

PRESS RELEASE
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Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra Announces New Principal Guest Conductor – Yu Long

[14 January 2015, Hong Kong] The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) has today announced the appointment of conductor Yu Long to be its Principal Guest Conductor, effective from the 2015/16 concert season for an initial three year term.

China's pre-eminent conductor, Yu Long regularly conducts the world's leading orchestras. He founded the China Philharmonic Orchestra, which he has led since 2000, and is Music Director of the Shanghai and Guangzhou Symphony Orchestras. He is the Founding Artistic Director of the Beijing Music Festival and is Artistic Co-Director of the MISA Festival in Shanghai.

HK Phil Chairman Mr Jack So said: "The Board of Governors is delighted that Yu Long is willing to take on a titled role with the HK Phil. We anticipate a long and inspiring relationship with him."

Yu Long said: "I am thrilled to be taking up this position to work with the formidable musicians of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. I have been enjoying my collaboration with this orchestra since 1995 and I have especially relished our recent performances last June. I look forward to making wonderful music with them in the coming seasons. Jaap van Zweden has clearly had an extremely positive musical impact on the standard of playing."

The collaboration will herald an exciting range of new projects:

- As Principal Guest, Yu Long will conduct the HK Phil for a number of concert projects in each season.
- The HK Phil and Shanghai Symphony Orchestras will cooperate in a major cultural exchange: the presentation, in Hong Kong and Shanghai, of a cycle of the symphonic works of Gustav Mahler, including performances of Mahler's 8th Symphony – the Symphony of a Thousand.
- The Hong Kong Philharmonic and Jaap van Zweden will perform in a major operatic project as part of the Beijing Festival in 2017.
- An educational initiative will see aspiring musicians from Shanghai Orchestra Academy receive mentoring from musicians of the HK Phil.

Music Director Jaap van Zweden said: "I am very excited to welcome Yu Long to this position with the Orchestra. He is an outstanding musician and a natural leader on the podium."

Concertmaster Jing Wang said: "Yu Long is an exceptional musician, and his connection with us from the podium produced electrifying results last season. The musicians of the HK Phil are honoured that he will join us in a titled role."

Yu Long made his debut with the HK Phil in 1995. His most recent performance with the orchestra was in June of 2014. He will be the first person to hold the title of Principal Guest Conductor at the HK Phil in over 20 years, the orchestra having had only two other conductors in that capacity before: Kenneth Jean and Maxim Shostakovich.

About Maestro Yu Long

Yu Long is the Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the China Philharmonic Orchestra, which he co-founded in 2000, and the Music Director of the Shanghai and Guangzhou Symphony Orchestras. All three ensembles tour actively internationally and feature the world's top soloists. Maestro Yu is also the Founding Artistic Director of the Beijing Music Festival, as well as Artistic Co-Director of the MISA Festival, bringing classical music to the young people of Shanghai.

Maestro Yu regularly appears with the world's leading orchestras and opera companies including Munich Philharmonic, Orchestre de Paris, BBC Symphony, Hamburg State Opera, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Sydney Symphony, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and Singapore Symphony.

Yu Long has created China's first orchestral academy partnering the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, Shanghai Conservatory and the New York Philharmonic. The academy's mission is to introduce China's growing audiences to key Western repertoire.

Yu Long was born in 1964 into a family of musicians in Shanghai. His grandfather Ding Shande, a renowned composer, inspired his passion for music and encouraged him to study at the Shanghai Conservatory and the Hochschule der Kunst in Berlin. Upon returning to China, Maestro was appointed Principal Conductor of the Central Opera Theatre in Beijing. Long Yu is a Chevalier dans L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and the recipient of the 2002 Arts Patronage Award of the Montblanc Cultural Foundation. In 2005 Italy honoured Maestro Long Yu with the title of L'onorificenza di commendatore.

Recently France has recognised Maestro Yu Long's leadership in strengthening China's cultural connections with other nations around the world by awarding him its highest honour of merit, the fabled Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur.

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001 Welcome remarks by Mr YS Liu, Vice-chairman of the Board of Governors of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society



002 Remarks by Maestro Jaap van Zweden, Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra



003 Maestro Yu Long talks about his new position as Principal Guest Conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra



004 Maestro Jaap van Zweden (right) and Maestro Yu Long



005 From left to right: Mr Michael MacLeod, Chief Executive of the HK Phil, Maestro Yu Long, Maestro Jaap van Zweden, Mr YS Liu



006 Mr YS Liu, Maestro Jaap van Zweden, Maestro Yu Long, Mr Michael MacLeod, representatives from Home Affairs Bureau and Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Mrs Janice Choi, Vice-chairman of the Board of Governors of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society, Mr Warren Lee and HK Phil players in a group photo

For further press information please contact:

Doris Chan, Director of Marketing

Tel: +852 2721 9035 Email: doris.chan@hkphil.org

Becky Lee, Media Relations Manager

Tel: +852 2721 1585 Email: becky.lee@hkphil.org

Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Music Director: Jaap van Zweden

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra is regarded as one of the leading orchestras in Asia. With a history stretching back to 1895, when it was formed as the Sino-British Orchestra, the HK Phil was re-named in 1957 and became fully professional in 1974.

Thanks to significant subsidy from the Hong Kong Government and long-term funding from Principal Patron Swire, the Hong Kong Jockey Club and other supporters, the HK Phil now boasts a full-time annual schedule of classical music concerts, pops concerts, an extensive education programme, and collaborations for staged opera with Opera Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Arts Festival.

Conductors and soloists who have recently performed with the orchestra include Vladimir Ashkenazy, Ning Feng, Matthias Goerne, Lang Lang, Yu Long, Yundi Li, the late Lorin Maazel, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Yuja Wang and Edo de Waart, the HK Phil's previous Music Director.

The HK Phil promotes the work of Chinese composers through an active commissioning programme, and has released recordings featuring Tan Dun and Bright Sheng, each conducting their own compositions, on the Naxos label. Its acclaimed community engagement programme brings music to ten of thousands of children annually. A recording will soon be issued free to schoolchildren throughout Hong Kong of Britten's *A Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* and Leopold Mozart's *Toy Symphony*.

In 2013/14 season, the orchestra made critically-acclaimed tour performances in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Xiamen and Taipei. Future plans include tours to the USA, Japan and Korea. The orchestra's 2015 European tour includes concerts in London, Vienna, Berlin, Amsterdam, Zurich, Birmingham and Eindhoven.

The Swire Group has been the Principal Patron of the HK Phil since 2006. Through this sponsorship, which is the largest in the orchestra's history, Swire also endeavours to promote artistic excellence, foster access to classical music and stimulate cultural participation in Hong Kong, and to enhance Hong Kong's reputation as one of the great cities of the world.

This season is Jaap van Zweden's third as Music Director of the HK Phil. With him, the orchestra is undertaking major expansion and new projects, including the first-ever performances by a Hong Kong or mainland Chinese orchestra of Wagner's *The Ring of the Nibelung*. The four operas are being performed, one a year, in concert and recorded live for the Naxos label.

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

SWIRE is the Principal Patron of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

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