

Concert Hall Classics – RTHK's Treasured Recordings of Live Performances

音樂廳經典 — 香港電台珍貴現場錄音

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To celebrate the 90 Years of Broadcasting in Hong Kong, Radio 4 has selected four historic performances out of their decades of recordings for weekly airing in the month of October. These performances, one from each decade in the 1950s through the 1980s, are not just musical notes of the past, they are musical milestones and key components of the city's collective memory.

6/10 (Sat) 8pm

Fou Ts'ong and Hong Kong Youth Symphony Orchestra

The first concert in the series is a live performance by the Hong Kong Youth Symphony Orchestra recorded at the City Hall Concert Hall on 21 October 1979. It was the sound of 90 young players selected from 2,500 instrumentalists from 11 to 24 years of age under the new Music Office founded only two years earlier. Coached by conductor Thomas Wang, the group had just returned from an extensive tour of the UK to perform this concert as a part of the Fourth Asian Arts Festival. The programme started with the Overture to Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, followed by two concertos, Mozart's 25th and Beethoven's First, with Fou Ts'ong as the piano soloist. It was the time of China's reform era, and optimism was in the air for the pianist as much as for the Hong Kong youngsters, among whom some are now masters in their own right, including Ivan Chan, Yang Helan, Frederick Lau, Joanna Lee, Homer Li, Chiu Kai-keung, Ng Ka-ming, to name a few. Chan, then a teenage violinist and now a senior lecturer of strings at The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts after a successful career with the Miami String Quartet, remembers the *Meistersinger*: "I was struck by its grandeur and was completely blown away by the sound and sheer volume that the brass section was capable of generating." As for his part in the Rossini Third Sonata for string quartet performed between the concertos, "it really was the precursor to my career in chamber music."



▲ Pianist Fou Ts'ong in 1988
1988年的鋼琴家傅聰



▲ A newspaper clipping of *Wah Kiu Yat Po* on 29 June 1958 featuring the Cantonese Opera Stars Gala to celebrate 30 Years of Broadcasting in Hong Kong
1958年6月29日的《華僑日報》介紹香港電台三十週年粵劇紅伶滙

13/10 (Sat) 8pm

30 Years of Broadcasting: Cantonese Opera Stars Gala

The second historic concert was the star-studded night of Cantonese Opera Stars Gala recorded on 30 June 1958, celebrating 30 Years of Radio Hong Kong's broadcast. It could well be an unprecedented fanfare to feature not one or two but seven Cantonese operatic legends to perform one after another. The list started with Sun Ma Si-tseng singing his signature work *Emperor Guangxu's Night Mourning of His Concubine Zhen*, followed by Fong Yim-fun, Mak Ping-wing, Tam Sin-hung, Ho Fei-fan, Tang Bik-wan, and Leung Sing-po. These performances testify to the notion that the 1950s was the golden era for Cantonese opera. It is also noteworthy that these masters were accompanied by two ensembles led by equally legendary bandleaders. It is rare in those days to see names of musicians as in Wan Chi-chung's 8-member band and Lo Ka-chi's 17-member band. A likely reason for the full rosters was the new policy adopted by Radio Hong Kong around 1957 to air only stars and professional musicians, a major departure from previous air-time for amateur music groups possibly due to the new Societies Ordinance. This concert is a case in point.

20/10 (Sat) 8pm

City Hall's First Concert: London Philharmonic Orchestra

The London Philharmonic Orchestra's historic concert that opened the Hong Kong City Hall in 1962 is a well-known event. But who attended the five concerts under the baton of Sir Malcolm Sargent, much less the Inaugural Concert on 4 March 1962? Former legislator Edward Ho was there, first as a Hong Kong Philharmonic violinist and HKU architecture student performing acoustics tests before the launch, and then in the audience for the London Philharmonic. "With the new hall, I could experience for the first time a major, world class orchestra in the right setting. Karajan and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (VPO) played in the Lee Theatre!" Ho exclaims, referring to the 1959 VPO concert in Hong Kong. In addition to the full programme of works by Ireland, Vaughan Williams, Stravinsky, and Sibelius, the broadcast will also include an exclusive interview with Maestro Sargent on his first visit to Hong Kong as a part of their Asian tour celebrating London Philharmonic's 30th anniversary.



▲ Malcolm Sargent conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra in Hong Kong City Hall in 1962
沙俊1962年指揮倫敦愛樂樂團為香港大會堂開幕禮演出



27/10 (Sat) 8pm

Central Philharmonic Orchestra's Hong Kong Debut

The last historic concert featured in this month is the first of the three concerts given by the Central Philharmonic Orchestra at the City Hall Concert Hall in 1986. It had been a 30-year wait for China's top orchestra, founded in 1956, to showcase a western repertoire to a non-mainland audience for the first time. Under the baton of Maestro Li Delun, the 1 September programme started with *Moonlight Reflected in Erquan*, a traditional erhu piece orchestrated for strings, which had its premiere under Li with the visiting Philadelphia Orchestra in 1973. No orchestras played the melancholy mood as well as the 60-plus Central Philharmonic string players, many of whom were erhu masters. Professor David Gwilt noted that the performance always had 'a beguiling lilt to the rhythms and, in the melody, with the little slides and thrills of authentic erhu playing.' The next two works were the real test for the Chinese players. If Gwilt felt the Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 was too slow, despite brilliant playing by pianist Shi Shucheng on a 'badly out-of-tune' piano, the Shostakovich Fifth Symphony 'worked towards a magnificently forceful conclusion'. This live performance may well be Li's only surviving recording of Shostakovich's Fifth. "With this rare recording, we are very lucky to be able to take a glimpse into what my grandfather spent his life on, helping his people to appreciate music during a special time in the past," Zhang Kemin, Li's grandson, remarked upon hearing about the live recording.



◀▲ Poster and house programme of the Central Philharmonic Orchestra's Hong Kong concerts
中央樂團在香港演出的海報和場刊

為誌香港廣播九十年，香港電台第四台從幾十年檔案中精選四套音樂會於10月份播出，以饗聽眾樂迷。這些上世紀五十年代到八十年代的昔日音符，各自具有劃時代的意義，亦是香港集體回憶的重要組成部份。

6/10 (星期六) 晚上8時正 傅聰與香港青年交響樂團音樂會

首先播出的，是香港青年交響樂團1979年10月21日在香港大會堂音樂廳的現場演出。該團是1977年成立的音樂事務統籌處的直接產物，九十位精英由當時二千五百位樂器學員中選出，在指揮汪西三領導下，在英國巡演一個多月不久參演這場第四屆亞洲藝術節的重頭戲。演出曲目包括華格納《紐倫堡之名歌手》序曲，以及莫扎特第二十五、貝多芬第一，合共兩首鋼琴協奏曲，擔任獨奏是汪西三的妻子傅聰。當年傅氏自1958年旅居海外後首次回到上海，亦適逢中國改革開放伊始，與同樣對前途無限憧憬的香港音樂尖子奏出亮麗之聲。當時樂隊中成員現已貴為音樂專家的包括陳浩堂、楊漢倫、劉長江、李正欣、李少霖、趙啟強、吳家明等。現於香港演藝學院教授小提琴的陳浩堂形容演奏華格納，與銅管一起發出的音量，讓他一生難忘。另外他有份演奏羅西尼為四重奏而寫的第三奏鳴曲，對他日後的室樂演奏意義深遠。



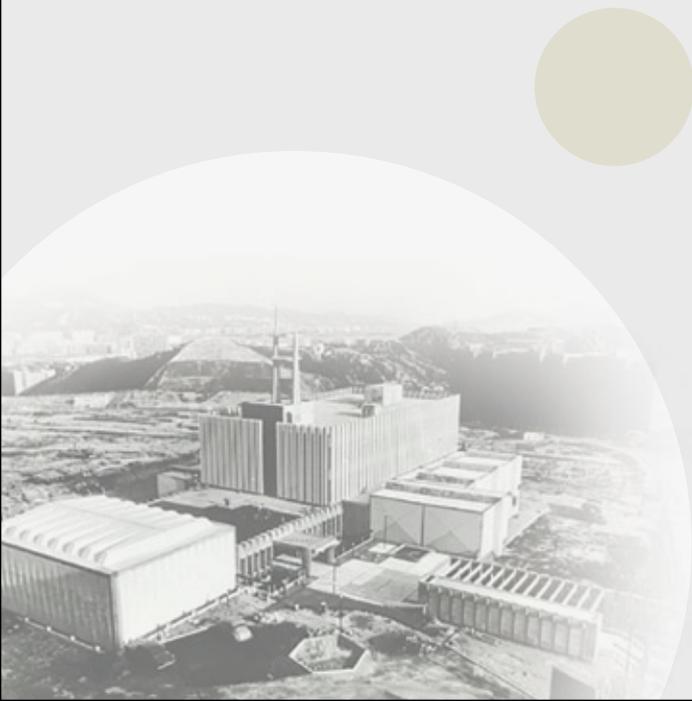
◀ House programme of Fou Ts'ong and the Hong Kong Youth Symphony Orchestra's concert 傅聰與香港青年交響樂團音樂會場刊



▲ Conductor and violinist Thomas Wang (right) and his wife, Wang Hung Yeuk-ho Mabel 汪西三與汪洪若豪夫拉姆孀的合照

13/10 (星期六) 晚上8時正 香港電台三十週年紀念節目：粵劇紅伶滙

第二場歷史音樂會是1958年6月30日慶祝香港電台三十年星光燦爛的演出，破天荒請來七位旗鼓相當的頭牌紅伶先後獻技。例如開場由新馬師曾主唱首本名曲〈光緒皇夜祭珍妃〉，接著出場包括芳艷芬、麥炳榮、譚倩紅、何非凡、鄧碧雲、梁醒波，各自施展渾身解數，顯出五十年代被譽為粵劇黃金時期的風範。值得指出的是，兩支拍和樂隊以尹自重、盧家熾名義，分別由八人和十七人組成，都是當時粵劇頂級戲班的拍和師傅，不少曾參與任白《帝女花》等經典錄音。他們「歸隊」演出，原因之一是電台戰前由業餘民間樂隊演出的日子已於1957年結束，之後改由名家、紅伶演出，可能跟當時的社團條例有關。1958年這場演出就是新措施的例子之一。



20/10 (星期六) 晚上8時正

香港大會堂首場音樂會：倫敦愛樂樂團香港音樂會

1962年香港大會堂開幕，應邀為音樂廳作開光演出的倫敦愛樂樂團，奏出香港專業演奏歷史的第一音，結束了國際一級樂團（1956年洛杉磯、1959年維也納愛樂）在非專業場館*演奏的尷尬日子，意義重大。請來的倫敦愛樂，正值團慶三十週年，作亞洲巡演，是英國樂團的首次。在港演出五場，全部由沙俊爵士指揮，曲目以英國和普及古典管弦作品為主。例如所播放首場3月4日的曲目包括艾爾蘭的倫敦序曲、佛漢威廉士《泰利士主題幻想曲》、史達拉汶斯基《火鳥組曲》，以及西貝流士第五交響曲。據在場的何承天回憶，他當時作為港大建築系學生兼港樂小提琴手，曾經作開館前的聲效試演。但親歷倫敦愛樂國際級的聲音在大會堂奏響，是他人生的第一次。

*編者按：兩團分別在旺角麥花臣球場及銅鑼灣利舞台演出

27/10 (星期六) 晚上8時正

中央樂團香港首演

最後一場歷史演出，是1986年9月1日北京中央交響樂團首度來港演出三場的第一場。那是該團1956年成立以來首次到境外演出正規古典作品，也是傳奇指揮大師李德倫與他共事多年的樂團唯一一次演出蕭斯達高維契第五交響曲的現場記錄。須知李氏五十年代留學蘇聯期間與作曲家相識，深入了解音符背後的意義。而中央樂團經歷幾十年政治運動，人文情操蘊藏於音符之間，例如開場的〈二泉映月〉，正是文革期間李德倫為到訪費城樂團首演的傑作。至於柴可夫斯基第一鋼琴協奏曲，獨奏的石叔誠展現上佳技術和音樂感，加奏〈翻身的日子〉更是趣味盎然。



Image courtesy of Oliver Chou

▲ Pianist Shi Shucheng 鋼琴家石叔誠



Image courtesy of Oliver Chou

▲ The Central Philharmonic Orchestra celebrating its 30th anniversary in 1986
1986年中央樂團慶祝三十週年

Following these October programmes, stay tuned for more historic performances to hear the sound of the pre-professional HK Phil, the RTHK Singers, soprano Felicity Lott, the artistry of violinist Yu Lina in the 'Butterfly Lovers' Violin Concerto with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, and music-making by the late Dr. Bard and Michael Rippon.

以上四場只是部份誌慶節目，11月份將續播白德指揮香港中樂團、俞麗娜與上海交響樂團演「梁祝」、職業化前的香港管弦樂團演海頓《創世紀》、香港電台合唱團、男中音聶明康及女高音羅德演出的珍貴歷史錄音，萬勿錯過。