

Veteran Cantonese opera stars and young talents to perform three Guan Hanqing plays in "Four Generations on Stage"

Veteran Cantonese opera stars Chan Ho-kau, Yau Sing-po and Yuen Siu-fai will collaborate with other Cantonese opera performers and talented young actors in an upcoming production entitled "Four Generations on Stage".

Each performance will showcase three of Guan Hanqing's plays, which have been adapted for Cantonese opera playlets by the acclaimed Cantonese opera artist Yuen Siu-fai. Details of the performances are as follows:

November 4 (Sunday) 7.30pm
Auditorium, Tuen Mun Town Hall
Ticket: \$120, \$180, \$240 and \$300

November 19 (Monday) 7.30pm
Auditorium, Kwai Tsing Theatre
Ticket: \$120, \$220, \$300 and \$380

December 3 (Monday) 7.30pm
Auditorium, Sha Tin Town Hall
Ticket: \$120, \$220, \$300 and \$380

The first short play, "Saving a Prostitute", follows a courtesan named Song Yinzhang who pledges her love for scholar An Xiushi. But, lured by the sweet talk of a rogue called Zhou She, Song Yinzhang marries Zhou She instead, despite the disapproval of her confidante, Zhao Paner. After marriage, Song Yinzhang suffers from the abusive Zhou She, and seeks help from Zhao Paner. Zhao Paner then devises a scheme to trick Zhou She into divorcing Song Yinzhang. With the divorce letter, Song Yinzhang is free. An Xiushi and Song Yinzhang finally become husband and wife.

The second short play, "The Riverside Pavilion", follows a scholar official, Bai Shizhong, who meets a widow, Tan Jier, and the two are married. But Yang the Court Officer wants to have Tan Jier for himself, so he lies to the Emperor to obtain an imperial decree and a sword to have Bai Shizhong executed. Tan Jier disguises herself as a fishmonger and meets Yang the Court Officer at the Riverside Pavilion. Tan Jier flirts with him and gets him drunk, then escapes with the imperial decree and the sword. Yang's fraudulent claim is discovered and his official title is taken away.

The third short play, "Meeting the Enemies Alone", is set in the Three Kingdoms period. To demand the return of Jingzhou to the Wu Kingdom, Lu Su invites Guan Yu to a banquet across the river where an ambush is waiting.

Knowing very well that it is a set-up, Guan Yu goes to the banquet with his attendant Zhou Cang, while his sons Guan Ping and Guan Xing stand by as reinforcements near the river. At the banquet, Guan Yu and Lu Su confront each other with their weapons after a few drinks. When Lu Su loses, Guan Yu takes him hostage on his boat, so that Lu Su dares not order his ambushers to attack. Guan Yu returns to his camp unscathed.

In addition to the three veteran stars, the cast includes Szeto Chui-ying, Ng Lap-hei, Li Qiuyuan, Lee Lung, Chui Yuet-ming, Chan Wing-yee, Tong Yuen-ying, Kwok Chun-sing, Leung Wai-hong, Cheung Kit-ha, Wan Yuk-yu, Jim Ho-fung, Sun Kim-long, Loong Koon-tin and Lo Lai-see.

"Four Generations on Stage" is presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. Tickets are now available at URBTIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone credit card bookings, please call 2111 5999. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2268 7325 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/Programme/en/chinese_opera/programs_618.html.

A post-performance talk (in Cantonese) will be held at 7.30pm on December 11 (Tuesday) at AC2, Level 4, Administration Building, Hong Kong Cultural Centre. Speakers will include Yuen Siu-fai, Li Qiuyuan and Wan Yuk-yu, and the moderator is Barbara Tang. Admission is free with limited seats available on a first-come, first-served basis.