

Elderly persons from Central and Western District to stage oral history theatre performance “A Tale of Two Circles” in September (with photos)

"A Tale of Two Circles", the finale performance of the Community Oral History Theatre Project – Central and Western District, will be staged at the Theatre of Sheung Wan Civic Centre on September 8 (Saturday) at 7.30pm and on September 9 (Sunday) at 3pm. More than 20 elderly participants of the project will take part in the full-length show (in Cantonese) to re-enact their own precious stories from the Central and Western districts.

The Central and Western districts are two important locations on Hong Kong Island, combining the best of East and West. Old Central, characterised by its European influence, was the centre of politics and economic affairs, while old Western district, primarily settled by Chinese people, was a trade port for food products.

The story follows the elderly project participants' recollections of the two districts. Some of them worked diligently in Central to earn a living; some strived to support their children's schooling, hoping they would become professionals in Central; and some were trained to become craftsmen and set up small businesses in the Western district.

The Community Oral History Theatre Project – Central and Western District has been co-organised by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), Chung Ying Theatre Company and the Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council since 2017. Through organising a series of workshops, the project gathered the personal experiences and valuable recollections of the elderly from Central and Western District to come up with a drama script, and provides an opportunity for the elderly to perform their stories onstage.

An outreach performance featuring excerpts of "A Tale of Two Circles" held recently at JC Cube in Tai Kwun was well received by the audience. The upcoming full-length finale with enriched programme contents will provide more delightful and enjoyable performances. To make the performances more meaningful, child actors were recruited earlier in the district. They have been rehearsing intensively since then and will be performing together with the elderly onstage so that the spirit of the elderly can be passed on to the young generation.

Since its launch in 2009, the Community Oral History Theatre Project has been implemented in several districts, namely Sham Shui Po, Kwun Tong, Islands (Tai O), Eastern and Sha Tin districts, and has been well received by the elderly participants and audiences. The project encourages the elderly to participate in arts and cultural activities, and provides them with an

opportunity to recount and perform their stories onstage. In addition, it allows the younger generation to understand the previous generations through the performances and encourages them to reflect on their own lives.

Tickets for "A Tale of Two Circles" priced at \$60 will be available at URBTIX (www.urbtix.hk) from tomorrow (August 8). For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2591 1300 (LCSD) or 8106 8336 (Chung Ying Theatre Company), or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/CE/CulturalService/ab/en/OH_central_western_finale.php.

