

PRESS RELEASE
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The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra warmly received on their return to the Xinghai Concert Hall in Guangzhou

The HK Phil is the first Hong Kong arts group to perform in the Area in the wake of the "Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area", showing the commitment to promote cultural exchanges in the Greater Bay Area

[16 March 2019, Hong Kong] The **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil)** is committed to participate in cultural exchange work, to showcase the artistic excellence of Hong Kong around the world. With the promulgation of the "Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area", and being the arts and culture ambassador of Hong Kong, the HK Phil is dedicated to promoting cultural exchange activities and developing audiences in the Greater Bay Area. The Orchestra staged a fantastic performance at the Xinghai Concert Hall in Guangzhou on 7 March. The HK Phil is the first Hong Kong arts group to perform in the Greater Bay Area since the promulgation of the "Outline Development Plan". The concert was led by the Orchestra's Concertmaster Jing Wang, who was joined by Hong Kong young pianist Rachel Cheung, finalist and Audience Award winner at the 15th Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. The programme included popular pieces by Mozart (*Così fan tutte* Overture), Beethoven (Piano Concerto no. 4) and Tchaikovsky (Serenade for Strings). The concert was well received by the audience with rounds of thunderous applause.

Ms. Liu Ying, Vice President of Xinghai Performing Arts Group and Director of Xinghai Concert Hall, said, "We enjoyed this great performance with wonderful expression by the Orchestra! The HK Phil showed excellent cooperation and harmony even without a conductor in the performance, demonstrating world-class standard as a symphony orchestra."

The HK Phil's performance in Guangzhou was supported by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong (GDETO) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). Before the concert, representatives from the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in Guangdong, the Guangdong Provincial Government and the Guangzhou Municipal Government; Consulate Generals and Consuls of different countries in Guangzhou; representatives from Chambers of Commerce; Xinghai Concert Hall representatives; the HK Phil's senior management, Concertmaster Jing Wang and players, as well as pianist Rachel Cheung, attended the reception hosted by the GDETO, meeting with figures from the political, economic, social and cultural scenes, promoting the artistic excellence of the HK Phil as well as Hong Kong.

At the reception, Mr. Albert Tang, Director of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong and Mr. Y. S. Liu, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society gave speeches to welcome the guests.

Mr. Albert Tang, Director of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong, said, "In recent years, the Hong Kong SAR Government has devoted substantial resources towards developing the arts and culture. Externally, the Government is supporting and encouraging arts groups to stage performances and exchange activities outside Hong Kong. Internally, the Government is building more cultural facilities in the city. Last month, the Central Government promulgated the 'Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area', which calls for joint efforts to promote cultural development, including support for exchanges between arts organisations and groups, schools for the performing arts, and cultural institutions and museums in the Greater Bay Area. Against this background, the performance by the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, which helps to share our arts and culture with friends in Guangzhou, is particularly timely."

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Mr. Y. S. Liu, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society, said, “The opening of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge and the High Speed Rail facilitates a wonderful connection between Hong Kong and Mainland China. The HK Phil will organise more cultural exchange activities with arts institutions across the Mainland, and plans for regular performances in the Greater Bay Area. Touring in Mainland China, as well as in other places around the world, highlights the HK Phil’s importance as a cultural ambassador for Hong Kong. The HK Phil will continue to showcase the artistic excellence of the Orchestra and Hong Kong’s home-grown talent nationally and internationally.”

Mr. Michael MacLeod also expressed his gratitude to the Hong Kong Government for their support to the Orchestra, “With the tremendous support of the Hong Kong Government, the HK Phil is able to tour around the Greater Bay Area, other cities in China and also around the world. The Orchestra performed in Zhuhai in January and in Guangzhou in March this year. Thanks to the support of GDETO, Zhuhai Huafa & CPAA Grand Theatre and Guangzhou Xinghai Concert Hall, the two performances were great successes from every aspect - musically, financially and logistically. The HK Phil has planned performances in Beijing, Shanghai, Macau and also other cities; and a tour in Japan and Korea in March 2020. As the flagship arts organisation in Hong Kong, the HK Phil will continue to explore collaborative opportunities with different arts groups, venues and musicians in China and around the globe.”

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Mr. Albert Tang, Director of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong (fifth left), Mr. Y. S. Liu, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society (sixth left), Ms. Liu Ying, Vice President of Xinghai Performing Arts Group and Director of Xinghai Concert Hall (third right), Hong Kong young pianist Miss Rachel Cheung (sith right), the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra Concertmaster Mr. Jing Wang and guests attended the reception hosted by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong.



Representatives from the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in Guangdong, the Guangdong Provincial Government and the Guangzhou Municipal Government; Consulate Generals and Consuls of different countries in Guangzhou; representatives from Chambers of Commerce; Xinghai Concert Hall representatives; the HK Phil's senior management, Concertmaster Jing Wang and players, as well as pianist Rachel Cheung attended the reception hosted by the GDETO, meeting with figures from the political, economic, social and cultural scenes, promoting the artistic excellence of the HK Phil as well as Hong Kong. (Photo Credit: Guangdong Xinghai Concert Hall)



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(Photo Credit: Guangdong Xinghai Concert Hall)

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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.