

► Session 1:

Challenges and Opportunities for a Creative Asia

15 November Afternoon

Moderator: **Mr Christopher CHENG**

Former Chairman, Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce

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Dr Patrick HO

Secretary for Home Affairs

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

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Minister of Culture

The People's Republic of China

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Session 1

► **Challenges and Opportunities for a Creative Asia**

Dr Patrick HO

Secretary for Home Affairs,
HKSAR



Welcoming Address

A society with insufficient cultural depth may spring off a few geniuses by accident but it can never nurture creativity on a massive scale, and it is the presence of creativity that helps build, over time, a strong nation and a vibrant economy.

Honourable Ministers, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon, and a very warm welcome to you all for joining the opening session of the second Asia Cultural Co-operation Forum. I am heartened to see once again so many familiar faces from all over Asia, whom I greeted, chatted and debated with last year at the first Asia Cultural Co-operation Forum.

Apart from renewing friendship, I also cherish very much the opportunity of making new friends who have flown from all over the world to Hong Kong. Of course, my heart-felt gratitude also goes to our local supporters, artists, policy-makers, cultural commentators as well as people who are attracted to art and culture.

The title of this forum is 'Creativity'. So what is creativity? The simple answer is that creativity lies in our culture. In the absence of a strong and coherent culture, creativity can seldom thrive on its own. A society with insufficient cultural depth may spring off a few geniuses by accident but it can never nurture creativity on a massive scale, and it is the presence of creativity that helps build, over time, a strong nation and a vibrant economy.

But creativity is not a monopoly of the Western world. Being part and parcel of human instinct, creativity exists everywhere. It may take a different form and it may be equally if not more useful and powerful in its contribution to our civilisation. While in the past, the abundant source of creativity of Asian culture escaped our attention, the core values of Asia — harmony, co-existence, discipline and respect for collectivity — have gradually and subtly given birth to a different sort of creativity, which may be called 'oriental creativity' or even 'Asian creativity'.

Creativity mattered in the past. It matters even more at present and for the future. In the wake of globalisation and the knowledge-based economy, creativity, together with culture, is increasingly seen as an engine for growth and civic pride. This calls for new development strategies. What we need to do is adopt strategies that can preserve the most value-added part of the business at home and attract the money earned overseas back to the homeland.

We can consider letting go of the middle part of the production and manufacturing process, but have to safeguard the beginning and the end of the business process in our homeland. To enable ourselves to become a creative economy as such, we need innovation in technology, creativity in cultural content and in management. Governments will have to promote innovation and creativity on the one hand and help the business sector to bring home the profits earned elsewhere.

To begin with, we need a cluster of strong and vibrant creative industries to

Question & Answer

DO WE NEED A MINISTRY OF CULTURE?

Q. In general, should there be a high-profile institution to lead cultural events or to promote, for example, creative industry? In particular, in Hong Kong, since we do not have a Ministry of Culture — as I asked my friend, who is the Minister of Culture, they cannot answer me — and in particular in the West Kowloon project, you can see there is nobody to govern the museum, the opera house, after they are built by the land developer. So it comes to me that whether Hong Kong should have a high profile institution to govern, to give the leadership for the cultural development. Thank you.

DR PATRICK HO: First of all, the Home Affairs Bureau of the Hong Kong SAR Government is responsible for cultural policies, and also implementing the strategies that may promote culture in Hong Kong.

The way that we look at culture is not just arts. Culture may be taken in a much broader sense: the way we act, the way that we sit, the way that we bargain, the way that we talk; it is part of culture. It depends on how we define culture.

If we look at culture, as you said, as fine art, then certainly we have a policy for that. But if you say do we have an explicit cultural policy, then it is back to what David Tang was

propel us to a new stage of economic development and restructuring. It is against this backdrop that the recent rise of creative industries gives us extra impetus to maintain our regional distinctions. Creative industries are widely regarded as the driving force of economic growth in the coming decades. More and more economies around the world, in particular the advanced ones, are focusing on creative industries. Unlike traditional industries, creative products are driven by desire and not by physical need. They are the things we want, not necessarily the things we need, and desire can be cultivated, deeply rooted in the culture of a particular society, value dependent, and can be influenced such as through the media and marketing strategy.

The unique strategies of creative industries provide a rare opportunity for the developing economies to compete on equal ground with the developed economies.

In the 21st century, competition is no longer one between countries and countries. Cities have become the dominant players. Except for those with substantial population and geographic areas, a single city alone is seldom enough to compete on its own; the alliance is called for. A cluster of cities with similar strength in economic and cultural terms is the answer to this challenge. Such an alliance would provide the necessary critical mass to attract talents and nurture them, as well as to create a market that is large enough to achieve economy of scale and encourage diversity of products and services.

In the past, alliance of cities usually centred on economic co-operation, but this proves too narrow an approach in a globalised world, where culture plays an increasingly pivotal role. We need cultural co-operation to foster closer and more vibrant city alliance, one that provides ample room for mutual appreciation, improvement and cross-fertilisation.

In response to challenges of a new age, Asia must form a cultural alliance based on our common heritage and goodwill for regional harmony and prosperity. Only in this way can Asia present itself strongly to the rest of the world. Just as there is an economy of scale in industrial production, there is also economy of scale in cultural co-operation. If political muscle and military might constitute the hard power in the context of international competitiveness, the way we co-opt ourselves, the oriental values we all believe in and the image we present internationally are the essence of our soft power. This soft power is crucial to a country's international standing and contributes significantly to its national security, regional peace and sustainable prosperity.

So, ladies and gentlemen, like many of you, I dream of a creative Asia, an Asia with ideas and values to inspire humanity. Since the last time we met here, we have talked, we have argued and we have agreed and disagreed, and we all want these to continue, so that this dream of a creative Asia will one day come true. I am sure that this rediscovery of creativity in Asia signifies the awakening of a modern humanity befitting another renaissance of the present time. Thank you very much. 

saying: Do we need a cultural tsar to tell our people what we do with culture? (Pg.137) No, we do not. There is actually no way that any government can govern the people in a cultural way.

What this government does in terms of cultural policy is that we provide infrastructure and we provide an environment, and within this environment we provide the proper ambience and atmosphere and the proper ingredient elements for the society to be cultural, and we encourage our citizens to participate in cultural and artistic events.

How do we encourage that? Through monetary support, through resources support. Resources go beyond money; it is manpower, space; it means networking, publicity; it means education, relationships, partnerships, and all these things cost and make things work. Through allocation of resources, through education and educational policy, and through promotional activities, to permit the people to be cultural and artistic.

So what the government does is provide an environment and the people do the rest. I think how tolerant a society can we be before that? I think this echoes what David was saying, that culture comes from within. Culture comes from our people, and the government just nurture things around and help things along. I hope that will clear things up.

Secondly, in terms of cultural policy in this government, we look at culture as big culture; it is not small culture. Not high culture, not low culture, not elite culture, but everything. The Home Affairs Bureau takes care of about 15 different policies, from district administration, rural administration, art and culture, to sport and recreation, creative industries, the LCE, local community economy, community building, religious works, minority affairs. We take care of monasteries and graveyards and cemeteries and we take care of youth development, we take care of gambling policy and monitor the Jockey Club and conduct the football betting Ordinances. We manage Building Ordinances — when a building collapses it is our business to take care of them. We give out licences, we monitor charitable organisations and provide liaison work with all the community organisations and social organisations, charitable organisations. We oversee the Government's trust funds.

So, a myriad of works. But these all come together. We have hardware and software. The hardware are the connections and networking in society, in 18 different districts, our arts and cultural bodies and sports organisation. Our software are our human rights, our appreciation for fine arts, our appreciation to be cultural, the sporting spirit, religious freedom, press freedom. All these are our values. All these are software.

So if we put the software with the hardware, immediately the whole society benefits, and by then we hope that we can improve the quality of life of our people, with the formation of a civil society. So it makes sense to deal with culture in a much broader sense of the word and we deal with society as a whole and people in general.

So do not say any more that we do not have a department or anybody to take care of our culture.

Mr SUN Jia Zheng
Minister of Culture, PRC

Opening Address

Asian culture cannot be developed in isolation. It cannot really develop by detaching from the world culture. We should learn from all the advantages and merits of international culture, so as to narrow the gap between Asian culture and that of the world at large, so we can have a richer culture in Asia.

Honourable Ministers, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. I am pleased to take part today in the Asia Cultural Co-operation Forum in Hong Kong and meet with every one of you.

Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region of China. Six million compatriots of Hong Kong have created a miracle in this land of justice over 1,000 square kilometres, combining an international financial centre, a trade centre and a free port, and has been renowned as the Pearl of the Orient and the capital of creativity.

The SAR Government is committed to develop Hong Kong's creative industries and develop it into a capital of creativity, so as to showcase Hong Kong's cultural industries and to promote Hong Kong as a bridge for international exchange, as capital of creativity and information exchange in Asia and in the international arena.

To this, on behalf of the Ministry of Culture, I would lend my full support and I believe it has a bright future. Hong Kong culture is part of Chinese culture, which has a long history. Chinese culture is a big treasure trove in support of the development of Hong Kong culture, and also it forms the core of the characteristics of Hong Kong culture. Because of the special historical and geographical location of Hong Kong, Hong Kong culture has manifested diversity and characteristics that accommodate both East and West in cultural exchange. Gradually, Hong Kong has become one of the international centres for the exchange of eastern and western cultures.

We are seeing the development of a multipolar world. In this day and age, we have globalisation of economics and diversification in culture.

The hosting of this forum on Asia cultural co-operation provides the best forum for Asian countries and regions to discuss how best they can take forward cultural exchange and co-operation. Asian people create a glorious culture in the past. At one point it was the centre of world culture and the origin of civilisation. In this day and age, Asian culture is still very vibrant.

Asian countries in the field of culture should grasp the trend of the modern developments. They should work closer to tie in with world development of culture; in philosophy, policy, production, economics, trade and technology for culture and circulation as well as training for talents, they should step up

exchanges and co-operation. Such exchange and co-operation would lead to more stability of Asia as a whole and also contribute to the development of culture internationally.

The Chinese Government treasures cultural co-operation with Asian countries. We welcome all Asian governments to participate in our creative industries and cultural development. We would like to see a better future for a better Asian culture. To work towards this end, we are willing to work hand in hand with all Asian people.

Asian culture cannot be developed in isolation. It cannot really develop by detaching from the world culture. We should learn from all the advantages and merits of international culture, so as to narrow the gap between Asian culture and that of the world at large, so we can have a richer culture in Asia.

Ladies and gentlemen, this forum and the theme itself in my view is a stroke of creativity. Let us join hands and enhance co-operation and exchange in the cultural field, so that cultural strength can be an impetus to drive and take forward the development of Asia, so that it becomes a continent of stability, peace and love. Having a rich culture, Asia would become a continent of creativity.

Asia should contribute more to the development of culture in the world, and Asia is in such a position to make such a contribution. Thank you. 

Mr Antony SPANBROOK

Managing Director of Jack Morton Worldwide, Asia



The World's Biggest Stage

This was the first time that a non-indigenous agency had been awarded with the production of the Olympic ceremonies. A winning part of our tender was to demonstrate how we would ensure the engagement and collaboration with mostly local partners.

I am proud to be here today to share with you an experience that will live in my mind absolutely forever, for many different reasons: the opening and closing ceremonies of the 28th Olympiad.

Through my presentation, I will hope today to share with you our journey to win the rights to produce these ceremonies, give you a bit of an insight into the creative in how it was crafted, and finally I am going to show you how we took this amazing experience of culture and creativity, engaged a community and hopefully won the hearts of the world.

THE MAGIC OF CEREMONIES

Ceremonies used to be about protocol, about flag-raising and providing platforms for dignitaries. Protocol still remains very important, but ceremonies do much, much more. Essentially, the format of the Olympic Games is the same, city to city. The only point of difference is the ceremonies. It is here that the host can express themselves and create a point of difference.

In marketing language, ceremonies are a brand experience. The brand is the host city, and it is to be projected, untarnished by commercial exploitation. Sponsorship plays no role in ceremonies.

The goal of the ceremony is to tell a story. Just like the storytellers of old and travelling theatres who played out stories in local villages, ceremonies must communicate but with the global village. As such, the tools we use are infinitely more sophisticated, and the stage dramatically bigger, particularly when you consider the electronic stage that the live telecast provides us.

If you get it right, the payback is enormous. According to a quantitative survey, 65 percent of respondents stated that their most memorable moment in the Games was the opening or closing ceremony. Focusing on the US market, the number of respondents that had a positive opinion of Greece increased by 23 percent after the Games, and following the Games 38.7 percent of people expressed an interest to visit Greece, ranking it second to only their most popular destination, Italy.

Our first major public event was the handover of Hong Kong in 1997. From here, we took on events such as the Special Olympics and Ryder Cup ceremonies in 1999, the Royal Military Tattoo and the Millennium Dome, both

in London in 2000, the Paralympic ceremonies in Salt Lake and the Commonwealth Games ceremonies in Manchester in 2002.

Making the jump from our 65-year heritage in corporate and brand communication to producing public events on a world stage, viewed by billions of people, required a lot of learning which was achieved during the progression of these events. It taught us how to create an experience for a live audience that equally resonates with the broadcast audience, and finally how to produce brand communications that work on a global scale but do not diminish the integrity of the nation's culture. The Greek ceremonies resonated around the world, but they were unmistakably Greek.

THE DREAM OF THE GREEK OLYMPIAD

This was the first time that a non-indigenous agency had been awarded with the production of the Olympic ceremonies. A winning part of our tender was to demonstrate how we would ensure the engagement and collaboration with mostly local partners.

In the first week of January, our team of six people landed in Athens, 19 months away from the big event. By showtime, our little team had built to 350 staff, with a technical crew of 550. Before long, we occupied 63 apartments, drove 58 cars donated by the Olympic sponsor Hyundai, nearly 70,000 room nights were booked for our staff and crew, and we had found a volunteer cast and support team of 8,000 local Greeks.

An important member of our team was David Zolcwer; he was the artistic director on the Manchester Commonwealth Games and is now our global director for the public events practice. Immediately, David began his collaboration with our Greek creative team. He used his vast experience to support, guide and stimulate the creative team, all Greek, under the direction of Greek artistic director Dimitris Pappaioanou, towards a comprehensive creative plan that married feasibility, affordability and maximum impact. Dimitris was well known to Greeks but was less experienced in the medium of stadium theatre, which is a very different medium from commercial theatre or film and television.

The creative vision was to present, with a contemporary face, the centuries of history that gave birth to Western thought and practice in the fields of philosophy, mathematics, science, medicine, politics, art and culture, since disseminated to all corners of the earth. For us, the methods required to tell this story meant that we would push the envelope farther than ever before in a ceremony of this nature, without failing or causing irreparable damage or embarrassment to the people of Greece and to ourselves. We had to communicate this creative faultlessly and do it spectacularly, safely, and within budget.

Question & Answer

BEIJING OLYMPICS 2008

Q: What do you think are the strongest selling points of Chinese culture that should be showcased in the Beijing Olympic Games?

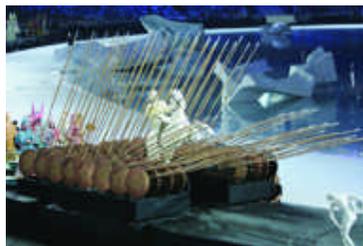
ANTONY SPANBROOK: I suppose to answer this I will go back two Olympics to Sydney. If everyone remembers Sydney, it was a much longer ceremony to Athens. I think one of the reasons is that Australia feels that it does not have such an identity as having a rich past and culture. Typical Australians, we feel we have to struggle and prove that. So I found the ceremony in Sydney, which personally I thought was far too long and far too complicated — and I am Australian, but I think the reason was that they really had so much to tell, to say to the world this is where we began, this is who we are.

Whereas I think when the artistic director was thinking about the Athens ceremony, firstly they thought there is an expected amount of knowledge of Greek history. We do not have to sing and dance and prove that we have the history as much as Sydney possibly did. So therefore, whilst we still have to present a history, which they did, as I mentioned in my speech, 5,000 years of history, but they did it in such a beautiful, modern summary that people could enjoy it and also enjoy the spectacle.

One thing that I would say about my opinion of what Beijing should be, it

needs to be about the people. China is about the people. It is a huge population and it is an exotic culture to most of the world, and I believe that that culture needs to be expressed fully, but I think there is a danger of getting bogged down into so much detail of such a long history that it could go too far the other way.

So I believe there is a careful balance there. Also, I would expect that the ambition of the Chinese Government would also be to give the world an insight into what China wants to be and where it wants to be and how it wants to be perceived, and I think that that will inevitably be an important part of the ceremony.



KEY TO SUCCESS: CONVERSING WITH LOCAL CULTURE

More than 75 percent of our staff in Athens were, understandably, made up of Greek nationals. Many of our suppliers were sourced in Greece, although some of these suppliers partnered with international companies with greater resources and relevant experience. This is exactly how it should be, as far as we are concerned, because ceremonies belong to the host nation and must be owned by the people of that nation. For our part, we saw it as an opportunity to leave behind a legacy of experience and training and skills, and we took that very seriously. We placed advertisements in Greek newspapers and produced a video that ran on Greek television.

Auditions began in full in September 2003. The volunteers came from 16 different countries and ranged from seven to 75 years of age, and what these people gave to the event was impressive to us all. They were asked to participate in over 600 hours of rehearsals for the ceremonies, and all they got in exchange was the experience and some clothing. We also knew that we both wanted and needed to make this a valuable experience for them, and we took a great deal of time and care ensuring that that was the case.

Apart from the ancient content, our production was also going to portray the new Greece to the entire world, and these people so wanted to be a part of that experience. I was talking with one volunteer who told me how excited she was to be part of the new Greece and how she looked forward to telling her children and grandchildren in years to come. The energy, enthusiasm and passion was something that I will never forget, and it really got us through the whole project.

Towards the end of 2003, we had found the facility that we would use for rehearsals. It was located five miles from the Olympiad stadium and, to a lot of us, it became home. The facility consisted of a very large warehouse space with an open area in between two buildings that we fitted with a replica of the field of play for the stadium.

On the inside, once in rehearsal mode, we stored all the wardrobe and props used in the ceremonies, and there were dedicated areas of the building where part of the flying system was installed, with replicas of the technical aspects, including the infamous cube, and a section of the body of water that we would ultimately install into the stadium. Another location was the old domestic airport site, where our costume and props workshop was set up.

PROLOGUES TO THE CARNIVAL

In early 2004, with the teams getting settled again after Christmas and new staff members arriving weekly, things really began to take off. On the music side, 18 composers contributed, and it took over 300 hours to record the

musical segments for the ceremonies. In costuming, the team designed and manufactured pretty much non-stop. We used six and a quarter miles of fabric, nine miles of thread, 528 gallons of glue, 150 gallons of paint, 7,152 socks and 4,000 pairs of shoes.

For those of you who have seen the ceremony, you may remember a very dramatic and wonderful piece that we called 'Clepsydra', which featured actors and actresses in various forms of costuming on rolling platforms. Clepsydras were ancient clocks and utilised the steady flow of sand or water to measure the passage of time. This segment was designed to show the passage of Greek history from the fertility goddess of 2000 BC through the pregnant woman who represented the future for Athens.

If you watched, you might remember this segment because of the blue Eros that flew over the heads of the performers as they passed by. Visually, these were some of the most beautiful images of the show, but there were some very specific cultural differences that had to be settled in the production period for this, none more so than the issue of nudity. A natural and accepted part of Greek culture, nudity was something that we felt the international media would no doubt have difficulties with, should it be included in the show, so ultimately body stockings and little sleight of hand ensured that an incident akin to Janet Jackson's wardrobe malfunction did not occur.

Within the stadium, we were engineering and constructing a full city below the athletic surface, with some pretty amazing statistics. The first element was the stadium lake, and the system used to get some 5,000 gallons of water in and out. Whilst we took six hours to fill it, we were to drain it in under three minutes, all of the water stored in a reservoir system that we built beneath the stadium surface. The chamber pit and tunnels that we designed beneath the centre of the stadium went eight storeys deep, and to construct it over 5,000 cubic feet of earth was taken out, or the equivalent to 500 dump trucks of dirt. The elevator system was capable of lifting 100,000 pounds of weight, and it was 32 feet in diameter. The Cycladic head was just one of the numerous scenic elements that had to enter through the pit.

It really took shape for me in February 2004, when I watched the complete opening for the first time. We had a staff of 30 performers, and their job was to come to the workshop and try on various costumes and make-up, test choreography and technical elements, and we would film them, looking at it segment by segment, looking at different camera angles and lighting effects, in order to perfect the visuals that would be broadcast to the world. In this way, we could ensure that the electronic story that was told to the global village was the same as the story that we told the local village. 3D animations were created and all the staging effects of these pieces were then married together to create a virtual opening ceremony. Even though we were so buried in detail, this gave us an invaluable glimpse of what it was going to be like on the night, and I have to say it was really inspiring.



On Friday, 28 May, we began the first rehearsals at our off-site location, some 85 days out from the opening ceremony. The buses would come and go with various groups of volunteers. Each of the show's segments was rehearsed individually, and then slowly we started combining them. By August we ran our first full three-and-a-half-hour rehearsal.

The pace of the last couple of months was understandably frantic. The crew was growing daily and, with work happening around the clock in the stadium, we ran a 24-hour schedule that lasted over two months. Athens meanwhile was getting itself together as well. Yes, everything you hear about the delays turned out to be true, but the Greeks had told us, 'Do not worry, we will get it done', they said. Secretly we crossed our fingers and hoped that they were right and, to their credit, they were, and the rest is history.

The 300 Greek nationals on our staff kept the excitement and energy levels high, and it really helped the rest of us get through. We were from 16 other countries. We all learned about Greece, its traditions, its food, its people, and quite simply there are many friends that we have made for life.

I am really not sure if I can begin to accurately describe the end of the experience. Five days before the opening, we ran a rehearsal for 35,000 people.

Three days before, we ran a rehearsal for 75,000 people. Whilst we presented this show to our live audiences, though, we were focused on show day, when we would tell our story to four billion people around the world.

THE GOOD SHOW IS HERE

The last week had its moments. It took us a little while to get the Cycladic head right. It was by far the most technically challenging part of the show and, to make things worse, delays in other construction meant that we were given full stadium access two weeks later than promised, so time became so precious, especially when you consider that each time we rehearsed the Cycladic head it would take 30 hours to put it back together.

On Friday, 13 August, 2004, at 8.45 pm Athens time, it began with a heartbeat and a countdown. There were subtle things in the show, such as the fact that the countdown started at 28 because this was the 28th Olympiad. The heartbeat represented the Athens 2004 theme, a unique Games on a human scale. I assure you, the heartbeat in that opening was moving much slower than ours. Via the large matrix screens in the stadium, we started our story 'Olympia', located 350 kilometres from Athens. Olympia is a sacred place, dedicated to the Greek God Zeus, and it was here that the first Olympic Games took place in 776 BC. It is also here that the Olympic torch has been lit from a parabolic bowl for each Games in the modern era. They came up with the idea of a torch relay that visited every city to host the Olympics in the modern era.

On 25 March, the journey began, and tonight the torch was coming home. From Olympia we introduced water and fire. For the Greeks, the sea is everything, a means of travel and trade, a source of food and joy. To the Greek philosopher Thales, water was the first element of the world. Fire represented the divinity of soul and spirit. In ancient times it symbolised knowledge and the power of man to determine his own fate. Each home kept a fire burning continuously as a constant reminder of this message.

As sources of heat and humidity, fire and water are necessary for life to exist. It was through this combination that we introduced the Olympic rings. Probably the most captured image was that of the rings burning on the surface of the water, ignited by a comet from Olympia. The rings formed and the Olympics had finally come home.

We moved to the raising of the Greek flag by using a child in a paper boat. For generations, the paper boat has been a simple and enduring toy for children all over Greece. This tiny scale of the boat in a large expanse of water represented Greece, a small country but the birthplace of big ideas.

Once the flag was raised, the Greek national anthem was played, and we moved into the most ambitious segment of the show, known as Allegory or the Cycladic head. Standing 60 feet tall and weighing 10.5 tonnes, it was the make-or-break point of the show for us. This was one segment where we experienced terror, fear, anticipation, worry, exhilaration, accomplishment, exhaustion, and several more emotions that I cannot begin to describe, all within the seven minutes and 52 seconds that it took to complete.

Throughout each segment of the opening, literally every second of the creative was based on Greek history and culture, and it spanned about 5,000 years. The Cycladic head segment is a good example of the grandeur and beautiful simplicity of this. In our dramatic representation of the establishment of the fields of mathematics and geometry, formulas and shapes were projected onto the head using a highly sophisticated laser. Thematically, this introduced the idea of knowledge and discovery as being part of the human being. The split of the head into more refined figures takes us into the sixth century BC, when Kouros depicted the first time the marble body was released from its background, and the human form was shown in sculpture. And from here to Contra Posto in the fifth century BC, when the human figure stood naturally, no longer reminding us of the stone from which it came.

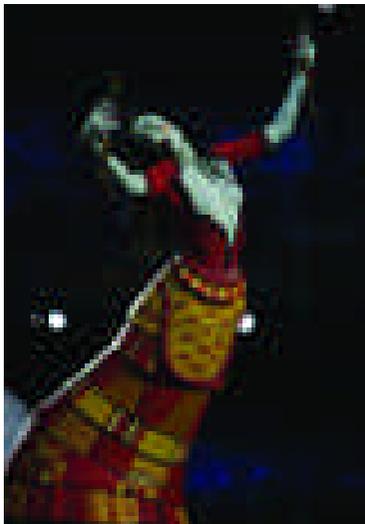
Democracy was born in Athens during this time, 'demos' meaning people and 'cratos' meaning strength, but later coming to mean state. Therefore, the classical figure was the first true citizen of a democratic society.





From the Cycladic head came the cube. According to Pythagoras, the cube was the symbol of earth. Its perfect geometric shape is one that does not appear in nature. In our show, the movement of the cube represents the rotation of the earth on its own axis, and its revolution around the sun. From a perception of existence based on myth, man has now evolved into a logical, spiritual being searching for knowledge. As man evolves further and finds knowledge, we celebrate the beauty and diversity of humanity through the imagery that was projected on the pieces of rock. As this segment came to an end, the rock pieces settled in the water to represent the 1,500 islands of the Greek seas. Working wonderfully well as it did on the night, this provides a great example of the creative treatment that told the story of an early western civilisation.

The three and a half hours of the show seemed to go so quickly, but as the athletes entered and created the largest gathering in history, with 202 countries represented, it really gave us a feeling of something incredible. Apparently, thanks goodness, the world press saw it the same way as well. We woke on Saturday morning to headlines such as these. For about an hour we sat back and read the reviews, proud, stunned, I suppose somewhat humbled. We had done it. We could finally go to sleep without any speculation as to the results of our hard work. I think my favourite quote, for *Time*, was: 'Last Friday, Athens introduced a surprising new element to the show: class.'



THE FINAL ACT

This fabulous feeling did not last too long, though. Remember what I said about enjoying our success? Well, in a few hours, we were off into rehearsals for the closing ceremony. The closing represented a far different challenge than the opening. While we had months in the stadium to prepare for the opening, we would have 16 hours to install the closing and rehearse it. While the world watched athletics, we suffered through what we called intermission; that time when all we could do for 15 days was worrying about what it would be like in the stadium at 1 am on Sunday, 29 August, when we would load in the production infrastructure for our final act.

It was during this time that the team from BOCOG arrived, and we helped them stage their segment within the closing. We were able to use one of our Putonghua speakers from our Jack Morton office here in Asia to help the team in their relationship between the Chinese and the Greeks.

We ran a full rehearsal for the first time including the performance from Beijing. As we were wrapping up, the entire cast and crew had assembled in front of the production tower. We were standing there looking down at a sea of 2,500 faces from countries all over the world. In various costumes and colours they stood, intermingled with the performance from Beijing and, as they looked up at us, our choreographer announced that they had just concluded their final rehearsal for the 2004 Olympic Games. The closing ceremony was a great party for Greece to celebrate their accomplishment.

For us, our 20-month journey was over. We had created a story-telling experience on the world's biggest stage and, even if we only experience the smallest part of it, it was a memory that would live in our hearts forever. 🌍



Session 1

► **Challenges and Opportunities for a Creative Asia**

Mr Richard ENGELHARDT

UNESCO Regional Advisor for Culture for Asia and the Pacific

A Policy Framework for Creative Community Development



The challenge for governments is how to use creativity and cultural industries as a comprehensive strategy, on one hand for poverty reduction and on the other hand for local economic development.

As one of the early speakers in the forum, my task is to introduce briefly the elements of a policy framework to promote cultural industries for creative community development.

I will do this by outlining the international response with UNESCO, together with our UN dialogue partners, such as the World Bank and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), is leading to focus on the development potential of cultural industries as a key strategic sector for economic and social equity, for building local capacity, for professional culture asset management and mobilising communities for culture conservation.

We might ask ourselves, just why are we talking about creativity and cultural industries? To localise our discussion, I would like to begin with a quotation from Hong Kong's baseline study on creative industries which was published in 2003. In this ground-breaking publication, we read: 'The conception of creative industries is a variegated notion for describing a rising economic sector, the dynamics of industrial collaboration as well as the changing landscape of the employment market. The rise of the creative sector concurrently underscores the deep-seated transformation of the economic domain from manufacturing-based economy to consumption-based economy, by which culture is re-discovered as one of the most important resources for economic development.'

THE RE-DISCOVERIES OF CULTURE

Now, this is a brave vision, but when we examine the reality we find that although the countries of Asia do have a vast wealth of cultural assets, both physical and intangible, and the populations of the region are rich in cultural knowledge and traditional skills, still the world's map of cultural industries shows a widening gap between developing and industrial countries, between East and West, North and South, between the contribution that cultural industries make to the total gross domestic product. Similarly, the international debate on cultural industries, creative urban development and the information and knowledge-based economy is overwhelmingly still dominated by experience, resources and the economic realities of the North.

So what are we going to do to change this? First of all, we can start from a baseline of realising that the cultural industries have gained growing importance as an economic force over the last 20 years, and note that this trend is closely linked to the rise of the information society and the growing consumption of cultural goods and services. The challenge for governments, then, is how to use creativity and cultural industries as a comprehensive strategy, on one hand for

poverty reduction and on the other hand for local economic development.

To note this is to ask the question: Are the state and society affected by the same processes of commercialisation as seem to be affecting the culture sector? To ask this question is also to ask the question whether cultural industries are not themselves somehow directly involved in the restructuring of society and therefore of the state.

In Asia, there is not a lot of data on the cultural industry, but the data that has been systematically collected shows that the sector is rapidly growing in the region, outstripping other sectors by commonly three to four percent, and in some of your economies up to seven percent. While most countries rely on simple output and employment data, in those places where more sophisticated models have been developed, they reveal that the political and social transformations are accompanying the economic shift toward cultural industries. This phenomenon of the social and political transformations being directly linked to the economic transformations of the cultural industries has been very well described by Justin O'Conner. He writes that: 'The growth in cultural consumption means not just increased purchase of cultural goods but new uses of these goods in the construction of individual and social identity. These new forms of consumption — fast moving, highly segmented, increasingly cultural — have placed the cultural component of many consumer goods at the forefront of their economic value. These are large-scale transformations ... and the emergence of the cultural industries is part of this shift, a response to it, an active negotiation. In terms of the local level we could call it "cultural renegotiation as business."'

The ramifications of these transformations are significant not only for our economies, but they also affect the way we conceive society and therefore the way we construct governance, and of course how we construct our communities.

RISE OF NEW FORMS OF CULTURAL CONSUMPTION

One of the challenges of the new post-industrial knowledge society is the need to link the national policy to the global perspective again, as we have seen very well in the last presentation. Cultural industries play a pivotal role in this ideological redeployment as the generators of a new global information community.

The next question we should ask ourselves, therefore, is: Is there a common conceptual framework which we can use to promote innovation, creativity and, hence, the cultural industries?

Cultural industries have particular traits, including, first of all, the potential to penetrate hereto unresponsive sectors of the economy and therefore to be an engine of local development; secondly, there is the fact that cultural industries cross-cut traditional sectors and policy-making areas; and thirdly there is the

Question & Answer

UNESCO AS CULTURAL POLICE?

Q. Can UNESCO be a culture and heritage police to monitor economically developing nations like China and eastern Europe when they are so desperately pursuing Western values and technology and pulling down, destroying all the ancient and old buildings which are precious and valuable, materials for cultural creativity and finance generating? China and Hong Kong are pulling down many valuable and historical buildings. We have had enough of this crime.

What is UNESCO's policy on the destruction of heritage or cultural or historical monuments or establishment because of political reasons? For example, Hong Kong Government's pushy desire to decolonise Hong Kong by pulling down European architecture.

RICHARD ENGELHARDT: UNESCO is a strange animal. It is an inter-governmental organisation. So we are a collection of governments and we are basically run by the governments. But we are also representatives of the civil society, and among our constituents are academics and artists and educators and researchers and performing artists; a whole range of people who are dealing with the kinds of issues we are interested in.

The first question: I think the question is no, we cannot do this, and probably we should not. It goes back to this issue: In culture we need to not

freeze the dynamics of culture but make sure there is space in which cultural interactions can take place and innovations can happen.

In this process, we probably can do two things. One of them is monitor what we are doing and what is a consequence of that, which is what we certainly are attempting to do with the cultural industries. We are trying to track over a long period of time now the different kinds of decisions made by different levels of government, and trying to promote creative enterprises and see which ones work and which ones do not, which ones end up in boring, stifling cookie cutter products and which ones end up in brilliant innovations.

The other thing we can try to do is try to democratise everybody's efforts, through promotion of communication and mobilising things at the community level. This especially, I think, and I made allusion to this in my remarks, is what we can do to address the issue of heritage conservation.

I do not think it is quite fair to always say that the government is not doing enough to protect heritage, because I do not think government anywhere in the world can ever do enough to protect heritage, and the more you protect the more you realise that there is more heritage, the heritage in your community, your neighbourhood, in your own back yard. It is one of those things that as you become more familiar with it and recognise it more and more, there is more and more to protect.

Governments only have a macro view of this, and cannot be expected to

complexity of value asset accumulation of cultural property and therefore the extension of intellectual property protection regimes which this requires.

Let me summarise the policy implications of this matrix by quoting again, this time from Richard Florida, in his important 2002 work, *The Rise of the Creative Class*. Richard Florida says that:

'For cities aspiring to become the hubs of their regional economies, three local conditions must be satisfied: high level of efficiency in the provision of infrastructure such as communications and social and protection services ... plentitude of social and cultural amenities that affect the quality of the urban environment ... and an institutional milieu that protects individual rights and is tolerant towards diversity.'

From there we can then begin to draw up a list of objectives which can frame policy designed to promote creativity and stimulate the cultural industries a significant economic sector. Those policies, which I will just skim through quickly, would include things like: To encourage a wider recognition of the potential of cultural industries for local economic growth; they need to be based on a realistic analysis of the creative sector's potential; they need to facilitate intersectional co-ordination; they need to negotiate and support a multilevel programming platform, which includes the government, the private sector, international conglomerates and development agencies; there needs to be a pro-active building of capacity of culture professionals as well as for cultural resource and institutional management; and we need to promote culture conservation, mobilising the community for this purpose, for if we lose our cultural memory we have nothing, no base from which to innovate.

GEARING TOWARDS FAVOURABLE CULTURAL POLICIES: A PARADIGM SHIFT

Having outlined the objectives, let us go back again to Justin O'Conner, whom I quoted a little earlier, and see what he has to say. He says:

'... the culture sector is an articulation of the global and the local. It is also an articulation of the large and the small. The cultural industries are predominantly made up of small businesses. New cultural entrepreneurs operate as loose, fluid, highly creative clusters operating outside or on the edge of the public funding structures. These clusters are articulated to locally situated global businesses (the large broadcasting or film companies, for example), to global corporate distribution networks (such as music recording), and to the more open markets made possible by the internet and e-commerce.'

With that in mind, the development of the creative sector does require some government support and planning, but in very specific key areas. Some of those areas would be human resource development, especially in the provision of creative, interactive space which encourages innovation. Secondly, we must

enable a quantum leap of knowledge sharing, probably based on support for ICT infrastructure. We must protect the intellectual property rights regimes, to reward creativity and to protect local creators in global markets. We need to support the small and medium sized enterprises, to ensure that cultural industries as an economic driver of our society are widespread at all levels. We need fair play regulatory frameworks that promote access into the field of cultural industries by creative entrepreneurs, and do not close it off to only the large conglomerates. And we need baseline studies and data collection to inform policy-making, so we are not making policy in the dark but making policy on the basis of information.

The imperatives together of this strategy I think have been very well summed up by one of the speakers later on in our forum, Mr John Howkins. In his 2001 publication, *The Creative Economy*, he pointed out something very important that I would like to share with you, and I hope Mr Howkins will not mind if I quote from the seminal work of his. He says:

'The growth of the creative is likely to outgrow all other economic areas. Creative products are the basis not only of information and new technology but of the entire modern economy, from software to shoes. The way we treat the economics of ideas and inventions obviously affects all social, cultural, ideological and political issues. How we decide and who decides whether the ownership of ideas and inventions should be private or public has a powerful impact on the kind of society we build for ourselves. A society that stifles or misuses its creative resources, and signs up to the wrong property contract, cannot prosper. But if we understand and manage this new creative economy, individuals will profit and society will be rewarded.'

So are we in a new paradigm shift for culture and the economy? It seems perhaps so.

UNESCO is one of the world institutions undergoing transformation to respond, just as Professor Romer has indicated, to the new role of culture in the world order. UNESCO, together with the other international agencies, is now placing increased emphasis on focusing attention on the development potential of cultural industries, as a key part of economic strategy, both economic development and social equity; placing emphasis on building the capacity for professional cultural resource and asset management — we are talking now about growing assets as well as conserving our resources; and promoting intellectual property rights, as I have already touched upon; in mobilising communities for cultural conservation and in strengthening the recognition of the importance of cultural diversity — it cannot be something we leave to the government.

understand that what is in your backyard needs to be protected. Only you can do that, and that is why mobilisation of communities at all levels, and I mean to say at all levels, can really be effective in protecting heritage.

Now, you asked finally what was UNESCO's policy about destruction of heritage. I think it should be pretty clear that in terms of heritage, meaning things that are valuable from the past, we would certainly encourage all people, all governments, to retain all of their memories and all the stories they have of the past. You can think of it as memory. If you get Alzheimer's and start to lose your memory and then finally lose it all, you cannot even find your way home, you cannot put on your clothes in the morning, you cannot even go to the toilet, you cannot function. The same thing is true of any society, if you lose your memory and the more and more of it you lose, your lose your heritage, the more and more dysfunctional you become. That is to say, we must conserve it.

Though not everything from the past becomes our heritage, some things in fact become things that we wish to discard in the future, for the future, not bring them forward. These can be practices that we have now determined to be not necessary, not acceptable, not just. I mean, certainly there have been cultures in the past that structurally discriminated against women, there have been cultures that were pro-active in infanticide. There have been many cultural practices that we have abandoned, either individually as cultures or globally as human society.

So certainly to say that we are in favour of retaining our memory does not necessarily mean that we have to be slaves to all past practices if they are no longer valuable for the future.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY IS THE SOURCE OF CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

So let me simply conclude this brief introduction to policy frameworks for our region's newly emerging creative economies by observing that while the rapidly increasing demand for cultural goods and services is the main economic justification for applying a comprehensive policy and planning framework to this sector, there are other social and political arguments to be made as well, and these arguments are powerful.

Beyond economics, cultural industries produce cultural and social meanings and thus have the potential to induce wider social and human development, both in industrialised and developing societies. Cultural diversity is the source of creativity and innovation, not only within the arts but for the society at large. Creativity is one of the key forces structuring development. Promotion of cultural industries is the way to release the economic potential of creativity for sustainable and equitable human development. 

Session 1

► **Challenges and Opportunities for a Creative Asia**

Mr David TANG

Founder of
'Shanghai Tang'



How to be Cultural

People make culture. So in this sense we in Hong Kong cannot be in a cultural desert. We have been around for 150 years of continual culture. That is not a short time. People tell me 150 years is a short time. It is not a short time. I wish I lived for 150 years.

This is a very grand forum. There is a danger that this cultural forum is seen to be elitist. But culture is not elitist. It is for everyone. Indeed, each of us in a community makes up our culture. So the people of Hong Kong make up the culture of Hong Kong. The mahjong parlour in Hong Kong is a Hong Kong culture. A karaoke bar is a Hong Kong culture. The fish balls in the curry sauce that you get on the street stalls is a Hong Kong culture. Perhaps even having fine soups with one's mistresses is probably a Hong Kong culture.

People make culture. So in this sense we in Hong Kong cannot be in a cultural desert. We have been around for 150 years of continual culture. That is not a short time. People tell me 150 years is a short time. It is not a short time. I wish I lived for 150 years.

So what do people mean when they keep telling us and mocking us that we are a cultural desert in Hong Kong? They probably mean that we in Hong Kong do not have a culture of fine arts.

TRANSCENDENCE OF THE 'HIGH' CULTURE

They would be right, we are not a community of long history to have cultivated cultural roots, deep roots that are required to set, and roots which are crucial to what I call high culture, 'high' not in a sense of elitist but high in a sense of something spiritual; something more than material and temporal, that has evolved through histories and civilisations for a long time, longer than 150 years, perhaps a millennium, perhaps two millennia.

Now that we have established a stable social and economic community, we can now begin to aspire to finding high culture, and there is nothing wrong with that. Nothing surprising either. After all, that is what a lot of nouveaux riches do precisely. When they become rich, they want to buy better furniture, better antiques, finer paintings, finer architecture.

Particularly with this government, which is a bit obsessed with being on league tables in the world, Hong Kong has realised that now it has made it in economy, it must make it in culture. We are told we should be proud to be one of the world's freest economies, and we are told to be proud to be one of the world's greatest shopping destinations, both of which I am not sure I agree. So we feel inadequate for not having been on the world's stage or having had the world's finest museums or opera houses, theatres or concert halls.

Question & Answer

IN SEARCH OF A WORLD CITY

Q. David Tang was advocating that Hong Kong should start thinking about being a Chinese city. My thoughts are how about Hong Kong becoming a Chinese world city, or a world Chinese city? And also we heard that culture is not confined to the people in this room, but also the seven million people out there. For so long, we heard that Hong Kong has been a gateway, to China and also China's gateway to the world. Now do we get the Hong Kong people to start to take an anchor in becoming a destination, no longer a gateway? How do we help them anchor that soul?

DAVID TANG: Two parts to your question, I think. Asia's world city, for a community which wants everybody to speak excellent English, is a bad example, because 'world' is not an adjective. That is number one. So if you want to put another Chinese in it, it might balance the mistake, but it will be too long.

I just think that one of the things that we in Hong Kong could be is perhaps the Oxbridge of future China. We talk about economic competition from Shanghai and Chongqing and Guangzhou. We have one distinct advantage over China for the next 42 years or 2046, however many years that is, of freedom of expression, and scholarship requires freedom of expression. There is no reason why Harvard or SOAS or Cambridge should have the world's leading Chinese

But these are good aspirations. So I applaud the Hong Kong Government for doing this, rolling up its sleeves and starting to scheme about projects like 'West Kowloon'. What I do not applaud is the way they are going about it, but that is another subject altogether.

But going back to this idea of high culture, we must persuade the people at large that it is a good thing. Everybody in this room knows it is a good thing. But how about everybody outside, seven million of them, outside this room? They must be won over. How? I think it is not as complicated as that. The government must set an example of how to be cultural. For a start, it must declare, I think, an unequivocal sense of preservation, the preservation of heritage.

But what would be the point of the government starting something that is cultural that is supposed to last for generations when at the same time carry out the systematic destruction of much of our own cultural heritage?

HERITAGE: SAVING UP FOR CULTURE

Another example which the government might like to set is to propel the roots of Chinese cultural heritage to the forefront. We are a Chinese community. We are part of China. We are one of the China's brightest and most able communities, if not the brightest and the most able community. We should, indeed we have a duty to, promote, above all other cultures, Chinese culture.

For instance, we have so many holidays here in Hong Kong. How about things like Chinese signs? I think a Martian flying over Hong Kong would well mistake Hong Kong as a western city. Look at Quebec: they insist on French language signs, and if you ever go to Montreal you will sense immediately a French culture there. That is what we should do in Hong Kong, have more Chinese signs.

We and our visitors should feel this as a Chinese community. My point here, of course, is not to say that we should concentrate only on Chinese culture. My point is that unless we Chinese understand our own culture, we will not understand other cultures. It is only when we know of our own identity that we will begin to appreciate others.

As for spending billions on a Disneyland, that by itself sends such a wrong signal to us all, and the outside world, of what importance the Government of Hong Kong attaches to the ideals of culture. There is one thing I agree with the French, that they are rightly suspicious and contemptuous of certain American culture and fast food.

Most importantly, if we need to ascend to high culture and upraise the whole community towards this goal, we had better pay a little more attention to education, education which must encourage free thinking and scholarship and daring views, instead of texts aimed wholly for the passing of examinations.

In this regard, I actually blame Confucianism, because the Confucian system of exams, which lasted for two and a half years, I think, stagnated Chinese civilisation and put it in a cocoon which was regulated in a society by bureaucratic civil service and from which I think Chinese gradually fell behind in the world of the sciences and arts.

Anyway, the government must also demonstrate imagination. I do not think any outstanding human progress has ever been made through committees or consultations. They are always led by an individual or an institution passionate enough to take risks, to experiment, and therefore to experience – ‘experiment’ and ‘experience’ are virtually the same. So this government must get out of its timidity and begin to trust and believe in individuals and institutions who dare to lead with imaginative projects.

It always amazes me that the government always chooses to have no consultations on things on which they should have consultations, like politics, whereas they insist on consultations on matters which should not be lead on consultations, like arts. We have two words in Chinese for those, but I will not tell you what they are.

Anyway, we must make the Government of Hong Kong take a robust lead, by example and by imagination, in showing all of us in Hong Kong that high culture is a good thing for our souls, and each of us who believe in this should also persuade others and continue to persuade others that high culture in Hong Kong is something excellent for us and not that it is there just to show off to the world. Culture is our spiritual nourishment.

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. 

institutions. It should be here. We have 42 years to prepare it, and we should do that in Hong Kong.

Therefore, in my view, we must have as much Chinese culture as possible to build that up. It does not mean that, as I said, we do it at the exclusion of other cultures. We all love other cultures, but it very important not to be Tiger Balm, to be okay for a whole range of things but not particularly good at anything. I think from that point of view we should emphasise much more Chinese culture, buying Chinese clothes from a particular shop, or eating Chinese food at a particular venue.

The second part of the question, how do we educate people — you cannot. You cannot educate people to be cultural — you can stimulate them. You can set examples. Important institutions like the government can set examples. And you have to let people have their bad ways, because when it is anaesthetised you do not have culture. I always remember Harry Lime in that great film, *The Third Man*, the quote of the great Orson Welles says, ‘Under the Borgias, in Roman times there was pillage, incest, murder, arson, yet they produced Leonardo Da Vinci and Michelangelo. And in Switzerland, 500 years of stability and democracy, what have they produced? A cuckoo clock.’