



Tan Dun, Internationale Chorakademie Lübeck, & SSO

BUDDHA PASSION by Tan Dun

China, Germany, Singapore & USA
15 & 16 May 2020, Fri & Sat, 7.30pm
Esplanade Concert Hall
Rating: Rating to be advised.

Synopsis

From world-renowned composer Tan Dun, *Buddha Passion* is a sweeping work of imagination and a luminous meditation on the life and teaching of Buddha.

For *Buddha Passion*, Grammy and Academy award-winning artist Tan Dun has travelled the globe, from the mystical Buddhist caves of the ancient city of Dunhuang to the storied libraries of Europe.

Richly evoking an allegorical world inspired by Buddhist philosophy, *Buddha Passion* is marked by mythical characters and eastern landscapes in a multi-layered performance of narrative, rich choral textures and orchestra.

Buddha Passion unfolds over six acts. It begins with a mural alluding to Buddha's moment of nirvana. A little prince learns all lives are equal while a man reaps the fruits of karma after betraying the Deer of Nine Colours. Princess Miaoshan's sacrifice transmutes into the ultimate

symbol of compassion, while a Zen Master and lowly woodcutter debate on the true meaning of Zen. In a chance encounter on the Silk Road, a minstrel monk finds himself inexorably drawn to the fate of a dying woman.

Together with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, witness Tan Dun's prodigious, genre-breaking gifts which have won standing ovations from audiences globally.

Shimmering with mythic grace, *Buddha Passion* incarnates the timeless message of peace, compassion and gentleness and is a thrilling musical achievement not to be missed.

Journey with SIFA

"SIFA has had a wonderful relationship with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, and we really wanted to celebrate it by opening the 2020 festival with them. Alongside the SSO, be enchanted these this oratorio of six short stories, performed by some incredible soloists as well as the voices of a 100-member joint choir from Lübeck, Germany and the Singapore Symphony Chorus.

With Tan Dun – one of the most well-known Asian composers and conductors – conducting our national orchestra in a work that takes inspiration from Buddhism and the magnificent Dunhuang Mogao Caves, this performance will mark a momentous opening to SIFA," shares Gaurav Kripalani, Festival Director.

Interviews:

Tan Dun will be available for an email interview to share more on the following topics (proposed topics):

- Bringing to life "the ancient sounds of Dunhuang" from the Mogao Caves using western instruments to stage an East meets West production
- His experience collaborating with Singapore Symphony Orchestra and how different or

Media Contacts

Samantha Jong
M +65 81634662
Samantha.jong@huntington.com.sg

Glenn Huang
M +65 9274 7553
glennhuang@artshouse.sg

Johann Khairi
M +91807776
johann@artshouse.sg

similar it is compared to the other national orchestras he has performed with

- Are the stories fictitious, or are they depicted in the caves? How did Tan Dun conceive of this work
- The Passion form is so specific and rooted in tradition. Why did Tan Dun title this a Passion work. How is it similar, or different
- Not related to the Buddha Passion – Tan Dun recently premiered “12 Sounds of Wuhan” in support of those suffering from the Covid-Virus. Where did he draw inspiration for this work, and what other new works is he working on

About Tan Dun

The world-renowned artist and UNESCO Global Goodwill Ambassador Tan Dun has made an indelible mark on the world’s music scene with a creative repertoire that spans the boundaries of classical music, multimedia performance, and Eastern and Western traditions. A winner of today’s most prestigious honours including the Grammy Award, Oscar/Academy Award, Grawemeyer Award, Bach Prize, Shostakovich Award, and most recently Italy’s Golden Lion Award for Lifetime Achievement, Tan Dun’s music has been played throughout the world by leading orchestras, opera houses, international festivals, and on radio and television. Most recently, Tan Dun was named Dean of the Bard College Conservatory of Music. As dean, Tan Dun will further demonstrate music’s extraordinary ability to transform lives and guide the Conservatory in fulfilling its mission of understanding music’s connection to history, art, culture, and society.

As a conductor of innovative programs around the world, Tan Dun has led the China tours of the Mahler Chamber Orchestra and Japan’s NHK Symphony Orchestra. His current season includes leading the Orchestre National de Lyon in a six-city China tour, the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra

in a four-city tour of Switzerland and Belgium as well as engagements with the Rai National Symphony Orchestra, Oslo Philharmonic, Hong Kong Philharmonic, and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra where he was recently named Artistic Ambassador.

About Singapore Symphony Orchestra

Since its founding in 1979, the Singapore Symphony Orchestra (SSO) has been Singapore’s flagship orchestra, touching lives through classical music and providing the heartbeat of the cultural scene in the cosmopolitan city-state. In addition to its subscription series concerts, the orchestra is well-loved for its outdoor and community appearances, and its significant role educating the young people of Singapore. The SSO has also earned an international reputation for its orchestral virtuosity, having garnered sterling reviews for its overseas tours and many successful recordings.

The SSO makes its performing home at the 1,800-seat state-of-the-art Esplanade Concert Hall. More intimate works and all outreach and community performances take place at the 673-seat Victoria Concert Hall, the home of the SSO. The orchestra performs over 60 concerts a year, and its versatile repertoire spans all-time favourites and orchestral masterpieces to exciting cutting-edge premieres. Bridging the musical traditions of East and West, Singaporean and Asian musicians and composers are regularly showcased in the concert season. This has been a core of the SSO's programming philosophy from the very beginning under Choo Hoey, who was Music Director from 1979 to 1996.

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Samantha Jong
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