

PRESS RELEASE - For Immediate Release

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A new home for Italian Language and Culture in Hong Kong



The Dante Alighieri Society opens its new centre in the Hong Kong Arts Centre

Hong Kong SAR, 20 October 2021– On October 28, 2021, the Dante Alighieri Society will celebrate the Grand Opening of its brand-new centre on the 7th floor of the prestigious Hong Kong Arts Centre in Wan Chai.

The official ceremony will take place in the Louis Koo Cinema (upper basement of the Hong Kong Arts Centre), in the presence of the Consul General of Italy, Mr. Clemente Contestabile, and the Hong Kong Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr. Caspar Tsui. The Ambassador of Italy to the People's Republic of China., Mr. Luca Ferrari and the President of the Dante Alighieri Society in Rome, Mr. Andrea Riccardi will also share their video-greetings. After the official speeches, the audience will enjoy music performances by the talented Italian conductor and clarinettist Lorenzo Iosco accompanied by a string quartet, performing Donizetti and Morricone's pieces, and the Jazz Duo made up by the Dutch singer Meg Van Wyk and the French guitarist Antoine Richard, who will play famous Italian pop songs with a jazzy touch. An international ensemble of supporters, musicians, and friends with a shared love for Italy, her language, and her culture.

This is a milestone for the Italian cultural centre that has been actively promoting Italian language and culture in Hong Kong since the beginning of the last century. The first committee of the Dante Alighieri Society in Hong Kong traced back to 1934, founded by Eugenio Volpicelli, the Italian Consul General at that time.

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Lingua e Cultura Italiana

From 2007 the Society has been directed by the President Mr. Bruno Feltracco and a group of active directors that have set the foundation to make the Dante Alighieri Society the main centre in Hong Kong to learn Italian language and get closer to the beauty of the Italian culture and lifestyle. With a young and motivated team of professional teachers, all native speakers, the Society has been able to offer quality teaching with innovative methods. They are now organizing lessons in presence, online, and in a blended mode.

Every week, more than 200 students attend classes and workshops. In collaboration with the Consulate General of Italy in Hong Kong, the Italian Cultural Institute, and the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong and Macao, the Dante Alighieri Society managed to organize hundreds of cultural events over these years, covering many different subjects: from Italian food and wines to the Italian design, from Italian history and architecture to Italian art and music. In 2019 it has obtained official recognition by the Hong Kong government as a charitable entity.

For these reasons, the new, larger, and beautiful venue situated in the Hong Kong Arts Centre, places the Dante Alighieri Society and the Italian culture to where they naturally belong, in the heart of the main Hong Kong cultural hub, together with cultural institutions such as the Hong Kong Art School, Goethe-Institut Hongkong, and the Hong Kong Arts Festival Society Ltd.

This relocation has been made possible thanks to the enormous help from the Italian Consul-General, and the generous support of local companies and foundations such as the Chinese-Italian Cultural Society, Sino Group, WINDTRE, International Atelier Limited, and the Rusy & Purviz Shroff Charitable Foundation. This huge support from major local entities attests the strong recognition for the important job that the Dante Alighieri Society has done for the local community in these years.

In addition, the notable artist Simon Ma generously donated to the Dante Alighieri Society a beautiful bronze three-dimensional calligraphy statue dedicated to the poet Dante Alighieri, which contributes to making this new space unique.

Such important step will allow the Dante Alighieri Society to increase its activities, thus helping the Hong Kong people to get closer to Italy, her language, and her culture. The new school is probably the best way to celebrate the 700th anniversary of the death of the great poet Dante Alighieri, the father of the Italian Language, that falls this year. Dante Alighieri in his masterpiece, the Divine Comedy wrote:

"You were not made to live like brutes, but to follow virtue and knowledge"

Hong Kong has now a new place where his advice could be followed.

Notes to Editors:

- Attached please find some high-resolution photos of Dante Alighieri Society Limited in its new premises in the Hong Kong Arts Centre.
- For press tour and interview arrangements, please contact Mr. Francesco Marascia at francesco@ladante.cc. or Ms Tracy Chan at tracy@ladante.cc
- For information on our Italian language courses for adults and children, please visit <http://ladante.cc/>

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