

Welcome Remarks at the Greater Bay Area Cultural Heritage and Creative Innovative Conference

31 May 2021 Fung Yiu King Hall, S H Ho Academic Building, HSUHK

Distinguished Speakers, Delegates and Guests,

Good morning. I would like to welcome you all to this *Greater Bay Area Conference on Cultural Heritage and Creative Innovation: Establishing the Cultural and Creative Nexus for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area* organized jointly by our Centre for Greater China Studies and Department of Art and Design of The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (HSUHK) with the support by *China Daily*.

This 2-Day Conference consists of a full day meeting today of academic research paper presentations followed by a half day meeting tomorrow of industry leaders and practitioners sharing their insights and success stories from the Greater Bay Area (known in short as the GBA).

The GBA Development is a very important strategic planning by the Central Government laying down the development blueprint of the region for the coming decades. To shape the GBA's cultural values is one of the aims listed in the Outline of the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. The Outline indicates support for HK to become a film and TV exhibition hub. This line of development can consolidate Hong Kong's status as a creative hub.

Hong Kong as an international city has a unique cultural setting blending Chinese and Western cultures. Hong Kong is world famous for its Cantonese pop songs, literature, films, TV dramas, games and music works. It is the cultural hub of Asia, with artists and cultural organizations from all around the world gathering here. At the same time, there are unique challenges faced by the HK creative and cultural industry (CCI) such as high rents, little choices of venues, and relatively small markets. The CCI in Hong Kong should leverage its own strengths to capture new opportunities and markets in GBA.

Similarly, GD and Macau each has its own unique cultural heritage and challenges. Although there is huge amount of tangible and non-tangible cultural heritage (e.g. Lingnan culture on Cantonese operas, Kung Fu, lion dancing, paintings) and CCI resources in GBA, cross-border collaborations have been few and joint developments of creative/cultural

contents and associated intellectual properties (IPs) are little. As the cities in GBA share geographical proximity and similar languages, cultures and folk customs, these factors should be conducive to jointly exploring further collaborations among CCI entities in the area.

There are government agents in GD, HK and Macau driving the CCI, but it seems we lack a high-level cross-governments and cross-departments overall planning and co-ordination function. The current development mainly relies on business entities. Without a strong overarching governmental executive body, it would be difficult to co-ordinate the CCI resources among the 3 regions. The Government, the industries and the educational institutions should also work more closely together to fully tap the market.

Here at HSUHK, we are treasuring this visionary policy directive to develop our teaching, research and practice opportunities in the GBA. HSUHK set up the Centre for Greater China Studies in early 2018 with one of the research focusses being GBA studies. The University also established the Greater Bay Area Innogration Centre in 2019 (the first of its kind in HK) promoting and assisting our students/alumni in cross-border innovations and business start-ups in GBA. Many colleagues from many Schools/Departments are conducting research and teaching activities related to the GBA. I have confidence that HSUHK will in time develop into a centre of excellence in terms of GBA studies.

Relating to CCI and GBA more directly, less than 2 years ago in September of 2019, the BA in Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) Programme under the directorship of Prof Desmond Hui organized the first Outstanding Awards for the Cultural and Creative Industries of the GBA with *China Daily*, recognizing some 20 CCI companies and organizations from the GBA with awards and commendations. In terms of nurturing cultural talents in GBA, our Department of Art and Design has a number of partner institutions in GBA with student exchange and other joint projects. We hope more GD and Macau students can join our BA in Art & Design or BA in CCI programmes at HSUHK. There is still much room for cooperation in GBA on nurturing CCI talents.

The topic of this conference is also very unique – putting cultural heritage with creative innovation together – which might also be something new to be discussed publicly for the first time. I am glad to see many leaders from the sectors attending either on site or online, including the two Chairmen of the two important advisory committees on heritage and conservation in HK – one of them, Prof Lau Chi-peng, will be our first keynote speaker – as well as Mr. Douglas So. Let me offer my gratitude and appreciation for your presence, and my best wishes for the success of the conference!

Thank you.