

PRESS RELEASE

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Piano Superstar Yundi Kicked off the Hong Kong Philharmonic's 2012/13 Season with Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No.1

Conductor Vassily Sinaisky Leads the HKPO in a Russian Programme

[7 September 2012, Hong Kong] Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HKPO), one of Asia's leading orchestras, kicked off its exciting 2012/13 Season with a night of cocktails and classical favourites. Adding even more excitement to this fascinating evening, an Opening Concert featuring piano superstar Yundi followed the cocktail reception and Opening Ceremony on **7 September (Friday)**.

Guest of Honour **Mr Raymond Young**, Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, joined officiating guests **Mr Y.S. Liu**, Chairman of the Board of Governors, Hong Kong Philharmonic Society, **Yundi**, soloist in the concert, **Ms Laura Lau**, Head of Philanthropy, The Swire Group Charitable Trust, the HKPO's Principal Patron, and **Ms Nancy Chan**, Deputy Chief Executive of Bank of Communications, officiated the new season at the Opening Ceremony before the concert.

Other guests who attended the Ceremony included Mr Lam Woon-kwong, Chairperson of Equal Opportunities Commission and Convenor of the Non-Official Members of the Executive Council, Hong Kong Philharmonic Society Board members Mrs Janice Choi, Dr Lilian Leong, Mrs Harriet Tung and Ms Joanne Chan, Consuls General of the United States of America, Canada, Japan, Austria, Italy and many other honourable guests.

Led by guest conductor Vassily Sinaisky, **Bank of Communication brings to you: "Yundi's Tchaikovsky"** opened with Shostakovich's *Festive Overture* and Symphony No.9. Pianist Yundi received thunderous applause from the capacity audience after his compelling performance of Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto, one of the most popular pieces in the classical music repertory.

The 2012/13 Season also offers a warm welcome to the HKPO's new Music Director Jaap van Zweden, who will be giving his inaugural concert on 28&29 September 2012 and leads the HKPO in six inspiring programmes for the rest of the season.

Concert Programme

SHOSTAKOVICH *Festive Overture*

SHOSTAKOVICH *Symphony No.9*

TCHAIKOVSKY *Piano Concerto No.1*

Yundi, pianist

Born in Chongqing, China, Yundi enjoys the title “prince of the piano” and an international career takes him to the most prestigious of music halls around the world. He is praised by the New York Times for his “prodigious technique, wondrous colorings, delicate passagework and steely power”, as well as his “romantic ardor, myriad colorings and bursts of hand-blurring virtuosity” in addition to being “stunningly talented”.

In 2000 Yundi won First Prize at The International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw. He was not only the youngest and first Chinese winner in the history of the prestigious competition, but also the first pianist to be awarded the first prize for 15 years. In recognition of his contribution to Polish culture, the Government of Poland presented a Gold Medal for Merit to Culture 'Gloria Artis' to Yundi in 2010, the year of Chopin's 200th anniversary.

He is the first Chinese pianist to appear on the cover of Wall Street Journal in America and the prestigious AERA magazine in Japan. He is the first Chinese pianist selected and featured in Madame Tussauds wax museum, and the first Chinese pianist to record live with the Berlin Philharmonic.

Yundi has released 10 recordings worldwide on Deutsche Grammophon in Germany and EMI in London to enthusiastic acclaim by critics and music lovers alike, and received numerous awards. In 2013 Yundi will return to DG to record an album of Beethoven's Moonlight, Pathétique and Appassionata sonatas.

Yundi has performed in the most prestigious music halls around the world including sold-out concerts at

the Carnegie Hall (New York), Royal Festival Hall (London), Wiener Musikverein (Vienna), the Berlin Philharmonie (Berlin), National Centre for the Performing Arts (Beijing) and Suntory Hall (Tokyo). Renowned conductors he has collaborated with include James Levine, Seiji Ozawa, Gustavo Dudamel, Valery Gergiev, Daniel Harding, Lorin Maazel, Riccardo Chailly and Yuri Temirkanov. Yundi has also collaborated with such prestigious orchestras as the Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony, Moscow Symphony, NHK Symphony and Vienna Philharmonic.

Yundi's website: www.yundimusic.com

Vassily Sinaisky, conductor

Vassily Sinaisky's international career was launched in 1973 when he won the Gold Medal at the prestigious Karajan Competition. Soon afterwards, he was appointed Chief Conductor of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, a post he held from 1976 to 1987. He then became Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Moscow Philharmonic, leading numerous high-profile projects with the Orchestra both in Russia and on tour. In 2010, Sinaisky was announced as the new Chief Conductor and Music Director of the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow. Highlights in this new role included tours to Athens and London, and the Bolshoi's first ever production of Strauss' Der Rosenkavalier.

As a guest conductor, Sinaisky has worked with such prestigious orchestras as the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, NDR Sinfonieorchester Hamburg, Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Highlights of the upcoming seasons include a return to the London Philharmonic and on tour in the Netherlands. Sinaisky additionally holds the positions of Conductor Emeritus of the BBC Philharmonic and Honorary Conductor of the Malmö Symphony Orchestra, Sweden. Memorable projects with the BBC Philharmonic have included the "Shostakovich and his Heroes" festival in 2006, tours to Europe and China, and many appearances at the BBC Proms. With the Malmö Symphony, Sinaisky has toured to the UK and to Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and recorded an acclaimed four-disc series of the symphonies of Franz Schmidt.

Sinaisky has also held the positions of Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Philharmonic and Music Director of the Russian State Orchestra. He also holds the position of Professor of Conducting at the St Petersburg Conservatoire.

His other recordings include works by Shostakovich, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Shchedrin, Glinka, Liadov, Schreker and Szymanowski, many of which was recorded with the BBC Philharmonic.

Vassily Sinaisky has a distinguished pedigree as an operatic conductor. In addition to his projects at the Bolshoi Theatre, Sinaisky also conducted the San Francisco Opera, English National Opera, the Komische Oper Berlin, among others.

Media Photos (please click the thumbnail to download the images)

01. Mr Y.S. Liu delivers his welcoming speech



02. (From Left) Ms Nancy Chan, Yundi, Mr Raymond Young, Mr Y.S. Liu and Ms Laura Lau officiated the HKPO's 2012/13 Season at the Opening Ceremony



03. (From Left) Mr Michael MacLeod, Chief Executive of the HKPO, Ms Nancy Chan, Yundi, Mr Raymond Young, Mr Y.S. Liu and Ms Laura Lau



04. Thunderous applause from the capacity audience to Maestro Vassily Sinaisky, Yundi and the HKPO.



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Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Music Director: Jaap van Zweden

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HKPO) is one of Asia's leading orchestras. Enriching Hong Kong's cultural life for over a century, the Orchestra has grown into a formidable ensemble of Chinese and international talents, attracting world-class artists to collaborate on its stage. The HKPO annually touches the lives of over 200,000 music lovers through more than 150 performances. From the 2012/13 season, Jaap van Zweden has become Music Director of the HKPO. Under his leadership, the HKPO will continue to develop its reputation for artistic excellence.

From April 2006, The Swire Group Charitable Trust became the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra's Principal Patron. Swire's sponsorship of the HKPO, the largest in the ensemble's history, supports artistic growth and development as the Orchestra takes its place on the world stage, and brings performances of musical excellence to the widest possible public.

The HKPO stays in tune with our city by presenting the Orchestra in unexpected venues and bringing the excitement of the concert experience to every home through radio and television broadcasts including the largest symphonic event of the year, *Swire Symphony under the Stars*, at Happy Valley. The Orchestra runs a comprehensive schools education programme, bringing the joy of classical music to primary, secondary and special school kids. The Orchestra also collaborates regularly with other performing arts organisations such as Opera Hong Kong in addition to its crossover series with Western and Chinese pop artists.

The Orchestra also builds its reputation and raises its artistic standards by touring. In September 2010, the HKPO returned to China, performing at the Expo 2010 Shanghai, Xi'an and Beijing to critical acclaim.

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