

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra announces Vivian Ip and Gerard Salonga as its Assistant Conductors

[8 September 2016, Hong Kong] The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is pleased to announce that Vivian Ip and Gerard Salonga have been appointed as the orchestra's Assistant Conductors starting in the 2016/17 season. Auditions were held in June 2016 with Music Director Jaap van Zweden and the HK Phil players, and two candidates were selected from 170 applicants from Hong Kong and abroad. The two assistant conductors will work alongside the orchestra's guest conductors, observing rehearsals, acting as a potential cover conductor, and conducting the HK Phil's education and outreach concerts.

"This role benefits both conductor and orchestra. The Assistant Conductor works with guest artists and the musicians on stage, advising on sound balance and providing musical assistance to the performers. Many great conductors have begun their careers in this fashion," said Raff Wilson, Director of Artistic Planning of the HK Phil. "We were delighted to attract such a strong field for the position, and that the orchestra and Jaap van Zweden chose two such talented people to share the post. Both Vivian and Gerard are great communicators, and have proven skills as conductors. We look forward to working together."

Vivian said, "It is my great honour and privilege to be selected as one of the assistant conductors of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, the ever-rising foremost orchestra in Asia from my home town. It is an excellent opportunity for me to serve my community by offering the best I have. I am very excited to work under Maestro Jaap van Zweden, Yu Long, and other guest conductors on a colourful repertoire. I aspire to contribute and not to disappoint those who have nurtured me and put trust in me."

Gerard said "It is a delight to have been appointed as one of the HK Phil's assistant conductors. The opportunity to work with and learn from Maestro Jaap van Zweden and the musicians of the orchestra is a dream come true, and I am grateful for their vote of confidence. I look forward to many more great musical experiences with the HK Phil, and am very happy to be a part of this amazing orchestra. The big bonus is that I get to spend more time in one of my favourite cities, Hong Kong."

Gerard will start his role with Yu Long in the season opening concerts in September, while Vivian will be starting with Vassily Sinaisky in November. Both will share opportunities to work with HK Phil's Music Director Jaap van Zweden, Principal Guest Conductor Yu Long, and other guest conductors throughout the season.

About Vivian Ip, Assistant Conductor [\[full biography\]](#)

Vivian Ip is a native of Hong Kong. A graduate of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, she obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music with first class honours. She later obtained a Master Degree in Choral Conducting at the Indiana University Bloomington; and a Master of Arts' Degree in Orchestral Conducting at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna. As an orchestral conductor, Vivian has worked and performed in Hong Kong and Europe with, among others, the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra. She has worked with world-class conductors including Riccardo Muti, Simon Rattle and Riccardo Chailly.

About Gerard Salonga, Assistant Conductor [\[full biography\]](#)

Born in Manila, Gerard Salonga is a multi-awarded musical director, conductor, and arranger. He has collaborated with some of the brightest musical artists, including Lea Salonga, Wang Leehom, Hins Cheung, Elisa Chan, Wu Tong and more. Currently Gerard is music director of the ABS-CBN Philharmonic Orchestra, and as an orchestral arranger, his works have been performed by the Hong Kong Philharmonic, New York Pops, National Symphony (Washington DC) and many other orchestras in the US. Orchestras he has conducted included the HK Phil, Shanghai Opera House Orchestra and Chorus, The Evergreen Symphony Orchestra, Philippine Philharmonic, Bangkok Symphony, and the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra.

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Vivian Ip



Gerard Salonga

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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. The Orchestra presents more than 150 concerts over a 44-week season and attracts more than 200,000 music lovers annually.

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. In addition, Maestro van Zweden will also be the next Music Director of the New York Philharmonic starting with the 2018-19 season.

Yu Long was appointed for an initial three-year term in the 2015/16 season as Principal Guest Conductor.

Under Maestro van Zweden, the HK Phil is undertaking a variety of initiatives including a four-year project to perform and record the complete *Ring of the Nibelung* (Richard Wagner). The Orchestra is in the second of this four-year journey, performing one opera annually in concert. The performances are being recorded live for the Naxos label and mark the first performances by a Hong Kong or mainland Chinese orchestra of the entire *Ring* cycle.

Also under van Zweden, the orchestra undertook a highly successful five-country, seven-city tour of Europe in the 2014/15 season, with concerts in London, Vienna, Zurich, Eindhoven, Birmingham, Berlin and Amsterdam. Performances were met with enthusiasm and universally positive reviews. The concert in Vienna's Musikverein was filmed for broadcast on TV.

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 and Yuja Wang.

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*.

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.

Thanks to a 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.

The Orchestra celebrated its 40th season as a professional orchestra in 2013/14.

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.