

August, 22-24, 2025

China Arts and Entertainment Group presents Hong Kong Ballet: The New York Premiere of The Butterfly Lovers

Company: Hong Kong Ballet
Venue: Lincoln Center
Location: New York, NY

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China Arts and Entertainment Group presents Hong Kong Ballet in the New York Premiere of The Butterfly Lovers from August 22- 24, 2025 at the David H. Koch Theater at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, 20 Lincoln Center Plaza, NYC. Performances: Fri & Sat at 7:30pm, Sat & Sun at 2pm. Tickets start at \$39 and can be purchased online at <https://www.davidhkochtheater.com/tickets-and-events/the-butterfly-lovers> or in person at the David H. Koch Theater Box Office at 20 Lincoln Center Plaza. Use code "EARLYBIRD" to get 30% OFF before July 15.

"A Triumph of Choreography" – South China Morning Post

An eternal love that defies all expectations. Reimagined by an international team of creative minds together with Hong Kong Ballet's Choreographer-in-Residence HU Song Wei Ricky and MAI Jingwen, The Butterfly Lovers is a legendary Chinese folktale about humble scholar Liang Shanbo and aristocratic heiress Zhu Yingtai, who disguises herself as a boy in order to study at a prestigious academy. From innocently meeting as students and forging a strong, immediate bond to dangerously rebelling against centuries-old forces that threaten to keep them apart, the lovers face unexpected challenges at every turn, as secrets are revealed and a shocking family betrayal ultimately seals their fate.

With a sweeping original score by acclaimed Chinese composer TIAN Mi with New York City Ballet Orchestra under the baton of LIO Kuokman (The Philadelphia Inquirer as "a startling conducting talent"), this powerful tale of forbidden love and filial duty features Academy Award winner Tim YIP's visually stunning sets and costumes that bring to life a world with traditional and modern elements. Transcendent and uplifting, The Butterfly Lovers is a glorious fusion of inspiring dance, contemporary Chinese aesthetics and eternal hope.

This production has won SIX major awards at the 26th Hong Kong Dance Awards in 2025 – Outstanding Choreography, Outstanding Large Venue Production, Outstanding Performance by a Female Dancer (CHENG Xuan as Zhu Yingtai), Outstanding Ensemble Performance, Outstanding Set and Costume Design (Tim YIP) and Outstanding Music Composition (TIAN Mi).

Creative Team

Concept and Choreography: HU Song Wei Ricky

Libretto and Associate Choreographer: MAI Jingwen

Music: TIAN Mi (inspired by HE Zhanhao and CHEN Gang's The Butterfly Lovers Violin Concerto)

Music and Orchestral Arrangement: ZHOU Chuhan, LUO Geng, ZHANG Qun, ZHANG Qiandan, ZHANG Boning

Set and Costume Design: Tim YIP

Design Supervisor: Jin YAU

Associate Costume Designer: Mandy TAM

Costume Design Assistant: LAI Wing Ki

Assistant Set Designer: Matthieu CHU Siu Ming

Set Design Assistant: Katie CHOW Tsz Wing

Video Design: William KWOK, Yicai WANG

Lighting Design: YEUNG Tsz Yan

Sound Design: Roy CHEUNG

Orchestra: New York City Ballet Orchestra

Conductor: LIO Kuokman

For more information, visit hkballet.com.

Artist Bios

HU Song Wei Ricky graduated from Shanghai Dance School and then studied Contemporary Dance at The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) on a full scholarship. He joined Hong Kong Ballet (HKB) in 2008, and was appointed Choreographer-in-Residence in 2019. His HKB commissions *The Rite of Spring* (2019) and *The Last Song* (2022) have earned him Outstanding Choreography at the Hong Kong Dance Awards. Other choreographic works include *Notturmo*, *Carmen*, *Bolero*, *Twins*, *White Lies*, *Demons* and *When u see*. HU co-choreographed *Everlasting Flower* with his wife MAI Jingwen for the College of Dance at Shanghai Theatre Academy and *Yi Yi* for the Dance School of The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. He received the Award for Young Artist in Dance at 2012 Hong Kong Arts Development Awards. In 2025, HU and MAI Jingwen received the Outstanding Choreography Award at the 26th Hong Kong Dance Awards for their work on *The Butterfly Lovers*.

MAI Jingwen majored in Chinese Folk Dance at the School of Dance of Minzu University of China and then earned a Master's degree in Public Performance at Joongbu University in Korea on scholarship. Her notable works include *The Wall* (Shanghai Opera House), *Xi Yuan* (Liaoning Ballet), *Memory* (Liaoning Song and Dance Troupe), *Bolero* (Shanghai Dance Theatre), *Yi Yi* (HKAPA), *Everlasting Flower* (Shanghai Theatre Academy), *Never Resting Footsteps* (High School Attached to the Hunan Normal University), *Look up* (National University of Singapore) and *Blood Bird* (Korean Arts Festival). MAI won First Prize at the National Arts Exhibition and National Outstanding Choreography Awards with her choreographic works *Festival*, *Sunny Girl* and *Don't Want to Say Goodbye*. In 2025, MAI and his husband HU Song Wei Ricky received the Outstanding Choreography Award at the 26th Hong Kong Dance Awards for their work on *The Butterfly Lovers*.

TIAN Mi graduated from the Composition Department of Shanghai Conservatory of Music and has taught at his alma mater. His music creations span across various fields such as film, television, games and stage plays, having composed scores for multiple movies and TV dramas including *Creation of the Gods*, *Full River Red* and *Ruyi's Royal Love in the Palace*. TIAN has also composed music for major events like the Beijing Winter Olympics and the CCTV Lantern Festival Gala. His works have won numerous awards, including the Hollywood Music in Media Awards, the China National Arts Fund and the Tencent GDC Artistic Achievement Award. Collaborating with many renowned artists, he stands as an iconic figure in the Chinese music industry. In 2025, TIAN received the Outstanding Music Composition Award at the 26th Hong Kong Dance Awards for his work on *The Butterfly Lovers*.

Tim YIP is a world-renowned stage and film art director, fashion designer and visual artist. He is the first person of Chinese descent to win an Academy Award for Best Art Direction and a BAFTA Award for Best Costume Design for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. An internationally sought-after artist, he has collaborated with world-class artists and organizations, including Robert Wilson, Franco Dragone, Akram Khan, François Girard, Zhang Yimou, Stan Lai, Yang Liping, English National Ballet, Cloud Gate Dance Theatre, Contemporary Legend Theatre, Legend Lin Dance Theatre, Han Tang Yue Fu, Tai Gu Tales Dance Theatre and U Theatre. Recently, YIP earned rave reviews for his stage and costume designs for François Girard's production of *Lohengrin* at Bolshoi Theatre and the Metropolitan Opera. In 2025, Tim YIP garnered Outstanding Set and Costume Design Award at the 26th Hong Kong Dance Awards for *The Butterfly Lovers*.

YEUNG Tsz Yan is an award-winning lighting designer and has collaborated with major Hong Kong arts organizations and has designed for over 100 productions. Since winning her first Best Lighting Design Award at the 15th Hong Kong Drama Awards with *Phaedra* during her time at The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, YEUNG has earned four more accolades in the same category with *Iron* (We Draman Group), *Attempts on Her Life*, *Marriage and Le Père* (Hong Kong Repertory Theatre). In 2012, her design for *Two Swallows*, *Ode to Wu Guanzhong* won the Outstanding Design for Dance at the 14th Hong Kong Dance Awards. She was selected to represent Hong Kong at Prague Quadrennial in 2011 and 2015.

LIO Kuokman is currently the Music Director and Principal Conductor of Macao Orchestra, Programme Director of Macao International Music Festival, Chief Conductor of RTV Slovenia Symphony Orchestra and Resident Conductor of Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil). He has been praised by Philadelphia Inquirer as 'a startling conducting talent' and won second prize at the 3rd Svetlanov International Conducting Competition in Paris, with Audience Prize and Orchestra Prize. Having served as the first Chinese Assistant Conductor with the Philadelphia Orchestra, LIO has collaborated with many world-leading orchestras. Recent appearances include a HK Phil's gala concert in the presence of China's President Xi Jinping and his debut as the first Chinese conductor in a Vienna Symphony Orchestra concert.

About China Arts and Entertainment Group

China Arts and Entertainment Group (CAEG) was founded in April 2004, and its two major subsidiaries China Performing Arts Agency (CPAA) and China International Exhibition Agency (CIEA) were established in 1957 and 1950, respectively. As China's only central state owned cultural enterprise that has performance and exhibition business worldwide, CAEG has developed a nationwide market network of international performing arts, art exhibitions, and culture & tourism and theater operation, and set up branches in major cities in China and some European and American countries. CAEG was elected one of the "Top 30 China Cultural Enterprises" for eight consecutive years since 2009. CAEG stages over 5,000 different kinds of performances, exhibitions and other cultural activities at home and abroad every year. Based on 20

theaters that directly owned and managed by the CPAA Theaters, CAEG has initiated and organized a league of domestic theaters with 70 CPAA allied-theaters across 27 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, and the "Silk Road International League of Theatres" (SRILT) for countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative. CAEG's productions include several multimedia shows such as ERA-Intersection of Time, Shaolin Warriors, the original opera production Marco Polo, and the Chinese version of world classic musicals Mamma Mia! and Cats, which pool domestic and foreign resources and cater to both domestic and overseas markets.

Since 2009, CAEG has presented a series of productions in the U.S., such as Forbidden Fruit under the Great Wall (Kennedy Center, 2010), Silk Road (Kennedy Center, 2011; Lincoln Center, 2013), The Peony Pavilion (Lincoln Center, 2012), Qingming Riverside (Kennedy Center, 2013), Wedding of Ordos (Kennedy Center, 2014), The Red Dress (Lincoln Center, 2014), The Legend of Mulan (Lincoln Center, 2015), Dragon Boat Racing (Lincoln Center, 2016; Kennedy Center and Kimmel Center, 2018), Confucius (Lincoln Center and Kennedy Center, 2017), Soaring Wings (Lincoln Center and Boch Center, 2018), Princess Zhaojun (Boch Center and Lincoln Center, 2019), Mulan(Boch Center and Kennedy Center, 2023), Dongpo: Life in Poems (Kennedy Center and Lincoln Center, 2024).

About Hong Kong Ballet

One of Asia's premier ballet companies, Hong Kong Ballet (HKB) is internationally recognized 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 programs. With celebrated re-stagings of the classics, neoclassical masterworks by George Balanchine and others and original ballets created for HKB and about Hong Kong, HKB additionally performs works by its Artistic Director Septime WEBRE and some of today's most sought-after choreographers, including Alexei Ratmanský, Christopher Wheeldon, Wayne McGregor, Justin Peck, Jiří Kylián, Nacho Duato and Annabelle Lopez Ochoa as well as innovative new works by its Choreographer-in-Residence, HU Song Wei Ricky, and numerous emerging Hong Kong choreographers. HKB serves as one of Hong Kong's most prominent Cultural Ambassadors, sharing its unique repertoire and style with audiences in Europe, North America, Mainland China and Asia. With over 50 international tours since its founding, this year HKB will have performed or presented immersive works in Macau, Venice, New York, London, Seoul and Shanghai. HKB maintains the Hong Kong Academy of Ballet, a professionally-oriented ballet school, as well as a full schedule of award-winning community programmes and crossover collaborations throughout Hong Kong to ensure that ballet is accessible to all. HKB has also produced engaging original videos and dance films that have collectively garnered over 10 million views online, connecting with ballet lovers worldwide. Recently, Septime WEBRE's The Nutcracker: A Hong Kong Adventure notably won UNESCO's Star of Outstanding Award. HKB maintains an active schedule of community initiatives throughout Hong Kong to ensure that ballet is accessible to people from all walks of life.

Hong Kong Ballet 20 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023 New York, NY, 10023 6467654773 https://www.lincolncenter.org/	Schedule August 22, 2025: 7:30pm August 23, 2025: 2:00pm, 7:30pm August 24, 2025: 2:00pm
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