

# PREMIERE PERFORMANCES ANNUAL REPORT

1 July 2022 - 30 June 2023



 PREMIERE  
PERFORMANCES  
飛躍演奏香港

[www.pphk.org](http://www.pphk.org)

Premiere Performances of Hong Kong Ltd was established in 2007  
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# MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

What a year we have just had! Coming out of the pain of the pandemic, we have just had the best year in Premiere Performances' history. Perhaps because of all the shutdowns, it seems that a much wider audience has discovered the joy of attending a live music performance. Every concert we presented since April 1, 2023 has been completely sold out.

At our 15th Anniversary Gala in March 2023, I took a look at our top 20 concerts (by box office receipts) in Premiere Performances' history. Did you know that 7 out of our top 20 concerts from September 2007 through March 2023 actually occurred during the pandemic? I guess people value something when they do not have it anymore - and in our case, it was an appreciation for live music performances.

Looking ahead, we have two new initiatives in the pipeline. The first is Jazz - for which there is definitely a growing interest and many exceptional local talents being developed. The second is the Greater Bay Area - to see if we can expand our geographical reach, and also expose our local groups to a wider audience. Stay tuned for updates, as we begin pilot programs for both this year. Please get in touch if you can help with either!

We are so grateful to the Culture, Sports & Tourism Bureau for their continued support under the Art Development Matching Grants Scheme, and for keeping the higher level of matching grant (180%) for the fourth year in a row. As this is a Matching Grant, we would receive nothing from the government were it not for the generous and unwavering support of our donor base.

See you in the concert hall!

*Andrea D Fessler*

## Administration (as of 30 June 2023)

### Board of Governors

- Andrea Fessler, Chair
- Winnie Kwan
- Shu Yin Lee
- Ester Li
- Radhika Mahidhara (from March 2023)
- Janana Suleymanli (from March 2023)

### Staff

- Andrea Fessler, Founder and Executive Director
- Loretta Cheung, Box Office Manager
- Brian Chui, Programme and Outreach Manager (from August 2022)
- Ingrid Kwok, Senior Arts Administration Officer (until July 2023)
- Sharen Lau, Marketing Manager
- Hoffmann Lai, Arts Administration Officer (from June 2023)
- Vanessa Leung, Assistant Arts Administration Manager (until November 2022)
- Jane Ng, Senior Arts Administration Officer (until October 2022)

### Interns

- Cheng Hong Yi (from May 2023 to August 2023)





# ABOUT

## PREMIERE PERFORMANCES

### Overview

Founded in 2007 as a registered charity by Andrea D. Fessler, Premiere Performances aims to establish Hong Kong as a leader in the international cultural landscape. Premiere Performances is a presenter of the world’s best performers of recitals and chamber music with almost 100 events each year, featuring a dynamic array of instruments, performance styles and musical genres.

### Mission

Premiere Performances brings the best classical musicians in the world to Hong Kong for performances and outreach, building a vibrant local arts scene, nurturing local artists, and making the inspiration of a live music performance accessible to all.

### Vision

Premiere Performances is sparking a musical movement. We want to enliven the imagination of Hong Kong audiences through extraordinary performances, inspire those who play to pick up their instruments and play with joy and love, and enable those who listen to have a concert experience like no other.

### Beneficiaries

From special needs students to the elite of Hong Kong, we have programmes aimed at all demographics of society. We believe that everybody, regardless of social class or education, ethnicity or language, will be moved by the power of a live music performance presented at a world class level.

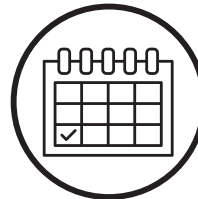
In 2022/2023,  
Premiere Performances  
organised:



**15**  
Public Ticketed  
Concerts



**6**  
Family Concerts



**9**  
Private Events



**67**  
School Concerts



**4**  
Online Events



With

**42**  
Musicians

Impacting over

**24,000**

audience members

# AUDIENCE

## REACH

Events (2022/23)	Concert Attendance	Outreach Attendance
Mahan Esfahani, harpsichord “The Art of Fugue”	654	120
Plinio Fernandes, guitar	825	-
Rhythmaker Family Concert	306	36
Tony Siqi Yun, piano	814	130
Rhythmaker’s Hysan Place Christmas Performances	-	300
BPMF 2023: Cho-Liang Lin, violin and Evelyn Chang, piano	672	60
BPMF 2023: Carnival of the Zodiac Family Concert	624	50
BPMF 2023: Romer Quartet & Rachel Cheung	328	119
BPMF 2023: Boris Giltburg, piano recital	715	-
Fundraising Gala Dinner with Tony Siqi Yun	104	-
The Chamber Music World of Rachel Cheung - Arts Experience Scheme Concert	-	257
Camille Thomas, cello	1,491	-
Romer String Quartet Family Concert	448	25
Viva! Pipers “Peter & the Wolf” (Tuen Mun Town Hall)	268	-
Verona Quartet	1,088	-
Esther Yoo, violin & Zee Zee, piano	1,063	80
Viva! Pipers “Peter & The Wolf” (Sha Tin Town Hall)	296	271
Donor Salon with Ning Feng	80	-
Viva! Pipers School Concerts	-	5,293
Fiesta Brass School Concerts	-	2,616
Romer String Quartet School Concerts	-	1,295
Rhythmaker Pilot School Concerts	-	3,987
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>9,664</b>	<b>14,669</b>
<b>Total Reach</b>	<b>24,333</b>	



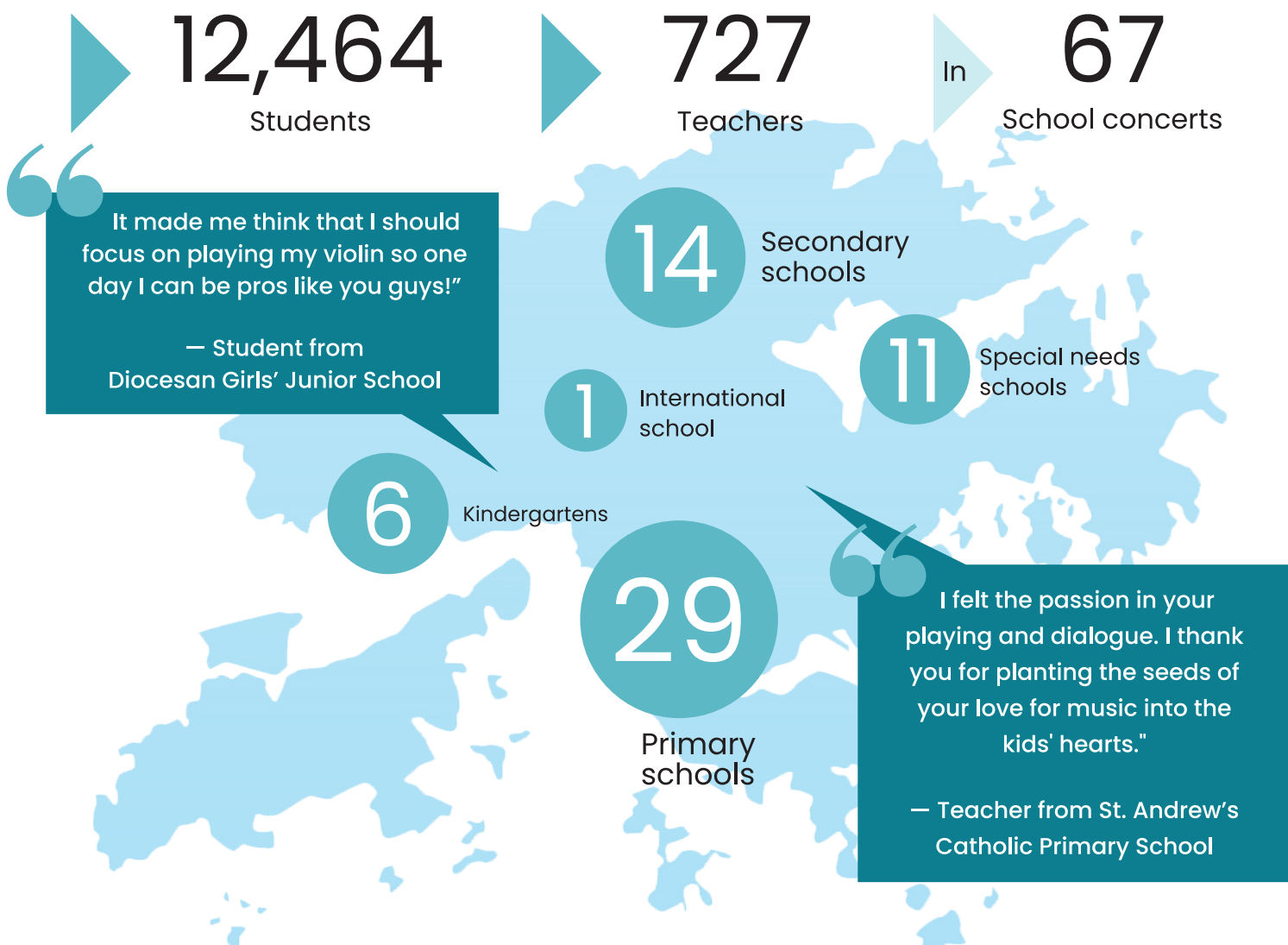
# CHAMBER MUSIC IN SCHOOLS

Making classical music accessible to all is central to PPHK’s mission. As one of the few organisations in the city that specialises in chamber music, we are proud to be building a vibrant local arts scene and nurturing young audiences with our wide range of Outreach & Education Programmes.

Since the establishment of our Chamber Music in Schools (CMIS) programme in 2013, we have brought 15 different overseas and local ensembles to Hong Kong schools, organising over 450 school performances, and reaching more than 122,000 kindergarten, primary, secondary and special educational needs students and 5,500 teachers.

The 2022-23 fiscal year was the first academic year since the pandemic where the CMIS programme was run without Covid-related interruptions. In particular, there was a huge resurgence of interest and demand for live performances in schools after the mandatory mask-wearing policy was lifted in March 2023. In total, our four ensembles visited a total of 67 concerts in 61 schools during FY 2022-23 including 6 kindergartens, 29 primary schools, 14 secondary schools, 11 special needs schools, and 1 international school.

## IN 2022/23, WE REACHED



In 2022-23, we launched a pilot tour with the Rhythmaker percussion ensemble, which is the fourth ensemble to join our roster for the CMIS Programme. Rhythmaker was chosen after an open audition in October 2021.

With reference to the outstanding work by our other local ensembles, the Viva! Pipers, Fiesta Brass and Romer String Quartet, Rhythmaker worked for a year on developing their own interactive school concert. By playing games and making music with small percussion instruments and a range of daily objects like bottles, stools, cups, and even body parts, they demonstrate in a refreshing and entertaining way that “pitch-less” music can also be enjoyable and educational.



### Fiesta Brass Quintet

- Hong Chi Morningjoy School Yuen Long
- ELCHK Ma On Shan Lutheran Primary School
- King's College Old Boys' Association Primary School (School 2)
- PLK Dr. Jimmy Wong Chi-Ho (Tin Sum Valley) Primary School
- San Wui Commercial Society Chan Pak Sha School
- HKMLC Queen Maud Secondary School
- Po Leung Kuk Lui Chan Wai Ching Kindergarten-Cum-Nursery
- Diocesan Girls' Junior School
- CNEC Lau Wing Sang Secondary School
- SKH Holy Carpenter Primary School
- S.K.H. Wei Lun Primary School
- Hong Chi Morninghope School
- Po Leung Kuk Law's Foundation School
- Buddhist Ho Nam Kam College
- SKH Kei Yan Primary School
- Buddhist To Chi Fat She Yeung Yat Lam Memorial School

### Viva! Pipers Wind Quintet

- HKSYC & IA Chan Nam Chong Memorial School
- SKH Chu Yan Primary School
- Tsuen Wan Baptist Church Kindergarten
- Li Sing Tai Hang School
- Society of Boys' Centres Hui Chung Sing Memorial School
- Evangelize China Fellowship Holy Word School
- Korean International School
- C.C.C. Fong Yun Wah Primary School
- St James Catholic Kindergarten
- Lock Tao Christian Kindergarten
- Creative Kindergarten
- St. Stephen's Girls' College Kindergarten
- Caritas Jockey Club Lok Yan School
- Pentecostal Yu Leung Fat Primary School
- S.K.H. St. Peter's Primary School
- Taoist Ching Chung Primary School
- Baptist Rainbow Primary School
- Church of Christ in China Kei Shun Special School
- Wai Chow Public School
- CNEC Lui Ming Choi Primary School

### Romer String Quartet

- Lee Chi Tat Memorial School
- St. John The Baptist Catholic Primary School
- TWGHs Mr. and Mrs. Kwong Sik Kwan College
- Diocesan Girls' Junior School
- Shun Tak Fraternal Association Cheng Yu Tung Secondary School
- PLK Tong Nai Kan Junior Secondary College
- Choi Hung Estate Catholic Secondary School

### Rhythmaker

- Holy Angels Canossian School
- Baptist Rainbow Primary School
- Tung Chung Catholic School
- CCC Kei Tsz Primary School
- Wai Chow Public School (Sheung Shui)
- Chan Sui Ki (La Salle) Primary School
- SKH St. Peter's Primary School
- Tsung Tsin Mission of HK On Yan Nursery School
- Taoist Ching Chung Primary School
- CCC Chun Kwong Primary School
- Carmel Leung Sing Tak School
- St. Andrew's Catholic Primary School
- Hong Kong Red Cross John F. Kennedy Centre
- Chun Tok School
- Tai Kwong Hilary College
- Sing Yin Secondary School
- Alliance Primary School, Whampoa
- Fanling A.o.g. Church Grace Light Kindergarten





# OUTREACH & EDUCATION

## SEN Training:

To expand our capacity to provide inspirational and impactful performances for Special Educational Needs (SEN) students, we held two workshops for our local ensembles with Dr. Marina Wong from Hong Kong Baptist University – a leading expert in designing music curriculum for SEN students. The workshops covered an introduction to the types of special educational needs, and SEN students' specific needs in music learning, as well as strategies for guided listening activities for SEN students and how to build concert programs for SEN students. Members of Viva! Pipers, Fiesta Brass and Rhythmaker attended these sessions which were held at the Hong Kong Arts Development Council Conference Room. The funding for these sessions was provided by the Tin Ka Ping Foundation.

Since attending these workshops, we brought Viva! Pipers into 6 SEN schools and Fiesta Brass into 4 SEN schools.



The ensemble could explain musical theory through their playing; I could see the effort they put in their activities; it's truly rare to see my students so engaged"

"My students could pleasantly learn and engage with musical instruments; the ensemble's activities were very comprehensive and thoughtful. Thank you!"

— Teachers from Hong Chi Morninghope School, Tuen Mun

## Rhythmaker @ Hysan Place

On Dec 22, 2023, Rhythmaker performed four shows of 30 minutes each at 1/F Hysan Place, to entertain the holiday shopping crowds. They performed a mixture of holiday favorites and everyone had a good time.



## Senior Secondary School Arts Experience Scheme Concert: The Chamber Music World of Rachel Cheung

On March 7, 2023 at Kwai Tsing Theatre, we contributed a programme to the LCSD Audience Building Office's Senior Secondary School Arts Experience Scheme called "The Chamber Music World of Rachel Cheung". Pianist Rachel Cheung curated an interesting programme including works by Mozart, Stravinsky, Rachmaninoff, Saint-Saëns and Schoenfield. Rachel was joined by violinist Ruda Lee, clarinetist Eric Fung and pianist Hin-yat Tsang.

After the performance, the artists held a Q&A session for the audience of senior secondary students from various schools, including Tsuen Wan Public Ho Chuen Yiu Memorial College, Ebenezer New Hope School, C.C.C. Kei Shun Special School, Yuen Long Merchants Association Secondary School, CNEC Christian College and Yan Chai Hospital Lim Por Yen Secondary School.



## Pre-Concert Zoom chats and Podcasts

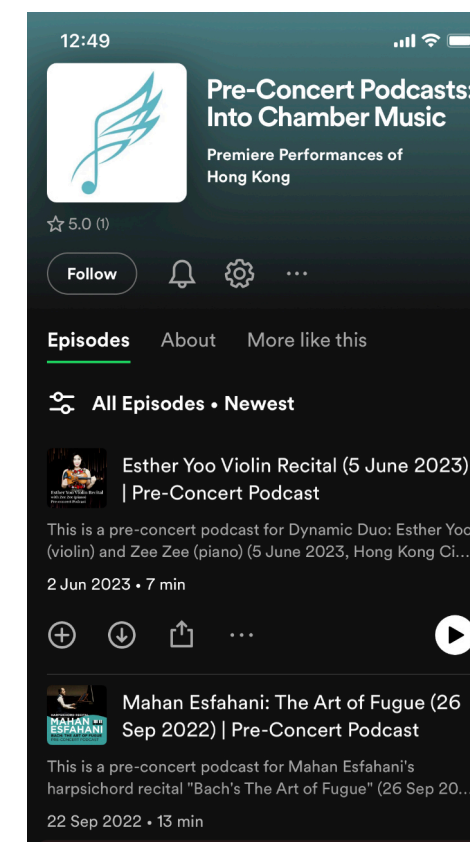
When the pandemic hit in 2020, we were all introduced to a "new normal", especially in performing arts. While we still believe in the live music experience, we decided to go "digital" for the pre-concert talks.

In collaboration with Aura Music, we organised pre-concert Zoom chats with all of our recital artists, with around 20-40 audience members joining us for each chat session.

We then edited the chats into a pre-concert podcast, available on Spotify, YouTube, Anchor, Google Podcasts and other streaming platforms. Audiences were able to listen on demand to the artist giving a brief explanation of the music they were going to play in their recital.

In 2022/23, we presented 4 pre-concert Zoom chats and 2 pre-concert podcasts. We have organised pre-concert Zoom Chats with the following artists:

- Mahan Esfahani (19 Sept 2022)
- Tony Siqi Yun (17 Nov 2022)
- Cho-Liang Lin (21 Dec 2022)
- Esther Yoo (29 May 2023)



Our podcasts are available on:





## Audience of Tomorrow Project

To make world-class music accessible to all, Premiere Performances donated 604 tickets to local NGOs and students. Additionally, we held a special performance of Peter & the Wolf at Sha Tin Town Hall exclusively for NGOs. This year's partner organisations included:



### This year's partner organisations included:

- Music Children Foundation
- Sprouts Foundation
- Changing Young Lives Foundation
- St James Settlement
- The Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers
- The Boys' & Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong
- The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts
- Hong Kong Baptist University
- The Chinese University Hong Kong
- The Education University of Hong Kong
- The University of Hong Kong
- HKFYG Lee Shau Kee Primary School
- SKH Yautong Kei Hin Primary School
- Po Leung Kuk Tong Nai Kan Junior Secondary College
- HKMLC Queen Maud Secondary School
- Taoist Ching Chung Primary School

## RECITALS & CONCERTS

We had an eventful Recital Series in 2022/23 in which we presented 6 concerts with a wide range of instruments and repertoires. All concerts took place at 7:30 p.m. in the Concert Hall, Hong Kong City Hall. Because a quarantine was still in place, we continued to look for collaborations and other events for our Recital artists.

This was our fourth consecutive season tackling the effects brought on by the pandemic. All of our originally scheduled artists for the fall of 2022 were replaced because their China tours fell through. All of the artists who agreed to perform in Hong Kong in the fall of 2022 accepted a one week quarantine (which was then lowered to three days). For that reason, we tried very hard to find all of our artists additional engagements for their time in Hong Kong.



Mahan Esfahani did two events at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology as well as a masterclass at Hong Kong Baptist University. Plinio Fernandes performed at Soho House and the University of Chicago Frances & Rose Yuen campus in Pok Fu Lam ("University of Chicago"). Tony Siqi Yun also performed a concert at the University of Chicago as well as at the Hong Kong Club.

Many of this year's Recital Artists were featured in interviews and/or cover stories of Vantage Music Magazine, including Plinio Fernandes, Tony Siqi Yun, Boris Giltburg (two-part interview), and Camille Thomas.





## Mahan Esfahani, harpsichord “The Art of the Fugue”

26 September 2022 (Monday)

Following his extremely well-received performances in Hong Kong for Premiere Performances in 2019 (with violinist Jennifer Pike) and 2020 (in the Brandenburg Concertos), we were thrilled to bring back Mahan Esfahani for his first solo recital in Hong Kong featuring J.S. Bach’s The Art of Fugue. Mahan brought this programme direct from his recital at Wigmore Hall (London), where he also received the Wigmore Hall Medal, recognising major international artists and significant figures in the classical music world. The programme was specifically requested by Buckingham Palace for this occasion.

Mahan Esfahani was invited as part of a special collaboration between Premiere Performances and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

In addition to his recital for Premiere Performances, Mahan also gave a lecture at HKUST called “The Modern Harpsichord”, performed in a free community concert as part of HKUST’s Cosmopolis Festival called “The Art of the Harpsichord” featuring sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti and contemporary composers, as well as giving a masterclass at Hong Kong Baptist University.



“

The Art of Fugue is not easy to play or listen to, especially how Bach has pushed the envelope to the extreme... I am not a scholar myself, and I can speak for any other regular audience members like myself – we don’t feel bored at all because Mahan Esfahani creates a sense of connection, with the audience, making it a very successful reading.”

- Savio Lau on RTHK 4

“

He can play Harpsichord in a way beyond imagination. Fantastic!”

- Audience member

“The pre-concert talk gave me much confidence in the musician’s interpretation of the music. The performance was also highly enjoyable even without prior knowledge of the musician’s reputation. In general, I have high esteem for the choice of musicians from PPHK.”

- Audience member



## Plínio Fernandes, guitar “Sounds of Old and New”

30 October 2022 (Sunday)

Named one of Classic FM’s “Top 30 brilliant musicians under 30” in 2022, Brazilian guitar virtuoso Plínio Fernandes made his Hong Kong début with a mixed programme of old and new repertoire. In addition to his signature Brazilian repertoire, Plínio also showcased his classical virtuosity with works by English Renaissance composer John Dowland and Spanish Romantic composer Fernando Sor.

Fernandes also performed salons in collaboration with the University of Chicago Francis & Rose Yuen campus in Pok Fu Lam, as well as a member’s event at Soho House

“

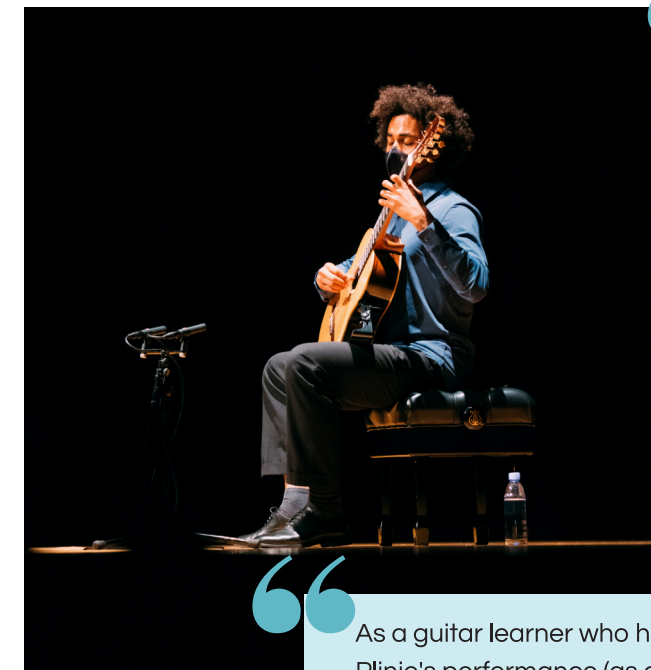
A captivating Hong Kong debut, a concert filled with the vibrant, distinguished and colourful sound of this romantic instrument.”

- Vantage Music Magazine

“

The music is so beautiful! It’s singing with the guitar. I can imagine myself sipping Brazilian coffee.”

- Audience member



“

As a guitar learner who has spent numerous hours on the Villa Lobos Preludes, Plínio’s performance (as a Brazilian guitarist) is truly inspiring. Thoroughly enjoyed.”

- Audience member





## Tony Siqi Yun, piano

24 November 2022 (Thursday)



Known as “a true poet of the keyboard” (Pianist Magazine), Canadian Chinese pianist Tony Siqi Yun performed an intriguing showcase of Bach, Liszt and Berio, ending his recital with Brahms’ powerful Third Sonata. Yun came into the limelight of the classical music stage after winning the First Prize and Gold Medal at the inaugural China International Music Competition in 2019 at the age of 18. Now 21 and in his third year at the Juilliard School of Music, Tony is a protégée of conductor Yannick Nézin-Séguet. An exciting career to watch!

Tony performed salons in collaboration with the University of Chicago as well as a member’s event at the Hong Kong Club.

“

A breathtaking recital with a finely balanced programme was demonstrated by Tony with much energy, insight and maturity”

- Vantage Music Magazine

“

“Please invite him to come more to HK if possible before he becomes world famous. He did play very well! Poetic, soft and yet with strong energy.”

- Audience member



“For a 21 year old, he showed great promise... Brilliant and definitely one to watch. Please bring him back”

- Audience member

## Camille Thomas, cello & Rachel Cheung, piano “Grieg and Franck Sonatas”

1 April, 2023 (Saturday)

In her long-awaited sold-out Hong Kong début, Franco-Belgian cellist Camille Thomas teamed up with Hong Kong’s own Van Cliburn finalist Rachel Cheung in a recital featuring two of the most beloved sonatas in the cello repertoire – the powerful Grieg Sonata, and the lyrical Franck Sonata. One highlight was the encore of the slow movement from the Chopin Cello Sonata – which was played by Auguste Franchomme to Frédéric Chopin on his deathbed – on the exact Stradivari cello that Camille now plays.

“

Many thanks to Premiere Performance for arranging such talented artists. Much grateful for PP’s focus on bringing emerging artists to HK and broadening the horizon of the HK arts scene.”

- Audience member

“Enjoyed the programme very much, well selected, the musician was charming, and the cello stories were excellent. Bravo!”

- Audience member

“

Camille Thomas playing reminded me of Jacqueline du Pré...There were several moments she really touched my heart, making me tear up in the concert hall”

- Vincent Liauw on RTHK 4





## Verona Quartet “Ravishing Ravel”

22 May 2023 (Monday)

Firmly established amongst the most distinguished ensembles on the chamber music scene today, the Verona Quartet played a lively programme for their sold-out Hong Kong début, which included Bartók Quartet No. 3, Beethoven Op. 59 No. 1 (“Razumovskys”), and the ravishing Ravel Quartet as a centrepiece. The concert was a co-presentation of Premiere Performances and the French May Arts Festival and was supported by Ms. Whitney Ferrare.

“

Such an impressive performance. Excellent!”

- Audience member



“

The Verona Quartet bring the house down in Hong Kong debut”

“impressive synergy between members and seamless transitions made for an atmospheric performance par excellence”

- South China Morning Post

“

Amazing quartet with sound so unified and creamy and beautiful in tone color! They have individuality yet togetherness! I also particularly love their interaction with the Audience with explaining the music and their choices of repertoire.”

- Audience member

## Esther Yoo, violin & Zee Zee, piano “Dynamic Duo”

5 June 2023 (Monday)



The final concert of our 2022/23 Recital Series featured a sold-out violin recital by Korean virtuoso Esther Yoo, together with Chinese piano star Zee Zee. The two musicians met as BBC New Generation Artists in 2015 and comprise two-thirds of the Zen Trio. The lively programme featured works by Debussy, Grieg, Rachmaninoff, Vieuxtemps and Korean contemporary composer, Jeongkyu Park. The concert was supported by Elia Mourtzanou, and the Korean Cultural Centre was a collaborator.

“

“Korean-American violinist’s flawless technique and magnetism, and her interplay with Chinese pianist Zee Zee, captivate Hong Kong City Hall audience. Their playing was luscious and lyrical in sonatas by Debussy and Grieg, brilliant and eerie in Korean contemporary work Toad, and there were fireworks to finish.”

- Christopher Halls, South China Morning Post

“

“The performance of Esther Yoo and Zee Zee was amazing throughout the whole concert and the conversations between the violin and piano were impressive.”

- Audience member

“Exquisite playing by the dynamic duo, interesting programme, two gracious encores! ...The recital itself was first-class.”

- Audience member





# BEARE'S PREMIERE MUSIC FESTIVAL 2023

Title Sponsor  
**John & Arthur Beare**  
FINE VIOLINS SINCE 1892

With travel restrictions still in place on 1 September 2022 and two canceled festivals behind us, we made the decision not to move forward with the 2023 Beare's Premiere Music Festival. When all travel restrictions and quarantine were dropped in November 2022, we decided instead to stage four concerts celebrating the 15th anniversary of Premiere Performances.

## The 2023 Beare's Premiere Music Festival brought together:

### Cho-Liang Lin

Festival Artistic Director since 2012 who transformed the Festival into one of the best in Asia



### Rachel Cheung

Local star pianist who took part in Premiere Performances' first masterclass as a student in 2008 and performed in our Recital Series in 2021



### Romer String Quartet

Premiere Performances' first Quartet-in-Residence since 2018;



### Carnival of the Zodiac's return

From our first Family Series (2013), with creator Haylie Ecker coming back to Hong Kong to be the English narrator



...and 4 concerts in Hong Kong City Hall Concert Hall:



## Violin recital with Cho-Liang Lin, violin & Evelyn Chang, piano

6 January, 2023 (Friday)

In this violin recital, Cho-Liang Lin teamed up with pianist Evelyn Chang for a night of heartfelt music by Bach, Schumann, Brahms, Debussy and the pianist Evelyn Chang herself.



Excellent performance by a top-notch, world-class musician still at his best!"

- Audience member



Cho-Liang Lin's playing in Brahms revived his signature 'Cho-Liang Lin tone' - the tone that the whole European and International classical music world sought-after. The collaboration between Evelyn Chang and Cho Liang Lin is highly harmonious. The two individuals share a great deal of consensus, resulting in an excellent overall performance that brings out the poetic essence of the work."

- Tina Fu, IACT

## Family Concert: Carnival of the Zodiac

7 January, 2023 (Saturday)

A delightful adaptation of Saint-Saëns' beloved Carnival of the Animals, reworked for Chinese New Year by Haylie Ecker. With additional movements by Dobrinka Tabakova and poems by Nury Vittachi, this is surely a Hong Kong classic! First performed in the 2013 Hong Kong International Chamber Music Festival (now Beare's Premiere Music Festival).

### Performers:

Narrators: Haylie Ecker, Leon Chu

Violins: Ruda Lee, Kiann Chow

Viola: Yu Sun

Cello: Eric Yip

Double Bass: Masami Nagai

Clarinet: Chen Chiu-yuan

Flute: Angus Lee

Percussion: Phoebe Chan, Karina Yau

Pianos: Colleen Lee, Evelyn Chang

Lion Dancers: Hung Lok Man Martial Arts  
Dragon & Lion Dance



It felt like the Chinese New Year arrived early. Everyone including the children enjoyed this show, as I could tell from the laughter. Both narrators performed so well, elevating the atmosphere so much."

- Audience member



## Romer Quartet & Rachel Cheung, piano

9 January, 2023 (Monday)

The Romer String Quartet and pianist Rachel Cheung came together for a rousing night of Mozart and Dvořák. The Romer String Quartet has been Premiere Performances' Quartet-in-Residence since 2018 and a participating ensemble in our Chamber Music in Schools Programme since 2019. Rachel Cheung performed a solo recital for Premiere Performances in 2021 to rave reviews and is regularly featured in our recitals and education programmes.



“Brilliantly performed by the young artists of Hong Kong! So proud of them! Highest marks to the organiser.”  
“Very proud of these young local artists! They played their hearts out...”

- Audience member

“Young Hong Kong string quartet wow with Mozart, Dvořák performances full of energy and refinement”  
“...the quartet really shone, showing lovely lyrical poise”

- South China Morning Post

## Boris Giltburg, piano recital

10 January, 2023 (Tuesday)



“The main programme came to an end with a spectacular reading of Schumann's Carnival, Op. 9, in which Giltburg tellingly captured the essence of the characters inspired by commedia dell'arte, with effective shifts in articulation and tonal colours.”

- Interlude.hk

Moscow-born Israeli pianist Boris Giltburg is lauded across the globe as a deeply sensitive, insightful and compelling interpreter. In his Hong Kong recital, Giltburg played his signature Beethoven, Schumann's colourful Carnival, and two dazzling Chopin Ballades.

“Always enjoyed watching Giltburg's playing on YouTube, thank you for inviting him to HK and give us an unforgettable recital during this terrible pandemic”

“This concert was wonderful! I cannot praise the pianist more highly!”

“One of the best piano recitals I attended ever! A concert to remember...”

- Audience member



## FAMILY CONCERTS

We had a very successful season of Family Concerts, featuring our local ensembles. These are specially designed one hour concerts for kids aged 5-11 and their families, and typically take place on weekend afternoons at 4pm. In 2022/23, we had five ticketed Family Concerts and one Family Concert exclusively for NGOs serving under-privileged children. With the exception of Carnival of the Zodiac (see page 17), all of the concerts were in Cantonese.

### Rhythmaker

6 November, 2022 (Sunday) 4pm | Sheung Wan Civic Centre

Rhythmaker is the latest ensemble to join Premiere Performances' Chamber Music in Schools ensemble lineup. The group is made up of five passionate percussionists who have actively promoted local chamber music since 2019.

In addition to playing traditional percussion instruments such as marimba, cabasa and drums, the Rhythmaker percussion quintet also transforms daily objects into percussion instruments. Using different parts of the body, the audience was able to make music alongside the performers.



“This was an excellent performance that really appealed to the young child without the gimmicks of screens, as other children's performances often use. As an educator and parent, I was most impressed. Keep up these opportunities please!”

“Really appropriate family event. It gave my kids an entertaining opportunity to develop an interest in music. Well done!”

-Audience members





## Romer String Quartet

16 April, 2023 (Sunday) 4pm | Sheung Wan Civic Centre



Known for their virtuosic performances, the Romer String Quartet curated a sold-out family programme to introduce children to the magic of a string quartet, exploring the development of chamber music from different musical eras and styles. The programme included masterworks by great composers like Haydn, Beethoven and Brahms, as well as modern works by tango master Piazzolla.

“Very energetic performances. I appreciated the interaction with the audience.”  
- Audience member

“A very nice experience: interaction, lighting, it felt very novel; large selection of short works, great for the kids, from the classics to modern pieces. Endless applause; amazing!”  
- Audience member (original quote in Chinese)



## Viva! Pipers “Peter & the Wolf”

23 April, 2023 (Sunday) 4pm | Cultural Activities Hall, Tuen Mun Town Hall

11 June, 2023 (Sunday) 2pm and 4pm | Cultural Activities Hall, Sha Tin Town Hall



The Viva! Pipers performed Prokofiev’s family classic “Peter & the Wolf” – a fascinating story about the two title characters and a crowd of animals, each represented by different (combinations of) instruments in the quintet and narrated by the musicians themselves. The performance also included an additional selection of pieces to complement the programme. The concert was a great way for children to experience the descriptive ability of music and to spark their imaginations.

After the first show at Tuen Mun sold out, we were able to add two more shows at Sha Tin Town Hall, one of which was exclusively reserved for NGO partners.



“Spectacular! The musicians played at their best and the kids could feel the splendid world of music. Very thankful that we can enjoy this high quality performance!”

“Marvellous interaction with the audience to bring music and also the musical instruments to life to even the youngest kids. The programme is a wonderful exposure and inspiration to the winds family. My first experience and will definitely have more to come. Thank you.”

From a Chinese comment: “This is my 6-year-old’s first concert, I was worried whether or not he would like it, but he ended up loving it and was very engaged. The concert was interactive, had a great atmosphere, and gave him such a good experience and memories.”

- Audience members



# DONOR PROGRAMMES

## Fundraising Gala

Celebrating the 15th Anniversary of Premiere Performances, we held a black tie fundraising gala on March 4, 2023 on the first floor of the Hong Kong Club. To perform at the gala, we brought back Canadian-Chinese pianist Tony Siqi Yun (who also performed a recital at Hong Kong University of Science & Technology). The gala was attended by 104 people and included a champagne reception, piano performance, sit-down multi-course dinner followed by a dessert buffet accompanied by the cool jazz of the Carpio Brothers.

We are very grateful to the following donors who have contributed amazing silent auction prizes:

- Friends of Florence.org
  - Hong Kong Ballet & Septime Webre
  - Damien Horth
  - Miloš Karadaglić
  - Langham Hospitality Group
  - Catherine Leung
  - Christian Levett
  - M+ Museum & Suhanya Raffel
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  - Hugh Simon
  - Soho House
  - Sun Hung Kai Foundation Limited
  - The Fullerton Ocean Park Hotel
  - The Peninsula Hotel Group
  - Camille Thomas
  - Esther Yoo
  - Zee Zee

The Gala raised a net total of \$1,005,788.72, which will be used to support our 2023/24 programs.



## Salon Circle:

Premiere Performances organises private Salon concerts for our top donors and invited guests featuring our world class artists, taking place in private homes and boutique venues. These salons are a unique opportunity to see performances by the best in the world in an intimate setting. Donors of \$10,000 or more receive invitations to private salon concerts.

To thank our patrons for their support and contribution, we held a special Donor Thank You salon with violinist Ning Feng in June 2023 at the Liang Yi Museum. Attended by 80 guests, Ning Feng treated the audience to an impressive performance of works for solo violin by Bach and Paganini.



## Audience of Tomorrow:

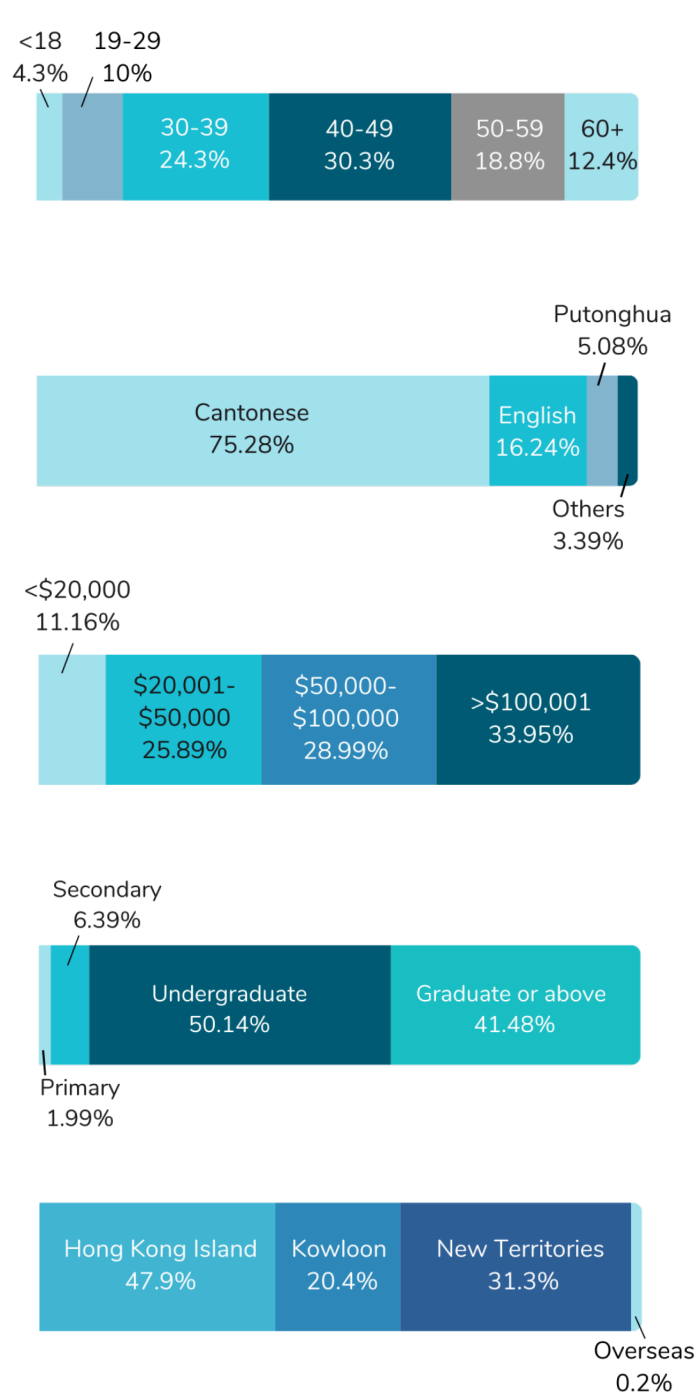
The Audience of Tomorrow Project is a donor initiative that underwrites tickets to Premiere Performances' concerts, allowing underprivileged children and elderly to attend our concerts. In 2022/23, our donors helped us to donate 604 tickets to beneficiaries from 16 NGOs and schools. See page 8 for the list of charities.





# AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS

Surveys collected after each Recital, Family Concert, and Beare’s Premiere Music Festival tell us about our audience. The following represents an average of both of the series.



## Age

It is clear that our concerts appeal to all ages, but notably more than two-thirds of our audience is under the age of 50.

## Mother Tongue

A majority of our audience is local, with more than 75% having Cantonese as their mother tongue.

## Monthly Income

Our concerts attract people from all economic backgrounds.

## Education

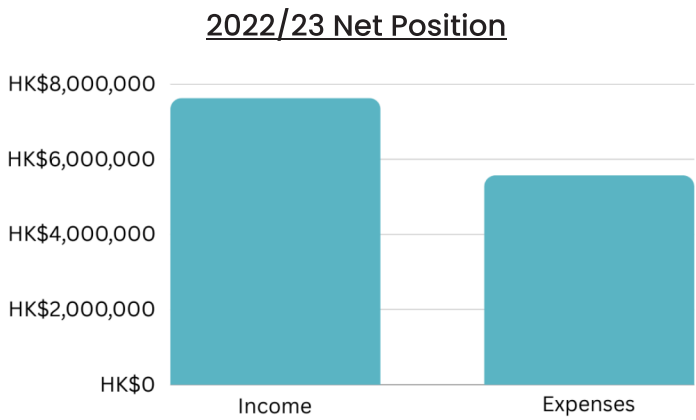
Our audience is highly educated, with over 90% having a university education.

## District of Residence

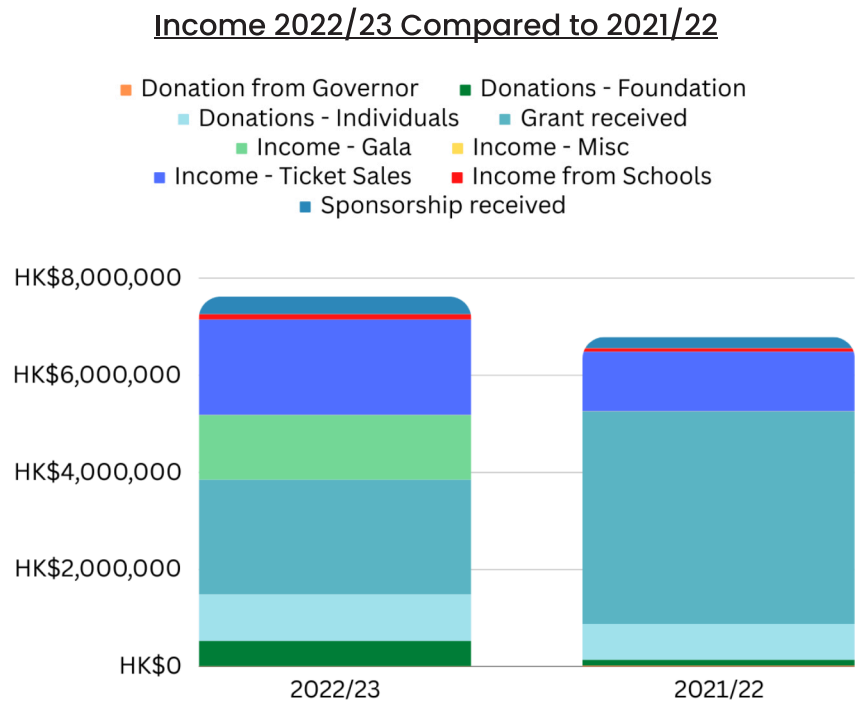
Our audience comes from all across the city, and over 50% of our audience does NOT live on Hong Kong Island.

# FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Although the 2022-23 fiscal year included the final six months of COVID restrictions, by the second half of the fiscal year, everything had pretty much returned to normal. This is the second year in a row that we have ended the year with a surplus. Our total income for the 2022/23 fiscal year was \$7,631,363 and our expenses were \$5,657,756, resulting in a net surplus of \$1,973,607. We did not suffer from any cancellations during this fiscal year, and ticket sales were strong throughout this period.

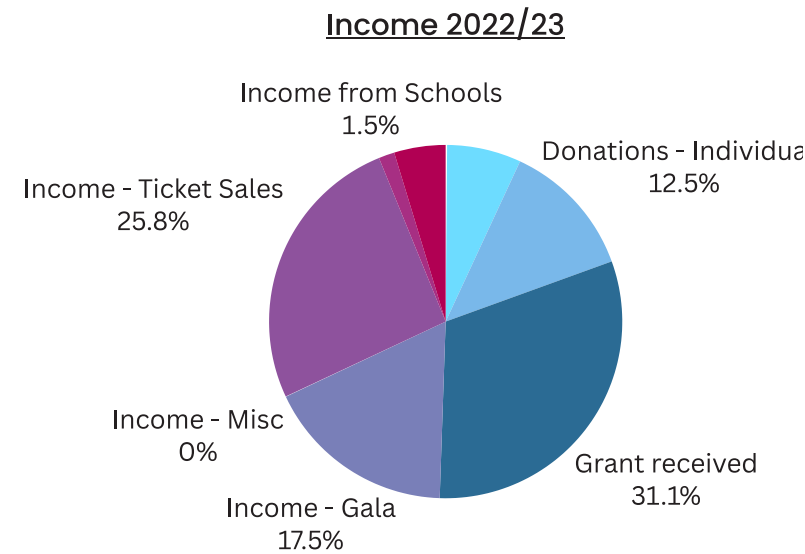


## Income





Our income increased by 12% in 2022-23 compared to the previous fiscal year. Our biggest income category remained Government Grants at 31% of our annual income, down 46% year on year (\$2,368,058, down from \$4,382,790 in FY2021-22). This year's amount has normalised, after an unusually large amount of Government Grants in the last fiscal year which included installments under more than one government grant (as well as various COVID subsidies including for employment (ESS) and for arts organisations). We are very fortunate to have the support of the Culture, Sports & Tourism Bureau under the Art Development Matching Grants Scheme. For the fourth year in a row, the Culture, Sports & Tourism Bureau retroactively changed the matching ratio from 1.5:1 to 1.8:1, and increased the maximum amount of the grant from \$4.0 million to \$4.5 million as a special subsidy due to the hardships of the pandemic.



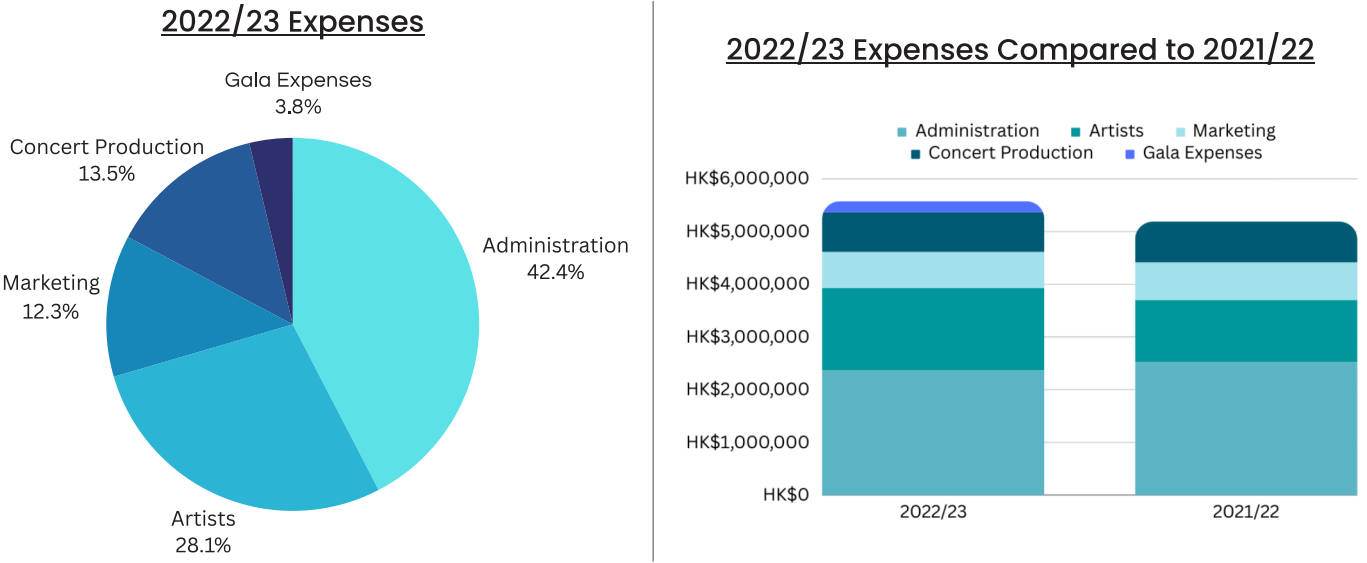
For the second year in a row, Ticket Sales (\$1,966,812) was the second largest category of income, accounting for a record-breaking 26% of our income (up 61% from \$1,223,928 in FY2021-22). All of the Spring 2023 Recitals had incredible ticket sales, and all concerts were sold out (3 Recitals, 3 Family Concerts). In FY2022-23, we presented 15 concerts: six Recitals, five Family Concerts and four concerts in the Beare's Premiere Music Festival, whereas in FY2021-22, we presented only 9 concerts. While the increase in ticket sales can be attributed to an increased number of concerts, this year's Ticket Sales actually exceeded pre-pandemic levels.

Private donations remain a very important component of our income, comprising 19% of our total income, increasing 72% over FY2021-22. Furthermore, we raised another \$1,331,427 of Gala Income in March 2023 (17% of our total income), our first gala event since January 2019. When added together, Private Donations and Gala Income total \$2,815,313, or 37% of our total income. This highlights how important individual support is to the sustainability of our organisation, and we are very grateful to our generous donor base.

Corporate sponsorship is still very insignificant, accounting for only 5% of our annual income (up from 3% in FY2021-22). We raised \$358,993 from sponsors (both corporate and individual), which represents an increase of 57% over last year (\$229,000). The only corporate sponsors that we retained were BNP Paribas, who continue to support the Viva! Pipers for their Chamber Music in Schools tour, and J&A Beare, the Title Sponsor of the Beare's Premiere Music Festival. Two of our Spring Recitals (Verona Quartet and Esther Yoo & Zee Zee) were sponsored by private individuals.

Expenses

Despite our increased activity, our Total Expenses for FY 2022-23 only increased by 7% over the previous year, to \$5,574,804, up from \$5,187,781 in FY2021-22



For the third year in a row, our biggest category of expenses was Administration, which comprised 42% of Total Expenses (down from 49% in the previous year). Administration costs decreased 6% year-on-year (\$2,362,761 in FY2022-23, down from \$2,525,231 in FY2021-22). Payroll costs (plus MPF) accounted for 67% of Administration costs, and office rent was 18% of Administration costs. This was actually less than in FY2021-22, with Payroll costs decreasing by 9% year-on-year.

Our second largest category was Artist Expenses, which comprised 28% of our Total Expenses (up from 23% in FY2021-22). With increased concert activity, it is no surprise that Artist Expenses also increased by 34% year-on-year (\$1,565,917, up from \$1,172,668 in the previous fiscal year). With concert activities fully resuming, we were finally able to bring in ensembles like the Verona Quartet, which have much higher airfare/hotel costs than a solo artist.

Concert Production (venue rental, production, printing) accounted for 13% of our Total Expenses (15% in 2020-21), staying pretty flat year on year (\$751,989 in FY2022-23, down from \$774,118 the previous year, a decrease of only 4%). For the third year in a row, we benefited from a special subsidy by LCSD venues reducing the rental cost of City Hall by 80%.

Marketing Expenses decreased by 4% over the previous fiscal year, constituting 12% of our Total Expenses (down from 14% in FY2021-22). We spent \$684,961 for Marketing (down from \$715,763 in FY2022-23). With the increased migration to digital marketing, we no longer need to procure expensive MTR campaigns, and so our Marketing Expenses have decreased significantly. As we used to benchmark Marketing Expenses against Ticket Income, it is clear that we are in a new phase of our growth & development, as we earned approximately \$1,300,000 more in Ticket Income than we spent on Marketing.



# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

We are very grateful to all of our sponsors, collaborators, and donors, whose support enables us to present such a wide range of world-class programmes and outreach.

Premiere Performances is financially supported by the Art Development Matching Grants Scheme of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

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## Beare's Premiere Music Festival

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Co-Presenter:  
The Verona Quartet



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Co-Presenter:  
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The content of these programmes does not reflect the views of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

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