

藝術家年獎（音樂）

廖國敏

LIO

KUOKMAN



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廖國敏是出色的指揮家及鋼琴家、國際指揮大賽得主，造詣卓越，刻苦用功，值得嘉許。現任香港管弦樂團駐團指揮，亦是澳門國際音樂節節目總監，既具豐富大型管弦樂團的指揮及國際演出經驗，又擁有相當藝術行政經驗，推動古典音樂不遺餘力。評審年度雖然在疫情期間，亦無減大型演出，當中港樂與港鐵的合作更成功吸引國際關注香港音樂。

As an outstanding conductor, pianist and prize winner of international conducting competition, Lio Kuokman is commendable for his extraordinary artistry and devotion. He is currently Resident Conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and Programme Director of the Macao International Music Festival. With extensive experiences as conductor for large orchestras and performer on the international stage, Lio also has solid experiences in arts administration and has been promoting classical music tirelessly. During the assessment year, the pandemic has not stopped Lio from giving large-scale performances. In particular, the collaborative project between the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and MTR Corporation has brought global attention to music in Hong Kong.

廖國敏畢業於香港演藝學院，後負笈紐約茱莉亞音樂學院、費城寇蒂斯音樂學院、波士頓新英格蘭音樂學院深造。2014年成為首位當上美國費城樂團助理指揮的華人，同年在國際史雲蘭諾夫指揮大賽贏得亞軍（冠軍從缺）。曾分別以指揮家或鋼琴家身分，與美、歐、亞多個樂團合作演出，活躍於國際舞台。廖氏先後獲香港及澳門特區政府頒授嘉許獎狀及文化功績勳章，2021年獲選為香港十大傑出青年。2015年創辦澳門室內樂協會，2017年至2020年擔任香港創樂團首席指揮兼音樂總監，現為香港管弦樂團駐團指揮及澳門國際音樂節節目總監。

Lio Kuokman graduated from the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and furthered his studies at the Juilliard School of Music in New York, the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and the New England Conservatory in Boston. In 2014, he became the first Chinese Assistant Conductor at the Philadelphia Orchestra and the second-prize winner at the Evgeny Svetlanov International Conducting Competition in Paris (no First Prize was given). As an active performer on the international stage, Lio has appeared as conductor and pianist with orchestras across North America, Europe and Asia. Lio was a recipient of the Certificate of Commendation and Medal of Cultural Merit from the governments of Hong Kong and Macao respectively, and an awardee of the Ten Outstanding Young Persons Selection 2021 in Hong Kong. Currently Resident Conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and Programme Director of the Macao International Music Festival, Lio founded the Macao Chamber Music Association in 2015, and was Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Hong Kong New Music Ensemble in 2017-2020.



Photo Credit : Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra & MTR

《享樂在港鐵》Phil Your MTR Ride with Music

在澳門出生的廖國敏，四歲那年首次隨母親欣賞音樂會。他說：「我看見一個人帶領一群人奏樂，令我嘖嘖稱奇，我很想做拿『筷子』（指揮棒）的那個人。」母親覺得他似乎對音樂有興趣，便在他五歲時開始讓他學鋼琴。今天，廖氏既是指揮家又是鋼琴家：「我也喜歡鋼琴，但獨個兒在台上彈奏會有一種孤獨感，我更喜歡和大夥兒一起演奏的快樂。」

追夢路上的一步一腳印

為圓指揮夢，廖氏十四五歲時每逢周末都隻身到香港學習音樂，後來乾脆移居香港。其後他赴美入讀著名的紐約茱莉亞音樂學院和費城寇蒂斯音樂學院，沒料到學成時迎來金融海嘯，不但因樂團倒閉令落實的指揮工作告吹，寄出數百封求職信也鮮有回音。

他憶述如何面對五年「低潮期」：「裝備好自己。我會想像樂團希望聘用怎樣的指揮，例如能用更流利的英語向觀眾介紹音樂，我便在這方面增值自己；又例如許多歌劇發源自意大利，我就親赴當地進修。」

讓大家看見香港有指揮家

2014年，廖氏喜獲費城樂團招手，成為該樂團首位華人助理指揮。同年，他在國際史雲蘭諾夫指揮大賽贏得亞軍（冠軍從缺），之後陸續接到歐洲國家的演出邀約。在國際舞台顯露才華，對廖氏別具意義：「不論你到哪裡表演，當地的人總會好奇他從何處來，然後得知香港有年青人很努力地做音樂，原來香港也有指揮家。」

Born in Macao, Lio Kuokman attended his first concert at the age of four with his mother. "There was this person who led the group to play music," he recalled. "I was filled with wonder and wanted to become that 'chopstick (baton) bearer'." His mother sensed an interest in music and let him start his piano classes when he was five. Today, Lio is both a conductor and pianist. "I love the piano too, but there is this loneliness playing alone on stage and I prefer the joy of making music in a group."

The Way to Becoming a Conductor wasn't Straight

When he was 14 to 15, Lio travelled alone to Hong Kong every weekend for music classes in pursuit of his dream and eventually moved to Hong Kong. He later studied at the famous Juilliard School of Music in New York and the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, yet upon graduation found himself caught in the waves of the global financial crisis. Orchestras were closing down. Not only were his conducting jobs cancelled, the hundreds of job applications he sent out seemed to have fallen into a black hole.

This period of stagnation lasted for five years and Lio found his way to cope. "I geared up. I would try to picture the conductor an orchestra would like to hire, for example, someone who could introduce music to the audience in fluent English, and I would equip myself to this end. Or for instance, many operas originated from Italy and I made my way to there to study."

There are Conductors in Hong Kong too

In 2014, Lio was hired by the Philadelphia Orchestra and became its first Chinese Assistant Conductor, and won Second Prize at the Evgeny Svetlanov International Conducting Competition in Paris (no First Prize was given). Since then, invitations to perform in Europe began to roll in. Being able to share his talent on the global stage holds a special significance for him. "No matter where I perform, people would always be curious about where I come from. This is how the world learns that there are young Hong Kongers making music with dedication and there are conductors in Hong Kong too."

廖氏覺得優秀的指揮就如靈魂人物，能夠帶動樂手，向觀眾呈獻感動人心的音樂。他也把老師奧托－維爾納·繆勒的話語銘記在心：「『別人不會記得你最好的那場音樂會，只會記得最不好那場。』所以我總要求自己每次都做到極致。」

疫情下繼續分享音樂

回看得獎年度，廖氏為工作隔離逾150天，不少表演因場地關閉只得延期或取消。「我們也嘗試做網上直播。能把音樂帶給更多觀眾是好事，但看着沒有觀眾的音樂廳，感覺很是奇怪，要知道觀眾也為台上的表演者帶來能量。」廖氏坦言比以前更珍惜有觀眾的實體音樂會。

與香港管弦樂團（港樂）合作的《樂季揭幕：貝多芬音樂節：廖國敏 | 貝多芬三重協奏曲》是他印象深刻的項目之一。「這本來是音樂總監的音樂會，他因疫情無法前來，就讓我來替代，那時候我甚至還不是他們的駐團指揮。」曲目由廖氏自定，揭幕作品是柯普蘭的《平民的號角聲》，特意獻給在疫情期間無私奉獻的香港醫護人員。廖氏除展示指揮功力，也以鋼琴家身分演繹貝多芬三重協奏曲。

港樂與港鐵合作的《享樂在港鐵》則滿載創意，把古典音樂帶到車站大堂和車廂裡。「我們透過短片向乘客送上音樂，讓他們覺得音樂可以就在身邊。」短片中廖氏更化身為喜愛音樂的上班族，他笑言：「我們想了很多表達方法，只為令古典音樂連繫社區。」

期望證明亞洲實力

展望未來，廖氏有一個心願：「一般人心目中一流的管弦樂團都是歐美樂團。我期望有一天能帶領一個獲邀到外國音樂節演出的亞洲樂團，而這個樂團也證明我們演奏西方音樂足與歐美樂團並駕齊驅，甚至超越他們。」

Lio sees a good conductor as a special person who can inspire orchestral members to make music that moves people's heart. Etched on his mind were these words from his teacher Otto-Werner Mueller - "You will not be remembered for your best concert but the worst one." And Lio remarked, "This is why I only give my very best every single time."

Sharing Music Despite the Pandemic

During the assessment year, Lio spent 150 days in quarantine for work, and many performances were postponed or cancelled due to the closing of performance venues. "We tried to do livestreaming too. Being able to share music with a wider audience is a wonderful thing yet an empty auditorium is a rather strange place to be. You know, performers on stage thrive on energy from the audience too." Now Lio cherishes concerts with a live audience more than ever.



太古「港樂·星夜·交響曲」2020
Swire Symphony Under the Stars 2020 Online

One of Lio's most memorable projects during these times was his concert with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra (HK Phil) - *Season Opening: Lio Kuokman | Beethoven Triple Concerto*. "This was supposed to be a concert by their Music Director yet he could not travel due to the pandemic and so I jumped in. I was not even their Resident Conductor yet at the time." Lio selected the programme and dedicated the opening work Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*, to healthcare professionals for their selfless contribution. Apart from conducting, Lio also performed the *Beethoven Triple Concerto* as pianist.

By bringing classical music to MTR concourses and train compartments, *Phil Your MTR Ride with Music*, a collaborative project between HK Phil and the MTR Corporation was loaded with creativity. "We brought music to commuters through the form of videos. We hope to tell people that music can be around us." In the video, Lio plays an office worker who loves music. "We came up with tons of ideas to make the video," Lio said with a smile. "All we wanted was to create a bond between classical music and the community."

Making Asian Orchestras Shine on the Global Stage

Looking into the future, Lio has a dream. "The best orchestra in people's minds are always European or American. I hope that I could lead an Asian orchestra at an overseas music festival one day and show people that we could perform western music as greatly as western orchestras, or even better than they do."