

For discussion on
1 March 2021

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 Promotion and Venue Operations of Performing Arts in
the West Kowloon Cultural District

PURPOSE

This paper updates Members on the efforts made by the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD or the District) in promoting performing arts in Hong Kong as well as enhancing its venue operations, marketing and customer services in 2020.

BACKGROUND

2. As with many other sectors in Hong Kong, the arts and cultural industry has encountered unprecedented challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic and the related social distancing measures, resulting in the cancellation and repeated rescheduling of many planned programmes and activities. Since the last update on performing arts development presented to the Joint Subcommittee to Monitor the Implementation of the West Kowloon Cultural District (Joint Subcommittee) in January 2020, the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCDA or the Authority) has been making every effort to sustain the promotion of arts and culture in Hong Kong amidst the pandemic through presenting live programmes whenever practicable whilst identifying alternatives, including introducing online programmes/initiatives and providing timely assistance to arts and cultural practitioners in times of adversity. The dedicated support provided by the Authority to its venue hirers and practitioners in response to the COVID-19 pandemic had been reported at the last meeting of the Joint Subcommittee held on 18 January 2021.

MAJOR PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAMMES IN 2020

3. To comply with the Government's anti-pandemic and social distancing measures, the District's performing arts venues, as well as other facilities were intermittently closed during different periods throughout 2020. We had been able to present on-site programmes intermittently in 2020 when theatres were open to the public in January before the first confirmed case; in May and June before the third wave of the pandemic; and in the autumn before the onset of the fourth wave. Due to international travel restrictions and the Authority's commitment to support the local sector, performing arts programmes in 2020 featured almost exclusively Hong Kong artists, with the engagement of more than 1 000 local dance, theatre, music and xiqu artists on-site and online. In the spirit of 'the show must go on', the Authority has made every effort to present performing arts programmes, whenever feasible, online/digitally via the District's website and through its different social media platforms to provide audiences with continued access to quality performances and activities.

4. WKCD is one of the pioneer arts and cultural organisations in Hong Kong to launch digital programming in response to venue closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout 2020, WKCD continued to pursue its vision and mission of developing WKCD into a world-class integrated arts and cultural hub and made its best endeavour to deliver diverse programmes and initiatives that **build capacity** of Hong Kong's arts and cultural industry including nurturing young artists and arts practitioners, **expand audiences** and **engage the community and youth** through learning and participation. This paper provides an update on WKCD's efforts in promoting these three areas through online and offline initiatives.

Capacity Building

Choreographer and Composer Lab 2020

5. *Choreographer and Composer Lab* brings together professional music and movement artists to work together over a period of time to generate creative ideas, explore new approaches to composition in music and dance, and develop partnerships. Inaugurated in 2016 in collaboration with Hong Kong Ballet, the programme has generated successful new creations that have been performed at different venues in Hong Kong. From February to June

2020, Freespace presented the third edition, featuring two independent contemporary dance choreographers – Alice Ma and Joseph Lee – and three independent composers of diverse disciplines and genres – Fiona Lee, Karen Yu and Lawrence Lau. To share the results of the exchange with a wider audience, the 2020 edition included a free public works-in-development showcase and sharing session held in mid-June 2020.

West Kowloon Young Fellows Scheme (Performing Arts) 2020

6. Launched in 2019, The West Kowloon Young Fellows Scheme (Performing Arts) encourages young artists, arts administrators, scholars, researchers and postgraduate students to develop arts learning, public participation, community engagement or audience building projects to enrich the arts ecology in Hong Kong. Projects showing potential may be adopted by the Authority for integration into its future learning and participation programmes.

7. The 2020 fellowships were awarded to Onnie Chan On-yin (Drama educator, founder and artistic director of Banana Effect) and Leung Ho-yin (arts practitioner, researcher and writer). Through her project *Fun Time for Single-parent Families*, Chan developed an interactive toolkit that used storytelling and drama techniques to help single-parents engage with their children. Leung's project '*Yau Lok, Ng-goi*' – *The Music of Minibus Drivers in Hong Kong* features recorded interviews with a selection of Hong Kong minibus drivers from different bus routes, combined with curated music playlists available on Spotify and other online platforms featuring the interviewed drivers' favourite songs. The project's goal is to connect passengers with drivers in a personal way through sharing the joy of music, and to celebrate a side of the city which may have been ignored by people during the rush of daily commute. The results of both projects will be published in 2021.

What is Stage 2020: Gap Year

8. *What is Stage* is an annual collaboration between WKCD and Edward Lam Dance Theatre, inviting international leaders in scenography (stage design) to give intensive workshops for Hong Kong's theatre sector. 2020 marked the fourth year of the programme. Due to travel restrictions, instead of inviting an international guest lecturer, the programme took a 'gap year' and in August 2020, 15 alumni of the three previous annual workshops joined co-curators

Edward Lam and Low Kee-hong, WKCDA's Head of Theatre, Performing Arts, in a two-week online workshop to explore space design through discussion and sharing original new films that each participant created.

Internship Programmes

9. WKCDA is committed to nurturing students and young people with interest in the arts through internships and professional development opportunities, in arts administration. In 2020, a total of 22 interns were enrolled to work in the Performing Arts Division of WKCDA and mentored by their line managers in areas such as programming, venue operations as well as technical and productions.

Audience Building

Dance

Company Wayne McGregor – Autobiography

10. Award-winning British choreographer, Wayne McGregor, and his company opened the 2020 calendar year at Freespace with the Asian premiere of *Autobiography*, which ran from 10 to 12 January 2020. This production, co-commissioned by Freespace with other leading international venues and festivals, is the fruition of a three-year partnership with Company Wayne McGregor which began in 2017. The work's Asian premiere marked a major milestone for this artistic collaboration and reflected WKCDA's commitment to programming that contributes to Hong Kong's performing arts ecology in diverse ways, from artist development to international exchange and producing new, innovative works.

Cypher Dance and Movement Series

11. From October to November 2020, Freespace presented a series of dance and movement events on-site and online with performances by regional and international artists. On-site events of Cypher series included graffiti workshops, a mural project outside Freespace and other activities in and around the venue. Digital events included the online world premiere of Hong Kong Dance Company's (HKDC) performance, *Convergence*, the culmination of a three-year research into Chinese dance and martial arts; an online seminar co-presented with HKDC; and *With/out Umeda*, a showcase of works by

Japanese choreographer and multidisciplinary artist Hiroaki Umeda in response to 2020 travel restrictions and social distancing.

Maybe Tomorrow@Freespace

12. On 28 and 29 November 2020, local choreographer Chloe Wong presented her work *Maybe Tomorrow@Freespace* in the Art Park. Her mobile dance theatre work was created specifically for Freespace and the Art Park and involved a cross-disciplinary mix of dance, original music, site-specific set design and the use of giant reflective spheres as props. Audiences enjoyed the event in socially distanced areas in the Art Park.

CCDC in Residence 2020

13. As the second of the three-year 'CCDC in Residence' programme, WKCD partnered with the City Contemporary Dance Company (CCDC) to present two events in 2020 based on the theme of 'I/YOU LOOK AT YOU/ME'. Ticketed events included two online live performances of *Social Distancing Theatre Joyeux Noël*, a solo dance piece choreographed and performed by CCDC resident artist, Noel Pong, where audiences could select live from which camera angle they viewed the work. A meet-the-artist session was conducted online following each performance. Another event, *The Pandora Studio*, was a free live-streaming event curated by CCDC's Artistic Director Designate Yuri Ng. The event enabled the public to observe Hong Kong dance artists while they rehearsed via an online link, demonstrating how artists are affected by the knowledge that someone is watching.

Creative Meeting Point: Museum of Human E-motions (MoHE) 2020

14. *Creative Meeting Point: Museum of Human E-motions (MoHE) 2020*, a digital dance residency in collaboration with partners from France, Italy, Japan and Taiwan, was organised from September to December 2020. During the residency period, five artists from each place explored digital space as a place for creation and dialogue through a combination of research in their home cities and online sharing with the participants in other cities. Working with experts from various disciplines and an international facilitator, each artist devised online sharing and workshop sessions, participated in virtual exchanges, and prepared an original digital presentation that shared their creative process with the public.

Xiqu

Experimental Chinese Opera Festival 2020 and Creative Sharing Sessions

15. The Experimental Chinese Opera Festival features original productions and new perspectives of Chinese opera. The 2020 edition in October and November presented 13 live performances of two Xiqu Centre-produced Cantonese opera works: *Farewell My Concubine (New Adaptation)* and the Hong Kong premiere of *Wenguang Explores the Valley*.

16. In addition to having all local artists performing in the live productions due to on-going travel restrictions in 2020, WKCD has adjusted the original invited programme and presented a series of free Creative Sharing Sessions with creators and performers from four regional troupes: Shanghai Kunqu Opera Troupe, Shanghai Yue Opera House, Jin Liansheng Gaojia Opera Troupe of Xiamen City and Contemporary Legend Theatre and Hsing Legend Youth Theatre of Taiwan. Through live-streaming, the troupes discussed their work and offered insights into some of the productions the District plans to present in the coming years. The sessions explored regional genres, creative choices and performance styles and included video excerpts from highlighted works followed by a question and answer session with the audience.

Tea House Theatre Experience

17. The *Tea House Theatre Experience* introduces new audiences to Cantonese opera through a specially designed 90-minute performance presented by WKCD's own Tea House Rising Stars Troupe. Running from Thursday to Sunday every week (except during temporary venue closures due to the pandemic), the popular long-run production showcases a selection of short excerpts demonstrating a range of vocal, music and performance styles. It also includes narration by a moderator to introduce the history of the art form to new audiences.

Music in the Atrium

18. In 2020, *Music in the Atrium* offered free performances of traditional Chinese music at the Atrium of the Xiqu Centre. Performed

by a roster of invited professional troupes on alternate Saturdays and Sundays (except during temporary venue closure due to the pandemic), the programme features a range of styles, including classical and folk tunes and Chinese opera music, and showcases the versatility of traditional stringed and percussion instruments. Performances by wind instruments were temporarily suspended to safeguard the health of staff members, performers, audience and visitors during the pandemic.

Music

Music Performances and #LivehouseAtHome at Lau Bak Livehouse

19. Lau Bak Livehouse at Freespace is a bar-café and performance space offering live music by artists from Hong Kong and around the world. Upon the first venue closure on 29 January 2020, the District launched its first online streaming series, #LivehouseAtHome, on 7 February 2020, bringing Hong Kong music artists to audiences worldwide. Every Friday through Sunday from February to late March 2020 when live performances in food and beverage (F&B) establishments was suspended, Freespace live-streamed local jazz, alternative, classical and indie music acts from Lau Bak Livehouse. #LivehouseAtHome reached more than 110 000 online viewers globally during these six weeks of programmes. As a result, many Hong Kong performing arts groups were able to maintain their profile and engage the audience through WKCD's various social media platforms.

100 Singing Bowls at Dawn and Sound Bath with Shane Aspegren

20. In the fall of 2020, Freespace presented two projects using music for health and wellness. In October 2020, artist and Himalayan singing bowl player Tsang Man-tung from Allpamama led participants in a calming dawn performance involving 100 Himalayan singing bowls at the Competition Pavilion in the Nursery Park. The soothing bell-like vibrations of the singing bowls created a meditative atmosphere. The performance was recorded and released digitally at dawn on 1 January 2021 to ring in the New Year, reaching over 700 viewers.

21. In November 2020, multidisciplinary artist and Holistic Sound practitioner Shane Aspegren led a unique form of sound bath meditation at Freespace exploring the therapeutic effects of sound and

vibration on the human body. The hour-long immersive experience was followed by a 30-minute sharing session with the artist.

Freespace Jazz Fest

22. From 6 to 8 November 2020, Freespace Jazz Fest returned to WKCD with a series of indoor and outdoor music and art events celebrating the innovation and diversity of one of the world's most popular forms of music, featuring over 200 Hong Kong jazz artists. Highlighted ticketed events included *Ted Lo and Eugene Pao* – an evening of fusion, classics and original compositions by acclaimed jazz greats Pao and Lo; *Angelita Li Sings Billie Holiday – Feat. Patrick Lui Jazz Orchestra* – with songs and stories honouring the life and legacy of jazz diva Billie Holiday performed by Angelita Li and Patrick Lui and his orchestra; and the experimental collaboration *Jazz Imaginarium* – a unique, multisensory immersive experience with jazz musicians and visual artists creating a black box installation with improvised sound and digital imagery. Free events included the *Experimental Jazz Lab* – live and online jam sessions featuring interactive collaborations between artists from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Zurich – as well as live shows by local talents and bands performing different jazz genres in and around Freespace including Freespace Terrace, Lau Bak Livehouse and the Competition Pavilion. Visitors also enjoyed a range of free arts events and workshops for all ages.

The MET: Live in HD 2020 – The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess

23. As a prelude to the Freespace Jazz Fest, WKCD presented a screening of the American opera masterpiece *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess* from the Metropolitan Opera's MET Live in HD series in November 2020. The screening presented James Robinson's widely acclaimed stage production, which premiered at the English National Opera in 2018 and at the Metropolitan Opera in 2019. Before the screening, special VIP guest Angel Blue, acclaimed soprano who starred as 'Bess' in the MET production, joined audiences live online from New York City for a pre-screening talk.

Theatre

An Invitation: On Empty Theatre

24. In June 2020, Edward Lam Dance Theatre and Freespace

co-produced the video series *An Invitation: On Empty Theatre*, inviting 30 Hong Kong-based actors to stand inside an empty theatre and reflect on their relationship with the audience, and the meaning of theatre, both as a space and as an art form, in the absence of audience and performers. Standing alone in Freespace's black box theatre, each artist produced intuitive and heartfelt short solo videos responding to the moment, and explored the nature of theatre when live performance is impossible. The full series of videos are available online to critical and popular acclaims on the District's YouTube channel.

Community and Youth Engagement

Memorial Talk Series Commemorating Wong Yuet-sang, Maestro of Cantonese Music Culture

25. The Xiqu Centre and the Centre for Chinese Music Studies of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) held two co-presented programmes for the public. As an extension to the commemorative talk series on Wong Yuet-sang held in 2019 to mark the 100th anniversary of his birth, a new series of talks on his work were co-presented in November 2020. During his lifetime, Wong created over 200 songs and instrumental pieces for Cantonese opera. As an instructor at CUHK, Wong also taught a number of students who are now professional artists. This project is part of the Xiqu Centre's commitment to preserve tradition and share the art form with students, youth and new generations of audiences.

Xiqu Dialogues II: West Kowloon Cultural District's 'Xiqu Petit Theatre': The Why and What of Innovation and Experimentation

26. On 28 December 2020, the Xiqu Centre and the Centre for Chinese Music Studies of The Chinese University of Hong Kong co-presented *Xiqu Dialogues II: West Kowloon Cultural District's 'Xiqu Petit Theatre': The Why and What of Innovation and Experimentation*. In this online public forum, Naomi Chung, WKCDA's Head of Xiqu, Performing Arts, Li Siu-leung, Adjunct Professor of Cultural Studies at Lingnan University, and Frederick Lau, Head of the Department of Music at The Chinese University of Hong Kong shared their thoughts and inspirations regarding Chinese opera, and explored the possibility of developing 'xiqu petit theatre' (smaller-scale contemporary xiqu productions) in Hong Kong.

West Kowloon 101

27. Since February 2017, an array of free learning and participatory talks in each of the major performing arts genres (xiqu, dance, theatre, and music) and arts criticism were held on weekends and evenings. Rebranded in 2018 as *West Kowloon 101*, the lectures and demonstrations encourage appreciation and enhance enjoyment of arts and cultural programmes among a broader spectrum of the community. 23 talks including online sessions were held in 2020 and attracted over 1 200 participants.

Xiqu Centre Guided Tours

28. *Xiqu Centre Guided Tours* was launched in January 2019. Conducted in Cantonese, English or Mandarin and supplemented with multimedia elements, the 60-minute tour helps visitors explore the Xiqu Centre facilities, learn about the architectural and design features, and discover fascinating facts about the culture and stories behind the art of xiqu. Weekly group tours are also offered for schools and registered charitable or non-profit organisations for free.

Giant Steps – Jazz Rhythms for Kids

29. From 14 to 22 November 2020, WKCD held 11 sessions of 90-minute children’s workshop *Giant Steps – Jazz Rhythms for Kids*. In the workshop, a team of experienced jazz musicians and tap dancers introduced young participants to the fundamental elements of jazz – rhythm, call-and-response and improvisation. The workshops included rhythm clapping, movement games and simple dance steps. Participants also learnt how familiar songs could be adapted into swing and Latin jazz styles, tried out some basic tap footwork, and had the chance to join an impromptu finale jamming session with professional tap dancers and the band.

Children’s Workshop: Musical Storytelling with Uncle Hung

30. On 28 and 29 November 2020, local poet and storyteller Yuen Che-hung, affectionately known as Uncle Hung, returned to Freespace with *Children’s Workshop: Musical Storytelling with Uncle Hung*, an interactive storytelling workshop for children aged four to nine. Joined by local musicians Chan Wai-fat and Lau Chi-bun, Uncle Hung led young participants into the magical world of imagination and

play. Through live music and fun conversations, children were encouraged to make up and tell their own stories and to co-create a poem with Uncle Hung.

31. A table listing the major performing arts initiatives and public programmes organised by WKCD between January and December 2020 with the number of participants or beneficiaries is at **Annex**.

Outdoor performances

32. Set against the backdrop of Hong Kong's iconic city skyline and harbour, as well as the open green spaces, WKCD provides an unparalleled outdoor environment for hosting events. Outdoor events were held at the Art Park when the pandemic situation once improved in October and November 2020.

33. Local musicians were invited to perform live at 'Sunday Jazz at the Art Park' in October 2020, which aimed to support artists who were unable to perform at indoor venues due to venue closure. It was arranged under permission of licensing regulations with enhanced hygiene measures. Additional manpower was deployed to reinforce strict adherence to social distancing.

34. From April 2020 to February 2021, 19 events were originally scheduled to take place at the Art Park but only one was successfully held in November 2020. The rest had been rescheduled or cancelled. With the growing popularity of the Art Park and hopefully gradual easing of social distancing restrictions, the Authority looks forward to introducing more exciting events at the Art Park in the coming year.

PERFORMING ARTS VENUE OPERATIONS

Venue hire

35. Venue hire of WKCD's performing arts venues is artistically driven to foster and support the arts and cultural industry by encouraging more creations and performing opportunities while building bigger audiences and elevating their appreciation of the arts. Priority is given to artistic hirers with preferential rates. Small and medium performing companies are also offered a lower base rate and sharing of financial risk with box office sharing.

36. The Xiqu Centre and Freespace started operations in 2019 and have become choice venues for different art groups to showcase their talents. At the Xiqu Centre, a world-class venue dedicated to promoting the rich heritage of xiqu, xiqu groups enjoy scheduling priority and preferential rates are offered to support the xiqu sector. While xiqu remains the dominant art form for the Xiqu Centre, the booking has been extended beyond this art form since January 2020, and performances by orchestra, Chinese orchestra, pop music, fashion show, etc. had been presented at the venue. Freespace is Hong Kong's new centre for contemporary performances, an in-demand platform for artists and audiences to encounter, exchange ideas and explore performing arts without boundary.

37. The first full calendar year (2020) of operations for the two venues was unfortunately challenged by the pandemic. WKCD's performing arts venues operating under the Places of Public Entertainment Licence are governed under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F). In compliance with this regulation, the District's performing arts venues were closed for a total of 188 days in 2020 and having 50%, 75% or 80% seating capacity restrictions in different periods when they were allowed to open. Compounded by the restrictions on international travel, around 516 performances and programmes and over 470 regular activities at the Xiqu Centre and Freespace had been rescheduled or cancelled in 2020.

38. Nevertheless, the Authority has tried its best to support the sector during such trying times, by offering venue hirers the maximum flexibility to cope with the uncertainty over events rescheduling or rescoping. Rate concessions and/ or refunds have been arranged with consideration of the hirers' individual circumstances.

39. During the period from April 2020 to January 2021, the actual utilisation rate of the Grand Theatre of the Xiqu Centre is 27%. Among all programmes, 62% were WKCD's presentations and 38% hirer programmes. During the same period, 60% of the programmes or bookings were related to xiqu, while 2.5% were related to dance, 10% to music, 15% to multi-arts and 12.5 % to non-performing arts.

40. The Tea House Theatre has an actual utilisation rate of 66% during the period from April 2020 to January 2021. The venue is utilised by WKCD's own production of the Tea House Rising Stars

Troupe.

41. For Freespace, The Box has an actual utilisation rate of 65% from April 2020 to January 2021. Among all programmes, 71% of which were WKCD's presentations and 29% hirer programmes. In the same period, 38% of the programmes or bookings are related to theatre, while 29% were related to dance, 20% to music, 12% to multi-arts and 1% to non-performing arts.

Ticketing service

42. As a result of the rescheduling or cancellation of individual ticketed performances or events due to venue closure, the Authority had to reprocess over 14 000 tickets and contact customers on refund or rescheduling arrangement by e-mail and phone calls. Most customers have expressed their gratitude on the Authority's streamlined approach for processing refunds on credit card payments.

43. Online ticketing proves to be an effective channel for distributing tickets of performances and programmes: excluding consignment inventory, 56% of online sales for programmes in the Tea House Theatre were achieved and 72% were achieved for that at Freespace, while the majority of the Grand Theatre tickets continued to be sold at counter or by phone. In general, excluding the consignment inventory, the Authority has achieved 52% online sales in average for all venues.

MARKETING INITIATIVES

44. Despite the unprecedented challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Authority has maintained its focus on providing quality customer services when dealing with programme refunds and rescheduling. We have also worked closely with artistic groups in promoting online programme and strived to increase the awareness of the outdoor elements of the District.

Digital marketing campaign

45. Online events included live-streamed and on demand performances such as *With/out Umeda* by internationally acclaimed choreographer and multidisciplinary artist Hiroaki Umeda and *Waking Dreams in 1984* by On & On Theatre Workshop were supported by

digital marketing campaigns. There were also livestreamed Creative Sharing Sessions with Mainland troupes as part of the Experimental Chinese Opera Festival. Two extensively promoted projects were commissioned online in response to the pandemic, namely *An Invitation: On Empty Theatre*, co-produced with Edward Lam Dance Theatre, and *Dear 2021*. The marketing campaign for *Dear 2021* had reached over 1.3 million unique users in total.

46. In anticipation of the resumption of regular live performances at WKCD, the Authority is shifting towards a season-based approach. Programmes and shows produced by the District across the Xiqu Centre, Freespace and the Art Park will be promoted together in a single ticket on-sale as part of the venue relaunch strategy in mid-2021.

47. To attract visitation to the Xiqu Centre and Freespace, two placemaking digital campaigns will be undertaken to raise the awareness and interest of the public, especially the youth. These campaigns will feature Freespace mural, free public events at the Atrium of the Xiqu Centre, and the Austin Road Pedestrian Linkage System connecting the MTR Austin Station and the Xiqu Centre. The campaigns will make use of Instagram filters and digital stickers on WhatsApp and Signal to encourage participation and social sharing.

48. To promote the Art Park, the Authority has leveraged both online and offline channels and reached different target groups with over 7 million impressions and over 100 000 engagements (likes, clicks, shares and comments). By moving campaigns online, the Authority has been able to respond quickly to the rapidly changing pandemic situation especially to the restrictive measures on public gatherings and social distancing.

District mobile app

49. A district mobile app is going to be launched in the second quarter of 2021 to provide mobile ticketing service, event registration, wayfinding, service hours and information of WKCD venues, facilities, restaurants, as well as personalised recommendations and offers to enhance users' mobile and on-site experience when they visit the District. To guide arriving visitors, especially for those who are new to the District, an Augmented Reality (AR) wayfinding and signage experience would be offered, allowing visitors to visualise both outdoor and indoor routes and facilities within the District through their

mobile phone cameras. The mobile app could also display the number of available parking spaces at the District so that visitors could better plan their journey.

Social media

50. The District's social media profile continues to grow. Over 130 000 followers are attracted across various Facebook pages under WKCD. For Instagram, the number of followers has hit 40 000 and continues to increase. It is anticipated that there will be significant growth in Facebook and Instagram followers in 2021/2022 due to the opening of M+ in late 2021 and the run-up to the opening of the Hong Kong Palace Museum (HKPM), as well as an increasing interest in WKCD in the Mainland social media platforms like WeChat.

Website

51. With online contents clearly becoming a priority, the Authority launched a dedicated West Kowloon Video Platform (digital.westkowloon.hk) in November 2020 to engage users who enjoy video contents while at home. This video platform currently features more than 70 videos across different art forms.

52. The WKCD website (www.westkowloon.hk) continues to play a key role in promoting events, F&B offerings and general venue information within the District. The website had generated 5.4 million page views across 2.2 million visitor sessions. More than 1 500 webpages were published in 2020. A new District website is now under development and is scheduled to launch in mid-2021. It will have greater scope to cross promote events, increase capacity for retail and dining promotion and enhanced customer experience with additional service on itineraries and personalisation.

Accessibility

53. The Accessibility Office of WKCD helps connect the disability community through online platforms or in small groups. Events included stakeholder consultation on the accessibility of the HKPM and the proposed Marine Landing Facilities in the District.

54. A new page on the WKCD website was launched in June 2020 to enhance the provision of accessibility information, such as an Access Guide for different venues and an explanation of access

services available at the District. The page includes Hong Kong Sign language to serve as a demonstration of good accessibility practice.

55. An audio-described performance at the Xiqu Centre was held successfully in November 2020 and was well received by participants who are blind or have low vision. For programmes with dedicated services for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing, the Accessibility Office also supported the production of a Sign Language promotional video in collaboration with a native Deaf interpreter to enhance engagement with the Deaf community.

ADVICE SOUGHT

56. Members are invited to note the update on the promotion and venue operations in respect of performing arts in WKCD.

West Kowloon Cultural District Authority
February 2021

Annex

**Major Performing Arts Initiatives and Public Programmes
undertaken by WKCD**

January to December 2020

Programme/Initiative	Date/Period	No. of Participants/ Beneficiaries
<i>Capacity building</i>		
Choreographer and Composer Lab 2020	2020	5 artists
West Kowloon Young Fellows Scheme (Performing Arts) 2020	2020	2 fellows awarded
What is Stage 2020: Gap Year	Aug 2020	1 artist 15 alumni
Performing Arts Internship Programme	Ongoing	22 interns
<i>Audience building</i>		
<i>Dance</i>		
Company Wayne McGregor – Autobiography	10 to 12 Jan 2020	Over 600 audience
Cypher Dance and Movement Series		
• With/out Umeda	11 to 17 Oct 2020	Over 100 audience
• HKDC in Residence 2020: Convergence	18 to 24 Oct 2020	Over 250 audience
• HKDC in Residence 2020: online seminar	18 Oct 2020	Over 1 000 online views

Programme/Initiative	Date/Period	No. of Participants/ Beneficiaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freespace Mural 	9 to 29 Nov 2020	Over 3 000 online views on the time-lapse video
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graffiti Workshop: Spray Paint 	29 Nov 2020	22 participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stencil Art Workshop: Spray Paint A Skateboard Deck 	29 Nov 2020	6 participants
Maybe Tomorrow@Freespace	28 to 29 Nov 2020	Over 700 audience
CCDC in Residence 2020		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Distancing Theatre Joyeux Noël 	25 Dec 2020	Over 100 audience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pandora Studio 	23 to 30 Dec 2020	Over 2 400 viewers
Creative Meeting Point: Museum of Human E-motions (MoHE) 2020	Sep to Dec 2020	Over 5 000 viewers
<i>Xiqu</i>		
Experimental Chinese Opera Festival 2020 and Creative Sharing Sessions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimental Cantonese Opera Wenguang Explores the Valley 	22 to 27 Oct 2020	Over 400 audience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimental Cantonese Opera Farewell My Concubine (New Adaptation) 	6 to 13 Nov 2020	Over 450 audience

Programme/Initiative	Date/Period	No. of Participants/ Beneficiaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative Sharing Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ From Theatre of the Absurd to Kunqu ○ Gaojia Opera's Comic Tales of Human Lives ○ A Woman's Perspective, Past and Present ○ Blending Peking Opera, Street Dance and Rock 	<p>10 Oct 2020</p> <p>17 Oct 2020</p> <p>31 Oct 2020</p> <p>15 Nov 2020</p>	Over 500 audience
Tea House Theatre Experience	Ongoing	Over 2 400 audience
Music in the Atrium	Ongoing	Over 2 800 audience
Music		
Music Performances at Lau Bak Livehouse	Ongoing	Over 4 700 audience
#LivehouseAtHome	Feb to Mar 2020	Reached over 110 000 audience online Attracted over 38 000 people click-to-view Reach-to-view ratio: 35%
100 Singing Bowls at Dawn	26 Oct 2020	50 audience
Sound Bath with Shane Aspegren	27 to 29 Nov 2020	75 audience
Freespace Jazz Fest	6 to 8 Nov 2020	Over 7 000 visitors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jazz Imaginarium 	6 Nov 2020	Over 400 audience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ted Lo and Eugene Pao 	7 Nov 2020	Over 200 audience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angelita Li Sings Billie Holiday – Feat. Patrick Lui Jazz Orchestra 	7 to 8 Nov 2020	Over 500 audience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experimental Jazz Lab 	7 to 8 Nov 2020	250 audience

Programme/Initiative	Date/Period	No. of Participants/ Beneficiaries
The MET: Live in HD 2020 – The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess	1 Nov 2020	65 audience
<i>Theatre</i>		
An Invitation: On Empty Theatre	Jul 2020 onwards	Over 19 000 online views
<i>Community and Youth Engagement</i>		
Memorial Talk Series Commemorating Wong Yuet-sang, Maestro of Cantonese Music Culture	20 Nov, 29 Nov 2020	68 participants
Xiqu Dialogues II: West Kowloon Cultural District’s ‘Xiqu Petit Theatre’: The Why and What of Innovation and Experimentation	28 Dec 2020	43 participants
West Kowloon 101	Ongoing	Over 1 200 participants
Xiqu Centre Guided Tour	Ongoing	Over 750 visitors
Giant Steps – Jazz Rhythms for Kids	14 to 15 Nov, 21 to 22 Nov 2020	Over 350 participants
Children's Workshop: Musical Storytelling with Uncle Hung	28 to 29 Nov 2020	Over 100 participants