

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**DATE: 29 September 2017**

## **Maestro Jaap van Zweden and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra to join the Beijing Music Festival in October 2017**

[29 September 2017, Hong Kong] The **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil)** under the baton of its Music Director Jaap van Zweden will be joining the 20<sup>th</sup> **Beijing Music Festival** in October for two stunning programmes; “**Sounding Cathedral Architecture**”, featuring Bruckner’s majestic Eighth Symphony, and “**A Timeless Karajan Version of Wagner**” restoring Herbert von Karajan’s Salzburg Easter Festival version of *Die Walküre*.

2017 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR, also the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Music Festival and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Salzburg Easter Festival. With their return to the Beijing Music Festival after their successful collaboration last year, the HK Phil and Music Director Jaap van Zweden celebrate all three anniversaries.

Legendary conductor Herbert von Karajan founded the Salzburg Easter Festival in 1967, and in his very first festival conducted and directed his own staging of Wagner’s *Die Walküre*. In this upcoming Beijing visit, the HK Phil and Jaap van Zweden will be working with world-class Wagner singers and a production crew from Beijing and Salzburg to restore this historic staged performance.

The HK Phil’s previous instalment of Wagner’s Ring Cycle Part II - *Die Walküre* with Maestro Jaap van Zweden, was a huge success with universal critical acclaim from around the Globe. *The Gramophone* (U.K.) recognised the performance as “A Ring from Hong Kong to take on the world”, while *Der Neue Merker* (Vienna) declared that the HK Phil’s *Die Walküre* “Merited the highest praise for nearly all concerned”. The HK Phil’s two performances of this extravagant opera in Beijing’s Poly Theatre on 24 & 27 October will definitely be a major undertaking in China’s operatic scene.

The HK Phil will also be performing Bruckner’s Eighth Symphony with Maestro van Zweden in the “Sounding Cathedral Architecture” programme on 28 October. Maestro van Zweden “is now the leading interpreter of Bruckner’s symphonies”, according to the *BBC Music Magazine*, and audiences from Beijing will soon be able to experience at first hand the Maestro’s authoritative interpretation of Bruckner’s glorious, magisterial and intensely beautiful Eighth.

Maestro van Zweden has toured to Mainland China twice with the HK Phil, and both visits have earned high acclaim from critics and audiences alike. This collaboration with the Beijing Music Festival is definitely a must-see for Chinese audiences!

### **Artists**

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

Over the last decade, conductor Jaap van Zweden has become an international presence on three continents. The 17/18 season marks a major milestone as he completes his ten-year tenure as Music Director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and simultaneously is Music Director Designate in New York, anticipating his inaugural season (2018/19) as the 26th Music Director of the New York Philharmonic. He continues as Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic, a post he has held since 2012. Born in Amsterdam, Jaap van Zweden was the youngest ever Concertmaster of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. He began his conducting career in 1995, and in 2012 was named Musical America’s Conductor of the Year.

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**Jaap van Zweden**  
Photo Credit: Cheung Chi Wai



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

## THE 20TH BEIJING MUSIC FESTIVAL 2017 A Timeless Karajan Version of Wagner

24 & 27 OCT 2017 Tue & Fri 6:30pm  
Poly Theatre, Beijing  
RMB ¥880(VIP) ¥380 ¥180 ¥80

### Programme

**WAGNER** *Die Walküre*

## THE 20TH BEIJING MUSIC FESTIVAL 2017 Sounding Cathedral Architecture

28 OCT 2017 Sat 7:30pm  
Poly Theatre, Beijing  
RMB ¥880(VIP) ¥380 ¥180 ¥80

### Programme

**BRUCKNER** Symphony no. 8

For tickets and programme details, please visit: <http://bmf.org.cn/EN>

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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. Presenting more than 150 concerts over a 44-week season, the HK Phil 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 2022. Maestro van Zweden will be the next Music Director of the New York Philharmonic from 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 the dynamic leadership of Music Director Jaap van Zweden, the HK Phil has attained new heights of artistic excellence, garnering international critical acclaim.

Following on from the success of the European tour which included a filmed concert from Vienna's Musikverein, the HK Phil has toured extensively within the mainland China. In celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR, and with support of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices, the orchestra recently performed in Seoul, Osaka, Singapore, Melbourne and at the Sydney Opera House.

Jaap, the HK Phil, and a superb casts of soloists, have presented concert performances and recordings of the first three operas from Richard Wagner's epic *Ring* cycle. These have been enthusiastically endorsed by both audiences and critics at home and abroad, and in recognition of their quality, the orchestra and Jaap have been invited to perform Wagner's *Die Walküre* in staged performances at the Beijing Music Festival this October in a co-production with the Salzburg Easter Festival.

Conductors and soloists who have recently, or shortly will have, performed with the orchestra include Vladimir Ashkenazy, Charles Dutoit, Christoph Eschenbach, Matthias Goerne, Stephen Hough, Lang Lang, Yo-Yo Ma, Ning Feng and Yuja Wang.

The HK Phil promotes the work of Hong Kong and Chinese composers through an active commissioning programme, and has released recordings on the Naxos label featuring Tan Dun and Bright Sheng, each conducting their own compositions. Its acclaimed education and community engagement programmes in schools, hospital and outdoor space, bring music into the hearts of tens of thousands of children and families every year.

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 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 Charities Trust and other supporters, the HK Phil now boasts a full-time annual schedule of core classical repertoire and innovative popular programming, extensive education and community programmes, and collaborations with, among others, Opera Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Arts Festival.

Originally called the Sino-British Orchestra, it was renamed the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra in 1957 and became fully professional in 1974. The HK Phil is a charitable organisation.

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.