

**PRESS RELEASE**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Date: 31 August 2022

**The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and Hong Kong Ballet  
Present *Carmina Burana*  
A Celebration of Music, Dance and Literature**



**[31 August 2022, Hong Kong]** The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) and Hong Kong Ballet (HKB) join forces to bring the exciting production *Carmina Burana*. Under the baton of HK Phil Resident Conductor Lio Kuokman, acclaimed soloists, dancers, two choruses and the HK Phil present the world premiere of *The Last Song* by HKB's Choreographer-in-Residence Ricky Hu Songwei and Artistic Director Septime Webre's powerful dance masterpiece *Carmina Burana*. This epic double bill programme uniquely brings the world-class musicians of the HK Phil and the acclaimed dancers of HKB together for a celebration of culture and artistry combining riveting music with visually arresting dance. Five performances of *Carmina Burana* will take place at Hong Kong Culture Centre's Grand Theatre on 14-16 October 2022. Tickets are now available at URBTIX.

Inspired by selections by J.S. Bach and Oscar Wilde's *The Nightingale and the Rose*, Hu creates his new work *The Last Song*, which features HK Phil Concertmaster Jing Wang and Principal Cello Richard Bamping as soloists, exploring the ultimate definition of beauty. Carl Orff's iconic *Carmina Burana* is a commanding interpretation of 24 medieval poems. With dances from medieval times to the present, Webre's choreography is influenced by Orff's bombastic music and by themes from Virginia Woolf's novella *Orlando* about our eternal search for love. A striking eight-metre scaffolding surrounding the stage holds over 100 members of the HK Phil Chorus and Hong Kong Children's Choir, joined by soprano Vivian Yau, tenor Ren Shengzhi and baritone Elliot Madore.

The production is exclusively sponsored by The Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC), and is one of the many initiatives supported by the HKJC's approved donation of HK\$630 million to the Government of the HKSAR to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR. The Hong Kong Jockey Club is resolute in pursuing its purpose of acting continuously for the betterment of society, all in support of creating stronger communities together.

**HK PHIL x HK BALLET CO-PRESENT: CARMINA BURANA**

14-16 | 10 | 2022

FRI 7:30PM

SAT & SUN 2:30PM & 7:30PM

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Grand Theatre

\$1,200 (limited VIP tickets) \$800 \$600 \$420 \$240

Tickets now available at URBTIX

For ages 6 and above

**THE LAST SONG (World Premiere)**

MUSIC **J. S. Bach**

CHOREOGRAPHY AND COSTUME DESIGN

[Ricky Hu Songwei](#)

ASSOCIATE COSTUME DESIGNER **Joanne Chong**

SET DESIGN **Siu Wai-man**

LIGHTING DESIGN **Mak Kwok-fai**

CONDUCTOR [Lio Kuokman](#)

VIOLIN [Jing Wang](#)

CELLO [Richard Bamping](#)

ORCHESTRA **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra**

**CARMINA BURANA (Asia Premiere)**

MUSIC **Carl Orff**

CHOREOGRAPHY AND SET DESIGN

[Septime Webre](#)

COSTUME DESIGN **Liz Vandal**

LIGHTING DESIGN **Mak Kwok-fai**

CONDUCTOR [Lio Kuokman](#)

SOPRANO [Vivian Yau](#)

TENOR [Ren Shengzhi](#)

BARITONE [Elliot Madore](#)

CHORUS [Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus](#),  
[Hong Kong Children's Choir](#)

ORCHESTRA **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra**

**Artists**

**Lio Kuokman, conductor** [\[full description\]](#)

Currently serving as Resident Conductor of the HK Phil and Programme Director of the Macao International Music Festival, Lio is praised by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* as “a startling conducting talent”. He was the second prize winner of the third Svetlanov International Conducting Competition in Paris with Audience Prize and Orchestra Prize, and he has also served as the first Chinese Assistant Conductor with the Philadelphia Orchestra. In 2021, Lio was the recipient of the Hong Kong Ten Outstanding Young Persons award. In 2022, he was awarded Artist of the Year (Music) of the 16<sup>th</sup> Hong Kong Arts Development Awards and appointed a Justice of the Peace by the HKSAR Government.

**Jing Wang, violin** [\[full description\]](#)

Currently serving as Concertmaster of the HK Phil, Jing Wang is one of the most versatile and dynamic violinists of his generation. Since his solo recital debut in Marseilles, France at the age of six, Wang has garnered prizes in top international competitions, including the first prize at the 2007 Irving M. Klein International Strings Competition. In 2003, Wang was awarded the "Young Soloist of the Year" by Les Radios Francophones Publiques, a broadcast network of four countries including France, Canada, Switzerland and Belgium.

**Richard Bamping, cello** [\[full description\]](#)

Richard Bamping has been the Principal Cellist of the HK Phil since 1993. He has performed with many of the finest musicians of recent history – Lord Yehudi Menuhin, Leonidas Kavakos, Mstislav Rostropovich, Carlo Maria Giulini, Valery Gergiev, Leonard Bernstein, Lorin Maazel, Sir Colin Davis and Claudio Abbado, to name but a few. Bamping has performed many of the staples of the solo cello repertoire with orchestras from Europe to the Far East. He has a great passion for playing chamber music with friends and colleagues whenever he gets the chance.

**Septime Webre, choreography and set design** [\[full description\]](#)

An internationally recognised ballet director, choreographer, educator and advocate, Septime Webre joined Hong Kong Ballet as its Artistic Director in July 2017 after 17 years as Artistic Director of The Washington Ballet (US) from 1999-2016, and six years as Artistic Director for the American Repertory Ballet in Princeton (US) from 1993-1999. Much sought-after as a choreographer, Webre's works appear in the repertoires of ballet companies globally. He has also worked frequently in theatre as well as opera. His work has received numerous honours, grants and awards.

**Ricky Hu Songwei, choreography and costume design** [\[full description\]](#)

Born in Jiangxi, China, Ricky Hu Songwei trained at Shanghai Dance School, LASALLE-SIA College of the Arts in Singapore and The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. He joined Hong Kong Ballet as a Corps de Ballet member in 2008, was named Coryphée in 2015 and appointed Choreographer-in-Residence in 2019. He received the Award for Young Artist (Dance) at the 2012 Hong Kong Arts Development Awards.

**Vivian Yau, soprano** [\[full description\]](#)

Hailed as “a light, silvery, bright soprano with impressive coloratura” by *The Aspen Times*, Hong Kong soprano Vivian Yau performed the title role in the world premiere of Pierangelo Valtinoni’s *Alice in Wonderland* at the 2021 Hong Kong Arts Festival, a production co-commissioned by the Zürich Opera House and Yip’s Children’s Choir. Yau has also been a repeat featured guest artist with the Hong Kong Sinfonietta. Some other highlights of her career include Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* with the Aspen Opera Center and Mediterranean Opera Festival, her Carnegie Hall debut as a soloist in Bach’s Christmas Oratorio with the Cecilia Chorus of New York, and soprano solo in Handel’s *Messiah* in Radio Television Hong Kong’s annual Christmas Concert.

**Ren Shengzhi, tenor** [\[full description\]](#)

Ren Shengzhi is an opera singer and a singing teacher of the Harbin Conservatory of Music. He was a Scottish Opera Emerging Artist 2020/21. He completed the Young Artist Programme 2019/20 at National Opera Studio. From 2017 to 2019, he completed the Advanced Diploma in Opera at Royal Academy of Music. He was trained at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, where he graduated with Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees with honours. His competition awards include: Third Prize and Audience Award at the Neapolitan Masters Competition 2019, First Prizes at the Golden Bell Awards 2015 (Hunan), First Prize at International Opera Competition 2010 (Hong Kong), etc.

**Elliot Madore, baritone** [\[full description\]](#)

Grammy Award winning Canadian baritone Elliot Madore has established himself as an international artist in demand at the leading opera houses and orchestras of the world. Recently he made his house debut in the world premiere of Giorgio Battistelli’s new opera *Julius Caesar* with Teatro dell’Opera di Roma, directed by Robert Carsen and conducted by Daniele Gatti. He also made his role debut as Dr Falke in *Die Fledermaus* with the Sieji Ozawa Music Academy in Japan. Orchestral work included *Carmina Burana* with Santa Cruz Symphony, conducted by Daniel Stewart.







**The Hong Kong Children's Choir, chorus** [\[full description\]](#)




The Hong Kong Children's Choir (HKCC) was founded in 1969 as a private non-profit-making charitable organisation. Established with only 39 members, HKCC is now the biggest choir in the world with over 5,000 boys and girls receiving choral, dancing, arts and craft training from the Choir. Each year, touring groups are invited to give performances overseas. The Choir has been well received and applauded in over 24 countries, gaining an international reputation as "one of the best children's choirs in the world" and "the Little Goodwill Singing Ambassadors from Hong Kong". In 2003, HKCC was awarded the "China's Top Ten Children Chorus".






**Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus, chorus** [\[full description\]](#)

Established in 1980, the Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus collaborates with the HK Phil to perform a range of different works. In 2013, the Chorus undertook a new recruitment drive, and over 450 singers were attracted to attend the auditions. The first performance by the reformed Chorus was Handel’s *Messiah*. Since then, the Chorus has performed with the HK Phil in major works by composers including Britten, Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Haydn and Mahler under renowned conductors Lorin Maazel, Nicholas McGegan and Jaap van Zweden. The Fellows programme was launched in the 2020/21 Season.

[Download](#) press images

	<p>Photo 1 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Dancer: Reina Sawai   Creative: Li Chi Tak   Photography: Bobyeah  Courtesy of Hong Kong Ballet</p>
	<p>Photo 2 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Dancer: Wang Qingxin   Creative: Li Chi Tak   Photography: Bobyeah   Courtesy of Hong Kong Ballet</p>
	<p>Photo 3 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Dancer (from left): Luis Cabrera, Jeremy Chan, Lin Chang-yuan Kyle   Creative: Li Chi Tak   Photography: Bobyeah   Courtesy of Hong Kong Ballet</p>
	<p>Photo 4 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Dancer (from left): Reina Sawai, Basil James   Creative: Li Chi Tak   Photography: Bobyeah   Courtesy of Hong Kong Ballet</p>
	<p>Photo 5 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Dancers (from top): Zhang Xuening, Ethan Chudnow   Creative: Li Chi Tak   Photography: Bobyeah   Courtesy of Hong Kong Ballet</p>
	<p>Photo 6 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Choreographer: Septime Webre, HKB Artistic Director   Courtesy of Hong Kong Ballet</p>

	<p>Photo 7 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Choreographer: Hu Song Wei Ricky, HKB Choreographer-in-Residence   Courtesy of Hong Kong Ballet</p>
	<p>Photo 8 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Conductor: Lio Kuoman, HK Phil Resident Conductor   Photography: Jane Chiang   Curation: Cerine Lee   Courtesy of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra</p>
	<p>Photo 9 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Violin: Jing Wang, HK Phil Concertmaster   Photography: Wong King-chung   Courtesy of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra</p>
	<p>Photo 10 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Cello: Richard Bamping, HK Phil Principal Cello   Photography: Andrew Ling   Courtesy of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra</p>
	<p>Photo 11 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Tenor: Ren Shengzhi</p>

	<p>Photo 12 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Soprano: Vivian Yau   Photography: David Noles</p>
	<p>Photo 13 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Baritone: Elliot Madore   Photography: Cyrill Matter</p>
	<p>Photo 14 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Hong Kong Children's Choir   Courtesy of the Hong Kong Children's Choir</p>
	<p>Photo 15 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Hong Kong Philharmonic Chorus   Courtesy of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra</p>
	<p>Photo 16 HK Phil x HK Ballet <i>Carmina Burana</i>   Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra   Photography: Ka Lam   Courtesy of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra</p>

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### About Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) is regarded as one of the leading orchestras in Asia. The orchestra's annual schedule focuses on symphonic repertoire, with conductors and soloists from all around the world. The HK Phil runs extensive education programmes, commissions new works and nurtures local talent. Recent recording projects with Jaap van Zweden include the complete *Ring Cycle* by Richard Wagner; Mahler's Symphony no. 10 (performing version by Willem Mengelberg) and Shostakovich's Symphony no. 10, both to be released in November 2022 (Naxos). With Music Director Jaap van Zweden since 2012, the HK Phil has toured Europe, Asia, Australia, and on numerous occasions to Mainland China. Yu Long has been Principal Guest Conductor since the 2015/16 Season. Lio Kuokman was appointed as Resident Conductor in December 2020. The HK Phil won the prestigious UK classical music magazine *Gramophone's* 2019 Orchestra of the Year Award – the first orchestra in Asia to receive this accolade.

### About Hong Kong Ballet

One of Asia's premier ballet companies, Hong Kong Ballet (HKB) is internationally recognised as a vibrant arts institution that represents Hong Kong's unique character. Established in 1979 and led by Artistic Director Septime Webre, HKB has a dynamic repertoire performed by nearly 50 dancers from all over the globe and award-winning education and community programmes.

With almost 50 international tours, HKB has won recognition from critics and fans both at home and abroad. Its diverse repertoire includes classic and modern masterpieces, original full-length ballets created for HKB, an interactive ballet series for younger fans and groundbreaking dance by today's most sought-after choreographers, including Alexei Ratmansky, Christopher Wheeldon, Jiří Kylian, Nacho Duato and Trey McIntyre, among others. HKB maintains an active schedule of community initiatives throughout Hong Kong to ensure that ballet is accessible to people from all walks of life.