

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**6 April 2018**

## **Ashkenazy's Pastoral and Esther Yoo's Glazunov Violin Concerto (25 & 26 May)**

[6 April 2018, Hong Kong] The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is proud to present a programme that features one of music's elder statesmen, [Vladimir Ashkenazy](#), and young American-Korean violin sensation, [Esther Yoo](#), on 25 & 26 May in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall.

**"It is rare to find, in the same artist, the very highest levels of musical talent living alongside the deepest genuine humility. None has that rare combination in higher degree than Vladimir Ashkenazy."**

--- Gramophone

Renowned pianist and conductor Vladimir Ashkenazy is returning to the HK Phil to direct the orchestra in Beethoven's Symphony no. 6, *Pastoral*. An early biographer said of Beethoven and this symphony "... the spirit of nature revealed itself to him in all its mighty force and endowed him with the ability to create a work that cannot compare with anything else in the entire musical repertoire." *Gramophone* magazine described Ashkenazy's recording of the work as revealing the "sunshine in Beethoven's picture of the countryside".

In the same programme, Ashkenazy will be pairing up with young violinist Esther Yoo in Glazunov's under-appreciated Violin Concerto. Ashkenazy and Yoo have collaborated twice before, on one occasion recording this Concerto for CD. Reviewing it, *Classical Source* wrote that Yoo "commands a rich tone that can be pared to something silver-fine and her dynamic range is wide while her technique is excellent and music-serving". Yoo first came to international attention in 2010 when, at 16, she became the youngest prize winner of the 10<sup>th</sup> International Sibelius Violin Competition. She was also one of the youngest-ever prize winners of the Queen Elisabeth Competition in 2012.

The concert opener is another richly colourful work by Glazunov, *Chopiniana*. A prodigy in Russia who began composing at age 11, Glazunov went on to become a noted conductor and teacher (his most renowned students included Prokofiev and Shostakovich), and was hailed as one of the best orchestrators of all time. Completed in 1907, *Chopiniana* is his orchestration of several piano pieces by Chopin commissioned by the legendary choreographer Michel Fokine for the ballet *Les Sylphides*.

This is certainly a not-to-be-missed programme showcasing the harmony and unity of great music-making which spans both the generations and the continents.

Tickets priced: HK\$580, \$380, \$280, \$180 are now available at [URBTIX](#). For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit [www.hkphil.org](http://www.hkphil.org).

## Artists

### **Vladimir Ashkenazy, conductor** [\[full biography\]](#)

Conducting has formed the larger part of Ashkenazy's activities for more than 35 years. He continues his relationship with the Philharmonia Orchestra, who appointed him Conductor Laureate in 2000. He is also Conductor Laureate of both the Iceland and NHK Symphony orchestras and Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana. He has recently stepped down from the Music Directorship of the European Union Youth Orchestra, a post held with great satisfaction for 15 years. Previously he has held posts as Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra (2009-13), Chief Conductor of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra and Music Director of NHK Symphony Orchestra.

### **Esther Yoo, violin** [\[full biography\]](#)

American-Korean violinist Esther Yoo first came to international attention in 2010 when she became the youngest prizewinner of the 10th International Sibelius Violin Competition, and from 2014 to 2016 she was a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist, culminating with her BBC Proms debut. The 2017/18 season sees Esther debut with the Orchestre National de Belgique, Orchestra Teatro San Carlo, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and the symphony orchestras of Vancouver, Bay Atlantic and Hawaii.

## CLASSICS SERIES: ASHKENAZY'S PASTORAL

25 & 26 | 5 | 2018

FRI & SAT 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$580 \$380 \$280 \$180

Tickets are now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

### Artists

[Vladimir Ashkenazy](#) conductor  
[Esther Yoo](#) violin

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



Vladimir Ashkenazy  
Photo Credit: Keith Saunders



Esther Yoo  
Photo Credit: Marco Borggreve



The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra  
Photo Credit: Cheung Chi Wai/HK Phil

### Programme

GLAZUNOV *Chopiniana*  
GLAZUNOV Violin Concerto  
BEETHOVEN Symphony no. 6, *Pastoral*

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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, a superb cast of soloists and a chorus successfully completed the four-year epic "Ring Cycle" journey in January 2018. The concert performances and live Naxos recordings have been enthusiastically received by audiences and praised by critics at home and abroad. The recording of *Götterdämmerung* will be released towards the end of 2018.

Conductors and soloists who have recently 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 and is Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre.

SWIRE is the Principal Patron of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.