

For Immediate Release

23 April 2012

Hong Kong

Maestro Edo de Waart's Eight Glorious Seasons with the HKPO Concluded with the Magnificent Beethoven Symphony No.9

On an emotionally charged evening last **Saturday (April 21)** in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall, Maestro **Edo de Waart** received a standing ovation by a packed audience for more than 10 minutes at the conclusion of his final concert as Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HKPO)**. Begun with Berlioz's *La Mort de Cléopâtre* and ended with the glorious Beethoven Symphony No.9, the historical concert drew to a close as the final notes of *Ode to Joy* were played. Immediately, the audience rose to their feet and cheered thunderously, bidding a moving farewell to the master conductor. After Saturday's performance, no one would dispute that de Waart has elevated the Hong Kong Philharmonic to a whole new level after eight seasons at its helm, leaving behind an illustrious legacy.

The maestro certainly knew how to say goodbye. "[Beethoven's] last word will be mine, too. Not every farewell needs to have tears – the *Ode to Joy* will do nicely!" He once said. Over the course of three weeks from 6 to 21 April, his inspired and powerful readings of Beethoven, Wagner, Berlioz, Richard Strauss, Adams and Chen Qigang, six of his signature works with the Orchestra over the last 7 seasons, drew applause and praise from audiences and critics alike and will be remembered as some of the great performances in the history of the Orchestra. He was joined on stage by eleven stellar guests artists - including singers [Susan Graham](#), [Lisa Larsson](#), [Chen Xiaoduo](#), [Meng Meng](#), [Mark Schnaible](#) and [Henry Choo](#), instrumentalists [Wang Nan](#), [Chang Jing](#) and [Li Jia](#) and two of the Orchestra's principals, [Richard Bamping](#) and [Andrew Ling](#) – as well as the [Shanghai Opera House Chorus](#),

Maestro de Waart, whose directorship officially ending on 31 July, will be succeeded by another Dutch maestro **Jaap van Zweden**. The latter's inaugural concerts will take place in late September.

Maestro de Waart's time as Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the HKPO began with Mahler's First Symphony in the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall on 22 October 2004; a performance which received

thunderous applause. After 8 years here, Maestro de Waart has accumulated some very impressive statistics. Under his masterful baton there have been **203 memorable performances, 118 stellar artists, 272 masterful works** and **over 200,000 in attendance.**

In 8 years, Maestro has conducted many outstanding Chinese compositions such as works by Tan Dun, Chen Qigang and Guo Wenjing. In the concert - **Bank of Communications brings to you: “Farewell to Edo –Visions Unveiled”** held on **6&7 April 2012** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall** - Maestro de Waart led five exceptional Chinese artists in Chen Qigang’s masterwork, *Iris Dévoilée* and Wagner’s *Parsifal* - an orchestra quest arranged by de Vlieger.

Hailed as a master “Orchestra Builder”, Maestro de Waart has taken the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra to new heights. The Orchestra’s two principals – Cellist Richard Bamping and Violist Andrew Ling - joined hands in Richard Strauss’ *Don Quixote* in **Edo de Waart Festival: “Farewell to Edo - Dream Harmonies** on **13&14 April 2012.**

Not every farewell needs to have tears – on his very last performance with the Orchestra, Maestro de Waart chose another way – embrace the love and joy brought by the overwhelmed audiences. Maestro teamed up with four superb singers including soprano Lisa Larsson, mezzo-soprano Susan Graham, tenor Henry Choo and bass-baritone Mark Schnaible, and the Shanghai Opera House Chorus, in Beethoven’s powerful Ninth Symphony as his glorious finale in **The Macallan Bravo Series: Beethoven 9 – The Moment of Farewell** on **20&21 April 2012.**

Edo de Waart

Edo de Waart is Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. Renowned as an "orchestral builder" who has the enviable ability to transform his orchestras into world-class ensembles, de Waart has held such distinguished positions as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Sydney Symphony and the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Chief Conductor of the Netherlands Opera, as well as Music Director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony and Minnesota Orchestras. He is also Music Director of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Artistic Partner of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and Conductor Laureate of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic.

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6 & 7 April - Bank of Communications brings to you: "Farewell to Edo –Visions Unveiled"



01. (from left to right) Li Jia (pipa), Wang Nan (erhu), Chen Xiaoduo (soprano), Meng Meng (qingyi and soprano II), Chang Jing (zheng) join forces in Chen Qigang's *Iris Dévoilée* [Photo: Cheung Chi-wai]



02. Maestro Edo de Waart conducted another favourite piece – Wagner's *Parsifal* – an orchestral quest (arr. de Vlieger) [Photo: Cheung Chi-wai]

13 & 14 April - "Farewell to Edo – Dream Harmonies"



03. Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra's Principal Cellist Richard Bamping dazzled the audience in Richard Strauss' *Don Quixote* [Photo: Cheung Chi-wai]



04. A wonderful music making between two of the Orchestra's principals, Richard Bamping (left) and Principal Viola, Andrew Ling (right) [Photo: Cheung Chi-wai]

20 & 21 April – The Macallan Bravo Series: “Farewell to Edo – Beethoven 9 – The Moment of Farewell”



05. (from left) Y.S. Liu, Chairman, Board of Governors of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Society, Tsang Tak-sing, Secretary for Home Affairs and Michael MacLeod presented a jade ruyi to Maestro Edo de Waart before the concert [Photo: Cheung Chi-wai]



06. Mezzo-soprano Susan Graham captivated the audience with her beautiful voice in Berlioz’s *La Mort de Cléopâtre* [Photo: Cheung Chi-wai]



07. (from left) Maestro Edo de Waart, Henry Choo, Chorus Master Vance George, Mark Schnaible, Susan Graham, Lisa Larsson with the Shanghai Opera House [Photo: On Andy]



08. Thunderous applause from a full-house crowd [Photo: Cheung Chi-wai]



09. Maestro Edo de Waart received a standing ovation by a packed audience for over 10 minutes at the end of his farewell concert [Photo: Cheung Chi-wai]

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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

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