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Night for music lovers

Michelle Sheares

WORLD class cellist Yo Yo Ma and the Asian Youth Orchestra (AYO) will perform at the Malaysian Gala Performance at the Putra World Trade Centre tomorrow night.

Fresh from a three-week rehearsal camp sponsored by the Malaysia Youth Orchestra Foundation (MYOF), they promised to make the night an occasion to remember.

Five Malaysian students will join 97 other students from 11 countries in Asia to perform at the gala performance.

MYOF patron, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali described the project as nurturing, and will expose homegrown talents to the gifted members of the AYO.

"The spirit of collaboration and pursuit of excellence through the universal language of music will certainly reinforce the message of national and international cooperation and unity," she said.

The AYO performance will include a selection of the following from French, German and British composers: Hector Berlioz's Le Corsaire Overture, Edward Elgar's Cello Concerto and Enigma Variations and Richard Strauss' Don Quixote.

Yo Yo Ma's performance is especially committed to contemporary American music, premiering works by a diverse group of composers, ranging from Stephen Albert to Peter Lieberman and John Williams.

Among the guests of honour at the grand event will be Dr Siti Hasmah, Acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Datin Seri Dr Wan Azizah Dr Wan Ismail, MYOF chairman Mirzan Mahathir, who is also the organising committee chairman of the 1997 AYO Malaysia programme.

Following tomorrow night's performance, the AYO will be in Hong Kong where they will be performing at the historic reunification ceremony on July 1.

A special composition by Tun Dan - Heaven, Earth and Man - will be performed at the ceremony.

Following that, the AYO will embark on a tour of China, South Korea and Japan.

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