

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: 15 March 2013

An Easter Special! All-New Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus Unveiled at Handel's *Messiah* (29&30 March)

Tickets Going Fast

[15 March 2013, Hong Kong] The **Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus** was established in 1980 and its first performance was *Messiah*. Since then the Chorus has been collaborating with the **Hong Kong Philharmonic (HK Phil)** in various forms. Part of Music Director Jaap van Zweden's artistic vision to energize Hong Kong's choral scene, the HK Phil Chorus resumed recruiting members last year, attracting over 450 people who applied for audition.

Following a month-long search and the ensuing rigorous training under the direction of Chorus-master **Philip Chu**, over 150 excellent singers from all over Hong Kong and from all walks of life will be making their much anticipated début in **Handel's *Messiah***. Under the baton of Australian choral luminary [Brett Weymark](#) and joined by a fabulous cast of vocalists including soprano [Yuki Ip](#), countertenor [Xiao Ma](#), tenor [Chen Yong](#) and bass [Brian Montgomery](#), this HK Phil performance of the Easter special, with its majestic Hallelujah Chorus, will be remembered by choral fans in Hong Kong for a long time to come.

Holiday, Pops & More: *Messiah* will be held on **29&30 March 2013 (Fri & Sat), 8PM** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Tickets priced: \$400, \$300, \$220, \$140 are now available at [URBTIX](#). Free pre-concert talks will be given by musicologist Dr Joanna Lee on both nights (29 March: English, 30 March: Cantonese) at 7:15pm, also at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. For enquiries, please call 2721 2030 or visit www.hkphil.org

Artists

Brett Weymark, conductor [[full biography](#)]

Brett Weymark is Conductor and Artistic & Musical Director of Sydney Symphony Choirs. He studied singing at the University of Sydney and conducting at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. He has more recently continued his conducting studies in England, Europe and America, and was awarded a Centenary Medal in 2001 for services to choral music.

In 2011 he opened the Sydney Philharmonia season with Bach's *St John Passion* and conducted the Sydney Symphony as part of the 2011 Sydney Festival in Midsummer Shakespeare with Australian actor John Bell.

Yuki Ip, soprano [[full biography](#)]

Hong Kong soprano, (Yuki) Ip Po-Ching's major performances have included being the featured soloist with José Carreras for the inaugural season of the National Centre of the Performing Arts, Beijing, Cio-Cio San in Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* with MusicaViva, Hong Kong, and her European début at the Basilica di San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy in Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*. Miss Ip was the soprano soloist in Bach's B Minor Mass under the baton of Maestro Helmuth Rilling in 2011.

Recently she performed Villa-Lobos's *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* in Verona and Cremona, Italy, and was guest soloist at the Shanghai World Exposition with Shanghai Opera House Orchestra as Micaëla in Bizet's *Carmen* with Le French May Festival Hong Kong.

Ma, Xiao, countertenor [[full biography](#)]

Xiao Ma is China's first professional countertenor. He was discovered by renowned Chinese bass Gong Dong-Jian in 2006 and made his début the following year with Shanghai Opera as Cherubino in Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*, which has become his signature role.

Since his Shanghai début Xiao Ma has given numerous recitals and appearances in China as well as the US, Europe and other Asian countries. He toured nine European cities under the auspices of the Chinese Ministry of Culture as soloist with the Forbidden City Chamber Orchestra, and in 2012 made his New Zealand début with a tour of four cities and nine concerts. In 2012 he returns to New Zealand to début with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra.

Yong, Chen, tenor [[full biography](#)]

Tenor Chen Yong received his master's degree in vocal performance from the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, and finished his postgraduate programme at the Universität für Music und Darstellende Kunst, Wien (the University for Music and Performing Arts in Vienna, Austria).

In January 2010 he sang in the production of Donizetti's *La Fille du Régiment* as Tonio in Hong Kong City Hall. In 2012 he sang *Carmen* as Don Jose with Opera Hong Kong in Grand Theatre Culture Centre Hong Kong. Mr. Chen also sang Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* as tenor solo in Hong Kong City Hall in September 2012.

Brian Montgomery, bass [\[full biography\]](#)

Brian Montgomery has performed to critical acclaim with important opera companies throughout the world, having performed 16 years in international level opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Arena di Verona and Bavarian State Opera. He is a specialist in the Italian repertoire, having sung over 50 leading roles in Italian.

Holiday, Pops & More: Messiah

29&30 | 3 | 2013

FRI & SAT 8PM

HK Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$400 \$300 \$220 \$140

Available at URBTIX now

For ages 6 and above

Tickets going fast!

Artists

[Brett Weymark](#)

conductor

[Yuki Ip](#)

soprano

[Xiao Ma](#)

countertenor

[Chen Yong](#)

tenor

[Brian Montgomery](#)

bass

Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus chorus

(Chorus Master: Philip Chu)

Click the thumbnails to download press images [Or hold Ctrl then click to open the file]



Programme

HANDEL *Messiah*

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Free Pre-concert Talk

Time: 29/3 Fri 7:15pm - 7:45pm (English)

30/3 Sat 7:15pm - 7:45pm (Cantonese)

Venue: HK Cultural Centre Auditoria Building 4/F Foyer

Speaker: Dr Joanna Lee, Musicologist

Ticketing Information

Credit Card Booking

(852) 2111 5999

Online Booking

www.urbtix.hk

For programme enquiry, please call HK Phil at

(852) 2721 2030

Or go on our website:

www.hkphil.org

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Hong Kong Philharmonic

Music Director: Jaap van Zweden

As the city's largest and busiest musical organisation, the Hong Kong Philharmonic is a vital part of Hong Kong's cultural life. In 2013/14 the HK Phil will celebrate its 40th professional season, but its roots stretch back well over a century. The HK Phil has now evolved into an orchestral powerhouse of the region, and an acclaimed cultural centrepiece of Asia's World City.

The HK Phil is founded on the belief that a great city deserves a great orchestra. Annually it presents over 150 concerts for 200,000 music lovers. Featuring an enviable roster of international and local artists, with many concerts presented free, among them the annual *Swire Symphony Under The Stars*. Through its acclaimed education programme, over 40,000 young people learned about orchestral music last year.

The HK Phil's members come from every corner of the globe, joining its strong core of Hong Kong musicians. In September 2012, Jaap van Zweden became the orchestra's Music Director. Future years will see an ambitious series of new projects, with major international tours, renewed local partnerships, and large-scale concert events. The HK Phil has recently commenced a multi-CD recording project for Naxos, featuring works by Chinese composers.

The Hong Kong Philharmonic is financially supported by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

SWIRE is the Principal Patron of the Hong Kong Philharmonic

The Hong Kong Philharmonic is a Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre