

New body to raise level of Chinese music performances

Federation to represent over 200 music groups and thousands of professionals

By **LEONG WENG KAM**
SENIOR WRITER

A NEW organisation to promote Chinese music and raise its performance standards has been set up.

The Singapore Chinese Music Federation, as it is called, will represent the more than 200 local Chinese music groups and thousands of professional musicians. Membership is free.

Cultural Medallion recipient Tay Teow Kiat, the music director and conductor of the City Chinese Orchestra, and Mr Terence Ho, general manager of the Singapore Chinese Orchestra (SCO), are the driving forces behind the new body. They have formed a 15-member management council com-

prising young and old leaders representing several Chinese instrumental groups like erhu, guzheng and pipa.

The council held its first meeting last Wednesday at the Singapore Conference Hall, home of the SCO, and elected Dr Tay, 66, as president with Mr Ho, 44, as vice-president. Other office-bearers elected were veteran suona player-turned teacher Yeo Siew Wee, 59, who is secretary-general, and Teng Ensemble's music director Yang Jiwei, 33, who is treasurer.

Dr Tay said he was approached last August by SCO chairman Patrick Lee, the federation's patron, to help set up the umbrella body. "I agreed after Mr Lee gave me his full support by providing space and even secretariat assist-



Singapore Chinese Music Federation council members (from left) Yang Jiwei, Chua Yew Kok, Tay Teow Kiat, Terence Ho and Ling Hock Siang. Last week, Dr Tay, Mr Ho and Mr Yang were elected as the group's president, vice-president and treasurer, respectively. ST PHOTO: SEAH KWANG PENG

ance at SCO's premises," he added.

Dr Tay said the federation will stage concerts, music workshops and seminars, issue publications and undertake research projects to help raise the standards of Chinese music performances. It will be formally launched at a concert in March.

Mr Ho said recruitment has just begun and there will be two categories of membership: group and individual.

Council member Chua Yew Kok, 35, from Ding Yi Music Company and a 2013 Young Artist Award winner,

said the new group will help bring the many thousands of Chinese musicians closer.

Fellow council member Ling Hock Siang, 44, an associate principal erhu player with the SCO, hoped smaller music groups and even individuals – especially semi-professionals or amateurs – will benefit from the education programmes which the federation will soon roll out. Mr Lee said the SCO will find it easier to spot talent with the formation of the umbrella body.

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SCO to hold mega concert at new national stadium

A MEGA concert featuring more than 4,300 Chinese musicians and choral singers will be the first major music event to be staged at the new national stadium in the Singapore Sports Hub.

The June 28 performance is being organised by the Singapore Chinese Orchestra (SCO) with the assistance of the newly formed Singapore Chinese Music Federation.

The programme will be conducted by SCO music director Yeh Tsung, resident conductor Quek Ling Kiong and its young assistant conductor-in-resi-

dence, Mr Moses Gay.

It will include classical Chinese orchestral pieces and popular Chinese songs. Composer Dick Lee will also sing his popular National Day song Home, accompanied by all the musicians and choristers.

That could make for a spectacular performance given that 4,327 musicians have signed up for the event since invitations for participation went out last October, said SCO general manager Terence Ho.

"It has already exceeded our target

of 4,000 and the number is still rising as the closing date for registration is Feb 15," he said.

Mr Ho said Our People, Our Music 2014, as the event is called, will be the SCO's third mega concert.

The first, the Millennium Concert in 2000, attracted only about 1,000 performers but one in 2004 enticed 2,400 participants.

Said Mr Ho: "Through the mega concerts, SCO hopes to create a platform for Chinese orchestra musicians from the schools, clan associations,

community clubs and professional groups to come together to display their talents and make music as a big Chinese music community."

Tickets at \$20 and \$10 will go on sale after Chinese New Year.

"We hope to attract at least a crowd of 30,000 and fill the entire stadium if possible," Mr Ho said.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong will be the guest of honour.

For participation details and ticketing information, log on to www.opom.sg

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