



Mr Wong Kah Chun conducting the orchestra in its performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7, complete with its rousing finale, to applause from the crowd at the Botanic Gardens yesterday ST PHOTOS: CHONG JUN LIANG

## A symphony of joy and beauty at the Gardens

More than 3,000 people enjoyed the joyful beauty and relentless energy of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 at the Botanic Gardens yesterday, in a performance conducted by Wong Kah Chun.

The 32-year-old is the first Singaporean and one of a handful of Asians to become chief conductor of a European orchestra – in this case the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra.

The concert was a homecoming

of sorts after Mr Wong treated 65,000 people at an open-air concert in Germany last month which featured recordings of a Singapore thunderstorm and a folk song performed by children in Ang Mo Kio.

Yesterday, Mr Wong and five key members of the orchestra – the concertmaster, principal cellist, principal clarinetist, principal horn player and associate principal violist – joined students of the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music to



perform Beethoven's No. 7, complete with its rousing finale. There were cheers of "Bravo!" and loud applause from the audience.

The evening of music, presented in partnership with the Embassy of

the Federal Republic of Germany in Singapore and the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, was organised to celebrate German-Singaporean ties and friendship.

The chief conductor himself is an

alumnus of Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music.

Mr Wong told *The Sunday Times*: "If I say the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory is like a parent because it brought me up – I studied there for

four years, learning and growing – then the Nuremberg Symphony is like a partner. We're growing together over the next few years."

**Janice Tai**