

**Hong Kong Arts Development Council  
International Arts Leadership Roundtable 2017**

**Plenary 3: Exploring Boundaries of the Arts**

*Classical Choral Theatre*

**Full transcript of speech by  
Mr. Patrick CHIU, Founder of Hong Kong SingFest**

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Welcome, good morning. It's almost impossible to share with you my projects in 10 minutes but I'll try my best.

I wear different hats in different organisations. For example, on Tuesday evening in the Asia Cultural Cooperation Forum 2017 Gala Dinner, you listened to and watched four young gentlemen singing a cappella together. They delivered a song called *Swan Lake*. I am one of the artistic leaders of the this group, the Yat Po Singers. Today, I am also representing another group that does classical music, especially early classical music. The group is called Hong Kong SingFest.

I founded both organisations back in 2012. They both have a common aim of promoting human voice and body. I'm going to first show you some pictures and videos of a production that the Yat Po Singers did two years ago. The production is called *Requiem HK*, describing our very beloved Hong Kong in difficult times. It's a theater productions and perhaps it would be very nice if I show you immediately the highlights of that show, so you can understand what it is about more clearly.

(Video clip played)

Our work is more like contemporary operas. And thoroughly we have made use of the audio system to enhance the music we composed. What you just heard was not a defect of the audio system. Actually, we made that effect intentionally. Mr. Yuri Ng, co-artistic director of the Yat Po Singers, Mr. Ng Cheuk-yin, the composer of the piece, and I co-founded this artistic group. We compose new music for every show. Whenever we stage a show, we use a cappella as the musical medium with audio design.

On the other hand, for the Hong Kong SingFest, we focus on doing classical music, especially old music in the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Different from the Yat Po Singers, we do not use any audio system. We perform acoustically with old instruments. This is also what we do in the production in May 2017 from *Monteverdi Madrigals, Book 8: War and Love*.

By the way, this year is the 450th birthday anniversary of Monteverdi. That's the reason we do a lot of Monteverdi this year. As you can see in this production I staged myself and we used chairs as the main theme to link up the different ideas of Monteverdi. Perhaps, once again, let's go to a highlight.

(Video clip played)

The instruments you see at the back are Baroque instruments dated 200 years ago. In both groups you can see young professional performers. And today, I want to talk more about the young people I work with in Hong Kong SingFest, because I think it is really important to let the next generation of artists work on something we believe in.

So, in this summer, I worked with a group of young people from high schools. We staged them in a theater and trained them. In the production, I included some physical elements together with singing. The average age of the students is around 15. We gave them approximately 3 months of training. Before the concert, we sent them to a camp for eight days and seven nights. So, during the retreat, they lived together, learnt together and finally they're like family. They sang in Italian, a language they have never learnt before, without a score. I think they really deserve applause. This is the end of my presentation, thank you very much.

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