

PRESS RELEASE
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DATE: 29 May 2017

The HK Phil gathers immense forces for Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*

[29 May 2017, Hong Kong] The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) proudly presents *Carmina Burana* — earthy and bawdy, tender and breathtakingly beautiful. This is music that gets blood pumping and hearts swooning. On **3 & 4 June** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**, sensational conductor **Karina Canellakis** will return to lead immense forces which include stellar vocal soloists soprano **Xi Wang**, tenor **Nicholas Phan** and baritone **Troy Cook**, the **Hong Kong Children's Choir** and the **HK Phil Chorus**, as well as, of course, the HK Phil. These immense forces have gathered to celebrate the pleasures of spring, life and love in Carl Orff's famous work.

Carmina Burana was inspired by an anonymous manuscript discovered in a monastery in Upper Bavaria in 1803 which contained poems by wandering scholars of the 12th and 13th centuries. Orff set 24 of the poems to music in 1935 and, with the title *Carmina Burana*, produced the only work of his which has gone into the repertory. It is a glorious celebration of words and music and of the timelessness of natural existence. Each of the three parts is framed by a homage to the goddess Fortuna; a poem which, in the original manuscript, was accompanied by a miniature depiction of the Wheel of Fortune. The individual parts focus on aspects of life as enjoyed by the medieval poets.

Opening the concert is Haydn's Symphony no. 101, *The Clock*, one of the composer's final six symphonies written during his hugely successful visit to London. Following its 1794 premiere the Symphony was described in the press as "delicious". The nickname *The Clock* derives from the ticking rhythm in the 2nd movement which was the composer's gentle hint at the London audience's notorious disregard for punctuality.

Masterworks: Carmina Burana is an accredited event celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

3 June performance is sponsored by Vita Green

4 June performance is sponsored by Henderson Land Group

Masterworks: Carmina Burana will be held on **3 June (Sat) at 8PM** and **4 June (Sun) at 3PM** 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

Karina Canellakis, conductor [\[full biography\]](#)

Winner of the 2016 Sir George Solti Conducting Award, Karina Canellakis has rapidly gained international recognition as one of today's most dynamic and exciting young American conductors. In the 2016/17 season she debuts with the Swedish Radio Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lyon and the symphony orchestras of the City of Birmingham, Trondheim, Kristiansand, Malmö, Toronto, Vancouver and Milwaukee.

Xi Wang, soprano [\[full biography\]](#)

Xi Wang is emerging as an important new young Chinese soprano. In 2011 she joined the prestigious Merola programme at San Francisco Opera as a young artist and appeared as a guest soloist at New York City Opera's Annual Composer showcase concert "VOX". Wang holds the degree of Master of Music from San Francisco Conservatory of Music. She also received her doctoral degree in Musical Arts from University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music in 2014.

Nicholas Phan, tenor [\[full biography\]](#)

American tenor Nicholas Phan's 2016/17 season includes returns to the Cleveland Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore

Symphony Orchestra, North Carolina Symphony, and the National Art Centre in Ottawa. He also makes his role debut with the Philharmonia Orchestra of London, his recital debut at the Wigmore Hall in London. This concert marks his debut with the HK Phil.

Troy Cook, baritone [\[full biography\]](#)

American baritone Troy Cook recently performed in Hamburgische Staatsoper's *Falstaff*. In the 2016/17 season he performed with Des Moines Metro Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Atlanta Opera, San Diego Opera and Syracuse Opera. He also made his debuts with Washington National Opera and appeared with the Portland Symphony.

The Hong Kong Children's Choir [\[full biography\]](#)

The Hong Kong Children's Choir (HKCC) was founded in 1969 as a private non-profit charitable organisation. HKCC is now the biggest choir in the world with over 5,000 boys and girls receiving choral, dancing, arts and craft training from the Choir. Each year touring groups are invited to give performances overseas, spreading the message of love and peace to other parts of the world.

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus [\[full biography\]](#)

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus was established in 1980. Over the years it has collaborated with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra to perform a range of different works. In 2013 the Chorus undertook a new recruitment drive, and over 450 singers were attracted to attend the audition. Since then, the Chorus has performed with the HK Phil in major works under renowned conductors including Lorin Maazel, Nicholas McGegan and Brett Weymark.

MASTERWORKS: CARMINA BURANA

3 & 4 | 6 | 2017

SAT 8PM & SUN 3PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

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

Tickets are now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Karina Canellakis](#) conductor

[Xi Wang](#) soprano

[Nicholas Phan](#) tenor

[Troy Cook](#) baritone

[The Hong Kong Children's Choir](#)

[The Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus](#)

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Karina Canellakis

Photo Credit: Todd Rosenberg



Xi Wang

Photo Credit: Chris Koon



Nicholas Phan

Photo Credit: Henry Dombey



The Hong Kong Children's Choir



Troy Cook



HK Phil & Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus

Photo Credit: Cheung Chi Wai/HK Phil

Programme

HAYDN

Symphony no. 101, *The Clock*

ORFF

Carmina Burana

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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 Principal Guest Conductor with the HK Phil for a three-year period commencing with the 2015/16 season.

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 just completed an ambitious five-city tour to Seoul, Osaka, Singapore, Melbourne and Sydney in April - 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, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Yuja Wang and the late Lorin Maazel.

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 was originally called the Sino-British Orchestra. It was renamed as the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra 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.