

Future of Hong Kong's visual culture in times of pandemic (with photo)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Berlin (HKETO Berlin), together with the Centre for International Relations (CIR) and THINKTANK, organised an online seminar on February 15 (Warsaw time). Renowned speakers from the creative industry in Hong Kong and Poland, including Ms Ikko Yokoyama, Lead Curator, Design and Architecture of M+, Hong Kong; Mr Tomek Rygalik, Founder of Studio Rygalik and Design Nature; and Dr PaweÅ, Ukielski, Deputy Director of Warsaw Rising Museum, shared valuable insights on how the arts and culture industry has overcome the obstacles and navigate through the challenges posed by the pandemic and discussed the current developments of visual culture in Asia and Europe.

Ms Jenny Szeto, the Director of HKETO Berlin, pointed out in her welcoming remarks that Hong Kong has demonstrated remarkable resilience by using innovative ways to strengthen its position as an emerging arts and cultural hub in Asia amid the pandemic.

Hong Kong has all along been an East-meets-West hub for international arts and cultural exchanges. With Asian economies' strong performance and fast recovery from the pandemic, the Asian and Hong Kong art scenes flourish, attracting both artists and entrepreneurs who are looking to expand their presence here.

"The promotion of arts is one of Hong Kong's top priorities. The development of the city's arts and culture formed a key part of the Government's budget in 2020-21, with a total of HK\$5.5 billion (around 2.8 billion Zloty) allocated to the arts and culture, excluding capital works expenditure," Ms Szeto said.

West Kowloon Cultural District is a flagship project designed to boost Hong Kong's art and cultural landscape. "The centerpiece of the District is the M+, Hong Kong's new visual cultural museum which opened its doors to the public in November last year, dramatically changing the Asian art landscape. The creators of M+ defined its mission as collecting and curating visual culture, encompassing twentieth and twenty-first century art, design and architecture as well as moving image from Hong Kong, Mainland China, Asia and the whole world," Ms Szeto added.

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has been supporting the creative industries over the years: In the 2021-22 Budget, an additional injection of HK\$1 billion (around 500 million Zloty) into the CreateSmart Initiative to drive the development of the creative industries was announced. On top of that, an additional allocation of HK\$900 million (around 460 million Zloty) was earmarked for the Art Development Matching Grants Scheme to further promote culture and arts from all sectors.

About HKETO Berlin

HKETO Berlin is the official Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government representative in commercial relations and other economic and trade matters in Poland as well as Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Switzerland.

