

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: 21 June 2024

Angus Lee Awarded a Commission from HK Phil's The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Hong Kong Composers Scheme

[21 June 2024, Hong Kong] The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is delighted to announce that Angus Lee has been awarded a commission for a new composition for the third edition of The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Hong Kong Composers Scheme. This new piece will receive its world premiere by the HK Phil in its 2024/25 season.

Angus Lee (b.1992) is a flautist, composer, and conductor. The work he composed for the public working sessions and showcase held on 25 May 2024 was titled *Des flammes...* and was workshopped and performed by the HK Phil under conductor Jung-Ho Pak. Lee drew a connection between his piece and the "studies" by painter Francis Bacon, demonstrating his understanding of the "studies" as a metaphor for pushing boundaries within the tradition of virtuoso writing. The piece showed how visual artistic philosophies can be incorporated into musical composition.

The HK Phil is committed to nurturing local compositional talent and promoting the works of Hong Kong and Chinese composers through commissions and overseas performances. Launched in 2018, the Composers Scheme, sponsored by The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Hong Kong and organised by the HK Phil, provides a platform for local emerging composers to broaden their orchestral writing experience. The selected composers receive guidance and feedback from several HK Phil principals and musicians, a designated composer mentor, and the guest conductor. The recently completed third cohort saw esteemed British composer Christian Mason as mentor and conductor Jung-Ho Pak working with six talented Hong Kong composers: Owen Ho, Matthew Lam Chun-hei, Angus Lee, Tiffany Leung Yan-ting, So Chuen-on and Zheng Yui-ka. Each year, one composer is awarded a commission following the showcase.

Lee's new work will receive its world premiere at the "Swire Maestro Series: Elim Chan & James Ehnes" concert on 22 & 23 November 2024. Conducted by Elim Chan, the programme will also include Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto and Prokofiev's Symphony no. 5. Tickets will be available at URBTIX from 8 August 2024. Please visit the HK Phil website for more details.

About Angus Lee

Angus Lee is a flautist, composer and conductor; he has been a musician of the Hong Kong New Music Ensemble since 2016. He regularly performs as a recitalist, having been featured in LCSD's *Our Music Talent* (2018) and *City Hall Virtuosi* (2023) series. His compositions have been performed by the likes of Ensemble Intercontemporain, Ensemble Modern, and Klangforum Wien, at international music festivals across Asia and continental Europe. His opera, *Chasing Waterfalls* (2022), was premiered at Semperoper Dresden in 2022 to critical acclaim. He currently teaches at HKU's Music Department as an assistant lecturer, as well as teaching woodwind chamber music at the HKAPA.

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Angus Lee
Photo: Yat-ho Tsang

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Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Music Director: Jaap van Zweden, SBS

Principal Guest Conductor: Long Yu

Resident Conductor: Lio Kuokman, JP

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is regarded as one of the leading orchestras in Asia. Presenting more than 150 concerts over a 44-week season, the HK Phil attracts more than 200,000 music lovers annually. Recently the HK Phil won the prestigious UK classical music magazine *Gramophone's* 2019 Orchestra of the Year Award – the first orchestra in Asia to receive this accolade.

Jaap van Zweden, SBS, one of today's most sought-after conductors, has been the orchestra's Music Director since the 2012/13 Season, a position he will hold until the end of the 2023/24 Season. Jaap van Zweden has also been Music Director of the New York Philharmonic since the 2018/19 Season. Long Yu has been Principal Guest Conductor since the 2015/16 Season. Lio Kuokman, JP was appointed Resident Conductor in December 2020.

Under the dynamic leadership of Jaap van Zweden, the HK Phil has attained new heights of artistic excellence, receiving international critical acclaim. The orchestra successfully completed a four-year journey through Wagner's *Ring Cycle*, performing and recording one opera from the cycle annually from 2015 to 2018. The concert performances were well received, and the live Naxos recordings were praised by critics and garnered the *Gramophone* Orchestra of the Year Award 2019. Other recent recording projects include Mahler's Symphony no. 10, Shostakovich's Symphony no. 10, and Tchaikovsky's Symphony no. 6 and Piano Concerto no. 1.

The HK Phil has toured extensively across Mainland China. The orchestra 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 HK Phil celebrates its 50th anniversary in the 2023/24 season, touring Europe, Asia, and Mainland China, performing in 22 cities across ten countries.

Conductors and soloists who have recently performed with the orchestra include Anja Bihlmaier, Stéphane Denève, Christoph Eschenbach, Paavo Järvi, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Tarmo Peltokoski, Vasily Petrenko, Krzysztof Urbanski, Joshua Bell, Ning Feng, Boris Giltburg, Lang Lang, Leonidas Kavakos, Olivier Latry, Yo-Yo Ma and Akiko Suwanai. The HK Phil promotes the work of Hong Kong and Chinese composers through an active commissioning programme, and it has released recordings on the Naxos label featuring Tan Dun and Bright Sheng conducting their own compositions.

The HK Phil runs diverse education and community programmes in schools and outdoor spaces, bringing 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 current sponsorship donation, which is the largest amount received in the orchestra's history, Swire endeavours to foster access to classical music and stimulate cultural participation in Hong Kong and the Chinese Mainland – a critical aspect of this is to engage with the community, especially young people. The sponsorship will also help promote local artistic excellence and enhance Hong Kong's reputation as one of the great cities in the world.

Thanks to a significant subsidy from the Government of the HKSAR 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, amongst others, Hong Kong Ballet, Opera Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Arts Festival.

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 registered 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.