

**PRESS RELEASE**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Date: 28 August 2020

## HK Phil Concerts Change Amid Pandemic Uncertainties

### “Asia Miles Proudly Sponsors: Joe Hisaishi in Concert” rescheduled to June 2021

**[28 August 2020, Hong Kong]** The **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil)** passionately believes in the power of music as a source of courage, healing, calm and unity. In spite of these disquieting and disturbing times, the HK Phil very much looks forward to presenting to the community our 2020/21 season that we have prepared with utmost care and thoughtfulness. At the same time, the HK Phil always puts the health and well-being of our audience, guest artists, orchestra and staff members as our top priority. Sadly, changes in certain concerts of our 2020/21 season must now be made.

In view of the latest COVID-19 situation, and uncertainties relating to such matters as global travel and in-bound quarantine measures, along with discussions with our guest artists and related partners, the HK Phil has to make certain changes to concerts held between October and early December 2020, including the cancellation of five programmes<sup>(1)</sup> scheduled for Hong Kong in October 2020, as well as two performances in Jakarta, originally scheduled for November 2020. We have also had to reschedule “Asia Miles Proudly Sponsors: Joe Hisaishi in Concert” from December 2020 to June 2021.

HK Phil Chief Executive Benedikt Fohr stated, “The HK Phil team has made every effort to retain and reschedule concerts. Arrangements for our 2020/21 season concerts have been continually under discussion, and concerns over uncertainties in global travel and in-bound quarantine measures have been brought up in conversations with our guest artists and related partners. It is sad to see some concerts being cancelled, but we will try our best to bring back these artists and programmes in the future.”

HK Phil Music Director Jaap van Zweden said, “The orchestra and I are so eager to perform for our dear audience, sharing many evenings of our fantastic music making throughout the 2020/21 season, but we will not compromise safety. These changes have to be made with this as the priority. I sincerely hope the world will overcome the current challenging situation and we can all reunite in music and rejoice together in its power to fill us with hope and courage.”

Our friend, superstar violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter said, “I have been excited to return to Hong Kong for these very special Beethoven concerts with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and Jaap van Zweden. Since performing in Hong Kong in 1997 I’ve always felt a deep appreciation for the beauty and respect of the city and people. I am saddened that the COVID-19 situation prevents us from sharing these performances in 2020, but I look forward to celebrating life and music together again soon!”

The HK Phil is pleased to have been able to reschedule “Asia Miles Proudly Sponsors: Joe Hisaishi in Concert”, from the dates of 4, 5 & 6 December 2020, to new dates – 17, 18, 19 & 20 June 2021<sup>(2)(3)</sup>. Maestro Joe Hisaishi said, “I am very disappointed that I will not be able to celebrate my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday in Hong Kong with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, but I am very much looking forward to performing with the orchestra and meeting all my Hong Kong fans again in June 2021.”

It is our mission to share our passion for music with people everywhere, not just in the designated venues but also in other accessible ways. The HK Phil team is planning various projects to be broadcast online to keep us connected, especially during this difficult time. Stay tuned!

Never underestimate the power of music. The HK Phil wishes everyone in the world to stay strong and hopeful. In the coming months, we shall constantly evaluate plans for our upcoming concerts, and we are hoping to maintain as many programmes of the 2020/21 season as possible and to perform live under safe and comfortable circumstances. We will keep patrons updated on the status and hope to see you again very soon!

2020/21 subscribers will receive an email from our Subscription Office on or before 4 September (Friday) about the relevant ticket arrangements. You are also welcome to visit our website [hkphil.org](http://hkphil.org) for details about the cancelled/rescheduled concerts and the HK Phil’s latest updates.

(1) Five affected programmes include:

- JAAP's Beethoven 9 (2 & 3 October 2020)
- JAAP's Fidelio Opera-in-Concert (15 & 17 October 2020)
- Anne-Sophie Mutter & Friends (20 October 2020)
- Season Opening: JAAP's Beethoven 6 | Anne-Sophie Mutter I (23 October 2020)
- JAAP's Beethoven 8 | Anne-Sophie Mutter II (24 October 2020)

(2) Rescheduling details of "Asia Miles Proudly Sponsors: Joe Hisaishi in Concert" are as follows:

Original performance date and time	Programme	New performance date and time	Programme
4 December 2020 Friday, 8pm	Programme I	17 June 2021 Thursday, 8pm	Programme I
5 December 2020 Saturday, 3pm	Programme I	18 June 2021 Friday, 8pm	Programme II
5 December 2020 Saturday, 8pm	Programme II	19 June 2021 Saturday, 8pm	Programme I
6 December 2020 Sunday, 3pm	Programme II	20 June 2021 Sunday, 3pm	Programme II

Programme I

Joe HISAISHI		<i>Woman</i>
Joe HISAISHI		<i>Kiki's Delivery Service Suite</i>
Joe HISAISHI		Symphony no. 2 (Hong Kong Premiere)

Joe Hisaishi, conductor

Programme II

Joe HISAISHI		<i>Encounter for String Orchestra</i>
Joe HISAISHI		<i>The Border, Concerto for 3 Horns (Hong Kong Premiere)</i>
Joe HISAISHI		<i>Woman</i>
Joe HISAISHI		<i>Kiki's Delivery Service Suite</i>

Joe Hisaishi, conductor  
Nobuaki Fukukawa, horn  
Lin Jiang, horn  
Russell Bonifede, horn

(3) Due to changes in our concert schedule, the HK Phil's "BBC Planet Earth II Live in Concert", originally scheduled for 18 & 19 June 2021, and "Swire Sunday Family Series: BBC Planet Earth II Live in Concert", originally scheduled for 20 June 2021, will be rescheduled. New dates for the two concerts (i.e. three performances) will be announced on the HK Phil website and official social media platforms as soon as possible.

--- END ---

For further press information please contact:

**Meggy Cheng, Director of Marketing**

Tel: +852 2721 9035 Email: [meggy.cheng@hkphil.org](mailto:meggy.cheng@hkphil.org)

**Flora Fung, Media Relations and Communications Manager**

Tel: +852 2721 1585 Email: [flora.fung@hkphil.org](mailto:flora.fung@hkphil.org)

## 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 through to the end of the 2023/24 season. Following his tenure as Music Director, he will hold the title of Conductor Laureate. Maestro van Zweden has also been 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 annually 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 undertake tours to 10 cities in Europe in May 2021, with debuts in Spain, Luxembourg, Belgium, and the German cities of Cologne and Dresden. The HK Phil will also be making its debut at the prestigious Royal Concertgebouw's Mahler Festival 2021, the first Asian orchestra to perform at this monumental event which is held every 25 years in Amsterdam.

Thanks to a significant subsidy from the HKSAR Government, as well as 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, Hong Kong Arts Festival, and Hong Kong Ballet.

Conductors and soloists who have recently performed with the orchestra include Vladimir Ashkenazy, Joshua Bell, Charles Dutoit, Christoph Eschenbach, Renée Fleming, Matthias Goerne, Stephen Hough, Evgeny Kissin, Katia and Marielle Labèque (the Labèque sisters), 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.