

Acclaimed local pianist Cheng Wai to give recital in December

Acclaimed local pianist Cheng Wai will play a variety of compositions for a recital in December.

"Piano Recital by Cheng Wai" is presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) as part of its "City Hall Virtuosi" Series.

The programme will include Wu Zuqiang and Du Mingxin's "The Mermaid Suite for Piano" which consists of "Dance of Coral", "Dance of Ginseng", "Dance of Waterweed" and "Wedding Dance"; Ye Xiaogang's "Namucuo", Doming Lam's "Flowery Moon Light of Spring River", Zhou Long's "Wu Kui", Chen Peixun's "Autumn Moon on a Calm Lake", Zhang Zhao's "Pi Huang", Liszt's Three Concert Études, S. 144, No. 3 "Un Sospiro" and "Sonata in B minor, S. 178".

Cheng Wai, who has been described by one critic as a "piano poetess", received one of Hong Kong's Ten Outstanding Young Persons awards in 2009. Having graduated early from the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) and the Curtis Institute of Music in the United States, she obtained her master's degree at Yale University, and then finished with a doctoral degree from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Her principal teachers included Ling Yuan, Gabriel Kwok, John Winther, Seymour Lipkin, Gary Graffman, Claude Frank and Gilbert Kalish.

Cheng has performed around the world, including the concert halls of the Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall in New York, the John F Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, the National Centre for Performing Arts, Beijing Concert Hall, Shanghai Grand Theatre, Harbin Grand Theatre, the Hong Kong Cultural Centre and more. One of Hong Kong's most versatile and renowned pianists, Cheng is active both as soloist and chamber musician. She has appeared with numerous orchestras, including the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra. Cheng has also performed under the baton of Gustav Meier, Lawrence Smith, Samuel Wong, Yip Wing-sie, Zheng Xiaoying, Mak Ka-lok, Hu Yongyan, Yan Huichang and more.

Cheng is the chairlady of the Central Conservatory of Music (Hong Kong) Foundation, and teaches at the HKAPA, Hong Kong Baptist University and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. In addition, she is a frequent adjudicator of numerous local and international competitions. She recently finished her 2017 "Dessiner la Musique, Cheng Wai Piano Recital China Tour" of 15 cities to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Hong Kong Special Administration Region's establishment.

"City Hall Virtuosi Series – Piano Recital by Cheng Wai" will be staged at 8pm on December 28 (Friday) at the Theatre of Hong Kong City Hall. Tickets priced at \$150 and \$200 are now available at URBIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme

enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7321 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/music/programs_555.html.

2Faced Dance Company to perform dance and circus show "What the Moon Saw"

2Faced Dance Company from the United Kingdom will perform the dance and circus production "What the Moon Saw" in December. This performance is suitable for children aged 3 and above.

2Faced Dance Company drew inspiration from the work of Hans Christian Andersen and artfully re-imagined it for "What the Moon Saw", a dance and circus performance for little ones and their families. Alone in the world and scared of the dark, Jack opens his bedroom windows to find a familiar friendly face, the Moon. The Moon teaches Jack to be brave with his treasured experience and takes Jack on travels around the world.

2Faced Dance Company was established in the United Kingdom in 1999 by Artistic Director and Choreographer Tamsin Fitzgerald. The company produces innovative and aspirational artistic performances and participation programmes which tour extensively across the United Kingdom and internationally. The company works with cutting-edge and culturally diverse designers, venues and organisations, and supports and mentors artists while advocating on behalf of the dance sector, challenging and inspiring different sectors of society.

Details of the performances are as follows:

December 14 and 15 (Friday and Saturday), 7.30pm

December 16 (Sunday), 3pm

Theatre, Hong Kong City Hall

Tickets: \$140, \$180 and \$240

Presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, "What the Moon Saw" is one of the attractions of the "Cheers!" Series. Tickets are now available at URBIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7323 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/multi_arts/programs_652.html.

Hong Kong Customs teams up with Australian Border Force to curb international drug trafficking activities

Hong Kong Customs and the Australian Border Force mounted a joint operation against drug trafficking by air mail between the two places from October 15 to 28.

During the operation, a total of 18 cases of trafficking drugs from Hong Kong to Australia were detected with a seizure of about 26 kilograms of suspected gamma-butyrolactone and about 4kg of suspected Part 1 poisons. The estimated market value of the seizure is about HK\$500,000.

Hong Kong Customs will continue to step up co-operation with overseas law enforcement agencies through intelligence exchange and joint operations to combat international drug trafficking activities.

Illegal worker jailed

A Pakistani illegal worker holding a recognisance form was jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (October 29).

During operation "Twilight" on September 26, Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators raided a tailor shop in Tsim Sha Tsui. A male Pakistani illegal worker, aged 37, was arrested. When intercepted he was working as odd-job worker. Upon identity checking, he produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that he was a non-refoulement claimant. An employer suspected of employing the illegal worker was arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

The illegal worker was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. He pleaded guilty to the charge and was sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a

removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening on vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation, with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

Hong Kong Customs combats unfair trade practices at fitness centre

Hong Kong Customs today (October 29) arrested a male director, a female director and five male staff members of a fitness centre suspected of engaging in aggressive commercial practices in the course of selling fitness service, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO).

Customs earlier received information alleging that staff members of a fitness centre in Mong Kok imposed undue influence in selling fitness services to three customers who were forced to procure fitness club membership valued at \$9,600, \$19,200 and \$36,000 respectively.

After investigation, Customs officers today arrested six men and one woman, aged between 20 and 27.

Investigation is ongoing and the arrested persons have been released on bail pending further investigation.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TD0 and consumers to procure services at reputable shops. Before making the purchase decision, consumers should not easily provide their identity cards or credit cards to a salesperson. Consumers should firmly refuse signing any sales documents if they have no intention to purchase.

Under the TD0, any trader commits an offence of engaging in aggressive commercial practices if harassment, coercion or undue influence is used to impair consumer's freedom of choice or conduct, causing the consumer to make a transactional decision. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years. The management staff will also be liable if the offence is committed with their consent or connivance or is attributed to their neglect.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TD0 to the Customs 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).