

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Opera Hong Kong Presents Franz Lehár's beloved Operetta *The Merry Widow*

All-Local Cast Brings Timeless Romance and Wit to the Stage in a Semi-Staged Opera

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Hong Kong, 7 Jul 2025 – Opera Hong Kong is delighted to announce its upcoming production of Franz Lehár's sparkling operetta *The Merry Widow* (*Die lustige Witwe*) at Hong Kong City Hall, Concert Hall on 15 and 16 August 2025. This debut production by the company showcases Lehár's glittering score and romantic comedy with a cast of Hong Kong's brightest young talents.

Composed in 1905 by Austro-Hungarian composer and conductor Franz Lehár, *The Merry Widow* stands as the most famous and enduring of his 30 operettas. Based on *L'Attaché d'ambassade*, a comic play from 1861 by Henri Meilhac, *The Merry Widow* tells the story of the fabulously wealthy widow Hanna Glawari whose money is critical to the economic survival of her native land of Pontevedro, and the scheming of the Pontevedrian nobles to marry her off to keep her fortune in the country. Old flames, disguised passions, and a whirl of waltzes prove that love and money make dangerously merry bedfellows.

Timeless Romance Meets Modern Flair: A Semi-Staged Spectacle

For this production, produced by Opera Hong Kong's Artistic Director, Dr. Warren Mok, renowned German conductor Michael Koehler will lead the Opera Hong Kong Orchestra and Chorus. Since 2000, Koehler has served as Music Director of the Leipzig Philharmonic Orchestra, where his innovative programming has brought fresh attention to 20th-century operetta repertoire. The production will be directed by renowned opera director Tang Xinxin, former resident director at Beijing's National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) who has produced multiple opera productions internationally. Notably, both Michael Koehler and Tang Xinxin collaborated on Opera Hong Kong's 2024 production of *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. This production marks a meaningful reunion for the two esteemed artists, promising an unforgettable synergy on stage.



Producer
Warren Mok



Conductor
Michael Koehler



Director
Tang Xinxin

In a powerful statement of confidence in Hong Kong's cultural future, all principal and supporting roles are sung by local artists. The production showcases how far Hong Kong's opera development has come, with singers who began their journeys in local school choirs and music programmes now taking on leading roles in one of the world's most beloved operettas.



Hanna Glawari
Candice Chung



Rianne Lau



Count Danilo Danilovitsch
Henry Ngan



Lam Kwok Ho



Baron Mirko Zeta
Albert Lim

The Merry Widow features an all-local cast of rising stars, including sopranos Candice Chung and Rianne Lau alternating as the glamorous widow Hanna Glawari, tenors Henry Ngan and Lam Kwok Ho as the

dashing Count Danilo, and baritone Albert Lim as the scheming Baron Zeta. These exceptional young artists exemplify Opera Hong Kong's legacy of cultivating world-class performers, blending professional artistry with fresh energy to breathe new life into Lehár's timeless operetta.

For audiences, operetta is the ideal introduction to musical storytelling: lighter than opera but more sophisticated than most musicals, it blends catchy melodies, witty dialogue, and lavish romance into one delightful package. With its accessible stories and instantly hummable tunes, operetta offers newcomers an easy entry point while still delivering the grandeur of classical music.

Tickets Now on Sale!

Tickets for *The Merry Widow* are now available for booking online via URBIX <https://bit.ly/MerryWidow2025>. Prices range from \$500, \$400, \$300, to \$200. A limited number of concession tickets are also available for full-time students, senior citizens aged 60 or above, persons with physical impairments, and recipients of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA).

#TheMerryWidow #OperaHongKong #OHK #Lehár @operahongkong

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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 direction of Dr. Warren Mok, the internationally acclaimed Hong Kong tenor. OHK has elevated opera in 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 around the world.

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 five-year funding has become a boost to further the company's development. In 2024, OHK was named as a recipient of the "Eminent Arts Group Scheme" for a further five years.

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, 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.

In 2024 OHK launched the inaugural "LKSFOHK Young Artist Overseas Fellowships" Programme, generously sponsored by the Li Ka Shing Foundation, to provide short-term international residencies for six selected young artists who are Hong Kong residents to elevate their vocal artistry.

OHK also places a strong emphasis on 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 adults in addition to Children Chorus classes.



The OHK Chorus and the OHK Children Chorus were established in 2004 and 2008 respectively and are recognised contributors to 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.

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