

Legislative Council Panel on Transport
Subcommittee on Matters Relations to Railways

Approach and Updates of MTR Station Art Programme

Purpose

This paper aims to discuss the approach and progress of the incorporation of art in railway stations of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL).

Background

2. The MTRCL is committed to providing a pleasant travelling environment for passengers. In 1998, the “art in MTR” concept was introduced to enhance the travelling environment and showcase the diversity of cultural and historical characteristics of local districts. A comprehensive art programme has also been developed which offers a channel for local artists to exhibit their talent and helps to promote the appreciation of art in Hong Kong.

3. Public participation is important in the station art programme especially for the stations of new railway lines. The MTRCL has asked the local communities to contribute their ideas for the art element for new stations in the preliminary stage of the station design. The aim is to reflect the cultural and historical characteristics unique to each station in the design. By participating in station design, the communities also develop stronger connections to the new railway lines.

Approach

4. The MTRCL takes a number of factors into consideration when determining the type, size and location of artwork to be displayed at railway stations. The priority is that the art piece should not affect the normal operation and passenger flow of stations. Other factors that need to be taken into account include the environment of the station, restrictions of space and technical feasibility. Generally, sculpture and mural are two common types of artwork that are displayed at stations on a long-term basis. Meanwhile, community gallery is a showcase usually for displaying works of students from the local community or non-profit organizations on a short-term basis.

5. In terms of the creation of art, it is being carried out in three ways:
- (a) Local communities along the new railway lines are invited to submit their ideas and contribute to artwork at the new stations to capture special qualities of different districts.
 - (b) The MTRCL joins hands with local art, youth and community groups to develop artwork for the new railway stations.
 - (c) There is an open call for local and overseas artists who have experience in the creation of public art to submit their proposals to the station art programme.

Public Engagement in Art Creation for West Island Line

6. Views of the local residents have been incorporated into the design of West Island Line starting from the preliminary conceptual stage to ensure the railway is tailored to meet the needs of the community. We hope that railway services will become part of the lives of Western District residents when West Island Line starts operation in 2014.

7. One of the objectives of public engagement in station art creation for West Island Line is to enhance the community's understanding of the rich history and culture of the Western District. Through documenting the different images of the district via art and having the collective efforts on the permanent display at railway stations, residents will also develop a greater sense of belonging and connection to the new line. The MTRCL has collaborated with a number of local district and youth groups for the line's community art programme as well to strengthen bonds within the Western District.

"Our Memories of the Western District" Photography Competition

8. Art creation for West Island Line is not restricted to residents in the neighbourhood. "Our Memories of the Western District", one of the art activities of the new line, was a photo contest open to everyone in Hong Kong. The MTRCL co-organized the event with the Central and Western District Council in 2010 to select images which best represent the district. Over 400 entries were submitted and the winning pieces were chosen through online

polling. The winning photographs will be collaged into mega murals for displaying at the concourses of Sai Ying Pun Station, Hong Kong University Station and Kennedy Town Station.

9. To further engage the community, the MTRCL also held a photo collection campaign between 2010 and 2011 to seek more than 10,000 pictures taken in the Western District. These pictures will be incorporated into the aforementioned mega murals at the three new stations.

“Our Impressions of Western District” Workshops and Tours

10. In addition to open competition, the MTRCL also joined hands with local organizations such as the Hong Kong Youth Arts Foundation in 2010 to conduct a series of workshops and tours for students as part of the programme “Our Impressions of Western District”. Under the guidance of professional photographer, illustrator and artist, students captured the unique images of the Western District such as traditional shops, historical buildings and street scenes. The young people’s work will be displayed at lift lobbies, lifts and passageways at the new stations.

11. West Island Line is a good canvas for art creation as one of its stations – Sai Ying Pun Station, will have a space of up to 8,600 square feet to hold artwork, making it the railway station with the largest art space in Hong Kong. Art at Hong Kong University Station will also reflect the university’s centenary with images of the institution’s history to be put up at passageways, lift lobbies and inside the elevators.

MTR New Railway Lines Art in Station 2012

12. The MTRCL and the Art Promotion Office of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department jointly organize the “MTR New Railway Lines Art in Station 2012” which was launched in July this year. It is an open call for proposals for artwork to be displayed along new railway lines. Local and overseas artists with experience in public artwork creation have been invited to join the competition. (Please refer to the annex for details.)

13. An adjudication panel of representatives from the art sector and local community is in charge of selecting the winning pieces. About 300 submissions were received, and 30 of them were shortlisted and exhibited at different stations since November 2012. The shortlisted proposals will be

further assessed and the results of the competition will be announced during the first quarter of 2013. Winners of the competition would be invited to create artwork for the new railway lines.

Art Themes Unique to Each Station for South Island Line (East)

14. The public art programme under South Island Line (East) includes two core themes: “Inspiration of Southern District” and “Integration into Southern District”. The core themes will be executed through open call for proposals and community engagement in artwork development. These two approaches are based on the characteristics of different stations along the railway.

Open call for proposals: Admiralty Station and Ocean Park Station

15. Admiralty and Ocean Park, two prime locations in the territory, are epitomes of the metropolitan city of Hong Kong. Admiralty Station sits in the heart of the territory and it will be the first interchange station for four rail lines in Hong Kong. Ocean Park, meanwhile, is a famous tourist attraction. Contemporary artwork to capture what is unique to these two stations is being planned. MTRCL proposed to place an art piece at the Harcourt Garden landscape deck reprovisioned above Admiralty Station while the artwork for Ocean Park Station will be on display at its concourse. Under the “MTR New Railway Lines Art in Station 2012” competition as mentioned above, high-calibre artists who have previous experience in public art development have been invited to submit proposals through open call for the artwork at these two stations. The MTRCL is also studying the feasibility of adding three more large artworks at Admiralty Station.

Community Engagement in Art Work Development: Wong Chuk Hang Station, Lei Tung Station and South Horizons Station

16. Wong Chuk Hang, Lei Tung and South Horizons are places with diverse characteristics and rich local history. Therefore specific themes have been proposed for artwork at each of these stations.

- (a) “Birds in Wong Chuk Hang” will be the theme for Wong Chuk Hang Station and the artwork will be used to decorate a canopy column and footbridge ceiling at a station entrance. The artwork will be jointly developed by local artists and youth or community groups.

- (b) For Lei Tung Station, the theme will be “Folk Customs and Rituals of the Fishing Community” given the station’s proximity to the Aberdeen Typhoon Shelter. Local artists and students will take photographs of community rituals and festive decorations on fishing boats. These photographs will be made into pictures with traditional Chinese paper cutting techniques then printed on glass wall at a lift and lift lobby at the station.
- (c) “Horizon and Sea” will be the theme for South Horizons Station to highlight the station’s close association with the sea. An artist will guide local youth groups to develop a mosaic mural to be placed at the station.

Artwork for Kwun Tong Line Extension

17. The “MTR New Railway Lines Art in Station 2012” also covers the Kwun Tong Line Extension. For this new railway line, there will be three locations for art pieces at Ho Man Tin Station: two at the forecourt outside entrance B and another will be hung at the ceiling of a new footbridge along Chatham Road North near the station. The MTRCL is also working with local art groups to study the artwork locations and themes for Ho Man Tin Station and Whampoa Station.

Other New Railway Lines

18. Artwork to be displayed at stations along Shatin to Central Link will adopt the same principles for other railway lines mentioned above: the objectives are to strengthen community engagement and provide a more pleasant journey for passengers. Plans for the Hong Kong Section of Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link are different. Since the express rail link will be a major cross-boundary transport connection and the terminus is next to the West Kowloon Cultural District, the art programme of the terminus will be more international and of a larger scale. The MTRCL is currently working on this programme.

Conclusion

19. With the five new railway projects under construction, the MTRCL hopes to bring in more art and local elements to the new lines. The aspiration is that the comprehensive art programme will offer more room to show the talent of local artists and bring a diversity of art into the daily lives of the local communities.

MTR Corporation
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MTR New Railway Lines Art in Station 2012

Theme of Artwork

- To promote the cultural, social, geographic and environmental characteristics of the relevant local district

Participants

- Hong Kong artists with experience in public artwork creation
- Overseas artists who are interested in participating can team up with Hong Kong local residents.

Awards

- Entrants whose proposals are shortlisted will each receive a cash award of HK\$10,000 and those submitting a winning proposal may get a commission offer.

Result Announcement

- 1st Quarter of 2013

Summary of Six Artwork Locations

Railway Line/ Station	Location	No. of Artwork
West Island Line		
Kennedy Town Station		
1	Concourse	1 pair; free-standing; indoor
Kwun Tong Line Extension		
Ho Man Tin Station		
2	Forecourt outside Station facing Entrance B	1 free-standing; outdoor
3	Forecourt near Entrance B1	1 free-standing; outdoor
4	Footbridge across Chatham Road North	1 ceiling-hung in covered area; outdoor

South Island Line (East)		
Admiralty Station		
5	Landscape Deck of Harcourt Garden above Station Extension	1 free-standing; outdoor
Ocean Park Station		
6	Concourse	1 free-standing; indoor