

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: 13 May 2014

***Songs of the Auvergne* - A Taste of France with the HK Phil (23 & 24 May)**

[13 May 2014, Hong Kong] The **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil)** will present an associated project with Le French May, the **Songs of the Auvergne** concerts on **23 & 24 May**. The concert offers audiences a taste of France through Olivier Messiaen's *Les offrandes oubliées* and selections from Canteloube's *Chants d'Auvergne*, led by conductor **Alexander Shelley** and mezzo-soprano **Clara Mouriz**.

Olivier Messiaen's musical meditation on the nature of spiritual love - *Les offrandes oubliées* (The forgotten offerings) - was composed in 1930 and is a tender statement of his deeply-held beliefs. Canteloube took more than thirty years (1924 to 1955) to compile his enchanting collection of songs from his native Auvergne region, full of the images of the people and their lives in this rustic part of France. Shepherds, farmers, lovers all come together in music which encapsulates the tranquillity of this unique area.

The second half of the concert will explore the indomitable northern spirit of Finland, with Sibelius' second symphony, a testament to his homeland's pristine landscape.

Born in the UK in 1979, **Alexander Shelley** first gained widespread attention when he was unanimously awarded first prize at the 2005 Leeds Conducting Competition. Shelley is currently the Chief Conductor of the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra. His first recording for Deutsche Grammophon will be released later in 2014.

Described by *London Evening Standard* as "A lustrous beauty of tone and an engaging stage presence... a magnetic performer", Spanish-born **Clara Mouriz** is rapidly establishing herself as one of the most exciting mezzo-sopranos of her generation. She has been recognised with an Independent Opera/Wigmore Hall Fellowship, and she was selected as a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist 2011-2013.

Masterworks: Songs of the Auvergne will be held on **23 & 24 May 2014 (Fri & Sat), 8PM** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Tickets priced: \$320, \$240, \$180, \$120 are now available at URBTIX. For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit www.hkphil.org.

Free Pre-concert talks in English given by Dr Maureen Buja, Associate Professor of Music, Lingnan University (23 May, Friday); and in Cantonese by Mr Dennis Wu, Music Writer and Critic (24 May, Saturday), will be held at 7:15pm in AC2, 4/F, Administration Building, Hong Kong Cultural Centre.

Songs of the Auvergne is an associated project of Le French May.

Artists

Alexander Shelley, conductor [\[full biography\]](#)

Born in 1979, English conductor Alexander Shelley was awarded first prize in the 2005 Leeds Conducting Competition and was described in the press as "the most exciting and gifted young conductor to have taken this highly prestigious award. His conducting technique is immaculate, everything crystal clear and a tool to his inborn musicality."

Clara Mouriz, mezzo-soprano [\[full biography\]](#)

Spanish born, Clara Mouriz is rapidly establishing herself as one of the most exciting mezzo-sopranos of her generation. A committed recital singer, Clara made her debut in Wigmore Hall under the auspices of the Kirckman Concert Society in 2007, and has since returned every season. She appears regularly in Europe and the UK, in festivals including Brighton Festival, Oxford Chamber Music Festival, the recital series of the Westminster School and Oxford Lieder Festival.

Masterworks: Songs of the Auvergne

23 & 24 | 5 | 2014

FRI & SAT 8PM

HK Cultural Centre Concert Hall

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

Tickets available at URBTIX now

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Alexander Shelley](#)

conductor

[Clara Mouriz](#)

mezzo-soprano

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Alexander Shelley

Photo credit: Thorsten Hoenig



Clara Mouriz



HK Philharmonic Orchestra

Photo Credit: Keith Hiro / HK Phil

Programme

MESSIAEN *Les offrandes oubliées*

CANTELOUBE *Chants d'Auvergne* (selections)

SIBELIUS *Symphony no. 2*

Ticketing Information

Credit Card Booking

+852 2111 5999

Online Booking

www.urbtix.hk

For programme enquiry, please call HK Phil at

+852 2721 2332

Or go on our website:

www.hkphil.org

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Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Music Director: Jaap van Zweden

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra is the city's largest and busiest musical organisation and is a vital part of Hong Kong's cultural life. This season it celebrates its 40th professional season, but its roots stretch back well over a century. The HK Phil has now evolved into an orchestral powerhouse in the region, and an acclaimed cultural centrepiece of Asia's World City.

The HK Phil is formed on the belief that a great city deserves a great orchestra. Annually it presents over 150 concerts attracting over 200,000 music lovers. Featuring an enviable roster of international conductors and soloists, the HK Phil performs a broad variety of music, with many concerts presented free; among them the annual *Swire Symphony Under The Stars*. Through its acclaimed education programme, over 40,000 young people learned about orchestral music in the last year.

The Swire Group Charitable Trust has been the Principal Patron of the HK Phil since 2006. Swire's enlightened support, the most generous in the orchestra's history, continues to enable the orchestra to reach towards high artistic goals.

The HK Phil's members come from every corner of the globe, with a strong core of Hong Kong musicians. In September 2012 Jaap van Zweden became the orchestra's Music Director. Future years will see an ambitious series of new projects, with major international tours, renewed local partnerships, and large-scale concert events. The HK Phil has commenced a multi-CD recording project for Naxos, featuring works by Chinese composers.

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 a Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre