

PRESS RELEASE
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A Majestic River, a Noble Emperor and some Seductive Dances all feature in Beethoven “Emperor” Concerto Programme

[14 February 2017, Hong Kong] The **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil)** will be joined by Hong Kong-born conductor **Elim Chan**, for two nights of powerful music on 31 March & 1 April in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall.

The *Boston Globe* wrote of powerhouse pianist **Stephen Hough** “It’s hard not to be a little awestruck by the breadth of [his] passions, to say nothing of his talents”. Experience for yourself those extraordinary talents as he captures the noble spirit and regal power of Beethoven’s Piano Concerto no. 5, *Emperor*.

At its premiere in Leipzig in 1811, the press described Beethoven’s Fifth and final Piano Concerto as “one of the most original, imaginative, most effective but also one of the most difficult of all existing concertos”. Its title recalls the events surrounding its composition, when the Emperor was forced to flee Vienna ahead of an invading French army.

Rachmaninov’s very last orchestral work was the set of three seductive Symphonic Dances which he wrote for the American audience. But he could never escape his Russian roots, and these bring a sense of grandeur, tragedy and intense beauty to these exotic orchestral showpieces.

Opening the concert is one of the most famous pieces of classical music. Celebrating the great Czech river (known as the Vltava or Moldau) which runs through his homeland, Smetana created one of the most colourful and vividly pictorial images in all music. Immerse yourselves in the sparkling waters of this majestic river as it passes through woods, fields and a great city.

Classics: Beethoven “Emperor” Concerto will be held on **31 March (Fri) & 1 April (Sat) at 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

Artists

Elim Chan, conductor [[full biography](#)]

Born in Hong Kong, Elim Chan became the first female winner of the Donatella Flick Conducting Competition in December 2014 as a result of which she held the position of Assistant Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra in 2015/16. From the 2017/18 season she assumes the title of Chief Conductor of NorrlandsOperan and has been appointed to the Dudamel Fellowship programme with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 2016/17.

Stephen Hough, piano [[full biography](#)]

Stephen Hough is regarded as a renaissance man in our time. Over the course of his career he has distinguished himself as a true polymath, not only securing a reputation as a uniquely insightful concert pianist, but also as a writer and composer. In January 2014 he was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth in the New Year’s Honours List. He has appeared with most of the major European and American orchestras and regularly plays recitals in major halls and concert series around the world.

CLASSICS: BEETHOVEN “EMPEROR” CONCERTO

31 | 3 & 1 | 4 | 2017

FRI & SAT 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

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

Tickets are available now at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Elim Chan](#)

conductor

[Stephen Hough](#)

piano

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Elim Chan

Photo Credit:
Lau Kwok Kei



Stephen Hough

Photo Credit: Sim Canetty-Clarke



Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo Credit: Cheung Chi Wai/HK Phil

Programme

SMETANA

Má vlast. The Moldau

BEETHOVEN

Piano Concerto no. 5, *Emperor*

RACHMANINOV

Symphonic Dances

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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 third of this four-year journey, performing one opera annually in concert. The performances being recorded live for the Naxos label are winning rave reviews internationally; and mark the first performances by a Hong Kong or mainland Chinese orchestra of the entire *Ring* cycle.

Also under van Zweden, the orchestra has toured to Taiwan, Europe and Mainland China. The orchestra will undertake an ambitious five-city tour to Seoul, Osaka, Singapore, Melbourne and Sydney in April and May 2017 in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR.

Conductors and soloists who have recently performed with the orchestra include Yo-Yo Ma, 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.