

Manila Symphony Junior Orchestra tops two Europe-based music tilts

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Before Filipinos became transfixed with our athletes who have brought so much joy and honor to the country in the ongoing 2024 Paris Olympics, another homegrown group has been making waves abroad in a totally different but equally worthy discipline.

Photos provided by MSJO



The Manila Symphony Junior Orchestra (MSJO) recently won in two major European musical competitions. On July 4, the MSJO won the Gold and the Grand Prix at the 6th Bratislava International Music Festival in Slovakia, besting 17 ensembles from around the world. Scoring 99 points, they were the only orchestra awarded the Grand Prix.

Three days later on July 7, the MSJO continued their winning streak by securing First Place, with Outstanding Success for String Orchestra Category at the 16th Summa Cum Laude International Music Festival in Vienna, Austria. The competition was held at the prestigious Golden Hall of the Musikverein. This year's festival, directed by professor Saul Saks and managing director Christian Bender, is one of the most prestigious for young musicians and was attended by over 2000 participants from 14 countries and 38 ensembles.

In this competition, first place was also awarded to the Hsing Lung String Orchestra from Taiwan. The Hong Kong Youth Strings and the Taipei Municipal Zhongzheng Junior High School took second place, while the Singapore National Youth String Orchestra came in third.



The Manila Symphony Junior Orchestra at the Golden Hall of the Musikverein, one of the most iconic concert venues in the world, where they garnered First Place, with Outstanding Success for String Orchestra Category at the 16th Summa Cum Laude International Music Festival in Vienna, Austria.



The Manila Symphony Junior Orchestra performs with precision and passion under the baton of Maestro Jeffrey Solares at the Slovak Radio Hall.



Maestro Jeffrey Solares, with his exceptional leadership, guides the Manila Symphony Junior Orchestra to a stellar performance at the 13th Bratislava International Youth Music Festival, securing them the prestigious Gold Prize plus the Grand Prix for orchestra for getting 99 points



Clartrome Jacalan, cellist and Charmers Bersaba, violist from the Manila Symphony Junior Orchestra contributes to their Gold Prize-winning performance at the 13th Bratislava International Youth Music Festival.



Sharlette Saluta, violinist from the Manila Symphony Junior Orchestra showcases her talent, helping the ensemble secure the Grand Prix for orchestra with 99 points.

Led by Maestro Jeffrey Solares and their trainers Sara Maria Gonzales and Arnold Josue. The 40-member MSJO embarked on their European Concert Tour on June 29. Their tour included performances in Budapest and Salzburg, followed by competitions in Bratislava and Vienna. They will continue their tour with concerts at the MuTh Theater in Vienna and perform at the Winner's Concert at the Vienna Konzerthaus. They will conclude their tour with a final performance at the Smetana Hall in Prague on July 11 before returning to the Philippines on July 13.

The MSJO's repertoire featured Puccini's "Crisantemi", Dvorak's "Scherzo" from "Serenade for Strings", Stephan Koncz's "A New

Satisfaction”, Ernani Cuenca’s “Naha”n arranged by Cyro Cloud Bon Moral, and Ryle Nicole Claudio’s “Tagu-taguan” by Ryle, performed entirely from memory.

The 2024 European Tour of the Manila Symphony Junior Orchestra is sponsored by Standard Insurance.

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