

Music Office Youth Choir and Hong Kong Youth Symphony Orchestra achieve outstanding results at overseas competitions (with photos)

The Music Office Youth Choir of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department has won three Gold Awards at the 11th International Johannes Brahms Choir Festival and Competition, held in Germany from July 3 to 7. The choir won Gold Awards in the Youth Mixed Voices, Equal Voices (Female Choirs) and Equal Voices (Male Choirs) and was also named champion in the Youth Mixed Voices and Equal Voices (Female Choirs) categories. The conductor of the Choir, Dr Angelina Au, was awarded the Conductor Prize. The Hong Kong Youth Symphony Orchestra of the Music Office, participating in the 30th Australian International Music Festival held in Australia from July 4 to 10, took home the Gold Award in the Instrumental Category and was named Command Ensemble by the adjudication panel, which enabled the Orchestra to perform at the Festival Closing Concert.

Both activities are part of the Music Office's International Youth Music Exchange Programme. The 68-member Youth Choir, led by conductor and Senior Music Officer Dr Angelina Au, joined a tour to Wernigerode and Hannover, Germany, to take part in the reputable international music event. The competition drew the participation of 45 choirs from 17 countries and regions. The choir was invited to perform at the Festival Opening Concert, the Friendship Concert and the Closing Concert. Repertoire highlights included Haydn's "Gloria"; Faure's "Les Djinns" (The Genies); Mendelssohn's "Denn Er hat seinen Engeln befohlen über dir" (For he shall give his angels charge over thee); "Tundra" by Gjeilo; "Unclouded Day" arranged by Kirchner; and "Xiu He Bao" (Purse Embroidering) arranged by Liu Zhuang.

The 69-member Hong Kong Youth Symphony Orchestra, led and conducted by Chief Music Officer Mr James Leung, Senior Music Officer Mr Lee Sing-wan and Music Officer Ms Tsang Yin-yu, visited Sydney, Australia to meet around 30 participating groups from all over the world. Not only was the Orchestra invited to perform at the Festival Opening Concert, but it also performed at four other festival concerts at prestigious venues such as the Sydney Opera House and the Sydney Town Hall. Various Chinese and Western classics were performed, including Brahms' "Symphony No. 2"; Rachmaninoff's "Symphonic Dances"; Bizet's "Carmen Suite No. 2"; Tchaikovsky's "Slavonic March"; "Jasmine" arranged by Li Wen-ping; and "Good News from Beijing Reaches the Frontier" by Zhenglu and Ma Hong-ye. Besides performing for the Festival, the Orchestra also joined a music workshop and exchange with the Cincinnati Junior String Orchestra from the US at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

