

Press Release

Opera Hong Kong presents  
**Verdi's *La Traviata***  
Featuring world-acclaimed divas  
Venera Gimadieva & Stacey Alleaume



(24 August 2022, Hong Kong) Opera Hong Kong is delighted to present the grand production *La Traviata* featuring the most sought-after overseas artists, including Venera Gimadieva, Stacey Alleaume, Kang Wang, Mario Chang, Stephen Powell and Luca Grassi. The opera will be staged from 5 to 9 Oct, 2022, at the Grand Theatre of Hong Kong Cultural Centre.

*La Traviata* (“The Fallen Woman”) is Giuseppe Verdi’s most immediate opera, set in what was the composer’s “present day”. A touching yet tragic love story, the work is also a forceful indictment of class bigotry and gender prejudice that still resonates today, a story all the more poignant — and credible — at a time when pestilence once again cuts a deadly swathe through society.

Violetta, suffering secretly from tuberculosis, is a Parisian courtesan, who is independent, beautiful, elegant, charming, witty, but not the sort of woman welcomed into good families. Alfredo falls in love, as does Violetta, the first true love for each of them: they embark on a happy affair that is broken up by the machinations of Alfredo’s father, Giorgio Germont. Alfredo’s faith is broken, but behaves abominably; even his father is ashamed. Regret comes too late, as Violetta, destitute, succumbs to the illness that has been plaguing her. She dies in the arms of the now penitent and reconciled father and son.



Winner of Molière Award of the best musical show, Director **Jean-Louis Grinda** has been the General Director of Opéra de Monte-Carlo since 2007 and has directed wide range of repertoires including *La Périochole*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Tales of Hoffmann*, *Falstaff*, *Rigoletto*, *Mefistofele*, *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, *La Navarraise* and *Duello amoroso*. He also collaborated with Opera Hong Kong in *Aida* (2017) and *Don Giovanni* (2019).

World-class conductor, **Renato Palumbo** is praised “Cavaliere della Repubblica italiana” (knight of the Italian Republic) for his artistic merits. His international career began very early as musical director of the Istanbul State Opera of the Macau Festival and was latter appointed as the first Italian General Music Director at the Deutsche Oper. He is a regular guest at the major international theaters, such as La Scala in Milan, Paris Opéra, Covent Garden in London, Pesaro and Martina Franca festivals.

Russian soprano **Venera Gimadieva** debuted her Violetta Valéry in *La Traviata* to enormous acclaim. It becomes one of her signature roles with subsequent performances at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, La Fenice, Opéra National de Paris and Glyndebourne Festival Opera, as well as her US debut with the LA Philharmonic Orchestra at the Hollywood Bowl. Other signature roles of Gimadieva including the title role of *Lucia di Lammermoor* and The Queen of Shemakha in *The Golden Cockerel*.

**Stacey Alleaume**, an accomplished Australian-Mauritian Soprano, will share the role of Violetta Valéry. Alleaume was awarded the prestigious AOAC Dame Joan Sutherland Scholarship for outstanding Australian operatic talent. She also won the Waiariki Institute of Technology New Zealand Aria in 2011, as well as Australia’s longest-running and most prestigious awards, The Sydney Eisteddfod Opera Scholarship 2012 and the Herald Sun Aria 2013. Her principal roles with Opera Australia also include Violetta Valéry in *La Traviata* both on the mainstage and Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour, Fiorilla in *Il Turco in Italia*, Sophie in *Werther*, Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Valencienne in *The Merry Widow*.

Alfredo will be sung by the renowned tenors **Kang Wang** and **Mario Chang**. Australian-Chinese tenor, Kang Wang was a grand finalist in the 2017 Cardiff Singer of the World competition and 2nd Prize winner of the 2017 International Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition in Moscow, Russia. Highlights of the past season include a return to the Metropolitan Opera for Edmondo in *Manon Lescaut* opposite Sonya Yoncheva and Marcelo Álvarez, Opera Australia and Welsh National Opera as Alfredo in *La Traviata* and more. Winner of the 2014 Operalia Competition and the overall First Prize in the Plácido Domingo Competition, Guatemalan tenor Mario Chang has been praised as a “born bel canto tenor” by Anthony Tommasini in the New York Times. In the recent season, Chang sang Alfredo in *La Traviata* at Washington National Opera and the Atlanta Opera. He returns to Oper Frankfurt for and returns to Santa Fe Opera to reprise the role of Rodolfo in a new production of *La Bohème*.

**Stephen Powell** and **Luca Grassi** will take on the role as Germont. Praised by Wall Street Journal for his “rich, lyric baritone, commanding presence, and thoughtful musicianship”, Stephen made a successful debut performance as the title role in *Macbeth* with Michigan Opera Theatre. Past seasons he was the



title role of *Sweeney Todd* with Michigan Opera Theatre, Germont in *La Traviata* with Seattle Opera, San Diego Opera, Opera Philadelphia and Los Angeles Opera, Scarpia in *Tosca* with Minnesota Opera, and more. Winner of numerous competitions, Grassi debuted in *La Traviata* as Germont and sings the role later in many theatres including Oper Leipzig, Opéra de Montreal and Teatro Verdi di Pisa. He has performed singing career in many opera houses and festivals around the world, such as, *La Bohème* (Marcello) in Glyndebourne, Modena, and Bergamo; *Madama Butterfly* (Sharpless) in Bologna, Genova, Glasgow, at the Deutsche Oper of Berlin, Roma.

Special thanks to the continuous support from the Art Development Matching Grants Scheme of the Government of the HKSAR, Hong Kong Arts Development Council and Leisure and Cultural Services Department, as well as our title sponsor of 5 October performance, Bank of China (Hong Kong) Private Banking and hotel sponsor, New World Millennium Hong Kong Hotel.

### **Programme Details**

Date and time: 5-9 October (Wed to Sun) 7:45pm, 9 October (Sun) 3:00pm

Venue: Grand Theatre, Hong Kong Cultural Centre

Ticket price: \$1,080, \$920, \$720, \$620, \$420, \$220

Tickets available at Urbtix from 24 August 2022

Performed in Italian with Chinese and English Surtitles.

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

### **Production Team**

Producer	Warren Mok
Conductor	Renato Palumbo
Director	Jean-Louis Grinda
Set and Lighting Designer	Laurent Castaingt
Costume Designer	Jorge Jara
Choreographer	Eugénie Andrin
Chorus Director	Alex Tam
Revival Director	Olga Paliakova

### **Performers**

Violetta Valéry	Venera Gimadieva (5, 7 Oct 7:45pm & 9 Oct 3:00pm) / Stacey Alleaume (6 & 8 Oct 7:45pm)
Alfredo	Kang Wang (5, 7 Oct 7:45pm & 9 Oct 3:00pm) / Mario Chang (6 & 8 Oct 7:45pm)
Germont	Stephen Powell (5, 7 Oct 7:45pm & 9 Oct 3:00pm) / Luca Grassi (6 & 8 Oct 7:45pm)
Flora Bervoix	Bobbie Zhang (5, 7 Oct 7:45pm & 9 Oct 3:00pm) / Christy Li (6 & 8 Oct 7:45pm)
Annina	Rachel Kwok
Gastone	Samuel Huang (5, 7 Oct 7:45pm & 9 Oct 3:00pm) / Henry Ngan (6 & 8 Oct 7:45pm)
Barone Douphol	Lam Kwok Ho
Marchese d'Obigny	Alex Kwok
Dottore Grenvil	Freddie Tong
Giuseppe	Wesley Lam
Commissioner	Charles Tsang
Opera Hong Kong Orchestra	
Opera Hong Kong Chorus	

**High resolution photos can be downloaded at:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/t9o8pccxhj993n40zmhtm/h?dl=0&rlkey=blcv6wlsiax4vb6edb9x904u0>

**-END-**



### **Media Enquiry**

For media enquiry, please contact:

Dory Lui      Tel: (852) 2234 0303

Email: [dorylui@operahongkong.org](mailto:dorylui@operahongkong.org)

Derek Wu      Tel: (852) 2234 0303

Email: [derekwu@operahongkong.org](mailto:derekwu@operahongkong.org)

### **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 direction of 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 and Education 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. The Programme has been completed successfully in March 2022.

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](http://www.operahongkong.org)

Facebook Page: [www.facebook.com/OperaHongKongLimited](https://www.facebook.com/OperaHongKongLimited)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/operahongkong](https://www.instagram.com/operahongkong)

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/operahongkong](https://www.youtube.com/operahongkong)