

HK Phil Presents the First-ever Metaverse Symphony
Performed both in a Concert Hall and The Sandbox
Chow Sang Sang Jewellery Proudly Sponsors: Metaverse Symphony
(5 & 6 May 2023)

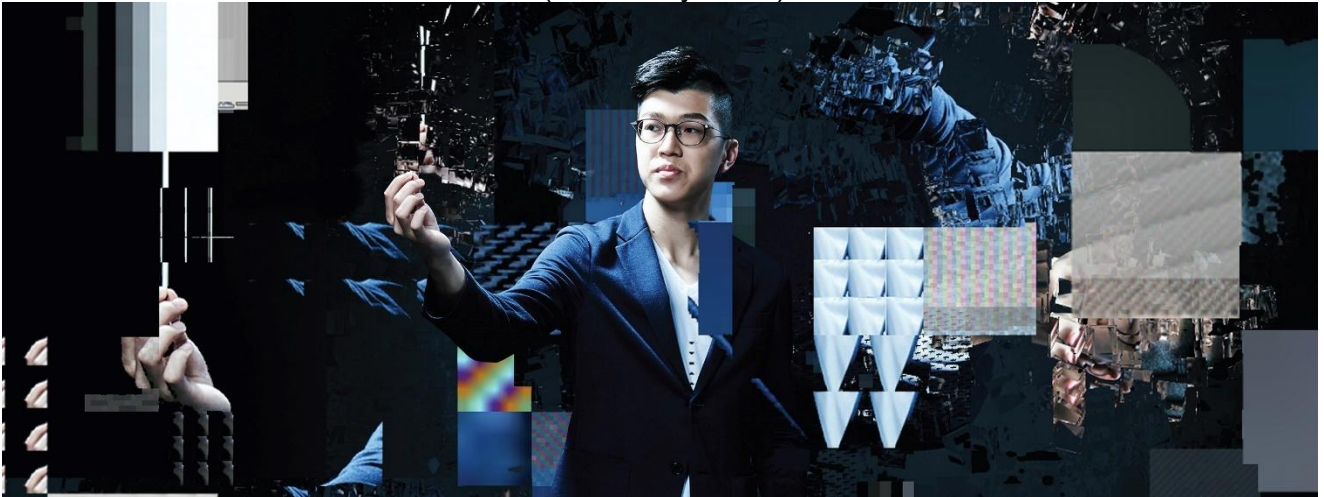


Image courtesy of Henry Chu

[13 April 2023, Hong Kong] The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is thrilled to present the first-ever symphonic work to be performed both in a concert hall and the metaverse. Featuring groundbreaking music composed by Hollywood film composer Elliot Leung and an immersive art experience created by award-winning Hong Kong-based digital artist Henry Chu, “Chow Sang Sang Jewellery Proudly Sponsors: Metaverse Symphony” will be held on 5 & 6 May 2023 at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall with three performances, followed by a virtual debut in The Sandbox metaverse. The world premiere of *The Metaverse Symphony*, which serves as the inaugural programme of the HK Phil’s Arts Tech programme, will be conducted by Gerard Salonga.

Co-commissioned by the HK Phil and Asia Society Hong Kong Center, Symphony no. 1, *The Metaverse*, represents Elliot Leung’s personal experience of what it means to be alive in Hong Kong in the currents of the data-driven 21st century. Each of the four movements celebrates and captures the experience of progressive milestones regarding the advancements of the Internet. Designed to be musically palpable, textural stabs reflect the injection of energy we feel when our phones buzz. Everchanging tonal centres keep pace with the rapidly evolving technological modalities in our lives. To engage the community, the HK Phil will perform alongside bite-sized sound recordings submitted by the public in the third movement. The concert will open with *Through the Fog, Into the Darkness*, another new work by Leung.

Today, Elliot Leung said at the press conference that, “From court chambers, to concert halls, and now into the Metaverse, classical music remains relevant to every age and every setting. I am beyond excited to share with the world what my mind hears as the zeitgeist of this Digital Age, through the virtuosity of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and baton of Maestro Salonga. While my symphony pushes the bounds of composition into modernity — exploring new sounds, instruments, and technologies, it remains faithful to the discipline and rigor of my heroes such as Bartók and Stravinsky. I hope digital natives like myself can find familiarity and fascination in this work.”

With the support of Ora-Ora, Henry Chu will create an epoch-making, immersive experience using generative art and transmedia at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall, with an aim to explore the intersections of symphonic music, digital fine art, and technology. Live data and pre-recorded footage will be delivered to real-time software custom made by the artist to generate visuals that are unique in every concert.

Henry Chu said that, "I'm delighted to be involved in this groundbreaking cultural project with Elliot Leung and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. It's a landmark collaboration in which my real time visuals aim to form unique interactions with each musical movement. That the spectacle takes place in front of a live audience and in the metaverse adds welcome symbiosis and completeness. Participating in the Metaverse Symphony marks a fresh waypoint in my journey across the audiovisual frontier of humanity and technology."

In partnership with Artifact Labs, *The Metaverse Symphony* will make its virtual debut in The Sandbox metaverse in the summer this year as a fully immersive Web3 experience. The multiplayer interactive experience will take place in a re-creation of Hong Kong's iconic Statue Square built on a 2 x 2 plot of land on The Sandbox, showcasing the unlimited possibilities of music in cyberspace, and blending technology and music in unprecedented ways. Throughout the metaverse experience, the audience will have the opportunity to engage in deeper ways with a number of quests and time trials, which help them learn about the composer, the music, and the transformation of technology in the 21st century. Besides, *The Metaverse Symphony* will be released by Sony Classical in July 2023.

As the Education Partner, the Asia Society Hong Kong Center will host a series of education programmes about the metaverse, digital art and symphonic music, including a talk with Elliot Leung, studio visits with Elliot Leung and Henry Chu, as well as a symposium to engage with a new generation of art and cultural supporters and the community at large.

Co-presented by the HK Phil and Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) Academy of Music, a lecture demonstration will be held on 18 April 2023 (Tue) at 3:30PM, in which Elliot Leung will discuss his role as a composer when developing an open-world game. It will be simultaneously live streamed on the HK Phil [Facebook](#) page, [YouTube](#) channel, [Twitch](#) platform, as well as the [YouTube](#) channel of HKBU Academy of Music. The public is welcome to join the talk online.

"Chow Sang Sang Jewellery Proudly Sponsors: Metaverse Symphony" will be held on 5 May 2023 (Fri) at 9PM and 6 May 2023 (Sat) at 5PM & 7:30PM in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall. Tickets priced at HK\$320 are available at URBTIX and POPTICKET. For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit hkphil.org.

Title Sponsor: Chow Sang Sang Jewellery

Sponsor: Audio Exotics

Education Partner and Press Conference Venue Support: Asia Society Hong Kong Center

Metaverse Partner: Artifact Labs

Gallery Partner: Ora-Ora

Project Manager: MetaKapital

Web3 Partner: The Sandbox

Build Partner: Lululand World

[Download](#) press images

Press conference photos



1. Elliot Leung (left) and Henry Chu (right) share their artistic concepts

(Photo: Ka Lam/HK Phil)



2. Group Photo (From left to right)

- Mr Gary Liu, Founder, Artifact Labs
- Mrs Vennie Ho, Executive Director, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra
- Dr Henrietta Tsui-Leung, Founder, Ora-Ora
- Mr Joey Liu, Co-founder, Artifact Labs
- Ms Alice Mong, Executive Director, Asia Society Hong Kong Center
- Mr Chris Leung, CEO, Audio Exotics
- Mr Elliot Leung, Composer
- Mr Benedikt Fohr, Chief Executive, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra
- Mr Henry Chu, Digital Artist
- Ms Cecilia Yim, Chief Market Strategy Officer, Chow Sang Sang Jewellery
- Mr Emmanuel Hui, Line Producer, H1 Music

(Photo: Ka Lam/HK Phil)

Henry Chu's artworks



Image courtesy of Henry Chu

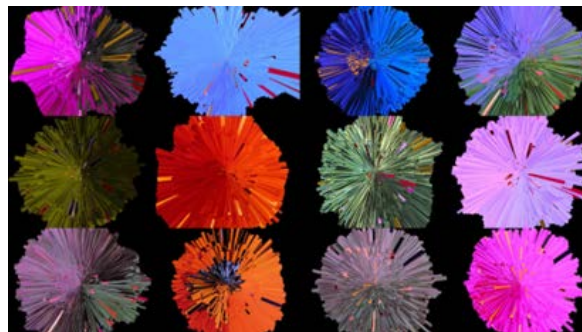


Image courtesy of Henry Chu

The Metaverse Symphony in The Sandbox



Image courtesy of Artifact Labs, Lululand World, The Sandbox

Artists

Gerard Salonga, conductor [\[full description\]](#)

Gerard Salonga is currently Resident Conductor of the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra in Kuala Lumpur, a position he has held since January 2019. Appointed by Maestro Jaap van Zweden, he served as Assistant Conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra for two seasons from 2016 to 2018, after being selected from among over 170 international applicants. He also served as Music Director of the ABS-CBN Philharmonic Orchestra in Manila from 2012 to 2020. In January 2021, Salonga began his term as Music Director of the Orchestra of the Filipino Youth.

Elliot Leung, composer [\[full description\]](#)

A Forbes 30 under 30 inductee and three-time ASCAP Award winner, Elliot Leung has composed the scores for three of the top ten highest-grossing non-English films, and become the first Hong Kong film composer making his breakthrough to Hollywood. His music has been described as "audio-graphically visual" by *The Standard*, and being able to "tug at the audience's heartstrings" by *Sina News*. *South China Morning Post* observed him as "a seasoned composer who enhances the magic of cinema".

Henry Chu, digital artist [\[full description\]](#)

Henry Chu is a Hong Kong-based new media artist who always works with data, music and body movements. He graduated from the Electrical and Electronic Engineering programme at the University of Auckland, and founded digital design studio pill & pillow in 2004. Chu's digital creations received more than 200 local and international awards, including recognitions at the Cannes Lions, Webbys, and One Show. His iPad music app "Squiggle" was exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 2011. In 2020, he created a karaoke generator "Canto Cocktail" commissioned by the M+ Museum. At the Digital Art Fair Asia 2021, he presented "Blockchain Piano", which converts crypto price into music in real time, and allows visitors to buy crypto through playing a song. In 2022, he received multiple commissions, including "Wind Piano" for the Audemars Piguet 50 Years of Royal Oak exhibition, "I'm waiting to blossom" for HSBC Open to Art, "Portrait Play" for the Hong Kong Museum of Art, "Quadtree series" for Bank of China Hong Kong, and "SURIV" for the University of Hong Kong Faculty of Medicine. His video work "Flower World" was sold at a Sotheby's auction on 1 November 2022. He has been a speaker at Business of Design Week, TEDxKowloon and TEDxTaipei.

CHOW SANG SANG JEWELLERY PROUDLY SPONSORS: METAVERSE SYMPHONY

5 & 6 | 5 | 2023

FRI 9PM

SAT 5PM & 7:30PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$320

Tickets now available at URBTIX and POPTICKET

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Gerard Salonga](#)

conductor

[Elliot Leung](#)

composer

[Henry Chu](#)

digital artist

Programme

Elliot LEUNG

Through the Fog, Into the Darkness (World Premiere)

Elliot LEUNG

Symphony no. 1, *The Metaverse* (World Premiere)

[Download](#) press images



Gerard Salonga
Photo: Malaysian
Philharmonic Orchestra



Elliot Leung
Photo: Create HK



Henry Chu



Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra
Photo: Ka Lam/HK Phil

About Asia Society Hong Kong Center

Asia Society Hong Kong Center (ASHK) is an independent non-governmental educational organisation established in 1990. It is one of 14 centers of Asia Society's diverse network across the globe, with the mission to navigate shared futures for Asia and the world in the fields of arts and culture, business and policy. Since 2012, ASHK is situated at the Former Explosives Magazine of the Victoria Barracks, a site steeped in history, cultural significance and natural beauty. Through conservation, restoration and adaptive reuse, the heritage site has been transformed into a cultural and intellectual hub, combining heritage preservation with a distinct modern aesthetic complete with world-class performance and conference facilities that offer a broad range of arts and culture, business and policy programmes, and exhibitions to the community.

About Artifact Labs

Artifact Labs is an independent blockchain company committed to the preservation of cultural and historical assets. Working with organisations and cultural institutions, Artifact Labs enables all guardians of significant cultural and historic artifacts to unlock new value propositions through harnessing the power of blockchain. At the forefront of preserving and showcasing unique and valuable collections, Artifact Labs establishes a rich metadata standard and provides a deeper lens into web3 applications with new models of engagement and participation. Artifact Labs was originally incubated by the *South China Morning Post*, a global news media company that has reported on China for the world since 1903.

For *The Metaverse Symphony*, Artifact Labs joins hands with Metaverse Partner The Sandbox and Build Partner Lululand World, to establish an alternative symphonic experience on the metaverse, setting new precedent for cultural production and navigating new potentials for symphonic music.

About Ora-Ora

Ora-Ora began in Hong Kong in 2006 and quickly established itself as a force and catalyst for innovation and openness of expression. Academically rigorous and philosophically-minded, our artists embody a fresh spirit of curiosity and enquiry. By interpreting and re-evaluating established frameworks of thought, they pursue unforeseen perspectives on the world around us. Ora-Ora believes in the power of eschewing boundaries and limitations, and combines an esteem for ancient traditions with a passion for the most contemporary and ground-breaking artistic media. Long recognised for our successful development of Asian creative talent, we have grown to represent artists from Asia, Europe and the US. Restlessly broadening our horizons, we continue to develop alliances and partnerships with institutions worldwide to enable discovery of our artists in new environments. Dr Henrietta Tsui-Leung, co-founder of Ora-Ora, is also co-founder of the Hong Kong Art Gallery Association, which has played a lead role in nurturing the diverse and thriving art ecosystem in the city.

About MetaKapital

MetaKapital offers an all-encompassing, one-stop product suite to enable companies, institutions and brands to launch their presence in the Metaverse, supporting all aspects of the journey from inception to monetisation. Our capabilities include the creation of NFTs and other digital assets, tokenisation, IP creation, and the developing of entire digital ecosystems in the Metaverse. MetaKapital is a worthy partner to global cultural institutions, international corporations and trusted brands. Founded and managed by experts from the worlds of banking, art and NFTs, MetaKapital is itself supported by diverse blockchain pioneers and specialists. Its extensive network and experience provides clients with the resources, support and advice they need to initiate, maintain and amplify their presence in the digital world.

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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 one of Asia's foremost classical orchestras. 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.