

54th



香港藝術節
HK ARTS FESTIVAL
2026



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20.03.2026 / 8:00pm

21-22.03.2026 / 3:00pm

Auditorium, Sha Tin Town Hall

Approximately one hour and 10 minutes
with no interval

Performed in English with Chinese and
English surtitles

Acrobatic performers have been
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- ✂ The content of all works is independently produced by the creative team, and does not reflect the views or opinions of the Sponsor.
- ✂ The content of this programme and the opinions featured in this publication are solely those of the artists/guest writers and do not represent the views or opinions of the Hong Kong Arts Festival (“HKAF”).
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Chief Executive's Message

I am pleased to congratulate the Hong Kong Arts Festival on the organisation of its 2026 season. This year's Festival, the 54th edition, features some 180 performances, encompassing music, Chinese and Western opera, theatre, dance, arts technology and a dazzling variety of performing arts productions.

The Festival opens on 27 February with Ballet Nacional de España's acclaimed operatic ballet *La Bella Otero*, recreating the glamour of Paris' golden era on stage. The Festival concludes on 27 March with the large-scale dance theatre production *Dream in The Peony Pavilion*, directed and choreographed by Li Xing, injecting fresh life into the timeless love classic. This year's music performances present a number of brilliant pianists, including young Korean piano sensation Yunchan Lim, and Hong Kong-born Aristo Sham, the gold medallist and audience award winner at the 2025 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition.

As ever, the Festival features a diverse range of outreach and educational activities. This year's PLUS programme focuses on a wide cultural experience for arts lovers and deeper understanding of world-class artists, contributing to promoting engagement in cultural events and consolidating Hong Kong's positioning as the East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange.

I am grateful to our many sponsors and donors for their generous support. My thanks also, as always, go to the Hong Kong Arts Festival for once again bringing Hong Kong, and the world, a shining season of arts and culture, entertainment and wonder.



John KC LEE

Chief Executive

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

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Chairman's Message

A warm welcome to the 54th Hong Kong Arts Festival. As a leading international performing arts event, the Festival continues to uphold its mission of enriching our city's cultural life and promoting the best of the performing arts to different sectors of our community. This year, the Festival brings to Hong Kong more than 1,100 distinguished local and international artists from a wide range of artistic disciplines in over 180 performances of more than 45 programmes, as well as about 300 "PLUS", outreach and education events.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the HKSAR Government, acting through the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, for its annual subvention and matching grant. My heartfelt thanks also go out to The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, our corporate sponsors, charitable foundations and donors for their generous support. Their invaluable contributions empower us to actively advance the community through the performing arts.

My genuine appreciation goes to all our internationally renowned and most talented artists for their creativity and outstanding performances on stage. Their dedication profoundly motivates us to continue showcasing exceptional productions, commissioning new works and nurturing local talent. I am also deeply grateful to the HKAF team for its commitment and efforts to bring this Festival to life.

Finally, I extend my warmest thanks to all audience members. We truly hope you enjoy this artistic journey and discover moments of delight, resonance and inspiration throughout the programmes being presented this year.



Lo Kingman

Chairman
Hong Kong Arts Festival



Supporting Organisation:



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Foreword

The 54th Hong Kong Arts Festival once again brings together great masters and outstanding artists, presenting more than 180 performances across music, dance, theatre, opera, Chinese opera, arts-tech and interdisciplinary creations—showcasing the exceptional craft of leading local and international talent.

One of this year's themes is an exploration of "Courage and Peace". At a time when the world is troubled by war, displacement, economic downturns and other hardships, artists respond from their own distinctive perspectives and in their own languages on stage, reminding us of the need to be resilient and hopeful.

Some works in this year's Festival adopt a minimalistic theatrical approach, enabling us to transcend the constraints of geography and resources. We also continue to embrace arts-tech, using mixed-reality technologies to open up new performance possibilities.

As always, the Festival presents more than 300 outreach and education activities. Our PLUS events feature a curated series of talks, masterclasses, backstage tours and guided cultural walks. Our comprehensive education initiatives tailored for primary, secondary and tertiary students are aimed at enabling students to gain a more in-depth understanding and appreciation of the works we present.

I sincerely thank you for joining us at this performance, and we hope that you find joy and resonance in the experience.



Flora Yu

Executive Director
Hong Kong Arts Festival

The Hong Kong Arts Festival is made possible with the funding support of:



香港賽馬會慈善信託基金
The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust



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Creative & Production Team

Production

Les 7 doigts de la main

Originally produced and created with Virgin Voyages

Commissioning Partner

ArtsEmerson (Boston)

Direction

Shana Carroll

Cast

Héloïse Bourgeois
Jessica Connell
Andreas De Ryck
Carlos Francos Peré
Gerardo Gutierrez Flores
Michelle Hernández Garcia
Nicolas Jelmoni
Vitor Martinez Silva
Santiago Rivera Laugerud
Lucy Tan
Danny Vrijssen

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Alexander Nichols

Costume Designer

Camille Thibault-Bédard

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Maude St-Pierre

Technical Director

Simon Carrière

Technical Coordinator

Audrey Belzile

Assistant to the Artistic Director

Anna Kichtchenko

Acrobatic Coach

Francisco Cruz

Musical Director & Composer

Colin Gagné

Lyrics

Colin Gagné
Ricardo Isaias Collier

Musical Arrangements

Colin Gagné
Jean-Sébastien Leblanc
Ricardo Isaias Collier

Vocals

Sophie Beaudet
Katee Julien
Ricardo Isaias Collier
Alexandre Désilets
Mykalle Bielinski

Instruments

Guido del Fabbro (Violin)
Cédric Dind-Lavoie (Upright Bass)
Jean-Sébastien Leblanc (Clarinet)
Olivier Hébert (Trombone)
Gabriel Godbout-Castonguay (Piano)
Mathieu Roberge (Upright Bass)
Jonathan Gagné (Drums)
Alexandre Dodier (Saxophone)
Raphaël D'Amours (Electric Guitar)
Sheila Hannigan (Cello)

The soundtrack contains lines from William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

Touring Team

Tour Manager

Christelle Vitupier

Technical Director & Sound Engineer

Delphine Quenneville

Light Operator

Florent Pattou

Rigger

Benoît Rouillard

Tour made possible thanks to the touring assistance programme of the Quebec Council for the Arts and Letters.

Special thanks to:

Gypsy Snider
Héloïse Bourgeois

Thanks to:

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Naomie Slabber, Véronique St-Germain,
Mark Eden Towle, William Underwood

About The 7 Fingers



The 7 Fingers (Les 7 Doigts de la main) is an arts collective unlike any other. Founded in Montreal in 2002 by seven visionary artists, the company set out to redefine the contemporary circus by stripping spectacle down to its thrilling essence, and infusing it with humanity, intimacy and storytelling.

The company's productions combine death-defying acrobatics with life-affirming theatricality, creating a style that is unmistakably its own. Over the years, The 7 Fingers has expanded from touring shows to a wide range of artistic endeavours: original works from solo pieces to arena spectacles, Broadway musicals, Olympic ceremonies, televised performances, collaborations with renowned artists, immersive installations and more.

At the heart of every project is the same impulse: to explore the human condition and celebrate our shared humanity. With this spirit, The 7 Fingers has brought audiences to their feet in more than 700 cities worldwide.

The company also invests deeply in creation and community. In 2016, it established a foundation to support training, workshops and residencies. In 2018, it opened a Creation and Production Centre in Montreal's theatre district. In 2021, it revived San Francisco's legendary Club Fugazi with *Dear San Francisco*, and in 2022 launched Supply + Demand, a multimedia studio at the crossroads of art, science and technology.

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[About Shana Carroll](#)

About Shana Carroll



Shana Carroll is the co-founding Artistic Director of The 7 Fingers, a company she has helped shape since its inception in 2002. She has directed, written and choreographed numerous touring and resident shows, including *Passengers*, *Cuisine and Confessions*, *Sequence 8* and *Traces*.

In 2024, Carroll served as Co-Choreographer and Circus Designer for *Water for Elephants* on Broadway, earning the Chita Rivera Award for Best Choreography and nominations for a Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle awards. Her notable projects also include directing and creating *Crystal* for Cirque du Soleil, and serving as Acrobatic Designer and Choreographer for *Iris* (Los Angeles) and *Paramour* (Broadway). Carroll co-created the immersive experience *Queen of the Night* in New York City and was the Co-Choreographer for the medieval segment of the Sochi Winter Olympics Opening Ceremony.

In 2023, she was inducted into the Ordre des arts et des lettres du Québec as a Compagne, an honour recognising her contributions to Quebec culture. A former trapeze artist and soloist with Cirque du Soleil, Carroll is an alumna of Montreal's National Circus School and began her career with the Pickle Family Circus in San Francisco. She hails from Berkeley, California.

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Creative Note



Duel Reality grew out of a long-time dream to re-imagine Shakespeare through the language of circus. *Romeo and Juliet*—with its passion, violence, and impossible stakes—felt like the perfect story to embody through acrobatics, where every leap and every catch carries its own urgency and risk.

I was drawn to the idea of presenting the timeless conflict between two sides as if it were a sporting event: red versus blue, rival teams locked in competition. At first it is exhilarating—tribal, playful, even celebratory. But gradually we begin to recognise the darker side of this division and the ways we ourselves become complicit in the story's tragic turn.



What makes circus so powerful in this context is its deep reliance on trust. Performers literally put their lives in each other's hands; one cannot soar unless others are there to lift and to catch. Even in moments of apparent battle, the mechanics of the art form remind us of interdependence, community and connection.

In the end, I hope audiences walk away with their hearts racing, but also with a renewed faith that even in times of polarity, it is our capacity to support one another that holds the real possibility of transformation.

Text: Shana Carroll

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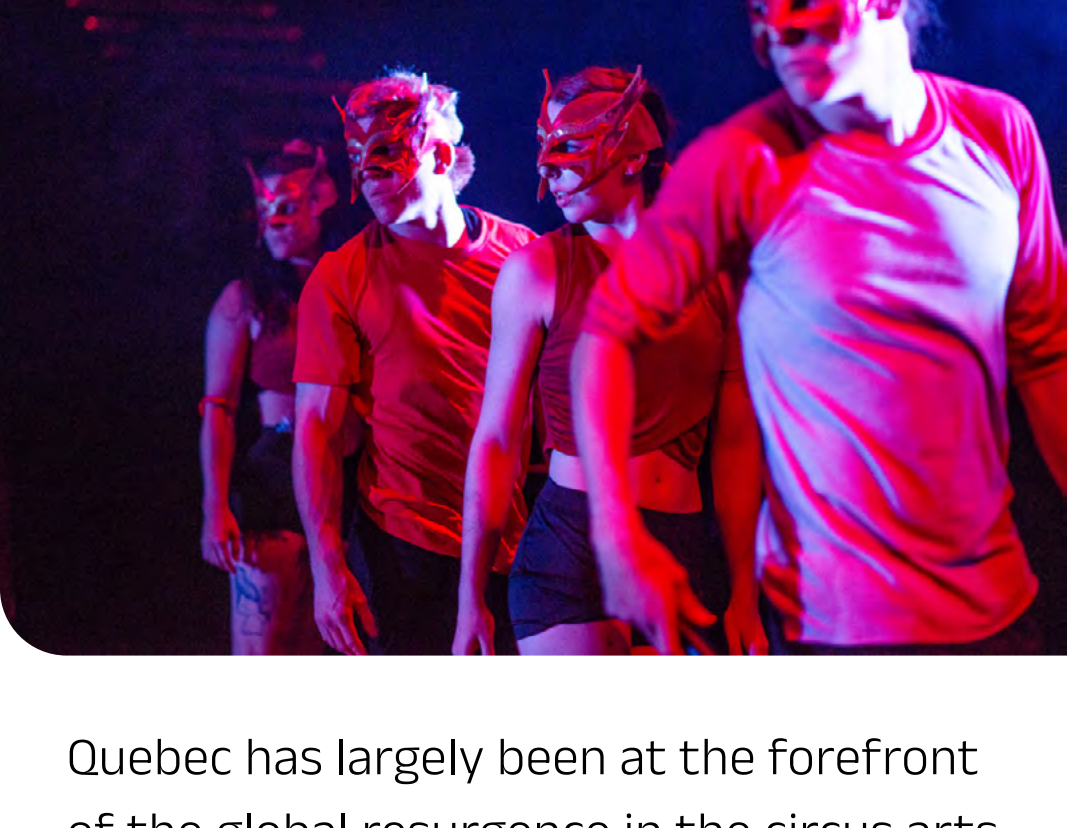
[Feature Article](#)

Feature Article

The 7 Fingers: A Québécois Vision



After more than two centuries of evolution and global movement, circus arts have taken root around the world, developing distinctive styles. Influenced by the Nouveau Cirque movement, humans have gradually replaced animals as the focal point of circus performances. Jaw-dropping acrobatic feats are no longer the core of this art form; instead, it emphasises theatricality and the humanity of the performer.



Quebec has largely been at the forefront of the global resurgence in the circus arts thanks to the success of Cirque du Soleil, which took the world by storm with its exuberant glamour and high-profile collaborations with big international names such as the Oscars. The Cirque has served as a springboard for a growing number of young artists, including Shana Carroll, who went on to co-found one of the biggest troupes in the Québécois circus scene, Les 7 doigts de la main, or simply The 7 Fingers.



Carroll and her six friends behind The 7 Fingers share a simple vision: to resist definition and to put the focus back on the human. Whereas Cirque du Soleil invites viewers into a fantastic realm populated by superhuman characters, The 7 Fingers seeks to reveal the human performers as they are—real, troubled individuals who have hopes and anxieties. *Loft*, the troupe’s first production in 2002, showcased the seven founders as themselves, establishing a kind of personal intimacy with audiences that had rarely been seen in earlier circus acts.



Now, in a bold retelling of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, Carroll pits the rival houses of Montague and Capulet against each other in a nerve-wracking collection of hand-to-hand sequences, hula-hooping and juggling, and audience members are led to side with one team in an almost tribalistic fashion. But beyond its deceptively simple premise of “sworn enemies as sporting competitors”, there lies a universal message at the heart of *Duel Reality*. “Unfortunately, warring tribes in whatever form they take will never fade in relevance,” Carroll said in an interview with the Seattle Rep, “but these two young romantics see past their families... and we know love is what curbs our worst urges and gives us hope for the future.”

Text: Shao Yi Chan

This article was originally published on the HKAF’s *News & Features* website in January 2026

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The Sir Edward Youde Memorial Fund has since its inception supported more than **31,500** Hong Kong students under its major award schemes. The total value of the grants awarded stands at over **HK\$269 million**. Over **2,890** scholars and fellows have completed their studies and are now working in different fields, contributing to the well-being and development of the community.

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limits

「德川女盲人按摩師」由谷野九郎所著，由香港藝術節委約。The Blind Female Masseuse Who Became a Blind (The Source of Mass' Copied) 1911. Shiroko Sato, Collector of the National City Art Museum.

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2026

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Details and Online Application

About the Hong Kong Arts Festival

Launched in 1973, the **Hong Kong Arts Festival** is a major international arts festival committed to enriching the cultural life of the city. In February and March every year, the Festival presents leading local and international artists in all genres of the performing arts, placing equal importance on great traditions and contemporary creations. The Festival also commissions and produces work in Cantonese opera, theatre, music, chamber opera and contemporary dance by Hong Kong's creative talent and emerging artists; many of these works have had successful subsequent runs in Hong Kong and overseas. The Festival also presents "PLUS" and educational activities that bring a diverse range of arts experiences to the community as well as tertiary, secondary and primary school students. In addition, through the "No Limits" project co-presented with The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, the Festival strives to create an inclusive space for people with different abilities to share the joys of the arts together.

The HKAF is a non-profit organisation. The total estimated income for FY2025 / 26 (including the 54th Hong Kong Arts Festival and 2026 "No Limits") is approximately HK\$159 million. Current Government annual baseline funding accounts for around 12% of the Festival's total income. Around 24% of the Festival's income needs to come from the box office, and around 44% from sponsorship and donations made by corporations, individuals and charitable foundations. The remaining 20% is expected to come from other revenue sources including the Government's matching grant scheme, which matches income generated through private sector sponsorship and donations.

Full Organisational Profile:

<https://www.hk.artsfestival.org/en/about-us/index.html?>



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Committee and Staff List



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