

Cantonese operas "The Judge Goes to Pieces" and "Time to Go Home" to be staged in March

Hung Ka Po Cantonese Opera Troupe will stage a new adaptation of the Cantonese opera "The Judge Goes to Pieces" (Re-run) and the renowned work "Time to Go Home" in March featuring local Cantonese virtuosi.

The performers of "The Judge Goes to Pieces" will be Loong Koon-tin, Nam Fung, Chan Hung-chun, Yat Dim-hung, Leung Sum-ye, Ruan Dewen, Vong Seng-pan and Lee Yuen-ye. The story is about how former minor legal practitioner Song Shijie gets justice for widow Yang Xiuzhen. In the story, Madam Tian eyes a family fortune and schemes with her husband to have the husband of Yang Xiuzhen killed. The pregnant Xiuzhen escapes from home to seek help from her brother, but is betrayed. When she reaches a tea stand run by Song Shijie, Song's wife comes to her rescue and takes her home. Song, who has retired and runs an inn and a tea stand, is urged by his wife to help reinstate Xiuzhen. Shijie makes Xiuzhen his sworn sister after serious consideration, then writes a petition on her behalf. However, the Commissioner's wife accepts a bribe and decides to incriminate Xiuzhen. Shijie, who has the evidence of Madam Tian's bribery, delivers a scathing defence as well as accusations with full confidence in a court attended by four titled scholars.

The cast of "Time to Go Home" will be Lung Koon-tin, Nam Fung, Chan Hung-chun, Lui Hung-kwong, Vong Seng-pan and Lee Yuen-ye. The story follows young general Wen Pingsheng, who is deeply in love with his wife, Pinni. Jealous of the couple's love, Wen's cousins conspire with a doctor to separate the couple by claiming that Pinni has caught an incurable disease. Pingsheng is the only son in the family, so his mother dislikes Pinni for being barren and is also afraid that her son might contract the disease. Fang forces her daughter-in-law to live apart from her son, and forbids her son to visit. As Pingsheng is about to go to war, he visits his wife at night but is caught and scolded by his mother. After he leaves home, the mother gives Pinni a maid and some gold to keep her from ever returning, and then tells her son that his wife has died. Aghast at the news, Pingsheng wants to die on the battlefield but survives numerous conflicts and goes home. As he weeps at Pinni's tomb, his touched wife comes out to meet him. Moved by their undying love and ashamed of their misdeeds, the cousins admit to their wrongdoing. In the end, the mother agrees to the reunion of the couple.

The performances are presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. Details are as follows:

A new adaptation of "The Judge Goes to Pieces" (Re-run)
March 4 (Monday), 7.30pm: Auditorium, Tsuen Wan Town Hall
March 23 (Saturday), 7.30pm: Auditorium, Tuen Mun Town Hall
Ticket prices: \$120 to \$280

"Time to Go Home"

March 9 (Saturday), 7.30pm: Auditorium, Tai Po Civic Centre

Ticket prices: \$120 to \$240

Tickets are now available at URB TIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7321 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/chinese_opera/programs_716.html.

A post-performance talk (in Cantonese) will be held at 7.30pm on March 26 (Tuesday) at AC2, 4/F, Administration Building, Hong Kong Cultural Centre. Speakers will include Lung Koon-tin, Nam Fung and Chan Hung-chun. Admission is free with limited seats available on a first-come, first-served basis.