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Hong Kong comics

By Wang Han Source:Global Times Published: 2015-12-9 18:38:01



Comic books from Hong Kong have created many classic works over time, such as Old Master Q, McDull and Chinese Hero. Their story lines, settings and personalities tend to reflect the unique lifestyle, values and spirit of Hong Kong residents.

An exhibition of popular works of three generations of Hong Kong cartoonists, rare comic book collections and other animation-related items is currently on display in Shanghai. Representative works from Hong Kong's most influential cartoonists including Alfonso Wong, Wong Yuk-long and Ma Wing-shing are highlights.

Wong Chak is the elderly son of Alfonso Wong, the creator of one of Hong Kong's longest-running comic strips, Old Master Q. Through the main character, an elderly Cantonese man, Wong made subtle social commentary about the struggles of 1960s Hong Kong while poking fun at its local society.

Wong Yuk-long, who wrote and created Oriental Heroes and Weapons of the Gods, is regarded as the "Godfather of Hong Kong comics." Comic artist Ma Wing-shing is best known for creating the Fung Wan and Chinese Hero series, whose artwork is credited for the modern day characteristics of manhua (the mainland equivalent of Japanese manga).

The timeless works of these Hong Kong artists have been closely followed over the decades by their fans in Shanghai, many who are now middle-aged. The exhibition allows their mainland readers to recall and relive their old days as comic-devouring youth.

"Old Master Q was my favorite comic figure, because he always dealt with troubles in his life in a humorous way," an older Shanghai resident told the Global Times. "His character reflected the fighting spirit of Hong Kong people and has deeply influenced me."

Borderless language

As art is generally considered a "borderless language," organizers of the Shanghai event are attempting to promote old and new Cantonese comics as a medium to spread the lifestyle and spirit of Hong Kong into the mainland.

But this exhibition is also being seen as continuing the long-term cooperation and communication between Hong Kong and Shanghai governments and businesses. "Cooperation in our creative industries is an important part of the bigger cooperation blueprint between Hong Kong and Shanghai," said Victoria Tang Chung-man, director of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Affairs in Shanghai.

With the rising global status of Shanghai and its rapid economic development over the past decade, an increasing number of Hong Kong residents are choosing to settle and work here. According to statistics, there are approximately 80,000 to 100,000 Hong Kong people in Shanghai, including entrepreneurs, executives, financial professionals, lawyers, performers, artists and students.

As international metropolises, Shanghai and Hong Kong share many traits. Both are financial hubs for Asia and the world, with fast-paced lifestyles and high costs of living. Deeply influenced by Western cultures, these two cities also boast the most cultural diversity and the largest foreign populations in all of Asia.

A sense of belonging

To meet the social, cultural, educational and business needs of Hong Kong people now living in Shanghai, the Shanghai Hong Kong Association was established in August of this year. "Our goal is to organize more activities to unite and connect our Hong Kong fellows in this city," said Shanghai Hong Kong Association president and Hong Kong deputy to the 12th National People's Congress Yao Cho-fai.

"I am a newcomer to Shanghai, and lack a sense of belonging. But this kind of activity helps me meet other Hong Kong people," one Hong Kong native in attendance at the event told the Global Times.

Also attending the exhibition's debut, ongoing and free to the public for the next three weeks at the HUB mall in Hongqiao CBD, were legendary Hong Kong artist Lee Wai-Chun and newcomer Keung Chi-kit, authors of best-selling comic book series Miss 13 Dots and Samba AMIGO, respectively.

In the 1960s, many young women in Hong Kong grew up reading Miss 13 Dots, a name originating from Shanghainese dialect referring to a modern but silly young woman. The female character in this comic became a pop culture icon among young Cantonese and mainland women, who often took the books to their tailor to copy her latest appearance and fashion.

"This comic exhibition is a new attempt at cultural exchange between Shanghai and Hong Kong," Zhao Weixing, vice president of Shanghai Chinese Overseas Friendship Association, said. "And through an activity like this, we can bring out more communications between Hong Kong and Shanghai while helping Shanghai's Hong Kong community develop better."



(From left) Yao Cho-fai, Zhao Weixing, Lee Wai-chun, Victoria Tang Chung-man, Keung Chi-kit and a representative from Comix Home Base officiate at the opening ceremony of the exhibition.



Children pose with McDull, a classic Hong Kong cartoon pig, at the exhibition.

Photos: Courtesy of the Shanghai Hong Kong Association and Wang Han/GT

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港漫老友記 好運迎新年



From left (From left) Yao Cho-fai, Zhao Weiming, Lee Wai-chun, Victoria Tang Chung-man, Keung Chi-kit and a representative from Comic Home Base officiate at the opening ceremony of the exhibition. Children pose with McDull, a classic Hong Kong cartoon pig, at the exhibition. Photos: Courtesy of the Shanghai Hong Kong Association and Wang Han/GT

► Exhibition featuring three generations of Cantonese cartoonists comes to Shanghai

HONGKONG COMICS

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With the rising global status of Shanghai and its rapid economic development over the past decade, an increasing number of Hong Kong residents are choosing to settle and work here. According to statistics, there are approximately 20,000 to 100,000 Hong Kong people in Shanghai, including entrepreneurs, executives, financial professionals, lawyers, performers, artists and students.

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