

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: 21 May 2026

**HK Phil in June:
Anja Bihlmaier Conducts Beethoven 5 and
Long Yu Conducts Joe Hisaishi and Brahms**

[21 May 2026, Hong Kong] The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is pleased to announce two programmes in June 2026. German conductor Anja Bihlmaier returns with an all-Beethoven programme, while HK Phil Principal Conductor Long Yu leads the orchestra in a programme that interweaves the soundscapes of Joe Hisaishi and Brahms. Tickets are now available at URBTIX.

Anja Bihlmaier Conducts Beethoven 5 (12 & 13 June)



Praised by *The Times* for her “natural ease, musical rigour and feel for pacing and phrasing”, Anja Bihlmaier returns with an all-Beethoven programme. Joining her is Czech violinist Josef Špaček, who is known for his “fluent technique and expressive finesse,” and described by *The Guardian* as “coolly contained Špaček”. He makes his HK Phil debut in Beethoven’s Violin Concerto. The concert opens with Beethoven’s *Leonore* Overture no. 3 and culminates in the composer’s Symphony no. 5.

“Anja Bihlmaier Conducts Beethoven 5” will be held on 12 June 2026 (Fri) at 7:30PM and 13 June 2026 (Sat) at 5PM 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.

Long Yu Conducts Joe Hisaishi and Brahms (19 & 20 June)



Joe Hisaishi transcends traditional movie scores, crafting evocative melodies that resonate across diverse musical landscapes. Similarly, Brahms, a prominent figure of the Romantic period, expanded classical symphonic traditions with innovative ideas in his four symphonies. In the concerts, Berlin Philharmonic's First Principal Viola Diyang Mei joins Long Yu and the HK Phil to present a programme that intertwines the rich emotions of the two composers from different times. Highlights include Hisaishi's "Merry-Go-Round" and "Cave of Mind" from *Howl's Moving Castle*, along with his *Viola Saga*. The evening culminates with Brahms's Fourth Symphony, a masterpiece that showcases the depth and complexity found in both composers' works.

"Long Yu Conducts Joe Hisaishi and Brahms" will be held on 19 June 2026 (Fri) at 7:30PM and 20 June 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.

Artists

Anja Bihlmaier, conductor [\[full description\]](#)

Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic since September 2024, Anja Bihlmaier has become a firm favourite at the BBC Proms where she appears annually. In the 2025/26 season, she conducts for the first time the London Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal and Orchestre National de Lyon, returning to the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Madrid National, Helsinki Philharmonic, Berlin Konzerthausorchester, Hong Kong Philharmonic, and Sydney and Melbourne symphonies. She continues her residency at the Bonn Beethovenfest conducting the DSO Berlin, with whom she performed in the Berlin Musikfest in Sep 2025. Last season she debuted with the Seattle Symphony, NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra and Munich Philharmonic, all of whom have reinvited.

Josef Špaček, violin [\[full description\]](#)

Praised for his remarkable range of colours, his confident and concentrated stage presence, his virtuosity and technical poise as well as the beauty of his tone Josef Špaček has gradually emerged as one of the leading violinists of his generation. His performances of a wide range of repertoire demonstrate his "astonishing articulation and athleticism" (*The Scotsman*) and "a richness and piquancy of timbre" (*The Telegraph*).

Long Yu, conductor [\[full description\]](#)

Hailed by *The New York Times* as "the most powerful figure in China's classical music scene," conductor and impresario Long Yu has devoted his illustrious career to steering China's growing connection to classical music. Maestro Yu currently holds the top position in the country's most prominent orchestras: Artistic Director of the China Philharmonic Orchestra and Music Director of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. He is also Principal Guest Conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, co-director of Shanghai's Music in the Summer Air festival, and Chair of the Artistic Committee of the Beijing Music Festival. He is currently Vice President of the China Musicians Association and Chairman of its League of China Orchestras.

Diyang Mei, viola [\[full description\]](#)

Ever since violist Diyang Mei's brilliant success at the 2018 ARD International Music Competition, winning first prize and all other special prizes in the viola category, he has been steadily furthering his international career. He has served as First Principal Viola of Berliner Philharmoniker since 2022, and was Viola Principal of the Munich Philharmonic from 2019 to 2022. He also teaches as a visiting professor at the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler Berlin.

Anja Bihlmaier Conducts Beethoven 5

12 & 13 | 6 | 2026

FRI 7:30PM & SAT 5PM

Hong Kong City Hall Concert Hall

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

Tickets now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Anja Bihlmaier](#)

conductor

[Josef Špaček](#)

violin

Programme

BEETHOVEN

Leonore Overture no. 3, op. 72b

BEETHOVEN

Violin Concerto in D major, op. 61

BEETHOVEN

Symphony no. 5 in C minor, op. 67

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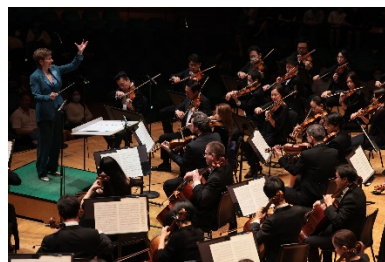
Anja Bihlmaier

Photo: Phil Sharp



Josef Špaček

Photo: Radovan Šubín



Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo: Keith Hiro/HK Phil

Long Yu Conducts Joe Hisaishi and Brahms

19 & 20 | 6 | 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

[Long Yu](#)

conductor

[Diyang Mei](#)

viola

Programme

HISAISHI

Symphonic Variation "Merry-Go-Round + Cave of Mind"
(from *Howl's Moving Castle*)

HISAISHI

Viola Saga

BRAHMS

Symphony no. 4 in E minor, op. 98

[Download](#) press images



Long Yu

Photo: Liu Hui



Diyang Mei



Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo: Keith Hiro/HK Phil

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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.