

## Premiere Performances announces 2017-18 Recital Series

All concerts to feature Hong Kong debuts of young international stars

18 July 2017—Premiere Performances today announced its 11<sup>th</sup> annual Recital Series, which will feature the Hong Kong debuts of must-hear young stars who are making a splash internationally. The series reinforces the organization’s reputation for delivering world-class chamber music and recitals while introducing Hong Kong audiences to some of the world’s most exciting rising stars.

Opening the series is the powerhouse trio of **Zhang Zuo** (piano), **Esther Yoo** (violin) and **Narek Hakhnazaryan** (cello) – the **Z.E.N. Piano Trio**. As soloists, these three BBC First Generation Artists have each wowed Hong Kong and international audiences. They joined forces in 2015 because of their love of chamber music and have toured and recorded for Deutsche Grammophon. **(Monday, 9 October, 2017)**

German baritone **Benjamin Appl**—“the current front-runner in the new generation of Lieder singers” (*Gramophone Magazine*)—will present an evening of adventure and romance in Premiere Performances’ first vocal recital. A BBC New Generation Artist, ECHO Rising Star artist, and Gramophone Young Artist of the Year, Appl is already celebrated as a soloist and for his operatic performances. He will perform with eminent Lieder pianist James Baillieu, who will also make his Hong Kong debut with this concert. **(Monday, 23 April, 2018)**

With 28 top prizes in 14 major international competitions between them, South Korean violinist **Bomsori Kim** and Indian-American pianist **Pallavi Mahidhara** are quickly making names for themselves as soloists. Kim is firmly establishing herself as a new star on the international concert scene following numerous competition wins and prestigious orchestral debuts in Europe and Asia. Mahidhara was selected as the “Most Promising Young Pianist” at the prestigious Verbier Academy in Switzerland and has performed throughout the world. **(Tuesday, 15 May, 2018)**

**The Danish String Quartet**—“simply your friendly neighborhood string quartet with above average amounts of beard”—is one of the world’s most sought-after ensembles. BBC New Generation Artists, Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award recipients, and in demand by music festivals and presenters around the world, this quartet is hailed as “in a different league altogether” (*The Examiner*). With their reputation for eclectic repertoire, technical excellence, and joyous music-making, they bring a fresh face to the classical string quartet. **(Sunday, 3 June, 2018)**

### PREMIERE PERFORMANCES 2017-18 RECITAL SERIES

Z.E.N. TRIO	9 October, 2017 (Mon)
Benjamin Appl Lieder Recital with James Baillieu	23 April, 2018 (Mon)
Bomsori Kim, violin-& Pallivai Mahidhara, piano	15 May, 2018 (Tues)
Danish String Quartet	3 June, 2018 (Sun)

All concerts in Premiere Performances 2017-18 Recitals Series will be held at the **Hong Kong City Hall Concert Hall beginning at 8pm.**

Tickets: \$480, \$300, \$200, \$100 available now at [www.pphk.org](http://www.pphk.org). Patrons can save up to 25% with the purchase of all four concerts.

#### For more information:

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### 2017-18 Recital Series Artist Biographies

**Z.E.N. TRIO:** This exciting young trio is made up of three international soloists who met through the BBC New Generation Artists programme.

#### ZHANG ZUO, piano

**Zhang Zuo** is one of the most sought-after young artists in China, collaborating with virtually all major Chinese orchestras. Ms Zhang won first prize at China's 1st International Piano Concerto Competition and the Gina Bachauer International Artists Piano Competition, the coveted Petschek Piano Award at the Juilliard School, and was a prize winner at the 2013 Queen Elizabeth Competition. She was a member of the prestigious BBC New Generation Artists programme from 2013-2015.

**"Zhang Zuo is the one of the most outstanding and passionate pianistic talents I have come across"** - *Maestro Paavo Järvi*

#### ESTHER YOO, violin

Born in the U.S. and raised in Europe, Korean-American violinist **Esther Yoo** first came to international attention in 2010 when, aged 16, she became the youngest prize winner of the 10<sup>th</sup> International Sibelius Violin Competition. In 2012, Ms Yoo was one of the youngest ever prize winners of the Queen Elisabeth Competition, and was named a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist in 2014-2016.

**"Innocence, beauty, pain and effortlessness melded in a way that will lodge for years in the memory, and the audience roared its approval."** - *Bachtrack, on Esther Yoo*

#### NAREK HAKHNAZARYAN, cello

Hailed by the *Washington Post* as "a seasoned phenomenon", **Narek Hakhnazaryan** is recognised world-wide as one of the finest cellists of his generation. Since winning the Cello First Prize and Gold Medal at the XIV International Tchaikovsky Competition in 2011, he has forged strong relationships with some of the world's most prestigious orchestras. Hakhnazaryan was selected to the prestigious 2014 BBC New Generation Artists Scheme, and his performances are broadcast regularly on BBC Radio 3.

**"This cellist is without a doubt a major presence on the international stage."** - *The Strad*

#### BENJAMIN APPL, baritone

Described as "the current front-runner in the new generation of Lieder singers" (*Gramophone Magazin*), **Benjamin Appl** is celebrated by audiences and critics in recital, concerts and opera. The German baritone was a BBC New Generation Artist and an ECHO Rising Star artist for the 2015/16 season, appearing in recital at major European venues. He became an exclusive SONY Classical recording artist in May 2016 and won the Gramophone Young Artist of the Year Award in 2016. His first solo album for Sony Classical; 'Heimat', was released in March 2017 and contains German and English songs.

**BOMSORI KIM, violin &-PALLAVI MAHIDHARA piano**

**[BOMSORI KIM, violin](#)**

South Korean violinist Bomsori Kim is firmly establishing herself as one of the new rising stars of the international concert stage. Bomsori is a major prize winner at the Tchaikovsky, Sendai, Wieniawski, Montreal, Sibelius, Qingdao and ARD International Violin Competitions. She has made numerous prestigious orchestral debuts in Europe and Asia under conductors including Marin Alsop and Hannu Lintu. After completing her studies at Seoul National University, she obtained her master's degree at the Juilliard School on full scholarship.

**[PALLAVI MAHIDHARA, piano](#)**

Known for her artistic versatility, Indian-American pianist **Pallavi Mahidhara** combines mature musical insight, astounding technique, and charismatic stage presence. She has appeared in solo and orchestral concerts across North and South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Among her many awards, Ms. Mahidhara is the Second Prize winner of the 2014 Geneva International Piano Competition, where she also received the Young Audience Award, and was the "Most Promising Young Pianist" at the prestigious Verbier Academy in Switzerland.

**[DANISH STRING QUARTET](#)**

The **Danish String Quartet** is one of the world's most sought-after quartets, with a reputation for their integrated sound, impeccable intonation, judicious balance and infectious love of music-making. In addition to acclaimed performances of the classical masters, the quartet is passionate about Scandinavian composers, contemporary programming, and Nordic folk music. The quartet was a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist from [2013-15](#), a member of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln's Centre "CMS Two" programme from [2013-16](#) and the Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award recipient in 2016.

"**This is one of the best quartets before the public today.**" - *Washington Post*

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