

For Immediate Release

19 April 2012

Hong Kong

**Violin Wunderkind – Multi-award Winning Violinist Ray Chen
HKPO Associate Conductor – Perry So
In Programme of Bruch, Sibelius and Rautavaara (11 & 12 MAY)**

Pairing one of the hottest young violinists today, [Ray Chen](#), with another equally talented artist, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HKPO)'s Associate Conductor, [Perry So](#), has all the promises of a scintillating musical experience of a very high order. Together they will bring Bruch's beloved Violin Concerto no.1 onto the HKPO stage in **Swire New Generation: "Ray Chen Plays Bruch"** on **11&12 May (Fri & Sat), 8pm** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**.

The rest of the delightful programme will include Rautavaara's mystical Symphony no. 7 *Angel of Light* and Sibelius' *The Tempest Suite*, the latter of which will be narrated by the famed local arts educator and performer, **Lynn Yau**.

Tickets at \$320, \$240, \$180 and \$120 are available now at [URBTIX](#). Programme Enquiries: 2721 2030. Free Pre-concert Talks **Swire Classic Insights** will be given on both nights at 7:15pm, also at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. For details, please visit www.hkpo.com.

Ray Chen, violin

"Even when the music is technically complex, he's also a thoughtful player, able to captivate the listener. He makes the virtuoso tricks sound really beautiful."

--- *GRAMOPHONE*, February 2011

Winner of the **Queen Elisabeth Competition** (2009) and the **Yehudi Menuhin Competition** (2008), Ray Chen is among the most compelling young violinists today. "Ray has proven himself to be a very

pure musician with great qualities such as a beautiful youthful tone, vitality and lightness. He has all the skills of a truly musical interpreter,” said his friend and mentor **Maxim Vengerov**.

Ray Chen's première album ***Virtuoso***, released worldwide on **Sony Classical**, won the prestigious **Echo Klassik Award in 2011**. The recording has received glowing reviews from major media outlets including ***The Times*** and ***Chicago Tribune***, which named it the “**CD of the week**”. Following the success of this album, Ray Chen was profiled by ***The Strad*** and ***Gramophone*** magazines as “**the one to watch**”. His 2011 recital tour featuring ***Virtuoso*** repertoire took him to **Tokyo, Hamburg, Berlin, Munich, Zurich, and Dresden**.

Ray Chen continues to win the admiration of fans and fellow musicians worldwide with outstanding performances at **Ravinia** and **Schleswig-Holstein**, as well as debuts at **Verbier** and **Dresden Festival**, and performances with **Filarmonica della Scala, Spanish National Orchestra, Munich Philharmonic, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Seoul Philharmonic** and Maestro **Myung-Whun Chung** at the Asian Games Festival in Guangzhou. Upcoming engagements, apart from that with the HKPO, include the **Gewandhaus Orchestra, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, and Israel Philharmonic**, as well as the televised performance at the **Nobel Prize** concert in Stockholm with the **Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra** and Maestro **Eschenbach**.

Born in Taiwan and raised in Australia, Ray Chen was accepted to the **Curtis Institute of Music** at the age of 15, where he studied with Aaron Rosand. Mr. Chen plays the 1721 “**Macmillan**” **Stradivarius**.

Perry So, conductor

[In] Tchaikovsky's still-lovable Serenade for Strings, he got a ripe, clear, cohesive string sound [from the Los Angeles Philharmonic]... eliciting adequate charm and sway in the famous Waltz and a muted level of electricity in the outer movements. ”

--- Richard S. Ginell, *Los Angeles Times*

Associate Conductor of the **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra** and one of the inaugural Dudamel Conducting Fellows at the **Los Angeles Philharmonic**, Perry So received first prize at the Fifth

International Profokiev Conducting Competition in 2008, held in St Petersburg.

Engagements in the 2011-12 season include débuts with the **Royal Danish Theatre** in Copenhagen, the **Singapore Symphony Orchestra**, and his Hollywood Bowl début with the **Los Angeles Philharmonic**, as well as return visits to the **New Zealand** and **Asturias Symphony Orchestras**, the **National Symphony Orchestra Taiwan**, as well as subscription and outreach performances with the HKPO. Recent seasons have seen his debuts with the **London, Japan, Zagreb, Seoul and Malaysian Philharmonic**.

In January 2012, his first commercial recording with the German violinist **Alexander Gilman** and the **Cape Town Philharmonic** in a programme of American violin concerti on the **Oehms Classics Label** was released. Born in Hong Kong in 1982, Perry graduated from Yale University in Comparative Literature and then studied conducting under Swiss pedagogue **Gustav Meier** at the Peabody Institute.

Lynn Yau, Narrator

Lynn Yau is the Chief Executive Officer of **The Absolutely Fabulous Theatre Connection**. Aside from producing AFTEC's programmes, Lynn is particularly passionate about arts education and in addition to running the company, continues to conceptualise, curate, and teach numerous cross-arts and cross-disciplinary learning projects for Hong Kong and the Mainland from primary to postgraduate level, for students, teachers and adult learners.

A stage veteran, Lynn has played numerous roles in major classics with **Seals Players**. Over the years, she has been a guest artist with the **Hong Kong Arts Festival, Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, Hong Kong Sinfonietta and the Hong Kong Chamber Music Festivals**.

Programme

When composers explore the mystical, the results can be profound. Finland's greatest living composer, Rautavaara, was inspired to write his seventh symphony by visions of angels. For him, music offers 'a glimpse of eternity through the window of time.' Rautavaara writes rich, momentous music, powered by those visions.

Sibelius' perspective was not dissimilar – “music can be like a beautiful mosaic which God has put together. He takes all the pieces in his hand, throws them into the world, and we have to recreate the picture from the pieces.” For Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Sibelius wrote one of his last masterpieces, music to match the genius of the play.

Aged three, Ray Chen was given a toy guitar. At first he strummed it, "Then one day I propped it underneath my chin, and grabbed a chopstick and pretended to play. I'm sure I saw it on TV somewhere." His parents took the hint and bought a small violin for his fourth birthday, “and I got really, really into it.” With two major violin competition titles, plus a Stradivarius to his name, they made the right choice. Ray Chen will play Bruch's timeless violin concerto in these concerts.

Swire New Generation: “Ray Chen Plays Bruch”

11&12 | 5 | 2012

FRI & SAT 8PM

HK Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$320 \$240 \$180 \$120

Available at URBTIX now

Artists

[Perry So](#) conductor

[Ray Chen](#) violin

Lynn Yau* narrator

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



Programme

RAUTAVAARA Symphony No.7 *Angel of Light*

BRUCH Violin Concerto No.1

SIBELIUS *The Tempest Suite**

Ticketing Information

Credit Card Booking

(852) 2111 5999

Online Booking

www.urbtix.hk

For programme enquiry, please call HKPO at

(852) 2721 2030

Or go on our website:

www.hkpo.com

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Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Edo de Waart

Artistic Director and Chief Conductor

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HKPO) is one of Asia's leading orchestras. Enriching Hong Kong's cultural life for over a century, the Orchestra has grown into a formidable ensemble of Chinese and international talents, attracting world-class artists to collaborate on its stage. The HKPO annually touches the lives of over 200,000 music lovers through more than 150 performances. Under the leadership of Artistic Director and Chief Conductor Edo de Waart, the HKPO has scaled new heights of musical excellence, and will continue to do so under the artistic leadership of Jaap van Zweden, the Orchestra's Music Director from the 2012/13 season.

The HKPO stays in tune with our city by presenting the Orchestra in unexpected venues and bringing the excitement of the concert experience to every home through radio and television broadcasts including the largest symphonic event of the year, Swire Symphony under the Stars, at Happy Valley. The Orchestra runs a comprehensive schools education programme, HSBC Insurance Creative Notes, bringing the joy of classical music to primary, secondary and special school kids. The Orchestra also collaborates regularly with other performing arts organisations such as Opera Hong Kong in addition to its crossover series with Western and Chinese pop artists.

The Orchestra also builds its reputation and raises its artistic standards by touring. In September 2010, de Waart and the HKPO returned to China, performing at the Expo 2010 Shanghai, Xi'an and Beijing to critical acclaim.

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 the Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre