



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

**HONG KONG:
BUSINESS OF DESIGN WEEK OPENING**

Thursday 6 December, 2018

The Honourable Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, GBM GBS, Chief Executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

The Honourable Edward Yau Tang-wah, GBS, JP, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

The Honourable Martin Foley MP, Victorian Minister for Creative Industries

Ms Michaela Browning, Australian Consul General to Hong Kong

Professor Eric Yim Chi-ming JP, Chairman, Hong Kong Design Centre

The Honourable Victor Lo Chung-wing, GBM, GBS, JP, Chairman, BODW Steering Committee, Hong Kong Design Centre

Dr Edmund Lee, Executive Director, Hong Kong Design Centre

All distinguished guests

It is wonderful to be here in Hong Kong at the Opening of Business of Design Week.

Naturally, I am proud that Melbourne is the 2018 BODW partner city, the more so as it is the first Southern Hemisphere partner in this event's history.

I am grateful to the many people who have brought this partnership to fruition, and am pleased for a small personal connection, early in its gestation!

In 2015, I had the privilege to meet the Honourable Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, GBM GBS – then Hong Kong's Chief Secretary for Administration – in Melbourne. She spoke with legitimate enthusiasm about Hong Kong's design credentials and its leadership in the region, as showcased by the Hong Kong Design Centre in the Business of Design Week.

I was then fortunate that my path crossed several times with the indefatigable Chairman of the Hong Kong Design Centre, Professor Eric Yim Chi-ming JP, a man with his own brilliant design credentials as well as the commitment to nurturing future talent and pre-eminence in the Hong Kong design community. And the Centre's inspirational Executive Director, Dr Edmund Lee.

I needed no persuasion about Hong Kong's success in this regard.

My husband and I were fortunate to live here in the 1980's.

We enjoyed and respected the clever design we experienced all around us. Whether it was as we enjoyed the cleverly crafted interplay between historical periods and their influences within the city. Or as we marvelled at the design of the MTR system that could move so many millions of people with such relative ease.

And over our frequent visits since then, we have admired how Hong Kong has cemented its reputation for design, and its position as a design hub in the region.

Of course, neither did I need any persuasion as to Melbourne's design credentials.

Design is one of Victoria's fastest growing sectors, and a major part of the State's \$28.4 billion creative economy. More than 135,000 Victorians are employed in design, and we graduate more university-trained designers, including international students, than any other State in Australia.

Design and the creative industries quite simply run through Melbourne's DNA, across sectors that include architecture, fashion, products, services, health, food and digital games. And as a critical capability across all aspects of innovation – a necessity in our nation's fastest-growing and soon to be most populous city.

I cannot think of a better compliment to Melbourne than to sit alongside Hong Kong BODW past partners, such as Sweden, Italy, Barcelona and Chicago.

It is an occasion when I am more than happy – indeed delighted – to be judged by the company that we are keeping.

If we could determine and easily articulate every element that makes a city a beacon of great design, we would no doubt have a concept that we could bottle and sell. And I am aware that, across these next few days, there will be more expert minds than mine discussing the anatomy of great design.

I can only say that I think there is a number of interconnected features. And I can only talk of my own city.

In Melbourne's case, it is a city that, according to The Economist Intelligence Unit, has been ranked as the world's most liveable city for seven consecutive years, and has been, without fail, included in the world's top three.

Certainly, the urban planning and design of our city that dates back to the 19th Century and the confidence, investment and artistry of that time - a legacy of the Gold Rush - does contribute.

But I think that what Melbourne also shares with Hong Kong, and other great design centres, is an understanding that contextually appropriate ideas always underpin the most inspiring and original design, whether it is a black-box flight recorder, polymer banknotes, the cochlear ear implant, or an animatronic dinosaur that can delight and entertain us.

Great design is a collaborative mindset of creativity, conceptual thinking and collaboration.

Thank you to Hong Kong for gathering design talent from all corners of the globe, and for helping to foster that collaborative mindset in this, the largest design event in Asia.

Thank you for the platform you provide for trade and industry in our region.

And thank you for the beautiful backdrop that your city provides, by way of inspiration.