

London ETO promotes Hong Kong's arts and culture in Finland with Hong Kong Children's Choir (with photos)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London (London ETO) promoted Hong Kong's thriving arts and cultural life by co-presenting a concert with the Hong Kong Children's Choir (HKCC) at the Finlandia Chamber Music Hall in Helsinki, Finland, on August 6 (Helsinki time).

Once again performing in Finland after its previous appearance in 2012, the HKCC, heading towards its 50th anniversary, delivered a special concert that also featured the renowned Tapiola Choir from Espoo, Finland. The music comprised a varied repertoire of songs from East and West, including works by some of Hong Kong's best-known and up-and-coming composers. Conducted by its Music Director and Principal Conductor, Kathy Fok, as well as conductors Dominic Lam and Vivian Suen, the HKCC performed, among other pieces, "Ave Maria" by Giulio Caccini, "Laudate Dominum" by John August Pamintuan and a specially commissioned piece by Darius Lim, "Children of Light". It also performed pieces by its resident composer Steve Ho: "Let Music Flow", "Kung Fu", "MTR Song" and "In Search of Plum Flowers in the Rockies".

The Tapiola Choir, conducted by Pasi Hyökki, performed several songs composed by Finnish composers at the concert. They also performed "The Ritual Dance" – a spectacular five-part "primitive music" composition by Jukka Linkola in which they sang as a mass choir alongside the HKCC and the Yuen Long DAC Treble Choir, another guest choir joining the concert. The concert ended with the theme song of the HKCC's 50th anniversary, "I Just Want to Sing", performed by the HKCC and the Tapiola Choir together.

Speaking at the opening of the concert, the Director-General of the London ETO, Ms Priscilla To, welcomed the choirs and talked about the closer collaboration between Hong Kong and Finland. "We are pleased to see that Finland and Hong Kong have in recent years built even closer ties on various fronts, including arts and culture collaboration. Last year, we collaborated with a number of Hong Kong arts groups, including the Musicus Society, the Hong Kong String Orchestra and the Hong Kong Arts Centre, to organise music concerts and a comics exhibition in Helsinki, Espoo, and Kauniainen," she said.

"In addition to being an international financial and business centre, Hong Kong has emerged as a leading arts and culture hub in the region. Orchestras, jazz ensembles, international film and arts festivals, art and design exhibitions and street performances reflect the diversity and vibrancy of Hong Kong's cultural life."

Founded in 1969, the HKCC has grown into a diversified arts organisation for children. The HKCC has gained international acclaim for its performances

and has earned a reputation as one of the best children's choirs in the world. The Helsinki performance was part of a European tour in which the HKCC also took part in a major international choral festival in Tallinn, Estonia.

