

**IX International Liszt Ferenc Competition - Gala & Award Ceremony
at the Eszterházy Károly Catholic University in Eger, Hungary
(1 August 2026)**

Welcome Remarks by HPR

Dear Deputy Mayor Gulyás, Deputy Rector General Novák, Prof. Ball, Ms Chan, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good evening, and a very warm welcome to the Gala & Award Ceremony of the IX International Liszt Ferenc Competition in Eger. The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Berlin is pleased to support this prestigious musical competition for the very first time and taking place at the beautiful Eszterházy Károly Catholic University in Eger.

2. I am so excited to be visiting this magnificent region of Hungary, Heves Komitat, for the very first time. At its heart lies the charming city of Eger, which is even located right at the geographical centre of Europe. It's a truly special place! More than perhaps any other city, Eger stands as a unique cultural melting pot, shaped by centuries of diverse influences from many different cultural traditions.

3. Much like the historic city of Eger, Hong Kong serves as a vital bridge connecting East and West, situated at the gateway to the Chinese Mainland and shaped by a rich, dynamic heritage where Chinese and Western cultures converge. Hong Kong aims to become an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange, nurturing and attracting the next generation of creative talents and strengthening collaboration with the arts, culture and creative sectors that reach across the globe, including Europe.

4. Today, we have gathered to experience the remarkable talent of young musicians who have traveled all the way from around the world, including Hong Kong, to share their artistry with us. It is truly inspiring to see musicians come together this evening. Their passion and talent serve as a powerful testament to music's unique ability to bring people together, to foster understanding, and to illuminate the beauty of cultural exchange.

5. Once more, my heartfelt thanks to every musician for participating at the competition, and to all of you in the audience for being here tonight to honour the brilliant young talents. I extend my warmest congratulations not only to our winners, but to every single finalist—your dedication and exceptional artistry in reaching this stage is a true achievement itself. Please carry this momentum with you. We also look forward to welcoming all winners to the stage for a final performance after the award ceremony. Thank you all, and may you have a truly memorable evening.

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