

PRESS RELEASE

Opera Hong Kong proudly presents
 Semi-staged Opera: Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*
 A Hilarious Love Story



(6 Oct 2020, Hong Kong) Opera Hong Kong is presenting a semi-staged production, *The Marriage of Figaro* (*Le nozze di Figaro*), one of the most endearing opera works of Mozart. The long-awaited opera will be staged on November 10-11, 2020, at the Concert Hall of Hong Kong Cultural Centre. Audience will enjoy a very human love story full of laughter and tears.

The Marriage of Figaro is a four-act *opera buffa* (comic opera). The plot, with all kinds of interesting subplots including hide-and-seek, assignments, would-be husband turning out to be a long-lost son, centres on the longing of the young Countess Almaviva to win back the love of her philandering husband with the help of her servants, Figaro and his betrothed Susanna, object of the Count's amorous attentions. The opera is filled with delightful arias and great vocal ensembles. The hilarious "mad day" comes to an end with everybody involved singing praise of love, the only fitting end to such a day.

Having endured the hardship of the coronavirus pandemic for almost a year, Hong Kong audience will be delighted to enjoy a cheerful production, featuring entirely our homegrown artists. Opera Hong Kong has committed to nurture and train local talents through the Young Artist Development Programme, children chorus or various workshops throughout the years, and provide them with different performing platforms in this particularly tough period. 10 shining local young artists from the Jockey Club Opera Hong Kong Young Artist Development and Education Programme will participate on stage.

Director **Nancy Yuen** refers that the production would be an authentic rendition of Mozart's popular work which reflects the society in early 19th century. Nancy is one of the most outstanding singers from Asia. She made her debut upon graduation from the Royal Academy of Music, London, with the Welsh National Opera, singing the title role of *Madama Butterfly* to great critical acclaim, with subsequent performances of the same role in Europe, Australia and Asia. Nancy has been the Head of Vocal Studies at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts since March 2010. She has been elected Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in 2014.

Conductor **Johnny Poon** has regularly appeared in concert halls and festivals across the globe, including the Carnegie Hall, Glinka Cappella Hall, Novgorod Philharmonic Hall, National Centre for the Performing Arts, Forbidden City Concert Hall, Harlaxton International Music Festival, Manhattan Hong Kong Music Festival,

Operafestival di Roma and Hong Kong Arts Festival. He has guest-conducted ensembles such as the Moscow State Philharmonic Orchestra, Südwestdeutsche Philharmonie, Slezske divadlo Opava, Kammerchor Stuttgart, Sinfonica dell' International Chamber Ensemble, New England Symphonic Ensemble, Beijing Central Conservatory Symphony Orchestra, Manhattan School of Music Symphony Orchestra, Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra, Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. **Johnny** is currently the Head of Department of Music and the Associate Vice-President (Interdisciplinary Research) at Hong Kong Baptist University.

Being a loyal supporter of Opera Hong Kong's opera production, **Apollo Wong** will take up the leading role as **Figaro** this time. Prior to that, Apollo has collaborated with Opera Hong Kong in over 20 productions, including Frère Laurent in *Roméo et Juliette*, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* and Zuniga in *Carmen* since 2004. Apollo is a bass-baritone, Conductor and Music Director of The Learners Chorus and Orchestra. He is also the winner of Palm Springs Opera Guild Vocal competition and Pasadena Opera Guild Vocal Scholarship.

Starring as **Count Almaviva** will be baritone **Sammy Chien**. A graduate of the Jockey Club Opera Hong Kong Young Artist Development Programme 2015-2018, Sammy has performed more than 20 operatic roles with Opera Hong Kong since 2010, including Papageno in *The Magic Flute* in Hong Kong and Fuzhou in 2018, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* and Ping in *Turandot*.

Opera Hong Kong sincerely thanks to the support of Home Affairs Bureau and Hong Kong Arts Development Council which make this production possible.

Programme Details

10-11 Nov 2020 (Tue & Wed) 7:30pm

Concert Hall, Hong Kong Cultural Centre

\$480, \$380, \$280, \$100 - Tickets available at all URBIX outlets on 13 Oct 2020

Performed in Italian with Chinese and English surtitles.

Please visit <http://operahongkong.org> for more details.

Production team

Producer	Warren Mok
Conductor	Johnny Poon
Director	Nancy Yuen
Chorus Director	Alex Tam
Orchestra Executive	Anders Hui

Performers

Figaro	Apollo Wong
Susanna	Yanna Chen^ (10 Nov) / Gladys Ho^ (11 Nov)
Count Almaviva	Sammy Chien (10 Nov) / Alexander Chen (11 Nov)
The Countess	Jasmine Law^ (10 Nov) / Candice Chung^ (11 Nov)
Cherubino	Bobbie Zhang (10 Nov) / Christy Li^ (11 Nov)
Dr. Bartolo	Edmund Kwan
Marcellina	Ivy Mak
Don Basilio	Wesley Lam^
Don Curzio	Henry Ngan^
Antonio	Alex Kwok^ (10 Nov) / Lam Kwok Ho^ (11 Nov)
Barbarina	Amanda Ng (10 Nov) / Rachel Kwok^ (11 Nov)

Opera Hong Kong Orchestra

Opera Hong Kong Chorus

^ Artists of 2019-2022 Jockey Club Opera Hong Kong Young Artists Development and Education Programme

High resolution photos can be downloaded at: <https://bit.ly/3cHJ9eE>

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About Opera Hong Kong

Founded in 2003 Opera Hong Kong (OHK) is Hong Kong's first professional opera company. Over the years, the company has gone from strength to strength under the Artistic Director Warren Mok, the internationally acclaimed Hong Kong tenor. OHK has elevated opera in the Asia's world city, with many world-class productions covering all major works in the operatic canon and has collaborated with opera houses and festivals including Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, Taormina Opera Festival, Theater Erfurt, Opéra de Nice, National Centre for the Performing Arts and Shanghai Opera House.

In 2019, OHK was selected by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council as one of the three recipients of the coveted "Eminent Arts Group Scheme". The Scheme's consecutive 5-year funding has become a boost to further the company's development.

OHK is committed to promoting the city's brightest, young opera singers. In 2015, OHK launched the Jockey Club Opera Hong Kong Young Artist Development Programme (the Programme), a three-year opera training programme designed to nurture ten young local artists. The success of the programme led to its renewal by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for another three years from 2019 to 2022, providing intensive training to 12 local artists.

OHK also places a strong emphasis on its education and community activities. Opera school tours, summer schools and master classes are held regularly to reach young audiences. The music centre in Wanchai provides a wide range of courses for early age children to adult in addition to Children Chorus classes. The OHK Chorus and the OHK Children Chorus were established in 2004 and 2008, respectively and are becoming recognised contributors on the local choral scene.

The recent development of the Greater Bay Area has created an environment for OHK to initiate more collaborations and bring the art of opera to a wider audience.

Official website: www.operahongkong.org

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