

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Date: 8 September 2023

**A Series of Spectacular Programmes Led by  
HK Phil Principal Guest Conductor Yu Long  
Joined by Virtuoso Soloists and Choruses**

Swire Community Concert: Musical Legends (20 & 23 September)  
Yu Long | Verdi Requiem (28 September)  
National Day Concert: A Panorama of Rivers and Mountains (30 September)

**[8 September 2023, Hong Kong]** Under the baton of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) Principal Guest Conductor Yu Long, the orchestra will present a series of spectacular programmes in September 2023, joined by illustrious soloists and choruses. “Swire Community Concert: Musical Legends” will be held on 20 and 23 September in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall and Tsuen Wan Town Hall Auditorium respectively. “Yu Long | Verdi Requiem” and “National Day Concert: A Panorama of Rivers and Mountains” will be held on 28 and 30 September respectively, both in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall.

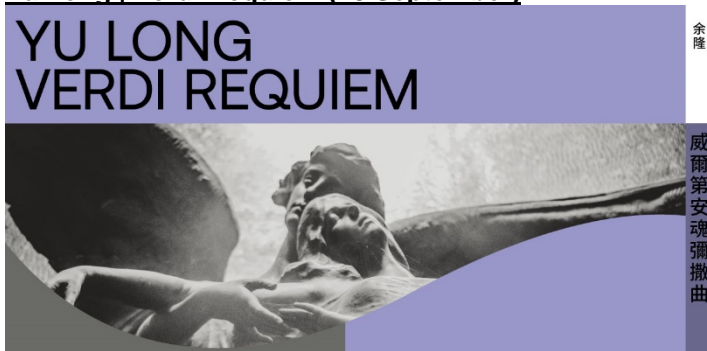
**Swire Community Concert: Musical Legends (20 & 23 September)**



The HK Phil performs across the community with the aim of increasing access to classical music. This September, join the HK Phil Principal Guest Conductor Yu Long and soprano Song Yuanming as they portray the fascinating stories of musical legends one after another. HK Phil horn player Homer Lee will be the presenter along the music journey. This is an inclusive concert that welcomes families and people with special needs to enjoy music in a friendly environment. Let's enjoy music together!

“Swire Community Concert: Musical Legends” will be held on 20 September 2023 (Wed) at 5PM in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall and 23 September 2023 (Sat) at 3PM in the Tsuen Wan Town Hall Auditorium. The concert welcomes audiences of all ages and people with special needs free of charge. Public registration starts from 12 September (Tue) at 10AM on [POPTICKET](https://www.opticket.com.hk) website. Tickets are limited, and are available on a first come, first-served basis. For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit [hkphil.org](https://www.hkphil.org).

**Yu Long | Verdi Requiem (28 September)**



In this programme, Yu Long will conduct Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*, a depiction of light and dark, heaven and hell, life and death. This Catholic Funeral Mass is written by the composer in honour of a famed Italian author he admired – Alessandro Manzoni, as a final prayer and farewell to a friend. Featuring soloists Song Yuanming, Zhu Huiling, Xiahou Jinxu and Nikolay Didenko, and the joint force of HK Phil Chorus and the China National Opera House Chorus, the combination of voices bring a powerful prayer to the souls that have passed.

“Yu Long | Verdi Requiem” will be held on 28 September 2023 (Thu) at 8PM in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall. Tickets priced at HK\$500, \$400, \$300 and \$200 are available at URBTIX. For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit [hkphil.org](http://hkphil.org).

### **National Day Concert: A Panorama of Rivers and Mountains (30 September)**



Yu Long and the HK Phil celebrate National Day with a portrayal of China's beautiful landscape. The concert will open with *Ode to the Red Flag* by Lü Qiming. Next, the Northern Song Dynasty's only surviving painting by Wang Ximeng – *A Panorama of Rivers and Mountains*, is brought to life. Composed by Zhao Lin, this symphonic poem weaves folk soprano with the Chinese instruments sheng, pipa, erhu and dizi into the Western orchestral fabric to produce a unique soundscape. Led by Yu Long, Chinese singer Fang Qiong, pianist Johnson Li and the virtuosos from the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra – Xu Hui, Zhang Ying, Wei Shen-fu and Wu Chih-ting will give a Hong Kong premiere of the co-commission by the League of China Orchestras and 23 orchestras, including the HK Phil.

“National Day Concert: A Panorama of Rivers and Mountains” will be held on 30 September 2023 (Sat) at 8PM in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall. Tickets priced at HK\$500, \$400, \$300, \$200 and \$50 are available at URBTIX. For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit [hkphil.org](http://hkphil.org).

*Sponsor: CMB Wing Lung Bank*

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## **SWIRE COMMUNITY CONCERT: MUSICAL LEGENDS**

### **Artists**

#### **Yu Long, conductor** [\[full description\]](#)

Hailed by *The New York Times* as “the most powerful figure in China’s classical music scene,” Yu Long has devoted his career to steering China’s growing connection to classical music while familiarising international audiences with the country’s most eminent musicians and composers. Yu is the Artistic Director of the China Philharmonic Orchestra in Beijing and Music Director of Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, as well as Principal Guest Conductor of the HK Phil. He is also Co-Director of Shanghai’s Music in the Summer Air (MISA) festival and Chair of the Artistic Committee of the Beijing Music Festival, and Honorary Music Director and the Chair of the Artistic Committee of Guangzhou Symphony. He is currently Vice President of the China Musicians Association and Chairman of the League of China Orchestras.

#### **Song Yuanming, soprano** [\[full description\]](#)

Song Yuanming obtained Graduate Artist Diploma and Double Master’s Degree in “Opera and Light Opera” and “Art Songs and Cantata” at University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna under the tutelage of Professor Franz Lukasovsky. Meanwhile, she graduated from The Prayner Conservatory of Music and Dramatic Arts in Vienna, majoring in flute. Song as Professor of vocalis teaches at the Voice and Opera Department of the Central Conservatory of Music, Beijing. She has won several awards including the first prize at the 48<sup>th</sup> Concours International de Chant de La Ville de Toulouse; “Best Soprano” at the 13<sup>th</sup> Tagliavini International Vocal Competition in Austria; and the first prize at the 44<sup>th</sup> Antonín Dvořák International Vocal Competition in Czech Republic.

### **SWIRE COMMUNITY CONCERT: MUSICAL LEGENDS**

20 | 9 | 2023

WED 5PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

23 | 9 | 2023

SAT 3PM

Tsuen Wan Town Hall Auditorium

Free admission with registration from 12 September (Tue) at 10AM on POPTICKET website

Suitable for all ages

### **Artists**

[Yu Long](#)

conductor

[Song Yuanming](#)

soprano

[Homer Lee](#)

presenter

### **Programme**

**ELGAR**

*Pomp and Circumstance* March no. 1

**J. STRAUSS II**

*Blue Danube* Waltz

**PUCCINI**

*Madama Butterfly*: Un bel dì, vedremo

**PUCCINI**

*Gianni Schicchi*: O mio babbino caro

**ROSSINI**

*William Tell* Overture

**WAGNER**

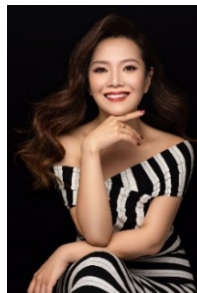
*Tannhäuser* Overture

[Download](#) press images



**Yu Long**

Photo: Liu Hui



**Song Yuanming**



**Homer Lee**

Photo: Michael Li Yam/HK Phil



**Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra**

Photo: Eric Hong/ HK Phil

## YU LONG | VERDI REQUIEM

### Artists

#### **Yu Long, conductor** [\[full description\]](#)

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#### **Zhu Huiling, mezzo-soprano** [\[full description\]](#)

Zhu Huiling, the Shanghai-born mezzo-soprano, graduated from the High School affiliated to the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg, and Musikhochschule Stuttgart. As one of the most high-profile vocal artists in China, Zhu regularly collaborates with all major orchestras and opera houses, performing operas such as *Tannhäuser*, *L’heure espagnole*, *Carmen*, etc., as well as Mahler’s Symphony nos. 2, no. 3 and no. 8 and *Das Lied von der Erde*, Verdi’s *Messa da Requiem*, the world premiere of Ye Xiaogang’s *Songs from the Steppe*, *Lu Xun*, etc.

#### **Xiahou Jinxu, tenor** [\[full description\]](#)

Xiahou Jinxu graduated from China Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing and Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst in Vienna in 2018. In 2011 he won the third prize of the renowned international singing competition *Neue Stimmen* of the Bertelsmann Foundation in Gütersloh. Xiahou has maintained frequent collaborations with renowned conductors and world-class orchestras such as Vienna Philharmonic, Copenhagen Philharmonic and etc. He has appeared on the world’s most prestigious opera stages since 2012, and performed the leading roles in dozens of operas such as *L’elisir d’amore*, *La Cenerentola*, *Don Pasquale* and etc. at Wiener Staatsoper.

#### **Nikolay Didenko, bass** [\[full description\]](#)

Russian bass Nikolay Didenko graduated from the Moscow Academy of Choral Art in both singing and conducting. He was previously a soloist of the “New Opera” in Moscow and a member of the Houston Grand Opera Studio. He performs across the world with many significant companies including the Houston Grand Opera, New York City Opera, Metropolitan Opera and Bilbao Opera. He recently sung *Don Pasquale* at the Bolshoi Theatre and Shostakovich’s *Songs and Dances of Death* at the Beethoven Festival in Warsaw. As a versatile performer, he is also established on the concert platform singing Verdi’s *Requiem* at the Beethoven Festival, with the Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg under Alexander Shelley, and most recently with Orchestre National d’Île de France under Enrique Mazzola.

#### **Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus** [\[full description\]](#)

The HK Phil Chorus was established in 1980. Over the years, it has collaborated with the HK Phil to perform a range of different works. In 2013, the Chorus undertook a new recruitment drive, and over 450 singers were attracted to attend the auditions. The first performance by the newly reformed Chorus was Handel’s *Messiah*. Since then, the Chorus has performed with the HK Phil in major works by composers including Britten, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Haydn and Mahler under renowned conductors Lorin Maazel, Nicholas McGegan and Jaap van Zweden, amongst others. The Fellows programme was launched in the 2020/21 Season.

**China National Opera House Chorus** [\[full description\]](#)

The Central Opera House is the national opera house under the direct administration of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The Chorus is the main department of China Opera House and is a prominent and influential singing company in China. Most of its members are top graduates from conservatories of music all over the country who were well trained in music knowledge and vocal expression. Over the years, the Chorus has performed a wide repertoire, ranging from well-known Chinese and foreign operas to vocal masterpieces. Thanks to the persistent efforts of generations of artists over more than half a century, the Opera House has debuted, staged and preserved a rich repertoire of world-famous operas, including *La traviata*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Carmen*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Turandot*, *Aida*, etc.

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**YU LONG | VERDI REQUIEM**

28 | 9 | 2023

THU 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$500 \$400 \$300 \$200

Tickets now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

**Artists**

[Yu Long](#)

[Song Yuanming](#)

[Zhu Huiling](#)

[Xiahou Jinxu](#)

[Nikolay Didenko](#)

[Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus](#)

[China National Opera House Chorus](#)

conductor

soprano

mezzo-soprano

tenor

Bass

**Programme**

**VERDI**

Messa da Requiem

[Download](#) press images



**Yu Long**  
Photo: Liu Hui



**Song Yuanming**



**Zhu Huiling**  
Photo: LIN



**Xiahou Jinxu**  
Photo: Johannes Ifkovits



**Nikolay Didenko**



**Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus**  
Photo: Ka Lam/HK Phil



**China National Opera House Chorus**



**Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra**  
Photo: Ka Lam/ HK Phil

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## **NATIONAL DAY CONCERT: A PANORAMA OF RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS**

### **Artists**

#### **Yu Long, conductor** [\[full description\]](#)

Hailed by *The New York Times* as “the most powerful figure in China’s classical music scene,” Yu Long has devoted his career to steering China’s growing connection to classical music while familiarising international audiences with the country’s most eminent musicians and composers. Yu is the Artistic Director of the China Philharmonic Orchestra in Beijing and Music Director of Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, as well as Principal Guest Conductor of the HK Phil. He is also Co-Director of Shanghai’s Music in the Summer Air (MISA) festival and Chair of the Artistic Committee of the Beijing Music Festival, and Honorary Music Director and the Chair of the Artistic Committee of Guangzhou Symphony. He is currently Vice President of the China Musicians Association and Chairman of the League of China Orchestras.

#### **Fang Qiong, soprano** [\[full description\]](#)

FangQiong is a renowned vocalist and professor. She now serves as the Director of the Voice and Opera Department of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music (SHCM), the Vice President of the National Vocality and Art Institution of China, and Director of the Vocal Music Professional Committee of the Shanghai Musician Association. Fang completed her study at the Voice and Opera Department of SHCM under the tutelage of Professors Zheng Ti and Zhou Xiaoyan. She is also winner for several significant award, including the first prize in the 7<sup>th</sup> National Young Singers Awards Competition, the Shanghai Yucai Award for Educationalist, and Baogang Education Foundation Award. She has also been entitled to honors including Model Individual for National Unity awarded by the State Council of the People’s Republic of China and Shanghai Model Worker.

#### **Johnson Li, piano** [\[full description\]](#)

Johnson Li, a twenty-year-old pianist from Hong Kong, embarked on his musical journey at the age of four. Over the years, his dedication and passion for playing piano have led to remarkable achievements. Taking centre stage as a soloist, Li delivered captivating performances with the HK Phil, conducted by Jun Märkl, the China Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Yu Long, and the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Christoph Eschenbach. Li’s musical talents have also resonated with global audiences through solo collaborations with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra, and the Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra.

### **Virtuosi from the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra**

#### **Xu Hui, erhu**

Xu Hui is the Acting Erhu Principal of the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra. She is concurrently Vice President of the Hong Kong Society for Art and Charity Limited, a non-profit arts organization in Hong Kong; director of the China Nationalities Orchestra Society, Sino-US Chinese Musicians Association, and YMCA Hong Kong. Xu has given solo recitals in Nanjing, Beijing, Hong Kong and the United States. Her discography includes the solo albums “Hui Sheng Hui Se” and “Moonlight Flower”. Orchestras she has performed with include the Shanghai Chinese Orchestra, Shandong Chinese Orchestra, Hangzhou Philharmonic Orchestra and the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra. She has also performed with renowned conductors and composers such as Tang Muhai, Yan Huichang, Wang Fujian, Pang Kapang, Liu Wenjin, He Zhanhao and Li Ying.

#### **Zhang Ying, pipa**

Principal Pipa of the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra (HKCO), Zhang joined the HKCO in 2004 and served as Acting Principal Pipa in 2013, she has served as Principal Pipa since 2016. Zhang is a lecturer on the Master’s degree programme of The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, and is teaching at the University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, Hong Kong Baptist University, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Education University of Hong Kong. She holds a Master’s degree from the China Conservatory of Music and was trained under Prof Zhao Yanan, Ms Li Guixiang, Prof Wu Junsheng, Ms Ren Hong and Prof Yang Jing.

#### **Wei Shen-fu, sheng**

Acting Principal Sheng and instrumental class instructor of the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, section instructor of the Hong Kong Young Chinese Orchestra, Wei joined the HKCO in 2018 and served as Acting Principal Sheng in 2021. He has served as Assistant Principal Sheng since the same year. Wei is also instructor of the Chinese Orchestra of Hong Kong Taoist Association Tang Hin Memorial Secondary School. Wei graduated from the NTUA with a degree in Chinese Music under the tutelage of Jen Yen-ping and Cheng

Chien-na. He gave his solo recital in 2018. Wei is a winner of many prizes and accolades: while he was still in high school, he won the first prize with Distinction in the Taiwan Music Competition, was awarded the title “The Pride of Taoyuan” by the City of Taoyuan.

**Wu Chih-ting, dizi**

Dizi virtuoso of the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, Wu joined the HKCO in 2012. He is a graduate from The Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts (Master in Music) and the NTUA (Bachelor in Chinese Music). Wu won the dizi and xiao solo championship in 2002 and 2004 at the National Student Competition of Music of Taiwan; first prize in the 2004 Taipei Chinese Instrumental Competition organised by the Taipei Chinese Orchestra; in 2007, he was named an “NTCH Young Star of Chinese Music” on the merit of winning first place in the Traditional Instrument Competition organised by the National Theatre & Concert Hall of Taipei.

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**NATIONAL DAY CONCERT: A PANORAMA OF RIVERS AND MOUNTAINS**

30 | 9 | 2023

SAT 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

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Tickets now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

**Artists**

[Yu Long](#)

conductor

[Fang Qiong](#)

soprano

[Johnson Li](#)

piano

**Virtuosi from the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra**

Xu Hui

erhu

Zhang Ying

pipa

Wei Shen-fu

sheng

Wu Chih-ting

dizi

**Programme**

LÜ Qiming

*Ode to the Red Flag*

ZHAO Lin

*A Thousand Li of Rivers and Mountains* (Hong Kong Premiere)

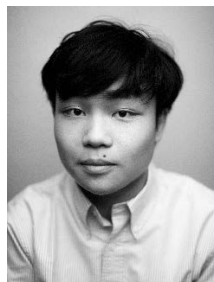
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**Yu Long**  
Photo: Liu Hui



**Fang Qiong**



**Johnson Li**  
Photo: Thomas Brunot



**Xu Hui**  
Photo: Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra



**Zhang Ying**  
Photo: Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra



**Wei Shen-fu**  
Photo: Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra



**Wu Chih-ting**  
Photo: Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra



**Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra**  
Photo: Ka Lam/ HK Phil

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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. 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. Following his tenure as Music Director, he will hold the title of Conductor Laureate. Jaap 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 well received, 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. The orchestra undertook a major tour in 2017 to Seoul, Osaka, Singapore, Melbourne and Sydney in celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. In the 2023/24 Season, the orchestra will embark on global tours to more than 18 cities.

Conductors and soloists who have recently performed with the orchestra include Anja Bihlmaier, Stéphane Denève, Christoph Eschenbach, Paavo Järvi, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Tarmo Peltokoski, Vasily Petrenko, Krzysztof Urbanski, Ning Feng, Boris Giltburg, Leonidas Kavakos, Olivier Latry and Akiko Suwanai. 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, each conducting their own compositions.

The HK Phil runs diverse education and community programmes in schools, hospitals and outdoor spaces, bringing 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 HKAPA's School of Music and facilitating 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.