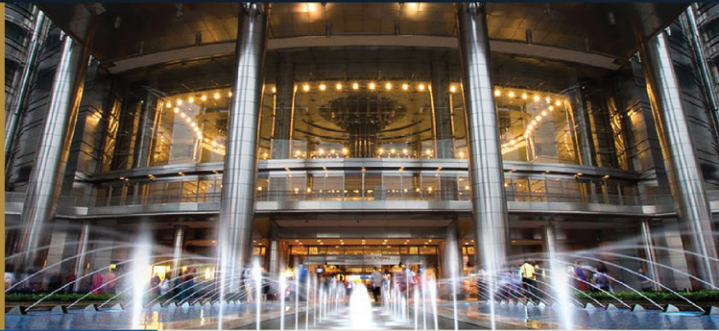
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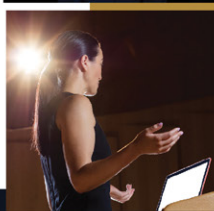
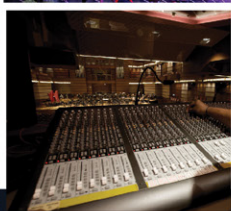
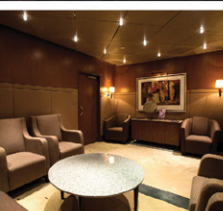
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