

Highly esteemed Jiangsu Kunqu Opera Theatre artists to perform in Hong Kong

The Chinese Opera Festival will offer Hong Kong audiences a rare opportunity to enjoy Kunqu opera performed by highly esteemed artists from Jiangsu Kunqu Opera Theatre in July. The three-day programme, to be jointly presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and the Xiqu Centre of the West Kowloon Cultural District, includes Qing period writer Li Yu's work "The Mistake Caused by a Kite" and excerpts performances.

As an exponent of the performing style of "Nankun" (Kunqu of the Southern school), the troupe will showcase the charm of this stylistic school to the Hong Kong audience through the consummate artistry of its cast, which includes renowned veteran artists Shi Xiaomei, Hu Jinfang and Zhang Jidie, who are Representative Bearers of Kunqu Opera as National Intangible Cultural Heritage and winners of the Plum Blossom Award for Chinese Theatre. The three highly regarded artists have reached the age of 70, so this is a rare opportunity to have them grace a stage in Hong Kong. Also in the cast are two more winners of the Plum Blossom Award for Chinese Theatre – Kong Aiping and Li Hongliang – as well as National Class One Performers Zhao Jian, Gong Yinlei and Qian Zhenrong. The presence of a stellar cast of five winners of the Plum Blossom Award for Chinese Theatre spanning three generations of actors in the troupe makes this an unmissable event for those interested in Kunqu opera.

The theatre company is bringing to Hong Kong a full version of "The Mistake Caused by a Kite". It tells the story of how a kite breaking off from its string leads to two marriages, with interesting twists and turns along the way. Peppered with humour and fun, the plot is an attraction in itself for theatre-goers. The full version of the play will be performed by veteran artists of the middle-age generation, led by the President of Jiangsu Kunqu Opera Theatre and renowned actor in "chou" (comic) roles, Li Hongliang. The show promises to be a refreshing and delightful experience. Also prepared for the Hong Kong audience are two excerpts from classics in Kunqu opera, which reflect an emotional spectrum that is typical of the genre.

Details of the performances (with Chinese and English surtitles) are as follows:

July 19 (Friday); 7.30pm
"The Mistake Caused by a Kite"

July 20 (Saturday); 7.30pm
Excerpts: "Pursuing Eternal Life" from "The Story of Two Pearls", "Catching Sanlang Alive" from "The Water Margin", "The Obsessive Dream" from "Lanke Mountain", "The Drunken Lu Zhishen Wreaking Havoc at the Monastery" from

"Braving Torture to File a Petition" and "The Soul Departs" from "The Peony Pavilion"

July 21 (Sunday); 2.30pm

Excerpts: "Chance Encounter on a Boat" from "The Peach Blossom Fan", "The Mansion on the Lake" from "Winning the Hand of the Beauty Nonpareil", "Pursuing the Dream" from "The Peony Pavilion", "Selling His Page" from "The Legend of the Embroidered Coat" and "Looking at the Predictions of the Dynastic Fate of Ming" from "The Iron Headgear"

All performances will be staged at the Grand Theatre of the Xiqu Centre in the West Kowloon Cultural District. Tickets priced at \$180, \$280, \$380 and \$480 are now available at URB TIX (www.urbtix.hk) and the Xiqu Centre Ticket Office. For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7325 or visit www.cof.gov.hk/2019/en/kun.html.

A meet-the-artists session will be held with free admission. Limited seats will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Details are as follows:

Meet-the-artists session: The Inheritance and Development of Kunqu opera
July 18 (Thursday); 7.30pm

AC2, Level 4, Administration Building, Hong Kong Cultural Centre

Speakers: Shi Xiaomei, Hu Jinfang, Zhang Jidie, Zhao Jian, Kong Aiping, Li Hongliang, Gong Yinlei, Qian Zhenrong

Moderator: Elbe Lau (Chinese opera researcher)

Lifesaving services at Cafeteria Old Beach resume

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department has announced that the lifesaving services at Cafeteria Old Beach in Tuen Mun District resumed today (June 4). The lifesaving services at the beach were suspended earlier due to an insufficient number of lifeguards on duty.

Missing man in Tseung Kwan O located

A man who went missing in Tseung Kwan O has been located.

Ngai Wong-wai, aged 22, went missing after he was last seen in Kin Ming Estate on May 26 afternoon. His family made a report to Police on June 1.

The man was located in Kin Ming Estate this morning (June 4). He sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

Transcript of remarks by CE at media session before ExCo meeting (with video)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, at a media session before the Executive Council meeting this morning (June 4):

Reporter: Mrs Lam, how would you reflect Hong Kong people through vindicating June 4th to Beijing? Do you agree with the Chinese minister's views that the massacre is actually justified? And second question on the extradition bill – according to clause 24 of the bill, do you think you yourself or the courts can still act as a safeguard to and reject the request whenever it is necessary?

Chief Executive: I try to repeat my answers to these two similar questions. First of all, Hong Kong is a very free society. We uphold and safeguard the rights and freedoms of individuals in Hong Kong. So today, if there are public gatherings to express their views and feelings on a particular historic incident, we fully respect those views.

About the extradition bill which is now under scrutiny in the Legislative Council, there has been this reference, and maybe worry or fear or even allegation that the Chief Executive will just follow the instructions given by the Central Government and surrender whatever fugitives that the Central Government wants. This is totally unfounded and deviates from the provisions in the law. There are very detailed provisions in the law that will not allow that sort of situation to happen. And on top of those, last week the Government announced six additional measures in response to public concerns in order to allay the fears and anxiety. Those additional measures

are very much in line with the international rights for the protection of the individual, which we have heard over the past few months. We have imposed those additional safeguards as requirements to be met by the requesting party under a case-by-case extradition arrangement. If those requirements are not fulfilled, the Chief Executive will not trigger the process to deal with this particular request. If those requirements are fulfilled, the triggering of the process will have to go through the legal process and the courts will decide in the light of the evidence and the law whether a surrender order should be pursued, and then the case will come back to the Chief Executive for a decision. That is, I would say, a very robust process and I would really urge you to look into details of the process and all the legal provisions and safeguards in the existing legislation and also in the six measures that we have additionally provided.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Red flags hoisted at Lido Beach and Ting Kau Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (June 4) that the Environmental Protection Department has classified the water quality at Lido Beach and Ting Kau Beach in Tsuen Wan District as Grade 4, which means the beaches are not suitable for swimming. The red flags have been hoisted. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beaches until further notice.