

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**DATE: 30 November 2020**

## Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra Appoints Resident Conductor – Lio Kuokman

**[30 November 2020, Hong Kong]** The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) today announced the appointment of **Lio Kuokman** as **Resident Conductor**, effective **1 December 2020** and covering the **2020/21 and 2021/22 seasons**.

Lio Kuokman, aged 39, has worked with many leading orchestras around the world. He served as the Assistant Conductor to Music Director Yannick Nézet-Seguin at The Philadelphia Orchestra - the first Chinese conductor to be appointed to this position in the history of the orchestra. He is currently the Programme Director of the Macao International Music Festival, a role he started in January 2020. He has received the Certificate of Commendation and Medal of Cultural Merit from both the governments of Hong Kong and Macao.

Mr Y. S. Liu, MH, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society, said, “The Board of Governors and the management team are delighted about the appointment of Lio Kuokman as the Resident Conductor of the HK Phil. Lio is a home-grown conductor who has earned remarkable recognition internationally. We are proud to have Lio embarking on an exciting musical journey with the orchestra in the coming seasons.”

Lio Kuokman said, “I am thrilled and honoured to take up this position and be part of the HK Phil family. It is always a great pleasure for me to work with all the brilliant musicians of the HK Phil, especially during these difficult times. We have tried our best to overcome challenges and to share our passions with and promote classical music to our dear audience in Hong Kong as well as around the world through live and online performances. I look forward to each and every upcoming concert with the orchestra.”

As Resident Conductor, Lio Kuokman will work with the orchestra for at least three weeks per season, conducting subscription concerts, presenting HK Phil family and community concerts, and recording music for HK Phil online platforms.

Music Director Jaap van Zweden said, “I am pleased to welcome Lio Kuokman to this position. He is a young and talented musician, his commitment to music is well-acknowledged. I look forward to his energetic and passionate music-making with the orchestra.”

Concertmaster Jing Wang said, “Lio Kuokman is an outstanding musician. The musicians of the HK Phil are excited to continue to partner with him, creating more musical moments on stage.”

Lio Kuokman first appeared with the HK Phil in 2009 when, along with his younger brother, he played the piano. He made his actual conducting debut with the orchestra in 2011, and recent performances with them have included the 2020/21 Season Opening concert in October 2020, and concerts in November 2020. He directed the orchestra's first live broadcast concert, HK Phil 2020/21 Season Preview Concert, on 4 July 2020 which was available on the orchestra's website, Facebook and YouTube channels, showcasing the artistic excellence of the HK Phil around the world, and toured with the orchestra in October 2019 to Zhuhai and Foshan, promoting cultural exchange activities and developing audiences in the Greater Bay Area.

In his new role as Resident Conductor, Lio Kuokman will lead the HK Phil in several programmes to round up 2020 and welcome in 2021. These concerts include the signature [Swire Symphony Under The Stars 2020 ONLINE](#) on 12 December 2020 (Saturday), live performances – [Beethoven Violin Concerto](#) on 19 December 2020 (Saturday), [Viennese New Year](#) on 30 & 31 December 2020 (Friday & Saturday), and [Akiko Suwanai Plays Prokofiev](#) on 22 & 23 January 2021 (Friday & Saturday). Tickets for live performances are available on [URBTIX](#).

## About Lio Kuokman

Praised by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* as “a startling conducting talent”, Lio Kuokman was the laureate at the 2014 Svetlanov International Conducting Competition. Lio served as Assistant Conductor to Music Director Yannick Nézet-Seguin at The Philadelphia Orchestra - the first Chinese conductor to be appointed in this position in the history of the orchestra. He is currently Programme Director of the Macao International Music Festival.

Lio has worked with many leading orchestras around the world including the Philadelphia, Detroit Symphony, Radio France Philharmonic, Seoul Philharmonic, NHK Symphony, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony and Moscow Philharmonic. Engagements over the past season included debuts and re-invitations with the Russian National Symphony, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Orchestre Philharmonique de Marseille, Hiroshima Symphony, Kyoto Symphony, Taiwan Philharmonic, and Latvian National Symphony orchestras.

Passionate about opera, he has conducted many productions including *Turandot*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Carmen*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, and *Il Pagliacci*, and was invited by Valery Gergiev at the Mariinsky Theatre to conduct Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Maid of Pskov*. As a pianist he has performed as soloist with many orchestras, including the Salzburg Camerata and the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra.

Lio graduated from the Hong Kong Academy for the Performing Arts, the Juilliard School, the Curtis Institute of Music and the New England Conservatory. Lio is a founding member and President of the Macao Chamber Music Association. He has received the Certificate of Commendation and Medal of Cultural Merit from the governments of both Hong Kong and Macao.

Media Photos of Lio Kuokman (Click the thumbnail to download photos)



**Lio Kuokman**  
Photo Credit: Tey Tat Keng



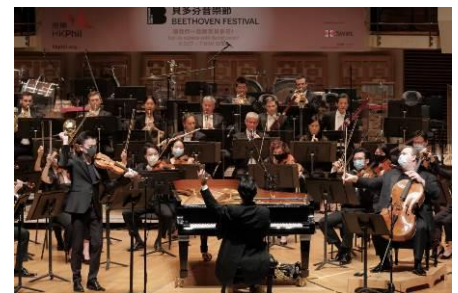
**Lio Kuokman**  
Photo Credit: Tey Tat Keng



**Lio Kuokman and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra**  
Photo Credit: Ka Lam / HK Phil



**Lio Kuokman and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra**  
Photo Credit: Ka Lam / HK Phil



**Lio Kuokman played and conducted Beethoven's Triple Concerto, joined by HK Phil Concertmaster Jing Wang and Principal Cello Richard Bamping at the HK Phil's 2020/21 Season Opening Concert on 9 & 10 October 2020.**  
Photo Credit: Ka Lam / HK Phil



**Lio Kuokman and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra toured to Zhuhai in October 2019.**  
Photo Credit: HK Phil / Zhuhai Huafa & CPAA Grand Theatre



**Lio Kuokman and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra toured to Foshan in October 2019.**  
Photo Credit: HK Phil / Foshan Grand Theatre

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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 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.

Lio Kuokman has been appointed as Resident Conductor, effective 1 December 2020 and covering the 2020/21 and 2021/22 seasons.

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.