

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra Triumphant Concludes  
its Singapore and Europe Tour of Nine Cities across Seven Countries with  
Music Director Jaap van Zweden, soloist Alexandre Kantorow and composer Daniel Lo**



**“(Rachmaninov *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*) The HK Phil’s adroit playing, excellent balance...and van Zweden’s sympathetic direction made this a resounding success.”**  
--- Mervin Beng, *The Straits Times*, Singapore

**“(Shostakovich Symphony no. 9) His (Jaap’s) highly committed conducting and the excellent Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra elicited from the complex score all the facets and colours that Shostakovich had given the musicians.”**  
--- Thomas Thielemann, *Der Opernfreund*, Germany

**“(Beethoven Piano Concerto no. 4) Arcs of suspense full of inwardness, coupled with high virtuosity in both the orchestra and the soloist – here the famous young French pianist Alexandre Kantorow... All of this was just as well received more than two hundred years ago as it is today.”**  
--- Michael Ernst, *Musik in Dresden*, Germany

**“(Daniel Lo *Asterismal Dance*) As an introduction, the concert began with a short piece by Hong Kong composer Daniel Lo Ting-cheung... It’s brilliant, pleasant, almost easy. The orchestra, under the able direction of Jaap Van Zweden, shines in all its brilliance.”**  
--- Hubert Stoecklin, *Classique News*, France

**“(Mahler Symphony no. 1) The explosive interpretation of this symphony was brilliantly rendered by the orchestra and its conductor.”**  
--- Jean-Rémi Barland, *La Provence*, France

**[27 March 2024, Hong Kong]** The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) successfully concluded a three-week international tour to Singapore and Europe, as part of the orchestra's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season. Led by Music Director Jaap van Zweden, the tour concerts featured renowned French pianist Alexandre Kantorow and Hong Kong composer Daniel Lo, whose *Asterismal Dance* was given its Singaporean and European premieres. Performances took place in nine cities across seven countries, enthralled audiences at prestigious venues including Singapore's Esplanade, Dresden's Kulturpalast, Zurich's Tonhalle, Toulouse's Halle aux Grains, Aix-En-Provence's Grand Théâtre de Provence, Rotterdam's De Doelen, Basels' Stadtcasino, Rome's Sala Santa Cecilia and Brussels's Bozar from 20 February to 8 March 2024.

The tour programmes featured the First Symphonies by Brahms and Mahler, as well as Shostakovich's Symphony no. 9. Pianist Alexandre Kantorow, winner of the 2019 International Tchaikovsky Competition and 2024 Gilmore Artist Award, performed Rachmaninov's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* and Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto. Each concert opened with Daniel Lo's new work, *Asterismal Dance*, commissioned to celebrate the HK Phil's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The grand finale of the tour in Bozar, Brussels opened the prestigious Klarafestival, Belgium's biggest classical music festival. The concert was broadcast live by the Belgium public radio VRT, one of the founding members of European Broadcasting Union (EBU). Jaap van Zweden, Alexandre Kantorow and Daniel Lo gave pre-concert talks in Rotterdam, Aix-En-Provence, and Brussels, respectively.

All of the concerts were well received, with nearly full or sold-out houses at the majority of the venues. Jaap van Zweden, Music Director of the HK Phil said, "I was happy to embark on an extensive tour to Singapore and Europe with the HK Phil. Due to the pandemic, this was the first opportunity I have had to tour overseas with the orchestra after it received the *Gramophone* Orchestra of the Year Award in 2019. The tour commemorated the orchestra's achievements over the past five decades and showcased its musical excellence on the world stage. I am glad that the high quality playing of the orchestra was appreciated by passionate audiences at every hall and uniformly praised in the reviews of the concerts."

The HK Phil would like to extend its sincere gratitude to the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in Singapore, Berlin and Brussels for their generosity, as well as PARKROYAL on Beach Road for its support as the Hotel Partner in Singapore, and Kerry Logistics for their contribution as the Official Logistics Partner in Europe.

As a cultural ambassador of Hong Kong, the HK Phil is dedicated to fostering cultural exchange and showcasing the artistic excellence of Hong Kong locally, nationally, and internationally. In May 2024, HK Phil Principal Guest Conductor Long Yu will lead the orchestra on a journey across Mainland China, presenting an enticing East-meets-West programme.

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**Singapore**

Photo: Desmond Chan/HK Phil



**Dresden**

Photo: Stephan Floss



**Zurich**

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**Toulouse**  
Photo: Desmond Chan/HK Phil



**Aix-En-Provence**  
Photo: Desmond Chan/HK Phil



**Rotterdam**  
Photo: Desmond Chan/HK Phil



**Basel**  
Photo: Desmond Chan/HK Phil



**Rome**  
Photo: Desmond Chan/HK Phil



**Brussels**  
Photo: Desmond Chan/HK Phil



**Jaap van Zweden at Rotterdam pre-concert talk**  
Photo: Desmond Chan/HK Phil



**Alexandre Kantorow at Aix-En-Provence pre-concert talk**  
Photo: Desmond Chan/HK Phil



**Daniel Lo at Brussels pre-concert talk**  
Photo: Desmond Chan/HK Phil

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## Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Music Director: Jaap van Zweden, SBS

Principal Guest Conductor: Long Yu

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. Long Yu 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.