

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Raining Petals – An Orchestral Re-Imagining Floral Princess 65th Anniversary Crossover Creation (23 & 24 December)

[9 December 2022, Hong Kong] The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) and Utopia Cantonese Opera Workshop join forces to present the spectacular inter-disciplinary production: Raining Petals – An Orchestral Re-Imagining. HK Phil Resident Conductor Lio Kuokman leads the orchestra in this world premiere of symphonic poem that is inspired by the Cantonese opera classic *Floral Princess*. Three performances will take place at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall on 23 and 24 December 2022 (Fri & Sat).

This year marks the 65th anniversary of legendary acting duo Yam Kim-fai and Pak Suet-sin's interpretation of *Floral Princess*, a hugely successful Cantonese opera written by Tong Tik-sang. It is not only an iconic classic in Cantonese opera, but also an important cultural heritage of Hong Kong.

This brand new orchestral re-imagination is complemented by the exquisite on-screen interpretation and vocals by the acting duo, bringing the audience to savour the heart-breaking romance of Princess Coeng-ping and Consort Zau Sai-hin from a contemporary perspective. For this rendition under Directors-General duo Joseph Chan and Ip Ka-po with producer Maurice Lai, director Rex Ng weaves together text, video and audio, while composer Lee Che-yi pens an original symphonic poem. This crossover production will offer our audience a uniquely refreshing arts experience.

“Raining Petals – An Orchestral Re-Imagining” will be held on 23 December 2022 (Fri) at 8PM and 24 December 2022 (Sat) at 3PM and 8PM in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall. Tickets priced at HK\$780, \$620, \$460 and \$300 are available at URBTIX and POPTICKET. For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit hkphil.org.

Artists

Lio Kuokman, conductor [\[full description\]](#)

Currently serving as Resident Conductor of the HK Phil, Principal Guest Conductor and Artistic Advisor of the Macao Orchestra and Programme Director of the Macao International Music Festival, Lio is praised by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* as "a startling conducting talent". He won the Second Prize, Audience Prize and Orchestra Prize at the 3rd Evgeny Svetlanov International Conducting Competition in Paris. He also served as the first Chinese Assistant Conductor with the Philadelphia Orchestra. In 2021, Lio received the Hong Kong Ten Outstanding Young Persons award. In 2022, he was awarded Artist of the Year (Music) of the 16th Hong Kong Arts Development Awards and appointed a Justice of the Peace by the HKSAR Government.

Joseph Chan Sinn-gi, directors-general [\[full description\]](#)

Joseph Chan Sinn-gi is the director of Utopia Cantonese Opera Workshop. He has extensive experience in film production with international stars and directors. He was the artist agent for pop icon Leon Lai and the general manager for Paciwood Music & Entertainment. He was Associate Producer of *Days of Being Wild* (directed by Wong Kar-wai), *Farewell China* (directed by Clara Law) and *92 Legendary La Rose Noire* (directed by Jeff Lau); Executive Producer and Producer of *Leaving Me, Loving You* (directed by Wilson Yip) and *Frozen* (directed by Derek Kwok). Chan has helped finance and manage production budget totalling more than US\$250m with co-investments and co-productions in the Asia-Pacific region.

Ip Ka-po, directors-general [\[full description\]](#)

Ip Ka-po has more than 40 years of experience in the media and entertainment industry. He served at Television Broadcasts Limited, Radio Television Hong Kong and Brainchild Production Limited. Celebrated as the "Father of Miss Asia Pageant", he organised many large-scale events, concerts, advertisements, TV programmes and films. Former Executive Director of Asia Television Limited (ATV), he supervised the daily operation, management and development at ATV, and broadcasted a number of film award ceremonies.

Maurice Lai, producer [\[full description\]](#)

Born and raised in Hong Kong, Maurice Lai is an MFA graduate in Cinema Production of the School of Film and Television of The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. He is one of the founders of Utopia Cantonese Opera Workshop, a dance filmmaker active in Hong Kong and Taiwan. He is currently Adjunct Assistant Professor at School of Dance of Taipei National University of the Arts, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors and Coordinator (Technical Support) of Utopia Cantonese Opera Workshop, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Unlock Dancing Plaza, theatre panel member of the Programme and Development Committee of Leisure and Cultural Services Department and jury member of The Hong Kong Dance Awards. In 2020, he set up HoShunKing Artistic Workshop in Taiwan.

Rex Ng, director, scriptwriter and film-editor [\[full description\]](#)

Being one of the founders of Utopia Cantonese Opera Workshop, Rex Ng is graduated from The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. He had been a graphic designer and is also a graduate from Asia Television Training Institute. With a diverse background, Ng is amazed by the works of three Cantonese opera pioneers YPT (i.e. Yam Kim-fai, Pak Suet-sin and Tong Tik-sang) and believes that artistic creations should celebrate artistic excellence and explore different possibilities while passing on the torch of Cantonese opera. His works include - reinterpretation of classic *III Domains: Human*; crossover works *A Fading Flower* (video x Cantonese opera) and *Waiting Heart* (dance x Cantonese opera), original Cantonese opera productions *Arena* and *Martyrdom*; original theatre concert *His Butterflies*, video work *Females in the Eyes of Stanley Kwan*, video on Pak Suet-sin, Life Time Achievement Award winner of The 20th Hong Kong Film Awards Presentation Ceremony; the making-of advertisement for *Leon-Fishing*, video for the celebration of Pak Suet-sin 90th birthday, etc.

Lee Che-yi, composer [\[full description\]](#)

Lee Che-yi has composed about 2,000 works and arranged nearly 5,000 works of various types. His works include musical theatre, dance drama, stage play, all kinds of cross-border theatre, children's drama, film and TV commercial soundtracks. Since the beginning of his professional career, he has conducted more than 2,000 performances and has composed songs, arrangements, and soundtracks for hundreds of professional performing groups, both at home and abroad. He has also performed at dozens of international arts festivals and has produced about 110 albums. He is now serving as Music Director and Resident Composer of One Song Orchestra.

RAINING PETALS – AN ORCHESTRAL RE-IMAGINING

23 & 24 | 12 | 2022

FRI 8PM

SAT 3PM & 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$780 \$620 \$460 \$300

Tickets now available at URBTIX and POPTICKET

For ages 6 and above

[Download](#) press images



Raining Petals – An Orchestral Re-Imagining



Lio Kuokman
Photo: Jane Chiang
Curation: Cerine Lee



Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra
Photo: Ka Lam/HK Phil

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For further press information please contact:

Dennis Wu, Director of Marketing

Tel: +852 2721 9035 Email: dennis.wu@hkphil.org

Emily Hui, Media Relations & Communications Manager

Tel: +852 2721 1585 Email: emily.hui@hkphil.org

Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Music Director: Jaap van Zweden, SBS

Principal Guest Conductor: Yu Long

Resident Conductor: Lio Kuokman, JP

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. Recently the HK Phil won the prestigious UK classical music magazine *Gramophone's* 2019 Orchestra of the Year Award – the first orchestra in Asia to receive this accolade.

Jaap van Zweden, SBS, one of today's most sought-after conductors, has been the orchestra's Music Director since the 2012/13 Season, a position he will hold until the end of the 2023/24 Season. 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, JP was appointed Resident Conductor in December 2020.

Under the dynamic leadership of Jaap van Zweden, the HK Phil has attained new heights of artistic excellence, receiving 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 were enthusiastically received by audiences, and the live Naxos recordings were praised by critics and garnered the *Gramophone* Orchestra of the Year Award 2019.

The HK Phil has toured extensively across Mainland China and, with the support of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices, it 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 of the People's Republic of China.

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

The HK Phil promotes the work of Hong Kong and Chinese composers through an active commissioning programme, and it 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. Founded in 2021, "The Orchestra Academy Hong Kong", funded by "TrustTomorrow" of The Swire Group Charitable Trust and co-directed with The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, aims at enhancing professional training for graduates from The HKAPA's School of Music to facilitate their career development in the orchestral field.

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.

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

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 registered 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.