

[For immediate release]

**Creative Tourism Project “Design District Hong Kong #ddHK”
Enlivens New Harbourfront with 7 Creative Installations
from Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter to Central
Featuring Hong Kong Debut of Acclaimed Skynet Art Series
to “transFORM” Urban Spaces
with Chinese Garden Aesthetics and Tai Hang Fire Dragon Heritage**

(Hong Kong, 3 June 2021) Presented by Tourism Commission, organised by Hong Kong Design Centre (HKDC) since 2018, the 3-year creative tourism project “Design District Hong Kong #ddHK” invite the public to peer into the future with the annual theme “transFORM” in its final year. It injects a good dose of Chinese garden aesthetics and the fire dragon elements into the “open-air design district gallery” branching out from Wan Chai as its grand finale. From 5 June, the harbourfront spanning from Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter to Wan Chai and Central will be enlivened by eye-popping colours and elements.

Victoria Harbour has long been a must-visit destination for both locals and non-locals. #ddHK’s “transFORM” exhibition draws inspiration from Chinese garden elements, such as mountains, rocks, pavilions, ponds, arches, windows, paving, nature and flowing water, and curates 7 sets of creative installations in a curatorial layout inspired by Tai Hang’s fire dragon dance heritage. When viewed from above, the works are scattered along the harbourfront as if a fire dragon is embracing Victoria Harbour (i.e. the oriental pearl). The 7 sets of featured design installations are inspired by Wan Chai history and the city’s colour palette, these installations collectively elevate the experience in the connected harbourfront to a sensory journey filled with poetry and rhythm. Visitors will rest and relax while social distancing and appreciate the transforming new urban harbourfront, enhancing the tourism characteristics of the Victoria Harbour and its harbourfront promenades.

“Travelling is a favourite activity among Hong Kong people. During the epidemic, hiking and outings have replaced travelling abroad as popular holiday activities. Besides discovering the countryside, exploring the city is equally exhilarating. By connecting #ddHK transFORM’s 7 sets of distinctively creative designs, HKDC hopes to pilot a walking and running route for all to explore the heart of Hong Kong. Some of the works merge local culture and tradition in the form of design installations, folk games, stimulating interactive installations, light and sound installations; some are destinations especially designed for use during the epidemic. We hope the visitors, while spending time on staycation, will find in each of the works a moment of well-being that relaxes their bodies and soothes their souls,” said Prof. Eric Yim, Chairman of HKDC.

Ms Sam Lam, Chief Curator of #ddHK and Business Development & Projects Director of HKDC, adds, “As the finale of the 3-year #ddHK, we extend our ‘open-air design district gallery’ from Wan Chai to Central in the section of the harbourfront, being referred to as one of the world’s densest and most spectacular cityscapes, and take the magnificent Victoria Harbour as our backdrop. Around 3 years ago, we began the work of commissioning renowned US artist Patrick Shearn to create the stunning artwork *River of Light* with the inspiration of our spectacular harbour, to bring the internationally acclaimed ‘Skynet Art Series’ and its contemplative immersive experience to Hong Kong. Victoria Harbour, the iconic tourist attraction of Hong Kong, is glazed with a new “limited-time” element of creativity and design. The series was originally inspired by the graceful murmuration of birds flocking together or schools of fish coalescing and moving simultaneously. The kinetic sculpture *River of Light* reminds us that nature is always among us in Hong Kong and it forms part

of our unique cityscape of Oriental Pearl. It also flutters in the wind like the tail of the fire dragon imagery of the exhibition."

Hong Kong has more than once overcome plagues. Over a century ago, people who lived in Tai Hang performed the "fire dragon dance" to drive away a plague. The rite later evolved into a festive tradition and was named a UNESCO intangible cultural heritage. Sam continues, "transFORM presents creative works designed by local and overseas creatives. They are scattered along the harbourfront as if a fire dragon is embracing Victoria Harbour when viewed from above, blessing Hong Kong during the ongoing epidemic."

The 7 sets of transFORM design installations are *The Lead*, *#APARTOGETHER*, *The Ripple of Time*, *Sky Castle*, *Recess at Harbourfront*, *Nature Therapy* and *River of Light*. The 7 sets of works will be displayed at different venues during different exhibition periods. Visitors may visit one or many of them depending on their interests and availability, physically or by virtual means. Please kindly check the details on #ddHK official website to plan your itinerary.

1. Maximising the fun amidst social distancing through creative placemaking and design thinking

Hong Kong is known as a resilient city that is always ready to adapt and rise above challenges. #ddHK shows the same spirit by curating a series of worry-free open spaces using creative placemaking and design thinking so that citizens can get active in the outdoors again with peace of mind.

Inspiriting mountains and rocks: *The Lead @ Harbourfront of Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter*

Display period: from 5 Jun to 4 Jul

As the lead-in of the fire dragon imagery of this exhibition, this #ddHK-shaped installation stands like the artificial mountains and rocks in a Chinese garden pond. The dragon head element resonates with the ending ritual of the Tai Hang fire dragon dance, in which the dragon prop was sent into the sea at the typhoon shelter. Meticulously made by the Tai Hang Residents' Welfare Association using chamber bitter and entirely covered by incense sticks, it embodies the wishes for our homes and echoes with the commissioned work *River of Light* at the end of transFORM.

Following *The Lead* is a series of "dragon pearls" scattered along the harbourfront, forming an image of a kindled fire dragon stretching out.

Pavilions in Chinese gardens: *#APARTOGETHER @ Harbourfront of Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter*

Display period: from 5 Jun to 4 Jul

The social distancing measure that marks the epidemic prompted local architectural design team One Bite Design Studio to rethink how outdoor space should adapt to the new normal. Their creative outcome is *#APARTOGETHER*, a series of pavilion-style outdoor furniture, which enables visitors to rest and hang out "together" while keeping "apart".

From enjoying a quiet sitting moment alone to having a solo ride on a merry-go-round, each of the furniture pieces is thoughtfully designed so that visitors can share-use the facilities without worries and enjoy a special me-time. Seemingly apart but actually together, the seating rids its sitters any feeling of loneliness while providing them with quiet spaces for contemplation, demonstrating how design thinking can bring out the vitality and diversity of the city.

2. Appreciating urban change and energy through Wan Chai's reclamation history

Many parts of Hong Kong were reclaimed from the sea. The earliest land reclamation projects took place in Central and Sheung Wan. In the 20s, it extended to Wan Chai and stretched the coastline northwards from Queen's Road East, subsequently adding Hennessy Road, Gloucester Road, Harbour Road, Convention Avenue, etc., to the neighbourhood. Wan Chai's far-reaching changes are an essential part of Hong Kong's transformation from a fishing village into a modern and international metropolis. #ddHK leads visitors to delve into the district's past and present through design installations that merge tech and design.

Vista-framing arches and windows: Sky Castle @ Water Sports and Recreation Precinct, Wan Chai

Display period: from 5 Jun to 4 Jul (1:00 – 10:00 PM)

Well-known for combining art and tech, Australian multimedia design studio ENESS worked with home-bred design and production team Hattrick Creative to bring the studio's interactive installation *Sky Castle* to Hong Kong. It is composed of twelve 4.5-metre-high and 3-metre-wide inflated archways all of which are integrated with colourful LED lights and speakers. Visitors sauntering through the archways will trigger sounds collected from different corners of our city and be immersed in a dreamy vibe charged with Wan Chai's urban energy. These arches and windows of beauty open up endless splendid scenes that delight eyes, ears and souls.

The pond element essential in Chinese landscape design: The Ripple of Time @ Victoria Park

Display period: from 23 Jun to 26 Jul

The ripples on fountains remind us of the gradual evolution of Wan Chai's coastline over the past century. Local event and visual design agency Double V re-enacts its development through *The Ripple of Time* kinetic installation. They pieced over 2,000 colour panels together to form Hong Kong's world-famous skyline. The panels tap against each other as the pool water undulates, echoing with our rapid pace of life. With the accompanying mobile app, visitors can make a wish, listen to the human stories collected from Wan Chai and find out more about the district's history.

3. Redesigning childhood games with a creative twist and unveiling the beauty of nature

#ddHK engages the public while pursuing creative tourism, rediscovering public spaces together, breathing new life into them, and uncovering untapped possibilities. With a touch of creativity, traditional games we all played growing up can be jazzed up into new amusements. Various sensorial stimulations will also awaken our numbed senses and help us re-embrace nature and the great outdoors.

Uplifting visual rhythm of blue bricks and black tiles: *Recess at Harbourfront @ Central & Western District Promenade (nearby Tamar Park)*

Display period: from 5 Jun to 27 Jun

“Rock Paper Scissors Hopscotch (猜飛機)”, “Grid Traffic Light (格仔紅綠燈)”, “Hopscotch combat (康樂『企』)”... These local games sound familiar but when you look closer, they are not exactly like those we played as kids. The 5 game-inspired floor designs scattered in Central & Western District Promenade were created through a series of public space design workshops led by home-grown creative design team Napp Studio with young and old users. At first glance, they look like household games but you will find them creatively tweaked with whole new sets of rules. Visitors can hop in and give the new-old games a try or come up with their own.

Creating infinite enchanting natural scenery in a definite space: *Nature Therapy presents a set of 5 works –*

Dream Our Rainbow @ Wan Chai Pierside HarbourChill

Display period: from 11 Jun to 27 Jun

See, Hear, Touch, Breathe @Central & Western District Promenade (near Tamar Park)

Display period: from 19 Jun to 4 Jul

Want a breather from hectic daily life? The essence of Chinese gardens is to create infinite enchanting scenery in a definite space with artificial or semi-artificial nature as the skeleton and vegetation as the fabric. Unearthing the versatility of open spaces, local design studio Milk Design created a set of 5 sense-opening works each placed at different spots. They help us immerse in the beauty of nature through our eyes, ears, sense of touch and mindful breathing. The core work of the set *Dream Our Rainbow* engages us in a mindfulness exercise and rewards us with a rare glimpse of a shimmering rainbow.

4. 80-metre sky river flutters above Victoria Harbour **Mirroring unceasing urban hustle then and now**

#ddHK is pleased to commission world-renowned artist Patrick Shearn from US creative studio Poetic Kinetics to create the floating kinetic sculpture *River of Light* with Victoria Harbour as his inspiration. The work marks the debut of the acclaimed "Skynet Art Series" in Hong Kong and the final act of transFORM.

"Wind, rivers, and time flow all around us. The central band running through this artwork represents a river. As similar to the Victoria Harbour, it seems to be a natural border but is in fact a connector linking up different nodes. Rivers are pathways of life, connecting generations together throughout history and connecting different parts of the planet across great distances," said Shearn.

Life-giving flowing water in Chinese gardens: *River of Light* @ Central Harbourfront Event Space

Display period: from 5 Jun to 15 Jun

Opening hours: 1:00-10:00 PM (Last admission at 9:30 PM)

Covering approximately 700 square metres and composed of over 45,000 coloured streamers, this extensive sculpture flutters above Victoria Harbour and Wan Chai North day and night, resonating with *The Lead* at the beginning of transFORM. With a light-reflecting band running through it, this symbolic river scintillates timelessly, connecting the past, present and future of our city with the life, growth and possibility of water. Viewing it from below, visitors will immerse in the work's dynamic yet tranquil presence and revel in Hong Kong's hustle and bustle in another "light".

#ddHK will upload wonderful clips and photos at Facebook and Instagram from time to time. You won't miss any works even if you can't go there in person. Please stay tuned.

- The end -

High-resolution images can be downloaded here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/msmgdwod4shzdm8/AAAwFtlAousGYaPsFbjf9a?dl=0>

Get updates of #ddHK at:

Website: www.designdistrict.hk | Facebook: www.facebook.com/designdistricthk |

Instagram: www.instagram.com/designdistricthk.com

In response to the crowd and site control measures against COVID-19, the works of the design exhibition may be exhibited in different periods. In addition, the exhibition period of each of the creative works may vary depending on venue availability. For the latest exhibition details, please refer to the official website and social media of #ddHK.

About Design District Hong Kong

Design District Hong Kong (#ddHK) celebrates authentic culture and creativity and uses design to liven up the unique “Heung Gong Dei” (a vernacular name of Hong Kong) experience, which embodies our collective local identity and affection for this city made possible by the contribution and perspiration of every Hong Kong citizen.

Presented by Tourism Commission and organised by Hong Kong Design Centre, ddHK envisions Wan Chai and Sham Shui Po as a 3-year pop-up “open-air design district gallery”. Through creatively curated community collaborations, social conversations and participatory design, #ddHK reimagines the future urban lifestyle by reinventing all sorts of public spaces and facilities, from footbridges to fire stations to different types of parks, into the heart of communities and attractive leisure destinations. It collaborates extensively with different design disciplines, including Multimedia, Fashion, Accessories and Textile, Architecture, Graphic Design and Visual Communications, Industrial, Furniture, Service, Exhibition and Display, Interior, Spatial, Landscape, Experience, Social Design, Design Education, etc., and have presented more than 100 original multidisciplinary designs and a number of authentic street events and guided tours.

In the first year (2018/19), #ddHK took the old Wan Chai coastline back in the 1840s as the starting point. From south to north, west to east, design works were installed all across Wan Chai, collating a love letter for the city “Connected City: A Love Letter to Hong Kong”. The scattering works formed a poetic visual vanish point showcasing the evolution of Hong Kong’s urban landscape. In the second year (2019/20), #ddHK is focusing on pop culture under the theme ‘Pop! Get Inspired at Every Turn’. Visitors can savour the surprises and inspirations in streets and alleys. #ddHK peers into the future in its final year (2020/21) with the annual theme “transFORM”. Tourists and locals can also follow the specially planned self-guided routes to explore this ‘open-air design district gallery’ with a series of creative works.

About Hong Kong Design Centre

Hong Kong Design Centre (HKDC) is a non-governmental organisation, and was founded in 2001 as a strategic partner of the HKSAR Government in establishing Hong Kong as an international centre of design excellence in Asia. Our public mission is to promote wider and strategic use of design and design thinking to create business value and improve societal well-being, with the aim of advancing Hong Kong as an international design centre in Asia.

HKDC’s flagship programmes include Business of Design Week (since 2002) – Asia’s leading annual conference and event on Design, Innovation and Brands; DFA Awards (since 2003) – a widely recognised design awards that celebrates outstanding designs with Asian perspectives; Design Incubation Programme (since 2012) and Fashion Incubation Programme (since 2016) – 2-year incubation programmes to nurture 4 future design and fashion entrepreneurs; FASHION ASIA HONGKONG (since 2016) – a fashion initiative combining conversations, interactions and cultural exchanges to energise the city’s image, and position it as an Asian hub for fashion trade and business development; Knowledge of Design Week (since 2006) – an annual thematic design knowledge sharing platform that explores how design can solve complex challenges of our society.

This press release is distributed on behalf of the Organiser by The Sparkling Code. For any enquiries, please contact:

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