

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Superstar Soprano Renée Fleming Performs with the HK Phil under the baton of Music Director Jaap van Zweden (8 & 9 November)

[5 November 2019, Hong Kong] In what is sure to be a highlight of this concert season, superstar soprano [Renée Fleming](#) will return to the **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil)** stage for the first time in 12 years, performing alongside [Maestro Jaap van Zweden](#) in a programme full of joyfulness and melody, on **8 and 9 November** at the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**.

Described as “possibly the most beautiful soprano voice in the world” (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*), Fleming will open her programme with a group of three early Romantic songs for soprano and orchestra by melodic master Schubert. She will continue with a nostalgic recollection of summer evenings in Tennessee with Samuel Barber’s *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*. *Opera News* described this work as “tailor-made” for her “with its lush, soaring melodies tinged with folksong, dramatic climaxes to show off her upper range, and a slightly sentimental text steeped in Americana”.

Book-ending these songs are a pair of orchestral works led by Music Director Jaap van Zweden. The first is the Prelude and Liebestod from Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde*, an unforgettably ecstatic celebration of love. The concert concludes with Shostakovich’s uncharacteristically joyful Ninth Symphony—originally conceived as a grand tribute to Soviet victory in World War II, but which ultimately became a light and playful work that was censored in Russia within a year of its premiere.

This is the second programme that the HK Phil dedicates to the Hong Kong Cultural Centre (HKCC) for its 30th Anniversary in its birthday month – November, and the first night of this programme - 8 November - is the very day of the HKCC’s opening. So come and share the joy of this special month in this iconic arts and culture venue in Hong Kong.

JAAP! Jaap | Renée Fleming will be held on **8 & 9 November (Fri & Sat) at 8PM** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Tickets are HK\$880, \$680, \$480, \$380 and are available at [URBTIX](#). For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit [hkphil.org](#).

Artists

Jaap van Zweden, conductor [\[full biography\]](#)

Over the past decade, conductor Jaap van Zweden has become an international presence on three continents. Currently Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, he is also Music Director of the New York Philharmonic – a post he has held since the 2018/19 season. Guest engagements this season include the Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Shanghai Symphony and Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra.

Renée Fleming, soprano [\[full biography\]](#)

Renée Fleming is one of the most acclaimed singers of our time. In 2013 President Obama awarded her America's highest honour for an artist, the National Medal of Arts. Winner of the 2013 Grammy Award (her fourth) for Best Classical Vocal Solo, Fleming has sung for momentous occasions from the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony to the Diamond Jubilee Concert for Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace. She earned a Tony Award nomination for her performance in the 2018 Broadway production of *Carousel*. Fleming's schedule this season includes concerts in New York, Boston, Vienna, Paris and Beijing.

JAAP! | RENÉE FLEMING

8 & 9 | 11 | 2019

FRI & SAT 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$880 \$680 \$480 \$380

Tickets are now available at URBTIX.

For ages 6 and above



Artists

[Jaap van Zweden](#)

conductor

[Renée Fleming](#)

soprano

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Jaap van Zweden

Photo Credit: Cheung Chi-wai/HK Phil



Renée Fleming

Photo Credit: Decca_Andrew Eccles



Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo Credit: Cheung Wai-lok/HK Phil

Programme

WAGNER

Tristan und Isolde: Prelude and Liebestod

SCHUBERT

Three Songs for soprano and orchestra

BARBER

Knoxville: Summer of 1915

SHOSTAKOVICH

Symphony no. 9

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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. In 2019, the HK Phil received the prestigious Gramophone Orchestra of the Year Award – the first orchestra in Asia to receive this distinction.

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 also Music Director of the New York Philharmonic since the 2018/19 season.

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

Under the dynamic leadership of Jaap van Zweden, the HK Phil has attained new heights of artistic excellence, garnering international critical acclaim. The orchestra successfully completed a four-year journey through Wagner's Ring Cycle, performing and recording one opera from the cycle each year from 2015 to 2018. The concert performances and live Naxos recordings were enthusiastically received by audiences, praised by critics at home and abroad and garnered Gramophone Orchestra of the Year Award 2019.

The HK Phil tours extensively across Mainland China and, with the support of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices, 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 orchestra will perform in Japan and Korea in 2020.

Thanks to a significant subsidy from the Hong Kong SAR Government and long-term funding from Principal Patron Swire, the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust and other supporters, the HK Phil presents an 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.

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, Leonard Slatkin 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 conducting their own compositions. Its acclaimed education and community engagement programmes in schools, hospitals and outdoor spaces 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, stimulate cultural participation in Hong Kong, and enhance Hong Kong's reputation as one of the great cities in the world.

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 a Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. SWIRE is the Principal Patron of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.