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Reuse

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# President's Message

## 會長語

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Editorial Team and Publication Committee for the in-depth investigation of re-use in our city that you can read about in the case studies and theoretical speculations that fill the articles of this issue of the HKIA Journal.

Over the last decade, a number of historic buildings have been preserved and transformed for new uses. Some of them, such as Tai Kwun, Central Market and The Mills, have been well received by the public. Others have been less successful. This issue is a timely reflection on how we can learn from the past and chart future paths to preserve and re-use our built heritage for the public's enjoyment and to enrich our city's culture. Old buildings, such as temples built in Qing Dynasty, the Victorian-era Murray House, traditional Hakka walled villages and post-war tong lau form an important part of our city's history and identity. With the public's growing awareness of the need to preserve our city's legacy, society is more willing to invest the necessary resources to revitalise old buildings for new public uses. The numerous social media posts of Instagrammable buildings and public places are just the tip of the iceberg of this growing public interest in memorable architecture.

Architects as custodians of built heritage must work to give older buildings a second life, especially when it comes to making them vessels for public enjoyment. Their design efforts and other inputs matter. Architecture that embraces the old as well as the new can create a liveable and culturally rich city. Hong Kong is a city with diversity and history. We should work with all stakeholders to preserve and reuse our buildings, not only as the public face of Hong Kong but also, through innovative adaptive reuse and placemaking, as architecture that can be enjoyed by all walks of life.

This issue of the HKIA Journal records the efforts by our profession to preserve and re-use buildings. The article writers and symposium panelists have most generously shared their views on these topics. I hope readers are stimulated by the different approaches to re-think the exciting endless possibilities of re-use for our city.

Donald Choi 蔡宏興  
FHKIA, Registered Architect, APEC Architect  
President

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# Reuse 再利用

Thomas Chung 鍾宏亮

Editorial 編者言

This issue on Reuse is bracketed by the symposia on 'Public space and Culture' as well as 'Future'. Weijen Wang opens the 'Reuse in Public' section by observing how recent adaptive reuse projects in Hong Kong have created inside-out public places by opening up previously private courtyards. For Wang, these public reuse projects embody the city's urban process, from revaluing authentic materiality of construction to allowing consensus-building among different stakeholders.

For Tai Kwun, Herzog & de Meuron are architecturally inspired by the found conditions, while Brian Anderson contends that professional completion of a project is just part of the revitalisation process for any building reuse which requires meticulous execution as well as risk-taking and bold decision-making. For PMQ, Alice Yeung emphasizes the importance of the community-enabling function in any sustainable rejuvenation of heritage buildings. Tony Lam describes the long-awaited transformation of Central Market into an urban oasis that now offers cultural variety within a curated heritage leisure experience.

At The Mills in Tsuen Wan, Ray Zee explains the juxtaposing of existing structures with new interventions using the design principle of 'old as old and new as new' and highlights the programmatic integration of retail, museum and incubator start-ups with a textile-related theme. For Oil! (Oil street Art Space) in North Point, Lesley Lau presents an art space in the neighbourhood, promoting creative collaborations through experimental art practices and unconventional curatorial strategies. Referring to Ruskin and Scarpa among others, Donald Choi reminds us that conservation is primarily a means to treasure successive layers of human activities marking the inevitable passing of time.

The 'Reuse in Culture' section begins with the Bishop Hill Underground Reservoir controversy that

triggered a city-wide debate on heritage conservation in Hong Kong. The unearthing of a century-old architectural gem also revealed a maturing conservation consciousness through the social media driven civil society response. The future of this graded infrastructural heritage also provided the topic for the HKIA Young Architect's Award 2020 – of which the three winning schemes with innovative reuse design ideas are included.

For the Green Hub in Tai Po, Billy Tam recalls the process of adapting the old police station for low-carbon living, including the breakthrough success of timber roof structure restoration. For the Tiger Balm Gardens, Roger Wu recounts how its conversion into Haw Par Music eventually took this cross-cultural exchange via music, heritage and the arts beyond the designing of place itself. Lawrence Mak considers how the Urban Renewal Authority's multi-faceted conservation of tong laus at 618 Shanghai Street offers a toolkit for dealing with the complexities of urban conservation in Hong Kong. Edward Leung wraps up the section by using the metaphor of the 'Ship of Theseus' to contextualise the ethics of conservation as a regeneration of cultural associations and meanings through disciplined change.

The 'Platform' section starts with Bob Pang's call to consider Brutalist architecture as future heritage. Patrick Hwang and Otto Chung explore the role of representation in pedagogy and as a vehicle for metaphoric re-imagination of urban heritage respectively. Carmen Tsui advocates for conserving post-war modernist heritage, while Wendy Ng evokes her childhood memories as motivation to turn State Theatre into a cultural oasis for the community. Fanny Ang shares her joyful experience in restoring the Duddell Street steps and gas lamps, while Emily Bovino reflects on the irreversible renewal of Kwun Tong's Yue Man Square.