

SCMP

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Arts hub shows hypocrisy of government

A number of distinguished people appeared on TV recently supporting West Kowloon Cultural District. They all had impressive titles, which were intended to give credibility to their statements. But the whole scene seemed contrived.

It reminds me of the old Chinese saying that "those who justify themselves do not convince".

A truly outstanding person needs no introduction. Albert Einstein comes to mind and so does Bill Gates.

When people talk a lot about culture, one knows that culture is in trouble. Which is another way of saying that we don't harp on matters that are self-evident and universally true.

So what does a cultural district mean? For most people, it means an area devoted to a grouping of human activities that celebrates the enlightenment and excellence of the arts and culture.

There is nothing wrong with that except when it means a massive landfill dumped into our harbour and a budget that rivals the gross national product of a third world nation.

To proceed with such a development while failing to protect our cultural heritage, the harbour and the countryside is hypocrisy.

An RTHK programme showed that it took six departments and six working days before illegal dumping of industrial waste could be stopped in the countryside. The government's priorities are questionable.

For me, a cultural district means more towers of Babel and more excuses to poison our sky and Earth.

Another building project is the last thing this cluttered and stifling city needs.

It would be a great tragedy if we spend millions of dollars on an overseas expert to lecture us on the fine arts while failing to see the artists that we are.

Let me explain. The greatest work of art is Earth. As inhabitants, we are artists in residence, so to speak. Imagine this planet as a living canvas and we each have a paint brush. We decide how the canvas looks. The Aurora Borealis, the Grand Canyon, the Great Barrier Reef and even Lantau Island are works of nature that far exceed in their beauty any work of which Michelangelo or Jackson Pollock could have ever dreamed.

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