

World premiere of Cantonese Opera Film "The Legend of The White Snake" at 4th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Culture and Arts Festival in November (with photos)

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department and the Foshan Cantonese Opera Inheritance Institute (Foshan Cantonese Opera Troupe) will present the world premiere of Cantonese Opera film "The Legend of The White Snake" at the Grand Theatre of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre on November 2 and 3, as one of the highlight events of the 4th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Culture and Arts Festival. Li Shuqin, director of the Foshan Cantonese Opera Troupe and a winner of the China Theatre Plum Blossom Award and the Best Lead Actor at the Shanghai White Magnolia Awards for Theatrical Art, will perform alongside renowned Hong Kong Cantonese opera artist Law Ka-ying in this film, which aims to revive the well-known folk legend by blending cinematic presentation techniques with opera performance. Through this cultural exchange and collaboration in the form of Cantonese opera filming, it seeks to further promote in-depth co-operation between the Mainland and Hong Kong in content creation, production and promotion, and to jointly develop a cultural Bay Area.

The Cantonese opera play "The Legend of The White Snake" is one of the classic repertoires of the Foshan Cantonese Opera Troupe and has remained popular over the years. Starring Li Shuqin (as Bai Suzhen) and Law Ka-ying (as Xu Xian), the Troupe brings the play to the big screen, and uses location shooting for some scenes that blend traditional Cantonese opera with modern cinematic elements to create a new form of classic heritage. It also marks Law Ka-ying's first role in a Cantonese opera film. By interpreting Cantonese opera in an innovative way, it enables the younger generation to learn more about its artistic and cultural essence.

The Cantonese opera film "The Legend of The White Snake" boasts a strong production team: the film is directed by national first-class director Yin Dawei, and the script is adapted by Li Jianglin, a talented protégée of Cantonese opera master Law Ka-bo. Apart from Li Shuqin and Law Ka-ying, the main cast also includes seasoned performers from the Troupe, including Wai Guo (as Abbott Fahai), Yang Yan (as Xiao Qing), and more. The film won the Best Musical Feature Film Award at the 21st Universe Multicultural Film Festival. It also received multiple nominations at the 2nd Hong Kong Bauhinia International Film Festival, including Best Film and Best Art Direction. Li's outstanding performance earned her the Best Actress Award at the Film Festival, while Law was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Foshan Cantonese Opera Troupe was established in 1957. It aims at

training Cantonese opera talents, preserving excellent Cantonese opera repertoires, as well as promoting its development. In recent years, the troupe has actively explored the integration of Cantonese opera and modern culture, and has launched cross-border collaborative film works such as "Empress Zhou the Lesser", "Xiaofengxian" and "The Legend of The White Snake". While preserving the traditional artistic characteristics, it has also attracted more young audiences to engage with Cantonese opera.

The Cantonese Opera Film "The Legend of The White Snake" will be held at 7.30pm on November 2 (Saturday) and 2.30pm on November 3 (Sunday) at the Grand Theatre of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. Lyrics and dialogue are with traditional Chinese and English subtitles. Tickets priced at \$70 are available at URB TIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone bookings, please call 3166 1288. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2734 2960 or visit www.gbaxlo.gov.hk/en/programmes/the-legend-of-the-white-snake.

The programme will also feature two post screening talks to be held at 9pm on November 2 and 4pm on November 3 at the Grand Theatre of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. The speakers will include Law Ka-ying, Li Shuqin and Yin Dawei, while Chinese opera researcher Ip Sai-hung will be the moderator. Members of the audience are welcome to stay behind to join.

Hong Kong is the host city of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Culture and Arts Festival for the first time this year. It organises and co-ordinates over 260 performances and exchange activities to be held across the "9+2" cities of the Greater Bay Area. The festival aims to showcase the vibrant and diverse cultural richness of the region and foster cultural exchange and co-operation among the cities. For detailed information about the festival, please visit www.gbaxlo.gov.hk.

