

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **HK Phil Launches "We Pick You Up!" Education and Outreach Initiative Expanding Students' Access to Live Concerts**

**[31 January 2026, Hong Kong]** The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is thrilled to announce the launch of the "We Pick You Up!", a new education and outreach initiative which aims to enhance access to the joy of music for young audiences across the city.

The programme addresses primary barriers that hinder young students from attending concerts—cost, distance, and context—by providing dedicated transportation and free concert tickets to them. Through this initiative, students aged 6 to 12, along with their families, can travel to the Hong Kong Cultural Centre by specially wrapped "We Pick You Up!" buses to attend live performances by the HK Phil. The programme also offers an opportunity for students to step out of the classroom and explore Hong Kong's vibrant cultural landscape.

The programme kicks off today (31 January), with over 450 students and family members from Tai Po Baptist Public School and Tsuen Wan Government Primary School embarking on the designated HK Phil buses to attend two "Cinematic Adventures: The Magic of Movie Music" concerts under the Swire Community Concert series at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall. The "We Pick You Up!" buses will continue their journey in April and May this year, bringing students and their families from their neighbourhoods to the Hong Kong Cultural Centre for HK Phil concerts and sending them home afterwards.

Mr Bernhard Fleischer, Chief Executive of the HK Phil, said, "The HK Phil believes in the transformative power of music. The 'We Pick You Up!' initiative opens the door to the concert hall for students who might not otherwise have the chance to experience a live orchestra. We hope to provide an unforgettable first concert experience that serves as the foundation for a lifelong relationship with music."

Ms Wong Lai-may, Principal of Tsuen Wan Government Primary School, remarked, "The HK Phil's considerate arrangements, including dedicated bus transportation, can expand students' opportunities to attend live concerts. By encouraging parents and students to participate together, the programme creates a shared experience of enjoying music, and enhances students' interest in classical music and live performances."

Ms Carol Chan, Vice-Principal of Tai Po Baptist Public School, shared, "With the HK Phil new initiative, students have more opportunities to enjoy concerts. This is also a wonderful parent-child activity that allows students to connect with different communities."

The HK Phil expresses its deepest gratitude to supporters including Mr Peter Brien, Mr Cusson Leung and Mrs Joyce Kwok Leung, Asia Insurance and the Lang Lang International Music Foundation USA, whose generous contributions have made this initiative possible. With additional sponsorship, the HK Phil looks forward to expanding its outreach to promote music education and make these enriching experiences accessible to the broader community.

The HK Phil places great importance on audience development and arts education, and runs various activities and programmes to engage with youth and the community at large. For details about HK Phil's education and outreach programmes, please visit [www.hkphil.org/explore](http://www.hkphil.org/explore).

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(photo: Desmond Chan/HK Phil)



Students and their families from Tai Po Baptist Public School and Tsuen Wan Government Primary School embark on the designated HK Phil buses to attend HK Phil concert.



Students and their families enjoy "Cinematic Adventures: The Magic of Movie Music" concert under the Swire Community Concert series.



HK Phil "We Pick You Up!" bus



HK Phil "We Pick You Up!" bus

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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 the Chinese Mainland. 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 the Mainland Chinese, 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 the Chinese Mainland 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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