

For discussion
on 14 May 2010

Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs

Strengthening the Arts and Cultural Software of Hong Kong

Introduction

To complement the development of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) and the promotion of local cultural development, the Government and our partners adopt a multi-pronged approach in strengthening our cultural software through arts programme development, manpower training, promotion of arts education, audience building and cultural exchanges. This paper briefs Members on our measures on the above fronts.

Overview

2. The Government is committed to promoting the arts and culture in Hong Kong. In 2010-11, we estimate that more than \$2.8 billion (excluding capital works expenditure) will be spent on the arts and culture. In the coming five years, a recurrent expenditure of \$486 million will be earmarked for strengthening the cultural software of Hong Kong through a series of measures.

3. As announced in this year's Budget, we will also inject \$3 billion into the Arts and Sport Development Fund (ASDF) as seed money and use the annual investment returns to subsidise the long-term development of the arts, culture and sports. It is our plan that the injected fund will be divided equally between the arts and sports portions (each receiving \$1.5 billion). Based on an annual rate of return of 4% to 5%, it is estimated that the investment returns for the arts portion would be approximately \$60 to \$75 million a year.

4. The above funding support will result in additional provision of around \$800 million (excluding capital works expenditure) for the promotion of the arts and culture in the coming five years.

Arts Programme Development

5. For the next five years, we will earmark \$202 million to sustain the provision of additional resources to nine major performing arts groups¹, and support small and medium-sized arts groups and individual artists through the ASDF (arts portion) and other schemes in developing quality programmes, promoting outreach activities, and advancing cultural exchanges.

6. As reported to this Panel previously, we will conduct a consultancy study on funding for the performing arts. A consultant has been appointed to carry out the study. We will, in consultation with the Funding Committee for the Performing Arts², monitor the details and progress of the study which is scheduled for completion in 2011. The study aims to review the objectives of public funding for the performing arts in Hong Kong and draw up a comprehensive proposal on a sustainable funding mechanism for performing arts groups to facilitate the flexible development of the sector. The consultant will seek views from arts groups and other stakeholders during the process through focused group discussions or other means.

7. In addition, we will reserve a sum of \$80 million to provide additional resources to the Hong Kong Arts Festival for programme enrichment, supporting the production by local arts groups and artists as

¹ The major performing arts groups are namely Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, Hong Kong Sinfonietta, Hong Kong Dance Company, Hong Kong Ballet, City Contemporary Dance Company, Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, Chung Ying Theatre and Zuni Icosahedron.

² The Funding Committee for the Performing Arts advises the Secretary for Home Affairs on funding for performing arts services.

well as their exchanges with world-renowned performers. Following the official inscription of Cantonese opera onto the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on 30 September last year, making it the first item of world intangible cultural heritage in Hong Kong, we plan to inject \$69 million into the Cantonese Opera Development Fund to further support various Cantonese opera preservation, promotion and development projects.

8. LCSD will continue to provide support and performance opportunities for small and medium-sized performing arts groups through various channels, including year-round cultural presentations, the Venue Partnership Scheme, free entertainment programmes, audience building schemes at schools and the community, as well as marketing activities at performance venues and district cultural activities. In 2010-11, it is estimated that the support on this front will amount to over \$90 million for more than 3 700 performances and activities. We will also actively explore the use of historic buildings, cultural heritage sites and non-LCSD venues, such as Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, Museum of Tea Ware, HKICC Lee Shau Kee School of Creativity and Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre at Shek Kip Mei, Wanchai Youth Square, etc. for performances by small and medium-sized arts groups.

Manpower Training

9. We attach great importance to nurturing artistic talents for a vibrant arts scene in Hong Kong. We will allocate additional funding of \$32 million in the next five years to launch training programmes for arts administrators. Organised by LCSD and by the partners of its performance venues, this programme will provide training and internship opportunities for people who aspire to a career in the arts and culture.

10. LCSD will provide internship opportunities to those who are interested in performing arts administration on venue operation, facilities maintenance, planning of arts festivals and cultural programmes, publicity and promotion, as well as audience building. The 20 venue

partners of the Department will also provide training on management of arts groups and organisation of cultural presentations. On museums, LCSD will offer internship opportunities on artworks acquisition, research and conservation, exhibition planning, venue management, education and community promotion work, etc.

11. In addition, the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts has been training professionals in the field of music, dance, drama, theatrical production, film and television and Cantonese opera, producing over 300 full-time equivalent graduates every year. The University Grants Committee-funded institutions and the Vocational Training Council also offer other relevant educational or vocational training programmes.

12. We will continue to strengthen the support for budding artists and small and medium-sized arts groups of different nature and development stages and cater to their needs through different schemes/funds :

- (a) Support small and medium-sized arts groups, budding groups and artists: a total of \$183 million was granted through various schemes under the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC)³ and the ASDF (arts portion) over the past three years;
- (b) Support outbound cultural exchanges: the grants from the Arts Development Fund over the past three years amounted to \$11.05 million; and
- (c) Support study, training activities and promotion of specific art forms: the grants from the Cantonese Opera Development Fund and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Music and Dance Fund over the past three years amounted to

³ Such schemes include Two-year Grant Scheme, One-year Grant Scheme, Project Grant Scheme, Multi-project Grant Scheme, Devolved Grant Scheme and Emerging Artist Grant.

\$29.37 million.

13. The HKADC runs a Local Internships Programme to sponsor participants to take up work attachments at local arts groups. We have also commissioned the HKADC to run the new pilot Cultural Internship Scheme from 2009-10 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 UK Clore Leadership Programme and the Sage Gateshead Internships Programme are among those identified for the Scheme.

Promotion of Arts Education

14. Starting from 2002, about 8% to 15% of learning time in the school curriculum is recommended for arts education. The new senior secondary school curriculum starting from the 2009/10 school year also provides students with more opportunities as set out below to pursue arts education :

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

15. In the next five years, we will allocate additional resources of \$21 million to enhance the promotion of the arts in schools so as to develop young people’s interest in the arts and culture and their appreciation abilities in these areas. To tie in with the new senior

secondary curriculum, we also take forward various projects as follows :

Project	Details
A Journey on Learning the Arts for Senior Secondary Students Scheme	Education Bureau, LCSD and various arts groups join hands to support students' participation in arts activities and performances for free outside the classroom setting. Genres covered include Chinese and Western music, Chinese opera, drama, dance, movie sharing sessions and exhibitions, etc. Docent service or seminars will be arranged in some programmes.
Arts Experience Scheme for Senior Secondary Students	LCSD offers a series of tailor-made performing arts programmes for senior secondary students, supplemented by extension activities with interactive and educational elements (e.g. pre-performance talks and post-performance seminars and workshops).
Enhancement of educational programmes	LCSD will produce teaching kits and worksheets for special exhibitions, enhance the programmes in museums and film archive to include learning sessions and workshops and the training of docents to engage students in the appreciation and critique of artworks. Artists will also be lined up to share their creative experience with students.

16. The Government also promotes various arts education activities outside the formal curriculum, including :

Activity	Details
School Culture Day Scheme	LCSD arranges student visits to its performing arts venues, museums and public libraries during school days with tailor-made programmes.
School Arts Animateur Scheme	LCSD joins hands with local professional arts groups to implement various activities at schools including introductory performances, workshop series and student finale performances/ exhibitions.
Let's Enjoy Cantonese Opera in Bamboo Theatre	LCSD and district groups co-organise free Cantonese opera presentations specially composed for students at bamboo theatres at various districts and interactive educational activities
Music Office	The Office runs an instrumental music training scheme for some 5 000 youngsters every year.

Audience Building

17. We have been actively bringing the arts and culture to the people. In the next five years, more than \$80 million additional resources will be allocated to step up the promotion of public art and organise more popular arts and cultural activities. We are working on a pilot scheme to display artworks in the open space of a number of selected Government joint-user buildings. Apart from giving an artistic touch to the public space, the scheme also provides more opportunities and exhibition space for local artists. To bring the arts to the public and encourage public participation in cultural activities, we will also launch a six-month trial scheme in July 2010 under which specific zones in three

locations (namely the Hong Kong Cultural Centre piazza, the Shatin Town Hall plaza and the Kwai Tsing Theatre plaza) with a relatively high pedestrian flow and an enabling setting will be designated as places for public performances by individuals or organisations.

18. LCSD will strengthen co-operation with different organisations to continue organising more creative public art activities, including guided tours, seminars and outdoor sculpture exhibitions, and enhance the publicity and promotion of public art (such as setting up websites and publishing guide maps to promote Hong Kong’s public art).

19. To introduce the arts to the community, LCSD and other organisations have organised a series of cultural and arts events at district level :

Activity	Details
Dance Day	LCSD organises Dance Day in the New Territories (e.g. in Yuen Long and Tsuen Wan Districts) for the participation of arts groups, schools and the local communities.
Community Cultural Ambassador Scheme	LCSD supports local performing arts practitioners in conducting outreach/ promotional arts activities and district carnivals at indoor and outdoor venues for the public and specific populations.
Artists in the Neighbourhood Scheme	LCSD collaborates with institutions like the MTR Corporation and shopping malls to set up arts exhibitions at various venues.
Community Arts Activities Enhancement Scheme	The HKADC encourages the arts and cultural societies throughout the territory to organise and promote arts activities in the local community.

20. The Steering Committee on Culture and Creativity aims to foster cooperation on the promotion of culture and creative industries amongst relevant departments. To support the development of culture and creative industries in Hong Kong, we launched the “Budding Winter” in November last year, a large-scale community arts programme lasting for two months. Through a series of activities such as “Art in the Park”, music and dance performances in parks, as well as free public and school guided tours, the visual and word art installations and performances of local young artists were showcased to the general public in four local parks (Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, Sha Tin and Tuen Mun). The Commerce and Economic Development Bureau also supported the large-scale regional forum “Make a Difference (MaD)” held in January this year in Hong Kong to encourage the expression of creativity and entrepreneurship of the new generations, and heighten their interest towards culture and creativity. We will continue to promote cross-departmental efforts through various means.

Promoting Cultural Exchange

21. To position Hong Kong as a regional cultural hub where the strengths of the East and the West converge, it is important to encourage and promote arts and cultural exchanges. We will continue to take proactive measures to create a conducive environment :

- (a) We have entered into an “Agreement on Closer Cultural Partnership Arrangement” with the Ministry of Culture of the Central Government and other agreements on co-operation with different provinces and cities in the Mainland.
- (b) We have entered into “Memoranda of Understandings on Cultural Cooperation” (MOU) with 11 countries³, and will

³ These countries are namely 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).

sign a MOU with Israel soon.

- (c) The Greater Pearl River Delta (GPRD) Cultural Cooperation Meeting is held on a regular basis to promote the development of the arts and culture in the region and to enhance mutual understanding and cooperation. In February last year, parties to the Meeting signed the “GPRD Cultural Exchange and Cooperation Development Plan 2009-2013” to set out the roadmap for cooperation.
- (d) We hosted the 6th Asia Cultural Co-operation Forum (ACCF) in October last year for exchanges on cultural development in the region. We would consider scheduling the ACCF high-level meeting in Hong Kong again next year to tie in with the Asia Arts Festival organised by the Mainland.
- (e) Hong Kong and Guangdong signed the “Framework Agreement on Hong Kong/Guangdong Co-operation” in April this year, which covers enhancement of cultural exchange and co-operation of the two sides.
- (f) To showcase creativity of Hong Kong to the Mainland and overseas, LCSD will coordinate a variety of cultural programmes for 2010 Shanghai Expo, including 20 programmes (47 performances) and two visual art exhibitions. The cultural programmes encompass various art forms such as Cantonese opera, Chinese and western music, dance, drama, opera, musicals, multi-media performances and visual art exhibitions, and provides a valuable opportunity of exchanges for the artists in Hong Kong and the Mainland. The HKADC will also facilitate the performances by its supported arts groups in Shanghai during the Expo period.

Conclusion

22. To enlarge the pool of local arts talents, promote public arts education and bring the arts into the community, we will continue to take advice on matters relating to the arts and culture from various bodies. We are committed to strengthening the development of our cultural software and hope to capitalise on the opportunities offered by the WKCD project to boost the city's standing in the world cultural map.