

ICBC (Asia) Charitable Foundation Sponsors Close to 15,000 Local Secondary School Students to View the 50th Hong Kong Arts Festival Theatre Programme *Wonder Boy* Online

Celebrating the 25th Anniversary of Establishment of HKSAR with Joy Together

20 June 2022, Hong Kong — Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Charitable Foundation Limited (“ICBC (Asia) Charitable Foundation”) has been committed to promoting local arts, culture and youth development since its establishment. To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People’s Republic of China, ICBC (Asia) Charitable Foundation collaborates with the Hong Kong Arts Festival (HKAF) for the first time to promote culture and arts in local schools, while encouraging more teenagers to engage in arts appreciation by inviting 15,000 secondary students in designated districts to enjoy the 50th Hong Kong Arts Festival English theatre programme *Wonder Boy* online for free from 13 to 17 June 2022.

A total of 15,000 students from nearly 80 secondary schools, primarily located in North District, Sham Shui Po and Kwun Tong, were invited to participate in the Student Special Online Performance and enjoy this inspirational drama online for free. ICBC (Asia) Charitable Foundation would like to encourage more teenagers to engage in arts appreciation and help them keep a positive mindset while encountering different challenges. The campaign was well-received by the school sector and over 90 percent of the participating student respondents were satisfied with the overall arrangements and the selection of the programme. They will also consider participating in similar events in the future.

Gao Ming, Chairman and Executive Director of ICBC (Asia) and Chairman of ICBC (Asia) Charitable Foundation, said, “The ICBC (Asia) Charitable Foundation fully realises that teenagers are the future pillars of society and the catalyst of sustainable development. Therefore, we have been closely focusing on the training and development of local youngsters. This year marks the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong’s return to the Motherland. We wish to boost cultural integration by providing opportunities for teenagers to gain exposure to arts outside the schools through sponsoring this Student Special Online Performance of the HKAF. At the same time, we believe that the inspirational drama could help students to develop positive values during the pandemic, as well as

enhancing emotional intelligence against all odds. With our concerted efforts, we believe Hong Kong will usher in a new era and open a new chapter.”

Tisa Ho, Executive Director of the Hong Kong Arts Festival, said, “In the new normal brought about by the pandemic, online programmes have become a critical part of the performing arts, and has enabled us to continue to present world class programmes to our audience, and to continue the work in arts education. We are most grateful to have a wonderful partner in the ICBC (Asia) Charitable Foundation, who has made it possible to bring the *Wonder Boy* Student Special Online Performance to local secondary school students in designated districts. *Wonder Boy* shows how young people can overcome various obstacles in their everyday life to reach their full potential. We hope this has given our young audience a helpful example.”

One of the featured theatre programmes of the 50th HKAF this year, *Wonder Boy* is a popular production from the Bristol Old Vic. The story is about a 12-year-old boy who suffers from a severe stammer and cannot communicate well with others. However, with the help and encouragement of his teachers and friends, the boy finally discovers the power of language and communication. *Wonder Boy* is a heartening drama that reveals the possibilities of language, the importance of friendship, and the spiritual healing journey of the character. It was well-received after its premiere in March this year.

Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (Asia) Limited

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