

PRESS RELEASE
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The 2024 Annual Conference of League of China Orchestras and the 10th China Orchestra Administration and Management Forum were Successfully Held

[25 June 2024, Hong Kong] Hosted by the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil), the 2024 Annual Conference of League of China Orchestras and the 10th China Orchestra Administration and Management Forum (Forum) were successfully held in Hong Kong from 24 to 25 June. Over 70 orchestra senior executives and classical music professionals from the Mainland attended, engaging in exchanges with representatives of Hong Kong's arts and cultural organisations to foster the development of the industry.

The League of China Orchestras (League), an affiliate of the Chinese Musicians Association, organises the Annual Conference and the Forum in different cities across China each year. As this year marks the 50th anniversary of the HK Phil, this significant annual event in the classical music scene was organised in collaboration with the League in Hong Kong. The 2024 Forum focused on classical orchestra administration and management, featuring four main themes: the 50-year development of the HK Phil, cultural exchange and touring, commission work, and nurturing young artists.

Vennie Ho, Vice-chairman of the League and Consultant of the HK Phil's 50th Anniversary, said: "The League has always played an instrumental role for the professional development of orchestras in China. The Forum serves as an important exchange platform for orchestra key leaders and industry practitioners, where participants join insightful discussions and connect to a national wide network. The HK Phil is honoured to participate in the League as one of the founding members, currently serving on the executive council. We are delighted to have the opportunity to organise the Forum this year."

On 24 June, Tse Wing-ye, Winnie, Deputy Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism commenced the forum with a welcoming remark. In the first keynote speech, titled "HK Phil's 50 Years Development", Benedikt Fohr, Chief Executive of the HK Phil, discussed the opportunities and challenges faced by the orchestra following its transition from an amateur orchestra named Sino-British Orchestra to a professional one. Jaap van Zweden, Music Director of the HK Phil, shared how music unites the audiences. James Tong, Director, Group Public Affairs representing the Swire Group, the Principal Patron of the orchestra, elaborated on the significance and collaborative outcomes of principal patronage for the orchestra's development.

The panel talk, "From an Amateur Association to a Professional Orchestra – HK Phil's Development" was moderated by Long Yu, Chairman of the League and Principal Guest Conductor of the HK Phil. Keynote speakers included Darwin Chen, former General Committee Member of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society; Fan Ting, Board Member of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society; Y. S. Liu, Senior Advisor and former Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society; and Benedikt Fohr, Chief Executive of the HK Phil.

The second part of the Forum focused on touring and cultural exchange. In the session "HK Phil's Tours – Planning and Management", Vanessa Chan, Director of Orchestral Operations of the HK Phil, shared her experience gained from the HK Phil's Europe and Asia tours this season. In the following session "Cultural

Exchange – Hong Kong Performing Arts Expo”, Kenneth Fok, Member of Legislative Council and Chairman of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, discussed the strengths of Hong Kong as a platform for cultural exchange between China and the world. The second part concluded with the panel talk, “Cultural Exchange and Touring” led by Long Yu. Orchestra representatives with touring experience, including Nie Bing, Chairman of Artistic Committee of the Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra, Tong Ming, President of the Ningbo Symphony Orchestra, and Vanessa Chan, Director of Orchestral Operations of the HK Phil, discussed the administrative preparations and challenges such as visa and tax issues for international tours.

The third part of the Forum, titled “Commission Work”, was moderated by Fedina Zhou, President of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. On the panel, Chan Wing-wah, Chairman of the Composers and Authors Society of Hong Kong, composer Elliot Leung, Timothy Tsukamoto, Director of Artistic Planning of the HK Phil, and Betty Ho, Librarian of the HK Phil, discussed topics related to commissioning, such as copyright and music score preparation.

The fourth part of the Forum took place on the following day (25 June). Doug He, Vice President of Artistic Planning & Education of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, moderated the panel talk “Young Artists Cultivation and Nurturing”, where Chen Qing, President of the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra, Zhang Weiwei, Vice President and Concertmaster of the Changsha Symphony Orchestra, and Benedikt Fohr, Chief Executive of the HK Phil, shared their experience in organising education and outreach programmes, as well as building youth symphony orchestras.

At the Forum’s closing ceremony, the League presented the Lifetime Achievement Award to Vennie Ho in recognition of her contributions to the classical music industry. As the next edition of the Forum will be hosted by the Harbin Concert Hall (Harbin Symphony Orchestra), Vennie Ho, the current rotating Chairman, handed over the host plaque to Qi Xuguang, Secretary of the Party Committee, Harbin Concert Hall.

The League of China Orchestras

Established in 2019, the League of China Orchestras is a professional organisation under the Chinese Musicians Association, and currently has 62 member organisations. The predecessor of the League was the China Orchestra Administration and Management Forum founded in 2015. The Forum is held annually in various cities across China, seeking to create a platform for exploring the professionalisation, internationalisation, and future development of orchestras.

[Download](#) Event Programme

[Download](#) Photos (Photo: Eric Hong/HK Phil)

1. Group photo of participants and keynote speakers
(From left) Benedikt Fohr, Chief Executive of the HK Phil; Peng Jie, Secretary General of the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles’ Hong Kong Member Association; Jaap van Zweden, Music Director of the HK Phil; Tse Wing-ye, Winnie, Deputy Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism; Long Yu, Chairman of the League and Principal Guest Conductor of the HK Phil; Vennie Ho, Vice-chairman of the League and Consultant of the HK Phil’s 50th Anniversary; and James Tong, Director, Group Public Affairs of John Swire & Sons (H.K.) Limited
2. Vennie Ho, Vice-chairman of the League and Consultant of the HK Phil’s 50th Anniversary
3. Tse Wing-ye, Winnie, Deputy Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism
4. Benedikt Fohr, Chief Executive of the HK Phil

5. Jaap van Zweden, Music Director of the HK Phil
6. James Tong, Director, Group Public Affairs of John Swire & Sons (H.K.) Limited
7. Panel Talk: "From an Amateur Association to a Professional Orchestra – HK Phil's Development"
(From left)
Moderator: Long Yu, Chairman of the League and Principal Guest Conductor of the HK Phil
Keynote speakers: Darwin Chen, former General Committee Member of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society; Fan Ting, Board Member of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society; Benedikt Fohr, Chief Executive of the HK Phil; and Y. S. Liu, Senior Advisor and former Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society
8. Keynote Speech: "HK Phil's Tours – Planning and Management"
Keynote speaker: Vanessa Chan, Director of Orchestral Operations of the HK Phil
9. Keynote Speech: "Cultural Exchange – Hong Kong Performing Arts Expo"
Keynote speaker: Kenneth Fok, Member of Legislative Council and Chairman of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council
10. Panel Talk: "Cultural Exchange and Touring"
(From left)
Moderator: Long Yu, Chairman of the League and Principal Guest Conductor of the HK Phil
Keynote speakers: Vanessa Chan, Director of Orchestral Operations of the HK Phil; Nie Bing, Chairman of Artistic Committee of the Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra; and Tong Ming, President of the Ningbo Symphony Orchestra
11. Commission Work
(From left)
Moderator: Fedina Zhou, President of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra
Keynote speakers: Chan Wing-wah, Chairman of the Composers and Authors Society of Hong Kong; Betty Ho, Librarian of the HK Phil; composer Elliot Leung; and Timothy Tsukamoto, Director of Artistic Planning of the HK Phil
12. Panel Talk: Young Artists Cultivation and Nurturing
(From left)
Moderator: Doug He, Vice President of Artistic Planning & Education of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra
Keynote speakers: Chen Qing, President of the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra; Benedikt Fohr, Chief Executive of the HK Phil; and Zhang Weiwei, Vice President and Concertmaster of the Changsha Symphony Orchestra
13. Long Yu presents the Lifetime Achievement Award to Vennie Ho.
14. Vennie Ho, recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award (fourth from right); Long Yu (third from right); Lio Kuokman, Resident Conductor of the HK Phil (second from right); Benedikt Fohr, Chief Executive of the HK Phil (fourth from left); Timothy Tsukamoto, Director of Artistic Planning of the HK Phil (first from right); Dennis Wu, Director of Marketing of the HK Phil (third from left); Vanessa Chan, Director of Orchestral Operations of the HK Phil (second from left) and Kary Hon, Director of Development of the HK Phil (first from left)
15. Vennie Ho hands over the host plaque to Qi Xuguang, Secretary of the Party Committee, Harbin Music Hall, which will host the next edition of the Forum.
16. Group photo of participants

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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: Long Yu
Resident Conductor: Lio Kuokman, JP

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is regarded as one of the leading orchestras in Asia. 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. 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. Other recent recording projects include Mahler's Symphony no. 10, Shostakovich's Symphony no. 10, and Tchaikovsky's Symphony no. 6 and Piano Concerto no. 1.

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 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The HK Phil celebrates its 50th anniversary in the 2023/24 season, touring Europe, Asia, and Mainland China, performing in 22 cities across ten countries.

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, Joshua Bell, Ning Feng, Boris Giltburg, Lang Lang, Leonidas Kavakos, Olivier Latry, Yo-Yo Ma 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 conducting their own compositions.

The HK Phil runs diverse education and community programmes in schools and outdoor spaces, bringing 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 current sponsorship donation, which is the largest amount received in the orchestra's history, Swire endeavours to foster access to classical music and stimulate cultural participation in Hong Kong and the Chinese Mainland – a critical aspect of this is to engage with the community, especially young people. The sponsorship will also help promote local artistic excellence and enhance Hong Kong's reputation as one of the great cities in the world.



梵志登 音樂總監
Jaap van Zweden Music Director
余隆 首席客席指揮
Yu Long Principal Guest Conductor

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.