

Press Release

Contact: Ian Palmer
Phone: 212.957.6935

For Immediate Release
August 1, 2003

SilkROAD 2003 Chinese Theater Production at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center to Kick-Off Month of Chinese Cultural Celebrations

NEW YORK— Hydra Ventures announced today that it will stage its rare and historical Chinese theater production titled 'SilkROAD 2003', at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center on September 5-6, unofficially kicking off the first of many exciting Chinese cultural celebrations in the month of September in New York City. Others include the Museum of Chinese in the Americas' Red Boat on the Canal exhibit on Cantonese Opera opening September 9, and the Moon (Mid-Autumn) Festival.

Starring in SilkROAD 2003 is Maestro Bao-Chun Li, whose mastery of the most important performance elements in Chinese Opera – singing, dancing, acrobatics, and acting – have contributed to his reputation as the preeminent star of modern day Chinese Opera. He will be accompanied by more than 40 performers from the Taipei Li-Yuan Chinese Opera Troupe.

"...Mr. Li gives the tale full operatic treatment, Chinese-style, with exquisite costumes, highly stylized drama and even acrobatics," wrote New York Times reporter James Oestreich about Maestro Li's previous New York City performance.

The first evening of the SilkROAD 2003, September 5, will feature *The Monkey King Wreaks Havoc in Heaven*, the tale of a mischievous creature with magical powers who causes mayhem in Heaven. Featured on the second evening, September 6, will be highlights of *Farewell My Concubine*, a classical Chinese opera piece about love, tragedy, and devotion between a King and his favored concubine, and *Golden Falcon*, a tale of forbidden love between a golden falcon and an angel, who choose to continue their affair even after one is forcefully banned from heaven.

SilkROAD 2003 adopted its name in the spirit of The Silk Road of centuries past, which was the most vital trade route that linked China, Central

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Asia, Persia, Western Asia, and Europe between the 2nd century B.C. and 16th century A.D.. The Silk Road facilitated the transmission of new ideas, goods, and technologies between different cultures and across various geographic locations, an aim shared by SilkROAD 2003 producers Hydra Ventures and the Koo Foundation.

SilkROAD 2003 promotional partners include Asia Society, Chinatrust, The China Institute, The Department of East Asian Studies at Columbia University, Iridium Jazz Club, Hydra Worldwide Corp., Taipei Cultural Center, and Museum of Chinese in the Americas.

Maestro Bao-Chun Li was born in 1950 into a family of great theatrical heritage in china. His grandparents and parents were all celebrated Chinese opera singers, particularly his father, the legendary Mr. Shao-Chun Li. Maestro Li holds an honorary doctoral degree of Chinese drama and arts at the Northern Pontifical Academy in Nantes, France, and was previously selected as a winner Outstanding Asian Artist Award from the Chinese American Arts Council. He currently teaches at the department of drama in the Chinese Cultural University and the National Taiwan University in Taipei. His permanent residence is in the United States.

Hydra Ventures, based in New York City, is a provider of web development and graphic design services. The Koo Foundation is a non-profit organization, founded in 1987 with the mission of promoting Chinese performing arts, researching anti-cancer drugs, and educating young Taiwanese business professionals.

For tickets, visit www.lincolncenter.org, call Center Charge at 212.721.6500, or visit any Chinatrust locations. Ticket prices are \$25, \$35, \$50, \$65, and \$85. Discounts for groups of 10 or more are available by calling Hydra Ventures at 212.957.6935.

For more information about SilkROAD 2003, visit www.SilkRoad2003.com, or contact Ian Palmer of Hydra Ventures by phone at 212.957.6935, via fax at 212.957.6936, or by e-mail at ianpalmer@hydravorldwide.com.

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For Immediate Release
August 1, 2003

**SilkROAD 2003 Producers to Host August 7 'Meet-the-Artist' Event
Featuring World-Renowned Chinese Opera Star Maestro Bao-Chun Li**

NEW YORK— Hydra Ventures and The Koo Foundation, producers of the *SilkROAD 2003* Chinese theater production, announced today that they will host a pre-production 'Meet-the-Artist' event Thursday, August 7, 2003, from 3:30-5:30 p.m. at the Iridium Jazz Club in Times Square. Presenting will be headlining performer Maestro Bao-Chun Li, the preeminent Chinese opera star worldwide, along with award-winning literature translator Ben Wang of the China Institute.

The Meet-the-Artist event is a precursor to the two-night theater performance event that will be staged September 5-6, 2003, at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center. It will be structured to allow the media a rare opportunity to meet Maestro Li, and also the chance to learn about Chinese Opera techniques, Chinese Opera history, and the *SilkROAD 2003* production.

Maestro Li's mastery of the most important performance elements in Chinese Opera – singing, dancing, acrobatics, and acting – have contributed to his reputation as the preeminent star of Chinese Opera.

During Maestro Li's previous New York City performance, Times reporter James Oestreich wrote "Mr. Li's portrayal...was brilliant, with an expressiveness that made the language barrier seem trifling."

The SilkROAD 2003 performance will feature *The Monkey King Wreaks Havoc in Heaven* on opening night and highlights from *Golden Falcon* and the popularly acclaimed *Farewell My Concubine* on the second evening. Performing will be Maestro Li and more than 40 performers from the Taipei Li-Yuan Chinese Opera Troupe.

Promotional partners include Asia Society, Chinatrust, The China Institute, The Department of East Asian Studies at Columbia University, Iridium Jazz Club, Hydra Worldwide Corp., Taipei Cultural Center, and Museum of Chinese in the Americas.

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Maestro Bao-Chun Li was born in 1950 into a family of great theatrical heritage in China. His grandparents and parents were all celebrated Chinese opera singers, particularly his father, the legendary Mr. Shao-Chun Li. Maestro Li holds an honorary doctoral degree of Chinese drama and arts at the Northern Pontifical Academy in Nantes, France, and was previously selected as a winner Outstanding Asian Artist Award from the Chinese American Arts Council. He currently teaches at the department of drama in the Chinese Cultural University and the National Taiwan University in Taipei. His permanent residence is in the United States.

Mr. Ben Wang is a senior lecturer of classical Chinese drama and literature at the China Institute, teacher of Chinese at the United Nations, and recipient of the National Prize in literature translation awarded by the National Literary Association of Taiwan.

Hydra Ventures, based in New York City, is a provider of web development and graphic design services. The Koo Foundation is a non-profit organization, founded in 1987 with the mission of promoting Chinese performing arts, researching anti-cancer drugs, and educating young Taiwanese business professionals. For more information about these organizations, please visit www.hydraventures.com or www.koo.org.tw.

For performance tickets, visit www.lincolncenter.org or call Center Charge at 212.721.6500. Ticket prices are \$25, \$35, \$50, \$65, and \$85.

To RSVP or for more information about SilkROAD 2003, contact Ian Palmer of Hydra Ventures by phone at 212.957.6934, via fax at 212.957.6936, or by e-mail at ianpalmer@hydravorldwide.com. Information can also be found online at www.SilkRoad2003.com.

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A Hydra Ventures Production

Press Release

Contact: Ian Palmer
Phone: 212.957.6935

For Immediate Release
August 30, 2003

Columbia University Department of East Asian Languages To Sponsor Chinese Opera Demonstration by SilkROAD 2003 Performer Maestro Li

NEW YORK— Hydra Ventures announced today that the East Asian Languages Department of Columbia University has agreed to sponsor a Chinese Opera demonstration and lecture on Thursday, September 4 from 3:00-5:00pm. SilkROAD 2003 lead performer Maestro Bao-Chun Li will conduct the demonstration, with the lecture to be given by China Institute's Senior Lecturer Ben Wang.

This Columbia-sponsored event will serve as a pre-cursory informational event to the SilkROAD 2003 production that is taking place September 5-6, 2003, 8pm, at Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center. Topics to be covered include: the elements and techniques of Chinese Opera, the meaning of movements, and the historical evolution of Chinese Opera and its effects on modern day art forms such as martial arts.

"Hydra is pleased that Chairman of Columbia University's East Asian Language and Culture Department Chairman Robert Hymes has pledged the University's support in bringing Maestro Li and Ben Wang on campus for this exciting prelude to SilkROAD 2003," said Hydra Ventures Managing Partner Shawn Liao. "It will surely be an opportunity not to be missed by anyone wanting to understand more about this great cultural art form, unique in both the stunning sights and sounds.

Maestro Bao-Chun Li is the star of SilkROAD 2003. He was born in 1950 into a family of great theatrical heritage in China. His parents and grandparents were all celebrated opera singers, particularly his father, the legendary Mr. Shao-Chun Li. Maestro Li holds an honorary doctoral degree of Chinese drama and arts at the Northern Pontifical Academy in Nantes, France, and was previously selected as a winner of the Outstanding Asian Artist Award from the

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Chinese American Arts Council. He currently teaches in the department of drama at the Chinese Cultural University and the National Taiwan University in Taipei. His permanent residence is in the United States.

Ben Wang is a senior lecturer at the China Institute, teacher of Chinese at the United Nations, and recipient of the National Prize in literature translation awarded by the National Literary Association of Taiwan.

SilkROAD 2003 will feature *The Monkey King Wreaks Havoc in Heaven* on opening night (9/5) and highlights from *Golden Falcon* and the popularly acclaimed *Farewell My Concubine* on the second evening (9/6). Promotional partners include: Asia Society, Chinatrust, The China Institute, The Department of East Asian Studies at Columbia University, Iridium Jazz Club, Hydra Worldwide Corporation, Taipei Cultural Center, and the Museum of Chinese in the Americas.

Hydra Ventures, based in New York City, is a provider of web development and graphic design services. The company is an affiliate of Hydra Worldwide Corporation, which has other affiliates in the areas of property management, architectural design and construction, dry-cleaning, and parts distribution for chemical companies.

For tickets, visit www.lincolncenter.org or call Center Charge at 212.721.6500. Ticket prices are \$25, \$35, \$50, \$65, and \$85.

For more information about SilkROAD 2003, visit www.SilkRoad2003.com, or contact Ian Palmer of Hydra Ventures by phone at 212.957.6935, via fax at 212.957.6936, or by e-mail at ianpalmer@hydraworldwide.com.

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Press Release

Contact: Ian Palmer
Phone: 212.957.6935

For Immediate Release
August 28, 2003

**New York City Councilman to Award Proclamation to SilkROAD 2003
Event Producer Hydra Ventures at Final Performance on September 6**

NEW YORK— The office of New York City Council Member John C. Liu announced today that Honorable Councilman Liu would present Hydra Ventures, the producers of Chinese Opera Event SilkROAD 2003, with a proclamation award on the evening of the final performance on September 6, 2003. The presentation will take place at 10:00pm, immediately following performances of Farewell My Concubine and Golden Falcon.

Hydra Ventures is being presented with the award for its cultural contribution to the local New York City community in association with SilkROAD 2003. Accepting this prestigious award on Hydra Ventures' behalf will be Hydra Ventures' Managing Partner and Co-Founder Shawn Liao.

"By making this rare and exciting event possible, Hydra has enabled the residents and visitors of New York City to share an important cultural treasure," said Councilman Liu. "The effects of this contribution are significant and Hydra's aim of promoting cultural exchange and understanding are commendable."

The two-night production features *The Monkey King Wreaks Havoc in Heaven* on the first evening (8pm) and highlights of *Farewell My Concubine* and *Golden Falcon* on the second evening (8pm). Starring in SilkROAD 2003 is Maestro Bao-Chun Li, whose mastery of the most important performance elements in Chinese Opera— singing, dancing, acrobatics, and acting— have contributed to his reputation as the preeminent star of modern day Chinese Opera.

Maestro Li and SilkROAD 2003 advisor Ben Wang will also be recognized on the evening of the final performance. Each will receive a citation, Maestro Li for a lifetime of artistic achievement and Mr. Wang for his important literary contributions.

Maestro Bao-Chun Li was born in 1950 into a family of great theatrical

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heritage in China. His parents and grandparents were all celebrated opera singers, particularly his father, the legendary Mr. Shao-Chun Li. Maestro Li holds an honorary doctoral degree of Chinese drama and arts at the Northern Pontifical Academy in Nantes, France, and was previously selected as a winner of the Outstanding Asian Artist Award from the Chinese American Arts Council. He currently teaches in the department of drama at the Chinese Cultural University and the National Taiwan University in Taipei.

Ben Wang is a senior lecturer at the China Institute, teacher of Chinese at the United Nations, and recipient of the National Prize in literature translation awarded by the National Literary Association of Taiwan.

Hydra Ventures, based in New York City, is a provider of graphic design and web development services. Its parent company is Hydra Worldwide Corporation, which has other affiliates in the areas of property management, architectural design and construction, dry-cleaning, and parts distribution for chemical companies.

Councilman John C. Liu has been a member of the New York City Council since November 2001, when he was elected by the people of Northeast Queens (Auburndale, Flushing, Fresh Meadows and Whitestone). He also serves as the Chair of the Council's Transportation Committee and a member of the committee on Education, Consumer Affairs, Contracts, Oversight & Investigation, and Lower Manhattan Development. Councilman Liu is also the first Asian Pacific American legislator in New York City.

SilkROAD 2003 partners include Asia Society, Chinatrust, The China Institute, The Department of East Asian Studies at Columbia University, Iridium Jazz Club, Taipei Cultural Center, and The Museum of Chinese in the Americas.

For tickets, visit www.lincolncenter.org or call Center Charge at 212.721.6500. Ticket prices are \$25, \$35, \$50, \$65, and \$85.

For more information about SilkROAD 2003, visit www.SilkRoad2003.com, or contact Ian Palmer of Hydra Ventures by phone at 212.957.6935, via fax at 212.957.6936, or by e-mail at ianpalmer@hydravventures.com.

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A Hydra Ventures Production

Schedule of Events

EVENT DETAILS

August 7 • Thursday • 3:30-5:30pm

Meet-the-Artist

Opportunity to meet Maestro Bao-Chun Li in an intimate setting for press members, *SilkROAD 2003* partners, and sponsors. *Invitation only.*

September 3 • Wednesday • Time TBA

Seminar for Ticket Holders

Seminar on Chinese opera, lectured by Mr. Ben Wang, for *SilkROAD 2003* ticket holders. *Seating is limited.*

September 4 • Thursday • 3:00-5:00pm

Chinese Opera Demonstration

Chinese Opera demonstration and discussion by Maestro Li and his troupe members, translation by Mr. Ben Wang. *Seating is limited.*

September 5 • Friday • 8:00-10:00pm

SilkROAD 2003: Monkey King Wreaks Havoc in Heaven

SilkROAD 2003 opening night, with special commentary on 'Monkey King' production from Mr. Ben Wang at the beginning of the performance.

September 6 • Saturday • 8:00-10:00pm

SilkROAD 2003: Golden Falcon & Farewell My Concubine

SilkROAD 2003 encore return, with special commentary from Mr. Ben Wang on 'Farewell' and 'Falcon' productions at the beginning of the performance.

September 6 • Saturday • 10:00-12midnight

SilkROAD 2003 VIP Cocktail Party

Cocktail reception – immediately following the performance – for Maestro Li, troupe members, VIP guests, *SilkROAD 2003* partners, and sponsors. *Invitation only.*

VENUE INFO

Iridium Jazz Club

1650 Broadway
New York, NY 10019
212-582-2121

China Institute

125 East 65th Street
New York, NY 10021
212-744-8181

Kent Hall, Columbia University

New York, NY 10027
212-854-5027

Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center

Columbus Ave & 65th Street
New York, NY 10023
212-721-6500

Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center

Columbus Ave & 65th Street
New York, NY 10023
212-721-6500

TBA
More Details To Come

Fact Sheet

Maestro Bao-Chun Li

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|----------------------------|--|
| LEGAL NAME: | Bao-Chun Li, 53 |
| SilkROAD 2003: | Lead role performer |
| OCCUPATION: | Chinese opera performance artist for the Taipei Li-yuan Chinese Opera Troupe; University drama teacher at the Chinese Cultural University and National Taiwan University in Taipei; Former member of the touring Chinese National Opera Troupe |
| AWARDS: | Honorary doctoral degree of Chinese drama and arts at the Northern Pontifical Academy in Nantes, France; winner of the Chinese American Arts Council's Outstanding Asian Artist Award |
| AUTHORED: | Sun Pin and Pang Chuan (story from the Hang Dynasty), 1993 |
| ROLE SPECIALTIES: | "lao-sheng" (bearded man) and the "wu-sheng" (combat-ing hero) roles |
| RECENT INT'L TOURS: | Singapore 2003, Germany 2002, France 1999 |
| BIRTH DATE: | August 9, 1950 |
| PLACE OF BIRTH: | Beijing, China |
| FAMILY: | Grandparents and parents were all celebrated Chinese opera singers, particularly his father, the legendary Mr. Shao-Chun Li |
| EDUCATION: | Beijing Opera School |
| RESIDENCY: | Washington, D.C., & Taipei, Taiwan |



Background

The Art of Classical Chinese Theater, As reflected in Kunqu

Singing, dancing and acting to poetic works by masters of the Yuan and Ming dynasties, the Kunqu theater towers as the predominant dramatic force in China from the sixteenth century down to the present day. Indeed, with the libretti of most Kunqu plays so marked by poetic splendor, a Kunqu performance is often treasured by audiences not only as a riveting theater of singing and dancing, but also as a fine reading of high literature.

The performer of the Kunqu theater: a singer, dancer, acrobat and actor -- all four in one, is the pivotal element on stage. All motions and emotions are expressed by the elaborately made up and resplendently robed actor through dancing, singing and acting against a stark background on a bare stage with minimum props. A bamboo flute serves as the principal musical instrument; other wind and string instruments are added to enhance the beauty of the music. A small drum and a pair of wooden clappers set the beat; gongs and cymbals are used to punctuate the action and emotion.

This much revered and beloved 400-year-old genre that uniquely blends poetic eloquence, musical refinement and dramatic wonder has left its mark on hundreds of musical theaters in China, including the Beijing opera, its most prominent descendant.

Both *The Monkey King* and *The Golden Falcon*, operas performed at this production, are of the Kun genre, and *Farewell My Concubine* is a famous opera from the Beijing opera repertoire.



Backgrounder

SilkROAD 2003 Production

This production adopted its name from the ancient and vital trade route that linked China, Central Asia, Persia, Western Asia, and Europe between the 2nd century B.C. and 16th century A.D. Long-distance trade was funded primarily by the elite in these regions, particularly for fine products such as silk that were extremely high in value and derived from limited supply sources.

The Silk Road facilitated the transportation of luxury goods and enriched the lives of countless peoples over the centuries. Though its overall economic impact might be moderate for the empires involved, the true significance of The Silk Road was marked by the transmission of new ideas, goods, and technologies between different cultures and across various geographic locations.

In the spirit of The Silk Road of centuries past, Hydra Ventures and The Koo Foundation have collaborated to produce *SilkRoad2003* with the resolve of promoting modern day exchanges between different cultural groups and through the unique experience in classical Chinese theater.

The September 5th performance at Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center, will feature *Monkey King Wreaks Havoc in Heaven*. It is a tale about a disciple with magical powers known as the Monkey King. Believing the celestial beings have bestowed him with a title of great importance, the Monkey King soon realizes that he has been set up to be humiliated. Contemptuous and filled with revenge, the Monkey King sets out to vindicate himself by spreading his mischief through the heavens.

Featured on the second evening, September 6, will be highlights from *Farewell My Concubine*, a classical Chinese opera piece about love, tragedy, and devotion between a King and his favored concubine, and *Golden Falcon*, a tale

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Backgrounder

of forbidden love between a golden falcon and an angel, who choose to continue their affair even after one is forcefully banned from heaven.

The lead role of each production is played by world renowned Maestro Bao-Chun Li, the preeminent star of modern day Chinese Opera.



Fact Sheet

SilkROAD 2003 Production

- NAME:** *SilkROAD 2003, An Experience in Chinese Theater*
- TYPE:** Chinese Opera, also known as Peking Opera, which uses highly stylized and rhythmic demonstrations of song, dance, dialogue, silent movements, and acrobatics for storytelling
- VENUE:** Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center, 2738 capacity per evening, 5476 total event
- DATE & TIME:** September 5-6, 2003 @ 8:00pm
- PRODUCTIONS:** (9/5) *The Monkey King Wreak Havoc in Heaven* and (9/6) highlights from *Golden Falcon* and *Farewell My Concubine*
- STARRING:** Maestro Bao-Chun Li, son of the legendary Mr. Shao-Chun Li, is today's preeminent Chinese opera star. Maestro Li graduated from the Beijing Opera School and has performed with the Chinese National Opera Troupe. He specializes in both the "lao-sheng" (bearded man) and the "wu-sheng" (combating hero) roles.
- PRODUCERS:** Hydra Ventures, a provider of web development, graphic design, and strategic consulting services (www.hydraventures.com)
- The Koo Foundation, a Taiwanese non-profit organization that was founded in 1987 with the mission of promoting Chinese performing arts, researching anti-cancer drugs, and educating young Taiwanese business professionals. (www.koo.org.tw)
- SPONSORS:** Chinatrust, Taipei Cultural Center, Museum of Chinese in the America's, Hydra Worldwide Corp., The China Institute, Iridium Jazz Club
- WEBSITE:** www.SilkRoad2003.com
- TICKET PRICE:** \$25, \$35, \$50, \$65, \$85; Discounts available for groups of 10 or more individuals.
- FOR TICKETS:** Online at www.lincolncenter.org, by phone at Center Charge at 212.721.6500, or at Chinatrust bank branches.

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Fact Sheet

SilkROAD 2003 'Meet-the-Artist' and Technical Demonstration Event at Iridium Jazz Club

- EVENT:** Meet *SilkROAD 2003* starring performer Maestro Bao-Chun Li, plus photo opportunity and technical demonstration
- DATE & TIME:** Thursday, August 7 2003, 3:30-5:30 p.m.
- FORMAT:** Opening remarks (10 min.), Chinese opera introduction (10 min.), informal demonstration (15 min.), followed by Q&A interview and photo shoot session (60 min.), and closing remarks (10 mins.)
- TOPICS:** Brief introduction to *SilkROAD 2003* productions, the history of Chinese Opera, and fundamental Chinese Opera performance techniques
- SPEAKERS:** (1) Maestro Bao-Chun Li, leading performer in SilkROAD 2003; (2) Jack Maisano, President of the China Institute; (3) Ben Wang, Senior lecturer at the China Institute; (4) C.T. Hsia, Prof. Emeritus at Columbia University East Asian Languages & Cultures Dept.
- ATTENDEES:** Press members, academicians, and representatives of promotional partner and sponsor organizations— By Invitation Only
- VENUE:** Iridium Jazz Club, 1650 Broadway, New York, NY, 10019; phone 212.582.2121
- OTHER:** One free beverage per person
- TO RSVP:** Contact Tony Ning of Hydra Ventures by phone at 212.957.6935, via fax at 212.957.6936 or by e-mail at tonyning@hydraworldwide.com
- FOR MORE INFO:** Contact Ian Palmer of Hydra Ventures by phone at 212.957.6935, via fax at 212.957.6936 or by e-mail at ianpalmer@hydraworldwide.com

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