

Choral artist Patrick Chiu partners with choreographer Ivanhoe Lam to present "Bach im Theater: St. John Passion" (with photos)

Choral artist Patrick Chiu is partnering with choreographer Ivanhoe Lam to present "Bach im Theater: St. John Passion", a production fusing baroque music with contemporary theatre. The two artists audaciously adjust Bach's voice types and dramatic figures, where choristers and soloists engage in movements and actions, bestowing the crucifixion story and Bach's choral masterpiece with an entirely new character.

"Bach im Theater: St. John Passion", one of the programmes of the New Vision Arts Festival (NVAF), will be staged on November 18 and 19 at the Kwai Tsing Theatre Auditorium. The programme received rave reviews last year when it was previewed in Bach's home country of Germany.

Bach is one of the most iconic musicians in Western music history. He never wrote an opera, but much of his music is no less dramatic than any opera. His "St. John Passion" is a good example.

The programme recasts Bach's masterpiece in a contemporary approach. Performers from Hong Kong, Germany, Japan and the United States, hailing from a variety of backgrounds, will dress in everyday clothes and play the roles of Jesus Christ, disciple Peter, Roman governor Pilate and Jewish people in the biblical story. In musical treatment, movement and staging, this production peels off layers of history, catapulting Jesus Christ and Bach into the 21st century, taking theatre audiences on a journey of the soul.

In the role of Jesus, Reginald Mobley is one of today's hottest countertenors, having been invited to perform at the coronation ceremony of King Charles III of the United Kingdom and the BBC Proms this year.

"Bach im Theater: St. John Passion" will be held at 8pm on November 18 (Saturday), and at 3pm on November 19 (Sunday) at the Kwai Tsing Theatre Auditorium. Tickets priced at \$160, \$200, \$280 and \$360 are now available at URBTIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone bookings, please call 3166 1288, or use the mobile ticketing app "URBTIX". Various discount schemes, including the newly introduced weekend package booking discount, are being offered.

"Bach im Theater: St. John Passion" is performed in German with Chinese and English surtitles. A meet-the-artist session will be held after the performance on November 18 at the Auditorium.

Organised by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the NVAF is running from October 20 to November 19, showcasing an array of interdisciplinary programmes by overseas and local performing groups and

artists. For programme enquiries, please call 2370 1044 or visit www.nvaf.gov.hk.

