

Acting D(SG) Eric Lee's remarks at
Reception of "Beyond: Really Love You the Musical"
(April 18, 2019, Singapore)

Clifton (Mr Clifton Ko, Producer and Director of "Beyond: Really Love You The Musical"), Philip (Mr Philip Chan, President of the Hong Kong Singapore Business Association), distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening! Welcome you all to the reception of "*Beyond: Really Love You the Musical*". I would also like to welcome director Mr Clifton Ko and his Spring-Time Experimental Theatre back in Singapore with us this evening.

Thank you for bringing to us the music of *Beyond*. It is not just about the good music, but also I am sure many of us here have good memories associated to the band and the music. I grow up listening to *Beyond*. Their songs always bring back the fond memories during my school days, and in fact the good time when my Singaporean friends brought me to karaoke – I am surprised some of them know *Beyond*'s songs better than I do.

For those who may not be too familiar with *Beyond*, the band is an iconic Cantopop band in Hong Kong from 1980s to 1990s. Cantopop has become an important component of Hong Kong's local culture with a sensation of Hong Kong and an identification with a Hong Kong society. As their popularity spread across many Asian countries and overseas Chinese communities, Cantopop artists and their songs have been playing a significant role in promoting various exchanges between Hong Kong and other countries. I am always fascinated to see how pop culture brings people together. Just a few days ago I saw a doctor. After knowing I am from HK, he started speaking to me in very fluent Cantonese. He told me he learnt the language by listening to songs of Alan Tam, Leslie Cheung, or watching TVB drama. In fact Director Ko also contributed a lot to our pop culture. "家有喜事" is my all-time favourite.

Beyond is widely considered as the most successful and influential Cantopop band from Hong Kong. They became prominent in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Mainland China, and overseas Chinese communities. Their signature songs, such as “*Really Love You 真的愛你*”, “*Boundless Oceans, Vast Skies 海闊天空*”, “*Glorious Years 光輝歲月*” and many others, were great hits then and golden classics now. Unfortunately, after the sad departure of the leader Wong Ka-kui in 1993, the band has undergone a lot of changes and disbanded. Nevertheless, their legacy in Hong Kong’s Cantopop culture has become our collective memories.

Just one year ago, Clifton and his Theatre presented the musical “*Shooting Star 喝采*” in Singapore, receiving big applauses from the audience here. If you have enjoyed the musical last year, I’m sure you would be excited to look forward to another splendid performance of them later this evening.

“*Beyond: Really Love You the Musical*” made its debut in Hong Kong in February last year. Earning high praise locally, the production planned its touring presentations with Singapore as the first stop outside Hong Kong. We should be glad to be the first overseas audience of the show, which will bring us a reminiscent evening of songs and performance to pay tribute to Hong Kong’s legendary band *Beyond*.

Thanks to Clifton and his team. Later this evening we will be revisiting in one go some 30 songs of *Beyond* in the musical depicting the sweet and bitter paths of four young musicians in the fight for success in their music career. The musical will showcase the most multi-talented Hong Kong artists who have attained world class singing, acting and dancing skills. Working with a number of Singaporean production crew members, the musical is indeed a collaboration of talents from Hong Kong and Singapore, enhancing cultural exchanges of the two places. To encourage more cultural exchange, Clifton also took the opportunity to talk with a group of students from Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts in a seminar this afternoon. I am pleased to know that there was a fruitful sharing between Hong Kong’s performing arts veteran and passionate Singaporean young people.

With one of our missions to promote Hong Kong's soft power in arts and culture in Singapore, Vietnam, Laos and India, we are committed to supporting arts groups in Hong Kong to stage performances in this region. To demonstrate the vibrancy and excellence of Hong Kong's arts and cultural sector, we will endeavor to connect Hong Kong's arts groups of various genres to the local arts circles and audience here. So please stay tuned for our future cultural activities.

Last but not least, I wish the performance a great success tonight. Thank all of you for joining us. Please stay relaxed and have an enjoyable evening.