

Dance drama "Awakening Lion" looks back on Guangdong citizens' courage to fight at historical moment

"Awakening Lion" by the Guangzhou Song and Dance Troupe will be staged in September as part of the Beyond Multi-arts Series presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department.

The story is set in 1840 when the warships of Western powers blockaded the Pearl River estuary and the First Opium War broke out. An irregular force made up of Chinese militias and citizens are fighting against the British in the Sanyuanli village on the outskirts of Canton (now Guangzhou). The plot reflects the spiritual awakening, courage to fight and national spirit of the people in Guangdong during the political chaos of the time. Such a social climate has been likened to "a lion awakening", and this theme runs throughout the play as the storyline traces the coming of age of ordinary people driven by patriotism. The play also presents a rich tapestry of human insights, political change, family relationships, friendship, love and the dilemma between families and the state in the southern part of Guangdong.

In terms of artistic style, "Awakening Lion" features strong characteristics of South China and indigenous features of old Canton. By integrating innovative elements and multimedia technology, the staging features both modern appeal and visual impact. In terms of choreography, the blending of Chinese dance and traditional lion dance is a bold and innovative concept. The production has been supported by the 2018 Special Funds for Cultural Prosperity and Development of Guangdong Province and the Key Literary and Artistic Projects of Guangzhou. It won an award in the Chinese Dance – Dance Drama Category of the 11th Lotus Awards.

"Awakening Lion" by the Guangzhou Song and Dance Troupe will be staged at 8pm on September 27 and 28 (Friday and Saturday) as well as at 3pm on September 29 (Sunday) at the Sha Tin Town Hall Auditorium. Tickets priced at \$180, \$280 and \$380 are now available at URBTIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and various discount schemes of the Beyond Multi-arts Series, please call 2268 7323 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/multi_arts/programs_829.html.

A meet-the-artist session will be held after the performance on September 27 (Friday). Admission is free.