

Hong Kong Young Talent Cantonese Opera Troupe gets three year grant

The executive committee of the Cantonese Opera Development Fund today (December 18) announced that the Hong Kong Young Talent Cantonese Opera Troupe had been chosen as the first troupe to receive a three-year grant under the Hong Kong Cantonese Opera Troupe for New Talent scheme.

The Hong Kong Young Talent Cantonese Opera Troupe will be registered as a local non-profit-making company. Mrs Marilyn To, a major local presenter, and Mr Lee Lung, a famous master artist, will be the chairman of the board of directors and the artistic director of the troupe respectively.

The scheme was introduced by the Cantonese Opera Development Fund in response to calls by the Cantonese opera sector to strengthen training for new talent. It aims to provide systematic training programmes for local young talent, and, through performing opportunities and promotional activities, to improve their skills and to broaden the audience so as to help preserve and rejuvenate the traditional art form.

Members of the trade were invited in March this year to submit proposals for the grant. The Hong Kong Young Talent Cantonese Opera Troupe was chosen as the first troupe to receive the grant after a stringent and prudent selection exercise.

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing, said, "As the Chief Executive mentioned in the Policy Address, the Government would actively preserve and promote our intangible cultural heritage, such as Cantonese opera. I hope that the scheme can encourage Cantonese opera troupes to identify and nurture new talent by providing them with systematic training programmes and performing opportunities so as to promote this unique local culture."

The chairman of the executive committee of the Cantonese Opera Development Fund, Dr Stephen Chow, said that the scheme not only could serve to pool together experienced Cantonese opera artists for grooming new talent, but also provide a platform for new talent to further develop their potential.

The fund will award a grant of \$1 million each year within the designated three-year period to the Hong Kong Young Talent Cantonese Opera Troupe. During that period, the troupe has to make use of the resources effectively to organise training

and rehearsals, and to stage formal performances of traditional as well as experimental and innovative plays. It is also required to make an effort to appeal to a wider audience and potential participants in the art form through activities such as school educational programmes and community outreach programmes.

Ends/Tuesday, December 18, 2007