

World Premiere of Tan Dun's landmark new work *Buddha Passion* presented at Dresden Music Festival on May 23rd, 2018.

On May 23rd, Tan Dun will conduct the world premiere of his landmark new work - *Buddha Passion* (*Opera in Six Acts*) at the Dresdner Musikfestspiele at Kulturpalast Dresden in Dresden, Germany.

Commissioned jointly by the Dresdner Musikfestspiele, New York Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the piece promises to "takes your breath away" (Dresden Music Festival).

This monumental work, sung in Chinese and Sanskrit, is scored for seven soloists, choir and orchestra and will be performed by The Münchner Philharmoniker, featuring the Internationale Chorakademie Lübeck.

Tan Dun's *Buddha Passion* weaves stories that have lived in the hearts and minds of the Eastern World for thousands of years. *Buddha Passion* will be the very first "passion" story written about the lessons of Buddha with music inspired by the ancient city of Dunhuang and the awe-inspiring Mogao caves, which have been under protection for the past thirty years as a UNESCO World Heritage Site:

"Located in an oasis of the Taklamakan Desert in western China, the ancient city of Dunhuang became an important outpost of the Silk Road nearly two thousand years ago. For centuries, it flourished as a center for Buddhist worship and learning. Generations of monks and pilgrims carved shrines out of the rock cliffs at Mogao, gradually building one of the greatest collections of Buddhist painting, sculpture, and architecture in the world." (Dunhuang Foundation).

Inspired by the powerful spiritual and cultural exchange, as well as the groundbreaking musical history discovered in the Dunhuang murals from the 4-14th century, Tan Dun spent two years locating, visiting, researching, and documenting the lost musical manuscripts from the Dunhuang Library Cave. His fascination and countless hours of research to translate and unearth "the ancient sounds of Dunhuang" culminate in this ambitious new work, weaving chants, stories, and sounds of Dunhuang into an opera of six individual short stories.

Capturing the ancient narratives of the Buddha's teachings and the timeless, universal concepts of love, forgiveness, sacrifice and salvation, Tan Dun has summarized the stories portrayed on the walls of the Mogao Caves in an extraordinary and unique musical work.

World Premiere: *Buddha Passion* (Opera in Six Acts)
Dresden Music Festival
May 23rd, 2018

Münich Philharmonic
Choral Academy of Lübeck
Tan Dun | Conductor
Sen Guo | Soprano
Kang Wang | Tenor
Shenyang | Baritone
Huiling Zhu | Mezzo Soprano

Tan Weiwei | Female Indigenous Singer
Batubagen | Male Indigenous Singer
Wenqing Shi | Fantan Pipa Soloist and Dancer

The premiere of the *Buddha Passion* in Dresden has deep additional significance and meaning for Tan Dun. Thirty-five years ago, Tan Dun's international career as a composer began in Dresden: he was awarded the Carl Maria von Weber Prize for his string quartet "Feng Ya Song" and became the first Chinese composer ever allowed to travel abroad to receive a prize. To return to Dresden with this towering work signifies an important milestone in the life and career of Tan Dun: "Now, finally, I come full circle and return to Dresden, 35 years later ... I am so very grateful to the Dresden community for continuing to give me the opportunity to share my music with them."

ABOUT TAN DUN

The world-renowned artist and UNESCO Global Goodwill Ambassador Tan Dun has made an indelible mark on the world's music scene with a creative repertoire that spans the boundaries of classical music, multimedia performance, and Eastern and Western traditions. A winner of today's most prestigious honors including the Grammy Award, Oscar/Academy Award, Grawemeyer Award, Bach Prize, Shostakovich Award, and most recently Italy's Golden Lion Award for Lifetime Achievement, Tan Dun's music has been played throughout the world by leading orchestras, opera houses, international festivals, and on radio and television.