

**PRESS RELEASE**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Beating the “Curse of the Ninth”? Jaap van Zweden to conduct the HK Phil in Mahler 10 and Shostakovich 10 (13 & 14 December)

**[6 December 2019, Hong Kong]** The “Curse of the Ninth” is always a myth in the history of classical music - a ninth symphony seems to be destined as the last of a composer’s life. The **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil)** and Music Director [Jaap van Zweden](#) will perform two “Tenth” symphonies: Mahler’s Symphony no. 10 and Shostakovich’s Symphony no. 10. Both were written during a time of emotional turmoil for their composers, resulting in two powerful and emotionally charged symphonies. Two big symphonies in the evening of **13 & 14 December (Friday & Saturday)** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**, don’t miss it!

**“Magical, masterful Mahler from the five-star Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and Jaap van Zweden”**  
--- *South China Morning Post*

Mahler began working on his Tenth Symphony in the summer of 1910, shortly after learning of both his incurable heart disease and his wife’s infidelity. By the time of his death in May 1911, he had drafted the symphony’s five movements but not fleshed them out sufficiently for performance.

This programme will open with the two movements which Mahler left the most complete: the opening Adagio and the Purgatorio. These movements and the remainder of the symphony were later orchestrated and performed by Mahler’s good friend Willem Mengelberg, who served as the long-time Principal Conductor of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra (Jaap van Zweden later became that Orchestra’s youngest Concertmaster). This will be the first performance of Mengelberg’s arrangement since its premiere in 1924—making this HK Phil performance something akin to a premiere after a 95-year hiatus.

The second half of the HK Phil programme will feature another “Tenth”, the Symphony no. 10 by Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich. First performed in December 1953, a few months after the death of Joseph Stalin, this emotionally fraught work was inspired by the brutal Stalinist regime (with the short second movement being a direct representation of Stalin himself), and offers depictions of the pain, joy, fear, laughter and loneliness experienced during those years. The result is a symphony that is quintessentially Shostakovich, and often considered the pinnacle of his orchestral output.

**Swire Maestro Series: Jaap | Mahler 10 & Shostakovich 10** will be held on **13 & 14 December (Fri & Sat), 8PM** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Tickets are HK\$580, \$480, \$380, \$280 and are available at [URBTIX](#). For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit [hkphil.org](http://hkphil.org).

### Artist

#### **Jaap van Zweden, conductor** [\[full biography\]](#)

Over the past decade, conductor Jaap van Zweden has become an international presence on three continents. Currently Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, he is also Music Director of the New York Philharmonic – a post he has held since the 2018/19 season. Guest engagements this season include the Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Shanghai Symphony and Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra.

## SWIRE MAESTRO SERIES: JAAP | MAHLER 10 & SHOSTAKOVICH 10

13 & 14 | 12 | 2019

FRI & SAT 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK \$580 \$480 \$380 \$280

Tickets are now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

### Artist

[Jaap van Zweden](#) conductor

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Jaap van Zweden

Photo Credit: Wong Kin-chung/HK Phil



Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo Credit: Cheung Wai-lok/HK Phil

### Programme

#### MAHLER

Symphony no. 10: Adagio and Purgatorio (first performance since 1924 of Willem Mengelberg's performing version)

#### SHOSTAKOVICH

Symphony no. 10

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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. In 2019, the HK Phil received the prestigious *Gramophone* Orchestra of the Year Award – the first orchestra in Asia to receive this distinction.

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 also Music Director of the New York Philharmonic since the 2018/19 season.

Yu Long has been Principal Guest Conductor since the 2015/16 season.

Under the dynamic leadership of Jaap van Zweden, the HK Phil has attained new heights of artistic excellence, garnering international critical acclaim. The orchestra successfully completed a four-year journey through Wagner's Ring Cycle, performing and recording one opera from the cycle each year from 2015 to 2018. The concert performances and live Naxos recordings were enthusiastically received by audiences, praised by critics at home and abroad and garnered Gramophone Orchestra of the Year Award 2019.

The HK Phil tours extensively across Mainland China and, with the support of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices, undertook a major tour in 2017 to Seoul, Osaka, Singapore, Melbourne and Sydney in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The orchestra will perform in Japan and Korea in 2020.

Thanks to a significant subsidy from the Hong Kong SAR Government and long-term funding from Principal Patron Swire, the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust and other supporters, the HK Phil presents an 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.

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 conducting their own compositions. Its acclaimed education and community engagement programmes in schools, hospitals and outdoor spaces 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, stimulate cultural participation in Hong Kong, and enhance Hong Kong's reputation as one of the great cities in the world.

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 a Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. SWIRE is the Principal Patron of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.