

Press Release vol.2

November 2015 - Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra



Tokyo Phil & Seoul Phil Combine To Celebrate Japan–South Korea Friendship

*Conducted by Maestro Myung-Whun Chung for
50th Anniversary of Restored Diplomatic Relations*

Two top orchestras of Japan and South Korea, the Tokyo Philharmonic and the Seoul Philharmonic, will combine into a single orchestra conducted by Maestro Myung-Whun Chung in celebration of the 50th anniversary of restored diplomatic relations between the two countries. Concerts will be held in Seoul on Dec 22 and Tokyo on Dec 26, with some 260 musicians on stage.

Each orchestra will contribute roughly half of the instrumentalists on stage, bringing with them both their unique cultural backgrounds and shared inspiration on the common theme of music and friendship, setting high expectations for an extraordinarily powerful and thrilling performance.

The program centerpiece, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, is rooted in the theme of friendship. The voice parts, which are a major milestone in the history of the symphony form, begin dramatically with "O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!" ("Oh friends, not these tones!"). These first words are Beethoven's own, adding all the more emphasis to the element of friendship that is in the Friedrich Schiller poem of the main libretto.



Maestro Chung has been Music Director of the Seoul Philharmonic since 2006. He was Special Artistic Advisor of the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra from 2001 to 2009, and has been its Honorary Conductor Laureate since 2010. A great passion of Maestro Chung's has always been the power of music to bring people together in friendship.

"When you think about art," said Chung, "the great works of art, one of reasons why they are so great is because they surpass any of these kinds of boundaries made by politics or by geography or even just by history, and they go directly to number one, which is the human. So this is why I think that this music can play an important role because we are forced to and gladly forget what country we are from when we play this music together. There is not much like this in our world, not so many things that can say: With this we can forget all of politics or even history, and just go straight to humanity."

On conducting the top orchestras of two countries on one stage, Chung remarked on the deeper realization of meaning in the word "concert." It contains the meaning of friendship, and through all the work of preparation and thrilling culmination of performance, one of the most intense feelings is the desire for the friendship to grow forever into the future.

The “Ode to Joy” chorale of the Ninth Symphony declares famously through Schiller’s poem that “all men are brothers” truly in the sense that all of humanity are bound to love if not yet bound by it, and compelled to love as a family. “Be embraced you millions!” (“Seid umschlungen, Millionen!”) the chorale concludes, ending on “Joy, beautiful spark of divinity!” (“Freude, schöner Götterfunken!”) in profound certainty that it is to be shared by all.

Concert Information

Dec 22, Tue, 2015 (20:00 start) / Sejong Center for the Performing Arts, Seoul

Dec 26, Sat, 2015 (14:00 start) / Bunkamura Orchard Hall

- Soprano: Ju-Young Hong
- Alto: Makiko Yamashita
- Tenor: Charles Kim
- Baritone: Teruhiko Komori
- Chorus: The Freude Choir of Beethoven’s 9th (Seoul Metropolitan Chorus, Anyang Civic Chorale, Seoul Motet Choir, the New National Theater Tokyo Chorus, and more)

Program: Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 in D minor "Choral", op. 125

Ticket Information (Japan performance)

Type/price

SS:¥15,000 S:¥10,000 A:¥8,000 B:¥6,000 C:¥4,000 Students:¥1,000

Purchase

- Tokyo Philharmonic Ticket Service 03-5353-9522

Organization (Korea performance)

- Presented by: Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, SBS, Sejong Center for the Performing Arts
- Supported by: Seoul Metropolitan Government

Organization (Japan performance)

- Presented by: Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra
- Co-Presented by: The Japan Foundation
- Supported by: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Japan, Embassy of Japan in Korea, Japan-Korea Economic Association
- In cooperation with: Bunkamura

Profiles

◇ Myung-Whun Chung (Honorary Conductor Laureate of the Tokyo Philharmonic / Music Director of the Seoul Philharmonic)



Born in Seoul, 1953. Debuted as Music Director of the Paris Opera Bastille in 1989 and since then has led and conducted many of the great orchestras of the world, including the Vienna Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic, Teatro La Fenice, Vienna State Opera and many more. In 2001 he was appointed Special Artistic Adviser of the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra and is now Honorary Conductor Laureate. He was appointed Musical Director of the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra Music Director in 2006. His passions include nurturing the young musicians of Asia and promoting peace in the region.

◇Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra

Korea's first western classical orchestra, founded in 1945. Appointed Maestro Myung-Whun Chung as Musical Director in 2006. Renowned through tours in both Asia and Europe, and in a five-year recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon.

◇Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra

Japan's first western classical orchestra, founded in 1911. Celebrated its 100th anniversary with a world tour that included New York, Madrid, Paris, London, Singapore and Bangkok, to acclaim in more than 80 reviews.

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