

“A Story of Two Celestials in the Mortal World” to be re-run after 50 years

"A Story of Two Celestials in the Mortal World" is one of the classic repertoires of renowned Cantonese virtuosi Fung Wong Nui and So Siu-tong, but has not been staged since the 1970s. Some fifty years later, thanks to Ko Lai, a disciple of Fung Wong Nui, the only known extant script of the play has been recovered. After some editing and adaptation, this revived opera can now be staged again for Cantonese opera lovers.

Inspired by the biographical story of the Tang dynasty Empress, Wu Zetian, "A Story of Two Celestials in the Mortal World" is a Cantonese opera of grand scale with a mythological theme including reimagined historical figures in the setting of the imperial court. The story starts with Lu Gaitian declaring herself as monarch. She falls in love with Li Yi, the second crown prince. Li pretends to work alongside Lu. The Prime Minister, Hu Renzhi, is determined to help Li. Li gets his way, rushes straight to the Royal Palace and Lu is besieged by Li.

This is a Ko Lai Sum Cantonese Opera Troupe production with a strong cast including Lee Lung, Ko Lai, Wan Yuk-yu, Yat Dim-hung, Ho Wai-ling, Mo Huamin and Lam Po-chu.

Presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, "A Story of Two Celestials in the Mortal World" by Ko Lai Sum Cantonese Opera Troupe will be staged at 7.30pm on December 8 (Saturday) at the Auditorium, Yuen Long Theatre; and at 7.30pm on December 17 (Monday) at the Theatre, Ko Shan Theatre. Tickets priced from \$120 to \$320 are now available at URBTIX (www.urbtix.hk).

For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7325 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/chinese_opera/programs_629.html.

A pre-performance talk with speakers Ko Lai, Keith Lai and Ng Wing-hei will be held at 7.30pm on November 20 (Tuesday) at Function Room, 4/F, Ko Shan Theatre New Wing. A post-performance talk with speakers Lee Lung, Ko Lai, Wan Yuk-yu and Martin Lau will be held at 7.30pm on December 20 (Thursday) at AC1, Level 4, Administration Building, Hong Kong Cultural Centre. Both talks will be conducted in Cantonese. Admission is free with limited seats available on a first-come, first-served basis.