

Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra

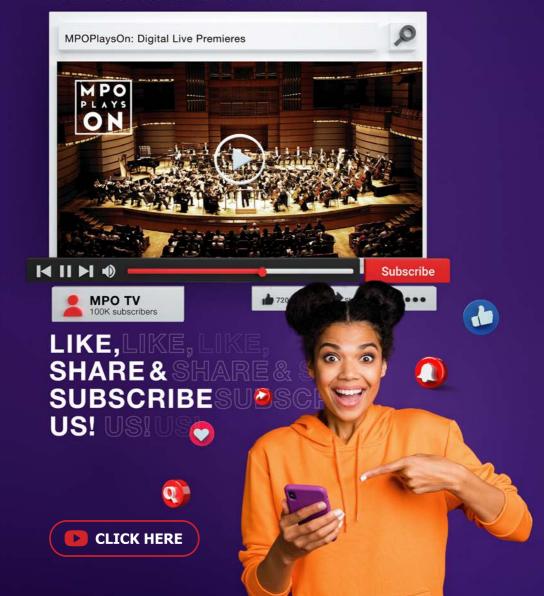
# DOTAK DOUBLE

**2025 SEASON** 

PERFORMANCE AT DEWAN FILHARMONIK PETRONAS

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#### MAI AYSIAN **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.

## Dvořák Double

Sat 8 Feb 2025, 8:00 pm

- Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra
- 05 Junichi Hirokami, conductor

#### **PROGRAMME**

#### Negaraku

#### DVOŘÁK

Carnival Overture 10 mins

#### DVOŘÁK

Slavonic Dances No. 1 4 mins

#### DVOŘÁK

Slavonic Dances No. 2 6 mins

#### DVOŘÁK

Slavonic Dances No. 8 3 mins

20-mins intermission

#### DVOŘÁK

Symphony No. 9 in E minor "From the New World" 40 mins

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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 NHK Symphony Orchestra and the 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.

From 2008 to 2022, he has achieved a golden era in Kyoto as Chief Conductor as well as Music and Artistic Advisor of the Kyoto Symphony Orchestra for 14 years. In 2015, he received an award at the Suntory Music Award with Kyoto Symphony Orchestra.

Currently, he serves as Friend of JPO / Artistic Advisor at Japan Philharmonic Orchestra and Friendship Conductor at Sapporo Symphony Orchestra. He was Artistic Leader at Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa for the 2022/23 season. He serves as professor of conducting division at Tokyo College of Music.



#### Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95, "From the New World" (1892 - 1893)

I. Adagio – Allegro

II. Largo

III. Scherzo: Molto vivace

IV. Allegro con fuoco

#### THE BACKGROUND



Dvořák's Symphony No. 9, the "New World Symphony" to most listeners, received its world premiere in New York's Carnegie Hall on 16 December 1893. Although the "New World" Symphony was written in the New World, it is not specifically about the New World. True, there are themes that could be construed as being "authentic" songs of the American Indians or African-Americans, but in fact, as in Dvořák's Slavonic works, he did not actually quote directly from folksong but rather composed his own based on study of the source material.

One "New World" aspect of this symphony is the role played by Longfellow's epic poem The Song of Hiawatha, which Dyořák had read in Czech translation some thirty years earlier. He re-read the poem in America and claimed that the scene of Minnehaha's funeral in the forest inspired the Largo movement of his symphony, while the Indians' Dance was responsible for the Scherzo. Dvořák actually visited Hiawatha's land (lowa and southern Minnesota), but the symphony was essentially complete by this time, so whatever influence Hiawatha had on him was purely literary, not geographical.

#### THE MUSIC



From the New World alone of Dvořák's nine symphonies opens with a slow introduction. Within the space of just 23 measures, the composer incorporates moods of melancholic dreaming and tense foreboding, startling eruptions and a surging melodic line. The main Allegro section is launched by horns in an arpeggiated fanfare motif in E minor, a motif that will reappear in all remaining movements as well. Several additional themes follow.

The Largo contains one of the most famous themes in all classical music. Many listeners know it as the song "Goin' home", but Dvořák did not borrow the theme from a spiritual; it is his own, and the words were superimposed after the symphony was written by one of his students, William Arms Fisher. Although Dvořák himself claimed the movement was inspired by a passage from Longfellow's poem, Otakar Sourek (himself a Czech), believes the listener is equally entitled to imagine instead Dvořák longing for his homeland: "the melancholy, the wide expanses of the South Bohemian countryside, his garden at Vysoka, the deep solemn sighing of the pine forests, and the broad, fragrant fields".

The Scherzo is one of the most energetic and exhilarating movements Dvořák ever wrote, and borders on the virtuosic as well for the dazzling orchestral display it entails. The contrasting Trio section is a charming rustic dance introduced by the woodwind choir and set to the lilting long-short-long rhythm of which Schubert was so fond.

The finale too contains its share of melodic fecundity and inventiveness. The development section develops not only material from this movement but from the three previous ones as well, especially the main theme of the Largo, which is fragmented and tossed about with almost reckless abandon. The grand climax of the long coda brings back the chordal sequence that opened the Largo, but now painted in broad, majestic strokes in the full brass and woodwind sections. The final chord is a surprise - not a predictably stentorian chord played fortissimo by the full orchestra, but a lovely, warm sonority of winds alone, a sound that lingers gently on the ears.

#### **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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Junichi Hirokami

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Gerard Salonga

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- \*Keng Xin Tian \*Yasuko Furusho
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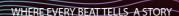






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Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra

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