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Alan Gilbert leads Shanghai Symphony Orchestra over New Year in Shanghai

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Alan Gilbert Leads Shanghai Symphony Orchestra in Two New Year Concerts in Shanghai (Dec 31 & Jan 1); New Year's Eve Concert to Be Broadcast on Chinese TV

Now in his fourth season as music director of the New York Philharmonic, **Alan Gilbert** closes out 2012 and rings in the New Year with **two special holiday concerts** in **Shanghai, China**, when he leads the **Shanghai Symphony Orchestra** in performances on **December 31** and **January 1**. The New Year's Eve concert, which will be **televised nationally in China**, offers Act II from **Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker***, the "**Symphonic Dances**" from **Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story***, and **Gershwin's *An American in Paris***. Gilbert and the orchestra will reprise the *Nutcracker's* second act in a New Year's Day performance at the Grand Hyatt Shanghai, to be followed afterwards by a gala dinner. While in China, Gilbert will lead a **master class** for students from the Shanghai Conservatory, who will also be able to see Gilbert in rehearsal with their city's orchestra.

Alan Gilbert comments: "I'm incredibly excited to be working in China with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra for this important holiday concert. My friend and colleague Long Yu [music director of the Shanghai Symphony] has been so kind in helping to organize this, as well as so many other important collaborations between New York and Shanghai. This is only the first step in what I know will be a long and fruitful journey together."

Long Yu adds: "I am thrilled to welcome Alan Gilbert to China for his debut with the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. Not only will his performances celebrate the New Year, but they will also herald the beginning of a long and fruitful partnership between SSO and the New York Philharmonic. These are exciting times for both our cities and I am happy that music is once again helping to build important cultural bridges. I am also glad that the Shanghai musicians and audiences will have a chance to enjoy the rare treat of 20th-century American masterpieces."

Just a few weeks ago the New York Philharmonic and the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra announced a four-year partnership together, which includes the establishment of an orchestral academy in Shanghai as well as annual performance residencies by the Philharmonic in Shanghai through the 2017–18 season. Further information about the partnership is available at the New York Philharmonic website.

Although Gilbert has given concerts frequently in Asia, both with the New York Philharmonic (including a historic visit to Hanoi during his inaugural season as music director) and with Japanese orchestras, the Shanghai concerts will mark only the second time Gilbert has performed in China.

In the previous two seasons, Maestros Kurt Masur and Riccardo Muti led these special holiday concerts given by the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra.

Shanghai Symphony Orchestra
Long Yu, Music Director

Shanghai Symphony Orchestra is the earliest and best known ensemble of its kind in Asia. It is a keeper of Western orchestral traditions in China and a passionate champion of contemporary Chinese music. Since the 1970s, the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra has been touring extensively abroad. In 1990, the orchestra made its debut at Carnegie Hall in New York; in 2003, it performed in eleven cities in the US; in 2004, it toured Europe to celebrate the Sino-French Cultural Year. In 2005 SSO became the first Chinese orchestra to play in the Berliner Philharmonie; this historic performance marked the ensemble's 125th anniversary and enjoyed great success with the audience and the critics. In 2009 SSO came back to North America to open Carnegie Hall's "Ancient Paths, Modern Voices" festival of Chinese culture, which was followed by a highly successful coast-to-coast tour of the United States. In 2010 the orchestra became a cultural ambassador of the World Expo 2010 Shanghai and delivered a riveting performance to 100,000 New Yorkers on the Great Lawn of Central Park.

Originally known as the Shanghai Public Band, it developed into an orchestra in 1907, and was renamed the Shanghai Municipal Council Symphony Orchestra in 1922. Notably under the baton of the Italian conductor Mario Paci, the orchestra promoted Western music and trained young Chinese talents very early on in China, and introduced the first Chinese orchestral work to the audience. It is hence reputed as the "the best in the Far East." The history of Shanghai Symphony Orchestra may be referred to as the history of China's symphonic music development.

Spanning three different centuries, the Shanghai Symphony has now embraced a new era; it has given more than ten thousand concerts, including premiere performances of several thousand musical works, and has collaborated with many guest artists (conductors, soloists and vocalists) of world renown. The orchestra has gained a reputation as the most authoritative explicator of Chinese symphonic compositions while promoting them with every possible endeavor. The Shanghai Symphony has become increasingly influential both at home and abroad, especially after most recently completing the audio and video recordings of such excellent music as: Zhu Jian'er's symphonies, Tan Dun's multimedia concerto *The Map*, and his music for the Oscar- and Grammy Award-winning film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

Maestro Long Yu is music director of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra.

Alan Gilbert

New York Philharmonic Music Director Alan Gilbert, the Yoko Nagaie Ceschina Chair, began his tenure at the orchestra in September 2009, launching what *New York* magazine called "a fresh future for the Philharmonic." The first native New Yorker in the post, he has introduced the positions of the Marie-Josée Kravis Composer-in-Residence and the Mary and James G. Wallach Artist-in-Residence, an annual multi-week festival, and *CONTACT!*, the new-music series, and he has sought to make the Philharmonic a point of civic pride for the city and

country. In October, the New York Philharmonic announced that it has extended the contract of its Music Director through the 2016-17 season.

In 2012–13, Alan Gilbert conducts world premieres; presides over a cycle of Brahms's complete symphonies and concertos; continues "The Nielsen Project," the multi-year initiative to perform and record Nielsen's symphonies and concertos; and leads the EUROPE / SPRING 2013 tour. The season concludes with "June Journey: Gilbert's Playlist," four programs showcasing themes he has introduced, including the season finale: a theatrical reimagining of Stravinsky ballets with director/designer Doug Fitch and New York City Ballet principal dancer Sara Mearns. Last season's highlights included tours of Europe and California, several world premieres, Mahler symphonies, and *Philharmonic 360*, the Philharmonic and Park Avenue Armory's acclaimed spatial-music program featuring Stockhausen's *Gruppen*, about which the *New York Times* said: "Those who think classical music needs some shaking up routinely challenge music directors at major orchestras to think outside the box. That is precisely what Alan Gilbert did."

Gilbert is Director of Conducting and Orchestral Studies and holds the William Schuman Chair in Musical Studies at the Juilliard School. He is also the Conductor Laureate of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor of Hamburg's NDR Symphony Orchestra, and he regularly conducts leading orchestras around the world. He made his acclaimed Metropolitan Opera debut conducting John Adams's *Doctor Atomic* in 2008, the DVD of which received a Grammy Award. His recordings have received top honors from the *Chicago Tribune* and *Gramophone* magazine. In May 2010 Gilbert received an Honorary Doctor of Music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music and in December 2011, Columbia University's Ditson Conductor's Award for his "exceptional commitment to the performance of works by American composers and to contemporary music."

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