

Secretary for Home Affairs opens Chinese Opera premiere in New York (with photo)

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The first Cantonese opera presentation under the "New York Celebrates Hong Kong 2008" festival by a popular Hong Kong opera troupe, Ming Chee Sing Chinese Opera Company, was officially opened today (October 11, New York time) by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Tsang Tak-sing.

The festival, organised by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, New York, is a month-long celebration, commencing October 1, to showcase the evolving "modern heritage" of the continuously vibrant and transformative city of Hong Kong.

Speaking to a full-house audience at Queens Theatre in The Park, New York, Mr Tsang said that Cantonese Opera is a very popular art form and that nearly every night in Hong Kong, there are performances of Cantonese Opera or operatic singing in private theatres or community centres. He further said that Ming Chee Sing Chinese Opera Company is one of the most renowned and popular troupes among many that regularly perform in the city.

Mr Tsang said, "The Hong Kong SAR (Special Administrative Region) Government is working hard to nurture local arts groups, promote public arts education and support cultural exchanges."

Mr Tsang further pointed out that Hong Kong Government is pushing ahead with the West Kowloon Cultural District, a world-class cultural district along the harbour waterfront which, when complete, "will be our own version of the West End with a Manhattan skyline".

Mr Tsang commended the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, New York for hosting the festival, which includes a series of programmes by local and international artists with close ties to Hong Kong.

Aside from the Cantonese opera performances and the related workshops, coming events include an international symposium at the Skyscraper Museum examining the dramatic vertical urbanism of Hong Kong, a modern dance performance by the Hong Kong City Contemporary Dance Company, a discussion by designer Eric Chan and architect/designer Calvin Tsao on design in a global environment, and a Hong Kong cuisine tasting event.

Ends/Sunday, October 12, 2008

