

For discussion on
20 December 2016

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

Update on the Progress of
the West Kowloon Cultural District Development

PURPOSE

This paper provides an update on the progress of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD/the District) development.

BACKGROUND

2. Situated on a magnificent 40-hectare waterfront site, the WKCD is being developed into an integrated arts and cultural destination of an international standard for the people of Hong Kong. The vision for WKCD is to meet the long-term infrastructural and development needs of Hong Kong's arts and cultural sector, provide quality programmes with a must-visit appeal, foster organic growth and development of cultural and creative industries, and become a hub for attracting and nurturing talents.

3. The draft Development Plan for WKCD, which was prepared based on Foster + Partners' 'City Park' concept after an extensive, three-stage public engagement exercise held from 2009 to 2011, was approved by the Chief Executive-in-Council in January 2013. Since then, the WKCD Authority (WKCDA) has been developing the core arts and cultural facilities (CACF) in accordance with the approved Development Plan. While the early phased facilities are being developed, a temporary Nursery Park and the M+ Pavilion, the first permanent facility, have been opened since July 2015 and July 2016 respectively.

PROGRESS ON HARDWARE DEVELOPMENT

4. As reported at the meeting of the Joint Subcommittee to

Monitor the Implementation of the WKCD Project (Joint Subcommittee) in July 2013, WKCD would develop the CACF of WKCD in three batches, and the upfront endowment of \$21.6 billion would be sufficient for developing all the Batch 1 and most of the Batch 2 facilities. These include the Xiqu Centre, M+ Building, Art Park (including M+ Pavilion and Freespace) and Lyric Theatre. Separately at the Joint Subcommittee meeting in May 2014, WKCD reported that efforts will be devoted to completing the facilities in the Artist Square Development Area (ASDA), also called the mini-WKCD, at an early stage. A schematic plan showing the batching of the CACF (including the two facilities to be developed by private sector funding) is at **Annex A**.

5. Over the past year, WKCD has made good progress in hardware development with substantial progress in various aspects of design and construction works. The first of the permanent facilities, M+ Pavilion, was completed in June 2016 and opened in July 2016. The next few years will see more arts and cultural facilities opening progressively. Details are set out below.

Xiqu Centre

6. The Xiqu Centre, designed by the late Hong Kong-born Canadian architect Bing THOM, and Ronald LU of Hong Kong, will be a world-class performing arts venue purposely built for Chinese operatic performances. A distinctive feature of the Xiqu Centre is the location of the 1 050-seat main theatre at the top part of the building, allowing the space below to be utilised for learning and rehearsals and providing a large covered plaza for public use. There is also a 200-seat tea house theatre in the Centre for performances of shorter duration. In designing the Centre, the architects have taken into account inputs from stakeholders and experts in the field to ensure that it suits the artistic needs of the Chinese operatic sector.

7. Main superstructure works of the Xiqu Centre started in December 2014 and have been progressing smoothly. A major milestone was reached when the steel structure totalling 2 400-tonne was lifted to the top in two phases, with the 1 800-tonne lifted in January and February 2016, and the theatre base structure of the main theatre lifted in May 2016. The completion of this technically complex lifting operation means that the structural frame of the building is essentially completed. One can now get a clear impression of the scale and complexity of the building at the junction

of Canton Road and Austin Road West. The target is to complete the building (with Occupation Permit obtained) in late 2017, allowing the Xiqu Centre to open to the public in late 2018.

Art Park

8. The Art Park will be the green heart of WKCD and will feature a rich variety of trees and greenery as well as open lawn spaces for leisure and relaxation. As an integral part of the 23-hectare public open space within WKCD, the Art Park will provide a vibrant venue for open-air performances of music, dance and theatre as well as art exhibitions and other cultural events. It will also provide space for large-scale outdoor sculptures and installations curated by M+, and provide retail, dining and entertainment (RDE) facilities to serve visitors.

9. Construction works for the Art Park have commenced in July 2016 and will be completed in three phases. The first phase of the Art Park is on track for completion by the end of 2017; and the target for overall completion is by end of 2018.

Freespace

10. Freespace is one of the two arts and cultural venues (the other being M+ Pavilion) located within the Art Park. Freespace will comprise a black box theatre (BBT) and an outdoor stage: the BBT provides a flexible performance space that can accommodate up to 450 seated or 900 standing spectators and is suitable for staging performances such as gigs, drama, dance and physical theatre; while the outdoor stage can accommodate up to 10 000 standing spectators and can be used for staging large-scale events and festivals. Construction works for Freespace have commenced in October 2016 and is scheduled to open in 2019.

M+ Pavilion

11. Opened in July 2016, the M+ Pavilion serves as the primary site for exhibitions curated by M+ in the run-up to the opening of the M+ Building in 2019. Designed by a team of young local architects, VPANG Architects Ltd + JET Architecture Inc + Lisa Cheung, to offer a respite from hectic city life, the Pavilion has mirrored external walls that allow it to blend into the surrounding and an elevated outdoor terrace with expansive views of the Hong

Kong skyline. After M+ Building opens, the M+ Pavilion will become a space for staging small-scale exhibitions and events in the Art Park.

M+ Building

12. Designed by Swiss architectural firm Herzog & de Meuron with TFP Farrells and Ove Arup & Partners Hong Kong, the M+ Building will house the M+, Hong Kong's new museum for visual culture. The M+ Building comprises a horizontal section that houses the exhibition galleries and supporting facilities, as well as a vertical section on top that provides space for office uses, RDE and other arts and cultural facilities (OACF). Main superstructure works have commenced in the fourth quarter of 2015. The key building activity of erecting the major trusses to support the tower section of the Building to span over the Airport Express tunnels has started in August 2016. The erection of the trusses is expected to be completed by the middle of 2017.

13. The M+ Building and the Conservation and Storage Facility are targeted for completion (with Occupation Permit obtained) by the end of 2018 and M+ is scheduled for opening in late 2019.

Lyric Theatre Complex

14. In order to complete the Batch 2 CACF as early as practicable, WKCD has decided to advance the delivery of the Medium Theatre II and one of the BBT housed in the Centre for Contemporary Performance (CCP) by incorporating them into the Lyric Theatre to form the Lyric Theatre Complex (LTC), which originally comprised a 1 200-seat auditorium only. The seating capacity of the lyric theatre has also been increased to cater for a wider variety of performances. The current design of LTC comprises a 1 450-seat lyric theatre with installation of digital projection equipment for film screenings as a proactive response to the request from the film industry, a 600-seat medium theatre and a studio theatre of around 250 seats. The LTC will also house a Resident Company Centre (RCC) with extensive rehearsal facilities. The RCC is intended to be a centre of excellence for staging the best of Hong Kong and international dance and theatre performances, and hence will serve as a hub for dance companies and artists for the exploration and development of dance and collaborations that will inspire audiences, participants and artists.

15. The LTC will sit alongside the M+ Building, and be accessible via the Artist Square and the waterfront promenade. It is designed by the joint venture of UNStudio of the Netherlands and AD+RG of Hong Kong. The detailed design has been substantially completed. Foundation works for the LTC and the surrounding basement below the Artist Square have started in January 2016. WKCDA will tender out the main works for the LTC in 2017. Subject to funding approval by the Legislative Council (LegCo) for the construction works of the relevant part of the integrated basement under the LTC, construction works of the LTC are expected to be completed in around 2021.

Latest Award

16. WKCDA's effort to build a green and sustainable WKCD was being recognised recently. On 6 December 2016, WKCDA was awarded the BEAM Plus Neighbourhood Platinum Certificate by the Hong Kong Green Building Council. BEAM Plus Neighbourhood is a new rating tool with the aim of promoting urban sustainability at neighbourhood level in the stage of master planning.

PROGRESS ON CULTURAL SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT

17. Construction of the facilities is only part of the work being undertaken by WKCDA. We are also developing cultural software to ensure that the arts and cultural facilities will be fully utilised when they are put into service progressively in the next few years. The following paragraphs highlight major pre-opening initiatives WKCDA has been organising to raise public awareness, enhance capacity, build audiences and engage young people.

Capacity Building

Professional Development and Exchange

(a) Exchanges and Collaboration Programmes for Xiqu

18. With a view to building up the capacity ahead of the opening of the Xiqu Centre, WKCDA has, since 2014, launched a Xiqu Cultural Exchange Programme in collaboration with the Chinese Artists Association of Hong Kong. The programme enables young artists to learn from key Xiqu institutions and experts in the

region. Under this programme, emerging talents visited the Zhejiang Xiaobaihua Yue Opera Troupe (浙江小百花越劇團), and Chongqing's Chuan Theatre (重慶市川劇院) in April and October 2015 respectively. Participants took part in a series of artistic training and learning sessions on singing technique, acting skills and body movement, etc.

19. On 12 July 2016 WKCDA signed an agreement with The Shanghai Center of Chinese Operas (上海戲曲藝術中心) to establish a long-term partnership covering exchanges in artistic development and venue operation. The Xiqu Centre and The Shanghai Center of Chinese Operas will take turns to organise exchange activities in the coming three years. A visit to Shanghai was subsequently conducted in August 2016 with participants exchanging views on venue operations, stage technologies, arts administration, marketing and promotion, talent cultivation and production of original works.

20. In December 2016, WKCDA will bring young Xiqu playwrights and their experimental Cantonese opera to join the “Shanghai Experimental Xiqu Festival” (上海小劇場戲曲節) presented by The Shanghai Center of Chinese Operas.

(b) Rising Stars of Cantonese Opera

21. The “Rising Stars of Cantonese Opera Showcase” was first introduced in 2014 whereby rising stars of Cantonese opera are given a platform at the West Kowloon Bamboo Theatre to showcase their artistic performance and potential through a competition. As a continuation of WKCDA’s attempt to groom young talents in Cantonese opera, WKCDA organised the “Rising Stars of Cantonese Opera” in 2015. Having received an overwhelmingly positive response from the audience, WKCDA has developed the scheme as an ongoing project.

22. In the current edition “Rising Stars of Cantonese Opera II”, under the guidance and curatorship of LAW Ka-ying, seven new rising stars with seven other performers performed three full-length productions, namely *Loyal to Love*, *The Lady’s Sash* and *The Immortal Zhang Yuqiao*, between 12 and 17 August 2016 at Ko Shan Theatre New Wing. The “Rising Stars of Cantonese Opera III” will comprise two romantic comedy classics and four entertaining excerpt performances for six consecutive nights in February 2017.

(c) The Ghost Seller & His Butterflies (Version 80): An evening of two contemporary performances

23. WKCDA presented an innovative double bill of genre-twisting productions - *The Ghost Seller* by GuoGuang Opera Company from Taiwan and *His Butterflies (Version 80)* by Utopia Cantonese Opera Workshop from Hong Kong on 26 – 28 February 2016. The programme aimed to foster cultural exchanges between Hong Kong and Taiwan and nurture young, talented artists and playwrights through joint presentation of new short pieces curated by the younger generation in Cantonese Opera. It also paved the way for WKCDA to develop new repertoire for small venues, and extend its audience base to the younger generation. Apart from performances, a student matinee and a sharing session for the public were also organised.

(d) Producers’ Network Meeting and Forum

24. WKCDA has organised the second “Producers’ Network Meeting and Forum” in May 2016 following the success of the first Forum in May 2015. The Forum aims at bringing together producers, curators and arts administrators to formulate action plans for improving competitiveness, widening the audience base and expanding 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.

(e) New Works Forum

25. The New Works Forum is an ongoing programme series organised with a view to enhancing local performing arts 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. Three New Works Forums with topics relating to dance were held in 2015.

26. In June and October 2016, two New Works Forums on “Multimedia and Dance Dialogue - Hiroaki Umeda” and “Multimedia and Dance Dialogue – Su Wen-Chi & Wu Chi-Tsung” were held and internationally renowned choreographers and artists were invited to exchange on and explore the interplay between dance and new media.

Another New Works Forum on “Choreographer & Composer Lab” held in November 2016 provided a platform for choreographers to work with composers from different background.

(f) Overseas Exposures for Local Art Group Leaders

27. Since 2013, WKCDA and the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (ADC) have initiated a programme to promote the professional development of local performing arts groups through offering our local art leaders valuable opportunities for vision expansion as well as global networking on top of gaining practical skills and knowledge. Local art leaders including 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 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. A sharing session was held on 11 April 2016 and all five participants shared their learning experience with the local arts sector after the training.

(g) Cultural Leadership Summit

28. Since 2011, WKCDA has supported the annual conference organised by the Hong Kong Arts Administrators Association, which brings together experienced international and local cultural leaders to share and discuss important issues of cultural leadership and management relevant to the Hong Kong arts and cultural sector. In 2016, WKCDA supported the summit with the theme on “The Art of Successful Collaboration” held from 31 May to 1 June. Senior executives of WKCDA spoke in different sessions of the conference to share their views and experiences fostering exchanges in the local arts and cultural sector.

(h) Venice Biennale 2017

29. A thriving local art scene and a pool of professional art practitioners are essential for the future success of M+. To enhance the artistic capacity of local up-and-coming artists, M+ will again collaborate with the ADC to co-present a local artist at the 57th Venice Biennale in May 2017 following the previous success in 2013 and 2015. To nurture local curators through providing experience in a major international setting, M+ will also engage a Hong

Kong-based curator as guest curator for the presentation. Samson YOUNG and Ying KWOK have been selected as the artist and the guest curator for the presentation in 2017.

Internship, volunteer and membership programmes

(a) Performing Arts Internship Programme

30. WKCDA launched the Performing Arts Internship Programme in 2014, offering a unique opportunity to those who are interested in developing a career in the performing arts scene. The programme runs on a recurring basis and has two to three intakes each year. Throughout the internship period, the interns work closely with professional staff to gain theoretical as well as practical training in arts programming, research, facility design and operations through active involvement in the on-going performing arts projects as well as a structured programme of workshops. WKCDA is now looking to extend the period of the internships in some areas from the standard period of three months to six months.

(b) M+ Internship Programme

31. M+ is determined to provide opportunities for younger generation who are interested in developing a career in the museum field and to nurture talents for the future operation of M+. The recurrent M+ Internship Programme has been launched since 2012 with openings every year for autumn and spring. The programme offers the interns the unique opportunities to engage both practically and theoretically in museum practice by working closely with professional staff on multiple projects. Encouraged by the success of previous intakes and taking into consideration the comments from the interns as well as other stakeholders, the duration of each intake of the M+ Internship Programme has been extended from three months to six months and the number of interns to be recruited has increased from three to five for each opening starting in year 2016.

(c) M+ Docent Volunteer Programme

32. M+ Docent Volunteer Programme is an ambitious upgrade on the existing docent training programme. This programme will engage a group of dedicated volunteers to give tours of the collection displays as well as special exhibitions to the public of different age

groups and education levels at the M+ Pavilion as well as the future M+ Building. These volunteers will become life-long ambassadors of M+ supporting its future operation.

(d) M+ Pioneers

33. Support from members and patrons is vital for the successful operation of a museum. A membership scheme can help provide a platform for supporters to engage with the museum, build a community that supports the values and mission of the museum and create a pool of potential donors for future fundraising efforts. With the opening of the M+ Pavilion which marks the gradual transition of M+ from the planning stage to the operational stage, M+ has launched its pilot membership scheme in August 2016, the M+ Pioneers Membership Scheme which runs from 9 September 2016 to 31 December 2017.

Programme development and audience building

34. To communicate to the public the artistic vision of WKCD and to enable WKCDA to gauge their views, WKCDA has organised various programmes and events as set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

(a) Antigone

35. Directed by critically acclaimed Hong Kong director TANG Shu-Wing and performed by an all-female cast from the young Beijing-based Baiguang Theatre Studio, *Antigone* was performed at the rooftop of WKCDA Project Site Office from 4 to 6 November 2016, taking the city's magnificent skyline at sunset as its backdrop. The performance was streamed live on the official YouTube channel of WKCD, inviting audiences from Hong Kong and overseas to explore the depths and contradictions of the human conditions with the six female characters and to enjoy an online theatre experience as exhilarating as watching the play in person. The recording of the performance was available for on-demand viewing on the channel for a period of ten days starting from 7 November 2016.

(b) Freespace Happening

36. Between August 2015 and March 2016, Freespace

Happening attracted over 50 000 visitors to the Nursery Park with a variety of free outdoor music and art activities. The new season of Freespace Happening commenced in September 2016 and will run till March 2017, bringing to audiences a mix of music, dance, film, street performances, markets, workshops and more. This programme has allowed WKCD to test out various types of programming in an outdoor venue ahead of the opening of Freespace in the Art Park.

(c) WE Dance

37. Based on the concept that anyone can dance, WE Dance is a series of showcases and workshops led by local dance partners that audiences of all kinds can take part in. It is a community programme inspired by the “Big Dance Pledge 2016 (Hong Kong)” held at WKCD on 20 May 2016 which is part of the global “Big Dance Worldwide Performance Day”. WE Dance is a continuation of the “Big Dance Pledge 2016 (Hong Kong)” and takes place every month from September 2016 to February 2017 at Freespace Happening.

(d) M+ Pavilion Exhibitions

38. While the construction works of the museum building is underway, the M+ Pavilion functions as a temporary home for M+ and will be used to host a series of thematic exhibitions displaying selections from the M+ Collection in the run-up to the opening of the museum building in 2019. Since its opening in July 2016, two exhibitions have already been held.

39. “Tsang Kin-Wah: ~~Nothing~~” was the inaugural exhibition for the M+ Pavilion. It was a new commission following the artist’s critically acclaimed exhibition “The Infinite Nothing”, presented by M+ and the ADC at the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015. Running from 9 September to 6 November 2016, a total of more than 11 000 visitors were attracted to this exhibition. 81 guided tours for the public, school, elderly and visitors with specific needs were organised. Other public programmes and activities accompanying the exhibition including talks and panel discussion, and teachers’ private view and dialogue were held.

40. The second exhibition held at the M+ Pavilion, “Shifting Objectives: Design from the M+ Collection” is M+’s debut design exhibition. The exhibition aims to explore the many concepts and frameworks that have shaped and broadened our understanding of

design. The exhibition runs from 30 November 2016 to 5 February 2017 and is accompanied by a series of programmes including workshops, talks, studio visits, teachers' private view, and guided tours for the public, schools, and visitors with specific needs.

(e) M+ Screenings

41. M+ Screenings is an on-going screening programme in a serialised format that showcases diverse and interesting moving image works in a cinema. M+ Screenings: Home Movies, the fourth episode of this ongoing programme, looks at how filmmakers and artists draw on personal memories and imagination to explore individual and collective histories. This fourth screening took place from 2 to 4 December 2016 at Broadway Cinematheque.

Outreach Programmes

(a) M+ Rover

42. M+ Rover: Travelling Creative Studio, which is an innovative outreach programme organised by M+, was rolled out in March 2016. The converted container functions as a pop-up creative studio that tours to secondary schools and communities. The programme emphasises participatory art practice as well as students and artist collaboration. The first edition of the programme (M+ Rover 2015-16), which ran from March to July 2016, was successfully completed and made a total of 43 school and 13 community visits. A total of around 18 000 (including students, teachers, school staff and public visitors) participated in the project. The second edition of the programme (M+ Rover 2016-17) is scheduled to be held from February to June 2017.

(b) M+ Summer Camp

43. M+ Summer Camp is a youth-targeted initiative. Over four days, young people from different backgrounds explore, experiment, play, and work together in ways that nurture creativity, critical thinking, and confidence. M+ Summer Camp 2016 took place in July/August 2016. 100 secondary school students participated and the programme engaged nine instructors from different disciplines and 21 university student volunteers. Activities included workshops, music and dance performance and sharing sessions.

44. A table listing the major cultural software development initiatives and public programmes organised by WKCDA between January and December 2016 with the number of participants/beneficiaries is at **Annex B**.

WAY FORWARD

45. Xiqu Centre, Art Park, Freespace and M+ will be put in operation in the next three years. WKCDA recognises that the development of cultural software is important for promoting the development of the District, strengthening connection between WKCD and the public, and building audiences for WKCD. To prepare for the commissioning of the arts and cultural facilities, WKCDA will continue efforts in developing cultural software, such as programme development and professional development, as well as engaging the public especially the young people through community arts projects.

ADVICE SOUGHT

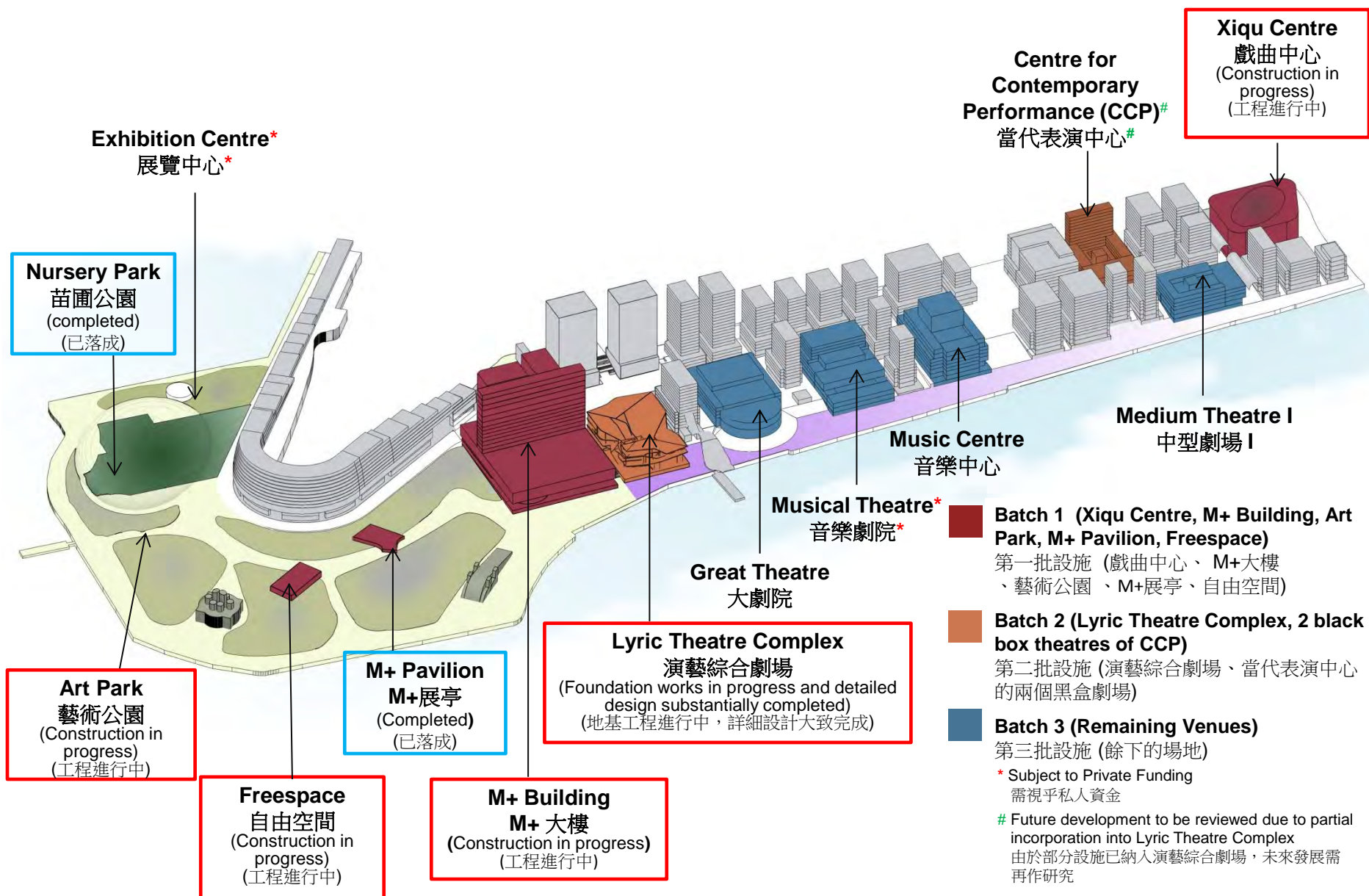
46. Members are invited to note the progress of the WKCD development.

West Kowloon Cultural District Authority
December 2016

Arts and Cultural Facilities in West Kowloon Cultural District

西九文化區文化藝術設施

Annex A
附件A



**Major cultural software development initiatives
and public programmes organised by WKCDA
from January to December 2016**

Programme/Initiative	Date/ Period	No. of Participants/ Beneficiaries
<i>Professional development</i>		
Producers' Network Meeting and Forum 2016	3 to 6 May 2016	Over 50 producers
New Works Forum: Multimedia and Dance Dialogue - Hiroaki Umeda	20 to 25 Jun 2016	Around 100 participants
New Works Forum: Multimedia and Dance Dialogue – Su Wen-Chi & Wu Chi-Tsung	4 to 8 Oct 2016	Around 170 participants
New Works Forum: Choreographer & Composer Lab	19 Nov 2016	Around 60 participants
<i>Internship, volunteer and membership programmes</i>		
Performing Arts Internship Programme	Ongoing	
2015/16		29 interns
2016/17 (as of end Nov 2016)		23 interns
M+ Internship Programme:	Ongoing	
2015 /16		6 interns
2016 /17 (as of mid-Dec 2016)		5 interns

Programme/Initiative	Date/ Period	No. of Participants/ Beneficiaries
M+ Docent Volunteer Programme	Second round in 2016	Around 70 new docents
M+ Pioneers	Launched in Aug 2016	Around 130 members
<i>Programme development and audience building</i>		
Freespace Happening 2015/16	Aug 2015 to Mar 2016	Over 50 000 participants
2016/17	Sep 2016 to Mar 2017	Over 39 900 participants (up to 11 Dec 2016)
The Ghost Seller & His Butterflies (Version 80): An evening of two contemporary performances	26 to 27 Feb 2016	Around 800
Big Dance Pledge 2016 (Hong Kong)	20 May 2016	Around 120 participants
Rising Stars of Cantonese Opera II	12 to 17 Aug 2016	Around 2 900
Tsang Kin-Wah: Nothing	9 Sep to 6 Nov 2016	Around 11 400 visitors
Antigone	4 to 6 Nov 2016	Live audience: Around 340 Online audience: Around 22 900
Shifting Objectives: Design from the M+ Collection	30 Nov 2016 to 5 Feb 2017	-

Programme/Initiative	Date/ Period	No. of Participants/ Beneficiaries
M+ Screenings: Home Movies	2 to 4 Dec 2016	Around 380
<i>Outreach programmes</i>		
M+ Rover	Ongoing	Around 18 000 participants
M+ Summer camp	Jul/Aug 2016	100 secondary school student participants 21 university student volunteers