

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
10 January 2019

Zhang Haochen Plays Rachmaninov (18 & 19 January 2019)
An East-meets-West programme featuring Zhang Haochen, and music by Chen Qigang and Sergei Rachmaninov

[10 January 2019, Hong Kong] The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is proud to present a concert in which East meets West on **18 & 19 January** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Our Principal Guest Conductor [Yu Long](#), who is an ambassador for contemporary Chinese music, will open the concert with *The Five Elements* by renowned Chinese composer Chen Qigang. [Zhang Haochen](#), winner of the 2009 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, will then take the stage for Rachmaninov's lyrical Piano Concerto no. 1. The programme closes with Rachmaninov's last composition, a magnificent showpiece for the orchestra, *Symphonic Dances*.

"...a chic young pianist who displays brilliance without undo flashiness and will be worth watching"

--- *Los Angeles Times*

The *MD Theatre Guide* described Zhang Haochen's playing of Rachmaninov "...with a gentleness and ease, effortlessly flowing throughout the sporadic shifts within Rachmaninov's score". The Hong Kong audience now has a chance to appreciate how the winner of the 2009 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition captivates listeners with his unique combination of deep musical sensitivity, fearless imagination and spectacular virtuosity. The Piano Concerto no.1 was premiered in New York in 1919 with Rachmaninov himself as soloist.

After the interval, the programme concludes with *Symphonic Dances* also by Rachmaninov, and composed after he left Russian for America. From the very beginning of the First Dance, Rachmaninov reveals his fascination with the different sounds created by the instruments of the orchestra. His Russian roots also bring a strong sense of grandeur, tragedy and intense beauty to these three seductive dances.

The opening piece of the programme is *The Five Elements* by Chen Qigang. Chen's music is amongst the finest examples of Chinese composers finding the strengths of Chinese culture but making use of the musical culture of the West. The music of *The Five Elements* is based on the idea of the five elements "metal, wood, water, fire and earth" that constitute the universe. The composer expresses his personal vision of the relationships between these elements, and what each element symbolises for him.

Swire Maestro Series: Zhang Haochen Plays Rachmaninov will be held on **18 & 19 January 2019 (Fri & Sat), 8PM** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Tickets price: HK\$480, \$380, \$280, \$180 are now available at [URBTIX](#). For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit hkphil.org.

Artists

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

Hailed the “most powerful figure in China’s classical music scene” by *The New York Times*, the preeminent Chinese conductor Yu Long holds positions as Chairman of the Artistic Committee of the Beijing Music Festival, Artist Director of the China Philharmonic Orchestra, Music Director of the Shanghai and Guangzhou Symphony Orchestras, the co-director of MISA Shanghai Summer Festival, and the principal guest conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. He frequently conducts the leading orchestras and opera companies around the world, including the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Hamburg State Opera, BBC Symphony Orchestra and many more.

Zhang Haochen, piano [\[full biography\]](#)

Since his gold medal win at the Thirteenth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in 2009, Zhang Haochen has captivated audiences in the United States, Europe, and Asia with a unique combination of deep musical sensitivity, fearless imagination, and spectacular virtuosity. He has appeared in many of the world’s leading festivals and orchestras including the BBC Proms with Yu Long and the Munich Philharmonic with the late Lorin Maazel in a sold-out tour in Munich and China. Zhang is also an avid chamber musician and he is frequently invited by chamber music festivals in the United States including the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival and La Jolla Summerfest.

SWIRE MAESTRO SERIES: ZHANG HAOCHEN PLAYS RACHMANINOV

18 & 19 | 11 | 2019

FRI & SAT 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$480 \$380 \$280 \$180

Tickets are available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Yu Long](#)

conductor

[Zhang Haochen](#)

piano

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Yu Long



Zhang Haochen

Photo Credit: Ben Ealovega



Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo Credit: Cheung Chi-wai/HK Phil

Programme

CHEN Qigang

The Five Elements

RACHMANINOV

Piano Concerto no. 1

RACHMANINOV

Symphonic Dances

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Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Music Director: Jaap van Zweden

Principal Guest Conductor: Yu Long

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is recognised as Asia's foremost classical orchestra. Presenting more than 150 concerts over a 44-week season, the HK Phil attracts more than 200,000 music lovers annually.

Jaap van Zweden, one of today's most sought-after conductors, has been the orchestra's Music Director since the 2012/13 concert season, a position he will continue to hold until at least 2022. Maestro van Zweden is the 26th Music Director of the New York Philharmonic from the 2018/19 season.

Yu Long has been Principal Guest Conductor since the 2015/16 season.

Under the dynamic leadership of Music Director Jaap van Zweden, the HK Phil has attained new heights of artistic excellence, garnering international critical acclaim.

Following on from the success of the European tour which included a filmed concert from Vienna's Musikverein, the HK Phil has toured extensively within the mainland China. In 2017, in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR, and with support of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices, the orchestra performed in Seoul, Osaka, Singapore, Melbourne and at the Sydney Opera House.

Jaap, the HK Phil, a superb cast of soloists and a chorus successfully completed an epic four-year journey through Wagner's "Ring Cycle" in January 2018. The concert performances and live Naxos recordings have been enthusiastically received by audiences and praised by critics at home and abroad. The recording of *Götterdämmerung* was released in November 2018.

Conductors and soloists who have recently performed with the orchestra include Vladimir Ashkenazy, Joshua Bell, Charles Dutoit, Christoph Eschenbach, Matthias Goerne, Stephen Hough, Evgeny Kissin, Lang Lang, Yo-Yo Ma, Ning Feng and Yuja Wang.

The HK Phil promotes the work of Hong Kong and Chinese composers through an active commissioning programme, and has released recordings on the Naxos label featuring Tan Dun and Bright Sheng, each conducting their own compositions. Its acclaimed education and community engagement programmes in schools, hospital and outdoor space, bring 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 sponsorship, which is the largest in the orchestra's history, Swire 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 in the world.

Thanks to a significant subsidy from the Hong Kong Government 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, among others, Opera Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Arts Festival and the Hong Kong Ballet.

Originally called the Sino-British Orchestra, it was renamed the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra in 1957 and became fully professional in 1974. The HK Phil is a charitable organisation.

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra is financially supported by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and is Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre.
SWIRE is the Principal Patron of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.