

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HK Phil Presents Two Premieres Plus a 20th Century Classic with Music Director Jaap van Zweden at the Podium

JAAP!: JAAP | Prokofiev 5 & Rouse 5 (23 January, ONE performance only)

[22 January 2020, Hong Kong] The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) Music Director [Jaap van Zweden](#) will lead the orchestra in a concert featuring the World Premiere of A Madman's Diary by Hong Kong composer [Alvin Tam Lok-hei](#), the Asia Premiere of Christopher Rouse's Symphony no. 5, and Prokofiev's Symphony no. 5, one of the great orchestral works of the 20th century. The concert will take place on **23 January 2020 (Thursday, ONE performance only) at 8pm in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall.**

Alvin Tam Lok-hei was commissioned by the HK Phil under The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Composers Scheme. This Composers Scheme, launched in the 2018/19 season, provides a platform for local composers to develop their skills in orchestral composition. Tam's music is deeply influenced by Chinese literature; this piece is inspired by the Madman in Lu Xun's writing. The piece features pitch ideas, contrasts and riddles.

"...Brilliant, exciting and at times hauntingly beautiful..." is how the *Dallas Morning News* described Symphony no. 5 by Christopher Rouse. Considered one of America's greatest composers, Rouse has created a symphonic palette in this work that ranges between dissonance and consonance, turbulence and serenity. The work was inspired by Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, the first piece of music Rouse remembers hearing (at age six). Numerous "homages" to Beethoven can be heard in the symphony's four continuous movements, which combine with Rouse's own distinctive musical imagination. This Symphony was premiered in 2017 by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jaap van Zweden.

Another "fifth" symphony completes the programme — the Symphony no. 5 by Prokofiev. Premiered in 1945 towards the end of the Second World War, Prokofiev considered the work as the culmination of his creative life, and described it as an expression of grandeur of the human spirit, much in keeping with Soviet expectations of its artists and arts at the time. The work is full of Prokofiev's beautiful melodies and sardonic sense of humour, but its air of simplicity is underscored by a richness and complexity that expresses much deeper sentiments.

JAAP!: JAAP | Prokofiev 5 & Rouse 5 will be held on **23 January (Thu) at 8PM** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Tickets are HK\$580, \$480, \$380, \$280 and are available at [URBTIX](#). For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit hkphil.org.

Artists

Jaap van Zweden, conductor [\[full biography\]](#)

Over the past decade, conductor Jaap van Zweden has become an international presence on three continents. Currently Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, he is also Music Director of the New York Philharmonic – a post he has held since the 2018/19 season. Guest engagements this season include the Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Shanghai Symphony and Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra.

JAAP! SERIES: JAAP | PROKOFIEV 5 & ROUSE 5

23 | 1 | 2020

THU 8PM (ONE performance only)

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$580 \$480 \$380 \$280

Tickets are now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Jaap van Zweden](#) conductor

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Jaap van Zweden

Photo Credit: Cheung Chi-wai/HK Phil



Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo Credit: Eric Hong/HK Phil

Programme

Alvin TAM Lok-hei

New Commission, commissioned by the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra under The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Composers Scheme (World Premiere)

**Christopher ROUSE
PROKOFIEV**

Symphony no. 5 (Asia premiere)
Symphony no. 5

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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.