

PRESS RELEASE
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The Paris Connection: Principal Guest Conductor Yu Long Leads the HK Phil in Two Ravishing Ballet Scores and a HK Premiere with Violin Virtuoso Ning Feng

Bravo: Yu Long | The Firebird & Carmen (6 & 7 December)

[29 November 2019, Hong Kong] In his second concert with the **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil)** this season, Principal Guest Conductor [Yu Long](#) directs a programme of works sharing a Parisian connection – two ravishing ballet scores and the Hong Kong premiere of composer Chen Qigang’s *La joie de la souffrance*, featuring virtuoso violinist [Ning Feng](#). Two performances will be given at the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall** on **6 & 7 December**.

“Ning Feng displayed a gorgeous light touch with faultless intonation and deft bowing married to a sweet tone. The melodic lines were all smooth and beautifully shaped.”

--- *Daily Telegraph*

Premiered in Beijing in 2017, *La joie de la souffrance* is the first work written specifically for the violin by Chen Qigang, who finds that the instrument “has perhaps the widest capacity to express human emotion”. With hauntingly beautiful melodies, this violin concerto explores the relationship between joy and suffering which, in the composer’s own words, is “a matter of ‘Yin’ and ‘Yang,’ inseparable and hence all things should contain both”. The Hong Kong premiere will be directed by Maestro Yu Long and Ning Feng, conductor of the world premiere and violinist of the US premiere respectively.

The concert opens with Stravinsky’s *Firebird Suite*. Based on an old Russian legend, the *Firebird* ballet was a huge success in Paris and propelled Stravinsky to international fame. Arranged by the composer himself, the 1919 Suite distills the essence of the complete work into a satisfying stream of orchestral bravura.

Another Russian composer provides the concert’s closing piece with a transcription of excerpts from Bizet’s popular opera, first staged in Paris. Shchedrin’s *Carmen Suite* was devised as a ballet, and reimagines Bizet’s famous melodies in colourful and distinctively original orchestrations for strings and a battery of percussion instruments.

Bravo: Yu Long | The Firebird & Carmen will be held on **6 & 7 December (Fri & Sat) at 8PM** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Tickets are HK\$480, \$380, \$280 and \$220 and are available at [URBTIX](#). For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit [hkphil.org](#).

Artists

Yu Long, conductor [\[full biography\]](#)

Hailed as the “most powerful figure in China’s classical music scene” by *The New York Times*, distinguished Chinese conductor Yu Long is Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the China Philharmonic Orchestra, and Music Director of the Shanghai and Guangzhou Symphony orchestras. He is also Principal Guest Conductor of the HK Phil. Currently the Co-Director of the MISA Summer Festival in Shanghai, Maestro Yu is the Founder of the Beijing Music Festival and was its Artistic Director from 1998 to 2018. He has signed a recording deal with Deutsche Grammophon and started global release and distribution partnership.

Ning Feng, violin [\[full biography\]](#)

Ning Feng is recognised internationally as an artist of great lyricism, innate musicality and stunning virtuosity. Recent successes have included tours with the HK Phil and Jaap van Zweden to Europe, Asia and Australia, a tour to China with the Konzerthausorchester Berlin and Lawrence Foster as well as successful debuts with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra and BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. In recital and chamber music Ning performs regularly with Igor Levit, amongst others, at many of the world’s major festivals and concert venues.

BRAVO SERIES: YU LONG | THE FIREBIRD & CARMEN

6 & 7 | 12 | 2019

FRI & SAT 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$480 \$380 \$280 \$220

Tickets are now available at URBTIX.

For ages 6 and above



Artists

[Yu Long](#)

conductor

[Ning Feng](#)

violin

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Yu Long

Photo Credit: Ka Lam/HK Phil



Ning Feng

Photo Credit: Felix Broede



Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo Credit: Eric Hong/HK Phil

Programme

STRAVINSKY

The Firebird Suite (1919)

CHEN Qigang

La joie de la souffrance for Violin and Orchestra (HK premiere)

SHCHEDRIN

Carmen Suite (after BIZET)

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Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Music Director: Jaap van Zweden

Principal Guest Conductor: Yu Long

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is recognised as Asia's foremost classical orchestra. Presenting more than 150 concerts over a 44-week season, the HK Phil attracts more than 200,000 music lovers annually. In 2019, the HK Phil received the prestigious *Gramophone* Orchestra of the Year Award – the first orchestra in Asia to receive this distinction.

Jaap van Zweden, one of today's most sought-after conductors, has been the orchestra's Music Director since the 2012/13 concert season, a position he will continue to hold until at least 2022. Maestro van Zweden is also Music Director of the New York Philharmonic since the 2018/19 season.

Yu Long has been Principal Guest Conductor since the 2015/16 season.

Under the dynamic leadership of Jaap van Zweden, the HK Phil has attained new heights of artistic excellence, garnering international critical acclaim. The orchestra successfully completed a four-year journey through Wagner's Ring Cycle, performing and recording one opera from the cycle each year from 2015 to 2018. The concert performances and live Naxos recordings were enthusiastically received by audiences, praised by critics at home and abroad and garnered Gramophone Orchestra of the Year Award 2019.

The HK Phil tours extensively across Mainland China and, with the support of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices, undertook a major tour in 2017 to Seoul, Osaka, Singapore, Melbourne and Sydney in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The orchestra will perform in Japan and Korea in 2020.

Thanks to a significant subsidy from the Hong Kong SAR Government and long-term funding from Principal Patron Swire, the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust and other supporters, the HK Phil presents an annual schedule of core classical repertoire and innovative popular programming, extensive education and community programmes, and collaborations with, among others, Opera Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Arts Festival and the Hong Kong Ballet.

Conductors and soloists who have recently performed with the orchestra include Vladimir Ashkenazy, Joshua Bell, Charles Dutoit, Christoph Eschenbach, Matthias Goerne, Stephen Hough, Evgeny Kissin, Lang Lang, Yo-Yo Ma, Ning Feng, Leonard Slatkin and Yuja Wang.

The HK Phil promotes the work of Hong Kong and Chinese composers through an active commissioning programme, and has released recordings on the Naxos label featuring Tan Dun and Bright Sheng conducting their own compositions. Its acclaimed education and community engagement programmes in schools, hospitals and outdoor spaces bring music into the hearts of tens of thousands of children and families every year.

The Swire Group has been the Principal Patron of the HK Phil since 2006. Through this sponsorship, which is the largest in the orchestra's history, Swire endeavours to promote artistic excellence, foster access to classical music, stimulate cultural participation in Hong Kong, and enhance Hong Kong's reputation as one of the great cities in the world.

Originally called the Sino-British Orchestra, it was renamed the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra in 1957 and became fully professional in 1974. The HK Phil is a charitable organisation.

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra is financially supported by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and is a Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. SWIRE is the Principal Patron of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.