貝托祺 音樂總監
Tarmo Peltokoski Music Director

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: 9 November 2026

Tarmo Peltokoski Leads the HK Phil Premiere of Mahler's Eighth Symphony in His Inaugural Concerts as Music Director

Nearly 600 Performers and 2,500 Audience Members Celebrate a Milestone for the HK Phil



[9 November 2026, Hong Kong] A new era has begun for the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil). On 7 and 8 November, Tarmo Peltokoski began his tenure as Music Director with the HK Phil's first performances of Mahler's Symphony no. 8 at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall. Both concerts were greeted with enthusiastic applause and standing ovations.

Bringing together nearly 600 performers, the project was among the largest ever undertaken by the orchestra. With these performances of Mahler's Symphony no. 8, the HK Phil has now presented all of the Mahler symphonies.

For the occasion, the HK Phil assembled an international cast of singers alongside choirs from Hong Kong and London, including local school choirs. The eight soloists were sopranos Jacquelyn Wagner (Magna Peccatrix), Chen Reiss (Una Poenitentium) and Louise Kwong (Mater Gloriosa); mezzo-sopranos Catriona Morison (Mulier Samaritana) and Sasha Cooke (Maria Aegyptiaca); tenor Tuomas Katajala (Doctor Marianus); baritone Rinalds Kandalincevs (Pater Ecstaticus); and bass Shenyang (Pater Profundus). They were joined by six choirs: the Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus, The Learners Chorus, the London Philharmonic Choir, the St. Paul's Co-educational College Senior Mixed-Voice Choir, the Ying Wa College Choir and The Hong Kong Children's Choir.

Peltokoski guided the vast forces of the "Symphony of a Thousand" with clarity, precision and a strong sense of its overarching structure. Across the two performances, approximately 2,500 audience members experienced one of the largest works in the orchestral repertoire.

Following the opening performance on 7 November, the HK Phil hosted a "Welcome Tarmo" reception at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. The Guest of Honour, Miss Rosanna Law, Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, attended together with HK Phil Board of Governors, Principal Patron Swire, Concert and Reception Sponsor Chow Sang Sang and many orchestra members.

Mr David Cogman, Chairman of the Board of Governors of The Hong Kong Philharmonic Society Limited, welcomed guests. He noted that Peltokoski regards Mahler's Eighth Symphony as a work reserved for special occasions, making it a fitting choice for his inaugural concert as Music Director. He also observed that bringing together such extensive musical forces was a rare undertaking for the orchestra. Looking ahead, he said the HK Phil is excited to begin a new chapter under Peltokoski's leadership and to continue contributing to Hong Kong's role as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange. He also thanked Chow Sang Sang, a long-standing partner of the orchestra, for its generous support of the concerts and reception.

Mr Bernhard Fleischer, Chief Executive of the HK Phil, expressed his gratitude to the orchestra members, staff, and supporters, emphasising that an endeavour of this immense scale would not have been possible without their extraordinary dedication and unwavering support. The joint efforts captured the spirit of "join friends" through music, marking a proud milestone as the HK Phil embarks on this exciting new chapter.

Mr David Cogman, Ms Winnie Tam, Vice-Chairman of the HK Phil, and Mr Patrick Ren, Deputy Chief Executive of the HK Phil, presented Peltokoski with a calligraphy work as a welcome gift. Guests also enjoyed a short film about Tarmo's artistic journey. The evening concluded with a surprise performance by Chen Reiss and Rinalds Kandalincevs, together with the Hong Kong Gaudeamus Dunhuang Ensemble and the Hong Kong Puppet and Shadow Art Center, featuring excerpts from Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Concert and Reception Sponsor: Chow Sang Sang

Principal Patron: Swire

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Download press images
(Photo: HK Phil)






1. Music Director Tarmo Peltokoski leads the HK Phil's premiere of Mahler's Symphony no. 8 in his inaugural concert.




2. Nearly 600 performers fill the stage of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall for Mahler 8, as the HK Phil completes the Mahler symphonies.



3. (From left) Jacquelyn Wagner, Chen Reiss, Catriona Morison, Sasha Cooke, Tuomas Katajala, Rinalds Kandalincevs and Shenyang

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Long Yu Principal Guest Conductor
廖國敏 JP 駐團指揮
Lio Kuokman, JP Resident Conductor



4. Louise Kwong



5. Tarmo Peltokoski, the soloists, the choirs and the HK Phil receive a standing ovation.



6. Mr David Cogman, Chairman of the HK Phil, delivers the welcome speech at the reception.



7. Mr David Cogman, Ms Winnie Tam and Mr Patrick Ren present a welcome gift to Tarmo Peltokoski.



8. (From left) Ms Cecilia Yim, Chief Market Strategy Officer of Chow Sang Sang Holdings International Limited; Mr Bernhard Fleischer, Chief Executive of the HK Phil; Mr David Cogman, Chairman of the HK Phil; Miss Rosanna Law, Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism; Maestro Tarmo Peltokoski, Music Director of the HK Phil; Ms Winnie Tam, Vice-Chairman of the HK Phil; Mr Patrick Ren, Deputy Chief Executive of the HK Phil and Ms May Lam, Director, Group Public Affairs, John Swire & Sons (H.K.) Limited.



9. Chen Reiss and Rinalds Kandalincevs, with the Hong Kong Gaudeamus Dunhuang Ensemble and the Hong Kong Puppet and Shadow Art Center, surprise guests with excerpts from Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

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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 collaborated with Deutsche Grammophon and released 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 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, Daniele 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.

港樂
HKPhil

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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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