

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: 12 September 2016

Guitar Queen Xuefei Yang playing *Concierto de Aranjuez* (18 & 19 November)

[12 September 2016, Hong Kong] Brilliant guitarist **Xuefei Yang** will take centre stage with the **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil)** on November 18 & 19 in a concert of classical favourites.

The programme features two Spanish works – Rodrigo’s *Concierto de Aranjuez* and Bizet’s sultry *Carmen* Suite – and two American works, both of them Gershwin classics: *An American in Paris* and *Porgy and Bess* Suite. It is a concert full of colours – from acoustic guitar in the hands of Xuefei Yang, to the car horns which pepper *An American in Paris*, and the unique sound of banjo which takes us straight to steamy South Carolina in *Porgy and Bess*.

The spotlight will be on Xuefei Yang, acclaimed as one of the world’s finest classical guitarists. *The Irish Times* raved: “With Yang showing a sense of total ownership of this piece [*Concierto de Aranjuez*], this was one of those performances that was simply revelatory, full of fresh and unexpected turns”. Rodrigo’s *Concierto de Aranjuez* brings us to the great palace near Madrid and its legendary Spanish gardens, and allows the guitar’s character to be refined and amplified by the orchestra – but not tamed.

Gershwin’s *An American in Paris* is inspired by the sounds of the famous boulevards and the swirl of the great city in all its motion and style. Paris is seen through the eyes of a visiting Yankee, mixed in with great blues and jazz, when the American feels a sudden pang of homesickness. In the second half we turn to two great love stories – Bizet’s *Carmen*, full of the drama of the bullfight and tragic love, and Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess*, a unique story of love in the deep South.

Since his appointment as Music Director of Canada’s National Arts Centre Orchestra in September 2015, **Alexander Shelley’s** conducting has been praised by the *Ottawa Citizen* as achieving “an orchestra transformed [...] hungry, bold, and unleashed”. London-born Alexander Shelley is also the Principal Associate Conductor of London’s Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and regularly conducts orchestras around the world.

Classics: The Regal *Concierto De Aranjuez* will be held on **18 & 19 November (Fri & Sat), 8PM** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. **Ticket prices: HK\$480, \$380, \$280, \$180 are now available at URBTIX**. For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit www.hkphil.org.

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

Artists

Alexander Shelley, conductor [\[full biography\]](#)

English conductor Alexander was awarded first prize in the 2005 Leeds Conducting Competition. He succeeded Pinchas Zukerman as Music Director of Canada’s National Arts Centre Orchestra in 2015 and he has been Chief Conductor of the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra since September 2009. He has been named Principal Associate Conductor of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and will lead the orchestra on a tour of Korea in 2016.

Xuefei Yang, guitar [\[full biography\]](#)

Xuefei Yang is acclaimed as one of the world’s finest classical guitarists, and was the first-ever guitarist in China to enter a music school. She was the first internationally recognised Chinese guitarist, with her début recording receiving a gold disc and her second selected as ‘Editor’s Choice’ in Gramophone magazine. Classic FM named Yang as one of the 100 top classical musicians of our time.

CLASSICS: THE REGAL CONCIERTO DE ARANJUEZ

18 & 19 | 11 | 2016

FRI & SAT 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$480 \$380 \$280 \$180

Tickets are now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Alexander Shelley](#)

conductor

[Xuefei Yang](#)

guitar

Click the thumbnails to download press images [Or hold Ctrl then click to open the file]



Alexander Shelley

Photo Credit: Thomas Dagg



Xuefei Yang

Photo Credit: Neil Muir



The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo Credit: Cheung Chi Wai/HK Phil

Programme

GERSHWIN *An American in Paris*
RODRIGO *Concierto de Aranjuez*
BIZET *Carmen Suite*
GERSHWIN *Porgy and Bess Suite*

--- END ---

For further press information please contact:

Deborah Hennig, Director of Marketing

Tel: +852 2721 9035 Email: deborah.hennig@hkphil.org

Becky Lee, Media Relations Manager

Tel: +852 2721 1585 Email: becky.lee@hkphil.org

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.