

“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.

Additional King Yin Lei public open days in November

To allow more people to visit the declared monument King Yin Lei to appreciate and learn about its architectural features and history, two additional public open days will be held in November for free.

The additional public open days will be held on November 17 and 18. Each open day will have four visit sessions:

- * From 9.30am to 11am;
- * From 11am to 12.30pm;
- * From 2pm to 3.30pm; and
- * From 3.30pm to 5pm.

In addition to an on-site guided tour service, antique furniture provided by the former owner of King Yin Lei will be on display along with information panels and artefacts, and there will be screenings of a documentary about King Yin Lei.

Admission tickets for these two additional public open days in November will be distributed at the Hong Kong Heritage Discovery Centre (HKHDC), Kowloon Park, Haiphong Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon from 10am to 6pm on October 27 and 28 (Saturday and Sunday). Tickets will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis and each person can obtain a maximum of four tickets for one of the sessions.

Remaining tickets for the November open days will be distributed at the HKHDC from October 29. Limited tickets for the public open days on October 20 and 21, and December 15 and 16 are still available at the HKHDC. The HKHDC is open from Mondays to Fridays (except Thursdays) from 10am to 6pm, and on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays from 10am to 7pm (Enquiry hotline: 2208 4400).

King Yin Lei is located at 45 Stubbs Road, Hong Kong. Visitors are advised to use public transport to access the venue as no parking facilities are available.

- * New World First Bus route No. 15 (Central – The Peak)
- * New World First Bus route No. 15B (Wan Chai (HKCEC Extension) – The Peak) (only operates on Sundays and public holidays)
- * Green minibus route No. 26 (Lee Garden Road, Causeway Bay – King Yin Lei)

For details about King Yin Lei open days, please visit the heritage conservation website of the Development Bureau (https://www.heritage.gov.hk/en/whatsnew/events_54.htm), call 2848 6230 or email to kyl@devb.gov.hk.

SED on all-graduate teaching force policy and school in Greater Bay Area

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, after attending a radio programme today (October 15):

Reporter: Mr Yeung, can I ask you an English question? During the programme, some callers expressed their concerns about the teaching quality of teachers. But then through the Policy Address, the policy about all-graduate teaching force, do you think it would help improve the quality of teachers?

Secretary for Education: I think, by and large, the quality of our teachers is very good. But our teachers need to keep themselves updated on the latest development in education and also to continuously upgrade themselves. By adopting an all-graduate policy on teachers, we are encouraging more qualified teachers or qualified students in future to join the teaching force. That's how we think in the longer term we could improve the quality of teachers in the sector.

Reporter: Why having a high qualification? You believe that the quality of teachers would also be a lot better?

Secretary for Education: Of course, all teachers need to have sufficient training and throughout their career they also have to upgrade themselves. But I think, at least it shows that the Government highly values the teaching force in our society and we could attract more talent into this area.

Reporter: One question on the schools in the Greater Bay Area. What is the actual target? And you just said it's for Hong Kong people, not Mainlanders. Can you talk about that?

Secretary for Education: During our thinking process, our focus is on Hong Kong people. So when we talk about setting up schools in the Greater Bay Area offering Hong Kong curriculum, we only have the Hong Kong people in mind. But of course, it all depends on all the future negotiations and developments. Thank you.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

[CE congratulates achievements of Hong Kong athletes in Asian Para Games](#)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (October 14) extended her congratulations to Hong Kong athletes on achieving the best ever results in the Indonesia 2018 Asian Para Games, noting that their distinguished performance and sportsmanship are most encouraging.

"The Hong Kong team won a record-breaking total of 48 medals, comprising 11 gold medals, 16 silver medals and 21 bronze medals. Breakthroughs were achieved in some areas including winning the gold medal for the first time in boccia and breaking the Asian Para Games record and the Asian record in swimming. Their achievements are most heartening.

"Since my tenure as the Director of Social Welfare, I have been supporting the participation by persons with disabilities in sports to demonstrate their talents. In this Asian Para Games, athletes of the Hong Kong team, as in the past, fought hard and persevered in competitions. They have earned the admiration of all Hong Kong people and made us proud. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government will certainly continue to allocate resources to support sports development for persons with disabilities," Mrs Lam said.

On the support by the HKSAR Government for persons with disabilities in sports development, a budget of \$70 million has been earmarked for 2018-19, representing an increase of 50 per cent compared to last year, which includes the support for disabled athletes to prepare for and participate in large-scale sports events, and the organisation of large-scale local sports activities for them. Furthermore, the Government has completed the consultancy study and public consultation on Sport for People with Disabilities in Hong Kong and will implement the recommendations gradually, including providing full-time training for athletes with disabilities. Also, the Government will enhance venue facilities to enable the hosting of sports activities for persons with disabilities, and allocate extra funding for relevant national sports associations to organise outreach programmes in workshops and institutions to provide more opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in sports.

[CE follows up on Policy Address initiatives \(with photos/video\)](#)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, attended a TV programme this morning (October 14) to elaborate on the initiatives in the 2018 Policy

Address and visited an old building in Sai Ying Pun in the afternoon to know more about support measures the residents need in carrying out building repair and maintenance works and introduce to them relevant measures in the Policy Address.

Accompanied by the Director of Buildings, Mr Cheung Tin-cheung; the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services, Mr Alfred Sit; the Director (Building Rehabilitation) of the Urban Renewal Authority (URA), Mr Daniel Ho and the District Officer (Central & Western) Mrs Susanne Wong, Mrs Lam visited a 52-year-old building on Wilmer Street, Sai Ying Pun and met with residents who are also members of the owners' corporation. They briefed her on the 13-storeyed building's repair and maintenance works in the past and works needed in the future. She also inspected areas of the building where repair works will be carried out and the lift. She then paid a home visit to an elderly resident to understand her daily life and introduce to her measures rolled out by the Government to support building repair and maintenance works. Mrs Lam noted that the building has applied for the subsidy schemes by the URA and plans to strengthen its fire safety standards and carry out the necessary repair works. The residents welcomed the initiative in the Policy Address to help home owners in need expedite lift modernisation.

"Hong Kong is facing the challenge posed by ageing buildings. Strengthening building rehabilitation will not only help protect the lives of residents and passers-by and improve the living environment of residents, it will also enhance the adaptability of buildings to extreme weather conditions brought by climate change. In the Policy Address last year, I proposed to allocate \$3 billion to launch "Operation Building Bright 2.0" and devote \$2 billion to subsidise eligible owners to undertake fire safety enhancement measures. The relevant schemes have already been rolled out. In the Policy Address this year, I further proposed to launch in partnership with the URA the Lift Modernisation Subsidy Scheme with a provision of around \$2.5 billion to subsidise lift modernisation for aged buildings to safeguard public safety, with additional subsidy for eligible elderly owner-occupiers. I look forward to launching the scheme in the first quarter of next year," Mrs Lam said.

In addition to rolling out various subsidy schemes to help owners in need enhance building safety, relevant government departments will collaborate with the URA to assist building owners who have participated in the above-mentioned schemes to build in corruption prevention safeguards in their building repair and maintenance projects and to provide more information on building rehabilitation and market information so that the processes of tendering for contractors will be conducted in a fair, just and competitive manner.

