



# Performing Arts

As the Hong Kong arts community continues to flourish, a broader variety of job opportunities become available for those interested in the performing arts and entertainment field. All employees in the arts community, be they performers, administrators or teachers, play an important role in promoting and supporting the development of the performing arts in Hong Kong.

### POSITIONS

Performing is one of the most challenging and competitive fields among the arts-related jobs. The most important quality for a creative performer is, of course, talent. This talent is generally discovered early in life for dancers, actors, musicians and singers, and they begin extracurricular studies at a young age.

Many continue with rigorous post-secondary training. As professionals, performers can find jobs in many local arts companies, or with one of the major performing arts companies: the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre; the Hong Kong Dance Company; the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra; the Hong Kong Ballet; the City Contemporary Dance Company; the Chung Ying Theatre Company; the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra; the Theatre Ensemble; the Zuni Icosahedron; and the Hong Kong Sinfonietta. However, performers with professional training are not guaranteed employment.

Administrators make informed, creative decisions; programme films and performances for festivals; design exhibitions; plan budgets, sponsorships, fees and marketing strategies; organise tours and more.

Teaching offers a more stable career than performing and wider job opportunities than administration. Art teachers help students acquire the skills they need to develop and express their potential. Dance teachers and drama teachers usually teach in private schools or community centres, while music teachers teach in primary and secondary schools or other teaching institutions and cultural organisations. Private teaching can be rewarding.

### EDUCATION & REQUIREMENTS

Various tertiary institutions in Hong Kong offer professional training in various fields of the performing arts. These include the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, Open University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Polytechnic University and University of Hong Kong.





The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) is Hong Kong's major tertiary institution for vocational training in the performing arts. It aims to foster and provide training, professional education and research in the performing and technical arts, bringing together under one roof the six schools of Dance, Drama, Film and Television, Music, Theatre and Entertainment Arts, and Chinese Traditional Theatre.

Emphasis is placed on both Chinese and Western cultures, modern and traditional, theatre and television. HKAPA is a degree-granting institution. The central core of its teaching programme is full-time degree, diploma and certificate courses.

While graduates from any discipline may enter arts administration, those with a generalist outlook and an interest in the arts are the most suitable. Arts administrators have to balance an artistic sensibility with good business sense and organisational ability.

The basic qualification for an arts teacher is formal training in the relevant field at tertiary institutions. Potential music teachers can attain qualification after graduating as music degree holders from the University of Hong Kong, Chinese University of Hong Kong or Hong Kong Baptist University.

The government recognises graduates of the HKAPA's School of Music as qualified to teach in secondary schools. Graduates from the Hong Kong Institute of Education who choose music as an elective subject are also qualified to be music teachers.

### **SALARY & BENEFITS**

The career path for an arts performer or creative artist is strewn with obstacles and challenges. With no fixed working hours, holidays or working places, it is not a life for those in search of stability.

Recently graduated performing artists may not enjoy great financial rewards. Many performers have to supplement their income with other work. In government-run organisations, performers are paid in accordance to government pay scales.

On the other hand, performers enjoy the intangible rewards such as job satisfaction and the applause of the crowd. Salary levels of arts performers in private organisations vary a great deal depending on talent, qualifications, experience and popularity.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

A useful source of information is the Hong Kong Arts Development Council Information Centre. The council can be contacted at:

14/F, East Warwick House, Taikoo Place,  
979 King's Road, Hong Kong  
Tel: 2827-8786; Fax: 2519-9301/2824-0585  
Email: [hkadc@hkadc.org.hk](mailto:hkadc@hkadc.org.hk)  
Website: [www.hkadc.org.hk](http://www.hkadc.org.hk)