

Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra announces a star-studded 2019/20 Season

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[6 May 2019, Hong Kong] The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) and its [Music Director Jaap van Zweden](#), today announced the orchestra's 2019/20 season, presenting a multi-fold of programmes featuring over 50 wonderful guest artists, and with 16 premieres including three HK Phil new commissions by local composers Chan Kai-young, Alvin Tam Lok-hei and some more Hong Kong composers. Highlights include:

- The 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth in 2020 – the HK Phil will complete cycles of Beethoven's symphonies and concertos under the baton of Maestro Jaap van Zweden, together with great pianists Rudolf Buchbinder, Rachel Cheung, Lang Lang, Víkingur Ólafsson and Nobuyuki Tsujii
- Music Director Jaap van Zweden, Principal Guest Conductor Yu Long and superstar artists as well as Hong Kong talents featured in programmes dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre – Seong-Jin Cho, Ning Feng and Renée Fleming; Lio Kuokman, Louise Kwong, Ping and Ting Piano Duo, The Hong Kong Children's Choir and Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus
- Exciting programmes conducted by Music Director Jaap van Zweden and Principal Guest Conductor Yu Long with superb line-up of artists – Leonidas Kavakos, The Labèque Sisters, Jian Wang and more
- More notable Conductors and Soloists – Elim Chan, Vassily Sinaisky, Boris Giltburg, Martin Grubinger, Francesco Tristano, Hiromi Uehara and more
- Tours to Mainland China, Japan, Korea and more

Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of Beethoven's Birth

2020 marks the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth. To celebrate this momentous year, the HK Phil launches a special "Beethoven 250" series with complete cycles of the composer's symphonies and concertos all conducted by **Music Director Jaap van Zweden** across two concert seasons from 2019/20. Five related programmes will be first presented in the 2019/20 season.

- Launching the series, "the hottest artist on the classical music planet" (*New York Times*), superstar pianist **Lang Lang**, returns to the stage of the HK Phil after four years, performing the work which Beethoven himself played as his public debut in Vienna – **Piano Concerto no. 2**. The same programme also features the **Egmont Overture** and Beethoven's tribute to his teacher Haydn, **Symphony no. 1** (16 & 18 January 2020).

Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of Beethoven's Birth (cont'd)

- Described by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* as “one of today’s most important and competent Beethoven performers”, **Rudolf Buchbinder** plays Beethoven’s distinctive **Piano Concerto no. 1**, following the composer’s growing fame back in Vienna with his invigorating **Symphony no. 2**, and the **Ruins of Athens Overture** (31 January & 1 February 2020).
- The HK Phil also captivates the audience with Beethoven’s most famous and popular work, **Symphony no. 5**, as well as the impressive **Leonore Overture no. 2**. The concert also features two Hong Kong musicians – pianist **Rachel Cheung** in the lively **Rondo for piano and orchestra**, originally intended for Beethoven’s Second Piano Concerto; and soprano **Louise Kwong** in “**Ah perfido!**” (26 & 27 February 2020).
- Alongside the **Fidelio Overture** and Beethoven’s largest purely instrumental work, **Symphony no. 3, Eroica**, this concert celebrates heroic deeds in the face of tyranny with “Iceland’s Glenn Gould”, **Víkingur Ólafsson**, performing Beethoven’s **Piano Concerto no. 3**, which sees the piano in a heroic struggle for dominance against the orchestra (20 & 21 March 2020).
- Remarkable Japanese pianist **Nobuyuki Tsujii**, who has been blind from birth and won the joint Gold Medal at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in 2009, when he was praised by Van Cliburn as “absolutely miraculous”, will exert his miraculous powers over Beethoven’s majestic **Piano Concerto no. 5, Emperor**, while the HK Phil continues its Beethoven celebrations with **Symphony no. 4** (22 & 23 May 2020).

Impressive Programmes Dedicated to the 30th Anniversary of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre

The HK Phil will be celebrating the 30th anniversary of its venue partner, the Hong Kong Cultural Centre (HKCC,) with four fabulous programmes.

- In the 46th season opener, The 2015 Chopin Piano Competition Prize Winner **Seong-Jin Cho** joins **Maestro Jaap van Zweden** in **Rachmaninov’s** heart-wrenching **Piano Concerto no. 2**. Together with the jubilant optimism of **Wagner’s Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg: Prelude to Act I** and the profound tragedy of **Prokofiev’s Romeo and Juliet**, this evening promises a truly emotionally-charged musical experience (6 & 7 September 2019).
- In November 2019, the “birthday month” of the HKCC, the HK Phil will feature two fabulous programmes. Firstly, Hong Kong talents team up to celebrate the birthday of Hong Kong’s signature cultural venue. Conductor **Lio Kuokman**, Hong Kong-born artists, soprano **Louise Kwong** and **Ping and Ting Piano Duo**, joined by **The Hong Kong Children’s Choir** and the **Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus**, will take to the stage in a programme of wonderful musical delights, including a brand new work, **Theme and Variations**, especially composed by **Hong Kong’s emerging composers** (1 & 2 November 2019).
- Star soprano **Renée Fleming** joins **Jaap van Zweden** in **Barber’s Knoxville: Summer of 1915**, an atmospheric recollection of the summer evenings in Tennessee. Icing on the cake of the evening is **Wagner’s** unforgettably ecstatic celebration of love, **Tristan und Isolde: Prelude and Liebestod**, and **Shostakovich’s** delightful **Symphony no. 9**, a symphony of simple happiness (8 & 9 November 2019).
- Rounding up this celebratory journey, **Principal Guest Conductor Yu Long** and violin virtuoso **Ning Feng** present the Hong Kong premiere of Chinese composer **Chen Qigang’s** expressive violin concerto **La joie de la souffrance**, for an electrifying experience of the violin’s widest capacity to express human emotion. The concert includes two ravishing Russian ballet scores, **Stravinsky’s The Firebird Suite (1919)** and **Shchedrin’s** brilliant interpretation of **Bizet’s** famous **Carmen Suite** (6 & 7 December 2019).

JAAP with More Fabulous Artists

Over this new season, **Music Director Jaap van Zweden** will be conducting a total of THIRTEEN exciting concert programmes with the HK Phil and many internationally-renowned artists. Some more with Jaap are as follows:

- After the season-opening with Seong-Jin Cho (6 & 7 September 2019), there comes a programme of fantasy with **Mahler's** famous song-cycle *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (Songs of a Wayfarer)*, **Berlioz's** highly-imaginative *Symphonie fantastique* and **Brahms' masterpiece Variations on a Theme by Joseph Haydn** (13 & 14 September 2019).
- A concert showcasing the chemistry between remarkable piano duet siblings **The Labèque Sisters** has them performing **Philip Glass' tailor-made work Concerto for Two Pianos**. In the same programme, the HK Phil proudly presents a **HK Phil new commission** by Hong Kong composer **Chan Kai-young** (22 & 23 November 2019).
- A great interpreter of Mahler, Jaap van Zweden will bring the first performance in 95 years of two movements from **Mahler's incomplete Symphony no. 10**, prepared by the legendary conductor Willem Mengelberg, along with **Shostakovich's powerful Symphony no. 10** (13 & 14 December 2019).
- A night of symphonies presents Russian composer **Prokofiev's Symphony no. 5** and American composer **Christopher Rouse's Symphony no. 5**, which was hailed as a "triumph" following its premiere by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra under Jaap van Zweden in 2017. The concert opens with a **HK Phil new commission under The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Composers Scheme** by another Hong Kong composer, **Alvin Tam Lok-hei** (23 January 2020 - one performance only).
- One of the greatest violinists of our time, **Leonidas Kavakos**, will perform **Shostakovich's epic Violin Concerto no. 1**, pairing with another truly epic Russian symphony, **Tchaikovsky's** popular and emotionally-charged **Symphony no. 6, Pathétique**, marking Jaap van Zweden's first interpretation of this classic work on the HK Phil podium (29 & 30 May 2020).
- Jaap van Zweden will once again conduct the orchestra's biggest annual outdoor symphonic event, **Swire Symphony Under The Stars**, at the Central Harbourfront, under the backdrop of the spectacular night view of the city (16 November 2019).

More with Principal Guest Conductor Yu Long

Principal Guest Conductor Yu Long and the HK Phil join hands with the **NCPA Chorus** to present a truly celebratory programme of Chinese folk songs and popular local hits, to mark the 70th anniversary of the People's Republic of China (19 & 20 September 2019).

Maestro Yu Long also introduces a couple of fantastic concertos by renowned Chinese Composers, including the dramatic violin concerto *La joie de la souffrance* by **Chen Qigang** with violin virtuoso **Ning Feng** (6 & 7 December 2019).

Charming Chinese cellist **Jian Wang** will be joining Maestro Yu Long to perform **Zhou Tian's** lyrical **Cello Concerto "Flowing Sleeves"** with his "wonderfully imaginative playing" (*BBC Music Magazine*). The HK Phil's own **Principal Viola Andrew Ling** will also be featured in **Strauss' famous Don Quixote** (17 and 18 April 2020).

Conductors and Soloists in the Spotlight

Appealing Japanese pianist and composer **Hiromi Uehara** brings her unique style of music to the stage of the HK Phil for a special Christmas celebration with a dazzling performance ranging from classical music to rock and jazz (23 & 24 December 2019).

The Chief Conductor Designate of the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, Hong Kong-born **Elim Chan**, pairs up with virtuoso percussionist **Martin Grubinger** in **Kalevi Aho's** explosive ***Sieidi, Percussion Concerto***, unleashing the potential of percussion. As a contrast, the concert includes **Stravinsky's** recently-rediscovered ***Funeral Song*** and his spectacular ballet score ***Petrushka*** (10 & 11 January 2020).

Rising star pianist **Behzod Abduraimov** will play **Tchaikovsky** hugely famous **Piano Concerto no. 1**. *The Times* reviewed his recording by saying that he “tackles familiar notes with exemplary aplomb...his playing conveys depth and grandeur.” Conductor **Andris Poga** returns to the stage of the HK Phil, presenting the once hidden **Symphony no. 4** by **Shostakovich** and Latvian composer **Pēteris Vasks' Cantabile** sharing “how beautiful and harmonious the world is” (24 & 25 April 2020).

Two great Russian masters join forces for two gigantic Russian works. Conductor **Vassily Sinaisky** pays homage to **Shostakovich's** richly contoured **Symphony no. 12**, while pianist **Boris Giltburg** performs **Rachmaninov's** monumental **Piano Concerto no. 3**. Giltburg's Rachmaninov performance was acclaimed by *Gramophone* as “a vividly imaginative re-creation of a score that lives and breathes with irresistible vitality” (12 & 13 June 2020).

Luxembourg-born experimental pianist and composer **Francesco Tristano** combines acoustic piano with electronic music element by drawing inspiration from the music of Bach, Stravinsky and Gershwin to create a new sonic experience with the premieres of **Tokyo Stories - orchestral version** and **Piano Concerto, Island Nation** (19 & 20 June 2020).

The much-loved Broadway diva **Lea Salonga** will return to Hong Kong in summer. Apart from “The Human Heart” from the Broadway Musical *Once On This Island*, Lea will also sing songs from popular musicals (including *Miss Saigon* and *Beautiful*) and Disney movies (*Frozen* and *Mulan*) and more (3 & 4 July 2020).

More Programmes to Anticipate

The HK Phil is also proud to present a diverse line-up of programme series in this new season.

Silver Screen Series

Continuing from 2018/19 season, the HK Phil brings you a series of movie-themed concerts.

Transferring cinematographic spectacles with magnificent musical scores, the Oscar-winning composer **Alexandre Desplat** will conduct his signature works to revisit the touching moments in films such as *The Grand Budapest Hotel* and *The Shape of Water* (1 & 2 May 2020).

Movie-in-concerts of the saga **Star Wars movies - Return of the Jedi** with **John Williams'** classic movie score in glorious “live” sound (4 & 5 January 2020), and Steven Spielberg's award-winning film **Jurassic Park** experiencing John Williams' vivid sound effects with the HK Phil (10 & 11 April 2020).

The HK Phil guides the audience through the wonders of our world in the spectacular BBC's flagship 2017 series **Planet Earth II**, with ground-breaking film-taking techniques and matchless musical scores by **Hans Zimmer, Jacob Shea** and **Jasha Klebe** (3 & 4 April 2020; 5 April 2020 under Swire Sunday Family Series).

More Programmes to Anticipate (cont'd)

Swire Denim Series

The Swire Denim Series offers a relaxing weekend option for busy urbanites, as well as an alternative for music lovers.

In this new season, the HK Phil is continuing the journey through Philips Glass' Bowie-inspired symphonies. The orchestra will give the Asia premiere of **Philip Glass' Symphony no. 1, Low**, as well as the Hong Kong premiere of **Lukas Foss' Night Music for John Lennon**, to remember this English rock legend on the 40th anniversary of his death (8 & 9 May 2020). The HK Phil will also present a unique concert featuring **two requiems** from two Viennese composers, **Mozart and Salieri** (15 & 16 May 2020).

Interesting Bits for Families

Set out on a journey with animals with the HK Phil through a hugely attractive score by **Herbert Chappell**. The whole family can join **Paddington Bear™** as he goes to his first symphony concert as well as explore the attractive world of animals with **Poulenc's** delightful **Les Animaux modèles** (28 September 2019, 3PM & 8PM).

Prokofiev's brilliant **Peter and the Wolf** uses orchestral music to share the joy with all ages, backgrounds and nationalities (12 October 2019, 3PM & 8PM).

To know more about dinosaurs, the HK Phil offers a child-friendly journey to discover dinosaurs in music with **Dr Michael Pittman**, the dinosaur expert (8 & 9 February 2020).

Tours to Mainland China, Japan and Korea

In the 2019/20 season, the HK Phil will embark on a tour to **Osaka, Tokyo** and **Seoul** in March 2020 at the Osaka Symphony Hall, Tokyo Suntory Hall, Seoul Arts Center and more. The orchestra will also return to **the Greater Bay Area** cities including Macau, Foshan and more. The HK Phil is honoured to take part in **Festival Hong Kong 2019 - A Cultural Extravaganza@Shanghai** coordinated by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department of the HKSAR Government, displaying arts of Hong Kong with cultural creativity and enhancing cultural exchanges with Mainland counterparts.

HK Phil x Tai Kwun: Chamber Music Series

Following on from the success of the new chamber music series in 2018/19 season, the HK Phil continues this series at Tai Kwun in the 2019/20 season. The evening chamber music concerts reveal a wide range of musical styles and characters, and showcase the wide range of chamber music. The chamber music series in the 2019/20 season will be held in 2020. Stay tuned!

Subscriptions Run from 9 May until 8 July 2019

The 2019/20 HK Phil subscription campaign will continue to have two phases.

- **2018/19 subscribers can renew their subscription before 29 May 2019** to enjoy the best savings and good seats.
- **Subscriptions will then be open to the public from 31 May to 8 July 2019.** During this period, subscribers can still enjoy the best savings.

Subscribers are eligible for discounts up to 25%; the more concerts purchased, the greater the savings. Students, seniors, disabled and CSSA recipients receive 50% off subscription and single ticket purchases.

How to Subscribe

There are four ways to subscribe:

1. Online: hkphil.org/1920sub **go online to enjoy a lower administration fee**
2. Mail: HK Phil Subscription Office, Level 8, Administration Building, HKCC, TST, Kowloon
3. Email: subscriptions@hkphil.org
4. Fax: 2721 1487

Education and Outreach Initiatives of the HK Phil

Jockey Club Keys to Music Education Programme

Thanks to generous sponsorship from The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, the **Jockey Club Keys to Music Education Programme** has brought tremendous benefits to local teachers and students every season since 2012. More than 200,000 students and educators have been inspired by the musical activities – Schools Concerts, Ensemble Visits, Focused Ensemble Visits and Instrumental Masterclasses – presented by the HK Phil. Since the 2018/19 season, a new initiative is included in the programme – ensemble residency at the iconic Tai Kwun, Centre for Heritage and Arts in Hong Kong, including afternoon Chamber Music Series at the JC Cube and lunchtime performances at the Laundry Steps. For more information, please visit ktm.hkphil.org.

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust is the exclusive sponsors of the Jockey Club Keys to Music Education Programme.

The Tung Foundation - Young Audience Scheme

Presented by the HK Phil and sponsored by The Tung Foundation, **Young Audience Scheme** has been established for over 20 years. It offers local full-time students aged between 6-25 exclusive access to the HK Phil and world-class musicians. Members will enjoy activities and events organised by the HK Phil, year-round privileges and discounts, as well as other rewards schemes and souvenirs. For more information, please visit yas.hkphil.org.

The Young Audience Scheme is sponsored by The Tung Foundation.

The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Composers Scheme

Organised by the HK Phil and sponsored by The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation, **The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Composers Scheme** provides a platform for local emerging composers to broaden their experience of orchestral writing. Four to six selected composers will have the opportunity to present an orchestral work of between three- and four-minute duration with the HK Phil at a Public Working Session and Showcase. Each year one outstanding composer will be commissioned to write a new work for the HK Phil to be played in a HK Phil concert. For more information, please visit hkphil.org/composersscheme.

The Composers Scheme is sponsored by The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation.

HK Phil Community Concert

Music enriches the way people think, feel and live their lives. It helps building up a harmonious society, and because of this, the HK Phil values its role of bringing music to the community. The HK Phil Community Concert is a long-established initiative reaching out to students and communities, providing world-class symphonic music for the public of Hong Kong free-of-charge. We engage students in the Community Concert as a means of nurturing future local audiences and musicians. It also helps boost their confidence, communication, cooperation and listening skills.

Connect with Us

The HK Phil's informative website hkphil.org offers the latest concert and ticketing information. Music lovers can also stay tuned through the HK Phil's updates on **Facebook** at www.facebook.com/HKPhil, **Instagram** at www.instagram.com/hkphilharmonic/ and **WeChat** (please scan the QR code attached below). Video from the HK Phil is also available on **YouTube** at www.youtube.com/HKPhilharmonic.

HK Phil WeChat Channel:



Radio and TV Broadcast by Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK)

Music lovers can enjoy some of the most memorable performances by the HK Phil through the broadcasting of **Radio Television Hong Kong** which connect the HK Phil with audiences in all parts of the world.

Thank You Partners

The HK Phil would like to express its heartfelt gratitude to the following partners for their support:

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Notes to Editors

- The HK Phil's 2019/20 Season starts on **6 September 2019 (Friday)**.
- **Subscribers' benefits** include **best savings (discounts up to 25%), good seats** and **flexible ticketing services**.
- **Season Subscription Booking Deadline: 8 July 2019 (Monday)**
- **Single Ticket** will be available at **URBTIX** from **15 July 2019 (Monday)**.
- **Season Subscription Enquiries: 2721 2332 / 2721 0132** or subscriptions@hkphil.org

HK Phil 2019/20 Season Launch Luncheon Venue Partner:

THE PENINSULA
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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* was 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, Evgeny Kissin, Lang Lang, Yo-Yo Ma, Ning Feng, Leonard Slatkin 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.