

For discussion
on 12 June 2009

Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs

Strengthening the Arts and Cultural Software of Hong Kong

INTRODUCTION

The development of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) gives the impetus for an overview of the arts and cultural software of Hong Kong. In strengthening our cultural software, the Government and our partners take a three-pronged approach: *capacity building*, *audience building*, and *arts education and manpower training*.

2. This paper informs Members of the initiatives that are currently being undertaken and new initiatives that will be pursued to nurture creative talents, build the professional support and heighten interest in the arts and culture.

OVERVIEW

3. The Government has all along been committed to promoting the arts and culture in Hong Kong. In the 2008-09 financial year, we spent more than \$2.6 billion (excluding capital works expenditure) on culture and the arts which was around 1% of the total expenditure of the Government, or HKD500 per capita, a level comparable to France.

4. Of the \$2.6 billion, excluding the running of libraries as well as other venue operating and staff related costs which are important in the provision of cultural software, more than \$880 million is invested directly into arts groups, programmes and arts education with the related expenditure by the Education Bureau and other University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded institutions not included -

Item	Expenditure (\$ million)
Subvention to the major performing arts groups	259
Support to small and medium sized arts groups	114
Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts	219
Government sponsored arts and cultural programmes (including performing arts and museum)	289
Total	881

DO WE HAVE ENOUGH CULTURAL PROGRAMMES?

5. There is a rich year-round programme of cultural activities and thematic arts festivals in Hong Kong, reaching an annual audience of more than 1 million. Also, with more than 20 museums of various natures, we record over 4 million visitors every year.

6. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) and our many partners in the arts and cultural arena organise many cultural events, festivals and community programmes throughout the year -

- On average, LCSD alone presents/sponsors over 4,400 cultural and educational programmes and about 8,000 programmes are held at LCSD venues each year in total.
- The Hong Kong Arts Festival from February to March and the Hong Kong International Film Festivals from March to May are highlights in our cultural calendar, with an audience of around 226,000 in 2008.
- There are numerous district carnivals/ thematic entertainment events in partnership with District Councils/ district organisations and cultural/ educational institutions.

7. Our challenge is to make our cultural programmes more visible

and accessible locally, regionally and internationally. We will –

- consider enhancing the level of funding support for the Hong Kong Arts Festival to enrich the programmes, attract high calibre performers and commission new works to inject life and vibrancy in our arts scene.
- continue to stage free indoor and outdoor entertainment events and enhance the programmes of the district arts festivals to enrich the cultural life of everybody.

DO WE HAVE ENOUGH TALENTS?

8. Questions have been asked whether sufficient artistic talents and arts administrators are available to support the WKCD development. We have all along been attaching great importance to nurturing artistic talents for a vibrant arts scene in Hong Kong –

- The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) is training professionals in the field of music, dance, drama, theatre and entertainment arts and film and television and Cantonese Opera. About 340 talented young people graduate from HKAPA every year.
- Over 380 persons have chosen performing arts as their career in the nine Hong Kong flagship performing arts companies, namely the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, the Hong Kong Sinfonietta, the Hong Kong Dance Company, the Hong Kong Ballet, the City Contemporary Dance Company, the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, the Chung Ying Theatre Company and Zuni Icosahedron. We have provided sustained Government funding of over \$260 million to these companies to provide an environment for nurturing professional talents and furthering artistic excellence.

- We continue to strengthen support for small and medium-sized performing arts groups as well as budding artists who are equally important to ensure a healthy and vibrant arts scene in Hong Kong.

Schemes/funds are available to cater to the needs of artists and arts groups of different sizes, nature and development stages -

Scheme/Fund	Examples of grantees/ Funds disbursed in the past three years
(1) Support small and medium sized arts groups, budding groups and artists	
a) HKADC ¹ b) Arts and Sport Development Fund (arts portion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amity Drama Club, Hong Kong Oratoria Society, Arts With The Disabled Association Hong Kong, Windpipe Chinese Ensemble, Hong Kong Dance Alliance, Opera Hong Kong Ltd. • \$156.8 million disbursed
(2) Support outbound cultural exchanges	
Arts Development Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allegro Singers to Austria, Actors' Family to Shanghai • 116 projects involving \$11.4 million
(3) Support study, training activities and promotion of specific art forms	
a) Cantonese Opera Development Fund b) Hong Kong Jockey Club Music and Dance Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hong Kong Young Talent Cantonese Opera Troupe, Cantonese Opera Promotion Association, and individual scholars • 237 projects and 15 scholarships involving \$25.15 million

9. Capable arts administrators are also an integral part of the arts and culture ecology. To ensure there are sufficient arts administrators and enhance

¹ Schemes operated include Project Grant Scheme, Multi-project Grant Scheme, Devolved Grant Scheme, One-year Grant Scheme, Emerging Artist Grant

their exposure, internship positions in performing arts venues, programming offices and museums are widely available. These include -

Scheme	Content	Target
Internships with LCSD's museums and other culture related sections	Exposure in – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organisation of museum programmes; • preservation of museum collections; • promotion of cultural programmes; • running of education programmes; • exhibition design; and • conducting research and developing demonstrations and lab programmes. 	Around 32 students
HKADC Local Internships Programme	One-year internship on arts administration and artistic works. Professional performing groups to act as training agents.	15 music interns, 10 xiqu interns and around 13 drama interns
HKADC Arts Scholarships	For studies of arts-related courses in the UK	Arts practitioners and undergraduates of arts-related courses
The Arts Council Korea	Six-month training in Korea to widen understanding on the administration systems of neighbouring countries	Professionals in the field of culture and the arts

10. One initiative on offer recently is the new pilot Cultural Internship Scheme. HKADC has been commissioned to run the Scheme from now to 2012-13 to sponsor local art practitioners to undertake short-term internship and training programmes in arts administration in the Mainland or overseas. The renowned UK Clore Leadership Programme is one of the programmes identified for the Scheme. We have also reached an initial agreement with the Arts Council Korea recently on sending executives in Hong Kong's arts sector to a six-month internship and exchange programme in South Korea.

11. For people interested in pursuing further education/ vocational

training in the field, the UGC-funded institutions, the Vocational Training Council also offer structured education programmes -

- The eight UGC-funded institutions are providing over 2,200 student places for the 2009/10 academic year. New programmes include Digital Media Broadcasting, cultural and heritage management of the City University of Hong Kong, Bachelor of Visual Arts Programme of the Hong Kong Baptist University, a new major in Culture, Heritages and Tourism in its Bachelor of Social Sciences programme in the University of Hong Kong.
- The Vocational Training Council has commenced the construction of a new campus at Tseung Kwan O to accommodate the Hong Kong Design Institute to cope with the demand for quality design and training.

DO WE HAVE A COMMUNITY THAT APPRECIATES THE ARTS AND CULTURE?

12. Concerns have also been raised whether Hong Kong has sufficient audience to fill the large number of seats in the future performing venues. Just as we would ensure iconic architectures and quality programmes are in place to attract visitors from the Mainland and all over the world, we would also continue our efforts on the following fronts to cultivate a community that appreciates the arts and culture.

13. Schools provide the best platform to advocate the learning of the arts and culture in youngsters through appreciating, creating and performing the arts -

- Starting from 2002, about 8% to 15% of lesson time in the school curriculum is recommended for arts education.
- The new senior secondary school curriculum starting from the 2009/10 school year will provide students more opportunities to pursue arts education:

- “Aesthetic Development” will be stressed as learning experience for all students throughout their three years’ of senior secondary schooling;
- Music and Visual Arts will become “elective subjects” in the curriculum;
- Arts-related applied learning courses in the areas of Creative Studies, Mass Media and Communication; and
- “Arts” will be added as one of the “independent enquiry study in Liberal Studies”.

14. Outside the formal curriculum, activities to promote arts education include -

- School Culture Day Scheme – visits to LCSD’s performing arts venues, museums and public libraries are arranged for students (from Primary 1 to Secondary 3) during school days to take part in cultural programmes specially designed under the Scheme. In the past three years, more than 700 schools with over 335,000 students participated in the Scheme.
- Arts Experience Scheme for Senior Secondary Students - This Scheme was piloted since the 2007-08 school year to pave way for the introduction of “Aesthetic Development” under the New Secondary School Curriculum from 2009/10. It offers a spectrum of tailor-made performing arts programmes with added interactive and educational elements for senior secondary students. Around 6,000 students from 53 schools participated in the pilot scheme in the last two years.
- School Arts Animateur Scheme - LCSD joins hands with local professional performing arts groups to implement at schools arts educational projects, including introductory performances,

workshop series and student finale performances/exhibitions. In the past three years, 250 schools with over 158,000 students took part in the Scheme.

Starting from 2009-10, the School Arts Animator Scheme will be strengthened with Cantonese opera added under the Scheme, more opportunities will be provided for collaboration between the small and medium sized arts groups and schools to introduce the different genres of performing arts to the students, and to arrange students' performances at voluntary agencies such as hospitals and elderly centres. The Arts Ambassador-in-school Scheme launched in November 2008 aims to encourage local primary and secondary students with a flair for the arts to become arts ambassador-in-school to promote arts. 500 ambassadors are being nominated by the schools in 2008/09.

15. To ensure youngsters from all spectrum of society can participate in making music and will not be denied the opportunities to instrumental music training for lack of financial means, the Music Office runs a training scheme for some 5,000 youngsters every year. Besides taking classes, students of the Music Office can also participate in any of the 18 youth orchestras, bands and choirs, as well as the many outreach activities with a combined audience of over 170,000. The annual music camp in the summer and the international youth music exchange programmes are occasions for the young musicians to share the joy of making music among their peers and counterparts from around the world.

16. There is also a large number of arts and cultural events for students to challenge themselves, interact with their peers and showcase their achievements. For instance, Exhibitions of Primary and Secondary Students' Creative Visual Arts Work, Schools Music Festival, Schools Speech Festival, Schools Drama Festival, Schools Dance Festival and Schools Creative Music Showcase are organised annually. About 400,000 student entries were received for these events in the 2007/08 school year.

17. To complement the efforts above, we are also enhancing support for arts teachers. An Arts Mart was organised recently in the Hong Kong Central Library to showcase services of arts groups for the schools to identify

suitable arts education projects for their students. More than 3,100 persons participated in the event. We have also -

- uploaded information of the arts groups participated in the Arts Mart on the websites of Home Affairs Bureau, Education Bureau and LCSD. Discussion is underway to set up a database detailing information on services and activities organised by different arts groups for the convenient access of schools;
- organised in-service Professional Development Programmes for the teachers;
- collaborated with tertiary institutes to develop learning and teaching materials for teachers' reference; and
- set up the Performing Arts Education Centre in 2008 on performing arts education curriculum design and teacher-training for primary and secondary schools.

BRINGING ARTS TO THE PEOPLE

18. For arts and culture to take roots, community involvement is crucial. We would wish to see that the arts and culture become a part of peoples' lives. To this end, we are stepping up efforts to bring culture and the arts to the people -

Scheme	Content
Community Arts Activities Enhancement Scheme	encourages the arts and cultural societies in all 18 districts to organise and promote arts activities in the local community
Community Cultural Ambassador Scheme	supports local performing arts practitioners in conducting creative outreach arts projects at various indoor and outdoor venues in different

Scheme	Content
	districts/communities. Activities include performances, workshops, lectures, demonstrations and exhibitions
District Cantonese Opera Parade	provides opportunities for budding and amateur Cantonese opera troupes to perform at the district level
Artists in the Neighbourhood Scheme	brings art exhibitions to diverse audience outside museums with sculpture, photography, printmaking, ceramics, contemporary Chinese painting, installation art and western painting, etc presented in various venues of the LCSD, the Hong Kong Arts Centre, MTR stations, hospitals and shopping malls, etc.
Public Art Scheme	Collaborates with parties like MTR to commission or install permanent public artworks at various public places in the city
Mobile Art Gallery	extends visual arts dimension to the everyday life of the people in Hong Kong by making use of the bus bodies and bus shelters as showrooms to display artworks
Artwork on Loan Scheme	Allows holders of the public library cards to borrow the reproduced artworks of local artists for viewing
Hong Kong Contemporary Art Biennial Awards Exhibition	showcases the recent development of Hong Kong contemporary art through an open competition exercise, in which outstanding entries are selected for exhibitions. Various art establishments, education institutions, art spaces, art groups, galleries are also invited to organise fringe activities to make the

Scheme	Content
	exhibition a territory-wide event
Summer Art Cadet Scheme	cultivates interest and involvement in artistic appreciation and creation for the less-privileged children of the Tin Shui Wai District. Artists are invited to interact and work with children and families, and works from the Scheme are subsequently exhibited at museums and Tin Shui Wai
the “Hong Kong Arts: Open Dialogue” exhibition series	invites guest curators to curate different thematic exhibitions on Hong Kong art, based on the museum’s collection

19. To outreach to the ever-growing cyber community, LCSD’s e-Magazine service provides the latest information on cultural presentations, which is currently subscribed by around 170,000 readers.

20. To develop venue-based marketing strategies to reach out to the neighbourhood and encourage community involvement in the development of performing arts, we set up the Venue Partnership Scheme recently to provide arts groups with priority booking of the venues they are partnered with. The small and medium sized arts groups also enjoy free venue use and funding support for organising programmes and audience building activities for three years. A total of 34 performing arts groups, including eight major performing companies and 26 small and medium sized ones, are benefiting from the scheme since its full inception in 2009.

21. Apart from conventional venues, we are also making better use of new venues to connect people to the arts at the district levels. Cultural events of different formats had taken place in the Cattle Depot, the HKICC Lee Shau Kee School of Creativity, the Shek Kip Mei Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre, the Nan Lian Garden, community halls in the districts, auditoriums at the various universities, heritage sites, etc. HKADC is also setting up a new rental subsidy scheme in 2009-10 to support arts groups in hiring non-LCSD venues.

Notable examples of programmes and activities taken place in these venues include -

- To arouse the interest of the general public, especially the children, in Cantonese opera, a new project “Let’s Enjoy Cantonese Opera in Bamboo Theatre” was organised in collaboration with the Sheung Shui District Rural Committee, Tsing Yi District Rural Committee and Tai Po Old Market Tin Hau Kung in March to April 2009, featuring Cantonese opera performances and interactive/educational activities at bamboo theatre in Sheung Shui, Tsing Yi and Tai Po. An academic was invited to give talk about the architecture of bamboo theatres. The project was well-received with over 8,000 tickets distributed to schools and the public.
- The Chinese music series at Nan Lian Garden, presenting a total of 12 concerts on Guqin, Nanquan, Nanyin and Chinese instrumental music, attracted overwhelming response and a total of 1,900 audience.

22. Hong Kong does not have a long history of arts philanthropy. However, more and more people, individuals and corporations, have been supporting the arts. We will continue to encourage such acts of donation and sponsorship. As part of these efforts, HKADC will launch the Hong Kong Arts Community Fund (HKACF) within 2009/10 to encourage support for the arts from the community and the corporate sector.

ARTS COMING FROM THE PEOPLE

23. Cantonese Opera is a refined and popular art genre as well as an emblem of our local culture. Over the years, we have spared no efforts in the preservation, promotion and development of Cantonese Opera. On performing venues -

- We will construct an Annex Building for the Ko Shan Theatre, which is scheduled for completion in 2012. The Ko Shan Theatre

and its new Annex Building will together provide over 1,600 seats for the Cantonese Opera troupes to stage performances, and other facilities for training, rehearsals and audio-visual production.

- We are building the Yau Ma Tei Xiqu Activity Centre, which costs about \$190 million, to accommodate about 300 seats for small-scale performances and operatic singing activities mainly by new and budding troupes.
- In 2009-10, we will provide 118 days of time slots for Cantonese Opera performances at the Shatin Town Hall and the Tuen Mun Town Hall through LCSD's Venue Partnership Scheme, an additional 100 days in the Ko Shan Theatre through the existing priority booking system for Cantonese Opera performances, and an additional 44 days (70 days in 2010-11) or so at five major performing arts venues (such as the Hong Kong Cultural Centre and the Hong Kong City Hall) for priority hiring by professional Cantonese Opera performing troupes.

24. To nurture new talents and recruit young audience to sustain the development of this arts form -

- HKAPA provides diploma and advanced diploma programmes, and full-time and part-time evening programmes on Cantonese Opera.
- The Cantonese Opera Development Fund approved a grant of \$3 million to support the operation of the "Hong Kong Young Talent Cantonese Opera Troupe" and about \$8.5 million in support of about 170 projects staging new and traditional plays to nurture young performers.
- Arts education, community promotion and audience development projects such as the Xiqu Education in Schools Scheme, the Cantonese Opera Day and the 18-District Cantonese Operatic Singing Competition are organised.

25. We will continue our efforts in preserving, promoting and developing Cantonese Opera with a view to bringing this unique art form to the international arena so that this important arts genre of our local tradition can be enjoyed worldwide. Such efforts include promoting international exchanges (e.g. Ming Chee Sing Chinese Opera Company performed in New York and Dawn Radiance Opera Troupe performed in an outdoor bamboo stage in Paris in October 2008), and collaborating with tertiary institutes in the translation of subtitles of popular Cantonese Opera play scripts.

ARTS BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER

26. Arts bring people together. And together, people inspire arts. By encouraging and facilitating exchanges, we aim to make Hong Kong a regional cultural hub where East truly meets West and a melting pot of cultural endeavours. We have created the relevant platforms to bring people together for exchanges in culture and the arts -

- In 2005, we have entered into an Agreement on Closer Cultural Partnership Arrangement with the Ministry of Culture of the Central Government.
- In 2009, we have entered into Agreements on Closer Cultural Partnership Arrangement with Yunnan and Shenzhen.
- We have entered into Memoranda of Understandings on Cultural Cooperation with 11 countries².
- The Greater Pearl River Delta (GPRD) Cultural Cooperation Meeting provides a regular forum for promoting the development of culture and the arts in the GPRD Region and to enhance mutual understanding and cooperation. In February 2009, parties to the Meeting signed the “GPRD Cultural Exchange and Cooperation

² The 11 MOUs signed so far are: Canada (1994), Italy (2002), the Philippines (2003), Egypt (2004), Singapore (2004), South Korea (2004), Croatia (2004), the Netherlands (2005), Hungary (2005), Vietnam (2006) and France (2006).

Development Plan 2009-2013” to set out the roadmap for cooperation.

- The 6th Asia Cultural Co-operation Forum will be held in October for the sharing of ideas among cultural policy-makers, scholars and creative entrepreneurs of economies in Asia.

27. We encourage our arts groups and artists to stage performances and promote exchanges in the Mainland and overseas. The Arts Development Fund is also dedicated to supporting outbound cultural exchanges for local arts groups and artists. Numerous exchange opportunities are there -

- Our flagship performing arts groups had represented Hong Kong in promotional activities organised by the Economic Trade Offices of the Hong Kong Government in the Mainland and overseas.
- Hong Kong has been keeping a presence in high profile events such as the Venice Arts Biennale (since 2001) and the International Cultural Industries Fair in Shenzhen (since 2005).
- We will actively participate in the 2010 Shanghai Expo fostering exchange between local and Mainland artists through a range of cultural events.

Other exchange activities, local, Mainland or overseas include -

Institution	Exchange Programme	Target
HKAPA School of Theatre and Entertainment Arts	Programmes with Cirque du Soleil's Quidam, AAV Systems Ltd in UK, Roger Sansom Productions Ltd, Royal Opera House in UK, English National Opera in London, Hong Kong Disneyland and City Contemporary Dance Company	Students of HKAPA

Institution	Exchange Programme	Target
HKAPA School of Dance	Outreach/ internship projects involving productions by local and visit international professional dance companies as well as works by distinguished choreographers in performances both locally and abroad - Hong Kong Ballet, Hong Kong Dance Company, City Contemporary Dance Company, Pina Bausch's Tanztheater Wuppertal Company and Stuttgart Ballet	Dance students of HKAPA, especially those in their senior years
City University of Hong Kong School of Creative Media	College of Architecture and the Arts, University of Illinois at Chicago	electronic Media, photography, film, graphic design, studio arts
	Department of Art Studies, Peking University	music, art theory, fine art, film theory
	College of Art and Communication, Beijing Normal University	film & TV production, music, fine art, dance
	School of Communication & Art, Tongji University	design, animation, photography, advertising, TV production

Institution	Exchange Programme	Target
	College of Journalism & Communications, Shih Hsin University	TV & radio production, visual design, multimedia design, photography, animation communication & journalism
Citigroup/ Asian Cultural Dance Fellowship	Summer intensive programme for seven weeks	Students or professionals majoring in Dance
Asian Cultural Council Fellowship Programme Grants	For study, research, observation and related activities in US or Asian country	Arts administrators
	For projects involving international exchanges in the all visual and performing arts, both contemporary and traditional	Students or professionals in the field of visual or performing arts

28. Visiting artists and arts groups are valuable sources of inspiration. Their interaction with local artists will spark new ideas. Notable examples include -

- Puppet show *Brer Rabbit in the Land of Monkey King* was co-produced by Ming Ri Institute for Arts Education in and Mabou Mines Theatre from the USA, whereas the puppeteers were from Guangxi Puppet Art Troupe of China and Hong Kong. A total of ten performances was held at Ngau Chi Wan Civic Centre and Sheung Wan Civic Centre in April 2009, attracting more than 3,200 audience.
- Theatre of the Silence and Youth Outreach - School of Hip Hop in

collaboration with The Wild Zappers from USA were featured in an physical theatre programme “*Park and Art*” produced by Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong in celebration of the spirit of “One World One Dream” of the 2008 Beijing Olympics in the 2008 International Arts Carnival.

29. Upcoming events include -

- 2009 Shenzhen & Hong Kong Bi-city Biennale of Architecture\ Urbanism will be held in Hong Kong at the WKCD site from December 2009 for a period of two months.
- Award-winning local young pianist Rachel Cheung will play with the Sydney Symphony in October 2009 at the City Hall under the baton of Vladimir Ashkenazy.
- “Louis Vuitton: A Passion for Creation” exhibition in which Louis Vuitton and the Fondation Louis Vuitton pour la Creation showcase masterpieces of contemporary artists such as Gilbert and George, Richard Prince, Takashi Murakami, Jeff Koons and and the LV heritage. The exhibition will be held from May to August 2009 at the Museum of Art. Seven young Hong Kong artists are commissioned to feature their artistic creations to promote local creative talents. Artists and Architect including Takashi Murakami and Frank Gehry will also visit Hong Kong and give talks.

UPDATING OUR ARTS AND CULTURAL SOFTWARE

30. To prepare for the development of the WKCD, the Government is determined to promote culture and the arts in a holistic, concerted and sustainable manner. We will continue to take advice on matters relating to the arts and culture from various bodies such as the WKCD Authority, HKADC, the Committee on Performing Arts and the Cantonese Opera Advisory Committee and further strengthen our cultural software through the three pronged approach of capacity building, audience building and arts education and manpower

training.

31. Initiatives being worked on and considered at present as highlighted in earlier sections include:

- (a) invest more resources to build our arts and cultural software through, for example, enhancing funding support for the Hong Kong Arts Festival
- (b) continue to step up our efforts in
 - developing quality programmes in close collaboration with the advisory bodies and community;
 - promoting arts education in the community and schools building on the new senior secondary curriculum;
 - nurturing artistic talents and arts administrators through training programmes and internship opportunities;
 - encouraging commercial and private donations with HKADC establishing the Hong Kong Arts Community Fund within 2009/10
 - enhancing Mainland and overseas exchanges;
- (c) strengthen partnership and collaboration among the schools, arts community, private and commercial sector, and the public, to ensure that our strategy and efforts are geared towards making the WKCD a success.

32. Apart from the above initiatives, we will commence a consultancy study in 2009 on funding for the performing arts. The aim is to introduce an improved funding mechanism based on measurable assessment criteria to promote the progressive development of arts groups and through them bringing the arts to people and building a wider community appreciation of the arts and

culture.

33. As the subject of the arts and culture cuts across various bureaux and departments, we will set up a steering group later this year to coordinate cross-bureaux and inter-departmental efforts in further developing the cultural software for Hong Kong.

Home Affairs Bureau
June 2009