

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: 2 November 2015

Jaap van Zweden's Beethoven Symphony Cycle (Nov – Dec 2015)

[2 November 2015, Hong Kong] Jaap van Zweden, Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil), returns to the stage of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall to present one of this season's most important projects – Jaap van Zweden's Beethoven Symphony Cycle with the HK Phil. All nine symphonies will be heard over four concerts, the climax coming with the great Choral Symphony featuring a stellar cast of singers as well as the NCPA Chorus. Get ready for an exciting November and December with us!

Beethoven Cycle: Eroica – 3 & 8 (11 & 12 Nov)

Symphony no. 8 was the composer's personal favourite, filled with delightful musical jokes. Music historian George Grove said of it; "At this time of life Beethoven's love of fun and practical joking had become a habit". No jokes in Symphony No.3, which Jaap van Zweden has selected to pair with it in this programme; instead power, might and heroism. Having excised the dedication to Napoleon, Beethoven described the work as being "in memory of a great hero".

Beethoven Cycle: Pastoral – 6 & 7 (17 & 18 Nov)

Featuring the delightful *Pastoral* Symphony – Beethoven's glorious celebration of nature in five wonderfully descriptive movements. Jaap van Zweden and the HK Phil pair this with the invigorating Seventh Symphony, which Wagner famously described as "the apotheosis of the dance".

Beethoven Cycle: 2 • 4 • 5 (27 & 28 Nov)

Thought by many to be the greatest musical work ever, the Fifth symphony begins in dark and menacing territory, but ends in a mood of ultimate triumph. The Second Symphony was composed as Beethoven came to grips with his failing hearing, but with its completion he spoke of 'setting out on new paths'. Despite being less known than its famous counterparts, the fourth symphony is one of his most original and inventive.

Beethoven Cycle: Ode to Joy – 1 & 9 (4 & 5 Dec)

Beethoven's first and last symphonies in the hands of Jaap van Zweden. Symphony no. 1 begins with a musical question; perhaps Symphony no. 9 represents Beethoven's answer – with it he re-defined music forever. Don't miss Beethoven's mammoth Symphony no. 9 "Choral" performed by the HK Phil, renowned international soloists and the NCPA Chorus.

Beethoven Cycle: Eroica – 3 & 8 will be held on **11 & 12 November (Wed & Thu), 8PM** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Tickets priced: HK\$680, \$480, \$380, \$280 are now available at [URBTIX](#).

Beethoven Cycle: Pastoral – 6 & 7 will be held on **17 & 18 November (Tue & Wed), 8PM** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Tickets priced: HK\$680, \$480, \$380, \$280 are now available at [URBTIX](#).

Beethoven Cycle: 2 • 4 • 5 will be held on **27 & 28 November (Fri & Sat), 8PM** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Tickets priced: HK\$680, \$480, \$380, \$280 are now available at [URBTIX](#).

Beethoven Cycle: Ode to Joy – 1 & 9 will be held on **4 & 5 December (Fri & Sat), 8PM** in the **Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall**. Tickets priced: HK\$880, \$480, \$380, \$280 are now available at [URBTIX](#).

For enquiries, please call +852 2721 2332 or visit www.hkphil.org.

Beethoven Cycle is sponsored by QBE Insurance.

Artists

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

Amsterdam-born Jaap van Zweden is one of today's most sought-after conductors. Named *Musical America's* Conductor of the Year for 2012, he has been Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra since 2012/13 season.

The maestro has recently conducted the New York Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra and Chicago Symphony to high acclaim.

At the age of nineteen, Jaap was appointed as the youngest Concertmaster ever of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. Maestro van Zweden is also currently Music Director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Honorary Chief Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and Honorary Conductor of the Radio Chamber Philharmonic.

Emily Magee, soprano [\[full biography\]](#)

Emily Magee has appeared on important stages including the Teatro alla Scala di Milano, Bavarian State Opera, London Royal Opera House, Zurich Opera House and Wiener Staatsoper. She has worked with prestigious conductors including Daniel Barenboim and Riccardo Chailly.

Deborah Humble, mezzo-soprano [\[full biography\]](#)

Deborah Humble was previously the Principal Mezzo-soprano with Hamburg State Opera. She has worked with the Seattle Symphony, Sydney Symphony, Hamburg Philharmonic and the London Mozart Players. She performed as Erda in the HK Phil's January performances of *Das Rheingold* to great acclaim.

Charles Reid, tenor [\[full biography\]](#)

Charles Reid is currently Artist in Residence and Associate Professor of Voice at Andrews University. He has performed on important international stages including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Theater an der Wien, Frankfurt Opera and at the festivals of Bayreuth and Salzburg. Charles appeared as Froh with the HK Phil in *Das Rheingold* last January. .

Kwangchul Youn, bass-baritone [\[full biography\]](#)

Kwangchul Youn has appeared at the Bayreuth Festival and the Salzburg Festival, and is also a frequent guest at major opera houses including the Vienna State Opera, Berlin State, Metropolitan Opera and the Royal Opera House. He also performs frequently with the Berlin Philharmonic, the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, the Radio Symphony Orchestra Berlin and the Orchestra of La Scala Milan. Kwangchul gave acclaimed performances as Fasolt in HK Phil's *Das Rheingold* last season.

NCPA Chorus [\[full biography\]](#)

The NCPA Chorus has performed under the baton of many great conductors, including the late Lorin Maazel. They have performed in Singapore, Korea, Japan and Hong Kong to great acclaim.

Free Pre-concert talks are available on all concert nights:

Beethoven Cycle: Eroica – 3 & 8

Date:	11 November 2015 (Wed)	12 November 2015 (Thu)
Time:	7:15 – 7:45pm	7:15 – 7:45pm
Venue:	4/F Foyer, Auditoria Building Hong Kong Cultural Centre	4/F Foyer, Auditoria Building Hong Kong Cultural Centre
Speaker:	Prof. Johnny Poon, Professor and Head Department of Music, HK Baptist University	Prof. Johnny Poon, Professor and Head Department of Music, HK Baptist University
Language:	English	English

Beethoven Cycle: Pastoral – 6 & 7

Date:	17 November 2015 (Tue)	18 November 2015 (Wed)
Time:	7:15 – 7:45pm	7:15 – 7:45pm
Venue:	4/F Foyer, Auditoria Building Hong Kong Cultural Centre	4/F Foyer, Auditoria Building Hong Kong Cultural Centre
Speaker:	Prof. Johnny Poon, Professor and Head Department of Music, HK Baptist University	Prof. Johnny Poon, Professor and Head Department of Music, HK Baptist University
Language:	English	Cantonese

Beethoven Cycle: 2 • 4 • 5

Date:	27 November 2015 (Fri)	28 November 2015 (Sat)
Time:	7:15 – 7:45pm	7:15 – 7:45pm
Venue:	4/F Foyer, Auditoria Building Hong Kong Cultural Centre	4/F Foyer, Auditoria Building Hong Kong Cultural Centre
Speaker:	Prof. Johnny Poon, Professor and Head Department of Music, HK Baptist University	Prof. Johnny Poon, Professor and Head Department of Music, HK Baptist University
Language:	English	Cantonese

Beethoven Cycle: Ode to Joy – 1 & 9

Date:	4 December 2015 (Fri)	5 December 2015 (Sat)
Time:	7:15 – 7:45pm	7:15 – 7:45pm
Venue:	AC2, 4/F, Administration Building Hong Kong Cultural Centre	4/F Foyer, Auditoria Building Hong Kong Cultural Centre
Speaker:	Prof. Johnny Poon, Professor and Head Department of Music, HK Baptist University	Prof. Johnny Poon, Professor and Head Department of Music, HK Baptist University
Language:	English	Cantonese

Beethoven Cycle: Eroica – 3 & 8

11 & 12 | 11 | 2015

WED & THU 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$680 \$480 \$380 \$280

Tickets are now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Jaap van Zweden](#) conductor

Programme

BEETHOVEN Symphony no. 8

BEETHOVEN Symphony no. 3, *Eroica*

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Beethoven Cycle: Pastoral – 6 & 7

17 & 18 | 11 | 2015

TUE & WED 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$680 \$480 \$380 \$280

Tickets are now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Jaap van Zweden](#) conductor

Programme

BEETHOVEN Symphony no. 6, *Pastoral*

BEETHOVEN Symphony no. 7

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Beethoven Cycle: Pastoral – 2 • 4 • 5

27 & 28 | 11 | 2015

FRI & SAT 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$680 \$480 \$380 \$280

Tickets are now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Jaap van Zweden](#) conductor

Programme

BEETHOVEN Symphony no. 2

BEETHOVEN Symphony no. 4

BEETHOVEN Symphony no. 5

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



Jaap van Zweden
Photo Credit: Cheung Chi Wai/HK Phil



The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra
Photo Credit: Cheung Chi Wai/HK Phil

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Beethoven Cycle: Ode to Joy – 1 & 9

4 & 5 | 12 | 2015

FRI & SAT 8PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

HK\$880 \$480 \$380 \$280

Tickets are now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

Artists

[Jaap van Zweden](#)

conductor

[Emily Magee](#)

soprano

[Deborah Humble](#)

mezzo-soprano

[Charles Reid](#)

tenor

[Kwangchul Youn](#)

bass-baritone

[NCPA Chorus](#)

Programme

BEETHOVEN

Symphony no. 1

BEETHOVEN

Symphony no. 9, *Choral*

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



Jaap van Zweden
Photo Credit: Keith Hiro/HK Phil



Emily Magee



Deborah Humble



Charles Reid
Photo Credit: Guido Mayer



Kwangchul Youn



NCPA Chorus



Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra
Photo Credit: Keith Hiro/HK Phil

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Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra Music Director: Jaap van Zweden

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) has recently returned from an extremely successful five-country, seven-city tour of Europe, with concerts in London, Vienna, Zurich, Eindhoven, Birmingham, Berlin and Amsterdam. Most concerts were sold out, there were standing ovations, and the reviews were universally positive. The concert in Vienna's Musikverein was filmed for broadcast on TV. With a history stretching back to 1895, when it was formed as the Sino-British Orchestra, the HK Phil was re-named in 1957 and became fully professional in 1974.

Thanks to significant subsidy from the Hong Kong Government and long-term funding from Principal Patron Swire, the Hong Kong Jockey Club and other supporters, the HK Phil now boasts a full-time annual schedule of classical music concerts, pops concerts, an extensive education programme, and collaborations for staged opera with Opera Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Arts Festival.

Conductors and soloists who have recently performed with the orchestra include Vladimir Ashkenazy, Ning Feng, Matthias Goerne, Lang Lang, Yu Long, Yundi Li, the late Lorin Maazel, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Yuja Wang and Edo de Waart, the HK Phil's previous Music Director.

The HK Phil promotes the work of Hong Kong and Chinese composers through an active commissioning programme, and has released recordings featuring Tan Dun and Bright Sheng, each conducting their own compositions, on the Naxos label. Its acclaimed community engagement programme brings music to tens of thousands of children annually. A recording was issued free to schoolchildren throughout Hong Kong of Britten's *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* and Leopold Mozart's *Toy Symphony*.

This season is Jaap van Zweden's fourth as Music Director of the HK Phil. With him, the orchestra is undertaking major expansion and new projects, including the first-ever performances by a Hong Kong or mainland Chinese orchestra of Wagner's *The Ring of the Nibelung*. The four operas are being performed, one a year, in concert and recorded live for the Naxos label.

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 also 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 of the world.

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