

She's only a small girl but she's a big, strong singer

SAN... meets a leading soprano

A WOMAN who has devoted most of her time and life to music is Hongkong's leading soprano Barbara Fei.

The much travelled soprano has done a wonderful job in promoting our Chinese folk songs whilst abroad.

"I know most foreigners cannot appreciate or understand Chinese opera, but our folk songs can be quite enjoyable, even to Western ears if given the correct interpretation," said Barbara.

With her petite figure, she belies the popular theory that all singers big, buxom women.

"Somebody in Paris, when he heard me sing, asked me where my voice came from. He couldn't understand how such great volume could come from such a tiny person," she said.

In the early days of Barbara's career, she did a lot of composing but, now frequently tied up with recitals, she concentrates on singing.

When she is not touring around the world giving concerts, Barbara gives private lessons in Hongkong.

Three years ago, she also formed her own choir, the Allegro Singers, a mixed chorus of 60 members.

Since then, the Allegro Singers have appeared frequently on radio, TV and at City Hall.

"We train once a week. Our members are people who enjoy singing and friendly companionship," Barbara said.

Recently, the chorus, under their teacher's expert guidance, gave some wonderful recitals of Chinese folk songs.

Poem

One of their songs was based on that famed Tang poem, Song of the Pipa, and the music was composed by Wang Yo-ti.

This was the first time the poem was rendered into a song.

Barbara has just returned from a 10-day tour of Taiwan where she has been giving recitals.

Not only is Barbara well known in the Far East. She has been well received in Europe and America.

She has toured Europe several times and last year was in America for a 10-week concert tour.



● BARBARA FEI