

PRESS RELEASE

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Tarmo Peltokoski Named Next Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

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[4 July 2024, Hong Kong] The Board of Governors of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) today announced that Finnish conductor Tarmo Peltokoski will become the Orchestra's next Music Director, beginning in the 2026/27 season, succeeding Jaap van Zweden. Peltokoski will hold the title of Music Director of the HK Phil for a four-year term, after serving as Music Director Designate during the 2025/26 season.

Tarmo Peltokoski will be the 9th Music Director of the HK Phil. He is also Music Director Designate of the Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse during the 2024/25 season and will become its Music Director from the 2025/26 season.

David Cogman, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the HK Phil and of the Music Director Search Committee, said, "I am delighted to welcome Maestro Peltokoski as the next Music Director of the HK Phil. He is a remarkable and visionary musician, and we are very fortunate that he will write the next chapter in our orchestra's history. The Board of Governors is tremendously excited by the orchestra's future under the leadership of such an outstanding conductor."

Tarmo Peltokoski said, "I am honoured and thrilled to be named Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. After being highly impressed by the orchestra last year, I knew this would be a long-lasting relationship. The HK Phil is surely one of the absolute top orchestras in Asia. I am very much looking forward to lots of inspiring musicmaking with the brilliant HK Phil musicians in the years to come."

Benedikt Fohr, Chief Executive of the HK Phil and member of the Music Director Search Committee, said, "The appointment of Tarmo Peltokoski as the new Music Director of our Orchestra marks a significant milestone. He is a highly talented musician from the younger generation. Under his leadership, we wish to inspire a new generation of music lovers, and continue to enhance our artistic excellence and elevate our reputation in Hong Kong and beyond. The HK Phil is thrilled about the creative journey that lies ahead."

Jing Wang, Concertmaster of the HK Phil and member of the Music Director Search Committee, said, "I would like to extend my warmest welcome to Tarmo. His debut concerts with the HK Phil last year were truly inspiring, and his talent was immediately apparent. He is a highly energetic conductor with a great passion for music. The orchestra and I look forward to many years of great musicmaking together in the upcoming seasons."

The contract signing ceremony was held at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall today. It was joined by HK Phil's Board of Governors, musicians from the orchestra, and James Tong, Director, Group Public Affairs of John Swire & Sons (H.K.) Limited who represents the Principal Patron of the HK Phil.

Tarmo Peltokoski made his debut with the HK Phil at its 2022/23 Season Finale concert in June 2023, conducting Sibelius' *Finlandia*, Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto and Shostakovich's Symphony no. 10. He is set to conduct the sold-out concerts of the HK Phil 2023/24 Season Finale: Tarmo Peltokoski & Seong-Jin Cho on 5 & 6 July 2024, as well as the 2024/25 Season Opening: Tarmo Peltokoski & Daniel Lozakovich on 5 & 6 September 2024, both at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall.

Tarmo Peltokoski

“a talent of a century”

(*Tagesspiegel*)

“Disconcerting, breathtaking, tearjerkingly beautiful. Even writing about it brings back goosebumps. How he did it is a mystery but the most beautiful concert of the year was played in Rotterdam. Tarmo Peltokoski. Write that name down.”

(*NRC Rotterdam*)

"Watch out – here comes a genius! . . . Peltokoski not only has phenomenal technique, but an energy, a musical instinct, a stylistic and expressive clarity as well as fiery dynamics, all of which leave one speechless."

(*Diapason Magazine*, Rémy Louis)

Finnish conductor Tarmo Peltokoski was awarded the title “Principal Guest Conductor” of The Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen in January 2022, the first conductor to hold this position in the orchestra’s 42-year history.

In May 2022, Peltokoski was named Music and Artistic Director of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra. He started his term in the 2022/23 season. He was subsequently named Principal Guest Conductor of the Rotterdams Philharmonisch Orkest. In August 2022 at the age of 22, he completed his first Wagner *Ring* cycle at the Eurajoki Bel Canto Festival. In December 2022, Peltokoski was announced as Music Director of the Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse.

In recent seasons he made debuts with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Orchestra dell’Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Göteborgs Symfoniker as well as SWR Symphonieorchester at Pflingstfestspiele Baden-Baden and with Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin.

Summer festival debuts include Rheingau Musik Festival, Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival, Beethovenfest Bonn, the Verbier Festival, Musikfest Bremen and Festival de Música y Danza Granada.

Tarmo Peltokoski returned to the Eurajoki Bel Canto Festival to conduct *Tristan und Isolde* in April 2023. In summer 2023 he conducted *Siegfried* with the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra and *Don Giovanni* at the Finnish National Opera in October 2023.

This August Peltokoski will conduct Wagner’s *Götterdämmerung* in Riga. In September he will make his BBC Proms debut at Royal Albert Hall with the BBC Symphony and later in the fall conduct Filarmonica della Scala and Philharmonia Zürich as well as the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

In spring 2025 he will tour Germany with Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, make his debut with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Bayerisches Staatsorchester, conduct Wagner’s *Der fliegende Holländer* in Luxembourg and Brussels and will make his Japan debut conducting the NHK Symphony. In summer 2025 he will be conducting *Parsifal* with the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra.

He has worked with soloists including Yuja Wang, Asmik Grigorian, Matthias Goerne, Julia Fischer, Golda Schultz, Martin Fröst, Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Janine Jansen, Martin Helmchen, Leonidas Kavakos, Camilla Nylund and Sol Gabetta.

Tarmo Peltokoski began his studies with professor emeritus Jorma Panula at the age of 14 and studied with Sakari Oramo at the Sibelius Academy. He has also been taught by Hannu Lintu, Jukka-Pekka Saraste and Esa-Pekka Salonen.

Also an acclaimed pianist, he studied piano at the Sibelius Academy with Antti Hotti. His piano playing has been awarded at many competitions and he has appeared as a soloist with all major Finnish orchestras. In October 2023 Tarmo Peltokoski signed an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon. His debut album was released in May 2024.

In 2022 he received the Lotto Prize at Rheingau Musik Festival and in 2023 he received the OPUS Klassik for his recording with The Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen.

In addition Tarmo Peltokoski has also studied composing and arranging, and especially enjoys music comedy and improvisation.

Tarmo Peltokoski is represented worldwide by Tanja Dorn at Dorn Music.

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Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

Music Director: Jaap van Zweden, SBS

Principal Guest Conductor: Long Yu

Resident Conductor: Lio Kuokman, JP

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is regarded as one of the leading orchestras in Asia. Presenting more than 150 concerts over a 44-week season, the HK Phil attracts more than 200,000 music lovers annually. Recently the HK Phil won the prestigious UK classical music magazine *Gramophone*'s 2019 Orchestra of the Year Award – the first orchestra in Asia to receive this accolade.

Jaap van Zweden, SBS, one of today's most sought-after conductors, has been the orchestra's Music Director since the 2012/13 Season, a position he will hold until the end of the 2023/24 Season. Jaap van Zweden has also been Music Director of the New York Philharmonic since the 2018/19 Season. Long Yu has been Principal Guest Conductor since the 2015/16 Season. Lio Kuokman, JP was appointed Resident Conductor in December 2020.

Under the dynamic leadership of Jaap van Zweden, the HK Phil has attained new heights of artistic excellence, receiving international critical acclaim. The orchestra successfully completed a four-year journey through Wagner's *Ring Cycle*, performing and recording one opera from the cycle annually from 2015 to 2018. The concert performances were well received, and the live Naxos recordings were praised by critics and garnered the *Gramophone* Orchestra of the Year Award 2019. Other recent recording projects include Mahler's Symphony no. 10, Shostakovich's Symphony no. 10, and Tchaikovsky's Symphony no. 6 and Piano Concerto no. 1.

The HK Phil has toured extensively across Mainland China. The orchestra undertook a major tour in 2017 to Seoul, Osaka, Singapore, Melbourne and Sydney in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The HK Phil celebrates its 50th anniversary in the 2023/24 season, touring Europe, Asia, and Mainland China, performing in 22 cities across ten countries.

Conductors and soloists who have recently performed with the orchestra include Anja Bihlmaier, Stéphane Denève, Christoph Eschenbach, Paavo Järvi, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Tarmo Peltokoski, Vasily Petrenko, Krzysztof Urbanski, Joshua Bell, Ning Feng, Boris Giltburg, Lang Lang, Leonidas Kavakos, Olivier Latry, Yo-Yo Ma and Akiko Suwanai. The HK Phil promotes the work of Hong Kong and Chinese composers through an active commissioning programme, and it has released recordings on the Naxos label featuring Tan Dun and Bright Sheng conducting their own compositions.

The HK Phil runs diverse education and community programmes in schools and outdoor spaces, bringing music into the hearts of tens of thousands of children and families every year.

The Swire Group has been the Principal Patron of the HK Phil since 2006. Through this current sponsorship donation, which is the largest amount received in the orchestra's history, Swire endeavours to foster access to classical music and stimulate cultural participation in Hong Kong and the Chinese Mainland – a critical aspect of this is to engage with the community, especially young people. The sponsorship will also help promote local artistic excellence and enhance Hong Kong's reputation as one of the great cities in the world.

Thanks to a significant subsidy from the Government of the HKSAR and long-term funding from Principal Patron Swire, the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust and other supporters, the HK Phil now boasts a full-time annual schedule of core classical repertoire and innovative popular programming, extensive education and community programmes, and collaborations with, amongst others, Hong Kong Ballet, Opera Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Arts Festival.

Originally called the Sino-British Orchestra, it was renamed the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra in 1957 and became fully professional in 1974. The HK Phil is a registered charitable organisation.

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra is financially supported by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and is a Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre.

Swire is the Principal Patron of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.