



MEDIA RELEASE

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BRIEF ENCOUNTERS: A MUSICAL AFFAIR Singapore meets Austria in a series of concerts

SINGAPORE 28 July 2017 - Singapore will truly be filled with the sound of music this September when two Austrian choirs and an award-winning Singapore pianist take centre stage in a series of performances at the Esplanade and Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music.

The highlight of this series is *Brief Encounters: A Musical Affair*, a one-night only concert on 3 September at Esplanade's Concert Hall featuring musical epics performed by one of Singapore's most promising pianists, Churen Li, 22, who has been named a Yamaha and Bösendorfer Artist, and Chorus Sine Nomine, a popular vocal ensemble in Austria which has been heard in more than 11 countries. The choir will be here in Singapore for the first time and accompanied by the Metropolitan Festival Orchestra.

Says Mr Phan Ming Yen, director of Global Cultural Alliance (GCA), the arts and cultural not-for-profit organisation spearheading the performances: "Central to GCA's work is the sharing of cultures within and beyond Singapore to countries around the world. In this, GCA is glad to be able to bring two Austrian choirs to Singapore this September, presenting different aspects of European musical culture in partnership with Singapore musicians and also with the local music community. The music that the two choirs will be performing and the activities which the choirs are involved in will allow for different levels of engagement with the Singapore audiences."

With *Brief Encounters: A Musical Affair*, the concert will open with Churen Li as the soloist in Rachmaninoff's beloved and popular Piano Concerto No. 2 that came into popular imagination through the award winning 1945 David Lean film, *Brief Encounter*. Li will play on a Bösendorfer 290 Imperial, a flagship model of Bösendorfer and one of the few concert grand pianos in the world with 97 keys. Dubbed the "Rolls-Royce of pianos", it is the first time that the Bösendorfer Imperial is played at the Esplanade Concert Hall. The piano is a loan from the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, where Li graduated from. Li has recently attained her Master's degree in Music at the Yale School of Music.

In the second part of the concert, Chorus Sine Nomine will perform Schubert's grand and massive but rarely heard Mass No. 6 in E-flat and three shorter choral works, one of them being Hubert Parry's *Blest Pair of Sirens* which was sung at the royal wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton.

Commenting on the repertoire, Mr Johannes Hiemetsberger, founder and conductor of Chorus Sine Nomine shares that "the great mass of Schubert is a milestone in Austrian music history and is one of the most beautiful pieces of romantic sacred music to "export" from our "music country"."

The choir was formed in 1991 and has won first prizes in eminent competitions in Vienna and Europe, including Let the Peoples Sing, an international choir competition organized by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), under Mr Hiemetsberger's artistic directorship. Mr Hiemetsberger serves as an associate professor for choirs and ensemble conducting at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna.

The second choir in the series is the A-cappella-Chor Villach which hails from the Carinthia region in Austria.

Elaborates Mr Phan: "With A-cappella-Chor Villach, we see an Austrian choir engaging with the Singapore community. Through their performances at the Enabling Village, a free concert at Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music and a talk by their conductor, we are able to present Austrian folk culture in an accessible manner to Singapore audiences".

A-cappella-Chor Villach's first appearance is at the Enabling Village, an integrated public space built for the disabled community, on 1 September where the choir will be part of a storytelling festival, Story Carnival. The choir founded in 1855 will also be performing at Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music in a concert entitled *Landscapes of Heaven and Earth* on 2 September. The programme include works by Bach, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Schubert, Mozart and Strauss as well as well-loved folk songs from Carinthia and the region. A talk by Professor Helmut Wulz, conductor of A-cappella-Chor Villach is scheduled on 5 September at the recital studio of Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music.

Juergen Primus, vice chairman of A-cappella-Chor Villach, sums up the intent best: "For us, it is not only our third journey to lovely Singapore, but also a musical voyage that we bring our newfound friends in Singapore with, through several centuries and the miscellaneous styles of music and worlds of sounds. We are glad to bring the music lovers of the country on to this journey of joy, emotions and unforgettable impressions."

For details on the series of concerts and talk by Chorus Sine Nomine and A-cappella-Chor Villach, please refer to the enclosed Event Listing.

For details on Brief Encounters: A Musical Affair programme and performers please refer to Annexes 1 – 2 respectively.

For more information, please contact:

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About Global Cultural Alliance

Global Cultural Alliance (GCA) is a Singapore-based not-for-profit creative enterprise that serves as a cultural catalyst between arts, culture and businesses. We create arts and culture-related platforms that enhances exchanges and dialogues between communities within and across countries. GCA is a wholly-owned subsidiary of The RICE Company Limited.

Event Listing

Featuring: CHORUS SINE NOMINE	
Event:	Brief Encounters: A Musical Affair
Synopsis:	Austria meets Singapore for a brief musical rendezvous when Chorus Sine Nomine, an award-winning Viennese concert choir performs alongside Yamaha and Bosendorfer Artist Churen Li and the Metropolitan Festival Orchestra for a one-night only concert at the Esplanade Concert Hall. Brief

	Encounter features an ethereal repertoire of epic classics such as Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18, Brahms's Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen and more!
Date:	3rd September 2017
Time:	7.30 pm - 10 pm
Venue:	Esplanade Concert Hall
Ticketing:	I Tickets are priced at \$18*, \$25*, \$40*, \$60* (*excludes booking fee) All SISTIC Channels (https://www.sistic.com.sg/events/caffair0917)
Featuring: A-CAPPELLA CHOR VILLACH	
Event:	A-cappella-Chor Villach at Story Carnival at Enabling Village
Date:	1 September 2017
Time:	12.30pm - 1.20pm
Venue:	Enabling Village Auditorium
Ticketing:	Free admission
Event:	Landscapes of Heaven and Earth With A-cappella-Chor Villach
Synopsis:	Journey through the boisterous gaiety of village life to the spiritual yearning of the great composers with the enchanting voices of A cappella Chor Villach, the 162-year-old choir directed by Professor Helmut Wulz from Austria returns to Singapore for the third time since their last concerts in 2007 (NUS) and 2008 (Esplanade). The programme will include works by Bach, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Schubert, Mozart and Strauss as well as well-loved folk songs from Carinthia and the region.
Date:	2 September 2017
Time:	7.30 pm - 10 pm
Venue:	Concert Hall, Yong Siew Toh Conservatory

Ticketing:	Free Admission. Register via https://www.eventbrite.sg/e/landscapes-of-heaven-and-earth-with-a-cappella-chor-villach-tickets-35571182364
Event:	Folk Songs and Austrian Singing Traditions: A Talk by Professor Helmut Wulz
Date:	5 September
Time:	5.30 pm - 6.30pm
Venue:	Recital Studio, Yong Siew Toh Conservatory
Ticketing:	Free Admission. Register via https://www.eventbrite.sg/e/forum-series-folk-songs-and-austrian-singing-traditions-tickets-35928492087

