

# **“Legends of Lion Dance” exhibition showcases Hong Kong’s cultural heritage, traditional crafts and Cantonese opera in Belgium (with photos)**

Riding on the success of its first two editions held in 2017 and 2018, the "Legends of Lion Dance" exhibition has returned to the port city of Antwerp in Belgium. It is being held at the city's main public library, Bibliotheek Permeke, from January 18 until February 10 to showcase Hong Kong's cultural heritage, traditional crafts and Cantonese opera to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

With the support of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Brussels (HKETO, Brussels) and the Belgium-Hong Kong Society, Asian Events Tofoe , a non-profit-making organisation established by Hong Kong second-generation community members in Antwerp, is presenting 12 unique lion heads made and embroidered in Hong Kong.

Visitors can learn how lion heads are made, the meaning of the lion dance, the traditions of Chinese New Year and their importance in Hong Kong culture. They can also discover the meaning of the Chinese horoscope. Moreover, on the occasion of the opening of the Xiqu Centre in the West Kowloon Cultural District of Hong Kong, this year’s exhibition also introduces visitors to the Cantonese Opera with some Cantonese Opera costumes from Hong Kong being displayed in the exhibition.

Assistant Representative of the HKETO, Brussels, Mr Jeffrey Chim and two Aldermen of the City of Antwerp, Alderman for Sports, Diamonds, and Markets, Mr Ludo van Campenhout, and Alderman for Finance, Mobility, City Parks, Retailers and Decentralisation, Mr Koen Kennis, officiated at the opening reception on January 18, which featured an expertly-performed lion dance attended by over 80 guests.

Speaking at the opening reception, Mr Chim said that the Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has spared no effort in creating an environment conducive to arts and cultural development as well as promoting Hong Kong's strengths in arts and culture. The much-anticipated West Kowloon Cultural District is now taking shape and will be developed into a world-class integrated arts, cultural and entertainment area befitting Hong Kong's status as an international arts and cultural metropolis. The Xiqu Centre, the first major performing arts venue in the Cultural District, would officially open two days later on January 20.

"The Xiqu Centre makes the Cantonese opera, which has been added to the UNESCO representative list of intangible cultural heritage, accessible to the

audiences from around the world and helps develop a locally rooted Cantonese opera network that has a regional impact with an important role in the international arts and culture development," Mr Chim said.

"I am particular glad that today's exhibition shares the same vision of promoting Hong Kong's rich cultural heritage to the Western audiences and allows them to learn more about the dynamic scenes of Hong Kong in different facades," Mr Chim added.

Antwerp has the largest community of Hong Kong emigrants in Belgium and the event is also an opportunity for the second generation of Hong Kong emigrants to learn more about Hong Kong's cultural heritage, to strengthen their bonds with their family's city of origin and to encourage them to develop their career in Hong Kong.

The "Legends of Lion Dance" exhibition is being held until 10 February 2019 at Bibliotheek Permeke in Antwerp. It is open seven days a week and entry is free of charge.

