

Speech by Commissioner for Tourism at opening ceremony and premiere of "Experience Cantopera: A Taste of Hong Kong's Intangible Cultural Heritage" (Eng only)

Following is the speech by the Commissioner for Tourism, Mr Philip Yung, at the opening ceremony and premiere of "Experience Cantopera: A Taste of Hong Kong's Intangible Cultural Heritage" this evening (October 9):

Dr Wang, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to join you all this evening at this opening ceremony of "Experience Cantopera: A Taste of Hong Kong's Intangible Cultural Heritage". This is a special day for Cantonese opera and the tourism industry in Hong Kong, as we are launching a new programme which our dear visitors from overseas will find very interesting.

Hong Kong is a travel destination full of diversities and choices of entertainment. It is also a place where tourists can see for themselves a good combination of modernity and fine traditions. The Government is committed to working closely with the travel trade and other organisations in developing new itineraries which can fill tourists' stays in Hong Kong with more colourful memories.

The initiative of introducing Cantonese opera to tourists through tailor-made performances at a historic building like where we are now is a vivid example of a quality tourism product that will fulfil multiple expectations of our visitors. The show, to be performed by young and upcoming talents, will highlight the unique characteristics of Cantonese opera and will enable tourists to experience first-hand this centuries-long Chinese heritage. The venue here, Yau Ma Tei Theatre, and the Red Brick Building nearby, are in themselves good tourist attractions. Built in 1930 and standing in the modern and busy city centre of Hong Kong today, the Theatre is now a revitalised heritage building. A number of government departments have rendered very useful assistance in the revitalisation exercise, for which we are most grateful. I am sure tourists who come to watch the traditional Cantonese opera show will be impressed by the well-matched traditional venue as well.

The credit for working out this culturally rich tourism product goes to the Chinese Artists Association of Hong Kong. My sincerest gratitude to the Association and all the artists who create the show and participate in the performances. I am also thankful to the Hong Kong Tourism Board and the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong, which have

formed a very useful partnership in packaging and promoting new tourism products. This is important in making sure we can attract visitors from as many different source markets as possible. I wish "Experience Cantopera" a great success and all of you an enjoyable evening.

Thank you very much.

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