

Ambassador for Cultural Promotion Tan Dun lines up local young soprano to perform in Holland Festival (with photos)

Internationally renowned composer and conductor Tan Dun, appointed as Hong Kong's Ambassador for Cultural Promotion (ACP) earlier by the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau, has recently lined up Hong Kong young soprano Candice Chung to take part in the 76th edition of the Holland Festival in Amsterdam, with the support of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), and participate in the world premiere of his new work "Requiem for Nature".

The Holland Festival is the oldest and largest annual international performing arts festival in the Netherlands. Tan's liaison enabled Chung to join the performance of the "Requiem for Nature" in Amsterdam on June 30 and July 1, and helped to groom local young artistic talent and promote East-meets-West cultural exchanges. Tan specially added Cantonese, Tibetan and Mongolian elements into his work and, by allowing a vocalist to play four roles in the opera through changes in languages and tones, enhanced the dramatic effects of the work.

Local-born soprano Candice Chung was thankful to Tan for inviting her to join the magnificent world premiere. "It is really a dream come true for a musician to sing with the world-renowned Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, and to be able to work with Pierre Audi, one of the world's leading opera directors, is also inspiring," she said.

To achieve a better performance, Chung took extra lessons with a Cantonese opera teacher, hoping to enhance the sense of authenticity for her interpretation of the performing role, and she found the preparation process an eye-opening experience. In return, she wowed the audience with her bright tone while the "Requiem for Nature" also received critical acclaim.

Tan has been serving as the ACP since January 1 this year for a period of five years. The LCSD hoped that the ACP, through inviting local young artists to participate in international arts festivals and outbound performances, can equip them with global perspectives. Prior to Chung's successful debut in the Holland Festival, Tan had also invited local young tenor and soprano Chen Chen and Louise Kwong to stage the "Buddha Passion" together with cross-strait musicians in Fuzhou this April.

Tan will continue to explore opportunities for local young artists to perform on global stages in the coming months to enrich their experience and broaden their international vision, so as to tie in with the strategy of the National 14th Five-Year Plan that supports Hong Kong to develop into an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchanges. The LCSD will

continue to work with Tan to bring local young artists to out of Hong Kong, telling good stories of China and Hong Kong with arts.

Tan is currently the Dean of the Bard College Conservatory of Music in New York and an Honorary Artistic Director of the China National Symphony Orchestra. He has been promoting the messages of peace and green environment throughout the years. His music has made an indelible mark on the world's music scene, which earned him many prestigious honours. In March this year, Tan was presented the Abu Dhabi Festival Award 2023 in recognition of his outstanding lifetime achievements and contributions to music. This December, he will present the WE-make Series to Hong Kong audiences, joining hands with local, international and Mainland artists to showcase a wide range of art forms including orchestra, rock, opera and dance, to bring new experience to audiences.

