

PRESS RELEASE
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Cello Superstar Yo-Yo Ma to open HK Phil 2016/17 Season (9 & 10 September)

[11 July 2016, Hong Kong] Internationally-acclaimed cello superstar **Yo-Yo Ma** will thrill audiences in the spectacular opening concert of the **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra's (HK Phil) 2016/17** season. In this festive concert Yo-Yo Ma partners with sheng virtuoso **Wu Tong** for Zhao Lin's *Duo*, a concerto that imaginatively expresses Chinese and Western musical traditions. The concert will be conducted by **Yu Long**, Principal Guest Conductor of the HK Phil.

Yo-Yo Ma will play Dvořák's *Silent Woods*, a beautiful and tranquil piece that was originally written for piano duet, which the composer later rearranged for cello and orchestra. Yo-Yo Ma is known for his spectacular sound. Alan Rich, respected music critic from *Musical America*, once said of him, "he is the unchallenged cello virtuoso of our time. Not only has he mastered the traditional classics from the baroque to the moderns, but with his Silk Road Project he has extended the normal boundaries of his instrument toward infinity."

Yo-Yo Ma will then partner with sheng virtuoso Wu Tong, who was also a singer with the famous rock band Again, in Zhao Lin's *Duo*. Yu Long had the idea of a duo for cello and sheng, which was endorsed by Yo-Yo Ma and Wu Tong. The piece had its highly acclaimed premiere in China in 2013, and Hong Kong audiences will have the chance to hear these same performers interpret this three-movement piece inspired by the classic Chinese story of *Great Tang Records on the Western Regions*.

Opening the programme is Bizet's delightful Symphony in C, a rare gem amongst mid-19th century symphonies. It was Bizet's only symphony, and he composed it at the age of 17. However it was neither published nor performed until it was discovered in 1935, 60 years after Bizet passed away. Since then, it has remained a key work in the orchestral repertoire.

Subscribers to the HK Phil's 2016/17 have the first opportunity to purchase tickets to the Yo-Yo Ma concert and enjoy exclusive subscriber savings. Subscriptions are on sale until 22 July. Single tickets for Yo-Yo Ma go on sale to the general public at URBTIX on 1 August.

Yo-Yo Ma will be held on **9 & 10 September (Fri & Sat), 8PM** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Ticket prices: HK\$1980, \$1580, \$1080, \$680 are available at URBTIX from 1 August. For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit www.hkphil.org.

Bank of China (Hong Kong) is the Title Sponsor of the Yo-Yo Ma concert on 9 September 2016.

Free Pre-concert talks are available before both concerts, stay-tuned for more details at www.hkphil.org.

Artists

Yu Long, conductor [\[full biography\]](#)

Yu Long was appointed Principal Guest Conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra in 2015. He is also the Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the China Philharmonic Orchestra. Yu was appointed Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur of France for his role in strengthening China's cultural connections with other nations around the world.

Yo-Yo Ma, cello [\[full biography\]](#)

Mr. Ma serves as the Artistic Director of Silkroad, an organisation he founded to promote cross-cultural performance and collaborations at the edge where education, business, and the arts come together to transform the world. More than 80 works have been commissioned specifically for the Silk Road Ensemble, which tours annually. The many-faceted career of cellist Yo-Yo Ma is testament to his continual search for new ways to communicate with audiences and to his personal desire for artistic growth and renewal.

Wu Tong, sheng [\[full biography\]](#)

A graduate of the Central Conservatory of Music, Wu Tong is a representative figure of the Chinese crossover musician who is skilled at creation, singing, and national music instrument performance. In 1992, he formed “Again Band”, the first college rock band in China. He has many award-winning albums. In 2010, he and Yo-Yo Ma et al. won the 52nd Grammy Awards for Best Classical Crossover Album with an album titled “Yo-Yo Ma & Friends: Songs of Joy & Peace”.

Yo-Yo Ma

9 & 10 | 9 | 2016

FRI & SAT 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$1980 \$1580 \$1080 \$680

Tickets will be available at URBIX from 1 August 2016

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Yu Long](#)

conductor

[Yo-Yo Ma](#)

cello

[Wu Tong](#)

sheng

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Yu Long



Yo-Yo Ma

Photo Credit: Jason Bell



Wu Tong



The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo Credit: Philip Chau/HK Phil

Programme

BIZET

Symphony in C

DVOŘÁK

Silent Woods

ZHAO Lin

Duo

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Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Music Director: Jaap van Zweden

Principal Guest Conductor: Yu Long

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is recognised as Asia's foremost classical orchestra. The Orchestra presents more than 150 concerts over a 44-week season and attracts more than 200,000 music lovers annually.

Jaap van Zweden, one of today's most sought-after conductors, is the Orchestra's Music Director, a position he has held since the 2012/13 concert season. Maestro van Zweden was recently announced as the next Music Director of the New York Philharmonic. This appointment will not affect his tenure with the HK Phil; his commitment to the HK Phil extends to 2022.

Yu Long was appointed for an initial three-year term in the 2015/16 season as Principal Guest Conductor.

Under Maestro van Zweden, the HK Phil is undertaking a variety of initiatives including a four-year project to perform and record the complete *Ring of the Nibelung* (Richard Wagner). The Orchestra is in the second of this four-year journey, performing one opera annually in concert. The performances are being recorded live for the Naxos label and mark the first performances by a Hong Kong or mainland Chinese orchestra of the entire *Ring* cycle.

Also under van Zweden, the orchestra undertook a highly successful five-country, seven-city tour of Europe in the 2014/15 season, with concerts in London, Vienna, Zurich, Eindhoven, Birmingham, Berlin and Amsterdam. Performances were met with enthusiasm and universally positive reviews. The concert in Vienna's Musikverein was filmed for broadcast on TV.

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 and Yuja Wang.

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 tens of thousands of children annually. A recording was issued free to schoolchildren throughout Hong Kong of Britten's *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* and Leopold Mozart's *Toy Symphony*.

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.

Thanks to a 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.

The Orchestra's history stretches back to 1895, when it was formed as the Sino-British Orchestra. It was re-named in 1957 and became fully professional in 1974.

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.