

PRESS RELEASE
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**International Chopin Competition Gold Medallist Eric Lu
Makes HK Phil Debut
Led by Lio Kuokman in Hong Kong and Chengdu**

[19 August 2026, Hong Kong] Under the baton of its Resident Conductor Lio Kuokman, the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) will perform alongside Eric Lu, Gold Medallist of the International Chopin Piano Competition, in Hong Kong and Chengdu on 9 and 12 September 2026 respectively. Tickets are now on public sale.

Eric Lu Plays Chopin (9 September, Hong Kong)

Described by *The Guardian* as “a true artist”, Eric Lu won First Prize at the 19th International Chopin Piano Competition 2025 in Warsaw, having previously come to international attention by winning the Leeds International Piano Competition in 2018 at the age of 20. For his debut with the HK Phil, he will present Chopin’s Piano Concerto no. 1, illuminating its lyricism and youthful ardour with his poetic voice.

Conducted by Lio Kuokman, the concert opens with the world premiere of *Waltz of the Rolling Giants*, a new work by Chinese composer Yao Chen, commissioned by the HK Phil especially for the orchestra’s China and international tours in the 2026/27 season. The concert concludes with Stravinsky’s *The Firebird Suite* (1919), bringing the performance to a grand climax with its orchestral grandeur and dramatic energy.

“Eric Lu Plays Chopin” will be held on 9 September 2026 (Wed) at 7:30PM at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall. Tickets priced at HK\$680, \$540, \$400 and \$260 are available at URBTIX. For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit hkphil.org.

**Hong Kong Week 2026@Chengdu - Lio Kuokman, Eric Lu and HK Phil
(12 September, Chengdu)**

Following the Hong Kong performance, the orchestra will travel to Chengdu. This concert is featured as part of “Hong Kong Week 2026@Chengdu”, presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. “Hong Kong Week” is a major cultural extravaganza organised by the LCSD that showcases Hong Kong’s creative excellence and promotes artistic collaboration across regions.

As with the Hong Kong performance, the Chengdu concert will be led by Lio Kuokman and will open with Yao Chen’s *Waltz of the Rolling Giants*, inspired by Sichuan’s giant pandas as a warm musical greeting to the Chengdu audience. Following Eric Lu’s performance of Chopin’s Piano Concerto no. 1, the HK Phil will close the evening with Stravinsky’s *The Firebird Suite* (1919 version).

“Hong Kong Week 2026@Chengdu - Lio Kuokman, Eric Lu and HK Phil” will be held on 12 September 2026 (Sat) at 7:30PM at the Chengdu City Concert Hall. Tickets priced at RMB¥1,080, ¥880, ¥580, ¥380, ¥280 and ¥180 are available at DAMAI.

In addition to the performance, the HK Phil will participate in two outreach and exchange activities on 11 September 2026 (Fri): a piano masterclass with Eric Lu for students at the Middle School affiliated to the Sichuan Conservatory of Music, as well as a meet-and-greet session with Lio Kuokman and HK Phil musicians to engage with local music lovers. The execution of concert and outreach activities is supported by Hongxing Media (Chengdu) Co., Ltd.

Artists

Lio Kuokman, JP, conductor [\[full description\]](#)

Currently Resident Conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Macao Orchestra, Programme Director of the Macao International Music Festival, Chief Conductor of the RTV Slovenia Symphony Orchestra and Artistic Partner of the Kansai Philharmonic Orchestra, Lio Kuokman was praised by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* as “a startling conducting talent”. He was the Second Prize winner of the Third Svetlanov International Conducting Competition in Paris with Audience Prize and Orchestra Prize, and he has served as the first Chinese Assistant Conductor with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Eric Lu, piano [\[full description\]](#)

Eric Lu is the First Prize winner of the 19th International Chopin Piano Competition 2025 in Warsaw. Before that he had won First Prize at the Leeds International Piano Competition in 2018 at the age of 20. Eric's always thoughtful, poetically imbued and powerful interpretations have already made him one of the most distinctive artists on the international music scene.

Eric Lu Plays Chopin

9 | 9 | 2026

WED 7:30PM

Hong Kong Culture Centre Concert Hall

HK\$680 \$540 \$400 \$260

Tickets now available at [URBTIX](#)

For ages 6 and above

Hong Kong Week 2026@Chengdu - Lio Kuokman, Eric Lu and HK Phil

12 | 9 | 2026

SAT 7:30pm

Chengdu City Concert Hall

RMB¥1,080 ¥880 ¥580 ¥380 ¥280 ¥180

Tickets now available at [DAMAI](#)

Artists

[Lio Kuokman](#)

conductor

[Eric Lu](#)

piano

Programme

YAO Chen

CHOPIN

STRAVINSKY

Waltz of the Rolling Giants (HK Phil Commission)

Piano Concerto no. 1 in E minor, op. 11

The Firebird Suite (1919)

[Download](#) press images



Lio Kuokman

Photo: Ka Lam/HK Phil



Eric Lu

Photo: Łukasz Rajchert



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: Tarmo Peltokoski
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. 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 starts his tenure as Music Director in the 2026/27 season. Currently, Long Yu serves as Principal Guest Conductor and Lio Kuokman is Resident Conductor.

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 Vlieter), 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.