

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
23 April 2018

## **The Macallan Bravo Series: Chopin & Brahms (18 & 19 May)** **Featuring conductor Hans Graf and International Chopin Piano Competition winner Yulianna Avdeeva**

[23 April 2018, Hong Kong] On 18 & 19 May in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**, the **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil)** is presenting a programme featuring Russian pianist [Yulianna Avdeeva](#), First Prize winner of the Chopin Competition 2010. Under the baton of [Hans Graf](#), one of the most respected Maestros on the podium, Yulianna will be making her debut with the HK Phil, delivering the magic of her touch in Chopin's lovely Second Piano Concerto. Another highlight of the programme is Brahms' soothing Third Symphony.

Yulianna Avdeeva won the First Prize in the Chopin Competition in 2010. Her Chopin performances have drawn particular praise. *The Guardian* observed that "... her ability to finesse Chopin's inner voices puts many to shame", and marked her out as one of the composer's foremost interpreters. In this concert she will perform Piano Concerto no. 2, on which the piano is unashamedly the star. This is a piece which showcases the soloist's virtuosity and sensitivity.

After the interval, Hans Graf and the orchestra will present Brahms' Symphony no. 3. German music-lovers in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century saw Brahms as a worthy successor to Beethoven, but Brahms himself only felt ready to present his first symphony when he was 43. Completed seven years later, Brahms' Third Symphony saw the composer at the peak of his creative powers. Hans Richter, who led the premiere with the Vienna Philharmonic, acclaimed it as Brahms' Eroica — high praise that seemed to reawaken Beethoven's ghost yet again.

Opening this concert is Mendelssohn's *The Fair Melusina: Overture*, which is based on Austrian dramatist Franz Grillparzer's play drawing on a medieval French tale. Melusina was a fish sprite who adopted human form in order to marry a nobleman and live with him in the beautiful castle of Lusignan. Mendelssohn's overture was not intended to depict the story in detail but rather to convey the poetic essence of the story. With its light, shimmering qualities the music beautifully captures the fairy-tale character of Grillparzer's work.

This will be programme of rich musical colours.

The Macallan Bravo Series: Chopin & Brahms is sponsored by The Macallan

Tickets priced: HK\$480, \$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

### **Hans Graf, conductor** [\[full biography\]](#)

Music Director of the Houston Symphony from 2001 to 2013, Hans Graf is the longest serving Music Director in the orchestra's history. Prior to his appointment in Houston, he was the Music Director of the Calgary Philharmonic for eight seasons and held the same post with the Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine for six years. An experienced opera conductor, his recent opera engagements have included *Parsifal* at the Zurich Opera, *Boris Godunov* at the Opera National du Rhin in Strasbourg, and Strauss's *Die Feuersnot* at the Volksoper Vienna, for which he received the 2014 Austrian Music Theatre Prize. Recent recordings include Hindemith's complete works for viola and orchestra, and live recordings of *Carmina Burana* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and *Wozzeck* with the Houston Symphony released by Naxos in 2017, which won the 2018 Grammy for best opera recording as well as the 2017 ECHO Klassik prize for best opera recording in the category of 20th and 21st century opera.

### **Yulianna Avdeeva, piano** [\[full biography\]](#)

Yulianna Avdeeva rose to fame when she won First Prize in the Chopin Competition in 2010. She is also winner of several other prizes, including the Bremen Piano Contest in 2003, the Concours de Genève 2006 and the Arthur Rubinstein Competition in Poland. Her Chopin performances have drawn particular praise, marking her out as one of the composer's foremost interpreters. Her 2017/18 season includes re-invitations from the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and the Lucerne Festival. Further highlights include new orchestral collaborations with the Bamberger Symphoniker, Stavanger Symphony and the Moscow State Academic Symphony orchestras.

## CLASSICS SERIES: THE MACALLAN BRAVO SERIES: CHOPIN & BRAHMS

18 & 19 | 5 | 2018

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

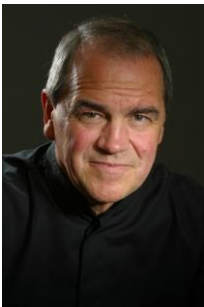
[Hans Graf](#)

conductor

[Yulianna Avdeeva](#)

piano

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Hans Graf

Photo Credit: Christian Steiner



Yulianna Avdeeva

Photo Credit: Christine Schneider



The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo Credit: Cheung Chi Wai/HK Phil

### Programme

**MENDELSSOHN**

*The Fair Melusina: Overture*

**CHOPIN**

Piano Concerto no. 2

**BRAHMS**

Symphony no. 3

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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.