

## **Richard PONTZIOUS - Conductor**

Artistic director and conductor of the Asian Youth Orchestra, Richard Pontzious founded the AYO in Hong Kong in 1990 with the distinguished violinist, conductor and humanitarian Yehudi Menuhin.

Mr. Pontzious' work with the Asian Youth Orchestra has led to extraordinary collaborations with Yehudi Menuhin, Sergiu Comissiona, James Judd and some the most famous soloists in the world.

In 2010 Maestro Pontzious was honored on behalf of the Asian Youth Orchestra to receive Japan's Praemium Imperiale Grant for Young Artists, a global arts prize, and in 2015 Japan's Nikkei Asia Prize for Culture and Community.

Maestro Pontzious was awarded Hong Kong's Bronze Bauhinia Star in 2000, and in 2014 he was named an Honorary Fellow of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. Two years later he was awarded Hong Kong's Silver Bauhinia Star by the Hong Kong government for distinguished service to the arts in Hong Kong, and that same year he was subject of the film, "In Search of Perfect Consonance," a documentary produced by Academy Award winning director, Ruby Yang.

The first overseas musician to be invited to live for an extend time in China after the tumultuous years of the Cultural Revolution, Mr. Pontzious served as conductor-in-residence at the prestigious Shanghai Conservatory of Music in the early 1980s, toured with the Conservatory orchestra, and conducted the orchestras of Nanjing, Hangzhou, Fuzhou and Harbin, where he is credited with reviving that city's Summer Arts Festival.