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LISTEN UP!

Greetings from the Autumn 2010 Editorial Board!

This issue of Varsity explores different aspects of the arts scene in Hong Kong.

The government has been striving to turn Hong Kong into what they call “an arts and cultural hub”. Some of the latest moves were announced in the policy address last month - including injecting \$3 billion into the Arts and Sports Development Fund, and displaying visual art pieces in parks, open spaces and government offices.

Then there is the long-anticipated West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD). World-renowned architects – including Rocco Yim who is interviewed in this issue – have submitted conceptual plans for the project. Officials boast these master plans will make the WKCD a world class arts and cultural district.

But where is the software to tie-in with this extremely grand and ambitious plan? Will the government be putting more resources into nurturing artists? How will they assist current artists? Are they going to educate the public on how to appreciate the arts and enjoy the WKCD? We still do not have a clue. It remains a mystery whether the WKCD is a white elephant, a grand infrastructure project sugar-coated with “art”.

Money has indeed been spent on the arts sector, but perhaps not in the most effective way. In the Periscope section, we bring you Arts in Hong Kong. We will delve into some of the problems the arts sector is facing, from the state of art education, to the difficulties of finding a job in the arts sector, to how the revitalisation of industrial buildings is driving artists out of them.

By looking at the seemingly impressive projects of the government, then at what the arts sector is really facing, we cannot help wondering whether the current policies are the right ones.

An arts hub is more than having artworks in our parks. So please, instead of badgering the arts sector with policies that do not seem to be helping, listen up and see what they really want. Hong Kong does not need more white elephants.



Karen Kwok Ka-yan
Editor-in-chief

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Editorial Office
School of Journalism and Communication,
Chinese University of Hong Kong,
Sha Tin, N.T., Hong Kong.
Telephone
26097680
Fax
26035007

Email
varsity@cuhk.edu.hk
Printer
Regal Printing Limited, Flat A, 12/F,
Good Prospect Factory Building,
33-35 Wong Chuk Hang Road,
Aberdeen, Hong Kong.

