

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**HK Phil Triumphs in Europe  
with Four-Concert Tour Ahead of 2025/26 Season**



The best Beethoven interpretation came from Hong Kong. From the very beginning (of Beethoven's Piano Concerto no. 3), they (the HK Phil) threw themselves into their task with verve, did not leave it at an accompaniment, but always sought an intensive cooperation with the soloist (Rudolf Buchbinder).

--- *Die Presse*, Austria

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra thrilled the audience with conductor Jaap van Zweden and Rudolf Buchbinder at the piano...he (Jaap van Zweden) opted for a broad sound in the overture to Wagner's *Tannhäuser*. The timbres seemed like the multiple layers of an oil painting. Pianist Rudolf Buchbinder carefully showcased his skills in (Beethoven's) Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, interacting harmoniously with the orchestra.

--- *Kurier*, Austria

In Ludwig van Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, the Hong Kongers throw a powerful punch. Van Zweden pulls the music from the earth with his bare hands. Where he once forged subtle phrasings at the beginning of the beloved Allegretto...The attacca (immediate) onset of the closing Allegro con brio is telling. Double basses rumble, a lone brass instrument goes off the rails in the final bars.

--- *de Volkskrant*, The Netherlands

(Daniel Lo's *Asterismal Dance*) The slow and mysterious opening featured beautiful woodwind passages, after which the piece exploded into a restless, pulsating stream of energy, tonal, chromatic...The intriguing whole sounded crushing, hectic, and frenetic...the sparks flew.

(Rachmaninov's Symphony no. 2) The dark melodies sang passionately and lushly, the brass section blended beautifully, the clarinet's "wordless love song" at the beginning of the Adagio sounded moving... The Second Symphony was convincing as a well-founded structure, built from solid materials under the unsparing eye of van Zweden as a strict architect.

--- *De nieuwe Muze*, The Netherlands

**[10 Sep 2025, Hong Kong]** Following the outstanding success of its grand tour in Europe and Singapore in 2024, the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) recently made a triumphant return to Europe with a four-concert

tour ahead of the opening of its 2025/26 Season. Under the baton of Maestro Jaap van Zweden, the HK Phil marked impressive debuts in three cities, performing with acclaimed pianists the Jussen Brothers and Alexandre Kantorow at the prestigious Het Concertgebouw in Amsterdam on 30-31 August, and with the legendary Rudolf Buchbinder at Kursaal in Merano on 2 September and the Auditorium in Grafenegg on 5 September. The latter two performances were part of the Südtirol Festival Merano and Grafenegg Festival 2025 respectively—two of the most important summer music festivals in Europe, featuring world-class orchestras and artists.

Three compelling programmes were presented, featuring masterpieces by Beethoven, Rachmaninov and Wagner, alongside *In Unison*, a concerto for two pianos by Dutch composer Joey Roukens. The HK Phil was very proud to showcase Hong Kong composer Daniel Lo with the Amsterdam premiere of his *Asterismal Dance*, which launched the tour in fine style. The closing night in Grafenegg brought the journey to a glorious culmination, leaving the audience enraptured and the musicians basking in the triumph of an unforgettable finale.

All of the concerts were met with immense enthusiasm as our full-house performances in Amsterdam received standing ovations. HK Phil Chief Executive, Mr Bernhard Fleischer, said, “This has been an incredible and historic journey for us, inspiring a whole new audience with our finest music-making, whilst showcasing our talented musicians during our first-ever performances at the Concertgebouw and at the two summer music festivals in Merano and Grafenegg. I am delighted that our performances received heartwarming responses from audiences across the three cities and glowing reviews from critics.”

The HK Phil would like to extend its sincere gratitude to the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in Berlin and Brussels for their generous support.

As a cultural ambassador for Hong Kong, the HK Phil remains dedicated to fostering cultural exchange and showcasing the city’s artistic excellence locally, nationally, and internationally. In October 2025, HK Phil Resident Conductor Lio Kuokman will lead the orchestra on tour in Japan and Korea, teaming up with star pianists Kyohei Sorita and Yekwon Sunwoo respectively, and presenting a new work by Hong Kong composer Charles Kwong.

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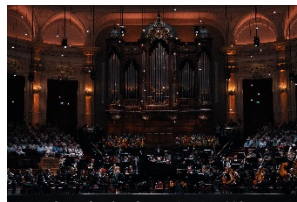
Amsterdam, 30 Aug



Daniel Lo (left) and  
Jaap van Zweden



(From left) Arthur  
Jussen, Jaap van  
Zweden, Joey  
Roukens, Lucas  
Jussen



Jussen Brothers on  
the pianos



Jaap van Zweden  
and the HK Phil



Lucas Jussen



Arthur Jussen



Amsterdam, 31 Aug



The HK Phil



Standing ovation at  
Het Concertgebouw



Alexandre  
Kantorow (left)  
and Jaap van  
Zweden



Alexandre Kantorow



Jaap van Zweden  
and the HK Phil

Merano, 2 Sep



Jaap van Zweden  
and the HK Phil



Rudolf Buchbinder

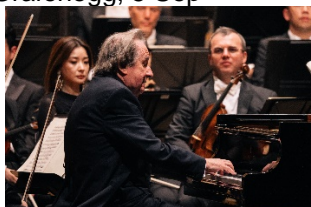


Rudolf Buchbinder  
(left) and Jaap van  
Zweden



Jaap van Zweden  
and the HK Phil

Grafenegg, 5 Sep



Rudolf Buchbinder



Jaap van Zweden  
(left) and Rudolf  
Buchbinder



Jaap van Zweden  
and the HK Phil



Jaap van Zweden  
and the HK Phil

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## Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Music Director Designate: Tarmo Peltokoski

Principal Guest Conductor: Long Yu

Resident Conductor: Lio Kuokman, JP

Composer-in-Residence: Esa-Pekka Salonen

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. 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.

Tarmo Peltokoski is the HK Phil's Music Director Designate in 2025/26 and will become Music Director in the 2026/27 season. Currently, Long Yu serves as Principal Guest Conductor and Lio Kuokman is Resident Conductor. Esa-Pekka Salonen is Composer-in-Residence in the 2025/26 season.

The HK Phil has flourished in the last two decades under Jaap van Zweden (Music Director, 2012–2024) and Edo de Waart (Artistic Director and Chief Conductor, 2004–2012). 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 collaborates with Deutsche Grammophon and is set to release Wagner's *The Ring: An Orchestral Adventure* arranged by Henk de Vlieger and conducted by Tarmo Peltokoski.

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 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The HK Phil toured Europe, Asia, and Mainland China, performing in 22 cities across ten countries in its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In the 2025/26 season, the orchestra will perform in Europe, Japan, Korea and Mainland China again.

Conductors and soloists who have recently performed with the orchestra include Anja Bihlmaier, Stéphane Denève, Christoph Eschenbach, Daniel Gatti, Daniel Harding, Pietari Inkinen, Paavo Järvi, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Vasily Petrenko, Joshua Bell, Ning Feng, Stephen Hough, Jonas Kaufmann, 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, each 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, the largest 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 engaging 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.

The history of the HK Phil dates back to the establishment of the Sino-British Orchestra in 1947. In 1957, the orchestra was officially registered as the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra 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.

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