

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: 8 May 2026

Michael Sanderling and François-Frédéric Guy Headline HK Phil's May Programmes

[8 May 2026, Hong Kong] The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) presents two programmes in mid-May. Renowned German conductor Michael Sanderling returns with Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra*, while celebrated French pianist François-Frédéric Guy brings Beethoven's complete piano concertos over two consecutive evenings. Tickets are now available at URBTIX.

Swire Maestro Series: Michael Sanderling Conducts Also sprach Zarathustra (15 & 16 May)



Michael Sanderling returns to the HK Phil for two performances. The programme opens with Brahms's Variations on a Theme of Joseph Haydn, followed by the world premiere of the *Maverick* Cello Concerto, featuring the HK Phil's Principal Cello, Richard Bamping. The work is composed by Hong Kong-born British composer Dani Howard and co-commissioned by the HK Phil. The programme concludes with Richard Strauss's symphonic poem *Also sprach Zarathustra*, a masterpiece inspired by Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophical novel of the same name. Its opening fanfare, made famous by Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, has become one of the most iconic passages in classical music.

"Swire Maestro Series: Michael Sanderling Conducts Also sprach Zarathustra" will be held on 15 May 2026 (Fri) at 7:30PM and 16 May 2026 (Sat) at 5PM at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall. Tickets priced at HK\$520, \$420, \$320 and \$220 are available at URBTIX. For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit hkphil.org.

BNP Paribas Wealth Management Proudly Sponsors: François-Frédéric Guy's Beethoven Piano Concertos I & II (22 & 23 May)



François-Frédéric Guy will perform and conduct all five Beethoven piano concertos over two consecutive evenings. Deeply connected to the piano, Beethoven expressed his most profound emotions through this instrument. The five concertos trace the composer's musical journey, from the youthful spirit of the First to the majestic grandeur of the *Emperor*. Praised by *Gramophone* as a "highly persuasive Beethovenian", Guy will perform the Second, Third, and Fourth concertos on 22 May, followed by the First and Fifth on 23 May.

"BNP Paribas Wealth Management Proudly Sponsors: François-Frédéric Guy's Beethoven Piano Concertos I" will be held on 22 May 2026 (Fri) at 7:30PM. "BNP Paribas Wealth Management Proudly Sponsors: François-Frédéric Guy's Beethoven Piano Concertos II" will be held on 23 May 2026 (Sat) at 5PM. Both performances will take place at the Hong Kong City Hall Concert Hall. Tickets priced at HK\$520, \$420 \$320 and \$220 are available at URBTIX. For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit hkphil.org.

Title sponsor: BNP Paribas Wealth Management
Cultural partner: French May Arts Festival

Artists

Michael Sanderling, conductor [\[full description\]](#)

Since the 2021/22 season, Michael Sanderling has served as Chief Conductor of the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra. This appointment marked the logical continuation of a long-standing, close partnership aimed at further establishing the orchestra's international reputation in the late Romantic repertoire — particularly with works by Bruckner, Mahler, and Strauss. Tours throughout Europe, Asia, and South America, as well as innovative projects, attest to the impact of this collaboration. Particular attention was drawn to the multimedia production of Shostakovich's Symphony no. 10 featuring artist William Kentridge, which, following its premiere at the KKL Lucerne and in Pompeii, enjoyed triumphant performances at the Vienna Konzerthaus and the Philharmonie de Paris.

Richard Bamping, cello [\[full description\]](#)

Richard Bamping has been Principal Cellist of the HK Phil since 1993. He has performed with many of the finest musicians of recent history — Lord Yehudi Menuhin, Leonidas Kavakos, Mstislav Rostropovich, Carlo Maria Giulini, Valery Gergiev, Leonard Bernstein, Lorin Maazel, Sir Colin Davis and Claudio Abbado, to name but a few.

François-Frédéric Guy, conductor and piano [\[full description\]](#)

As an outstanding interpreter of the music of German Romantics and their forebears as well as contemporary compositions, François-Frédéric Guy is pursuing a steady international career as both a soloist and as an orchestral conductor from the piano. Alongside great conductors such as Kent Nagano, Daniel Harding and Esa-Pekka Salonen, he has worked with renowned orchestras such as the Vienna Symphony, the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, the Seoul Philharmonic, and the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande.

Swire Maestro Series: Michael Sanderling Conducts Also sprach Zarathustra

15 & 16 | 5 | 2026

FRI 7:30PM & SAT 5PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$520 \$420 \$320 \$220

Tickets now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Michael Sanderling](#)

conductor

[Richard Bamping](#)

cello

Programme

BRAHMS

Variations on a Theme of Joseph Haydn, op. 56a

Dani HOWARD

Cello Concerto, *Maverick*

(World Premiere, HK Phil Co-commission)

STRAUSS

Also sprach Zarathustra, op. 30

[Download](#) press images



Michael Sanderling

Photo: Marco Borggreve



Richard Bamping

Photo: Michael Li Yam/HK Phil



Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo: Keith Hiro/HK Phil

BNP Paribas Wealth Management Proudly Sponsors: François-Frédéric Guy's Beethoven Piano Concertos I

22 | 5 | 2026

FRI 7:30PM

Hong Kong City Hall Concert Hall

HK\$520 \$420 \$320 \$220

Tickets now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

Artist

[François-Frédéric Guy](#)

conductor/piano

Programme

BEETHOVEN

Piano Concerto no. 2 in B flat major, op. 19

BEETHOVEN

Piano Concerto no. 3 in C minor, op. 37

BEETHOVEN

Piano Concerto no. 4 in G major, op. 58

BNP Paribas Wealth Management Proudly Sponsors: François-Frédéric Guy's Beethoven Piano Concertos II

23 | 5 | 2026

SAT 5PM

Hong Kong City Hall Concert Hall

HK\$520 \$420 \$320 \$220

Tickets now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

Artist

[François-Frédéric Guy](#)

conductor/piano

Programme

BEETHOVEN

Piano Concerto no. 1 in C major, op. 15

BEETHOVEN

Piano Concerto no. 5 in E flat major, op. 73, *Emperor*

[Download](#) press images



François-Frédéric Guy

Photo: Caroline Dourtre



Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo: Keith Hiro/HK Phil

--- END ---

For further press information please contact:

Dennis Wu, Director of Marketing

Tel: +852 2721 9035 Email: dennis.wu@hkphil.org

Emily Hui, Media Relations & Communications Manager

Tel: +852 2721 1585 Email: emily.hui@hkphil.org

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.

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 releases its debut album on Deutsche Grammophon in March 2026, featuring Richard Wagner's *The Ring – An Orchestral Adventure* (arranged by Henk de Vlieger), conducted by Tarmo Peltokoski. This landmark collaboration with the world's most historic classical label marks a new chapter in the HK Phil's international recording profile.

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 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The HK Phil toured Europe, Asia and the Chinese Mainland, performing in 22 cities across ten countries in its 50th anniversary. In the 2026/27 season, the orchestra will perform in Europe and the Chinese Mainland again.

Conductors and soloists who have recently performed with the orchestra include Stéphane Denève, Christoph Eschenbach, Daniel Gatti, Daniel Harding, Pietari Inkinen, Paavo Järvi, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Vasily Petrenko, Emanuel Ax, Joshua Bell, Ning Feng, Mao Fujita, Jonas Kaufmann, Lang Lang, Leonidas Kavakos, Olivier Latry, Yo-Yo Ma, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Aristo Sham, 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.