

For discussion on
21 June 2016

Legislative Council
Panel on Home Affairs and Panel on Development
Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the
West Kowloon Cultural District Project

Update on the Development of Lyric Theatre Complex

PURPOSE

This paper provides an update on the development of the Lyric Theatre Complex (LTC) project.

BACKGROUND

2. At the Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District Project (Joint Subcommittee) meeting held on 23 March 2015, Members were informed that the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA) proposed to modify the originally planned 1 200-seat Lyric Theatre to LTC by enhancing the design of the planned facilities as well as incorporating some of the Batch 2 facilities to advance their provision. The key components of LTC include the following facilities:

- (a) **Lyric Theatre:** High quality, dance-focused Lyric Theatre with 1 450 seats with installation of digital projection equipment for film screenings as a proactive response to the request from the film industry;
- (b) **Medium Theatre:** Theatre-focused Medium Theatre with 600 seats (previously called Medium Theatre II, a Batch 2 facility);
- (c) **Studio Theatre:** Theatre-focused Studio Theatre with 200+ seats (previously a 250-seat Black Box Theatre in the Centre for Contemporary Performance, also a Batch 2 facility);

- (d) **Resident Company Centre:** Resident Company Centre (RCC) with a full range of professional rehearsal, communal and supporting facilities for art groups serving as a powerhouse for creativity dedicated for long term dance development; and
- (e) **Retail, Dining and Entertainment (RDE) facilities.**

3. The reconfiguration of multiple performing venues in one single complex would not only achieve design efficiency and synergy in future operation, but would also advance the completion of the originally planned Medium Theatre II and one of the black box theatres in the Centre for Contemporary Performance by at least two years from after 2022 to around 2020. The reconfiguration was also warmly received by the stakeholders including relevant major Performing Arts (PA) groups.

UPDATE ON HARDWARE DEVELOPMENT

4. The foundation works for LTC and associated Zone 3B basement have commenced in January 2016 and are on schedule. The detailed design of LTC is expected to complete in the fourth quarter of 2016 and construction of the main works is planned to start in the third quarter of 2017. Completion of LTC is estimated to be around 2020.

5. Since the last Joint Subcommittee meeting on 23 March 2015, WKCDA has been in discussion with different local theatre groups and dance companies to ascertain their requirements in respect of performing, rehearsal and other supporting facilities. Specifically, dance companies, including Chinese dance, contemporary dance and ballet, have been consulted and their needs include studio space with decent ceiling heights, natural sunlight, quality flooring as well as supporting facilities.

6. As regards the local professional theatre groups, the discussions indicated that in addition to the demands for more quality performing venues in Hong Kong, they also wanted to secure more performance days in the venues. WKCDA has

conveyed the views of the art groups concerned to the LTC designer.

7. The key design concepts of LTC are highlighted as below:

- (a) **A Welcoming Approach:** LTC commands a prominent location within the Artist Square and will be easily accessible from the nearby MTR Kowloon Station and the Elements shopping mall through the proposed Artist Square Bridge. The arrival foyer with a large glass facade will give cultural identity to the Artist Square. The RCC to be located at higher levels of LTC overlooking the Artist Square will stimulate the interaction between the public and the artists and activate the vibrancy in the Artist Square. This is achieved through the dance studios in RCC directly facing the Artist Square, which the dancers can overlook the square whilst the visitors can view the activities inside RCC.
- (b) **Central Spine:** The three theatres and part of the RDE facilities are strategically connected with an indoor central spine with spacious circulation corridors which vary in width from 4m to 6m with natural light to guide the visitors towards their destinations. Barrier-free ramps will also be provided to the destinations along the spine to ensure LTC would comply with the principles of universal accessibility.
- (c) **Panoramic View:** When the visitors walk southward to the foyers of LTC along the spine, the journey gradually leads them to a panoramic view towards the Victoria Harbour. This will be a unique building in Hong Kong with a strong theatre presence and identity along the waterfront. Food and beverage outlets with open terraces located at the high levels on the south side of LTC also give the diners a unique experience with a panoramic harbour view.
- (d) **Variety of Public Space:** The foyers, the terraces and public roof deck will not only provide valuable

and accessible public space to the visitors and artists, but also offer the opportunity for a variety of events and performances outside the theatre stages.

- (e) **Harmony in Urban Context:** The setting of LTC will enrich the Artist Square and build a harmonious relationship with the neighbouring buildings including M+. The area in front of the LTC will provide public space for people to sit, relax and watch performances at the square. Red carpet events have been taken into consideration as part of the design development while the original urban design concept of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD) is retained.

The conceptual computer-aided illustration of LTC is shown at **Annex**.

SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT IN PERFORMING ARTS

8. Due to open in 2021, LTC will be a centre of excellence showcasing the best of Hong Kong and international dance and theatre productions, both large- and small-scale, amplified and unamplified. RCC will serve as a local and international creative lab, providing a meeting and performance space for the exploration and development of dance and multi-disciplinary collaborations that inspire audiences, participants and artists. To augment the mission set for LTC which is dance and theatre-oriented, major dance and theatre programmes, as set out in the ensuing paragraphs, have been organised by WKCDA in the past few years:

New Works Forum

9. The New Works Forum was organised with a view to enhancing local PA developments, as well as providing a platform for Hong Kong artists working across different fields to expand into new areas through exploring innovative ways of creating and performing, while brainstorming on topics around contemporary performances.

10. Three New Works Forums with topics on **“Screendance”, “Writing Choreographic Process”** and **“Dance Dialogue with Wayne McGregor”** were held from August to October 2015, where internationally renowned directors and choreographers were invited to exchange on and share about the art of screendance, choreographic research and methodology, as well as the creative learning resources materials used and developed.

11. Theatre sessions were held in 2014 and 2015 including **“Challenging Perspectives on Physicalities and Bodies”** which explored ways of producing inclusive performances for artists with diverse backgrounds and physical abilities; **“Social Acupuncture in the Tai Ping Shan Area”** explored how artists could engage local communities on improving shared culture in a changing environment; and **“Born from the Streets: The Theatre of La Fura dels Baus in the Last 30 Years”** discussed how social and political changes could motivate and inspire PA.

International Workshop Festival of Theatre

12. The inaugural International Workshop Festival of Theatre held from August to November 2015 is part of the longer term capability development of the Hong Kong and regional arts landscape focusing on methodology of contemporary performance. Eleven international theatre and contemporary performance makers were invited to share their experience and approaches to performance-making during the period. The Festival featured workshops, public lectures, dialogues with Hong Kong artists and an online archive service giving local theatre practitioners the opportunity to augment their knowledge and skills with leading international theatre and contemporary performance makers. A total of eight sessions were held with topics covering documentary theatre, playwright, dialogue within society, dramaturgy, writing movement, text and dance etc. by arts organisations and artists from Germany, Norway, Indonesia, Spain, Belgium, United Kingdom and Switzerland.

Producers’ Network Meeting and Forum

13. Producers’ Network Meeting and Forum is the first of its kind in the region organised by WKCDA with two rounds

held in May 2015 and May 2016. The Forum aimed at bringing together producers, curators and arts administrators on action plans to improve competitiveness, widen the audience base and expand artistic content with new regional cultural and arts infrastructure expected to come online in coming years. More than 80 local and overseas producers joined the networking meeting over the past two years.

Overseas Exposures for local Art Group Leaders

14. Since 2013, WKCD and the Hong Kong Arts Development Council initiated a programme to promote the professional development of local arts groups through providing training for local art leaders. The local art leaders are Sean Patrick CURRAN of Theatre du Pif, dance artist Daniel YEUNG, Even LAM of Jumbo Kids Theatre, Marble LEUNG of Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, and Mo LAI of FM Theatre Power. They were provided with training opportunities at overseas arts organisations, festivals and centres in the United States, Europe and Asia during the period from 2013 to 2015. The participants had to share their learning experience with the local arts sector after the visits.

15. This programme offers our local art leaders valuable opportunities for vision expansion as well as global networking on top of gaining practical skills and knowledge. WKCD believes that such programmes are important for the future arts development in Hong Kong.

Big Dance Pledge 2016

16. On 20 May 2016, Big Dance Worldwide Performance Day was held. WKCD collaborated with local partners and led around 120 participants in a Big Dance Pledge 2016 (Hong Kong), featuring on-site dance at WKCD. The event marked the first Big Dance Pledge performance in Hong Kong, kicking off a series of participatory events that are set to take place.

17. Big Dance Pledge is an international community participatory event that began in 2006 in the United Kingdom to bring people together through dance. The Big Dance choreography for 2016 was done by internationally acclaimed dancer/choreographer Akram KHAN, created for all walks of life

and all levels of dance experience, therefore easy to learn and perform.

18. Local dance partners included the City Contemporary Dance Company Dance Centre, The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA), HKAPA Dance Alumni Association, Centre for Community Cultural Development Symbiotic Dance Troupe and Passoverdance.

19. To conclude, in preparation for the opening of various arts and cultural facilities in WKCD, WKCDA is building on its existing initiatives while exploring a wide variety of new initiatives in collaboration with local artistic, technical and administrative talents. WKCDA's ultimate aim is to strengthen the capacity of the arts and cultural sector with a long-term vision.

ADVICE SOUGHT

20. Members are invited to note the progress of the hardware development of the LTC project and the software developments in PA by WKCDA.

West Kowloon Cultural District Authority
June 2016

Lyric Theatre Complex 3D Illustration

演藝綜合劇場立體示意圖

Annex
附件

