

Immediate Release

West Kowloon Cultural District Authority Announces a Memorandum of Understanding on Dance Exchange and Collaboration with UK's Studio Wayne McGregor



Wayne McGregor offered advice to Una (left photo, front row middle) and Li Han (right photo, front row right) during his visit to Hong Kong at the New Works Forum in 2015 © Cheung Chi Wai

(14 July 2017, Hong Kong) The West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCD) is very pleased to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on a Dance Exchange and Collaboration with the Studio Wayne McGregor Limited (Studio Wayne McGregor) in the United Kingdom.

Running from 2017 to 2020, the Dance Exchange and Collaboration with Studio Wayne McGregor aims to foster artistic dialogue and exploration, support artistic research and development, promote dance learning and participation, as well as realise possible co-production or co-commissioning of performance works between WKCD and the Studio. The three-year collaboration also intends to establish a long-term exchange and cooperation relationship, facilitate understanding and learning between the parties, work collaboratively to strive for the best in artistic development in anticipation of future collaboration between the Dancehouse in the Lyric Theatre Complex of West Kowloon Cultural District and Studio Wayne McGregor.

This newly launched collaboration will see WKCD and the Studio Wayne McGregor organise exchange programmes each year during the collaboration period with programmes varying from artist residencies, studio workshops, research, talks, forums, classes and seminars to online exchanges. Two programmes will be launched in the first year of collaboration – a dance residency for two Hong Kong dance artists, and a co-commissioned project, *Autobiography* by McGregor.

As part of the residency initiative, the Studio will support two Hong Kong dance artists – Li Han and He Yongning (Una) – with support from the Hong Kong Dance Company, to be mentored by Wayne McGregor for a three-week dance residency from 17 July to 5 August 2017. The residency is an

Page 1 of 3

outcome of the New Works Forum that WKCDA presented with the Studio Wayne McGregor in October 2015 in Hong Kong.

The second collaborative programme in 2017 will be the co-commissioning of a new full-length work by Wayne McGregor, an award-winning choreographer and the founder of the Studio. Titled *Autobiography*, the production will see McGregor have his entire genome sequenced by world-leading geneticists. This personal archaeology project will drastically reshape the choreographer's understanding of his own life story, tracing back his ancestral history and the past of our human species. Combining documentary, memoir, and science, *Autobiography* will have its world premiere at the Sadler's Wells Theatre in London, UK from 4 to 7 October 2017. The production's Hong Kong premiere has been set for 2019/2020.

"We are pleased to be officially collaborating with the Studio Wayne McGregor for the next three years," said Louis Yu, Executive Director, Performing Arts, WKCDA. "The West Kowloon Cultural District Authority has been actively programming since its inception and this new Memorandum of Understanding will create further opportunities for international cultural exchange between the District and the UK in addition to some of the world's leading performing arts specialists."

Anna CY Chan, Head of Dance, Performing Arts, WKCDA said, "The Memorandum of Understanding with the Studio Wayne McGregor is yet another exciting and excellent initiative in performing arts that WKCDA has been championing. The partnership strengthens the position of Dance in Hong Kong and its relationship with leading Dancehouses in the world. I look forward to building more relationships with world renowned choreographers, theatres and dance organisations in preparation for the opening of Freespace in 2019 and Lyric Theatre Complex in 2022."

###

For media enquiries

West Kowloon Cultural District Authority:

Louie Tong
Manager, Communications and Public Affairs
+852 2200-0716 / +852 6608-0909
louie.tong@wkcda.hk

International:

SUTTON
Carmen Yam
+852 2528-0792
wkcda@suttonpr.com

Notes to Editors

West Kowloon Cultural District

Located on Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour, the West Kowloon Cultural District is one of the largest cultural projects in the world. Its vision is to create a vibrant new cultural quarter for Hong Kong. With a complex of theatres, performance spaces, and M+, the West Kowloon Cultural District will produce and host world-class exhibitions, performances, and cultural events, as well as provide 23 hectares of public open space, including a two-kilometre waterfront promenade.

Studio Wayne McGregor

Studio Wayne McGregor is the creative engine for choreographer and director Wayne McGregor CBE, and the home of his life-long enquiry into thinking through and with the body. It is a nexus of partners who explore movement, artistry, thought and partnership. With Wayne at its centre, this collaborative network encompasses dancers, writers, composers, producers, software engineers, visual artists, scientists and more.

Studio Wayne McGregor fuels the breadth of Wayne's creative work including the development and touring of signature works on his ensemble of world-class dancers, Company Wayne McGregor; a portfolio of international commissions across genres including dance, visual arts, film, theatre and opera; specialised learning and engagement programmes emboldening individuals in their own creative expression; mentoring and cultivating of other artists; and inquisitive research enterprises which look across science, technology and the arts to provoke questions about some of the extraordinary phenomena of physical thinking.

Li Han

Li Han is the Principal Dancer of the Hong Kong Dance Company. Li graduated from the Department of Chinese Folk Dance at the Beijing Dance Academy in 2007, majoring in Performance and Education. He won the Outstanding Solo Performance Award at the 8th Taoli Cup. Li received a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts in 2009. During this period, he was awarded the Asian Cultural Council Scholarship, sponsored by Citibank, to study at the prestigious Ailey School of Dance in New York. Li joined the Hong Kong Dance Company in 2010, and has danced many lead roles. He was awarded "Outstanding Performance by a Male Dancer" at the 2015 Hong Kong Dance Awards for his performance in L'Amour Immortel. In April 2017, he was appointed Principal Dancer at the Hong Kong Dance Company.

Una, He Yongning

Una, He Yongning is the Dancer of the Hong Kong Dance Company. She graduated from the Guangdong Dance School majoring in Chinese dance, and obtained her Bachelor's degree with first class honours from the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts. She had received several awards and scholarships during her studies. Una has been with the Hong Kong Dance Company since 2012. Her choreography and solo dance piece Wander garnered the Gold Award and Outstanding Female Dancer Award at the Bauhinia Cup International Invitational Competition 2013. She was invited to perform at the Beppu Contemporary Arts Festival in 2015, MASDANZA International Festival 1st Asian Solo & Duo Challenge in Seoul and opening of the i-Dance Festival in 2016. Other choreographic works include Incite, Elysium, Hesitate, Riding River, Cloud Water, Mutineer, and 4 Times 13=? for the Hong Kong Dance Company's 8/F Platform.