

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S STATEMENT

## 行政總裁報告



I have lived and worked in Hong Kong for nearly 40 years. During this period, I have seen many events that have shaped our home. One thing I know: each time Hong Kong has had to face adversity, it has adapted to the new circumstances and emerged stronger. I believe our work at the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCD or the Authority) this past year has been fully in tune with our city's powerful spirit of resilience.

Despite unprecedented challenges, initially from social events and latterly the COVID-19 pandemic, the West Kowloon Cultural District (West Kowloon or the District) has been able to achieve a number of milestones over the last year. I am particularly pleased that we were able to celebrate the completion of our second major performing arts venue, **Freespace**. The name reflects our aspirations for this exciting new venue – to provide a free, open and boundary-free space where artists and audiences can engage, exchange ideas and explore new possibilities. From the start, Freespace launched with a variety of dance, music and theatre programmes designed to showcase its versatility. The inaugural Freespace Jazz Fest in November 2019 was the first event to make full use of the unique juxtaposition of Freespace within the Art Park. Featuring international and local jazz talents, indoor and al fresco performances and a weekend art market, the relaxed two-day event attracted nearly 14,000 visitors and proved the perfect showcase for our great new venue.

In its first full year of operations, the **Xiqu Centre** continued to establish itself as the premier xiqu performance venue and ideas incubator in Hong Kong. Dozens of performances by world-class troupes in a huge variety of genres and repertoires sparked new interest in this classic art form. One of these, the experimental Cantonese Opera *Wenguang Explores the Valley*, premiered in Beijing in November 2019, winning an important national

我在香港生活和工作了近40年，期間經歷過無數大事，塑造出我們今日的家園。有一點我很清楚：香港在每次逆境中總能適應新挑戰，並且變得更強大。我認為，西九文化區管理局(管理局)過去一年的工作，正好反映出香港自強不息的生命力。

從最初發生社會事件，到2019冠狀病毒疫情出現，我們在過去一年所面對的挑戰可謂前所未見，惟西九文化區(西九)仍然創出了多個里程碑。特別是我們第二個主要表演藝術場地**自由空間**，於年內順利竣工啟用，實在令人鼓舞。自由空間這名字，是我們對這個新場地的期許，顧名思義，希望此場地提供一個自由、開放、無邊界的空間，讓藝術家與觀眾可以參與、交流意念和探索新的可能性。在啟用初期，自由空間已善用它的靈活多用途空間，推出了多元化的舞蹈、音樂和戲劇節目；而西九於2019年11月舉辦首屆「自由爵士音樂節」，更加首次同時充分利用自由空間及藝術公園，內外全天候放送演出。這一系列結合室內和戶外的表演，雲集了本地以至世界各地的爵士音樂名人，加上周末藝術市集，為期兩天的輕鬆休閒活動共吸引了近14,000訪客人次，足以證明自由空間獨特的吸引力。

**戲曲中心**於首一整年的營運，繼續積極孕育新作，鞏固其香港戲曲表演殿堂的地位。多個世界級的劇團帶來了多場形式多樣、曲目豐富的表演，為戲曲這種經典傳統藝術吸納了不少新觀眾。其中，小劇場粵劇《文廣探谷》於2019年11月在北京首映，獲頒國家級獎項。而戲曲中心的首部紀錄片《戲棚》，亦喜獲金馬獎「最佳紀錄片」提名及香港電影金像獎「新晉導演」提

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award. We were delighted to see the Xiqu Centre's first film, *Bamboo Theatre*, nominated for Best Documentary at the Golden Horse Awards and for Best New Director at the Hong Kong Film Awards. The Xiqu Centre also delivered hundreds of guided tours and workshops for the community, along with a popular *Music in the Atrium* concert series.

The launch of these new venues has brought the Authority valuable experience in areas such as venue operations, ticketing, customer service and commercial operations. We are putting this experience to good use, learning and constantly improving, as we prepare for the opening of more world-class venues and facilities.

The next one of these will be **M+**, which is approaching completion. With 33 galleries showcasing thousands of exceptional art pieces, this stunning piece of architecture by the renowned Swiss architects, Herzog & de Meuron, is set to become a vital learning and art appreciation space for Hong Kong and the region. The M+ team has been working to establish a local, regional and, indeed, international profile for over five years. This year it launched the M+ International series, through which it is raising awareness of M+ among overseas organisations as the museum establishes its place within contemporary visual culture. M+ also stamped its mark on the regional art scene by hosting the inaugural Sigg Prize, recognising outstanding art produced in the Greater China region.

名。此外，戲曲中心亦為社區舉辦了上百場導賞團和工作坊，當中的「悠揚音韻樂中庭」音樂會系列，亦非常受歡迎。

這些新場地的啟用，讓管理局在場地營運、票務、顧客服務和商業營運等範疇累積了很多寶貴經驗。在未來，我們會不斷學習、精益求精，將這些經驗運用在籌備開放更多世界級場地和設施的過程當中。

西九下一個將會開幕的場地**M+**已接近竣工，該博物館設有33個展廳，將展示數千件不同凡響的藝術作品。這座令人驚嘆的博物館大樓由瑞士知名建築事務所Herzog & de Meuron設計，建成後將成為香港以至亞洲地區一個舉足輕重的學習和藝術鑑賞空間。過去五年多，M+團隊一直致力提升博物館在本地社會、亞洲地區以及世界舞台的地位，年內更推出了「M+寰遊」，提高M+在全球各地機構間的聲譽，鞏固其當代視覺文化的領先地位。此外，M+亦致力推動區內藝術，透過舉辦首屆希克獎，表彰大中華區創作的傑出藝術品。



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I am very pleased by the progress of work on the **Hong Kong Palace Museum** (HKPM), whose impressive superstructure is now rising for all to see. In preparation for opening, the museum has been working on various pre-opening public programmes. As part of this, HKPM took a booth at Fine Art Asia 2019 to raise public awareness of the new museum.

This year has not been an easy one for many reasons. Initially the social events impacted on our ability to stage performances in the Xiqu Centre. Subsequently, the COVID-19 pandemic has been a particular challenge for management and planning as we attempt to live up to the motto 'the show must go on'. Unfortunately, in line with the Government measures to combat the pandemic, we were forced to close many of our venues and other facilities temporarily from early February to April 2020. Despite

香港故宮文化博物館工程進展順利，其宏偉的上蓋建築已經舉目可望，實在令人振奮。博物館已經展開一系列開幕前公眾活動。其中，香港故宮文化博物館在典雅藝博2019設置預展攤位，以加深市民大眾對這所新博物館的認識。

回首這個報告年度，確實是困難重重的一年。早前的社會事件令戲曲中心部分節目無法上演；其後，2019冠狀病毒病疫情擴散，對西九的管理和規劃，均帶來巨大的挑戰。在此期間，我們竭盡所能，謹守「表演還是要繼續 The show must go on」的精神，但為配合特區政府的防疫措施，我們須於2020年2月初至4月暫時關閉西九部分場地和設施。雖然如此，我很慶幸**藝術公園**能夠一直維持開放，提供一個安靜的戶外休憩空間，讓市

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this, I was particularly happy that we were able to keep the **Art Park** open, providing an escape and a haven of outdoor peace and quiet for many. We also demonstrated our agility and adaptability by quickly shifting some venue-specific events online. A popular example was the launch of *#LivehouseAtHome* to bring intimate café-style live music into people's homes during the pandemic.

The pandemic has made one thing clearer than ever before: like all great cities, Hong Kong needs theatres, museums and parks. The venues and spaces that the District offers have already added to Hong Kong's quality of life and the nurturing of its spirit; they are places where people can be engaged, excited and entertained. Or simply places to relax and forget the world around. Restrictions on social gatherings have inspired us to think outside the box. We have been significantly increasing our digital contents and online presence, making available our collection items, activities and events to patrons everywhere, as we work towards a 'new normal' in the post-virus era. We are also providing much-needed support to the arts and culture industry and individual practitioners in a time of great financial pressure for many – an example of which was the establishment of the Arts Relief Scheme 2020 through generous financial support from senior colleagues in the Authority and our Board Chairman. I must thank them for their donations.

Hong Kong is seeing the early shape of a vibrant and world-class arts and culture hub along the iconic waterfront of the city. However, the delivery of the West Kowloon project is full of challenges. The social, financial and pandemic challenges we have faced in the past year were unprecedented, but so was our collective response. We have emerged stronger in the face of adversity, due largely to the innovative and unfailing support of diverse parties.

Thanks are due to the Board for its confident leadership and unequalled expertise. The dedication of our various frontline operations teams, including the ticketing, venue operations, safety and security, park and facilities management teams, has been essential in keeping things running smoothly. Indeed, all WKCD staff have played their parts by giving their utmost when it most mattered, helping ensure that West Kowloon performed a vital role in getting our city back on its feet again. I look forward to welcoming the public back to West Kowloon as soon as possible as we continue our exciting cultural journey in the years to come.

**Duncan PESCOT, GBS, JP**

**栢志高, GBS, JP**

Chief Executive Officer of the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority

西九文化區管理局行政總裁

Hong Kong, 8 September 2020

香港，2020年9月8日

民大眾可暫時忘憂。在今次疫情中，我們亦充份發揮靈活和彈性，迅速將多個原本於西九場地舉辦的活動改為網上舉行。其中一個例子是於疫情期間推出*#LivehouseAtHome*，讓觀眾足不出戶，也可以如置身咖啡廳般欣賞現場音樂表演，活動大受各界歡迎。

今次的疫情，再次證明了一個事實：香港如所有大城市一樣，都極需要劇院、博物館和公園。西九的場地及空間，除了提高了香港人的生活質素，還孕育出香港獨有的精神。在西九，訪客可以彼此交流、互相鼓舞、消遣娛樂，又或者僅僅放鬆身心，暫時忘掉煩囂，遁進世外桃源。社交聚會的限制啟發了我們打破固有思維。為了應對後疫情時代的「新常態」，我們已開始積極增加數碼內容及網上宣傳，向世界各地的支持者介紹我們的藏品、活動和節目。另外，因應不少從事藝術文化人士面對難關，西九為藝術文化界及個人藝術工作者提供了援助。得到管理局高級行政團隊及管理局董事局主席慷慨解囊，設立「藝術紓困計劃2020」，正是最佳例證。在此，我必須衷心感謝他們的捐助。

西九坐落於維港海旁，這個充滿活力的世界級藝術文化區已漸見雛形。然而，推展西九項目的前路，仍然挑戰重重。過去一年，社會環境、財務和疫情所帶來的巨大挑戰，均屬史無前例，但我們攜手團結應對的努力，亦不容小覷。面對逆境，有賴不同團隊靈活多變，努力堅持不懈，我們才得以變得更加強大。

在此，我非常感謝董事局的悉心指導和真知灼見。我亦感謝各前線營運團隊，包括票務、場地營運、區域安全及保安、園區營運及設施管理團隊群策群力，西九的運作才能井井有條。誠然，管理局其他所有員工亦盡職謹守崗位，在最重要的時刻全力以赴，推動西九協助香港重回正軌，發揮了關鍵作用。我期待疫情過後，市民大眾可以盡快再次到訪西九文化區，在未來日子，繼續參與西九的精彩藝術文化之旅，一起同行。