

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra is Awarded the Rosthorn Medal**

**[23 March 2015, Hong Kong]** The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) has been awarded Austria's Rosthorn Medal, an honour reserved for those who have made outstanding contributions towards fostering ties between Austria and China.

Mr YS Liu, Vice-Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society, was presented with the medal in the Austrian Parliament Building in Vienna on 25 February 2015, by Mr Karlheinz Kopf, the Second President of the Austria Parliament, and Dr Helmut Sohmen, Hon. Chairman of the Austro-Chinese Friendship Association and a Hong Kong resident.

Mr Kopf praised the HK Phil for its special contribution to the bilateral relationship between Austria and China.

Mr YS Liu said, "This honour is a great recognition of the HK Phil and its efforts over the past years. The HK Phil is now touring seven European cities including Vienna. Led by acclaimed Music Director Jaap van Zweden, and joined by renowned Chinese violinist Ning Feng, and performing a new work, *Quintessence*, by Hong Kong born composer Fung Lam, the HK Phil's Europe Tour certainly brings the sound of a professional orchestra from Hong Kong to the West."

The Rosthorn Medal is named after former Austrian Legate to China. Arthur von Rosthorn (1862-1945). He was Envoy of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire to the Qing Emperor at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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Mr YS Liu (middle), Vice-Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society, was presented with the medal by Mr Karlheinz Kopf (right), the Second President of the Austria Parliament, and Dr Helmut Sohmen (left), Hon. Chairman of the Austro-Chinese Friendship Association and a Hong Kong resident.



Musicians of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestras performing at the award ceremony.  
(From left: Jing Wang, Yingna Zhao, Andrew Ling, Richard Bamping)



The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra in Vienna Musikverein  
Photo Credit: Dieter Nagl

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For further press information please contact:

**Doris Chan, Director of Marketing**

Tel: +852 2721 9035 Email: [doris.chan@hkphil.org](mailto:doris.chan@hkphil.org)

**Becky Lee, Media Relations Manager**

Tel: +852 2721 1585 Email: [becky.lee@hkphil.org](mailto:becky.lee@hkphil.org)

## Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra Music Director: Jaap van Zweden

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) has recently returned from an extremely successful five-country, seven-city tour of Europe, with concerts in London, Vienna, Zurich, Eindhoven, Birmingham, Berlin and Amsterdam. Most concerts were sold out, there were standing ovations, and the reviews were universally positive. The concert in Vienna's Musikverein was filmed for future broadcast on TV. With a history stretching back to 1895, when it was formed as the Sino-British Orchestra, the HK Phil was re-named in 1957 and became fully professional in 1974.

Thanks to significant subsidy from the Hong Kong Government and long-term funding from Principal Patron Swire, the Hong Kong Jockey Club and other supporters, the HK Phil now boasts a full-time annual schedule of classical music concerts, pops concerts, an extensive education programme, and collaborations for staged opera with Opera Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Arts Festival.

Conductors and soloists who have recently performed with the orchestra include Vladimir Ashkenazy, Ning Feng, Matthias Goerne, Lang Lang, Yu Long, Yundi Li, the late Lorin Maazel, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Yuja Wang and Edo de Waart, the HK Phil's previous Music Director.

The HK Phil promotes the work of Hong Kong and Chinese composers through an active commissioning programme, and has released recordings featuring Tan Dun and Bright Sheng, each conducting their own compositions, on the Naxos label. Its acclaimed community engagement programme brings music to ten of thousands of children annually.

This season is Jaap van Zweden's third as Music Director of the HK Phil. With him, the orchestra is undertaking major expansion and new projects, including the first-ever performances by a Hong Kong or mainland Chinese orchestra of Wagner's *The Ring of the Nibelung*. The four operas are being performed, one a year, in concert and recorded live for the Naxos label.

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 also endeavours to promote artistic excellence, foster access to classical music and stimulate cultural participation in Hong Kong, and to enhance Hong Kong's reputation as one of the great cities of the world.

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra is financially supported by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
SWIRE is the Principal Patron of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra  
The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra is a Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre