



To: Clerk to Bills Committee,
The Bills Committee on West Kowloon Cultural District Authority Bill

Ref: CB1/BC/5/07

Date: 11 April 2008 Pages: Two (including this page)

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Submission by Benny Chia, Director, Fringe Club

- I We are in support of upfront endowment which is preferable to funding by stages, as upfront endowment will facilitate long-term financial planning and minimize the risks of the project being scaled down due to political and other considerations. We cite the case of the Sydney Opera House when it was being built and the costs being scaled down due to a change of ruling party in the Australian Government at that time. This resulted in making the interior of the Opera House look not only second-rate, but also reduced its intended functions.
- II On the integration of arts and cultural facilities and commercial development, we believe it should feed off and complement each other. However, here the profile of arts and culture should prevail over the commercial aspects. As such, a clear and strong image should be projected.
- III Calling it the WKCD Authority is neither desirable nor appropriate. Authority is the very antithesis of everything that arts and culture represent. We propose calling it WKCD Trust as in the Lincoln Centre Trust in New York. The term Trust has positive connotations. Unlike the term Authority which has had negative

To be cont'd ... 2

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connotations in the eyes of the public in Hong Kong. H.A.B. when questioned about this implied that they would look into the legal aspects of changing it to Trust. We put this on record.

4. We support the governance structure to be open, fair and accountable. At the same time, we like to point out that there are trade practices in arts management that would require confidentiality. For example, arts festivals do not as a rule reveal how much they pay artists or engage an arts groups to perform, nor do they reveal commissioning fees, or why they choose one over others in their selection of programmes.
5. It is important for the future WKCD body to concern itself with providing contents and training up future arts managers and artistic directors. There should be sufficient manpower and resources allocated for this purpose. We also believe that research and development should be in step with the above.
6. The future Board members should reflect the importance of expertise and commitment in arts and culture in its composition.
7. The WKCD should make our beautiful harbour proud in every aspects of its design and provide urban landmark for Hong Kong.

** If there are any queries, please contact
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