



朱慶祥先生

Mr CHOO Heng-cheong

朱慶祥先生於 1927 年在馬來西亞怡保出生，父親朱家樂、兄朱毅剛、朱兆祥均為粵劇樂師（行內尊稱他們三兄弟為「朱氏三雄」），姐姐朱秀英為粵劇花旦兼丑生。朱師傅自小已經學習樂器和粵曲拍和，擅奏多種樂器，包括小提琴、古箏、三弦、二弦、竹提琴、二胡、大笛（嗩吶）、色士風等，他亦熟悉鑼鼓敲擊。九歲初踏臺板，十三歲任頭架（音樂領導），並與不少著名粵劇老倌合作。1950 年與秦小梨及石燕子合作演出，又在 1951 年擔任薛覺先星馬巡迴演出的「私伙頭架」。

1953 年芳艷芬和林家聲到星馬登台，朱師傅亦為其伴奏。1953 至 1959 年間，他曾與粵劇紅伶紅線女、李寶瑩、鍾麗蓉、黎文所、何非凡、南紅、麥炳榮、余麗珍、梁醒波、靚次伯、半日安、鳳凰女、黃千歲、羅劍郎等在星馬一帶演出時合作。

朱師傅 1959 年移居香港，即參加「仙鳳鳴劇團」為新劇《再世紅梅記》拍和，並參與任、白名劇《帝女花》、《紫釵記》及《再世紅梅記》的長壽唱片灌錄工作，擔任音樂領導；亦曾為娛樂、天聲等唱片公司多張粵曲唱片作音樂領導。曾參與的唱片錄音超過一百張。

自 1966 年任劍輝和白雪仙訓練「雛鳳鳴劇團」演出《辭郎州》及《英烈劍中劍》的時候開始，

Maestro Choo Heng-cheong was born in Ipoh, Malaysia in 1927. His father Choo Ga-lok and elder brothers Ngai-kong and Siu-cheung were Cantonese opera instrumental musicians. (Highly regarded within their profession, the brothers have been named 'Big Three of the Choo Family'.) His sister Sau-ying, a Cantonese opera actress, had played *huadan* (young maiden) and *chousheng* (male clown) roles. Maestro Choo studied various musical instruments and Cantonese opera accompaniment at a young age. He is especially adept at playing a variety of instruments including violin, *guzheng*, *saxian*, *erxian*, bamboo *tiqin*, *erhu*, flute (*suona*) and saxophone. Moreover, Maestro Choo is familiar with percussion instruments such as gongs and drums. He started performing on stage when he was only nine and served as the music leader at the age of 13. Maestro Choo has since co-operated with many famous Cantonese opera performers. He performed with Chun Siu-lei and Sek Yin-tsi in 1950, and went on a performing tour to Singapore and Malaysia with Sit Kok-sin as his private music leader in 1951.

In 1953, Fong Yim-fun and Lam Kar-sing performed in Singapore and Malaysia with Maestro Choo accompanying them. From 1953 to 1959, he had worked with stars such as Hung Sin-nui, Lee Bo-ying, Chung Lai-yung, Lai Man-soh, Ho Fei-fan, Nam Hung, Mak Bing-wing, Yu Lai-zhen, Leung Sing-bor, Lan Chi-pak, Poon Yat-on, Fung Wong-nui, Wong Chin-sui and Law Kim-long when they performed in the area.

In 1959 Maestro Choo moved to Hong Kong and immediately began doing accompaniment work for *The Reincarnation of the Red Plum*, a new play of Sin Fung Ming Opera Troupe. He also served as the music leader for the recording of *Princess Cheung Ping* (aka *The Flower Princess*), *Legend of the Purple Hairpin* and *The Reincarnation of the Red Plum* – renowned plays of Yam Kim-fai and Pak Suet-sin, which have later become long-lasting popular albums. As a music leader for Cantonese opera of record companies such as Crown and Tien Shing, Maestro Choo was involved in the production of over 100 albums.

Since 1966 when Yam Kim-fai and Pak Suet-sin trained Chor Fung Ming Opera Troupe to perform *Farewell to a Warrior* and *The Sword of the Valiant*, Maestro Choo had been the music leader and vocal

朱師傅即擔任「雛鳳鳴劇團」音樂領導和唱腔設計，也是眾雛鳳成員的唱腔導師，直至1992年劇團解散為止。在此期間，亦曾為「大龍鳳」、「慶新聲」、「頌新聲」及「新馬」等著名劇團擔任音樂領導。1993年「慶鳳鳴劇團」成立，朱師傅續獲聘任為音樂領導。2005及2006年「雛鳳鳴劇團」再次演出三十二場《西樓錯夢》，朱師傅繼續擔任音樂設計及音樂領導。他為以上各大粵劇團演出的名劇設計音樂和唱腔，定下了演出的藍本。

朱師傅對傳統粵劇排場非常熟悉，亦能對中西音樂融會貫通，拍和的風格自成一格，音色悅耳，與歌者的行腔融合，動聽感人，是香港粵劇音樂拍和的代表人物，亦是一眾粵劇樂師喜歡模仿的對象。朱師傅不單藝術造詣高深，而且甚有職業道德，演出認真，從來不會遲到，對後學總是循循善誘。

朱師傅為香港粵劇界首屈一指的音樂領導，多年來醉心粵劇事業，提携後輩亦不遺餘力，深受粵劇界不同輩份人士敬仰。上世紀六十年代，朱師傅亦曾為許多電影參與配樂，其中包括當時風靡一時的黃梅調電影配樂。八十年代他每年參與電視籌款節目「歡樂滿東華」為名伶和電視藝員拍和伴奏，曾教授過無數電視藝員演唱粵曲。朱師傅桃李滿門，受其指導者不計其數。他近年更多次為大學作公開講座，分享他幾十年來對粵劇曲藝及音樂的心得。朱師傅亦大力支持香港公開大學一系列關於粵劇發展的活動，於2016年、2018年、2019年分別為「粵曲唱腔與音樂拍和藝術欣賞示範講座」、「粵劇曲藝縱橫談(一)」及「粵劇曲藝縱橫談(二)」特別主講嘉賓；並於2019年為香港公開大學三十周年校慶大型粵劇晚會「戲說紅樓夢」擔任藝術顧問，演出備受各方讚賞推崇。

為表揚朱慶祥師傅對香港及本校之貢獻，現恭請副校長頒授榮譽大學院士榮銜予朱慶祥師傅。

designer of the Troupe. He directed members in singing and pitching until the Troupe disbanded in 1992. During this period, Maestro Choo had also served as the music leader of other prestigious troupes such as Tai Lung Fung, Hing Sun Sing, Chung Sun Sing and Sun Ma. He was again appointed the music leader of Hing Fung Ming Opera Troupe when it was established in 1993. When Chor Fung Ming Opera Troupe hosted 32 performances of *Misconstruing Dream in the West Mansion* in 2005 and 2006, Maestro Choo continued to serve as music leader and designer of the singing styles. He constructed music and vocal pitching styles for well-known pieces of the above major Cantonese opera troupes, and set the blueprint for future performances.

Maestro Choo knows the *paichang* (formulaic scenes or patternized performance segments) of traditional Cantonese opera very well. He has been able to integrate Chinese and Western music and provide his unique style of melodic and touching accompaniment, which matches the singing and movements of performers brilliantly. As the guru of Cantonese opera accompaniment in Hong Kong, he is a role model whom other musicians look up to and try to emulate. Maestro Choo has excelled not only in artistic achievements but also professional ethics. He takes every performance seriously and has been always punctual, willing to teach the younger generation patiently and attentively.

As the foremost music leader for Cantonese opera in Hong Kong, Maestro Choo has totally immersed himself in his art for years. He has spared no effort to support the younger generation and is widely respected by all age groups in Cantonese opera circles. In the 1960s, Maestro Choo provided music accompaniment for many films, including *huangmei diao* films which became all the rage at the time. In the 1980s, he participated in the annual TV show *Tung Wah Charity Gala* every year to provide music accompaniment for famous stars and TV artists. He has since taught numerous TV artists how to sing Cantonese opera. Maestro Choo has many students and countless people have benefitted from his guidance. He has given several public lectures at universities in recent years, sharing his decades of experience in exploring the artistry of Cantonese opera music and singing. In particular, Maestro Choo has strongly supported a series of activities on the development of Cantonese opera organized by The Open University of Hong Kong. He was a special guest speaker for three seminars at the University in 2016, 2018 and 2019 respectively, namely 'Performance Seminar: Cheunghong (Singing Cavity) and Paakwo (Beating and Harmonization) in Cantonese Opera' and two 'Seminars on Cantonese Opera: Tradition, Improvisation and Transformation'. Maestro Choo was also the artistic advisor of the Cantonese opera concert *Dream of the Red Chamber*, a signature programme of the OUHK's 30th Anniversary celebration held in 2019, which has won wide acclaim from all sectors.

In recognition of Maestro Choo Heng-cheong's contributions to Hong Kong and the University, may I invite the Pro-Chancellor to present him with the Honorary University Fellowship.