

PRESS RELEASE
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To download 2016/17 dance season images:
(Including production photos of *Storm Clouds*)
<https://goo.gl/zn3jAO>

Hong Kong Dance Company 2016/17 Season

Remembering Traditions, Inspired by Modernity, Celebrating Life's Moving Moments



This year, Hong Kong Dance Company (HKDC) celebrates its 35th anniversary with a vibrant and compelling season brimming with martial arts dance dramas, literary reinterpretations, delightful children's dance drama, Chinese ethnic dance and experimental cross-border cooperation. Over the past 35 years, HKDC has abided by its artistic mission to create dance productions with diverse themes and uniquely Hong Kong character.

The season kicks off with the glorious return of award-winning martial arts dance drama *Storm Clouds* and signs off 2016 with another adaptation of Hong Kong comic master Ma Wing-shing's work, *Chinese Hero: Tales of the Blood Sword*. The former charts the destiny of two brotherly heroes, Bo Ging-wan and Lip Fung, and their love triangle with the heroine Hung Chi, and promises to wow audiences with a visual feast realised by an innovative set, sophisticated lighting and award-winning music score; while the latter follows the epic story of hero Wah Ying-hung's in a powerful combination of dance, martial arts, comic art effects, music, theatre and local culture.

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, HKDC's Children's and Youth Troupes team up with the Hong Kong Children's Choir to present the children's dance drama *Saturday Whispers*, which explores love and expectations between parents and children through song, dance and charming costumes, stage design and props.

Tradition takes centre stage in *Kaleidoscope of Dance from Yunnan*, an uplifting and poetic feast of authentic folk dance from Yunnan. In contrast, *8/F Platform X* pushes the boundaries of creativity with local and other Asian dance presented at the well-established experimental dance theatre 8/F Platform.

Artistic Director Yang Yuntao comments on the new season, "In recognition and the exploration of tradition and modernity, the Hong Kong Dance Company has been creating works to reflect the contemporary world and to pursue beauty. The performing arts are precious in their immediacy and impossibility to replicate. Now entering our 35th year, we hope to continue to communicate and share our messages with dance – to dance while the music continues to play and to cherish

momentary sentiments on the stage.”

As well as presenting unforgettable productions to Hong Kong audiences, HKDC also strives to bring its portfolio to those overseas. In 2015, HKDC took the critically acclaimed dance drama *The Legend of Mulan* to New York’s illustrious Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts and The Concourse Theatre, Chatswood at the invitation of Sydney’s Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (HKETO). HKDC Chairman, Mr Wilson Fung says, “Over the last 35 years, the HKDC has been dedicated to producing Chinese dance productions with contemporary flair and Hong Kong character. As one of the leading arts organisations, HKDC aspires to bring Hong Kong’s unique performing arts to the world with its international tours.” This year, HKDC will take to the stage at the Korea Dance Festival in Seoul with its much-loved dance drama *The Butterfly Lovers*, which will give audiences there an insight and understanding of Chinese dance with a distinct Hong Kong personality.



Creative team of Martial Arts Dance Drama *Storm Clouds*: Director and Choreographer Mr Yang Yuntao (third from left); Art Direction and Comics Creator Mr Ma Wing-shing (fourth from left) with the main cast at the press conference.



Mr Wilson Fung, Hong Kong Dance Company (HKDC)’s Board Chairman; Mr Yang Yuntao, Artistic Director of HKDC; award-winning designer and inkbrush painter Prof Kan Tai-keung, graphic designer of HKDC’s 35th Anniversary souvenir; Mr Lau Siu-ming, MH and Ms Emily Mok, MH, JP, both Artistic Advisers of HKDC; Mr Ma Wing-shing, Art Direction and Comics Creator of Martial Arts Dance Drama *Storm Clouds*; Helen Lai, MH, Director and Choreographer, and Ho Ying-fung, Director of *Reveries of the Red Chamber*; creative teams and main casts of HKDC 2016/17 season programmes, HKDC’s Principal and Senior Dancers and guest artists at the press conference.

Hong Kong Dance Company 2016/17 Season Programmes at a Glance

Martial Arts Dance Drama *Storm Clouds*

Winner of 2015 Hong Kong Dance Awards
Outstanding Achievement in Production,
Outstanding Performance by a Male Dancer,
Outstanding Achievement in Music for Dance

Greatness can never be contained

Published in instalments over 25 years, the hugely popular Hong Kong comic *The Storm Riders* was first adapted into the dance drama *Storm Clouds* in 2014. The fierce battle between Bo Ging-wan (Cloud) and Lip Fung (Wind), the ethereal dance movements of heroine Hung Chi, a complex love triangle and enthralling dance left audiences wowed. The debut was highly praised and won several trophies at the Hong Kong Dance Awards. Now the phenomenal show, which combines dance, drama and martial arts, is returning to the stage to stir up the mundane!

Many Hong Kong people grew up reading *The Storm Riders*, where within the pages of its near 700 chapters filling three volumes, a gripping plot and fascinating characters are described in great detail. *Storm Clouds* extracts the most exciting parts of the story, and sets it on an innovative stage that utilises digital imagery, a gleaming pool of water, sophisticated lighting and award-winning music score to reconstruct the comic realm and offer audiences great visual pleasure.

Swords wield, water gets splashed about and the two brotherly heroes are torn apart by hatred and destiny in this captivating, high-action dance drama.

Dates: 24-26 June 2016

Venue: Hong Kong Cultural Centre Grand Theatre

Children's Dance Drama *Saturday Whispers*

Hong Kong Dance Company x The Hong Kong Children's Choir

To get to the top, child prodigies never stop!

09:00 Piano class. 11:00 Painting class. 13:00 English oral class. 15:00 Swimming class. 17:00 Maths class. 19:00 Etiquette class... All kinds of extracurricular classes that make Saturday, the sixth "school day" one that is also called "training day for super children" by parents looking to make their kids top students. And of course, this is done by enrolling them in additional tutorials so they will compete better and set off as winners from the starting line.

In celebration of its 10th anniversary, the Children's and Youth Troupes collaborate with the Hong Kong Children's Choir for *Saturday Whispers*, a heartwarming dance drama that discusses love and expectations between parents and children. Some 200 young and very talented dancers and singers invite the audience to listen to the secrets of growing children, as told through dance, songs and theatrical acts with the help of charming costumes, stage design, props – and a clever robot with downloadable apps that give kids instant knowledge and learning abilities!

Dates: 29-31 July 2016

Venue: Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

Dance Theatre *Reveries of the Red Chamber*

Helen Lai X Yang Yuntao x Ho Ying-fung

Outcast from heaven, betrayed on Earth – bought to life in dance

Dream of the Red Chamber, also called *The Story of the Stone*, is a Chinese literary masterpiece written by Cao Xueqin. It tells the story of a stone that is outcast by the goddess Nüwa, who mends the heavens with stones. A Taoist priest and a Buddhist monk find the stone and bring it into the world, where it is reborn into a mortal boy called Jia Bao-yu. The story then revolves around two clans of the wealthy Jia family, who fall from financial grace, and a love triangle between Jia Bao-yu and his two female cousins.

The dance drama *Reveries of the Red Chamber* comprises three different reinterpretations of this epic book. Each one is individually helmed by dance doyenne Helen Lai, Hong Kong Dance Company artistic director, Yang Yuntao and theatre artist extraordinaire, Ho Ying-fung – all of whom felt inspired to bring the book to life from contemporary perspectives.

The three reinterpretations are set on an ingeniously designed stage where dance collides with literature and words take on a human form to portray a riches-to-rags story through poetic and emotive movements.

Dates: 5-7 August 2016

Venue: Hong Kong Cultural Centre Studio Theatre

Martial Arts Dance Drama *Chinese Hero: Tales of the Blood Sword*

A hero destined to wander life alone for eternity

Following on from the momentous martial arts dance drama, *Storm Clouds*, the Hong Kong Dance Company collaborates once again with renowned Hong Kong comic master, Ma Wing-shing to stage a feast of creativity that combines dance, martial arts, comic art effects, music, theatre and local culture in an adaptation of the best-selling martial arts comic, *Chinese Hero: Tales of the Blood Sword*.

Published in instalments since 1980, *Chinese Hero: Tales of the Blood Sword* saw unprecedented popularity when one of its volumes sold more than 200,000 copies. It tells the story of Wah Ying-hung who was born during troubled times in China. His parents were murdered when he was a child and he grew up as an orphan – but would go on to become a top martial artist and master swordsman, a hero fighting gangs for justice. Intense battle scenes are portrayed in rich colours in the comic, where familial love, romance, friendship, compassion, resentment and feuds abound in this highly emotive tragedy.

The language of dance serves as the perfect expression for capturing all the passion and dignity in Wah's fast-paced world – and brings this comic hero to life anew on stage for all to enjoy.

Dates: 25-27 November 2016

Venue: Hong Kong Cultural Centre Grand Theatre

Chinese Ethnic Dance *Kaleidoscope of Dance from Yunnan*
Hong Kong Dance Company x Yunnan Arts University

Traditional folk dance to uplift the heart. A vibrant feast for the senses.

The stunning Red River, snowy mountains, mysterious caves, enchanting forests, undulating meadows, bamboo homes built by the Dai people and the ancient old town of Lijiang that is a World Heritage Site... All of this breathtaking scenery is found in the beautiful Yunnan province located in southwest China. Yunnan is home to more than 20 ethnic groups. Together they live on a scenic plateau, where their charming songs ring out across the hills and joyous festivals and dancing, performed to express their cultural heritage, have taken place for generations.

The Yunnan Arts University joins hands with the Hong Kong Dance Company to deliver dance from the ethnic Dai, Miao, Wa, Naxi, and Dulong people to show the beauty, skills, energy and vibrancy of Yunnan folk dance.

Different ethnic groups may live close to one another but their cultural diversity is rich and wide. A variety of these cultures are depicted in dance to create a magnificent impression of colourful Yunnan.

Dates: 10-12 February 2017

Venue: Kwai Tsing Theatre Auditorium

8/F Platform X



Breaking through the boundaries with a mix and match of Asian dance!

On the one hand, traditional dance that is rooted in a long, rich history presents heritage and charm; on the other, contemporary arts constantly regenerate, integrate and improve to blossom into endless sparks of creativity.

8/F Platform X focuses on Asia, summoning up artists from Korea, Japan and Taiwan to fuse the old with the new. Tradition is explored and questioned as they interact with each other: contemporary surprises pervade in the allure of traditional dance, while deep-rooted tradition cannot be ignored in contemporary choreography.

When the old encounters the new in a parallel universe, they compete while simultaneously learning from one another, introducing new inspirations and creativity to create links between local and other Asian dance, and turn the spotlight on the fascinating trends in crossover performances.

* Please refer to the HKDC website for performance details and updates.

2016/17 Dance Season Advance Subscription Scheme

Enjoy privileged discounts and secure the best seats for *Storm Clouds*, *Reveries of the Red Chamber* and *Chinese Hero: Tales of the Blood Sword* by subscribing two standard tickets for one or more programmes, on or before 30th April 2016. For more information about the discounts, please refer to Hong Kong Dance Company's 2016/17 season brochure or call 3103 1806.

The season brochures are distributed at all URBTIX counters and available on HKDC website www.hkdance.com.

Hong Kong Dance Company

“Dancing across East and West, Moving to the Tempo of Hong Kong”

Mission Statement

We are nurtured in the cultural tradition of China, combining the creativity of contemporary art, to impress the world with Chinese dance of Hong Kong character.

History

Established in 1981 with the aim of promoting Chinese dance, the Hong Kong Dance Company was incorporated in 2001 as a charitable and non-profit-making institution, and is financially supported by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

Since its inception, the Hong Kong Dance Company has staged over 100 productions, many of which were highly popular with critical acclaim. Recent productions include *Qingming Riverside*; *The Smiling, Proud Wanderer*; *Snow Fox*; *Eagle Companions*; *Two Swallows – Ode to Wu Guanzhong*; *Spring Ritual·Eulogy*; *Feng Shui*; *Pop Classics: Joseph Koo's Dance Melodies 2013*; *The Legend of Mulan*; *The Butterfly Lovers*; *Storm Clouds*, *L'Amour Immortel* and *Dream of the Past: Ancient Chinese Court Dances*.

The Company has toured internationally as well as around Mainland China as a way to encourage cultural exchange. The Company was invited to perform at the “Meet in Beijing 2008” Arts Festival to celebrate the Beijing Olympics, and took part in the opening ceremony of the East Asian Games in 2009. In 2010, the Company participated in “The Ninth China Art Festival” in Guangzhou and the World Expo in Shanghai. In January 2013, the Hong Kong Dance Company presented *Qingming Riverside* at The Sony Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto and The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. *Spring Ritual·Eulogy* was presented at the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing in September 2013, and the Novel Hall for Performing Arts in Taipei in December 2013 as part of Hong Kong Week 2013. *The Legend of Mulan* was presented at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York in March 2015, and in Sydney in September 2015.

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