

PRESS RELEASE
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Maestro Jaap van Zweden and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra undertake a three-city tour to Mainland China in October 2016

[7 September 2016, Hong Kong] The **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil)** will undertake a three-city tour to Mainland China, performing concerts in Shanghai, Tianjin and Beijing.

Under the baton of Music Director **Jaap van Zweden**, the orchestra will perform a work by Hong Kong composer Fung Lam, Mozart's Violin Concerto no. 4 with violinist **Tianwa Yang** and Mahler's Symphony no. 1. This programme will be performed in the Shanghai Symphony Hall (26 October), followed by Tianjin's Grand Theatre (28 October) and, on 29 October, the HK Phil will give the closing concert of the Beijing Music Festival in the Poly Theatre.

Opening the programme will be the HK Phil-commissioned *Quintessence* by Hong Kong composer Fung Lam, with the support by The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation. The title derives from the fifth - and the highest - essence after the four elements of earth, air, fire and water, and is thought to be the magical substance of gods and latent in all living things. The work consists of a series of short and contrasting sections which share the same distinct core musical elements. The most significant of these is the zigzagging melodic line, signifying the journey towards one's goals.

The young Chinese violinist Tianwa Yang will play Mozart's Violin Concerto no. 4 in D, K218. Mozart wrote all five of his violin concertos before he was 20. As a fine violinist himself, his mastery and understanding of the instrument is revealed in this lovely work. Winner of the prestigious ECHO Klassik Instrumentalist of the Year 2015, Tianwa Yang will showcase her impressive musical and technical skills in this concerto.

Maestro van Zweden last toured to Mainland China in 2014 with the HK Phil and earned high acclaim from critics and audiences alike. This time, he will be inviting Chinese audiences into the musical world of Mahler. Subtitled "Titan", Mahler's Symphony no. 1 is a colossal work that requires large orchestral forces, including seven horn players who are instructed to stand with the bells of their instruments turned up in the breathtaking, jubilant finale.

On 25 October, a masterclass and side-by-side session will be held with students from the Shanghai Orchestra Academy, jointly playing Mahler Symphony no. 1. This is an educational initiative in which aspiring musicians from the Shanghai Orchestra Academy will receive mentoring from musicians of the HK Phil.

Artists

Jaap van Zweden, conductor [\[full biography\]](#)

Jaap van Zweden has risen rapidly in the past decade to become one of today's most sought-after conductors. Starting with the 2018-19 season, he becomes the Music Director of the New York Philharmonic. Currently, he is Music Director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra since 2008, and has been Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra since 2012. Jaap van Zweden was named *Musical America's* 2012 Conductor of the Year. Born in Amsterdam, Jaap van Zweden was the youngest concertmaster of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. He began his conducting career in 1995.

Tianwa Yang, violin [\[full biography\]](#)

Winner of the prestigious ECHO Klassik Instrumentalist of the Year 2015 Award, Tianwa Yang has quickly established herself as a leading international performer and recording artist. She has debuted with major orchestras in the United States and worldwide, and performed under the baton of many renowned conductors.

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Jaap van Zweden
Photo Credit: Cheung Chi Wai



Tianwa Yang
Photo Credit:
Friedrun Reinhold



The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra
Photo: Keith Hiro/HK Phil

Programme

FUNG LAM

Quintessence

MOZART

Violin Concerto no. 4

MAHLER

Symphony no. 1, *Titan*

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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, has been the Orchestra's Music Director since the 2012/13 concert season, a position he will continue to hold until at least 2022. In addition, Maestro van Zweden will also be the next Music Director of the New York Philharmonic starting with the 2018-19 season.

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 celebrated its 40th season as a professional orchestra in 2013/14.

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.