

Hong Kong movie closes the CinemAsia Film Festival in Amsterdam (with photos)

The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels (HKETO, Brussels) supported the participation of three Hong Kong films at the CinemAsia Film Festival which took place in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, from March 6 to 11 (Amsterdam time).

This year, CinemAsia concluded with the Hong Kong Film Evening supported by HKETO, Brussels which featured the Dutch premiere of "Fly Me to the Moon", a poignant drama directed and written by Hong Kong filmmaker Ms Sasha Chuk, produced by the renowned Hong Kong New Wave filmmaker Stanley Kwan on March 11 (Amsterdam time). A networking reception was organised at the same evening.

Celebrating Hong Kong's dynamic cinema, the Hong Kong networking reception brought together 300 Dutch and international filmmakers, industry professionals and film enthusiasts to an engaging exchange with renowned and emerging filmmakers from Hong Kong. The event also recognised the successful participation of two other Hong Kong films in the festival's programme: "Love Lies" by Ms Ho Miu Ki and "My First of May" by Mr James Hung.

The Deputy Representative of HKETO, Brussels, Miss Fiona Li was delighted that the film "Fly to the Moon" was selected as the festival's closing film. She expressed that participation in the CinemAsia Film Festival is an important opportunity to enhance the visibility of Hong Kong and its unique film industry among Dutch audiences and film admirors. "The three Hong Kong films screening during CinemAsia, each unique in storytelling and vision, represents the richness and dynamism of our film industry," said Miss Li.

During the Hong Kong reception, Miss Li reaffirmed the supportive role of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government in promoting the cultural and creative industries, noting that significant funding has been approved for film projects. "Over €160 million has been approved via the Hong Kong Film Development Fund to support more than 120 film projects," she highlighted.

The CinemAsia Film Festival celebrated its 17th edition from March 6 to 11 (Amsterdam time), in Amsterdam. It is one of the largest Asian film festivals in Europe and serves as a creative platform for Asian representation and filmmaking, presenting a diverse selection of blockbusters, inspiring documentaries, and independent productions.



[HKETO San Francisco rings in Year of Snake with Cathay Pacific \(with photos\)](#)

With support from Cathay Pacific, a carrier of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in San Francisco (HKETO San Francisco) hosted a series of spring receptions in San Francisco, California; Seattle, Washington; Los Angeles, California; and Dallas, Texas, between February 19 and 26 (local time), ringing in the Year of the Snake with festivities including lion dances and Guzheng performances. Nearly 700 local officials, dignitaries, academics, business representatives and community leaders attended the events.

The Acting Director of HKETO San Francisco, Ms Iris Wong, delivered remarks on Hong Kong's latest developments. "Hong Kong's economy grew at an accelerated pace in the fourth quarter of 2024, and we anticipate further progress in 2025 – a trend we are excited to build on. This growth is made possible not only by local resilience but also by the strong international partnerships that sustain the city's economy," she said.

Reflecting on the decades-long partnership between the US and Hong Kong, she pointed out that Hong Kong and the US enjoy a mutually beneficial trade relationship. "US goods exports to Hong Kong last year totalled nearly US\$26 billion, with the US enjoying one of its highest trade surpluses at over US\$21 billion," she said.

An overview of Hong Kong business innovation was also introduced. "With supportive government policies, the number of start-ups has reached a record high of over 4 700. Over 50 strategic enterprises are set to establish their foothold or expand their operations in Hong Kong. In the coming years, they will invest a total of US\$5.38 billion in total, creating over 17 000 jobs," she noted.

She also introduced a number of highly anticipated events in Hong Kong that cement its status as a must-visit global city, including Art Basel, the Coldplay concert, the French May Arts Festival, and Rugby Sevens. With world-class arts, culture and sports competitions and shows scheduled to take place throughout the year, Hong Kong provides unforgettable experiences for visitors, she concluded.

Also highlighted was Hong Kong's position as an international aviation hub. She said, "With its strategic location and world-class infrastructure, Hong Kong is connected to nearly 200 destinations worldwide. The completion of the Three-Runway System is expected to further boost the city's interconnectivity with the world, including the US."

Representatives from Cathay Pacific also spoke at the receptions, sharing news of the upcoming airline's first nonstop service between Hong Kong and Dallas-Fort Worth set to launch on April 24. In line with the anticipation that the Year of the Snake will be a year of evolution and new beginnings, the route will be Cathay Pacific's entrance to the southern region of the United States and the only nonstop route to Hong Kong available in Texas. At the reception in Dallas on February 26 (local time), Cathay Pacific Head of Corporate Sales, Americas, Mr Sebastien Granier, conducted a lucky draw to award a pair of round-trip business-class tickets between Hong Kong and the new destination.

The receptions concluded on a high note following a Guzheng performance by celebrated musician Melody Ho from Hong Kong. Featuring a Chinese New Year medley and her interpretation of classic melodies, the lively performance received enthusiastic applause from the audience.





MD announcement

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at suitable intervals:

The Marine Department today (March 14) reminded masters, coxswains and persons-in-charge of vessels navigating in Hong Kong waters to proceed at a safe speed and exercise extreme caution because restricted visibility of less than 2 nautical miles has been reported.

Appropriate sound signals shall be made when underway or at anchor. All vessels must comply with the International Regulations for Preventing Collision at Sea.

Also, when radar is used without the benefit of adequate plotting facilities, the information obtained from the equipment is rather limited and should be construed accordingly.

Visibility reports are broadcast by the Vessel Traffic Centre (VTC) on VHF channels 02, 12, 14, 63 and 67.

In the event of an accident, a report shall be made immediately to the VTC at Tel: 2233 7801.

Speech by SCST at preview and opening reception of the Hong Kong Jockey Club

Series: Picasso for Asia – A Conversation (English only)

Following is the speech by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Miss Rosanna Law, at the preview and opening reception of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Series: Picasso for Asia – A Conversation today (March 13):

Mr Henry Tang (Chairman of the Board of the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority), Mr Bernard Chan (Chairman of the M+ Board), Mr Nicolas D Hunsworth (Steward of the Hong Kong Jockey Club), Mrs Christile Drulhe (Consul General of France in Hong Kong and Macao), Mrs Cécile Debray (President of the Musée national Picasso-Paris), Ms Pansy Ho (Co-chairman of the Board of French May Arts Festival), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening and a very warm welcome to a full house of audience here. I'm so happy to see you all. I am most delighted to be in M+ Museum with you all here tonight to celebrate the opening of this extraordinary exhibition "the Hong Kong Jockey Club Series: Picasso for Asia – A Conversation". The power of artwork in telling stories and evoking emotions is universally acknowledged, and I believe art lovers would agree with me that Pablo Picasso is a master of the masters in terms of his ability to highlight, or more precisely, to breakdown the subject of his paintings to evoke a strong sense of emotion in the viewers.

I know that this exhibition, which features over 60 of Picasso's masterpieces in dialogue with works from the M+ Collections by Asian and Asian-diasporic artists, has been long-awaited and eagerly anticipated by many, including me of course. Instead of a straightforward showcase of famous pieces, this exhibition shows innovative curatorial vision by creating a dynamic conversation between the brilliance of Picasso's work and the richness of Asia's artistic traditions.

This innovative curatorial approach aligns perfectly with the Blueprint for Arts and Culture and Creative Industries Development promulgated by my Bureau (Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau) in November 2024. The Blueprint sets out, among other important features, a clear vision of Hong Kong becoming an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange, under which we would like to attract tourists through international arts and cultural exhibitions and performances, thereby promoting the integration of culture and tourism.

High quality exhibition such as today's will certainly help Hong Kong leap forward towards fulfilling the vision and, as a result, it should not come as any surprise that this exhibition is supported by the Mega Arts and Cultural Events Fund under my Bureau, and that it is high on our list of signature events in the Hong Kong Super March programme.

Indeed, this March, Hong Kong is filled with a fascinating array of world-class events attracting participants from various sectors, and tourists from all over the world. Apart from the official opening of the Kai Tak Sports Park, World Snooker Grand Prix (2025) and LIV Golf (Hong Kong) 2025 that took place in the past fortnight, upcoming highly anticipated events in the lineup include ComplexCon Hong Kong, Art Central, Art Basel Hong Kong and Hong Kong Sevens, just to name a few.

I sincerely invite all of you, my friends, to take part in at least some of these exciting Super March events.

Before I close, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the incredible efforts of M+ Museum in presenting this eye-opening and thought-provoking exhibition. My special thanks also go to Musée national Picasso-Paris for co-curating the exhibition.

May I wish the exhibition every success and everyone here an enjoyable evening. Thank you.

[Speech by FS at Ireland's National Day Reception \(English only\)](#)

Following is the speech by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, at Ireland's National Day Reception today (March 13):

Minister Browne (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage of Ireland, Mr James Browne), Ambassador Dr O'Brien (Ambassador of Ireland to China, Dr Nicholas O'Brien), Consul General Bourke (Consul General (CG) of Ireland to Hong Kong and Macao, Ms Jennifer Bourke), CGs, Commissioner Pan Yundong (Deputy Commissioner of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening.

It's a pleasure to be here with you in celebration of St Patrick's Day. Your national day is truly one of the world's most captivating events, as popular parades take to the festive, flag-waving streets of Dublin.

Tonight, we will share in your joy as we look forward to a splendid Irish dance performance following the ceremonies.

I would like to extend a special warm welcome to Minister Browne, who is currently visiting Hong Kong. I understand you have a busy schedule here.

This is indeed good news, as it signifies the vast potential for collaboration between Hong Kong and Ireland, ranging from construction and housing development to trade and investment relationships. And, of course, horse racing too!

Indeed, the trade ties between our two economies are flourishing. Last year, our trade in goods surged by over 40 per cent year on year, while trade in services increased by 15 per cent.

I can tell you our trade has ample room to grow. As mentioned by the Consul General, last October, we reduced the import duty on liquor to promote high-value liquor trade in Hong Kong. The statistics since then are encouraging: the volume of liquor imported has increased by around 40 per cent, while its value by 130 per cent. We believe this presents just a fantastic opportunity for Irish whiskey distilleries to expand their presence in this region. In fact, many here in Hong Kong are avid fans of Irish coffee as well, including this speaker.

More than your fine Irish spirits, there are many commonalities between Hong Kong and Ireland. They suggest that we can collaborate in more areas.

One such area is our shared commitment to multilateralism and free international trade. In the face of rising protectionism and the threat of unilateral tariffs, it is vital that we work together to sustain a stable global supply chain and maintain an open, friendly and welcoming environment where businesses can thrive.

Our mutual goal in combating climate change is another area of co-operation. Both of our economies aim to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. But the journey toward that goal is fraught with challenges. We need funding, technologies and policy incentives to drive this process forward.

Here in Hong Kong, we see the opportunities. We have set forth a vision to become an international green finance and green tech centre, through leveraging our leading position in green finance in Asia and a burgeoning ecosystem of green tech start-ups. We believe Hong Kong and Ireland can enhance co-operation and exchanges in this domain. Together, we can make valuable contributions to the regional and global decarbonisation process.

Moreover, we both place a high value on innovation and technology. Hong Kong is rapidly building dynamic ecosystems in AI, biotech, and fintech. These are also the areas where Ireland excels.

With our country's focus on adopting the "AI+" strategy, Hong Kong is well-positioned to become a hub for AI. We serve as a pivotal convergence point for data and talent from both the Mainland and abroad. It helps that Hong Kong is home to five of the world's top 100 universities, three of which rank among the world's top 20 in data science and AI, in the freshly released QS world university rankings 2025.

In my Budget delivered just two weeks ago, I put a spotlight on innovation and technology, with particular emphasis on the development of AI

as a core industry for Hong Kong.

We see vast potential for co-operation with Ireland in the I&T sectors. We warmly welcome tech companies from Ireland to consider Hong Kong as the gateway and platform for business expansion into China and the Asian region.

And of course, our exchanges extend to culture and sport, as the Consul General mentioned. I hope to see plenty of Irish rugby fans at the Hong Kong Sevens later this month. Two weeks from tomorrow, the event kicks off at the brand-new Kai Tak Stadium, with its retractable roof, South Stand views to Victoria Harbour, and seating for 50 000 rugby-and-fun-loving fans. Plenty of room, too, at the Stadium's 100-metre-long Champions Bar, where you can enjoy a good pint of Guinness.

Thank you all, and Happy St Patrick's Day!