

Attachment A

**Report on International Travel – Sydney
Symphony Highlight – Nanjing Art Festival**

REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL – SYDNEY SYMPHONY HIGHLIGHT – NANJING ART FESTIVAL

Travel Report: Councillor Robert Kok

1. Executive Summary

On Monday 17 September 2018, Council endorsed Councillor Robert Kok to lead a delegation that included the Sydney Symphony Orchestra to the Nanjing Art Festival, with a half-day trip to Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China from 16 to 18 October 2018.

It was a short but intensive trip.

I left Sydney right after the Committees Meeting at the night of Monday 15 October and arrived at Nanjing at noon the next day.

In the afternoon, I met with Mr Chen Yong, Member for Standing Committee in Nanjing Municipal Government and Director General of Nanjing Publicity Department, and in the evening attended one of the two public concerts played by Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellowship musicians. Mr Chen also attended the concert and said he enjoyed the performance and was especially grateful for the connection music has built for the people from the two cities.

Whilst in Nanjing, I also took part in several outreach programs highlighting Sydney Symphony's exchange with local universities, performing arts schools, local folk music groups, and cultural organisations.



COUNCILLOR ROBERT KOK, SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA FELLOWSHIP MUSICIANS AND NANJING BACKSTAGE STAFF AFTER THE CONCERT

Although we only had a short half day in Hangzhou on 18 October, we were impressed by the city's well-designed landscape, state of art infrastructures and public transport.

During my courtesy call with Mr Yang Jianhua, the Deputy Secretary General of Hangzhou Municipal People's Government, expressed his strong interest in inviting the Sydney Symphony Orchestra to perform in the Hangzhou Opera House, one of the largest in Asia. Mr Yang also introduced Mr Deng Jingshan, the President of Hangzhou Philharmonic Orchestra, to the Sydney Symphony to discuss further collaboration. Mr Jin Heng, Deputy Director of Hangzhou Municipal Bureau of Culture, Radio, TV, Press and Publication, also attended the Courtesy Call. We then visited the Hangzhou Opera House.

Mr Raff Wilson, Director of Artistic Planning, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, and Mr Benjamin Moh, Business Development Manager, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, also attended the official meetings with Nanjing and Hangzhou.

This visit to China was an outstanding success.

Mr Roger Benedict, Sydney Symphony Orchestra Principal Viola, Artistic Director of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellowship, highly praised the Nanjing trip.

“For over 17-year history of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellowship program,” he said, “It is the first time the Fellows embarked on an international tour. Performing as part of the 2018 Nanjing Art Festival and working with other young artists in the region offered the Fellows a unique and invaluable experience which has greatly enhanced their training and transition to professional careers.”

The cost for the three days travel was an average of approximately \$149 per person. Councillor Kok was accompanied by one staff member to provide translation and international relations assistance.

2. Nanjing

Nanjing, as one of the top four historical cities in China, served as the Capital City for six dynasties in Chinese history. It is a very green city with beautiful tree canopies. It also has abundant cultural facility resources, with more than 80 museums located throughout the city.



I visited Nanjing in 2016 and started the conversation with Nanjing Government about inviting Sydney-based performing groups to perform at the Nanjing Art Festival. I brought this request to the Chief Executive Officer of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Ms Emma Dunch, who strongly supported the participation of the Fellowship musicians.

In our debrief meeting back in Sydney, Ms Dunch articulated that the Sydney Symphony Orchestra

has a long-established role as a cultural diplomat for Australia, supporting international relations through music.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra first toured China in 2009 under the then Principal Conductor, Vladimir Ashkenazy.

In 2017, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra celebrated the 45th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Australia and China when it undertook its fifth tour to mainland China, led by Chief Conductor and Artistic Director David Robertson.

She especially noted that the 2018 Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellows' international tour to Nanjing further cemented Australia's cultural relationship with China.

The image shows a program guide for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. It features a list of musical pieces in both Chinese and English, along with portraits of the orchestra members. The text is as follows:

节目单

Rogier Beetsch (1644-1706)

1. 夜曲 (Nocturne) (1680-1690) 羽管键琴 亨德里克·范·登·赫斯特
2. 夜曲 (Nocturne) (1680-1690) 羽管键琴 亨德里克·范·登·赫斯特
3. 夜曲 (Nocturne) (1680-1690) 羽管键琴 亨德里克·范·登·赫斯特
4. 夜曲 (Nocturne) (1680-1690) 羽管键琴 亨德里克·范·登·赫斯特
5. 夜曲 (Nocturne) (1680-1690) 羽管键琴 亨德里克·范·登·赫斯特

PROGRAM GUIDES

Rogier Beetsch (1644-1706)

1. NOCTURNE (1680-1690) for Clavichord by Hendrick van der Horst
2. NOCTURNE (1680-1690) for Clavichord by Hendrick van der Horst
3. NOCTURNE (1680-1690) for Clavichord by Hendrick van der Horst
4. NOCTURNE (1680-1690) for Clavichord by Hendrick van der Horst
5. NOCTURNE (1680-1690) for Clavichord by Hendrick van der Horst

Below the text, there are two rows of small portraits of orchestra members, each with their name and instrument listed below them.

“The Sydney Symphony Orchestra was honoured to work on this exciting project with the City of Sydney, who facilitated the introduction to the Nanjing Government.” Ms Dunch also emphasized, “The 2018 Fellows are leading young artists from across Australia and New Zealand – they are the next generation of classical musicians. Representing Australia as cultural ambassadors on their tour to Nanjing, they are a reminder of how the arts can bridge cultural differences and bring nations together.”

2.1 Courtesy Call with Nanjing Government

In our meeting with the Secretary General of Department of Publicity of CPC Nanjing Municipal Committee, Mr Chen Yong said that Nanjing welcomes high standard performing arts groups from Sydney and Australia and believed cultural exchanges are the best way for Nanjing people to appreciate Australian arts and culture.



COUNCILLOR KOK IN COURTESY CALL WITH MR CHEN YONG

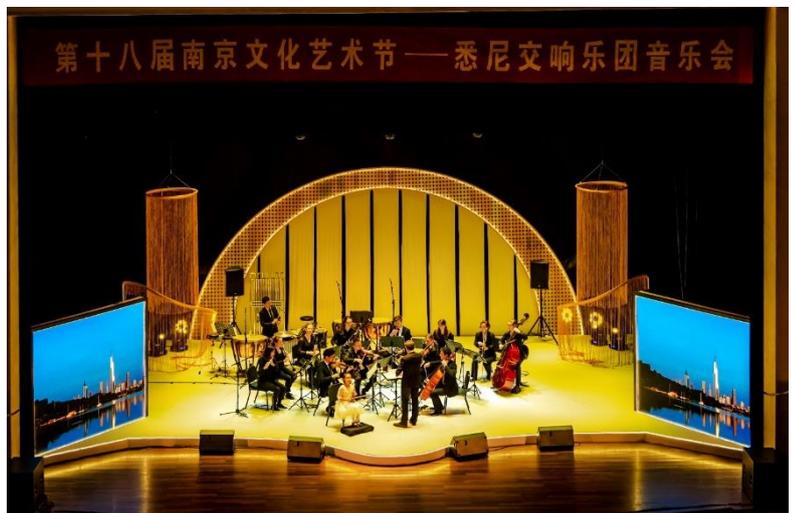
Mr Chen also extended invitations from the Mayor of Nanjing to me about a potential invitation to lead a media delegation from Sydney to attend the 19th Nanjing Art Festival in 2019, and the Sydney Symphony for 2019 Nanjing Forest Music Festival.

Mr Raff Wilson, Director of Artistic Planning, thanked Nanjing on behalf of Sydney Symphony for offering this opportunity, especially to the young musicians, who will benefit from the opportunity in their professional learning.

2.2 Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellows in the 18th Nanjing Art Festival

On the nights of 15 and 16 October, the Sydney Symphony concerts were held in the Nanjing People's Great Hall, the historical assembly hall built in the Kuomintang's time, with a capacity of 1,500 people.

With a beautifully designed Sydney Harbour Bridge background and two LED screens showing footage of Sydney, both concerts were full house and were free to public. Nanjing residents were able to order up to two tickets per person on the MyNanjing Website or through a smartphone App.



THE 8-YEAR-OLD ERHU PLAYER, MISS CAI YUJIA WITH THE SSO FELLOWS

Sydney Symphony Orchestra

Fellowship Artistic Director Roger Benedict worked closely with Nanjing Municipal Bureau of Culture, Broadcasting, TV, Press and Publication, the organiser of the Nanjing Art Festival, to finalise the program, which included pieces from both China and Australia. The performance was highly appreciated by the local audience.

2.3 Outreach Programs

We visited the Nanjing Arts Institute, China's most prestigious arts university, for an outreach program with its music students. The program was very popular, and the Sydney Symphony Fellows and Nanjing Arts Institute's music students played some pieces cooperatively to share their understanding of music - the universal language.



COUNCILLOR KOK WITH SYDNEY SYMPHONY IN NANJING ARTS INSTITUTE

For many Fellows, it was their first time to visit China. One of the Fellows, Mr Daniel Pini, found that the time in Nanjing was a chance to exchange ideas and learn from one another.

“Our minimal exposure to Chinese music and cultural traditions meant everything new competed for our attention. It was an overwhelming but exciting experience.” Daniel said.

He also believed that some memorable moments were not just those of cultural exchange, but also of bonding with his

colleagues, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellows. Often, they needed to step back to process the overwhelming new environment. Experiencing this tour together deepened their understanding of each other and gave them a new appreciation when performing together.

“This trip was one of cultural exchange and collaboration. I arrived and felt isolated by the language barrier. And then we played music, and immediately I could make myself understood. The essential role of music was further driven home for me while listening to the children at the school we visited as they performed. A universal language, it is a means of expression, of communication, and of understanding.” Daniel told the City after the trip.

We then visited the Taicheng Library, one of the eight cultural and recreational areas designed by Nanjing Government alongside its prestigious City Wall, and met with a local folk musician who later on played an improvised piece with Rollin Zhao, one of the Sydney Symphony Fellows.

On 18 and 19 October, the Sydney Symphony delegation also visited the Nanjing University of Science and Technology, the Nanjing Little Flower Arts Troupe, as well as local museums and cultural precincts.

2.4 Media Coverage

This visit received outstanding media coverage from media in Nanjing and Sydney:

- The People's Daily Australia: <http://australia.people.com.cn/n1/2018/1017/c408098-30346903.html>
- The Australian: Opera Australia and the Australian Ballet wow Chinese audiences
- The Australian: Fine arts of diplomacy



- Limelight Australia: <https://www.limelightmagazine.com.au/news/ss0-fellows-off-to-nanjing/>
- Broadway World News: <https://www.broadwayworld.com/sydney/article/Sydney-Symphony-Orchestra-Fellows-Embark-On-First-Ever-International-Fellows-Tour-20181005>
- Sounds like Sydney: <http://soundlikesydney.com.au/news/engagement-through-music-sydney-symphony-orchestra-fellows-tour-to-china/25424.html>
- Jiangsu Channel, People.cn: <http://js.people.com.cn/culture/n2/2018/1017/c360308-32165468.html>
- Xiandai Express Daily Newspaper: http://dz.xdkb.net/html/2018-10/17/content_495547.htm
- Yangtse Daily Newspaper: <http://www.yangtse.com/app/jiangsu/nanjing/2018-10-17/628606.html>
- Sina News: <https://news.sina.com.cn/o/2018-10-17/doc-ihmhafis2742540.shtml>
- Nanjing Daily Newspaper: http://njrb.njdaily.cn/njrb/html/2018-10/17/content_515990.htm?div=-1
- Longhoo News: http://livelihoo.longhoo.net/2018/xwxc_1016/310659.html
- Jiangsu Online: http://jsnews.jschina.com.cn/nj/a/201810/t20181017_1974257.shtml
- KK News: <https://kknews.cc/zh-cn/news/5z8xmmk.html>
- Cultural Nanjing: https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/w9TJdy0CaDF_pQfjCHYM9Q

- Zijinshan News:
<http://m.zijinshan.org/news/453318748541757045?from=singlemessage&isappinstalled=0>
- Jiaohuidian News, Jiangsu Culture Online:
<http://jnews.xhby.net/waparticles/29/t54M6GinxHsrqRn5/1?from=singlemessage&isappinstalled=0>
- InNanjing:
https://oriental.zainanjing365.com/siteapp/gdmm/jsp?service_name=gdmmArticle&method_name=shareJsp&id=42525&appscheme=gdmm-znj&from=singlemessage&isappinstalled=0
- Nanjing Morning Post Newspaper:
<http://news.inanjing.chinacici.cn/web/share/regular/320100/436073?from=singlemessage&isappinstalled=0>
- Nanjing Foreign Affairs News: <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/cBJIRp3fFcXNZnzsGORXg>
- The Bell News, Nanjing Science and Technology University:
<http://zs.njust.edu.cn/c4/e1/c4297a181473/page.htm?from=singlemessage&isappinstalled=0>



**COUNCILLORKOK IN INTERVIEW WITH
NANJING MEDIA AT THE BACKSTAGE**

3. Hangzhou

Hangzhou, as the capital city of Zhejiang province, is the economic and cultural centre in Yangtze River Delta Area in eastern China. Hangzhou was the host city of G20 in 2016. It has been ranked as the most liveable city in China, with abundant cultural and arts resources.

The half-day visit to Hangzhou was short but important. We arrived in Hangzhou in the early morning of 18 October by High Speed Train for our morning meeting with Mr Yang Jianhua, the Deputy Secretary General of Hangzhou Municipal People's Government.



Mr Yang said Sydney has always been Hangzhou people's dream city for living and visiting and has always been his government's role model in pursuing the best government management, especially in terms of cultural diversity and sustainable development. He also conveyed the warm invitation from Mr Xu Liyi, Mayor of Hangzhou, to City of Sydney and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra to attend the Hangzhou Chamber Music Festival in 2019.

Mr Deng Jingshan, the Director General of Hangzhou Philharmonic Orchestra, also welcomed this opportunity to meet with Sydney Symphony to further their connection and collaboration.

COUNCILLOR KOK AND THE SSO WITH CITY OF HANGZHOU

It was a very fruitful meeting and both the SSO delegates Mr Benjamin Moh and Mr Raff Wilson were very enthused about the possibility of the Fellows performing in Hangzhou. It would again be a great asset in their program to have international experience.

Our last stop was to the Hangzhou Opera House, with an inspection of their Concert Hall for Sydney Symphony's potential performance in 2019.