

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: 25 November 2018

Jaap van Zweden and 18,000 music lovers shared the excitement of Swire Symphony Under The Stars (24 Nov 2018)

[25 November 2018, Hong Kong] The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) and its Music Director [Jaap van Zweden](#) presented its iconic annual Swire *Symphony Under The Stars* concert to an audience of around 18,000 at the Central Harbourfront on 24 November (Saturday), with [Harry Wong](#) (or Harry Gor Gor) as host.

This marks the second time Maestro Jaap van Zweden has led the HK Phil to share beautiful music against the backdrop of Hong Kong's signature skyline. He said, "It's always been a wonderful experience conducting this outdoor extravaganza. This event gives us and Hong Kong audiences the opportunity to enjoy beautiful music by Hong Kong's very own orchestra, which can be counted among the very best in the world, under the starry sky. I hope you all had a joyful evening with us."

Following this year's "FAMILY" theme, the concert brought together the orchestra's own talented musicians from different instrumental families - [Jing Wang](#) (Concertmaster), [Richard Bamping](#) (Principal Cello) and [Fang Xiaomu](#) (Co-Principal Cello) from the string family, [Andrew Simon](#) (Principal Clarinet) from the woodwind family; and [Esteban Batallán](#) (Principal Trumpet) from the brass family. Under the baton of Jaap van Zweden, the entire orchestral family delighted audiences with well-known pieces including Vivaldi's Concerto for Two Cellos, Massenet's *Thaïs: Méditation*, Mozart's Clarinet Concerto - 2nd movement, and Haydn's Trumpet Concerto in E-flat - 3rd movement. The programme also included all-time favourite theme from *Star Wars*. Throughout the concert, Harry Gor Gor preceded each piece with a lively introduction and engaged audience members in cheerful banter during the interval. For the encore, the orchestra played Joe Hisaishi's ever-popular music from *My Neighbor Totoro*, and the concert concluded with a stunning fireworks display, accompanied by Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* - Finale.

The HK Phil wishes to express its deepest gratitude for the generous and continued support from Swire, as well as to Hong Kong's music lovers who have helped make Swire *Symphony Under The Stars* such a marvellous success year after year.

Swire Symphony Under The Stars will reach far beyond the people who attended in person; the event was recorded by RTHK TV and RTHK Radio 4 for broadcast.

TV Broadcast

The audio-visual recording will be broadcasted on Arts on Air TV program on 26 Jan 2019 (Sat) at 11pm.

Channels: RTHK TV31, RTHK TV31A & tv.rthk.hk

Radio Broadcast

The radio broadcast is scheduled for 21 December 2018 (Fri) at 8pm with a repeat on 26 December 2018 (Thu) at 2pm on RTHK Radio 4 (FM Stereo 97.6-98.9 MHz and www.rthk.hk).

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Principal Patron: SWIRE

Sponsor: Tom Lee Music

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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 at least 2022. Maestro van Zweden is the 26th Music Director of the New York Philharmonic from the 2018/19 season.

Yu Long has been Principal Guest Conductor since 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 2017, in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR, and with support of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices, the orchestra 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 an epic four-year journey through Wagner's "Ring Cycle" 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* is released in November 2018.

Conductors and soloists who have recently performed with the orchestra include Vladimir Ashkenazy, Joshua Bell, 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 in 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, the Hong Kong Arts Festival and the Hong Kong Ballet.

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.