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Opera Hong Kong and French May Arts Festival Proudly Present a Bold New Production of Bizet's *Carmen*

A Timeless Masterpiece Reimagined in 1970s Hong Kong

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Hong Kong, 10 March 2026 – Opera Hong Kong is proud to present, as part of French May Arts Festival, a brand-new production of Georges Bizet's iconic opera ***Carmen*** at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Grand Theatre from 7 to 10 May 2026.

We are honoured to have BNP Paribas as our title sponsor for this production. While set in Spain, *Carmen* is based on a novella by the French writer Prosper Mérimée and deeply resonates with French culture and artistry. Adding to its authenticity, almost all the main cast members are French, bringing a rich, genuine touch to Bizet's iconic opera.

The production marks the second collaboration between Opera Hong Kong and renowned director Jia Ding, who previously worked with Opera Hong Kong on the acclaimed 2024 production of *Turandot*. Known for his seamless blend of traditional opera, innovative storytelling, and striking visuals, Jia Ding brings his visionary expertise to *Carmen*, crafting a production that is both imaginative and emotionally resonant.

A Unique Setting: *Carmen* Comes to 1970s Hong Kong

In this new production, Bizet's *Carmen* unfolds amidst the rapid economic growth, cultural exchange, and boundless energy of 1970s Hong Kong. The city's vibrant and ever-changing landscape provides

the backdrop for *Carmen*'s universal themes of passion, ambition, and destiny. The opera's four acts take audiences on a journey through some of Hong Kong's most iconic locations, evoking a sense of nostalgia for an era defined by transformation and opportunity.

Producer, Dr. Warren Mok explains: "The story of *Carmen* is one of intense emotions and human connections, themes that align beautifully with Hong Kong's dynamic spirit in the 1970s. By reimagining *Carmen* in this unique setting, we hope to bring a production that is both fresh and timeless to our audiences."

Carmen, An Enduring Story of Passion, Love, and Heartbreak

One of the most performed operas in the world, *Carmen* is celebrated for its blend of French lyricism and Spanish passion. Its universal themes of love, desire, and destiny, combined with Bizet's unforgettable melodies, make it a timeless masterpiece that continues to captivate audiences across generations.

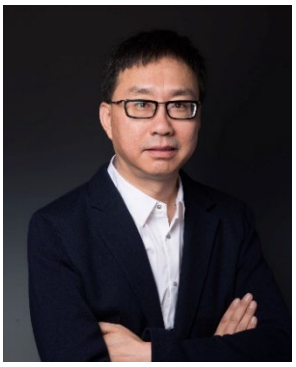
At the heart of *Carmen* is a poignant story of love and sacrifice. The opera tells the tale of Don José, a man who gives up his career, honour, and family for an all-consuming love affair with the bold and captivating Carmen. Torn between his longing for Carmen and the devotion of his childhood sweetheart Micaëla, Don José spirals into jealousy and despair, leading to a heartbreaking conclusion.

With Bizet's iconic melodies, including the celebrated *Habanera* and *Toreador Song*, *Carmen* remains a favourite among opera enthusiasts and newcomers alike, offering a musical and theatrical experience that lingers long after the final curtain falls.

An Outstanding Creative Team and Cast

This production of *Carmen* boasts an exceptional creative team, including some of the most talented professionals in opera, whose expertise ensures a visually stunning and musically captivating performance.

Producer
Warren Mok



Director
Jia Ding

Conductor
Franck Colombier

The cast includes world-class vocalists in the lead roles, bringing the characters of Carmen, Don José, Micaëla and Escamillo to life with passion and authenticity.

Carmen
Marie Gautrot

Carmen
Ambroisine Bré

Don José
Amadi Lagha

Don José
Sébastien Guèze

Escamillo
Timothée Varon

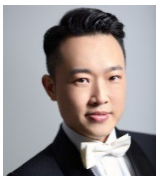
Escamillo
Wang Yun Peng

Micaëla
Camille Schnoor

Micaëla
Perrine Madoeuf

Zuniga
Edmund Kwan

Dancairo
Albert Lim



Remendado
Chen Yong

Mercédès
Christy Li

Frasquita
Valentina Tao

Moralès
Lam Kwok Ho

With Franck Colombier at the helm, Opera Hong Kong Orchestra, Opera Hong Kong Chorus and Opera Hong Kong Children Chorus will deliver a rich and dynamic musical experience, bringing Bizet's masterpiece to life with emotional depth and precision.

Tickets Now on Sale!
Tickets for *Carmen* are now available for booking online via URBTIX. Prices range from $1,280, $1,080, $880, $680, $480, to $280. A limited number of concession tickets are also available for full-time students, senior citizens aged 60 or above, persons with physical impairments, and recipients of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA).

Performance Details:
Dates and Times: 7–9 May 2026 (Thu–Sat) 7:30 PM | 10 May 2026 (Sun) 2:30 PM
Venue: Grand Theatre, Hong Kong Cultural Centre
Language: Sung in French with Chinese and English surtitles

#OperaHongKong #OHK #FrenchMay #Bizet #Carmen @operahongkong

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About Opera Hong Kong

Founded in 2003, Opera Hong Kong (OHK) is Hong Kong's first professional opera company. Over the years, the company has gone from strength to strength under the artistic direction of Dr. Warren Mok, the internationally acclaimed Hong Kong tenor. OHK has elevated opera in Asia's world city, with many world-class productions covering all major works in the operatic canon and has collaborated with opera houses and festivals around the world.

In 2019, OHK was selected by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council as one of the three recipients of the coveted "Eminent Arts Group Scheme". The Scheme's consecutive five-year funding has become a boost to further the company's development. In 2024, OHK was named as a recipient of the "Eminent Arts Group Scheme" for a further five years.

OHK is committed to promoting the city's brightest, young opera singers. In 2015, OHK launched the Jockey Club Opera Hong Kong Young Artist Development and Education Programme, a three-year opera training programme designed to nurture ten young local artists. The success of the Programme led to its renewal by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for another three years from 2019 to 2022. In 2024 OHK launched the inaugural "LKSF-OHK Young Artist Overseas Fellowships" Programme, generously sponsored by the Li Ka Shing Foundation, to provide short-term international bursaries for six selected young artists who are Hong Kong residents to elevate their vocal artistry.

OHK also places a strong emphasis on education and community activities. Opera school tours, summer schools and master classes are held regularly to reach young audiences. OHK provides a wide range of courses for early-age children to adults in addition to Children Chorus classes. The OHK Chorus and the OHK Children Chorus were established in 2004 and 2008 respectively and are recognised contributors to the local choral scene.

The development of the Greater Bay Area has created an environment for OHK to initiate more collaborations and bring the art of opera to a wider audience.

Official website: www.operahongkong.org
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