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**For Immediate Release**

## **Hong Kong Maritime Museum to close its public galleries and adopt Virtual Mode**

Hong Kong, 26 March 2020 - In response to recent Hong Kong SAR Government announcements regarding the operation of commercial premises during the coronavirus public health threat, the Hong Kong Maritime Museum (HKMM) will be temporarily closed\* but accessible to the general public in 'virtual mode' with effect from Saturday 28th March 2020, until further notice.

The public galleries of HKMM and the Museum shop will be closed\* until further notice and visitors will instead be encouraged to visit the extensive virtual facilities via its website <https://www.hkmaritimemuseum.org>.

"Many famous museums, like the Louvre in Paris, are becoming virtual museums open to online guests from all over the world, 24 hours a day, by offering a vibrant online presence with realistic virtual tours of its galleries. These difficult times offer us the opportunity to follow suit by adopting a 'virtual mode' and further developing our online presence," says Museum Director, Richard Wesley.

HKMM's partner organisation, The Nesbitt Centre, which runs the Café 8 social enterprise, also located at Central Pier 8, will remain open but with limited seating, arranged at safe distances and with a range of preventive health measures in place, including temperature checks and hand sanitizer being provided on arrival.

As an independent and private organisation, HKMM was one of very few cultural institutions in the city to remain open during the recent health crisis. It tightened its health protective measures and allowed carefully regulated numbers of visitors to enjoy its collections but it too will close its galleries from 28th March onwards until further notice, in the interests of public health.

The Museum will offer its virtual visitors special online features such as *Nautic Quest* (<https://www.nauticquest-yuto.com/>) (supported by the Maritime and Aviation Training Fund), a multi-media, interactive, encyclopaedic platform for maritime learning where guests can go on-board a mega-cargo ship and experience what it is like to travel across the ocean, without getting seasick. With a wide range of maritime topics, *Nautic Quest* aims to enrich the knowledge of students and the general public on the most precious natural resource of Hong Kong—our harbour—and its deep connections with a host of local maritime industries.

Online exhibits of the HKMM collection, ranging from China trade history, Dragon boat to pirates are available on Google Arts and Culture via <https://bit.ly/2QKM8ek>

Online distance learning facilities for schools and colleges will also be progressed. This will include Slow Art Day (a joint project with City University students) in April and International Museum Days in May. For modes of participation please refer to the HKMM website in due course, which also offers downloadable activity sheets related to the port history of Hong Kong, China trade and STEM topics related to shipping and navigation. There is also access to the *Canton Trade Game* for the Roblox

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gaming platform and Green Island Lighthouse story on the HKMM YouTube channel.

\*Pre-booked corporate event will proceed as scheduled, please refer to respective company's website for event details during this period.

Click [here](#) to download images

### About Hong Kong Maritime Museum

The Hong Kong Maritime Museum (HKMM) was founded by members of the Hong Kong Shipowners Association committed to helping the Hong Kong community and visitors to Hong Kong explore the city's unique maritime heritage. HKMM was named as a TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Top 10 Museum in China in 2017, and is an independent, non-profit registered charity supported by the shipping industry, the business community, private individuals and the Hong Kong SAR Government. HKMM is a cultural institution that tells the story of trade and maritime history in Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta, and the vital roles ships and the sea play in our past, present and future.

The Museum opened its door to the public at Murray House in Stanley in 2005 and relocated to Central Pier No. 8 in the heart of the Central Harbour Waterfront in 2013. Today the Museum displays about 1,000 objects in 15 galleries, attracting about 130,000 visitors annually. HKMM also houses various event spaces, resource centre, a roof-top social enterprise café, and gift shop that contribute to visitors' experiences. HKMM engages with the community of Hong Kong by actively engaging in education and public programming offered to schools, adults, community groups and families.

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