Music to win hearts

Musicians from various countries perform in charity recital in aid of foundation’s scholars

story by
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THERE is no better way to enjoy a beautiful Saturday evening than to surround yourself with good music while donating to a good cause.

A total of 757 music lovers enjoyed a charity recital hosted by the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation recently at the newly refurbished Sunway University hall.

The recital presented by the Perak Society of Performing Arts (PSPA) to benefit the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation Community Scholars was titled A Night of Musical Kaleidoscope.

The PSPA ensemble saw 13 renowned musicians from Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, the Netherlands and the US led by conductor Eugene Pook.

The other musicians were violinists Dr Andrew Filmer, Benjamin Wong, Gabriel Lee, Christina Zhou and Lim Jae Sae, as well as pianists Dr Alina Windell, cellists Lee Bert Chun, Rorkom Ong, pianists Jeroen Smit, Robert Huns and Robert Van Der Voort.

The night began with curtain raisers, the Sunway University Ensemble whose members include several Jeffrey Cheah Foundation Talent Scholarship recipients.

The repertoire began with Bach’s Brandenburg Concerto No 3 in G Major, BWV 1048 and went on to include other historical pieces including the Violin Concerto Op 8 The Four Seasons and Cinema Paradiso.

Pook had included music that appeals to the mass audience that is familiar to everyone.

“I was scared people would not be able to enjoy a completely classical repertoire, which is why we ensure our performances include classical hits that people have heard and can relate to,” he added.

According to Pook, he has used this concept every year and each year he has repeat audiences.

In fact, the event was a resounding success at the first two stops in Penang and Ipoh before it made its way to Sunway.

The audience in Sunway was also appreciative of the pieces and responded with resounding applause after each piece.

One of the more entertaining and recognisable pieces was the Four Seasons by Antonio Vivaldi that often goes unnoticed in places such as bookstores where it is often played.

Before the musicians performed the electrifying piece, violinist Andrew Filmer explained each part, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, humorously for the audience’s benefit.

Later in the night, internationally acclaimed clarinet soloist Andrew Simon, the principal clarinet from the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra also joined the group of musicians.

Simon performed for the first time here in Malaysia although he is a regular visitor here.

Awed by the hospitality and the food here, Simon was happy to perform along side his fellow musicians.

“The audience here is also great. I brought a ton of CDs and they were all taken up. It is also for us to be exposed and get our own experience while helping charity,” he added.

He also said the charity concert was a win-win situation for all since music lovers could enjoy the performances while they donated to a good cause.