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Philharmonic Orchestra puts on performance for royalty

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - The Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Ja'afar, Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Najihah, Sultan of Perak Raja Azlan Shah, Raja Permaisuri Perak Tuanku Bainun and Commonwealth Games Federation president Prince Edward of Britain, attended a royal performance by the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra tonight at the Philharmonic Hall, Petronas Twin Towers.

The concert, held in conjunction with the Commonwealth Games, was co-hosted by Petronas and Sukom Ninety Eight Berhad.

The orchestra, led by music director Kees Bakels, performed a wide-ranging repertoire including a medley of Games songs, Let's Join Our Hand, Let's Make It Great and Forever As One.

The orchestra also accompanied soprano Regina Nathan in a selection of arias from Italian and French operas.

Some 500 guests including Cabinet Ministers, dignitaries, ambassadors, Commonwealth Games organising committee office-bearers, cultural attaches and the public witnessed the gala performance.

The 105-piece orchestra was established in April last year. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, is the orchestra's patron.

The Petronas Philharmonic Hall, at the foot of the 88-storey Twin Towers, features an adjustable ceiling that moves according to the acoustical conditions required by a fully-staffed orchestra or solo pianist.

A 44-stop pipe organ, stretching from the floor to the ceiling, towers over the orchestra pit.

The entire hall rests on thick pads that cocoon it from the din of shoppers striding through the country's largest shopping mall, Suria KLCC, next door.

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