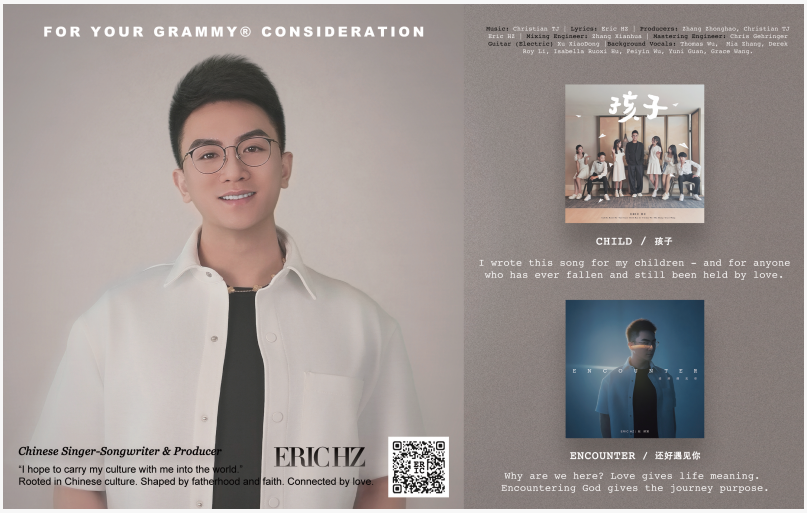
As Asian Pop Reaches a Wider World, Eric HZ Carries 'Child' — and His Chinese Cultural Roots — With Him

Through “Child,” Eric HZ explores fatherhood, cultural identity and how love can be understood across languages and cultures.



Chinese singer-songwriter and producer Eric HZ presents “Child” and “Encounter” for GRAMMY® consideration, reflecting his artistic journey through fatherhood, Chinese cultural roots and faith.

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, September 24, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Before Eric HZ’s lead vocal enters on Child, listeners first hear the laughter of his young children.

Child, presented for GRAMMY® consideration in Best Asian Pop Music Performance, grew from something Eric came to understand differently after becoming a father: love does not disappear when someone makes a mistake.

What did becoming a father teach you about love?

> I hope to carry my culture with me into the world.”
>
> *Eric HZ (Hechen Zhao)*

“Children make mistakes. They can be stubborn, playful and imperfect,” Eric says. “But none of that changes the simplest truth: they are still my children, and I will never love them any less. More than anything, I want them to grow up knowing they are loved.”

That became the emotional center of Child. Keeping his children’s real voices at the beginning was intentional.

“If you take away the production, the arrangement and the stage, this song begins with

something very simple — a father and his children," he says. "I wanted that truth to remain in the recording."

That understanding of love extends beyond Eric's family. Alongside his work as an artist, he teaches and mentors young people who love music, watching them move from uncertainty in vocal lessons and rehearsals to the courage to stand onstage. Through initiatives connected with the Chinese American Federation of Arts and Culture and the Chinese American Music Festival, he has sought to create opportunities for young voices to be heard.

In 2025, Eric shared the stage with renowned Chinese performing artist Liu Xiaoqing at a Chinese-American cultural exchange Lantern Festival gala. Later that year, he was invited to perform Child at the Golden Angel Awards ceremony of the 21st Chinese American Film Festival and Chinese American TV Festival, where he also received the International Outstanding Contribution to Arts and Culture Award. In 2026, he appeared at New York's Lincoln Center as a host and guest performer for renowned Chinese singer Tan Jing's Musical Journey concert.



Eric HZ and renowned Chinese performing artist Liu Xiaoqing share the stage at a Chinese-American cultural exchange Lantern Festival gala in 2025.



Eric HZ performs "Child" with young musicians and appears as a host and guest performer for Chinese singer Tan Jing's "Musical Journey" concert at New York's Lincoln Center.

Some of the young musicians Eric has mentored have also stepped onto major stages alongside him. Thomas Wu, Mia Zhang, Derek Roy Li, Isabella Ruoxi Hu, Feiyin Wu, Yuni Guan and others — also invited performers at the 21st Chinese American Film Festival and Chinese American TV Festival — contributed to both the background vocals and live performance of Child.

“A song I wrote for my children eventually became a song in which young musicians could leave their own voices,” Eric says. “I hope to help them reach bigger stages, so more people can hear what they have to say. Somewhere along the way, their dreams became part of mine.”

Can a Chinese Story Speak to the World?

As Asian pop music takes a more visible place internationally, Eric has been considering another question: what does it mean for a Chinese-language artist to reach a wider world without leaving his cultural identity behind?

“I hope to carry my culture with me into the world.”

“I used to wonder whether reaching a wider audience meant becoming more like something the world already recognized,” Eric says. “Now I believe the opposite. I don’t want to erase where I come from in order to be understood.”

He does not see Child as an attempt to explain Chinese culture to the world.

“I don’t want to give the world a lesson about Chinese culture,” he says. “I would rather tell an honest story that grew from my culture, my family and my life. If someone from a completely different background hears it and thinks about their own father, their own child, or someone who loved them when they were imperfect, then we have already understood each other.”

For Eric, cultural identity and universality are not opposites.

“Culture gives us different ways of expressing ourselves. Love gives us a way to understand one another.”

Two Songs, One Search for Meaning

While Child begins with fatherhood, Eric’s other recording under GRAMMY® consideration, Encounter (□□□□□), reflects another dimension of his life: faith and the human search for meaning and purpose.

“They both begin with love,” Eric says. “Child helped me understand love through being a father. Encounter comes from my own journey of faith and the questions that journey has led me to consider.”

“Faith has shaped my life and given me my own answers, but music does not require everyone to arrive at the same answer,” he says. “Whatever our culture or faith tradition, many of us eventually ask similar questions: Why are we here? What gives life meaning? What makes a life worth living?”

For Eric, a song can remain rooted in a particular language, family, culture or faith while still reaching someone whose life looks entirely different.

Remembering Where the Music Began

Child features lyrics by Eric HZ and music by Christian TJ, with production by Zhang Zhonghao, Christian TJ and Eric HZ. Zhang Xianhua served as mixing engineer, Chris Gehringer as mastering engineer, and Xu XiaoDong performed electric guitar. Background vocals feature Thomas Wu, Mia Zhang, Derek Roy Li, Isabella Ruoxi Hu, Feiyin Wu and Yuni Guan.

Asked what he hopes someone who does not speak Chinese might carry away from Child, Eric returns to where the song began.

“We spend a lot of time asking how far a person can go,” he says. “I have become more interested in another question: as I go farther, will I remember why I started — and where I came from?”

If someone who has never met Eric HZ hears Child and remembers a parent, a child, or someone who once loved them without condition, then language has not become a barrier.

It has become a bridge.

And perhaps that is the larger possibility for music that crosses cultures:

We do not have to leave where we come from in order to reach somewhere new.

Child — For Your GRAMMY® Consideration: Best Asian Pop Music Performance

Encounter — For Your GRAMMY® Consideration: Best Contemporary Christian Music Performance/Song

Chris Jin
Chinese-American Federation of Arts and Culture
festival@cafacofficial.org
Visit us on social media:
YouTube

This press release can be viewed online at: https://www.einpresswire.com/article/944666778

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable

in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.
© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.