

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: 29 NOVEMBER 2012

Experience the Power of the 8000-pipe Organ at the Cultural Centre. World Acclaimed Organist Simon Preston Showcased in Saint-Saëns' *Organ Symphony* and Poulenc's *Organ Concerto* under the baton of HK Phil's Former Music Director David Atherton (11&12 Jan 2013)

[29 November 2012, Hong Kong] Not for nothing is it called "the King of Instruments". The grand organ is a marvel, capable of awesome sound and charming delicacy. In **Masterworks: "The King of Instruments"**, the Cultural Centre's 8,000-pipe organ will be centre stage, played by one of the most acclaimed organists of our time, [Simon Preston](#). A double bill of Poulenc and Saint-Saëns showcases the splendour of this amazing instrument to unforgettable effect. Retaining the French flavour of the programme, former Music Director of the **Hong Kong Philharmonic (HK Phil)**, [David Atherton](#) has adds a pair of works by Paul Dukas – *La Péri Fanfare*, and *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*.

Masterworks: "The King of Instruments" will be held on **11&12 Jan 2013 (Fri & Sat), 8pm**, in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Tickets priced: \$300, \$200, \$160, \$120 are now available at [URBTIX](#). Free pre-concert talks will be given on both nights at 7:15pm, also at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. For enquiries, please visit <http://www.hkphil.org> or contact 2721 2030.

Simon Preston, organ [\[full biography\]](#)

"Preston is an artist of remarkable musicality and accomplishment."

--- Chicago Tribune

Simon Preston made his début at the Royal Festival Hall, London, in 1962. Shortly after his London début, Preston was appointed Sub-Organist of Westminster Abbey, and later that same year made his BBC Proms début. During that period he worked with such famous conductors as Leopold Stokowski, Pierre Monteux, Leonard Bernstein and Benjamin Britten. From 1981 to 1987 he was Organist and

Master of the Choristers at Westminster Abbey. He was also responsible for writing much of the “Salieri” music in the movie *Amadeus*.

A highly sought-after concert organist, he recorded the Saint-Saëns “*Organ*” Symphony with the Berlin Philharmonic and James Levine, the Poulenc Concerto with the Boston Symphony and Seiji Ozawa, and Copland’s Symphony for Organ and Orchestra with St Louis Symphony Orchestra and Leonard Slatkin.

Described by a Vienna newspaper as “a living legend”, Simon’s recording career began nearly fifty-five years ago. Currently nearly fifty of his CDs are still available, including versions of the Handel Organ Concertos with both Yehudi Menuhin and Trevor Pinnock. He was awarded an Edison Classique and a Grand Prix du Disque. In 2000 Deutsche Grammophon launched his complete recording of Bach’s organ works.

Classic CD recently named Simon Preston in its list of “The Greatest Players of the Century”. In 2009 Simon Preston was made a C.B.E (Commander of the British Empire), and in 2011 he was made an honorary Student at Christ Church, Oxford University and was awarded an honorary doctorate by Mount Royal University in Canada.

David Atherton, conductor [[full biography](#)]

David Atherton studied music at Cambridge University where his operatic conducting aroused much interest from the national press. In 1967 Sir Georg Solti invited him to join the music staff of the Royal Opera House and the following year, at the age of 24, he became the youngest conductor ever to appear there. In his 12 years as Resident Conductor he gave nearly 200 performances with Covent Garden, including a highly successful visit to La Scala, Milan.

David Atherton was co-founder of the London Sinfonietta in 1967 and, as its Music Director, gave the first performance of many important contemporary works. Widely regarded as one of the world’s leading chamber orchestras, the London Sinfonietta has made countless recordings. His work has won an Edison Award, many Grammy Award nominations and the sought-after Grand Prix du Disque. His recording of Tippett’s opera *King Priam* was given the coveted International Record Critics’ Award.

He became the youngest conductor in the history of the BBC Proms and subsequently appeared in thirty contiguous seasons. He has conducted leading orchestras in North America, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Europe, including the Czech Republic (to open the Prague Spring Festival) and Germany (to open the Berlin Festival with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra).

From 1980 to 1987 he was Music Director of the San Diego Symphony Orchestra and he returns to California each summer to direct the Mainly Mozart Festival, which he founded in 1989. He has also held titled positions with the BBC Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and BBC National Orchestra of Wales, as well as devising and conducting festivals in London featuring the complete works of Ravel, Stravinsky, Webern and Varèse with the London Sinfonietta, London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Opera House.

From 1989 David Atherton was the Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic. On his retirement from this position in 2000 and in recognition of his services to the music of Hong Kong, he was awarded the OBE.

Masterworks: The King of Instruments

11&12 | 1 | 2013

FRI & SAT 8PM

HK Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$300 \$200 \$160 \$120

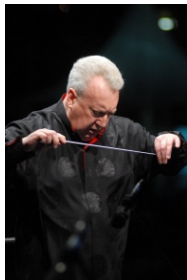
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Artists

[David Atherton](#) conductor

[Simon Preston](#) organ

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Programme

DUKAS *La Péri* Fanfare

DUKAS *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*

POULENC Organ Concerto

SAINT-SAËNS Symphony No.3 *Organ*

Ticketing Information

Credit Card Booking

(852) 2111 5999

Online Booking

www.urbtix.hk

For programme enquiry, please call HK Phil at

(852) 2721 2030

Or go on our website:

www.hkphil.org

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Hong Kong Philharmonic

Music Director: Jaap van Zweden

The Hong Kong Philharmonic is a vital part of Hong Kong's cultural life, as the city's largest and busiest musical organisation. In 2013/14 the HK Phil will celebrate its 40th professional season, but its roots are well over a century old. The HK Phil has now evolved to become an orchestral powerhouse in the region, and an acclaimed cultural centrepiece of Asia's World City.

The HK Phil is formed on the belief that a great city deserves a great orchestra. Annually it presents over 150 concerts for 200,000 music lovers. Featuring an enviable roster of international and local artists, with many concerts presented free, among them the annual *Swire Symphony Under The Stars*. Through its acclaimed education programme, over 40,000 young people learned about orchestral music last year.

The HK Phil's members come from every corner of the globe, joining its strong core of Hong Kong musicians. In September 2012, Jaap van Zweden became the orchestra's Music Director. Future years will see an ambitious series of new projects, with major international tours, renewed local partnerships, and large-scale concert events. The HK Phil has recently commenced a multi-CD recording project for Naxos, featuring works by Chinese composers.

The Hong Kong Philharmonic is financially supported by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

SWIRE is the Principal Patron of the Hong Kong Philharmonic

The Hong Kong Philharmonic is a Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre