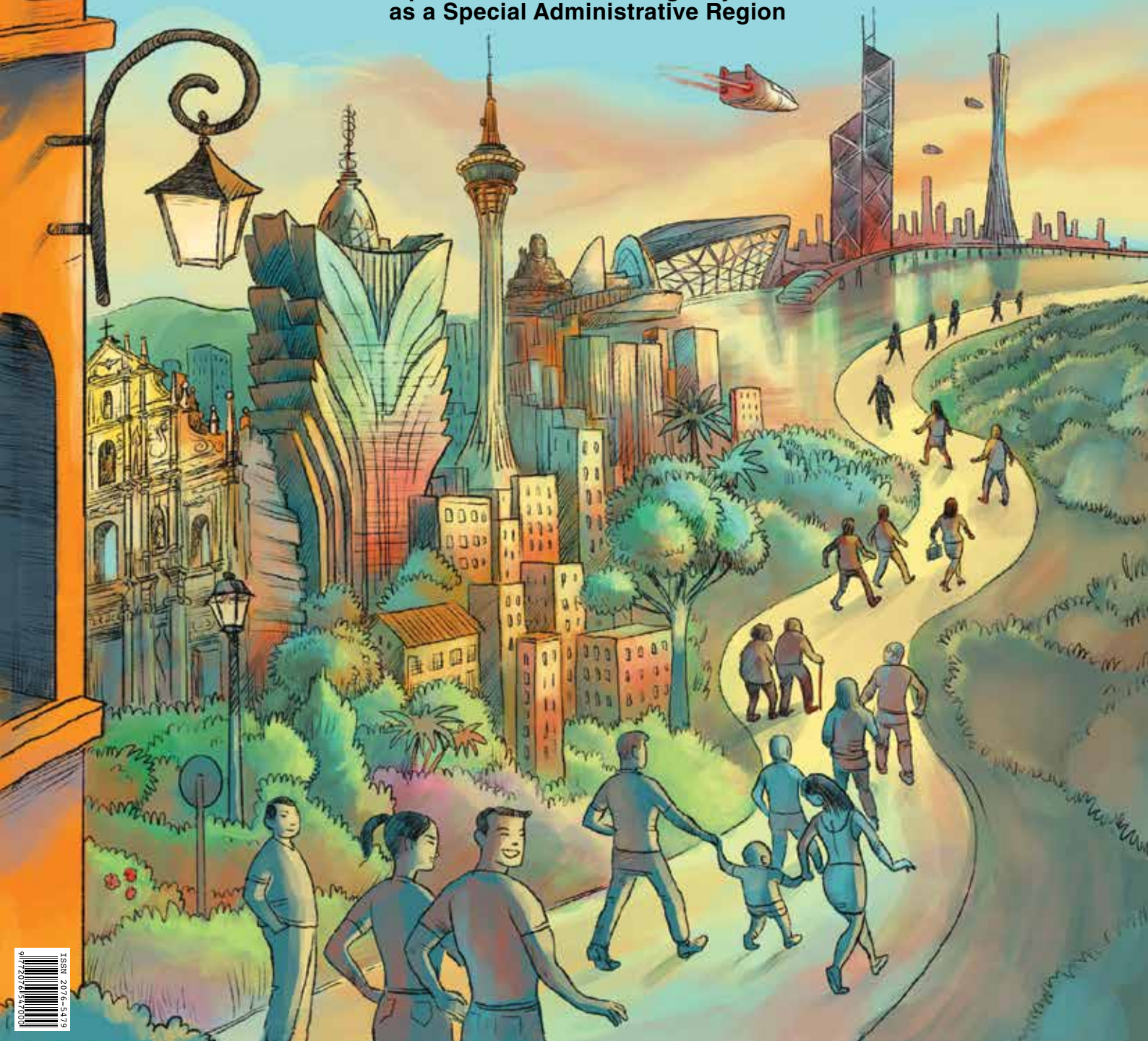


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The Road to the Future

Special issue celebrating 20 years
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IN THIS ISSUE



20th Anniversary Special

To toast two decades since we celebrated the handover of Macao's administration to China on 20 December 1999, our special section is devoted to the past, present and future of our Special Administrative Region. **p.12-61**



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Meet our team

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Cover Illustration Adolfo Arranz. The Road to the Future illustrates the journey from the Macao of the past to the Macao of the future as part of the Greater Bay Area

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CELEBRATING TWO DECADES AS A SAR

A special issue dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Macao Special Administrative Region.

Twenty years have passed since that historical day on 20 December 1999, when Macao's administration was handed over to China. There were celebrations then and, two decades on, there will be celebrations again on 20 December 2019. As a tribute, we've put together a special section of this November issue to look back at the unprecedented growth in the SAR over 20 years and to look forward to the next two decades and much further beyond. Join us in our celebration of all things Macao past, present and future...

History in the making

Text **Raquel Dias**

Unprecedented economic growth. Increasing numbers of tourists. A new-look city with a more affluent population. Macao has transformed over the past 20 years. We look back at what's changed in the SAR since its birth on 20 December, 1999.

Wind the clock back 20 years. Macao was a city of around 437,000 people, occupying an area of just 23.8 square kilometres. It was under the administration of Portugal, as it had been since 1557. It received around seven-and-a-half million visitors a year and had just over 7,000 students enrolled in higher education. Looking around, there were no huge gaming and entertainment resorts – Cotai wasn't even built yet – and the Bank of China was the tallest building in the city's skyline. Only two bridges connected Macao to Taipa and the famous Macao Tower was only just under construction.

But on 20 December, 1999, a new dawn broke over Macao. An exciting new dawn that would see this city grow at a rapid rate and become the beautiful, economically vibrant metropolis we know today. The establishment of the Macao Special Administrative Region, a handover of administration from Portugal to China, began an era that would see the social fabric, economic fortunes and actual geography of the city change at a rapid pace.

As the city prepares to celebrate 20 years since the handover of administration on 20 December – at a time when the population stands at almost 670,000, the land area has increased by almost 40 per cent to 32.9 square kilometres, the visitors to the city have rocketed more than 400 per cent to roughly 40 million a year and there are more than 34,000 students in higher education – it's worth looking back over the past two decades to examine what has got the SAR to the prosperous, dynamic and forward-thinking point it stands at now.

A SAR is born: thousands of Macao residents brave the freezing cold as a countdown clock strikes its last second on 19 December 1999, and the city's administration transfers from Portugal to China



The first steps

Journalist, historian and local author João Guedes has been in Macao since 1987. He was here for the 1999 celebrations. “I believe that the great challenges fell on the SAR's first Chief Executive, Edmund Ho,” he says, “as he had to guarantee all the great political changes. However, Chui Sai On – who is just now leaving office – maintained Ho's legacy and took important strides to guarantee one of the great pillars of any society: education.”

Indeed, the numbers corroborate Guedes' statement. Macao, since before 1999, has gradually grown its higher education offering to four universities and six higher education institutions. The Macau University of Science and Technology, which was founded in 2000, and the Millennium College, established in 2001, are both products of post-1999 Macao, as is the Macau Institute of Management, which was founded in 1988 but upgraded to a higher education institution in 2000. Over the past two decades, under Edmund Ho and Chui Sai On, the SAR has seen an incredible growth rate of just over 380 per cent when it comes to the amount of students in higher education. A testament to the focus the government has put on education.

Teresa Netto Rodrigues arrived in Macao the same way all visitors did back in 1989: via ferry. She had flown from Europe to Hong Kong and then took the boat to Macao's old ferry terminal. “I was coming from Portugal,” she says, “where I had lived for a few years after having left Mozambique, where I was born.” Rodrigues says she was struck by the buildings and the heat but she stayed until 2010 before returning to Lisbon. She looks back fondly at her years in Macao, however. “It was a completely different city back then,” she says. “Much smaller than it is today. I was fascinated by everything but eventually I realised it had a lot of social problems to be solved.”

Rodrigues came to Macao to serve as one of Governor Carlos Melancia's advisors and then she served the same role for Vasco Rocha Vieira, the last of Macao's Portuguese Governors. She says that in 1999, the city was ‘getting into shape’ and the handover of administration, when it came on 20 December, was a ‘smooth process’. “Thanks to the



João Guedes

collaboration of the central government,” she says, “it was possible to establish the Special Administrative Region in real social harmony. Looking back, I find it silly that we questioned the viability of the ‘One Country, Two Systems’ principle. It works much better than anyone could imagine.”

Building for the future

Architect José Joaquim Dias specialised in social housing and came to Macao to work at the Housing Institute in 1990. He too recalls just how different the city was back then. “Since 1999,” he says, “I believe the city has changed completely. Not only has it grown in area but the social fabric has changed with it.”

According to Dias, Macao has ‘experienced profound physical changes’ over the past 20 years. “I would say the greatest change to Macao's landscape since 1999 has been the Seac Pai Van Public Housing Complex in Coloane,” he says. “Macao is a unique case because of its high population density. Even when I first arrived in the city, I was overwhelmed by the sheer amount of people walking on the streets each day. You didn't then – and you still don't now – see so many people on busy streets anywhere else in the world, except for in Asia. That's why the local government was under immense pressure to solve the problem of how to house its population – small space and hundreds of thousands of people. I believe that, all things considered, however, the government has been on the right path – and the massive Seac Pai Van complex illustrates that.”



Spot the difference: NAPE back in 2003 and (right) NAPE in 2018

Dias also recalls how difficult it was to find professionals for all sorts of services and jobs in 1999. “Engineers were difficult to find,” he says. “We were really short on human resources. Everything was a struggle. I have truly found, however, that over the past 20 years, education in Macao has changed. And, as a result, job specialisms. We now find specialised professionals in most areas in the city. A lot has been done to improve education.”

The ripple effect

All of these advances over two decades were made possible thanks to favourable economic conditions – a fact almost universally agreed as to be down to the immense success of the gaming industry, which was liberalised from a previous monopoly in 2002 and massively increased the government’s revenue, meaning, in turn, it was able to provide more public services as a result. “I think that it’s impossible to deny that the SAR government did a great job when it came to managing the end of the gaming monopoly,” says Guedes. “At the time, the gaming liberalisation felt like a shot in the dark. No-one knew what to expect. Now, I feel

it is fair to say this was one of the most pivotal moments in the history of the SAR.”

Born and bred in Macao, entrepreneur Joe Liu, who is the director of prepaid contactless smartcard firm Macau Pass as well as the founder of integrated marketing and media company MOME, states that anyone living in town for the past two decades has ‘witnessed remarkable changes’ in ‘all aspects’ of life. “Naturally,” he says, “with big changes, there are always winners and losers. But I still believe the result of this transformation from town to metropolis has been positive.” Liu agrees the gaming liberalisation has been a deciding factor, adding that ‘without the support of the central government, nothing would have been possible’. “The impressive growth of the Chinese economy has had a huge impact on Macao too,” he says. “Without China’s help, Macao would not be what it is today.”

“In the beginning,” continues Liu, “I can see how easy it was to fear the economic reliance on gaming. But two decades later, I can definitely see the ripple effect that gaming has created in society. Every year I see more and more restaurants,

Joe Liu



MOME

cafés and boutiques opening up. And every year, I notice they are getting better and more innovative. This is happening because Macao has grown its tourism and we now receive more than 35 million tourists every year.”

According to Liu, there is another important factor to Macao’s success since the handover of administration. He says that the ‘government has been evolving too’. “As anywhere else in the world,” he says, “the public sector moves at a slower pace than the private companies. However, the Macao government are really broadening their minds. The Young Entrepreneurs Aid Scheme introduced by the government, a programme that provides interest-free loans to residents between 21 and 44 years of age who are planning to start their business, completely changed the lives of many.”

The incredible changes in the Macao Special Administrative Region over 20 years have, to many, been unprecedented. All who have bore witness to the city’s development during this time have seen a great metamorphosis – a metamorphosis that is worth celebrating with hundreds of thousands of city residents on 20 December. A solid infrastructure for the future has been laid out over two decades and the next 20 years and beyond look to be brighter than ever. However, you’ll have to find out what’s forecast to happen next in the rest of this special issue... ●

Two decades of public works

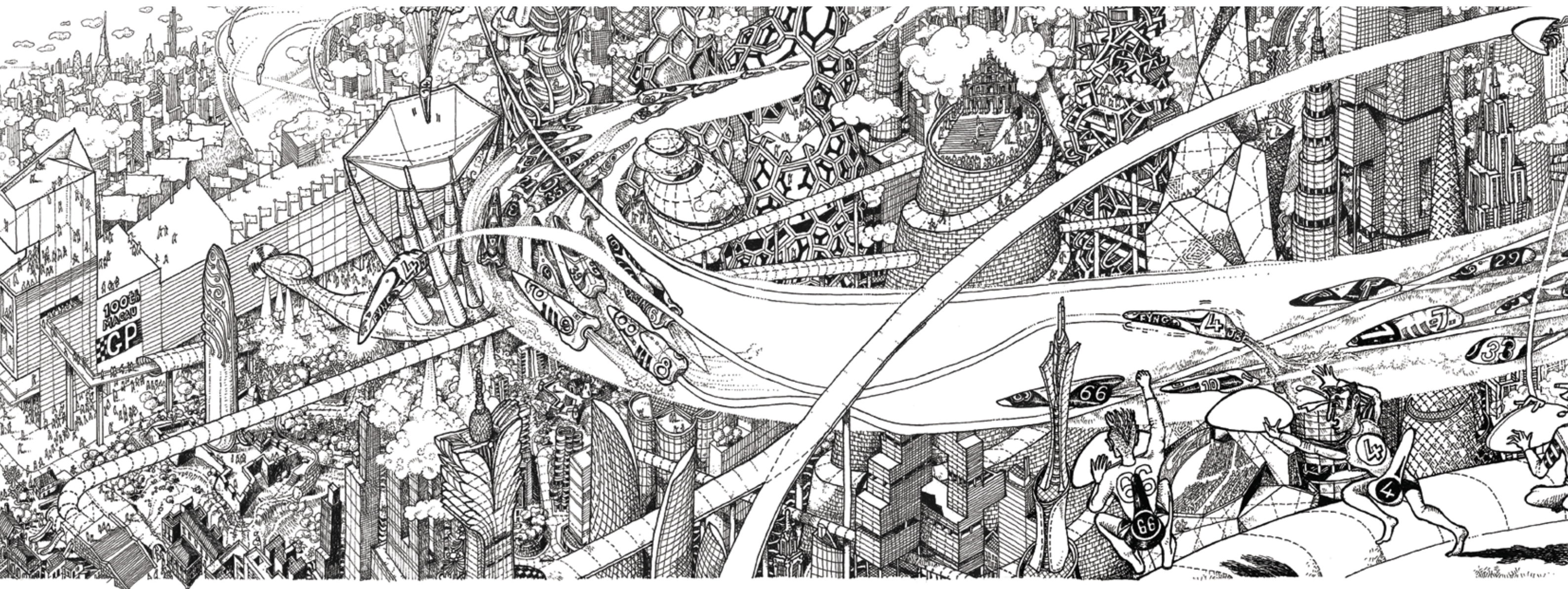
Big builds from the government over the past 20 years

- **1999** Macao hands over its administration to China on 20 December
- **2000** Inauguration of Lotus Bridge, a bridge that connects Taipa and Hengqin
- **2004** Cotai Strip reclamation works begin

Sai Van Bridge, the third connection to Taipa, is opened
- **2005** The Macao East Asian Games Dome is opened
- **2009** The Macao Science Centre opens
- **2013** The SAR’s biggest public housing project, Seac Pai Van, opens in Coloane

The University of Macau moves to Hengqin island in Zhuhai
- **2016** Public housing project in Ilha Verde opens
- **2017** Macao’s Taipa Ferry Terminal is inaugurated
- **2018** The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge opens

Zone C [between Sai Van and Governador Nobre de Carvalho bridges] reclamation starts
- **2019** Macao Light Rail Transit, or LRT, slated to start operations in Taipa at the end of the year



'Macao do Futuro',
an illustration by
Carlos Marreiros

Bring on the future

Text **Raquel Dias**

**The next 20 years and further into the future:
how will Macao change and develop?**

The future looks bright for the Special Administrative Region of Macao. Already boasting the second highest GDP per capita in the world, as well as a strategic place in China's grand plans for the Greater Bay Area, the city is expected to experience further growth and many changes in the decades to come.

But what do the experts reckon will happen? While they can't quite predict whether there will be flying cars zooming across Macao's skies, they can forecast how economically prosperous the city will become over the next 20 years and beyond and they can also look at how tourism will change in a metropolis where visitors already

outnumber locals by at least 20 to one. Given Macao's meteoric rise over the past couple of decades, can this great city become even greater?

Over the following pages in this special issue on the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the SAR, different topics are discussed with a view, in part, to the past 20 years but with a real focus on what the future holds in store for the city. Topics include gastronomy, tourism, arts, the economy, the gaming industry and Macao's relationships with Greater Bay Area cities and Portuguese-speaking countries. But before they have their say, it's worth looking at the 'greater picture'.



António Vasconcelos de Saldanha

Back to the future

Historian and professor at the University of Macau, António Vasconcelos de Saldanha, says that it is impossible to look at the future of the SAR without seeing the ‘greater picture’. “I believe,” he says, “that the solution for some of the problems faced in the past will be found in the integration of Macao in the Greater Bay Area. I would go as far as to say that this integration could – and should – allow the city to streamline all of its resources to assist Mainland China in its regional development.”

The Greater Bay Area is, for some, one of the ‘great challenges of the 21st century’ for its member

cities and regions. Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Huizhou, Dongguan, Zhongshan, Jiangmen and Zhaoqing in the province of Guangdong, as well as the Macao and Hong Kong SARs, fall under the GBA, which has a total area of 56,000 square kilometres and contains more than 70 million people. This will be an unprecedented common market as far as Macao is concerned.

Macao’s ‘One Country, Two Systems’ constitutional principle, which describes the governance of the SAR since 1999, allows it to take such an active part in the GBA. Ho Iat Seng, who becomes Macao’s fifth-term Chief Executive on December 20, has this year made references in interviews to his commitment to the principle and to the necessity of ensuring the ideal does not become ‘distorted’ in Macao. He has also stated he is confident to implement the principles of ‘Macao people governing Macao’ and the city having a high degree of autonomy – all concepts of major importance to the development of the SAR.

Journalist and local history author, João Guedes, says: “I believe that the greatest change still to come will be the integration of Macao into the GBA. This journey will bring changes at each stage. The effects of these changes will be more or less felt, depending on how Macao faces them. As of yet, however, there seems to be no great shadows on the horizon. Macao’s own geographical, demographic, economic and even cultural dimensions seem to be helping smooth the way.”

Housing and education

Chairman of the Industry and Commerce Association of Macau, Kevin Ho, has a positive vision of

what the future holds, noting that ‘great strides were made over the past two decades’, particularly in education, for instance. He also says that the previous administrations have built a ‘great foundation’ on which the city is now able to ‘plant the future’ hand in hand with the ‘help of the central government’.



It is clear that people in Macao are now happier and more confident about the future. Solving the housing problem will allow them to feel more secure, especially the younger generations.

“In his official appointment ceremony speech,” says Ho, “soon-to-be Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng mentioned the most important aspect Macao has yet to resolve: housing. He clearly stated that the priority issue of the new government is specifically to speed up the construction of housing units in the New Landfill Zone.” Housing is being constructed in the new zone near the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao bridge terminal.

“It is clear that people in Macao are now happier and more confident about the future,” continues Ho. “Solving the housing problem will allow them to feel more secure, especially the younger generations. The other problem yet to be addressed is that of improving healthcare but the construction of

the new [public] hospital in Cotai will go a long way to solve it.” The Cotai Health Complex, which just saw its first and only building completed so far – a nursing college – was announced in 2010 but is yet to be wholly constructed.

Drawing inspiration

Flying cars may never rocket through the Macao skies as architect and artist Carlos Marreiros, who has more than 250 projects in Macao and abroad to his name, including a project which will transform the Old Court Building and Judiciary Police headquarters into the new Macao Central Library, predicts in his illustration (pictured on p21 and 22). But he notes that ‘innovation’ is the key in the future for Macao. “Innovation has to be the key word for any city to grow,” he says, adding that ‘innovation must also mean sustainable growth and urban planning’.

Kevin Ho; (below, right) Carlos Marreiros



Marreiros mentions that Macao could potentially become a ‘smart city’ – an urban area dedicated to use technology to develop sustainable living, elevate living standards and improve urban planning – in the future, with the government promoting technology-related activities and improvement in the communications sector, for instance. And he also praises Raimundo do Rosário, Macao’s Secretary for Transport and Public Works, for doing ‘a great job in addressing a lot of the city’s problems’. In the architect’s view, however, there is still some work to be done in the near future. “I believe we need more of a holistic urban plan,” he says.

“I am not sure if we will ever see Macao as I idealised in that drawing,” continues Marreiros, pointing to his illustration, “but having been born and bred in the city, I’ve already seen a great many profound alterations to the SAR’s

landscape.” He says, in the ‘city of the future’, he would like to see ‘the transformation of Coloane into the lungs of the city, with low-rising, organic architecture’ that’s complete with ‘sustainable energy and eco-friendly solutions’. He adds: “The government has done good work so far in improving the quality of life and providing the education [that’s] necessary [for Macao’s society]. We are truly able to do the best and have the best people doing it.”

Marreiros is optimistic about the future. “As long as there is the will to improve and the economic capacity to grow,” he concludes, “Macao can only continue to prosper. The Greater Bay Area has already proved to be a capable international player, matching the bay areas of Tokyo and New York. I have no doubts that my dearest city will have an important role to play.” And the Greater Bay Area is just one topic discussed by our expert team of writers over the following pages. ●



Sun, sea, sightseeing and Senado

Text Kate Springer

Prepare for more tourists to hit Macao over the coming years. In the past two decades, the city has become a hub for visitors – and heritage projects to protect its history – but the future looks even busier, say the experts.

Over the past 20 years, Macao's tourism sector has grown an average of 8.6 per cent year-on-year. It now accounts for more than 50 per cent of Macao's jobs and the lion's share of its GDP. More striking still, the industry shows no signs of slowing down – it's on track to hit nearly 40 million visitors by the end of this year.

Last year, the city saw more than 35.8 million visitors in town. As a result, it earned a total of MOP 302.85 billion (US\$37.6 billion) in gaming revenues and the number of hotel rooms on offer expanded to almost 40,000. It was another strong year for tourism – however, the city's success as a tourist hub really began in 1999 when Portugal handed Macao's administration to China. At the time, the tourism industry was nascent: the territory welcomed 7.4 million people and counted roughly 9,000 hotel rooms that year. The majority of visitors came to try their luck at the gaming establishments since Macao was – and still is – the only place in China where gaming is allowed.

After the central government liberalised the gaming industry in 2001, however, international corporations joined the market and tourism exploded. Macao eclipsed Las Vegas in gaming revenues in

Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, director of the Macao Government Tourism Office

2006 and, last year, the revenues were more than three times that of its Western counterpart. But while gaming has played a major role in the rapid development of Macao's tourism industry, it's far from the only reason to visit the city. Religious tourism, architectural tourism and gastronomic tourism, for starters, pull the visitors in.

Peering into the future, the experience in Macao is expected to further evolve, with travellers perhaps becoming less fixated on the baccarat tables and more interested in the city's history, culture, arts and food. "We take 1999 as the turning point," explains Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, director of the Macao Government Tourism Office. "I would say that 20 years ago, people were still looking at Macao as a casino destination. Nowadays, people still look at it as a gaming destination but there are a lot more aspects. Even the gaming we talk about now is very different from before."

Senna Fernandes says today's gaming experience is associated with leisure and entertainment

within the integrated resort complexes, while the city's rich cultural tapestry has become another major calling card. "Now Macao has two UNESCO brandings," she notes. "One is World Heritage, which we obtained in 2005 for the Historic Centre of Macao, and the other was in 2017 for the Creative City of Gastronomy. This all adds up to a much more diversified Macao."

More than just games

The MGTO has been pushing Macao away from gaming and towards diversification for many years to avoid 'putting all the eggs in one basket', says Senna Fernandes, citing the MGTO's Macao Tourism Industry Development Master Plan. Unveiled in 2017, the step-by-step blueprint outlines plans to build a 'holistic tourism destination' over the coming years, by 2030.

The vision increasingly turns a spotlight on experiential travel, with hopes to re-brand Macao as a multi-day destination rather than a 'day-trip from Hong Kong'. Currently, the

average visitor stays an average of 2.2 days – compared with Las Vegas' 4.4-day – however, the department is designing multi-day packages that emphasise culture, heritage, creative industries, family-friendly entertainment and food to change tourists' perspectives.

"I would say the mix of Portuguese and Chinese heritage very much characterises Macao," says Senna Fernandes. "It comes in the food, it comes in the buildings and our everyday way of life. We say it's like a meeting between the southern Chinese and the southern Europeans, so although the pace of life has gotten a little bit quicker, you will see a very relaxed atmosphere in Macao." Gastronomy is particularly important because it serves as an edible expression of Macao's unique East-meets-West culture. To emphasise gastronomy in years to come, the MGTO's initiatives include more gourmet food tours, events and festivals.

The entertainment sector has been propelled by the development of Cotai over the past decade. Built on reclaimed land between Taipa and Coloane, the city's hotel and entertainment hub has 22,000-plus hotel rooms alongside ever-sophisticated facilities such as the Cotai Arena and the now-iconic House of Dancing Water at City of Dreams. "Today's tourists are not like before," explains Senna Fernandes. "Before maybe they used to come to take a few photos at the main tourist sights, then go shopping – and that's it. Now, our tourists are demanding more lifestyle products and experiences. Visitors are looking for more cultural products, enjoying lifestyles in different parts of the world and exploring history more deeply."

Keeping pace with changing preferences, MGTO increasingly markets the city's unique festivals – be that religious events like the

Procession of the Passion of Our Lord, the God Jesus, on the first weekend of Lent or the annual Macao International Fireworks Display Contest, which paints the sky in neon every autumn. Then there's extensive arts programmes including Art Macao – a city-wide cultural show that ran for the first time from May to October – and a wellspring of heritage attractions to discover.

In the coming years, Senna Fernandes says tourists may encounter more nature-driven experiences, such as a series of new water-based sightseeing tours that will shine a light on the city's coastal beauty. Or they could be more futuristic. As an example, Senna Fernandes points to Fisherman's Wharf, which has just announced it will develop a VR Zone with games and experiences in collaboration with Japan video game company Bandai Namco. Then there's the forthcoming Grand Prix Museum, which is slated to emerge from an overhaul next year. The museum will be six times larger and feature tech touches, including virtual reality and multimedia exhibitions.

Embracing the past

While Macao has one eye firmly on the future, it has not forsaken its past. In fact, in recent years, the city's heritage has seen renewed protection and appreciation following UNESCO's 2005 decision to name the SAR's 'Historic Centre' a World Heritage site. "The successful application of Macao as a UNESCO World Heritage site has helped the whole world re-frame our city," says Macao heritage expert Guo Zhan, who served as the vice-president of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), a professional advisory body on world cultural heritage affairs recognised

by UNESCO, between 2005 and 2014. "There is no other town in China – in the whole world – where Chinese and Portuguese culture and other foreign cultures blend on such a scale."

After UNESCO honoured the region's unique urban tapestry, the SAR established its own set of Intangible Cultural Heritage elements – a mix of ancient practices and arts, performances and languages that form Macao's cultural identity. Announced earlier this year, the 12 Intangible Heritage items include cultural treasures such as medicinal Chinese tea, wood carvings, Cantonese opera, Macanese gastronomy and events like the Procession of the Passion of Our Lord, the God Jesus. "It is important to further promote heritage protection and make it play a more vivid role in human life," says Guo. "Macao's policies for the protection of its Intangible Cultural Heritage will enhance the sustainability of the city's comprehensive characteristics and

exert a greater, more extensive and lasting influence on tourism."

There are still many opportunities when it comes to seizing Macao's potential as a cultural hub in Asia. Guo recommends tapping into the city's coastal roots as a hub of fishing and international trade, saying: "There is significant potential for a seascape tour – a historic route of imagination and association, landscapes and seascapes, and tangible and intangible experiences."

Leaning into the city's unique history is imperative, says Guo, in the face of growing competition from Asian neighbours in the gaming industry. "The instability of the gaming industry will have an unpredictable impact on the lasting stability and prosperity of Macao," he explains. "But now the calling card of UNESCO World Heritage has provided a permanent and attractive fame for Macao, becoming a guarantee of glorious identity and sustainable development in the future."

Classified as an Intangible Heritage element, the Procession of the Passion of Our Lord, the God Jesus takes places on the first Saturday and Sunday of Lent every year

New neighbours and smarter tech

The development of the Greater Bay Area should provide new opportunities for Macao, including multi-destination travel, relaxed visa policies and an opportunity to transform the city into a tourism education and training base. As the GBA comes to fruition, Macao aims to establish more direct flights and overland connections across the region. Asia currently accounts for more than 90 per cent of all visitors to Macao, with 70.6 per cent coming from Mainland China, 17.7 per cent from Hong Kong, 3 per cent from Taiwan and 2.3 per cent from South Korea as of last year's figures. However, many still visit Macao via Hong Kong as part of a two-city experience.

The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge, which opened just one year ago, is a case in point. It has already made a tremendous impact, serving as the port of entry for more than 1.05 million visitors in 2018. "Traditionally, we've had to rely on Hong Kong to feed us international travellers

because that's the main gateway," says Senna Fernandes. "But we've seen that airports like in Guangzhou are becoming more prominent in terms of their network, so we think there will be a lot more gateways out of the GBA and we may benefit from that."

With the number of travellers set to increase over the next decade, the MGTO also plans to introduce new ways to help develop Macao into a 'smart city'. Overcrowding is one of the key issues: if you visit Senado Square, say, on a weekend, you're more likely to remember the crowds than the architecture. When an average of 98,092 visitors descend on Macao every day, there's bound to be gridlock. To better accommodate the influx, the MGTO is working with Alibaba Group's Alibaba Cloud on three projects: a 'tourism information interchange platform' platform, 'application for visitor insights' app and 'smart application for visitor flows'. Essentially, this trio of tech solutions aims to analyse visitors' behaviour, traffic flows and density at the city's major attractions and points of entry. The platforms can then predict periods of high congestion and provide useful, real-time advice to travellers or tour operators.

In the future, key advancement for tourists will also include widespread cashless payment systems, integrated one-stop tourism mobile apps and the expansion of the MGTO's Wi-Fi Go service. The latter currently provides 200 internet hotspots across the city but the MGTO plans to expand coverage and upgrade internet speed in the coming years. "The majority of people – particularly young people – are consuming information on smartphones and tablets," says Senna Fernandes. "So we definitely need to catch up with technology, as well as be on alert as to what technology is coming next. I would say VR, AR or maybe something we haven't even seen yet – it changes fast." ●

Looking ahead to 2025

What the city's tourism industry will look like

Total visitor arrivals in 2025

38 TO 40 MILLION PEOPLE
(35.8 million in 2018)

Visitors' non-gaming spending in 2025

US\$13 TO 14 BILLION
(US\$8.6 billion in 2018)

Average length of stay for overnight visitors in 2025

2.3 DAYS
(2.2 days in 2018)

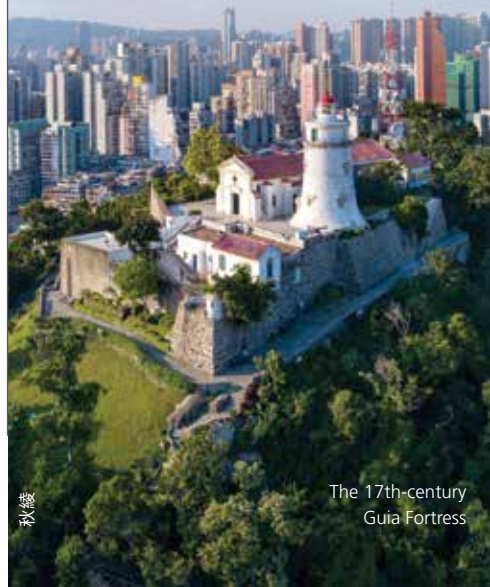
Number of hotel rooms in 2025

51,900
(38,809 in 2018)

Hotel average occupancy rate in 2025

84%
(91.1% in 2018)

**Figures are taken from the MGTO's Macao Tourism Industry Development Master Plan's 'modest visitor growth scenario' for 2025, based on 2015 figures. Comparisons are for 2018 only.*



Preserving the past

Text **Sam Sinha** Photos **António Sanmarful**

Since 1999, Macao's gastronomic scene has been boosted by a supernova of international chefs and cuisines. The challenge now is for locals to preserve the Macanese culinary heritage while passing on something new for the next generation to relish.

Over the past 20 years, Macao has become an Asian leader in gastronomy. Once known primarily for its homegrown Macanese cuisine and Portuguese-inspired restaurants, the city is now a hotbed of Michelin-starred eateries, fusion giants and niche establishments. The meteoric rise in its culinary scene has been so great that it was awarded the moniker of UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy at the end of 2017, making it one of only 26 cities worldwide to achieve this much-prized title.

However, due to the incredible array of restaurants, dishes and cuisines on offer in Macao today, one issue has bubbled to the surface – and it's an issue that could dominate the next 20 years and beyond in the city. Macao was indeed once known for its own Macanese cuisine – which is widely acknowledged as the world's first 'fusion cuisine', a 450-year-old blend of southern Chinese

and Portuguese cuisines with significant influences from across Southeast Asia and the Lusophone world – but is this tradition falling by the wayside? The city has one of the most fascinating gastronomic cultures on the planet – and since the handover of its administration to China in 1999, international cuisines have flooded the market, with the city attracting world-class chef talents. This, however, makes preserving the local culture and historic Macanese cuisine more important than ever.

Locals and visitors to the city can chow down at the city's restaurants and meet some of the characters trying to uphold these gastronomic traditions. From the old guard who share their insights into what life used to be like, to the next generation of local chefs, there's a wealth of people who are dedicated to keeping Macao's culinary heritage alive.

Keeping traditions alive

As one of UNESCO's Creative Cities of Gastronomy, Macao is part of a global network of cities that boast exceptional food heritage and are dedicated to working together to promote each other and to preserve their local traditions for future generations. Dag Hartman, project co-ordinator for the network, explains that 'cities are strong stakeholders for development' and that 'gastronomy as a development factor is strongly linked to culture'.

Hartman sees Macao as a particularly interesting member with a gift to give the world. "Macao has a very distinct culture, a unique heritage and a sense of global co-operation," he says. "It's a fusion of a lot of different cultures, mainly Chinese and Portuguese, of course, but you have influences from all over the world from 500 years of interaction. If you nourish it and work with your traditions in a good

way, you have a good asset to show to the world."

Over the next 20 years and beyond, Hartman emphasises how important it is for Macao's chefs to work hard to preserve local traditions. "Chefs are influencers and have strong personalities," he says. "And if they are included in this vision of preserving the traditions and working in a more sustainable way for the future, they can really make the change and be the carriers of the traditions and heritage."

One such chef who's been keeping traditions alive for decades is Aida de Jesus. At more than 100 years old, she is the unofficial 'godmother of Macanese cuisine' – and she's a popular figure at the helm of legendary eatery Riquexó, which literally means 'rickshaw'.

Her daughter, Sonia Palmer, says de Jesus has always taught her the value of sticking to tradition. On the restaurant's recent return to its original premises on Avenida de Sidónio Pais opposite Guia Municipal Park, she says: "All our customers are very happy. They all reminisce 'when I was young I used to come here and eat'. We've had a practically full house every day."

Palmer says that it's extremely difficult for Macanese cuisine to go international. "It's mostly a homemade kind of food," she explains. "There's no presentation on the dish. Although some of the restaurants try to make it look nicer, we concentrate on the real taste. You get what you see – and that's it!" But Palmer, who emphasises the importance of 'sticking to the

Aida de Jesus (sitting) and her daughter Sonia Palmer (standing) are proud to keep the old Macanese traditions alive





Keeping it in the family: Eileen (left) and Audrey Stow now run the business started by Eileen's brother and Audrey's father, the late Andrew Stow

original recipes' at the restaurant so younger generations can also enjoy the tastes, is optimistic about the future of the cuisine.

Palmer adds that the restaurant is called 'rickshaw' 'because rickshaws are traditional like our food'. She says: "It's one of the old ways to travel in Macao – part of the Macao identity." Palmer believes there's a bright future for Macao's gastronomy scene and culinary traditions. "The government is trying quite hard to introduce Macanese food to tourists and other places," she says. "More people know what Macanese food is now. There are a lot of young people who are trying to open restaurants and make Macanese food. That is a good step to preserve it."

The next generation

There are many gatekeepers of tradition in Macao's gastronomy scene who make up the next generation of chefs and culinary leaders. One young chef who champions the importance of modernising Macanese food in the city in order to preserve its

heritage is Sandra Barros of Cafe SAB 8, just round the corner from the Ruins of St Paul's.

"My mother had a restaurant for 14 years so I grew up with her cooking Macanese dishes," says Barros. "When you go out to a Portuguese or Macanese restaurant, it's always the same old stuff, the same décor. I was asking myself 'why is there nothing new on the market?' In order to go on for generations you have to have people to join and do it. If you take such a historic cuisine, you can make it fun. You can also make it look nice. Because the flavours are all there – there's no question about that."

Barros' Mozambique chicken creates an explosion of spice and keeps the dish up-to-date with a fresh style of presentation. "You don't want to change the heritage," she explains. "They've been cooking for more than three generations. They didn't run cafés or restaurants. They would get the best ingredients to cook for everyone in the family. It's very important for us to spread this from generation to generation because, I believe, if we don't do that, it will be lost."

Stick to your buns

One of the biggest keepers of tradition in Macao is Lord Stow's Bakery. Eileen Stow, its chief executive, meets us in the original shop in Coloane Village. She says her late brother, Andrew 'Lord' Stow, refused to give up on his idea to create a Western bakery even after receiving brutal feedback from his Portuguese friends. She says: "He knew about the pastéis de nata [Portuguese egg tarts] because he'd been to Belém [the Lisbon neighbourhood that made the tarts famous] on his honeymoon. Not having the recipe and being an obnoxious Brit, he set about making it himself."

Lord Stow's opened in 1989 and, since then, the tarts have become a symbol of the city's local food scene. In 2006, Andrew Stow – who died in the same year – was recognised for his services to tourism by the government. His sister says: "He always said that you've got to be true to what you create because if you start bending to other people's tastes, it just doesn't work. We don't mess with any of his recipes in the hope that anyone who came here 30 years ago will get the same experience today."

Eileen Stow remains steadfastly true to her brother's original vision and she understands the importance of serving locals first.



The famous handmade egg tarts from Lord Stow's bakery

"We opened for Macao people and we never lose sight of that," she says. "We both believe if you've got local people coming to your business, the tourists will follow. Your heart has to be for Macao and for local people." This sentiment is echoed by Dag Hartman. "If you do it just to attract tourists, it tends to be very superficial," he says. "You have to work on your identity, on your roots. And then you have more authenticity and that's what people are seeking nowadays. It makes it a very exciting place to visit."

Hartman believes the Creative Cities of Gastronomy campaign has been a success, although he admits there's a lot of work still to be done. "If you don't work with your traditions," he says, "you will have less interested people come to you and your economy will suffer."

And then there's more human reason that if we don't take care of our traditions we lose our identity and our society will suffer. We have to understand who we are and where we come from. If you lose the people who are the carriers of your tradition and your heritage, then it's really hard to get back."

Macao's gastronomic scene has risen to great heights over the past 20 years and it could rise further still in the coming decades as long as there's not too much tension between holding on to the wisdom of years of interaction between cultures and cultivating the desire for culinary innovation. It's down to the next generations who can encourage more Michelin-starred restaurants into the city while also succeeding to preserve Macao's unique culinary heritage. ●

Minchi and Macanese snacks at Cafe SAB 8



Macanese cuisine: the iconic dishes

Seven local creations that ooze tradition:

- 1 Minchi:** A dish of minced beef or pork that's stir-fried with cubed potatoes and flavoured with soy sauce and molasses. Often served with a fried egg on top.
- 2 Tacho:** A slow-cooked stew using readily available ingredients like the Chinese lap cheong sausage, as well as local cabbage and pork.
- 3 Capela:** A circular meatloaf stuffed with pork, beef and chorizo, wrapped in bacon and topped with cheese.
- 4 Galinha à Africana:** Barbecued or grilled chicken bathed in a spicy piri piri sauce often using a base of coconut milk and peanuts.
- 5 Porco Balichão Tamarindo:** Braised pork in a sticky tamarind and shrimp sauce. The combination of sour tamarind and fishy dried shrimps make this dish an acquired taste, beloved by locals.
- 6 Diabo:** 'The devil's stew' is a spicy concoction of leftover meat and poultry cooked with mustard and spices.
- 7 Porco Bafassá:** A pork leg or shoulder is simmered (bafa) then roasted (assar) with onions, garlic and turmeric.

The art and the soul

Text **Marianna Cerini**

From paintings and ceramics to music and literature, Macao has become a hotbed for art and artistic talents. The future paints a pretty picture too, say the creatives, as there's a collective 'will to put us on the world map as a great art city'.

On a sunny June afternoon in Macao's hip NAPE neighbourhood, buzzing crowds spill into the Macao Museum of Art to attend the first edition of 'Art Macao' – the city's largest arts festival, organised to mark the 20th anniversary of the city's handover of administration from Portugal to China. This throng of arts enthusiasts walk around the plethora of multimedia installations, gazing at the vivid paintings and snapping a seemingly endless series of photos of the century-old ceramics on display.

And the excitement isn't just happening in the museum on this fine day. Locals and visitors to Macao are also admiring the many outdoor installations across town, as well as popping into the city's integrated resorts to see their exhibitions. They also marvel at the art on display in the hotels and foreign consulates – and they await one of the many dance performances, stage shows and music concerts also organised under the Art Macao banner until October. In all, there's a positive response to this first edition of the festival. It's a festival that shows how far the SAR has come in terms of its devotion to the arts – and also underlines its intentions to become an arts hub in the region over the coming years.

Art Macao's first edition is now over but the organisers from several government departments have since

toasted its success. According to the government, more than 16 million people visited the exhibitions, installations and events, making it, some claim, the most visited arts exhibition in the world. And this is no overnight achievement, of course. The city has long had a rich cultural fabric, developed both on its own

Wong Ka Long's 'The Wanderer' sculptures, designed in homage to Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa, made up one of six outdoor installations at Art Macao

and through 400 years of exchanges between China and the West. But it's the efforts and initiatives undertaken over the past two decades that have really seen it emerge as a vibrant, ambitious destination for the arts.

Public museums have opened – the Museum of Art turned 20 this year – and galleries supporting local talent have mushroomed alongside a more underground arts scene. Currently, the city is home to more than 30 art spaces, including the non-profit Ox Warehouse, government-funded Tap Seac Gallery and Macau Art Garden, a five-storey structure wholly dedicated to native art creation and exhibitions.

Then there are music and literature. The Macao Orchestra, a 60-strong ensemble that's been together since 1983, has risen to the world-class stage and proved it is one of the most diversified orchestras today, with members from across the continents. And in 2012, The Script Road – Macau Literary Festival launched yearly with a programme that not only spotlights authors but also cinema, music, dance and theatre. Also, both the Macao Arts Festival and the Macao International Music Festival – two events that have been around for some 30 years – are now considered some of Asia's most notable cultural appointments.

The scale and success of this year's Art Macao are proof of the metropolis's cultural ambitions – and a sign that this compact but mighty city is set on shifting its role from gaming destination to global arts hub. But what does the future hold?

A visual experience

"There's no doubt Macao has reconsidered its priorities over the last decades," says Konstantin Bessmertny, a Russian artist who's been based in Macao since 1992, of the SAR's artistic awakening. "It used to be all about gaming revenues. Now, the focus is on

investing in cultural development. As an artist, it's a very good place to be."

Bessmertny recalls an 'art desert' when he first moved to Macao. "But the scene changed fast, as most things do here," he says. "People in power have always shown a very open-minded attitude towards the arts." The past 20 years, he adds, have brought a diverse set of players to define the local art scene, creating an interesting world of contrasts. "Both institutional and independent organisations are putting a lot of effort into building their own support model for the sector," he says. "Rather than copying and pasting from cities like New York or London, they're working around Macao's identity."

To that end, the city has made a point of placing homegrown talent at the centre. Taipa Village Art Space, is a case in point, showcasing local and regional artists. Macau Design Centre, a converted factory that now hosts galleries, shops, a coffee shop, bookshop and performance space, offers a creative space for the city's designers and brands.

Macao has also pushed its international edge. "As a city that's always been shaped by both East and West, Macao sits at this unique crossroad of cultures," says Bessmertny.

The local scene is also more refined than Hong Kong's, Bessmertny points out. "In Hong Kong, you have a lot of what I call 'art-tertainment' – big, very commercial projects. I think Macao has a more educational, socially engaged approach to art initiatives." The Women Artists 1st International Biennial of Macao, which launched last year and is exclusively dedicated to women artists from all over the world, is one such initiative. "There's a will to put us on the world map as a great art city, from everyone involved," concludes Bessmertny. "The potential is unbelievable."



Courtesy of the Cultural Affairs Bureau



Artist Konstantin Bessmertny; (above, right) author Yao Jing Ming



Cheong Kam Ka

Like an open book

Just like its visual arts, Macao's writing culture has long been a cauldron of different influences. Its authors are Chinese, Macanese, Portuguese and English. They write in their own languages and draw from their own backgrounds, then channel it all into a literature that's as diverse as it gets – albeit hardly known abroad. While the confluence of cultures and linguistic complexity have defined much of its history, they have taken a more deliberate direction during the past 20 years as new generations of writers have started working in the city and made its geographical and cultural positioning an essential aspect of their work.

“Macao's literary scene is deeply rich and colourful,” confirms Yao Jing Ming, head of the University of Macau's Department of Portuguese and author of a raft of books and articles over the past 30-plus years. “It's different from the literatures you'll find in other parts of China.” And one that, since the handover of administration, has been increasingly embraced and supported by local residents and the government, as the rise of literary organisations, public readings and festivals proves.

The art collective Ox Warehouse, founded in 2001, regularly runs publishing workshops, detailing how to edit, design and distribute. The Macau Outersky Poet Association, the first online literary organisation in the city, launched in 2002, and it's an active internet-based poetry-sharing platform. The non-profit Association of Stories in Macao, which promotes the poetry and fiction of Macao-based authors, was established in 2005, and has published more than 100 titles to date.

On a more institutional level, the government's Cultural Affairs Bureau has also fuelled the buzz. It regularly offers grants to local writers and authors to publish books and every two years it hosts the Macao Literary Awards to celebrate the city's authors. In July, it also inaugurated the first Macao International Book Fair.

Since 2012, the bureau has also sponsored The Script Road, Macao's international literary festival, whose founders are non-governmental organisations. “The co-operation [and separation of roles] has made the festival a unique literary activity,” says the festival's vice-director Yao. “It has helped it maintain its freedom, which is very appealing for writers. And it's only gotten better over the years.” The event, adds Yao ‘is a different window into Macao’.

‘The city has a lot of very good conditions to write and, if you have talent, be noticed’, says Yao. “Looking forward, what might really give Macao's literary scene the visibility it deserves will be the ability to move past its own shell. I think we should come out of our own world and look outwards,” he says, adding that he believes poetry – ‘the highest example of contemporary Macao literature’ – could serve that purpose.

It's not only the written word that is celebrated in festivals, however. So is the spoken word and the moving image: the International Film Festival & Awards, which enters its fourth edition between 5 and 10 December, represents the growing strength of Macao's movie industry and rewards those directors, actors and crew who have excelled in the industry, as well as showing films from around the world to the public. The Sound & Image Challenge International Festival is also worthy of note. The event, which takes place at the Dom Pedro V Theatre every December, celebrates Macao's short films and music videos, as well as international ones.

Music to our ears

There's a small but growing music scene in Macao. The city has had an orchestra since 1983 and the Macau Conservatory since 1991 – both of which have played an important role in music education. But, for a long time, not much existed beyond them. Live music venues were few and far between – still today, only a handful exist. Indie bands were not at all common. Even pop music is still in its early stages. “But it's getting better and better,” says Lu Jia, music director and principal conductor of the Macao Orchestra. “The orchestra itself has gone from an audience of some 100 people when I first moved

to Macao in 2006, to thousands, and grown tremendously in skill over the decades. All the concerts at the 33rd Macao International Music Festival sold out really fast. The whole sector is becoming more mature.”

Behind this rising maturity is a series of government subsidy programmes and free concerts introduced over the past 20 years which have provided a platform for locals to connect with local musicians and to develop a musical education. “The government has been extremely supportive of music,” says Lu. “They've helped create a welcoming atmosphere and space for local and international talent. In Shanghai or Guangzhou, people have to spend over a thousand dollars for a concert ticket – in Macao, ticket prices are in the hundreds because the government heavily subsidises them.”

Hush!! Full Music concert, a free annual event organised by the Cultural Affairs Bureau since 2005 – held in April this year – has been pivotal to that end. The 33rd Macao International Music Festival, which ran for most of last month, is another major government-led annual event assembling internationally renowned artists from all over the world to promote music. On a more independent level, Live Music Association, a not-for-profit venture that stages homegrown and out-of-town night acts, has played a major role in fostering an alternative music scene.

Lu believes such a high level of involvement, both institutional and underground, will boost the city's music potential further in the future. Macao's unique demographic and geographical positioning, he adds, could also contribute to that. “What's

interesting about Macao,” he says, “is that our audience's age is relatively young, especially compared to Europe. We're also an entry point to Guangdong province for many European cultures. Macao is a bridge and I think both aspects – this younger public and our geographical vantage – will be leading forces in its future musical development.”

Still, the road ahead is not an easy one. “I hope there'll be more local musicians in Macao,” says Lu, adding that he would like to see ‘more youth orchestras and music curricula in schools’. “The development of the Greater Bay Area (GBA) could potentially play a major part in the future of Macao's music scene.”

It may have been a vibrant arts landscape in Macao for hundreds of years but over the past 20 years the city has certainly been moving towards becoming a regional hub for the arts. However, over the coming years – if Lu's aspirations come true – we could see Macao leading the way in Asia for music, literature and visual arts. Not bad for a small territory. ●

Maestro Lu Jia



Courtesy of the Cultural Affairs Bureau

Making a fortune

Text Tony Chouin Lai

Macao's integrated entertainment resorts have proved to be a major cog in the economic success of the SAR over the past two decades – and the city's gaming industry is expected to keep reinventing itself in the years to come to entice tourists and more investment.

In 2002, when Macao's government liberalised the local gaming market, everyone knew it would be good for the city's economy. But even the academics and the analysts did not forecast quite how good it would be for the future development of the SAR. In the first full year after the city's handover of its administration to China, the gross domestic product only amounted to MOP 53.94 billion – or US\$6.68 billion. But last year, the city's annual GDP totalled MOP 440.32 billion – or US\$54.52 billion – representing a more-than-eightfold increase over two decades.

According to new data from the International Monetary Fund, Macao's GDP per capita is poised to reach MOP 654,435 – or US\$81,150 – this year, trailing behind Luxembourg as the world's second richest place and rising from 29th place in 2001 when the IMF first recorded such data of the city. This economic wonder was only made possible thanks to the gaming industry, which accounts for half of Macao's GDP. Figures for last year show that Macao's accumulated gross casino gaming revenue for 2018 stood at about MOP 303.88 billion – or US\$37.56 billion – a year-on-year increase of 14 per cent. The figures also show that the government collected nearly MOP 394.2 million – or US\$48.8 million – in taxes on commissions paid by the gaming establishments to junkets, a 17 per cent hike on the previous year.

"Though nobody could have predicted the scale of the economic growth at the time of liberalisation," says Davis Fong Ka Chio, director of the University of Macau's Institute for the Study of Commercial Gaming, "the development direction was very clear: opening up the gaming market to facilitate the growth of local economy and other industries." Documents show Edmund Ho Hau Wah, the city's first Chief Executive, had participated in studies concerning the competitiveness of Macao before assuming office. "The studies suggested developing the gaming and tourism industries was a possible path," says Fong, who is also a legislator.



And the outcomes now prove the accuracy of the studies. Following the end of the 50-year gaming monopoly of the Sociedade de Turismo e Diversões de Macau – or STDm, the Macao company owned by business magnate Stanley Ho and his family that was once the only gaming licensee in the city – not only has the number of gaming concessionaires and sub-concessionaires increased to six and the number of gaming establishments increased to 41, the city has also seen the introduction of a new business model: the integrated resort.

Much more than gaming

With the existence of casino-hotels only before the handover in 1999, multibillion dollar entertainment complexes can now be found across the Macao peninsula and in Cotai, offering more than just gaming and accommodation to attract travellers from across the globe, from Michelin-starred restaurants and shopping malls to touring concerts and shows. The Macao Tourism Industry Development Master Plan, released by the authorities in 2017 as a blueprint for the industry over the next 15 years, says that 'Macao, with its unique and cherished culture and heritage blended with world-class integrated resorts, has laid a solid foundation for long-term [tourism] development'.

One of the beneficiaries from the blooming tourism and integrated resorts – Macao is expected to receive 40 million visitors this year, jumping more than fivefold from 7.44 million visitors 20 years ago – is the meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions, or MICE, industry. "If anybody looks for a place to host a meeting of up to 10,000 participants in Asia," says Alan Ho, chairman of the board of directors for the Macau Convention and Exhibition

Association, "Macao or Singapore are definitely the top choices due to the all-round facilities in the resorts."

Before the handover of administration to China, the total area catering for MICE groups in Macao only amounted to less than 5,000 square metres. The space now totals more than 190,000 square metres. Alan Ho points out that the value added of the MICE industry has risen from less than MOP 50 million – or US\$6.2 million – in the few years following 1999 to nearly MOP 3.55 billion – or US\$440 million – in 2017. "With the addition of more MICE facilities and other offerings like dining, accommodation and entertainment in new projects and in the renovation of existing resorts," adds Ho, "there is a bright prospect for the MICE sector over the next few years."

According to the study on the development of the blueprint of Macao's MICE sector, published by the government in 2017, the industry should continue its strategy of giving priority to conventions, while the sector could be more commercialised and internationalised, thus turning the city into a 'destination for professional exhibitions and top quality fairs'.

Ace new projects

For more than a decade, work has been ongoing to create the glitzy entertainment complexes in the city we see today, as Macao is moving away from a purely gaming enclave to establishing itself as the World Centre of Tourism and Leisure, a position that was officially designated to the city by China's central government in 2011. And the declining gaming participation rate of local residents is a testament to these efforts. According to research by the Institute for the Study of Commercial Gaming at the University of Macau, the local

gaming participation rate was 40.9 per cent this year, the lowest level since the survey began in 2003 when the participation rate was measured at 67.9 per cent.

There are, though, a few resort projects still in the pipeline, including two that are linked to the family of Stanley Ho, founder of gaming operator SJM Holdings Ltd as well as STDm. They are the Grand Lisboa Palace, the flagship MOP 40.1 billion – or US\$4.97 billion – property of SJM in Cotai which is expected to open by the second half of next year and the MOP 5.1 billion – or US\$632 million – Lisboeta Macau that also becomes operational next year, providing a zip-line ride and indoor skydiving as new entertainment offerings in the city.

Other operators have also invested in the expansion and upgrade of their existing resorts to ramp up their entertainment and tourism portfolio. Wynn Resorts, parent firm of local gaming concessionaire Wynn Macau, has announced a MOP 16.15 billion – or US\$2 billion – expansion plan for Cotai's Wynn Palace, which will be ready by 2024. The expansion will add two hotel towers and a complex called Crystal Pavilion, which includes an art museum and an immersive entertainment theatre, to the resort.

Sands China is also undertaking a MOP 10.9 billion – or US\$1.35 billion – renovation at its Sands Cotai Central resort, which will be rebranded as The Londoner Macao from 2020 and will feature a new 6,000-seat arena, British-themed retail and dining facilities and a replica of the clock tower in London that houses famous bell Big Ben. "Only in Macao, with its already-proven high return on investment rates and guaranteed 30-plus million visitors a year," says Alidad Tash, managing director of gaming

consultancy 2NT8, “are companies comfortable with spending 5 to 10 billion [US] dollars over the next 10 years.” It’s worth noting that Macao’s gaming licences for its six concession and sub-concession holders are due for renewal in 2022 with the possibility of any of the companies not being given an extension by the government, however credit ratings agencies Fitch and Moody’s have predicted over the past few months that it’s likely the operators will have their concessions renewed.

Tash, a former executive at integrated resorts in Las Vegas and Macao, says that gaming operators in Macao have a margin of error to come up with new products. “They can go ahead and shut down some of their areas,” he says, “and come up with a new concept like virtual reality shopping – something that might sound crazy for us but these companies have the money. If they’re innovative and work, another company may try that too.”

In stark contrast to other emerging markets of integrated resorts in the region, the mature conditions in Macao allow the city’s industry to be a leader in the pack. “This is where Macao revolutionises the entire integrated resort industry in terms of the latest innovation and technology – for example facial recognition – as well as the latest entertainment,” says Tash.

The recently released Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area – which aims to promote the closer integration of nine cities in Guangdong and the two SARs – seeks to develop Macao as a world-class tourism and leisure centre. With regards to the plan, Fong believes the future path for the entertainment resorts and tourism industry in the city are clear: to draw more family and business tourists in with innovative

offerings, as well as regional co-operation. “The industry could work with counterparts in different cities in the Greater Bay Area to develop unique tourism products to attract regional and international travellers,” he says, adding that he believes local resorts will keep on introducing new products like Las Vegas has done over the past few decades.

Branding together

According to Glenn McCartney, associate professor of integrated resort and tourism management at the University of Macau, the offerings from the resorts, government departments and other bodies in the city could better link together to present a more united front for tourists. “We still have a lot to do on the branding [of Macao],” he says. “It is pretty fragmented now. Many people do their own things but we should tie it [all] together. Just like the Las Vegas Strip to Nevada, the Cotai Strip as part of Macao can be a clear branding.”



Government Information Bureau



Macao’s glitzy Cotai Strip as it looks now; (left) Cotai Strip as it looked in October 2004; (previous page) one of Macao’s biggest symbols of entertainment, accommodation and gaming: the Grand Lisboa

For the resorts to come up with appropriate products, some believe there should be more details outlined concerning Macao as the World Centre of Tourism and Leisure. “It has never been clearly defined,” says McCartney. “Finding a definition is very important for us in years to come – what we want to be and how we achieve it.”

Whether there will be a more unified approach to branding or not, there is no doubt that Macao is in a strong place when it comes to its gaming industry and entertainment complexes – and it has been for almost 20 years now. The industry will surely change in the years to come but nothing will ever alter the fact that the integrated resort is at the heart of the city’s incredible success as an exciting international destination. ●

Entertainment complexes: the evolution

A timeline of the six gaming operators in Macao which created the backbone of the industry we see today

- **2004** Sands Macao opens, the first foreign hotel and gaming property in the city since the market liberalisation in 2002.
- **2006** The openings of Wynn Macau and StarWorld represent respectively the first flagship properties in Macao for gaming operators Wynn Macau Ltd and Galaxy Entertainment Group.
- **2007** The Venetian Macao – covering gaming, accommodation, dining, retail, entertainment, MICE and other offerings – is inaugurated in Cotai, marking the commencement of the development of the Cotai Strip, home to the city’s cluster of mega resorts and Macao’s answer to the Las Vegas Strip. MGM China Holdings also opens its MGM Macau resort and Melco Resorts and Entertainment opens the Altira Macau.
- **2008** Stanley Ho’s SJM Holdings Ltd adds a new flagship property – the Grand Lisboa Macau – next to its existing signature Lisboa Hotel.
- **2009** Melco plants its flag in Cotai with the opening of the integrated resort City of Dreams Macau. This property sees the addition of more hotel towers and other facilities over the following years.
- **2011** Galaxy Entertainment unveils its first resort in Cotai – the Galaxy Macau.
- **2012** Sands China, operator of Sands Macao and The Venetian Macao, adds another mega project in Cotai – Sands Cotai Central.
- **2015** The development of the second phase of Galaxy Macau is completed, doubling the size of the resort, while Galaxy Entertainment Group also rebrands the adjoining property of Galaxy Macau as Broadway Macau, home to numerous local small eateries. Melco also expands its Cotai presence with the opening of Studio City, a Hollywood-inspired resort.
- **2016** The latest mega resort project of Sands China, The Parisian Macao, becomes operational. Wynn Macau opens its second property and also its first resort in Cotai – Wynn Palace.
- **2018** MGM China becomes the fifth gaming operator setting foot in Cotai with the opening of MGM Cotai.

Land of opportunity

Text Tony Chouin Lai

This year's unveiling of the outline plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area – and subsequent support measures – underscores China's commitment when it comes to this important regional integration, which is years in the making.

Twenty years ago, in December 1999, there was no Greater Bay Area. The regions and cities in the Chinese province of Guangdong that now make up this zone may have physically existed but there was no big initiative in place that brought them all together with shared goals and a shared future. In February, however, that all changed. Amid high expectations across cities and industries, the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area was finally unveiled, bringing the two Special Administrative Regions and nine municipalities together for co-operation and development.

"Its main purpose is to create an economically vibrant region," says José Luís de Sales Marques, president of the Institute of European Studies of Macao, "with innovation and high technology-based industries and services at its core. As one of the two SARs, Macao is set to play an important role." Although China's State Council only formulated this key strategic plan earlier this year to turn the region into one of the most robust megalopolises in the world by 2035, the idea of building this city cluster of living, working and travelling has been more than a decade in the making.

Leveraged on the strengthening ties of Macao and Hong Kong with Mainland China – particularly nearby Guangdong – since the handover of administration in both cities respectively in 1999 and 1997, the central government proposed in 2008 the 'Outline of the Plan for the Reform and Development of the Pearl River Delta (2008-2020)'. This blueprint has gradually evolved into the GBA initiative, which was confirmed for the first time in an official document by the Chinese government in Beijing in 2015.

From the perspective of Macao lawyer Carlos Simões, who is president of the Macau European Chamber of Commerce, the integration of the three sides has been continual over the past two decades, from tourism and business to day-to-day life. "The majority of the visitors to Macao," he says, "the life blood of Macao's tourism economy, originates from Mainland China. Guangdong province is a major contributor to that flow of visitors to Macao."

"Many residents in Macao already have their daily lives split across the GBA," continues Simões. "There is an increasing number of individuals who either work in Macao and live in Mainland China or live in Macao and have to travel almost daily to the Mainland because of their businesses or jobs. Therefore, it is easy to conclude that the GBA is already a reality and not just the future."

Mutual exchanges

The number of companies in Macao with capital from the Mainland side of the GBA was ever-increasing in the more recent years before the publication of the outline plan. According to the Statistics and Census Service, the number of



Cheong Kam Ka

José Luís de Sales Marques; (left) the incredible Guangzhou Opera House that was designed by Zaha Hadid Architects

enterprises incorporated in the territory with capital from the nine Guangdong cities stood at 656 last year, rising nearly 32 per cent from 497 in 2015, while the inward direct investment from this bloc to Macao expanded close to tenfold over the same time period to MOP 448 million – US\$55.6 million – last year.

And this investment flow is not only one-way traffic. The same set of data also shows the amount of the city's outward direct investment to the adjacent province amounted to MOP 11.85 billion – US\$1.47 billion – last year, representing 43.6 percent of the city's total outward direct investment.

With the outline development plan – which lays down the strategic positioning, objectives and principles of the GBA – and more supportive policies and measures from the central government, this city cluster – boasting the gross domestic product of just over RMB 10.86 trillion – MOP 12.46 trillion or US\$1.55 trillion – and a population size of more than 71 million in an area of 55,910 square kilometres as of last year – will not only create more development opportunities for Macao and Hong Kong but also lead the way for the nation's opening up.

Ties with the PSCs

Under the outline plan, Hong Kong, Macao, Guangzhou and Shenzhen are stipulated as 'core engines for regional development', with Macao's role as 'the world centre of tourism and leisure' and a 'commerce and trade co-operation service platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries'. Through this initiative, the city should 'promote the appropriate economic diversification and develop into a base for exchange and co-operation where Chinese culture is the mainstream and diverse cultures coexist', the plan reads.

Given Macao's historic relations with Portuguese-speaking countries through Portugal, Sales Marques believes the city could help further facilitating ties between the two sides. A multilateral, intergovernmental co-operation mechanism aimed at promoting the economic and trade exchanges between China and Portuguese-speaking countries – Forum Macao – was launched in 2003 with the permanent secretariat located in the city.

The Macao government's recent commitment in promoting arts and culture exchanges between the two sides is also a way to go forward, alongside business and tourism co-operation, Sales Marques continues. For instance, the outline plan, he notes, mandates Macao could be a platform for financial services between China and Lusophone countries and become an RMB clearing centre for the latter.

"It is, thus," notes Sales Marques, "in the connection between China and Portuguese-speaking countries that Macao finds its place in the meta-convergence between the construction of the GBA and the Belt and Road' initiative." The latter is a global development strategy tabled by the central government to enhance the connectivity among Asia, Europe, African and the Middle East through infrastructure and other investments.



Carlos Simões

Fifteen new measures

In a bid to ensure better supervision, the central government set up a leading group for the development of the GBA last year, comprising officials from Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao, headed by China's Vice Premier Han Zheng. This top-tier body met in Beijing in November and unveiled 15 new measures and policies to support Macao's role in the GBA.

These new measures can be divided into two areas: benefitting the general public and supporting professional services and businesses. When it comes to the general public, measures include facilitating property purchases by Macao residents in the Mainland cities of the GBA, more convenience for non-Chinese holders of Macao IDs to stay or reside in the Mainland side of the GBA and allowing the children of Macao residents to enjoy the same standard of education as those of Mainland residents in the GBA. Another important measure is for the facilitation of travel by foreign nationals holding Hong Kong or Macao permanent resident ID cards to and from the nine Mainland cities in the GBA, as well as facilitation of a system for them to stay or reside in any of those cities.

As for supporting services, these measures include extending the scope of mutual recognition of qualifications to architects and structural engineers, loosening the restrictions for Macao interests in law firms in the Mainland and supporting the bond market development in the city. Positioning itself to grasp the opportunities arising from the GBA, Sales Marques emphasises the city should 'strengthen its internal capacity and enhance the education, training, innovation, employment and quality of life of its population', adding that young people in the SAR could 'find jobs in the Greater Bay Area that Macao does not offer them today'.

Improving infrastructure

Better infrastructure is, undoubtedly, a key to expediting the flow of people in the region. "Any work made in this area would certainly substantially reduce the time needed to travel from [other cities in GBA] to Macao and vice versa," says Simões. The authorities should optimise the performance and efficiency of existing infrastructure, he adds, citing, for instance, more ferry services being made available between Macao and Mainland cities in the GBA. This is in addition to the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge – the world's longest sea crossing bridge – which significantly reduces the land transportation time among the three destinations. The bridge has seen more than 1.53 million vehicles – or an average of 4,212 vehicles a day – and more than 24.43 million passenger trips in its first year of operation since October last year.

Not only the transportation infrastructure but also the border facilities have been ameliorated to get ready for the growing traffic in the GBA. A new border checkpoint between Macao and Guangdong – 'Qingmao Border' in Ilha Verde, which will open around the clock – is now being built and expected to be completed by the end of next year, in addition to the Gongbei Port, the checkpoint at the HZMB, Hengqin Port and the customs at the Cross-Border Industrial Area.

The nation's top legislature, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, also approved in October to grant the city jurisdiction over the Hengqin Port. The SAR government said in a statement after the approval that it 'carried great significance in terms of strengthening the interconnectivity of infrastructure linking Macao and the Mainland, enhancing the convenience of boundary-crossing



China's Vice Premier Han Zheng, who heads a leading group for the development of the GBA, shakes hands with Macao's outgoing Chief Executive Fernando Chui Sai On

procedures and promoting the highly efficient and convenient flow of elements necessary for productivity, such as human talent and goods'. The government would work with the Guangdong administration to enforce the 'Joint Inspection and One-time Release' principle at the Hengqin checkpoint to expedite the flow of people and goods, the statement read.

Our own backyard

Hengqin, along with the Nansha Development Zone of Guangzhou, the Tsuiheng New District of Zhongshan and the Jiangmen Greater Guanhai Bay Economic Zone, has, throughout the years, been a focus of the joint development between Guangdong and Macao. These platforms do not only serve as pilot areas for bilateral co-operation but also provide more room for the city's economic diversification.

Following the inking of the 'Framework Agreement on Co-operation between Guangdong and Macao' in 2011, the two sides

have been committed to developing the Guangdong-Macao Industrial Co-operation Park in Hengqin, which covers an area of five square kilometres, for nurturing various sectors, namely traditional Chinese medicine, cultural and creative industries, education and professional training, including the 500,000-square metre Traditional Chinese Medicine Science and Technology Industry Park of Co-operation.

About 2.43 square kilometres of land in the Industrial Co-operation Park has been reserved for 28 projects backed by Macao capital as of this year, while the traditional Chinese medicine park had accommodated 155 enterprises, including 38 Macao firms, as of September. Even with the progress in Hengqin, which is often dubbed the 'backyard' of Macao, Simões highlights more thinking and better planning have to be done in regards to the nearby island to better complement the offerings in the city. "Overall," he adds, "the GBA is a major opportunity for Macao – but one already in the making." ●

The relationship game

Text **Paulo Figueiredo**

For hundreds of years, Macao has played a vital role as a bridge between China and Portuguese-speaking countries. This was strengthened post-1999 and there are now ongoing moves to develop the ties further.

The Chinese and Portuguese governments have settled the question of Macao through negotiations. This political decision is a wise move that conforms to the needs of the times. So said Jiang Zemin on 20 December 1999, during the Celebration of the Establishment of the Macao Special Administrative Region.

“After its return,” continued the then president of the People’s Republic of China, “Macao will continue to strengthen its role as an important bridge linking China and other countries and regions and as a window open to the outside world.” Perhaps Jiang Zemin was a prophet because, 20 years later, there is an overwhelming consensus that the city’s intended role is being well and truly fulfilled – particularly when it comes to its relationships with Portugal and the seven other Portuguese-speaking countries across the world.

In reality, Macao’s role as this ‘window’ has been in place for centuries. This was the case, in fact, for many years before the territory – ‘this sacred land of the motherland’, as Jiang Zemin put it – was even under the administration of the Portuguese, which was in effect from 1557.

For instance, Danilo Henriques, Timor-Leste’s representative at the Forum for Economic and Trade Co-operation Between China and Portuguese-Speaking



Danilo Henriques, Timor-Leste’s representative at Forum Macao

Countries – better known as Forum Macao – reckons Macao had an important role to play hundreds of years ago in the development of the Portuguese-speaking nation that lies to the south of Indonesia. “From the outset,” he says, “Macao played a crucial role in [Timor-Leste’s] development, in particular as it was the case that merchants from the [Macao] region travelled to the island before any other foreigners to trade in the famed and precious white sandalwood in the 13th century.”

Playing a crucial role

Today, says Henriques, Macao still has a dynamic role to play in the development of Portuguese-speaking countries through institutions like Forum Macao. This can include, he notes, trade links, business to business relations, human resources from Macao’s public sector and ministerial or other institutional exchanges. He also highlights the ‘strengthening of people to people contacts’ as a result of the many cultural exchanges that take place

between the Lusophone countries and Macao. “Increasingly,” he says, “in this globalised and ever more connected world, one of the key roles that Macao can play is the one that’s carried out by its companies in bridging the communication, logistical and other gaps that are required by companies in Portuguese-speaking countries for access into the vast Chinese market.”

Henriques speaks to us after returning from Timor-Leste, where he took part in a visit of 23 companies from China’s aromatic oil industry. The delegates looked at the potential of importing Timorese medicinal and therapeutic oils to Macao so that they can then be exported to other markets, such as Mainland China and Hong Kong. Given the giant size of the target market, studies are now being carried out to investigate the possibility of scaling up production

and growth in the nation with Chinese investment.

Another Portuguese-speaking country reaping the benefits of Macao’s position is São Tomé and Príncipe, off the west coast of Africa. The newest Forum Macao member hosted the 14th Business Meeting for Economic Co-operation between China and Portuguese-Speaking Countries in July – a conference that Rafael Branco, the country’s former prime minister and head of its Trade and Investment Promotion Agency, or APCI, called ‘very positive’ in terms of promoting the nation.

As a result of the event, there are now about a dozen projects, involving entrepreneurs from Macao and adjacent Chinese provinces, ‘with potential’ that will be followed up in São Tomé, according to Branco. Tourism, gaming and trading in the country’s future tax-free area are the main targets for these businessmen.

Trade at a record high

Last year, the value of trade between China and Portuguese-speaking countries reached a record high of US\$147.25 billion – or MOP 1.2 trillion – making China the largest partner and also the fastest growing export market for these countries. Since 2003, when Macao was given its role as a platform for Portuguese-speaking countries, this figure has grown elevenfold, according to former Chinese deputy commerce minister Gao Yan.

In an interview in Lisbon last year, Gao said Forum Macao had held ‘a very important role’ in China’s globalisation. And according to 2018 official figures, China’s business investment across a range of sectors in the countries exceeded US\$50 billion – or MOP 404 billion – while Chinese companies’ contracts in

The opening ceremony of the 5th Ministerial Conference of Forum Macao held in 2016



these markets reached US\$90 billion – or MOP 727 billion.

Speaking in July in São Tomé and Príncipe at the annual China-Portuguese-speaking Countries Business Meeting, Irene Va Kuan Lau, president of the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute, or IPIM, underlined the ‘great relevance’ of Macao as a platform ‘in establishing China abroad’. This role, she said, results from specific features of the SAR, such as the fact that it is bilingual – referring to Chinese and Portuguese – as well as its excellent business environment, its provision of professional services in the legal and e-commerce areas, and its existing arrangements to avoid double taxation. These arrangements, that enable companies to be taxed in only one country or territory, thus making business less onerous, are already in place with Cabo Verde and Portugal, the two countries that have been the quickest to sign agreements with the Macao government. It all means that companies which are operating in Portuguese-speaking countries can benefit from the low tax rates in the SAR.

Wang Wei, China’s ambassador to São Tomé and Príncipe, sees Macao’s role as a ‘bridge’ to Portuguese-speaking countries as one that’s on the rise. “Macao can very well play the part of a pathway from all Lusophone countries to the Greater Bay Area,” he says. “In terms of territory, Macao is small. But this does not stop it from being able to play a larger role in connecting and building bridges. I also believe that the Greater Bay Area will strengthen Macao’s role as a tourism hub and a meeting platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.”

An important conference

Next year will be a decisive one in the shaping of Macao’s future when

it comes to its relationship with the Portuguese-speaking countries. Mid-way through the year – the date is yet to be set – Forum Macao will hold its sixth ‘ministerial meeting’, which is held every three years but was postponed earlier this year. The forum is, at the moment, looking at its own processes and goals for the future so that it can fine-tune its procedures. It has commissioned an external evaluation, a document which will examine its first 15 years and also look to its future. Over the past year, a delegation from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences has been visiting each one of the Portuguese-speaking countries to gather information for the document. Its conclusions are to be presented soon.

Rodrigo Brum, one of the forum’s three deputy secretary-generals, expects that ongoing external evaluations of the organisation will lead to a fine-tuning of its procedures, bolstering its role. Evaluations, based on proposals from member countries, will be, notes Brum, ‘a basis for the preparation of the future’ for the forum. “It’s the way it should be,” adds Brum, who represents the Portuguese-speaking countries, “because the path is made with that fine-tuning – with new proposals.”

The forum has been implementing new measures over the past few years, such as its annual visits to Lusophone countries. From the 2020 ‘ministerial conference’ will come the guidelines to be executed by the forum’s secretariat in the near future. “It will take three, four or five years for the countries themselves to become aware of the forum’s actions,” says Brum, “of [the forum’s] willingness to make the connection to China, highlighting the opportunities for those countries in China, while also generating awareness in China for those countries, in terms of investments.”

Cheong Kam Ka



Rodrigo Brum, one of the forum’s three deputy secretary-generals

On the horizon is a new role for Macao, according to the Greater Bay Area Outline Development Plan: to become a financial platform, namely for Portuguese-speaking countries. Macao already houses the China-Portuguese Speaking Countries Co-operation Fund, managed by the China Development Bank, but, according to Brum, ‘there could be other’ financial instruments in the future. The creation of ‘other funds will be one of the topics to be discussed’ in 2020, he adds. As China’s business ties with Portuguese-speaking countries – be it tiny Timor-Leste or giant Brazil – become ever more increasingly interwoven with Macao, the SAR’s institutions are looking ahead to another couple of decades of big boosts to trade and investments. ●

Diversifying the dollar

Text Paulo Figueiredo

Despite the obvious success the gaming dollar has brought to Macao, its economy is on the verge of change. There’s a new financial model brewing in the city – and it’s a globally minded one.



The Bank of China and BNU’s 20th MSAR anniversary celebratory MOP 20 note shows the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge on one side and iconic Macao landmarks on the other

It is no secret that Macao’s economic success post-1999 is largely down to its thriving gaming industry. Since 2006, the city has been the world’s largest centre for gaming, overtaking Las Vegas in the US that year and never looking back since. In 2017, according to The Economist Intelligence Unit, gaming generated almost half of the city’s local GDP. Real estate came a distant second at a little over 10 per cent.

The entertainment complexes and their games have helped to

bring the territory huge wealth over the years. In 1999, Macao’s GDP was US\$6.46 billion – or MOP 51.87 billion – and last year, the city’s GDP stood at US\$54.96 billion – or MOP 444.67 billion – a stark reminder of how much the economy has boomed since the handover of its administration to China. And the wealth over these two decades has been spread around too, with its GDP per capita reaching US\$83,425 – or MOP 673,481 – last year, up from

US\$15,186 – or MOP 121,363 – in 1999. This is one of the best GDP per capita rates in the world.

But despite the prosperity the gaming industry has brought, China’s central government has pressed Macao to diversify its economy away from the dice and the cards. The local authorities have, over the past few years, instead placed more focus on fields such as conferences and exhibitions – and, so far, they’ve been showing great signs of success.

Macao's economy in figures

Here are some economical
stats for 2018...

Median monthly employment
earnings

MOP 16,000

Value of merchandise exports

MOP 15,886 million

Value of merchandise imports

MOP 107,120 million

Value of retail sales

MOP 76,807 million

Tax revenue from
gaming sector

MOP 113,512 million

Gross gaming revenue

MOP 303,879 million

GDP (at current price)

MOP 444,666 million

GDP (chain volume measure)

MOP 429,497 million

GDP per capita
(at current price)

MOP 673,481

GDP per capita (chain volume
measure)

MOP 650,507



It hasn't all been stellar of late – the International Monetary Fund last month predicted that GDP will be down by 1.3 per cent this year and also expected a further contraction of 1.1 per cent next year – but efforts are nevertheless ongoing to broaden the base of the SAR's economy. The downturn – said to be due to a decline in investment and exports, which in turn is affected by gaming tourism – could be a reminder that Macao needs to keep diversifying away from relying heavily on the gaming industry.

Investing abroad

So how is the city looking to diversify? One way is to look far afield. Green pastures in Portugal may seem a world away from Macao's bustling streets but there's money to be made in the European country. Macao-based investment and services firm CESL Asia last month acquired Portuguese farming group Monte do Pasto, or MdP, the nation's largest beef producer, investing EUR 40 million – or MOP 357 million – into 3,700 hectares of agricultural land in the south of Portugal that has been mainly used as pasture for cattle. This land lies in the municipalities of Cuba and Alvito in the Alentejo region.

A statement from CESL Asia following the acquisition, which was supported by the Bank of China, said that the deal aims to continue the development of social and economic co-operation between Portugal, China, Macao and African Portuguese-speaking countries.

Macao could therefore diversify away from relying on the gaming industry and thus become more of a service platform, investing in and linking to countries and organisations across the globe. The head of CESL Asia, António Trindade, sees this sort of diversification as not just necessary but inevitable.

According to Trindade, the key to economic diversification could be 'a combination of both' the development of the platform with Portuguese-speaking countries and Macao's role in the Greater Bay Area. And the financial services industry will also have to take centre-stage, says the trained engineer.

Great expectations

Macao may traditionally be an important platform for all Portuguese-speaking countries, however last year it became all the more important with the unveiling of the Greater Bay Area Outline Development Plan. In this Chinese government plan, the city was highlighted as a financial platform for Portuguese-speaking countries. The city is also expected to assist in the Belt and Road Initiative.

Leading academic José Luís de Sales Marques, president of the Institute of European Studies of Macau, identifies a 'great expectation' in Macao's financial domain. "The Greater Bay Area Outline Development Plan," he says in recently published book 'The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area: The Challenge of the Century for Macau', "outlines that Macao will become a 'green'



Cheong Kam Ka

António Trindade,
CEO of CESL Asia

financial services provider platform in the Sino-Lusophone relationship. Macao should develop special financial products and services, such as leasing, and study the viability of establishing in Macao a stock exchange in CNY [RMB]."

The Greater Bay project aims to create a world metropolis that integrates Hong Kong, Macao and nine cities in Guangdong province in a region of about 70 million people which already boasts a collective GDP of more than US\$1.5 trillion – or MOP 12.1 trillion – making up around 12 per cent of China's national GDP.

Other important services that could be offered in Macao, claims Sales Marques, include a secure export credit system, 'a long-term aspiration of traders dealing with Portuguese-speaking countries'. He also adds that a bigger local participation in the management of the China-Portuguese-speaking Countries Co-operation and Development Fund, based in Macao, is necessary. The fund, which has the China Development Bank as its sponsor, aims to promote the economic and commercial co-operation between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries, particularly in relation to members' development, with the total value of financing corresponding to US\$1 billion – just over MOP 8 billion. It has been reported that the fund has invested more than US\$120 million – or MOP 969 million – in five projects so far.

Given that Macao has privileged access to Africa, South America and Europe through its Portuguese-speaking countries platform, the Greater Bay Area Outline Development Plan also foresees the MSAR's participation, in due time, in several regional and multinational funds, such as the Silk Road Fund, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the Fund for Sino-Latin-American Production and the China-Africa Development Fund, mentions Sales Marques. He also suggests that Macao develops adequate study programmes about Africa and Latin America, encompassing their nations' political, economic and socio-economic environments.

Collaboration among the financial institutions that are based in Macao – namely the Banco Nacional Ultramarino (BNU) and the local branch of the Bank of China – is already ongoing to establish a platform to explore potential business opportunities, according to both banks. The banks are collaborating to respond to market needs in a faster and more agile way, offering a wide range of products and services to companies, like leasing, which BNU is now launching.

The Bank of China headquarters in Macao



António Sammarful



Courtesy of Macau inc

Li Guang, general manager of the Bank of China's Macao branch

Li Guang, general manager of the Bank of China's Macao branch, says that the branch has successfully been selling new financial products in Macao like bonds, which allow companies or governments access to finance in the present with the bond holders having the chance to make good profits in the future. The issuances have included the first 'Guangdong-

Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay' debt securities in MOP and the first 'Lotus' bonds in RMB, as well as 'Belt and Road' bonds. Macao residents have been the major investors in these products, according to the Bank of China.

“The financial industry development will have to happen, otherwise changing the economic system in Macao will be impossible. The existing system is unsustainable.”

Banking on it

The Bank of China has also been actively supporting overseas investment, according to Li Guang, including the financing of a Mainland China company to acquire Portugal's largest insurance company, supporting the investment activities of Macao companies in Portuguese-speaking countries and providing funds to buy farms in Portugal. The bank is Macao's currency issuer, along with the BNU.

The Bank of China's Macao branch is integrated in the Cross-Border Inter-Bank Payments System (CIPS), which offers clearing and settlement services for its participants in RMB operations abroad, including in Portuguese-speaking countries.

Carlos Cid Álvares, CEO of the BNU, explains that local financial institutions, together with the

Monetary Authority of Macao, have worked closely together to broaden the supply of products and services available in Macao, thereby meeting the needs of entrepreneurs and encouraging the creation of appropriate financial instruments to further deepen Sino-Lusophone economic relations.

In 2015, BNU established a protocol with the Bank of China in Macao to join efforts in strengthening ties to countries like Portugal, Brazil, Mozambique and Angola. Agreements aim to jointly promote business developments between China and Portuguese-speaking countries and create synergies and a broader referral network for new opportunities.

This year, the BNU also became a member of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC)-led Belt and Road Inter-Bank Regular Cooperation Mechanism and signed a memorandum of understanding with Macao's Trade and Investment Promotion Agency – the IPIM – during the 24th Macao International Fair to strengthen mutual collaboration in attracting more businesses to the territory.

The bank also began offering financial leasing services earlier this year. “This is a very relevant product for local entrepreneurs,” says Cid Álvares, “particularly in the context of small and medium enterprises, which might not be eligible for conventional loans.” According to BNU's CEO, the bank is also looking into the possibility of implementing an export insurance service that would enable its customers to mitigate the risks that are inherent when exporting goods and thereby encouraging business growth between Macao, Portuguese-speaking countries and China.

BNU's CEO is confident that Macao will diversify its financial offering and 'gradually become



Eric Tam



António Sanmarful

Carlos Cid Álvares, CEO of the Banco Nacional Ultramarino; (top) BNU headquarters in Macao

an international reference, namely in support of RMB internationalisation and co-operation with Portuguese-speaking countries'. New services could include the issuance of debt by local or Chinese companies which 'requires a concerted effort by the various actors', says Cid Álvares, including organisations like governmental bodies 'in defining standards', financial agents and brokers. More and more products are becoming available in the financial market and local bankers expect to attract capital from China, Hong Kong and beyond.

Macao could increase its co-operation with financial agents from neighbouring regions, such as its sister SAR, a famous financial hub. “In the future,” says Cid Álvares, “both Chinese and Portuguese-speaking companies will have the quintessential centre in Macao where they can find the financial resources best suited to their business and investment needs, as well as a legal and regulatory environment conducive to investment and the promotion of business.”

The special region's future may not be one dedicated only to the gaming dollar, then. There's a new financial and economic dawn on the horizon for Macao that could benefit the city, the region and beyond in the coming years. ●

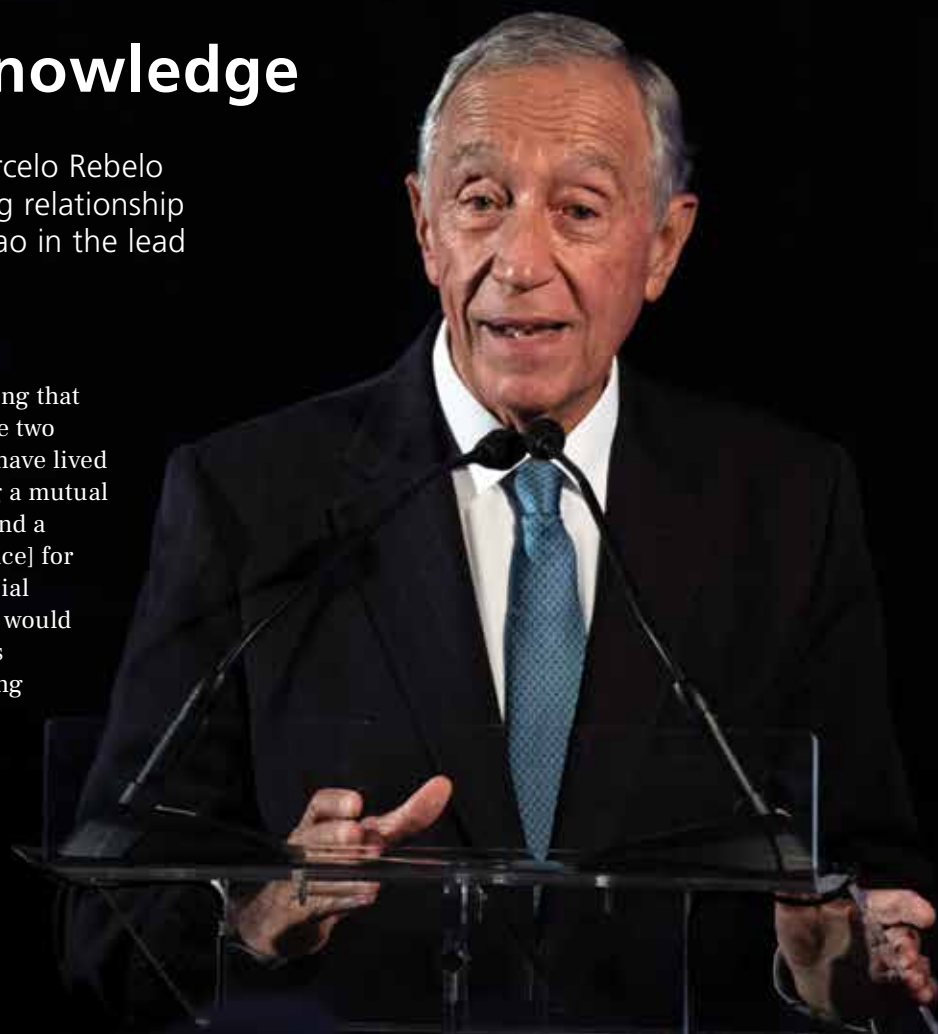
In their WORDS

Political, legal, media and other high profile representatives of Macao and across the world talk exclusively to 'Macao Magazine', giving their thoughts on the past two decades and the future of our city.

Our mutual knowledge

The President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, celebrates the strong relationship between his country and Macao in the lead up to the 20th anniversary.

I recall and welcome the understanding that was possible to be built between the two states [of Macao and Portugal] which have lived together for centuries, thus signalling a mutual knowledge made of past experience and a willingness to continue [this experience] for the future. The ever-friendly and special relations between Portugal and China would never have happened without Macao's unique contribution, namely by playing its role as a platform for China in the dialogue not only with Portugal but with all the Portuguese-speaking world. Macao has the ability to boost or optimise the China-Portuguese speaking countries connection.



The sea's the limit

Susana Wong, director of the Marine and Water Bureau, focuses on Macao's marine area management over the past 20 years and beyond.

For historical reasons, Macao used to have no clear jurisdiction over its waters, although the government had been managing the customary waters nearby before and during the early stage of the handover of Macao in 1999, including marine traffic control, navigation safety, maritime activities supervision and maritime search and rescue. In the early stage of the handover of Macao, as I remember, Macao and Zhuhai had different opinions on the management of the customary waters. After communication and co-ordination, the two places agreed to maintain the tacit understanding on the management scope of the customary waters and strengthen the co-operation in maritime management to jointly guarantee maritime safety.

Under the plan approved by the State Council at the end of 2015, however, the territorial waters of Macao were defined as an area of 85 square kilometres. Since then, the SAR government has made a number of important deployments for maritime management including the establishment of the Commission for the Co-ordination in the Management and Development of the Maritime Area, the signing of three co-operation agreements with the Mainland authorities, the demarcation of the SAR's coastline and the legislation of the Maritime Area Management Framework Law, which created a better frame and basis of maritime management. The Marine and Water Bureau is currently working with legal departments on the legislation of the law to establish legal procedures for obtaining the right to the use of the marine area and a monitoring system for its usage.

When it comes to exploring marine economy, it is important to make full use of the sea area to develop coastal tourism and maritime traffic and to promote ourselves as a World Centre of Tourism and Leisure. After defining the territorial waters, two shipping companies have successfully launched marine tourism projects, covering Macao, Taipa and Coloane. I participated in the first voyage of these sea routes, during which I enjoyed the unique scenery along the coast of Macao, such as the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge and the mangrove forest in Cotai.

At present, we are advancing the construction of a temporary pier near A-Ma Temple for sea tours and government vessels. In the future, we will continue to look for suitable sites to set up piers along the coast of Macao to promote the diversified development of maritime activities. The bureau has also been encouraging and supporting more maritime passenger routes, especially connecting Macao with other cities in the Greater Bay Area. It is believed that, over the coming years, the industry will open up more routes and make further use of the sea area to strengthen transport links between Macao and other GBA cities so as to facilitate communication, economic and cultural exchanges within the GBA. ●





Cheong Kam Ka

A land that welcomes all

Leonel Alberto Alves, lawyer and member of the Executive Council of Macao, praises the city's government for its work over the past 20 years and sees a consolidation of its 'harmonious and dynamic society' in the decades to come.

At this time for taking stock, we should recall that, in 1999, Macao was not ready to fully exercise the powers that the Basic Law generously granted it. And so, the first five years involved a titanic effort to organise Macao's functioning in all of the essential aspects of public life.

Thanks to Edmund Ho's excellent leadership, his charisma and his natural empathy for the people, for all of the different communities, and his vision of economic development, Macao – which before the transition had experienced times of relative stagnation and disquiet – enjoyed strong growth and a qualitative leap with unlimited effects.

Subsequent governments implemented – and well – a policy of redistribution of the wealth created in Macao. They improved



Macao – which before the transition had experienced times of relative stagnation and disquiet – has enjoyed strong growth.

standards of education, enhancing quality at all educational levels, and provided considerable funds for study abroad. Protection for the most disadvantaged has, undoubtedly, been ever-present, with a clear commitment to improving the living conditions of the most underprivileged sectors of the population.

Laws could have been improved at a faster pace, especially at the economic-financial level. But the legislative framework for protecting rights and freedoms has been strengthened with several different laws and also with the modification of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Some public services have substantially improved the quality of the service they provide. Others are still undergoing internal reforms – which are taking time – to help Macao increase its administrative effectiveness.

In short, 20 years on, Macao continues to be a land that welcomes everyone who wants to live here in peace and work to consolidate a harmonious and dynamic society with an excellent outlook for sustained and increasingly humane and prosperous development. ●

Twenty years of change

Yonghua Song, rector of the University of Macau, discusses how much the city's education offerings have transformed since 1999.

Most sectors in Macao have experienced enormous changes over the past two decades. The higher education sector in general and the University of Macau (UM) in particular are no exception. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Macao Special Administrative Region, so it seems an opportune time to recount some achievements of the university in teaching and research over the past 20 years.

In 1999, I was teaching in London. Like many of my fellow Chinese scholars based in the UK, I was excited by the handover of Macao's administration to the motherland but I had only a vague impression of the city. At that time, Macao had a less developed economy, with minimal research outcomes. Today, the formerly obscure town has transformed into a cosmopolitan city.

I was not personally connected to Macao until being appointed an advisor to the SAR government's Science and Technology Committee in 2002. Despite huge challenges, the government decided to invest in higher education and scientific research for the future. When I came to Macao to become the rector of UM last year, I was astonished to see the growth in these fields, where UM played a fundamental role.

Indeed, the 1999 handover of administration ushered in a new era for UM, which has since recruited considerably more students (more than 10,000 this academic year, from around 50 countries and regions). At UM, we deliver much more than just a university degree. Great efforts have been made to implement a unique 'four-in-one' education model, which consists of discipline-specific education, general education, research and internship education, and community and peer education.

A historic opportunity presented itself in 2009, when the National People's Congress Standing Committee adopted a bill that authorised the Macao SAR to exercise jurisdiction over the new UM campus on Hengqin Island, Guangdong province, turning our new campus dream into a reality. As an outstanding example of the vitality of the 'One Country, Two Systems' policy, our new campus has world-class facilities and Asia's largest residential



University of Macau

college system. This has created favourable conditions for us to better serve Macao and to assume a greater role in supporting the nation's overall development.

On the research front, with the support of the Ministry of Science and Technology and the local government, UM has established three State Key Laboratories, focused on microelectronics, Chinese medicine and Internet of Things applications for smart cities, respectively.

To expand the frontiers of science and technology, we have in recent years built numerous new faculties and institutes, including the Faculty of Health Sciences, Institute of Applied Physics and Materials Engineering, Institute of Microelectronics, Centre for Cognitive and Brain Sciences, Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Zhuhai UM Science & Technology Research Institute (whose new building was inaugurated just this October).

In all likelihood, Macao will continue to face tremendous changes in the years ahead but UM will remain committed to serving the local society, integrating with the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, contributing to the country and creating a greater impact on the international community. With the accomplishments we have already attained, I am confident that we will scale new heights in the future. ●



Cheong Kam Ka

One country, two systems, a great future

Wu Zhiliang, President of the Macao Foundation, praises the SAR for ‘surviving’ some tough issues in 1999 before creating a city that boasts a ‘harmonious social environment’ and ‘strong sense of national identity’ under the ‘One Country, Two Systems’ principle.

Macao is a city where Chinese and Western civilisations, different ethnicities, cultures and religions co-exist harmoniously and uniquely. Whether from the perspective of world history or Chinese history, Macao is greatly marvelled at across the globe.

The implementation of the ‘One Country, Two Systems’ principle over the past two decades has proved that Macao is indeed a miraculous city. Surviving social instability, economic recession and serious unemployment at the time of the transfer of sovereignty from Portugal to the People’s Republic of China on 20 December 1999 – as well as the outbreak of SARS in 2003, the ‘Great Recession’ in 2008 and the economic downturn in 2015 – Macao has developed into a prosperous, stable and vivid economy. It is now being seen by the world in a new light.

Macao’s development over the past two decades has fully proved the scientificness and the vitality of the ‘One Country, Two Systems’ principle. The harmonious social environment, the inclusive cultural background and the strong sense of national identity shared by Macao’s population have provided ample prerequisites for the successful implementation and development of the principle.

Like any other city, there are problems – and, indeed, new developments – associated with the growth of Macao. Issues such as wealth distribution, housing, transport, education, medical care and the competitiveness of the youth need to be addressed. Since these are difficulties associated with the development of Macao, solutions are required actually through development itself.

“

The people of Macao never complain. They firmly believe that a better tomorrow can be created with their own wisdom and strength.

The people of Macao never complain. They work quietly and realistically. They firmly believe that a better tomorrow can be created with their own wisdom and strength. They also believe that there are local potentials and values to be further excavated. Only if they work together can they contribute more to the nation – and to the world.

The policies and initiatives of the Chinese government, like the Belt and Road Initiative and the

Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, as well as the strategic positioning of Macao as a world-class tourism and leisure centre, a service platform for economic and trade co-operation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries and a base for exchange and co-operation with Chinese culture through the co-existence of many different cultures, provide unlimited space for Macao’s future development.

The central government also anticipates Macao will more actively contribute to the full opening up of the nation, as well as integrating into national development, participating in national governance and promoting international civilian exchanges. Only when we seize this opportunity and bravely face the challenges that lie ahead can Macao’s potential be fully realised – and, then, endless miracles can be created. ●



Cheong Kam Ka

From 'sleepy enclave' to global hub

Harald Brüning, director of 'The Macau Daily Post' newspaper, gives his thoughts on the past few decades in the SAR – and looks to a rosy future.

When I visited Hong Kong and Macao for the first time in April 1980, the former was known as the 'Pearl of the Orient' and the latter as the 'sleepy enclave'. Macao was also known as Hong Kong's 'poor cousin'. Well, epithets should always be taken with a pinch of salt. For instance, some writers at that time also referred to Macao as Portugal's very own Pearl of the Orient – or 'Pérola do Oriente'. After visiting Macao around Easter nearly four decades ago, I found the 'sleepy enclave' sobriquet rather asinine as I could easily confirm with my own eyes and ears that the then Portuguese-administered town was very much awake.

Macao at that time already had a thriving tourism industry and one of

the world's highest per capita textile production rates. It was also a major international centre for the production of artificial flowers – and in the previous decades it was a world centre for the production of firecrackers. Curiously enough, however, during my first visit to Macao I bought a book by a Portuguese visitor who described the town (that's what it still was back then) as 'Portugal's relic in the Orient'. Well, it was a very lively relic indeed.

Of course, in purely pecuniary terms, Macao in the 1980s was still much 'poorer' than Hong Kong. However, it quickly started to catch up with Hong Kong's development drive in the mid-1980s, a process that I was able to witness first-hand as I relocated from Hong Kong to Macao during that time.

In virtually no time, Macao developed from a town into a city. While the 1990s experienced public security challenges, the 1999 change in administration proved, by and large, a resounding success. Both China and Portugal proved to the world that two countries with different political systems were able to solve a leftover from history without acrimony – and, in an interesting twist of history, their relations have become even more amicable since the 1999 change in administration.



Macao's recipe for success is that the overwhelming majority of its residents love their country and love their city.

I am almost always asked the same question by visitors to my newspaper such as journalists and academics: how much has Macao changed since its 1999 reversion? Well, my standard answer is that on the one hand it has changed a lot and on the other hand it hasn't. Some find my answer rather puzzling – even evasive. Well, what I mean is that many things in Macao haven't changed much over the past two decades, such as its old neighbourhoods and, most

importantly, its civil society and community relations that continue to be, generally speaking, based on traditional consensus politics. Obviously, Macao people are allergic to social strife and political conflict and, therefore, usually avoid both.

What hasn't changed either is local people's positive fatalism, according to which Macao is a 'lucky land' ('fuk dei' in Cantonese) that is eternally protected by three divinities – Kun Iam (Guanyin), A-Ma (Mazu) and the Virgin Mary. Even deadly Super Typhoon Hato, which pummelled Macao in 2017, did not lastingly affect their strong folk belief that Macao is a fortunate place. Of course, fortune is of vital importance in a territory where games of chance generate well over three-quarters of the government's income.

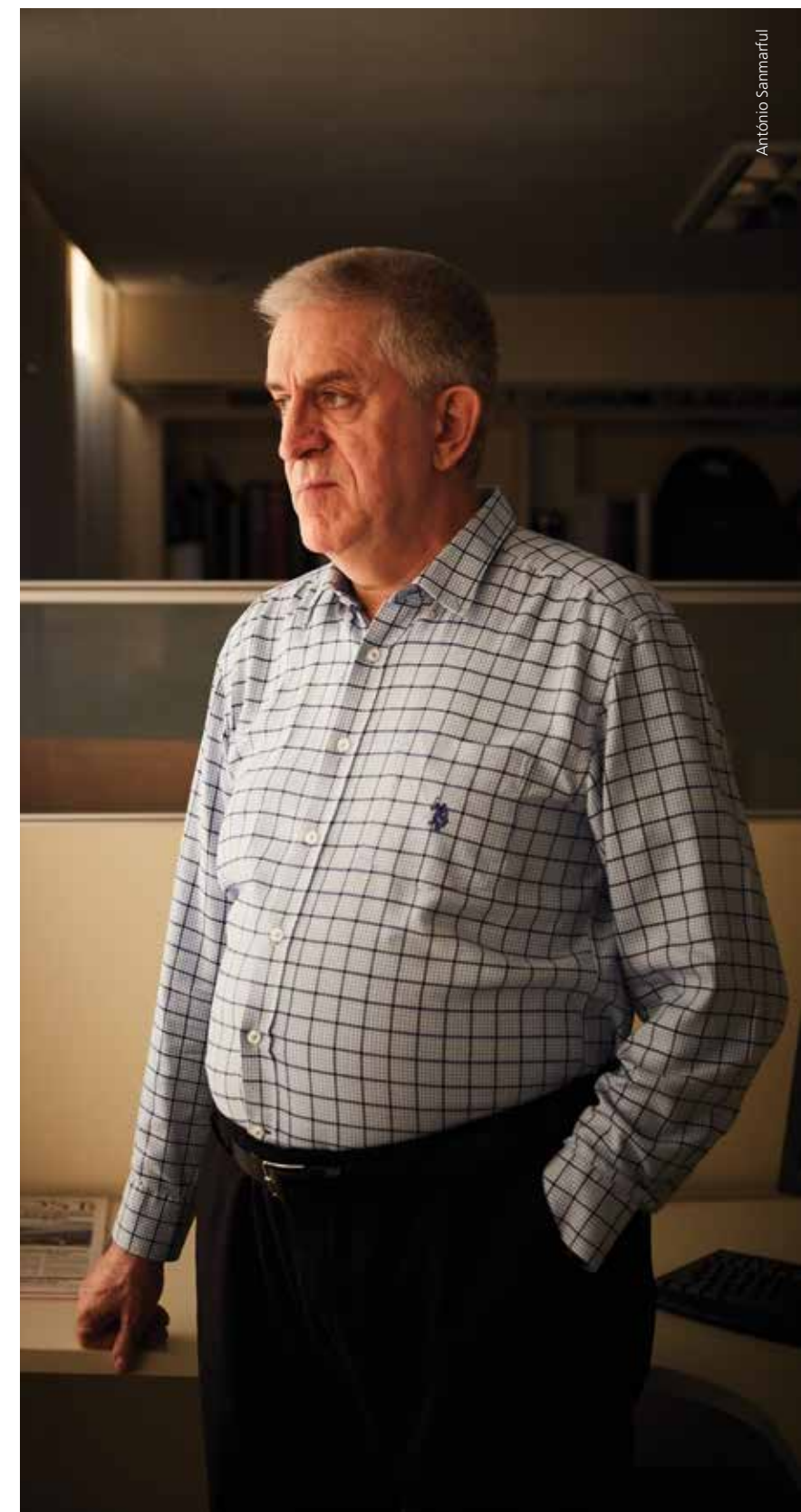
The Central People's Government's advice for Macao to upgrade itself into a world centre of tourism and leisure as well as a business service centre for trade and economic relations between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries has helped develop the city into a global hub for a wide range of activities such as international conferences and cultural exchanges. This goal has been achieved in less than 20 years, which is, quite probably, a world record. Macao is now one of the world's top tourism destinations and it boasts one of the world's highest GDPs per capita – which is much higher than Hong Kong's. Perhaps HK is now Macao's 'poor cousin'.

Macao's recipe for success is that the overwhelming majority of its residents love their country and love their city. Loving both is not a contradiction but a matter of course – and Macao's identity is strong enough to play a distinct role that benefits the world's most populous and soon the world's number one economic power.

I am optimistic about Macao's future as a very distinct Chinese city where the relatively strong presence of the Portuguese language and culture will continue to be one of its identity markers, while English will remain locals' 'lingua franca' alongside Cantonese and Mandarin. I expect this tiny but multifaceted city to continue to play its special role also beyond the 100th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China in 2049. ●



António Sammarful



António Sammarful

In your WORDS

Photos **Kary Lam** and **Rafelle Marie Allego**

**How has Macao changed since 1999?
We hit the streets and ask the people what they think about our SAR's past and future.**



FIONA CHAN
Age: 24
Profession: Secretary

"Macao has changed a lot in the past 20 years. Tourism has pushed up Macao's economy and we still have more room for development in the future. I hope the government also continues its efforts to develop the arts."



JOEL ANDRE GODINHO LOBO
Age: 25
Profession: Filmmaker and creative

"Macao has undergone great changes, transcending from a small city to today's metropolis. It's been a beautiful transition that has helped the economy bloom. In the future, I think the government will provide support for the creative industry. We are doing pretty okay!"



KEN JOLLY
Age: Over 50
Profession: Vice-president and MD of SG Gaming Asia Limited

"Macao has developed and grown, I think, for the better. People here now have a better economy to work with, with less unemployment. In the future, I feel Macao will continue to develop and become an even bigger and stronger tourist destination."



LEAH HONG
Age: 26
Profession: Financial manager at AIA

"We are safer and more peaceful than ever before in this economic powerhouse. Plus, tourism will do even better in the future. The gaming industry's instability these days will be solved by the government, so I'm not worried."



DAVID WONG
Age: 23
Profession: Integrated resort business analyst

"In the coming years, I hope the government will make more efforts in environmental protection so that Macao will not only excel economically but also culturally and environmentally."



MARIA FATIMA ROGAYAN
Age: 22
Profession: Fresh graduate from the University of Macau

"In the past 20 years, I've seen Macao grow into this big Asian Las Vegas. We now have a diverse culture unique to Macao and we're now expanding as part of the GBA initiative. I want to contribute to our community by adding more to Macao's arts and culture, such as helping to organise events for us young ones and for tourists as well."

AND THERE'S MORE...



SILVIA HO
Age: 32
Profession: Administrative worker

"Macao's development has been rapid and the Chinese government has provided great support, with Macao's long-term plans being farsighted."



JAVIER WRANA
Age: 52
Profession: Researcher at the Institute of European Studies of Macau (IEEM)

"Macao is at an interesting crossroads today. The city should definitely underline its position as the 'plaque tournante' between China and the Portuguese-speaking world."



ADELINA PARAGAS
Age: 69
Profession: Domestic worker who has lived in Macao for nearly 30 years

"Nowadays, Chinese locals are better at communicating in English. This might be because Macao is more open now and the locals are more experienced with the global community."



TONY CHEUNG
Age: 56
Profession: Office clerk

"With the opening up of gaming and the entry of foreign investment over the past 20 years, the city has developed and its competitiveness has increased a lot."



ANTHONY LEONG
Age: 24
Profession: Freelance artist

"I've seen Macao grow from a small city into an international gaming hub over the past 20 years. And with the new Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao bridge, I think the city will get even more popular."

In our **WORDS**

Macao: a success story

Executive director of Macaolink and editor-in-chief of this magazine, Gonçalo César de Sá – a journalist in Asia since the 1980s – reflects on the past, relishes the future and marks mighty milestones in this message.



On 20 December, we will mark the 20th anniversary of the transfer of the Portuguese administration to China. And, while we're celebrating this huge milestone, it will be important for all of us in the SAR to remember that Macao is now a completely different territory than it was back in December 1999.

Although many centuries-old customs and features across the city have been well maintained beyond a community that's rooted in local traditions as a result of the fusion of races, creeds and languages, Macao has completely transformed as a result of the establishment of the Special Administrative Region. In fact, it is impossible to find a territory that has undergone such profound and impactful transformations as it has done over just two decades.

For Macao to become what it is today, it is down to the work of the Chinese central government as well as the people of Macao. The Chinese government has created conditions for unstoppable and unparalleled economic growth in the city – the sort of growth that has never been seen in any other part of the world.

With the decision to open the gaming industry to international operators, to gain UNESCO World Heritage status, to see an exponential increase of tourists from Mainland China, to be gifted more maritime areas from Beijing and to strengthen ties by co-operating with China's structures and the cities of the Pearl River Delta, Macao has created excellent conditions for growth. And, with these conditions in place, the SAR is in a great

position to make another leap forward in its development over the coming decades.

Last year's opening of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge was another extremely important piece of regional development, notably in the Greater Bay Area, with the consequences in Macao now already beginning to be felt. Also, thanks to an unprecedented decision by the central government, China granted our city an international status by basing the Macao Forum in the SAR, which has become a platform for the ever-growing relations and relationships between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.

One of the most important consequences of the economic growth of the SAR is the increased purchasing power of residents which has allowed them, in just two decades, to greatly improve their quality of life. And despite the recognition that Macao's rapid economic growth has failed to keep pace with the improvement of social infrastructure, many of the plans outlined over the past 20 years – namely public housing, health and transport – are finally on the road towards being realised and fulfilled.

To understand what Macao looks like today, there is nothing better

than examining the statistics over the past couple of decades. In many of our Special Issue pieces over the previous pages, we have examined the facts and figures to see how our city has grown and transformed. We have also included a story on the Greater Bay Area, which will be the definitive engine that will transform Macao in the future and open up new challenges to the Macao government and people.

We have also covered so far in this issue the recent 15 measures announced by the central government in Beijing, showing how Macao can progress in the future with the co-operation of the other 10 cities of the GBA. Soon, the amount of people, businesses, tourists and innovators from the GBA, Asia and across the world will increase and bring ever more diversity to our city.

In this issue of the magazine, we have been able to talk to residents, politicians, government officials, artists, economists and many more besides. We have listened to what they think about the past 20 years and what they look forward to over the next two decades and beyond. There has been a common response from all of our interviewees: Macao will face a great future. One that sees more development and better organisation.

Above all, the city will become a place boasting a new arts and culture ethos, especially with the current push for more arts and tourism festivals, feasts, shows and events that take place throughout the year.

In short, it is not wrong to say that Macao, from now on, looks forward to a new life, be that in terms of its politics, its business, its culture, its tourist industry or its social affairs.

As for the rest of this issue, enjoy our interview with Tai Kin Ip, director of the Macao Economic Bureau, who discusses financial initiatives and innovations in the city, and also read our article on the SAR's Indonesian community, which shows how the city is and has always been tolerant to new ideas, races and creeds. Also, the continuous effort by the International Institute of Macau (IIM) – an organisation dedicated to preserving the city's identity and doing its utmost to keep its memory alive – is an important piece in this issue.

The 20th anniversary celebrations coincides with our own 10th anniversary of 'Macao Magazine'. We hope you will join us in marking the big occasion on 20 December while we also mark our own important occasion after 10 years and 55 issues of this magazine. ●



Environment

The green generation

Text Cathy Lai Photos Cheong Kam Ka



Eco-warriors (from left) Danny Leong, Vanessa Leung, Queenie Fok, Sonic Pun, Viena Mak and Annie Lao

As Macao is catching up with the global environmental movement, we talk to six young eco-warriors who are fighting for a greener future in the SAR.

The world may still be debating whether climate change is real and whether we really do need to make great changes for a more sustainable future – but one fact is clear: we must look after our planet better than we’ve ever done before if we want to continue living here for many generations. And Macao is no different. There are plastics in our waters that threaten wildlife and rubbish in our streets, parks and beaches that need to be constantly cleared up. Plus, there are animals we need to protect and food we need to stop wasting. It’s fortunate, then, that there’s a growing army of young people in the SAR who are dedicating their lives to protecting the environment.

Welcome to Macao’s young environmentalists. These people, many still students, work tirelessly to promote awareness and protect the environment, often working voluntarily and often toiling away despite great adversities. Take this sextet of young eco-warriors. Each one of them has been inspired in some way to join the local or global fight to clean up our cities, towns and planet and to treat nature with more respect. But don’t take that from us. Here are their stories...

The eco-campaigner

On Friday, 15 March, Annie Lao took the 9am ferry from her hometown of Macao to Hong Kong. She carried a homemade board on which she had painted a cartoon planet Earth holding a thermometer. Next to the picture, a slogan read: ‘Macao is with you’. She got off in Hong Kong and on her way to Chater Garden in the city’s Central district, the 30-year-old came across hordes of young people from across the region who were also holding boards with slogans that read ‘Save our Earth’, ‘Protect our future now’ and ‘There is no planet B’. Other props included figures of dolphins and turtles, creatively made from plastic waste collected during beach clean-ups.

Lao continued to Chater Garden and joined thousands of other young people, many skipping school but all sharing one common

goal: to protect the environment and make our world a better place. These children and young adults were among the one million young people who attended the first ever Global Climate Strike for the Future across more than 125 countries and cities. They participated in demonstrations known as Fridays for Future to demand action against global warming and climate change.

The international Fridays for Future movement began after 16-year-old Swedish girl Greta Thunberg last year staged lone protests every Friday outside her country’s parliament, holding a sign that translated to ‘School strike for the climate’. In the beginning, she was alone. But as news spread across the world, Thunberg became a symbol of determination and positive action when it comes to climate change and the environment. To Lao, Thunberg is a huge inspiration. “She is just an ordinary girl,” she says, “but she also has determination and persistence. She has woken up many people to the reality of looking after the environment. She proves that young people can also take the lead in the fight against climate change.”

Although Fridays for Future has yet to take place in Macao, the amount of young people involved in protecting the environment in the city is gathering pace, from those who are tackling plastic pollution, wildlife protection and waste management to those promoting a more eco-conscious lifestyle. David Gonçalves, dean of the Institute of Science and Environment at Macao’s University of Saint Joseph, is optimistic about these positive developments when it comes to young people’s attitudes in our SAR. “Sometimes, things take more time to happen than we would like,” he says, “but we can certainly see a movement happening in Macao. It’s good because it’s a movement among the younger generations.”

Lao speaks with enthusiasm and passion about tackling the environmental issues faced by Macao and the planet as a whole. The eco-activist found her calling after spending four



Annie Lao at a Macau for Waste Reduction event, initially known as Macau Waste-No Mall

years in Australia completing her degree in commerce at the University of Sydney between 2008 and 2012. “I encountered the most beautiful nature in Australia – fresh air, blue skies and clear waters,” she says. “I felt a strong responsibility to protect it.”

On her return to Macao from university, Lao vowed to do what she could for the SAR’s environment. She soon realised that municipal waste – especially plastic waste – was the most pressing issue for the city to tackle. Last year, according to a government report, the level of municipal waste created in Macao reached 522,548 tonnes, which

translates to 2.17kg of solid waste per person per day. The report also indicated that while organic waste – 39.5 per cent – accounted for the most waste produced in the city in 2018, plastic waste – 22.5 per cent – was a close second. Lao believes that the city urgently needs a solution to the problem.

In late January this year, Lao and several of her like-minded friends launched the Macau for Waste Reduction campaign – initially known as Macau Waste-No-Mall – on Facebook, aiming to promote awareness on how to recycle and reduce waste correctly

and responsibly. And from March, the campaign began to host a recycling station in the centre of the city every second Saturday of the month in a bid to collect recyclable plastics, aluminum cans and paper from the community. “Although the government has set up recycling bins to collect plastic, metal and paper everywhere in the city,” explains Lao, “people often don’t pay attention to them and throw random rubbish inside. But during our events, our members are there to answer questions, ensuring all items that are collected are clean and properly sorted.”



According to Lao, the collected items are sent directly to local recycling companies, where they are broken down into raw materials or exported to other countries for recycling. “Instead of dumping them at the city’s incinerators,” she says, “we want to try our best to ensure that these resources can be reused and, more importantly, we want to make people understand that they have to be responsible for the waste they have produced.” Lao claims that plastic takeaway boxes and plastic bottles are usually the most collected items during their events. But she stresses that people can’t just take recycling as a guilt-free solution. Instead, they should try to reduce their waste. “I think people need to know that it is very wasteful for these boxes or bottles to be used just one time,” she says. “Also, research has proved that plastic containers can be harmful to your health.”



The eco-business owner

Another young eco-warrior who shares Lao’s concerns over Macao’s plastic waste is Sonic Pun, the vice-chairman of the Macao Environment Protection Volunteer Association and the founder of Stuffbox Natural Friendly Store. Also 30 years old, Pun read about the environmental problems caused by humans when he was in secondary school and became determined to help the environment. Issues like ‘white pollution’ – a term that refers to the pollution caused by white plastics and polyfoam – concerned him greatly and he just wanted to do anything he could to help clean up the world. “When I was 14,” he says, “I told my friend that I wanted to be a street cleaner when I grew up.”

In 2012, Pun returned to Macao after finishing an environmental management degree overseas. Despite having difficulty finding a relevant full-time job, he regularly volunteered for environmental work. In 2015, his ambition was realised, however, when he became the vice-chairman of the Macao Environment Protection Volunteer Association, a local NGO that regularly organises beach clean-ups, visits to conservation zones and tours around environmental facilities. A year later, Pun noticed that in Taiwan and Hong Kong, more people were joining in the fight to reduce plastic waste, plus there was a global movement whereby eco-friendly products had become a trendy option for those who wanted to pursue a zero-waste lifestyle. “I think it’s time for Macao to catch up,” he said at the time – and he still believes this. In fact, he’s on a mission to make sure the city does indeed ‘catch up’.

A can is about to be crushed underfoot at a recycling campaign event hosted by Macau for Waste Reduction; (top left) bags of recyclable trash are collected by the campaign team

Pun launched his start-up business, Stuffbox Natural Friendly Store, on Facebook in 2016 and there has been steady growth in the company up to today. Stuffbox sells reusable food bags and containers – products that lead to a less wasteful and more environmentally conscious lifestyle. The activist-turned-entrepreneur admits that he doesn’t have a concrete strategy to boost his business at the moment but he’s confident that it will thrive as long as the eco-lifestyle trend continues to grow in Macao.

After running the online shop for a year, Pun created the Facebook group Macau Less Plastic Lifestyle to further promote eco-awareness and to provide a platform for like-minded people to exchange ideas. After two years, the group has now drawn more than 9,400 members. “As the group admin,” says Pun, “I keep posting lifestyle tips and the latest environmental news reports on the group page. But what I didn’t expect is that people have started to share photos of themselves shopping with reusable containers. They have even exchanged second-hand items on the page.”

While Pun’s membership on the page is expanding, so is his business. Last year, he launched the first physical shop of Stuffbox Natural Friendly Store inside a commercial building in Nape and in July, he relocated to a bigger store near Lou Lim Ieoc Garden. It now sells a range of eco, vegan and fair-trade products. Despite his success, though, he admits that the future of eco-friendly stores is still uncertain in Macao. “It always takes time to change people’s perceptions and habits,” he says. To this end, Pun has just made a further step towards promoting the zero-waste culture by establishing the Macau Less Plastic Lifestyle Association through which he will host workshops and big-scale events to raise awareness.

Joey Cheong and Jack Lei from the Macao Environment Protection Volunteer Association, of which Sonic Pun is vice-chairman, clean up the coastal area in Macao; (right) Sonic Pun



The eco-influencer

Queenie Fok is a master at organising events. The 29-year-old joined Green Future Macau, a local environmental NGO founded in 2012, after completing her degree in environmental science at Nanjing University earlier the same year. She says she became interested in environment protection when she was a school student. “At first, I started to notice that Macao was really lagging behind in recycling,” she says. “But as I became more

informed, I realised the solution really lies in waste reduction and upholding a green lifestyle.” Fok says she was eager to promote such concepts through Green Future, especially when she was appointed as the NGO’s chairman a year later.

Fok’s first activity as chairman was the Secondary Students Eco Protection Knowledge Competition (Green Cup) in 2013. Just under 500 students from more than 20 secondary schools in the city took part in the first major competition about ecological knowledge in Macao. Fok and her team were amazed by the well-rounded knowledge of the young participants during the event but they also worried that such knowledge might not be translated into real actions. “After the event,” she says, “we reflected a lot on what direction Green Future wanted to go for. I think it’s more important

to demonstrate practical actions than to only boost knowledge and information.”

Since the competition, Green Future has organised interactive events like beach clean-ups and vegetarian food and upcycling workshops around the city. But one particular programme that means a lot to Fok is Green Project Macau. Since 2014, this programme has recruited around 30 students between January and June each year to take part in events and activism campaigns, as well as exchange tours on the Mainland. “Over the past six years,” says Fok, “we have realised that with less participants in an activity, we can explore an issue more deeply and influence them better.” Fok notes that the participants have been influenced to change their everyday habits, such as bringing their own lunchboxes with them to events.

Green Future



Queenie Fok; (inset) Fok hosts a Green Project Macao event

Vanessa Leung; (inset) Leung's team sorts food which has been collected from a market



Pui Ching Middle School

The eco-charity worker

Vanessa Leung, a long-time volunteer who graduated from Macao’s Pui Ching Middle School in June, says she has had an ‘inspirational experience’ over the past two years. Now a medical student at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Leung says she developed an interest in conservation after taking part in an ongoing Leftover Vegetables Programme that’s hosted by The Salvation Army and Oxfam in Macao. Since she was in primary school, she has been a member of the Pui Ching Volunteer Team, participating in community activities such as visiting homes for the elderly or for children. Last year, she was named the team’s vice-captain. “As a student,” says the 18-year-old, “my contribution may be limited but I really enjoy helping people and I think I have made good use of my free time.”

Last year, Leung went from just taking part to actually leading a

group of eight school pupils in the Leftover Vegetables Programme. Over the course of a year-and-a-half, the group visited the Bairro Iao Hon Municipal Market in the north of Macao twice a week, from 6.30pm each night, using three trolleys and six baskets to transport 30kg of vegetables to the nearby Salvation Army centre. There, they packed the food into bags so that beneficiary families could collect them later. Leung recalls that she was always overwhelmed to see the massive amount of good food which remained in the market at the end of each day. “They looked the same as the vegetables that my mother would buy during the day,” she says. “I can’t imagine throwing them all away.”

Leung realised that the amount of leftover food they collected was only the tip of the iceberg. To make matters worse, she found that sometimes the beneficiary families could not even consume all of the food the group brought to the centre for them. Instead



of leaving the problem to The Salvation Army, however, Leung and her team decided to take action. They reached out to associations in the Iao Hon district and, finally, the General Union of Neighbours’ Association of Macau agreed to take in some of the vegetables they collected and distributed them to more families in need.

Now, Leung has left Pui Ching Middle School for further education but the team she once led will continue to work on the Leftover Vegetables Programme. She believes that she and her team have developed better awareness on saving resources as a result of the programme. For instance, to avoid wasting single-use plastic bags, the team asked for donations of clean and unwanted canvas bags from their classmates for packing the food. In just one week, they collected around 200 bags. The experience has also inspired changes in her daily life. “I am always mindful of not wasting food now,” she says. “I also remind my mother not to buy too much every time we go to the market. After all, saving resources and protecting the environment will eventually benefit all of us.”

The eco-animal lover

To inspire changes on long-time practices and raise awareness on neglected issues, it often requires both scientists' hard data and advocates' persuasion. Viena Mak thinks that her job is a perfect combination of both. Born in Macao, the 27-year-old graduated from the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) in 2013 with a degree in environmental science but a year before her graduation, she started taking part in a long-term study on Chinese white dolphins and finless porpoises in the Pearl River Delta region led by the Hong Kong Cetacean Research Project, a sister organisation of the Hong Kong Dolphin Conservation Society. "I hadn't been too into Chinese white dolphins or cetaceans before," she admits, "but out of curiosity in 2012, I joined a two-day workshop hosted by the Hong Kong Cetacean Research Project at CUHK and I was shocked to learn about the adversities faced by these precious creatures."

Mak was so shocked about the plight of the dolphins that she joined the project and has been

working for the organisation ever since. Although listed as a 'Grade 1 National Key Protected Species' on the Mainland – and named the official mascot of Hong Kong's transferral of authority to China in 1997 – the Chinese white dolphin, which is actually pink, faces a tough battle for survival in Hong Kong's waters every day. Its biggest threats include the frequent construction and reclamation works and the high-speed ferries travelling around their habitats. Ocean trash such as plastic debris and ghost nets may also cause accidental ingestions and injuries to the mammals.

According to a report released in August by the Hong Kong government, the number of Chinese white dolphins living in the city's waters remains 'critically low' at just 32 individuals. In Macao, studies have found that there were at least 70 dolphins roaming the SAR's waters last year, according to the Municipal Affairs Bureau.

As a researcher, Mak climbs mountains and wades through the sea in order to track the dolphins living in the waters of Hong Kong.

She observes their numbers, distributions and behaviours and she reckons she can now recognise more than 20 of them with her naked eyes, based on the shape of their dorsal fins and other distinctive features, such as colour patterns and scars. She also takes part in events geared towards the protection of the animals, such as exhibitions and workshops.

A lot of her work may be in Hong Kong but Mak also believes that it is important to raise awareness about the protection of the Chinese white dolphins in Macao as reclamation work and high-speed ferries are also common in our waters. In March, she was invited to give a talk at TEDxSenadoSquare alongside eight other experts from Macao in their respective fields. During the 20-minute talk, she shared her observations on the vulnerable dolphin population near the city's waters and the threats imposed on them by humans. Since then, she has become a local personality, giving talks at universities and bookstores.

At her talks, Mak now mentions the issue of dolphins and porpoises being put into captivity for profit or entertainment. "Although Macao doesn't have aquariums or marine parks," she says, "it is common for the people here to visit the aquariums on the Mainland. These aquariums may not tell you that the dolphins or whales they keep were captured in their natural habitats and were coercively separated from their families. Therefore, it is important for researchers and advocates to tell children and parents the whole truth."

Viena Mak uses a theodolite to pinpoint the location of dolphins and other cetaceans



The eco-scientist

Danny Leong, another young researcher from Macao, shares the same sentiments as Mak. "I think scientists nowadays cannot just focus on researching," he says. "They also need to share what they see and how they feel on the frontline to the public." The 26-year-old scientist has been given the moniker of the Macao Ant Man after publishing his discovery of *Leptanilla macauensis*, a whole new ant species residing in Ilha Verde, a small hill situated in the northern part of the Macao peninsula. He discovered the species in 2017 while he was still studying for his Master's in entomology at Taiwan University.

Leong is now a PhD student of ecology and biodiversity division at the University of Hong Kong and an adjunct instructor at the University of Macau. His research focus has shifted to ecology and urban planning, covering Southeast Asian cities such as Macao, Hong Kong, Taipei and Singapore. By studying how different 'ectotherm' species – animals that are dependant on external sources of body heat, like insects, crabs and shrimps – are affected by rising temperatures and how much canopy cover and urban green space is needed to balance out the impact of global warming, Leong seeks to identify the methods which would make an urban area ideal for living and for biodiversity conservation.

Despite a busy schedule, Leong interacts with the public, hosting talks and workshops about insect conservation and protecting ecosystems. "Insects are just a piece of the ecological puzzle," he explains. "As a scientist, you can focus on studying one piece of the puzzle but you also need to have a caring heart for all living creatures and show people how to respect nature." Leong says he takes part in up to seven public events each month, mainly initiated by local universities and associations.

One such meaningful activity was the Civil Scientist workshops which were held at the Macao Science Museum in the summer. Here, Leong told children and parents interesting stories about different insect species and how to identify them. He also introduced a useful mobile app, iNaturalist, which allows people to upload photos of the insects they encounter to the Global Biodiversity Information Facility, an international organisation that focuses on making scientific data on biodiversity available to all online. "This is extremely helpful for scientists who are studying urban biodiversity," Leong stresses.



Thanks to the discovery of *Leptanilla macauensis* and the hard work of those who are passionate about entomological studies, Leong believes that many Macao people are now changing their attitudes towards their arthropod neighbours. To illustrate this, he claims he once helped a family who attended one of his workshops. The family had set up a breeding box for an ant queen which had accidentally entered their home. "I think in the past," he reckons, "they would probably just have killed her."

Leong is representative of all the young eco-warriors in Macao: he boasts a determination to plant a seed of change. He knew, at the beginning, that this seed would only reach just a few people in the city. But he persevered and now his efforts are paying off. "Everybody can play an important part in promoting science and conservation," he says, "regardless of age and background. I hope that one day, Macao can truly become a smart city – a city that is not just focused on technology but is also eco-friendly, knowledgeable and compassionate." ●



Danny Leong; (top left) Leong holds an ant in the lab; (middle left) Leong uses a microscope in a Taiwan University lab

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Money talks

Text Mariana César de Sa Photos Cheong Kam Ka

Tai Kin Ip, director of the Macao Economic Bureau, discusses financial schemes in Macao and how the SAR's cash is spent on supporting businesses and young entrepreneurs.

Macao's government has earmarked more than MOP 4.7 billion – US\$583 million – over the past 16 years in support of Macao's entrepreneurs and youths at home and abroad. Macao's Economic Bureau director, Tai Kin Ip, tells us how this money has been used and for what initiatives. He also shares with us his recent trip to Portugal and how his bureau is actively working on bridging closer connections between Macao, the Greater Bay Area cities and the Portuguese-speaking countries.

How much funding and resources does the Macao Economic Bureau – DSE – allocate to SMEs in the city?

Launched in 2003, the SME Aid Scheme offers interest-free loans up to MOP 600,000 (US\$76,600), repayable over a maximum of eight years. Meanwhile, the SME Credit Guarantee Scheme offers a 70 per cent guarantee on loans up to MOP 7 million (US\$894,000). The SME Credit Guarantee Scheme Designated for Special Projects provides SMEs with guarantees of up to 100 per cent of the bank loans needed for financing specific projects and the loan ceiling is MOP 1 million (US\$127,700). In 2013, the Young Entrepreneur Aid Scheme was also launched to offer interest-free loans up to MOP 300,000 (US\$38,300). Amid the rapidly changing business environment, these schemes have been reviewed several times to streamline the application process, expand the scope of fund use and increase the amount of funding support. We also assist local SMEs by providing know-how training, optimising the market channels via regional co-operation and so forth.

Does the DSE work closely with the gaming operators on SME initiatives?

We have been actively advocating the 'large enterprises leading small enterprises' business model. In line with this, the Macao Chamber of Commerce has organised a series of local SME procurement partnership programmes with the large integrated resort operators. These include business matching sessions, training workshops, procurement co-operation and so forth. These strategic partnerships do not only provide vast business opportunities to the local SMEs but also enhance their ways of doing business and, thus, their overall competitiveness.

The Macau Productivity and Technology Transfer Centre (CPTTM) also works closely with SMEs. How do the CPTTM and the DSE work together when it comes to SME initiatives?

The mobile app 'Macao Happy Play', which is jointly developed by the CPTTM and DSE, provides a platform to consolidate and share all relative information of the participating SMEs. Another example is the SME360, an informational website which addresses a wide range of SMEs' needs by providing information such as how to set up a business in Macao, introduction to government business support policies and procurement information. The Young Entrepreneur Aid Scheme implemented by DSE also involves the CPTTM. The scheme was revised in 2017 to be more targeted, with one of the major changes being applicants must possess and provide certificates of at least 42 hours of training courses on entrepreneurship. The CPTTM is responsible for arranging a series of

entrepreneurial courses for the applicants of this aid scheme. Applicants can only be exempted from this if they possess an academic degree or diploma from a tertiary education institution in the fields of business administration or management studies.

Other initiatives launched jointly with the CPTTM are the SME Funding Scheme for Lifting Platforms against Flood Damage and the SME Funding Scheme for Flood Gates and Water Pumps against Flood Damage, which are open to application until the end of June 2020. Through these two schemes, qualified SMEs will be funded for the installation of lifting platforms, flood gates and water pumps to prevent or relieve the loss caused by extreme weather conditions. The maximum amount funded for each application is MOP 100,000 (US\$12,700) for the former scheme and MOP 50,000 (US\$6,385) for the latter.

The DSE launched the Macao Young Entrepreneur Incubation Centre (MYEIC) in 2015. What type of support does the MYEIC provide local entrepreneurs?

We launched the MYEIC with IPIM [the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute] and the CPTTM. Managed by Parafuturo de Macao Investment and Development Limited [a company created by the Macao government in 2015 with one of its purposes being to support young entrepreneurs as well as local SMEs], the centre operates around the clock to provide a wide spectrum of services to innovators and entrepreneurs in Macao. It offers co-working spaces, professional consulting, expert advisors, roadshow marketing, investment capital-matching and so forth. The centre also co-operates with domestic and overseas business incubators to enable young entrepreneurial teams in Mainland China, Portugal and Macao to exchange entrepreneurial resources and explore business opportunities. The centre also hosted the 'Parafuturo de Macao' Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition in June, aimed at discovering and nurturing entrepreneurs.

How can the Greater Bay Area support Macao's SMEs?

As we know, Macao is a small economy with limited resources. The initiative of developing the Greater Bay Area provides new impetus for diversifying the local economy. Since 2016, the DSE has signed various co-operation agreements with incubation centres in six cities – Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Dongguan, Zhongshan and Jiangmen – and through mutual recognition of start-up projects, as well as recommending and introducing the incubation centres in the Greater Bay Area to Macao youths. Through this, the Macao government has assisted them in exploring and starting up businesses in the Mainland.

Noting that SMEs and youth start-ups might not have sufficient resources or networks to navigate the complexity of different systems and regulations in operating businesses in the GBA, the DSE initiated the ‘Professional Consultation Services Exchange Programme’ in June. Through collaboration between the MYEIC and various incubation centres – six cities, 11 centres – in the GBA, both sides have agreed to provide advisory services, particularly in the area of legal, accounting and taxation, to start-ups who wish to attain their initial footing in the new market.

How is the bureau facilitating business across the GBA?

To facilitate Macao SMEs and entrepreneurs in setting up companies in the Mainland, the DSE-supported local association, the Guangdong and Macao Federation of Industry and Commerce, in setting up the Pilot Service Centre for Mainland Business Registration in Macao. The centre provides free-of-charge business registration services to Macao enterprises and residents for their incorporation of individually owned stores in Hengqin and Guangzhou. To assist Macao enterprises and individuals who need to register trademarks in the Mainland, the DSE-supported local association, the Macao Chain Stores and Franchise Association, in establishing the China Trademark Registration Consulting Centre. According to the needs of the enterprises, the centre will provide free consultation services on trademark information, application procedures and channels in the Mainland. It also introduces Mainland trademark registration agencies and assists in establishing initial connections. This co-operation not only enables Macao to break through the bottlenecked

areas of the economy but also plays an important role in achieving the goal of economic diversification.

The HK-Macao CEPA agreement was signed in 2017 and besides the continuation of zero tariffs, how else does the agreement benefit the SARs?

On 27 October 2017, Hong Kong and Macao signed the HK-Macao CEPA, which has been implemented since 1 January 2018 with a view of strengthening trade ties and exchanges in respect of technical co-operation between the two sides. The HK-Macao CEPA is the second FTA [Free Trade Agreement] signed by Macao with another WTO member, the first CEPA being signed with Mainland China. The agreement essentially covers the liberalisation measures of Trade in Goods and Trade in Services, while the Economic and Technical Cooperation Work Programme specifies the co-operation in trade facilitation and so on.

“

Young people should continuously enrich themselves with new knowledge to become competitive not only in Macao but also in the Greater Bay Area as well as the PSCs.

On the scope of the liberalisation of the agreement, both parties committed to continue to apply zero tariffs to goods – and not to apply non-tariffs and anti-dumping measures to goods – that originate

on either side. Hong Kong was the largest merchandise export destination and the fifth largest source of imports from Macao in 2018, with the bilateral trade volume reaching MOP 14.6 billion (US\$1.8 billion). After the implementation of the agreement in 2018, Macao’s export of goods to Hong Kong has risen by 14.7 per cent, while import of goods from Hong Kong increased by 3.6 per cent. The HK-Macao CEPA has established a long-term co-operative relationship, providing an even more favourable investment environment for trade and business and forging a closer economic relationship and development of both sides. We believe that the HK-Macao CEPA will open a new page of bilateral relationship in the future.

Do you think opening up our economy to more foreign talent would benefit the city?

It is notably obvious that talents are of utmost importance to social and economic development. In the process of building up the ‘One Centre, One Platform’ objective, there is an intense demand for talents. Hence, the government is actively exploring and cultivating talents through the Talents Development Committee. As for the issue of bringing in specific talents, it is necessary for all sectors of the community to reach a consensus. Undoubtedly, young people nowadays have more development opportunities than their previous generations with their careers being not only limited to Macao. My advice is that young people, whether they choose to throw themselves into the job market or start their own business, should continuously enrich themselves with new knowledge to become competitive not only in Macao but also in the Greater Bay Area as well as the PSCs.

You recently went to Portugal with local entrepreneurs to seek business opportunities and partnerships. Could you share how these visits went?

Being a commercial and trade co-operation service platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries, Macao is bringing its role into full play by setting up the ‘China-PSCs Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Exchange Centre’ in 2017. To complement the establishment of this centre, the ‘China-PSCs Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Exchange Programme’ was launched to encourage our youth to learn and develop in Portugal, inspire innovative thinking and foster opportunities for business and collaboration. In addition, to nurture young entrepreneurs and promote exchange among talents in the GBA, the programme was extended to Mainland entrepreneurs currently in Macao incubators which include MYEIC and the University of Macau Incubation Centre, as well as to Mainland students in Macao who wish to explore opportunities in PSCs. As of 31 August, 50 out of 57 cases have been approved for the exchange programme. The applicants are mainly engaged in business services, cultural and creativity and technology sectors.

While in Portugal, I met with João Correia Neves, the Secretary of State for Economy in Portugal, to give him an account of our work. Neves appreciated our efforts to help Portuguese young entrepreneurs to extend their connections and markets to the Greater Bay Area and welcomed Macao’s young entrepreneurs to explore market opportunities in Portugal through the exchange programme. I also visited João Borge, the director of Startup Portugal, and briefed him on our work on increasing co-operation in innovation and entrepreneurship between China and Portugal. He shared their experience about how the Portuguese government has incorporated the startup visa into Portuguese immigration law to develop a better business environment to attract talents and entrepreneurs.

The Economic Bureau has also continuously organised visits for young entrepreneurs, representatives of local youth associations, university professors and other stakeholders to PSCs such as Portugal and Brazil. This gives the members opportunities to exchange views with relevant parties as well as to learn more about local business environments and support policies. For instance, DSE, together with the MYEIC, organised a visit of around 30 representatives to Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo in March. The group visited several public services, incubators and local associations to discuss the possibility of future co-operation. During the visit, we arranged 11 start-up teams from the University of Macao and MYEIC to participate in a roadshow held at an incubator. We also facilitated the conclusion of two co-operation agreements between Macao and Brazil associations.

The ‘Macao Classic Brand’ – businesses existing for more than 40 years and offering unique products, techniques or services – was launched last year. Tell us about it...

In order to promote the revitalisation of Macao’s long-established stores which is one of the elements of the ‘The Five-Year Development Plan of the Macao SAR (2016-2020)’, the Economic Bureau signed the ‘Macao Classic Brand Support Group’ co-operation agreement with the Macao Chain Stores and Franchise Association in November 2017. The DSE supports the association in discovering and evaluating classic stores with distinguished Macao characteristics and to introduce new development elements into these stores. By rigorous evaluation of the ‘Macao Classic Brand Evaluation Committee’, which is composed of representatives from the government, industry and commerce sector, professional services and academia, 12 stores were honoured in the inaugural ‘Macao Classic Brand’. In fact, the evaluation of ‘Macao Classic Brand’ is itself a kind of protection and support for the stores’ businesses. It not only enhances the image and popularity of the stores but also combines the historical and cultural heritage owned by these stores.

The 12 ‘Macao Classic Brand’ firms

These dozen businesses have been around for more than 40 years and offer unique products or services. They have been honoured for being ‘classic’ by the government...

- Ourivesaria Chee Lee Yuen
- Pastelaria Ng Teng Kei
- Solmar Limited
- Estabelecimento de Comidas Lok Kei
- Fong Kei
- Pastelaria Chui Heong
- Tong Iec Pak Fa Fui Cheong Un Company Limited
- Merceria de Mok Yi Kei
- Estabelecimento de Comidas Medan
- Estabelecimento de Comidas de Canja (Loja de Sopa de Fitas) Seng Kei Pak Chok
- China Products Co
- Estabelecimento de Bebidas Lai Kei



Explain the diamonds initiative and why Macao chose this...

The government has been striving to promote Macao's development into a commercial and trade co-operation service platform between China and the PSCs, as well as to foster economic diversification. Portuguese-speaking countries such as Angola, Brazil and Mozambique are rich in natural resources of gems and the demand for luxury accessories in Mainland China is considerably strong, therefore an initiative in promoting the manufacturing industry towards a high-end and high value-added cluster was derived to fully utilise the advantages in gem resources of those PSCs and the role of Macao as a trade platform.

Considering that rough diamonds are the raw material for a variety of industrial equipment and luxury accessories, we saw the need to implement the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) to participate in the international trade of rough diamonds as the first step. Since the start of the initiative of introducing KPCS to Macao, works have been done in forging the legal framework for the trade of rough diamonds and the legislation on implementing the KPCS in Macao came into force on 1 October. Macao could act as a bridge between buyers and sellers of rough diamonds and

other precious stones, giving full play to our advantages as a service platform between China and PSCs. In the future, the implementation of the KPCS will bring a new industry to Macao, not only filling the gap of raw material supply for the diamond industry but also helping to build a complete jewellery industry chain by attracting jewellery design and processing enterprises to establish footholds in Macao. This would improve the development of the local jewellery industry, increase opportunity for new investors and attract new investment, injecting impetus to Macao's efforts in promoting a more diversified economy.

Looking at next year, what budget has the DSE allocated for SMEs – and are there any new initiatives to be launched?

Given the current regional and global economic uncertainties, the government will keep a close eye on the development of local SMEs. We will continue to study and assess the impact of the external environment and make policy refinements or introduce new initiatives where necessary. At the same time, we will continue to enhance the business environment and encourage SMEs to improve their operations through capacity building and other means in order to strengthen their overall competitiveness. ●

The story of the schemes

Four schemes set up to help businesses and young entrepreneurs. Here are the figures...

SME Aid Scheme: 10,250 applications have been approved in total*, amounting to MOP 3.05 billion (US\$389 million); 320 of those applications were approved between 1 January and 31 August, amounting to MOP 128 million (US\$16.3 million).

Credit Guarantee Scheme: 714 applications have been approved in total*, amounting to MOP 1.3 billion (US\$166 million) in guarantee bank loans; 29 of those applications were approved between 1 January and 31 August, amounting to MOP 56 million (US\$7.1 million) in credit bank loans.

SME Credit Guarantee Scheme Designated for Small Projects: 66 applications have been approved in total*, amounting to MOP 55.6 million (US\$7.1 million) in guaranteed bank loans.

Young Entrepreneur Aid Scheme: 1,490 applications have been approved in total*, with MOP 343 million (US\$43.8 million) granted; 126 of those applications were approved between 1 January and 31 August, with MOP 24.9 million (US\$3.2 million) granted.

**Figures correct up to 31 August*

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A decade in the making

Text Christian Ritter

Macao's outgoing Chief Executive Fernando Chui Sai On stressed socio-economic progress during his 10-year term at a speech made to the Legislative Assembly on 12 November.

There may be a new Chief Executive sworn in during the 20th anniversary celebrations in Macao on 20 December – Ho Iat Seng – however, on Tuesday 12 November, it was a time to reflect on the progress made under outgoing CE's 10 years at the helm of the local government. Fernando Chui Sai On spoke from the Legislative Assembly's hemicycle as he told politicians that over the past decade, the city has been able to keep up social and economic progress, ensuring political stability, improving people's livelihoods, speeding up infrastructure developments and maintaining social harmony.

Fernando Chui Sai On, whose term ends at midnight on 19 December, is Macao's second Chief Executive, becoming so in December 2009. The 62-year-old, who served as the city's Secretary for Social and Cultural Affairs between 1999 and 2009, has given many policy addresses over his 10 years, however the speech on 12 November focused on the government's work this year and budget proposals for next year. Chui also highlighted his two-term government's achievements since he became Chief Executive.

During the address, Chui pointed out that he had discussed his budget proposals for next year with Ho – and that the incoming CE had agreed with them. Ho's government is slated to present its 2020 budget bill to lawmakers early next year and Chui said that his government team had drafted its budget proposal in

accordance with the Macao Basic Law and the Budget Framework Law with a view to ensuring Macao's stability and the normal functioning of the public service. Chui also predicted that the SAR's financial reserves will reach MOP 627 billion (US\$77.8 billion) at the end of this year.

In the budget proposals presented by Chui, the government suggests the continuation of existing tax relief measures, such as the 30 per cent exemption of personal income tax, with the basic allowance set at MOP 144,000 (US\$17,868), and the 60 per cent rate of personal income tax, subject to a ceiling of MOP 14,000 (US\$1,737). The personal income tax allowance for employees aged 65 and over – and for employees with disabilities – amounts to MOP 198,000 (US\$24,569). Among the other measures to continue are waivers for business taxes, vendor-licence fees, stamp duty on life or non-life insurance and restaurants' exemption from tourism tax.

Chui, who holds a PhD in public health from the University of Oklahoma in the USA, also proposed that the government's so-called 'wealth-sharing' handouts continue next year, MOP 10,000 (US\$1,241) for each permanent resident and MOP 6,000 (US\$745) for each non-permanent resident. He added that the next government would continue to offer a wide range of subsidies and allowances for the elderly, disadvantaged households, low-income full-time employees and all those who need help.



At the address, Chui said that his government had made good progress in implementing the 2016-2020 Five Year Development Plan of the Macao Special Administrative Region, with a 90 per cent completion rate by the third quarter of this year. He said the aim of his 10-year term was to achieve long-term stability for the SAR. He added that 2019 was a milestone for him and his team, pointing out that the Taipa line of the Light Rapid Transit system will open soon and that sovereign bonds were recently issued in Macao for the first time. He also said that the progress achieved during the past decade had been largely due to the strong support of the central government in Beijing and the

wisdom and effort of the Macao people. He described Macao's financial situation as 'solid'.

Chui said his 10 years of experience as Macao's head of government had proved that the proper, persistent and comprehensive implementation, based on unswerving confidence, of the principle of 'One Country, Two Systems' was the key to ensuring the long-lasting stability of the SAR. He also said that only by safeguarding national sovereignty, state security and focusing on development could Macao's long-term stability and prosperity be promoted and maintained.

The people of Macao were thanked by Chui, who has been an

active member of many community organisations over the years, including president of the Juvenile Staff Committee of Kiang Wu Hospital and director of the Macao Eye Bank Fund, as were local civil servants as well as the central government and its representative offices in Macao for their support during his decade-long tenure. He underlined his government's commitment to getting more public housing projects off the ground and the further consolidation of patriotic education. He stressed that the SAR continues to enjoy public order before emphasising his government's various measures to turn Macao into a 'smart city' and tackle its transport issues. ●

Arts

A journey through memory

Text Raquel Dias Photos Rafael Alexandre Lopes

Macao is enthrallingly depicted across five colour-coded chambers as part of a new exhibition in Portugal by the SAR's artistic YiiMa duo. Visitors can take a journey through time at the Berardo Collection Museum.

'Aprendizes' [Apprentices] is a take on Rembrandt's famous painting 'Anatomy Lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp', symbolising the action of saving a city's heritage

It's a rare treat to visit an exhibition on Macao in Europe. However, art enthusiasts who travel to Lisbon between now and 9 February can enjoy such a rare treat at the '(De)Construction of Memory' exhibition in the Portuguese capital's Berardo Collection Museum of contemporary art. Welcome to a vibrant and engaging journey through the memory of Macao by way of videos and installations.

An explosion of colours greets visitors in each of the five chambers in the exhibition, which has been put together by artist duo YiiMa – Ung Vai Meng and Chan Hin Io, both from Macao. There is plenty of conceptual photography on display and the whole show, which includes 50 unpublished works, marks the 20th anniversary of Macao's handover of administration to the People's Republic

of China in December 1999, as well as the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Portugal and the Middle Kingdom.

YiiMa, which, when spoken, means 'twins' in Cantonese, presents a body of works from over the past two years in the exhibition. The artists were originally challenged by lawyer-turned-curator João Miguel Barros, who is also a photographer, to work on a unique concept and bring it to Portugal. So they did just that.

Encounters of East and West

On our visit, museum curator Rita Lougares says that the exhibition is dear to her because of the connection it has to the 20th and 40th anniversary celebrations and she adds that '(De)Construction of Memory'

is 'clearly a collection of works inspired by the encounters of the East and the West'. "The title of this exhibition," she says, "derives from the fact that memory often betrays us. Therefore, the exhibition, like our memory, has no chronological sequence. It is a collection of memories. Concepts of Chinese philosophy have a strong presence, as have numerous depictions of churches, Catholic rituals and other references to Western culture, making it a true multicultural experience."

What makes the exhibition all the more enthralling is that despite it leading visitors on a journey through Macao, the city itself is

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Someone who does not know Macao will probably not leave this gallery knowing it. However, there are distinctive elements of the city on display.

not depicted as a tangible space in any way. "Someone who does not know Macao will probably not leave this gallery knowing it," says João Miguel Barros. "However, there are distinctive elements of the city on display." Indeed, the collection, which also contains works of sculpture and even poetry, can be, at least, viewed as intrinsically a product of Macao. "Everything we do is aimed at promoting local culture, even if not directly," explains Chan Hin Io, the photographer of the duo. "That is why we brought a sculpture in bamboo. You can probably tell it mimics the structure of a church. That is not a coincidence."

Ung Vai Meng and Chan Hin Io interact with a bamboo structure



Curator João Miguel Barros and the artists interact in the 'Ceremony' chamber





Image by YilMa

'Vigas' [Beams] is a
homage to bamboo
structures

The artists agree that the encounter of cultures comes natural to them. "As two people who grew up in Macao," says Ung Vai Meng, painter and the first director of the Macau Museum of Art in 1999, "we cannot really always understand where the sphere of influence of the Portuguese culture begins and where the Chinese [influence] ends. For us, Macao, with its melting pot of East and West, is our reality. The two cultures have cohabited for so long in a peaceful environment, showcasing mutual respect, that they have ended up meshing together." The result, concludes Ung, who is also a former president of the Cultural Affairs Bureau, 'is Macao'.

A chamber collective

In '(De)Construction of Memory', the photos on the walls are mostly in full colour, with the exception of those in the 'Ritualism' section, where black and white reigns supreme. The artists worked hard not only in creating the concepts that the viewer can see at play in every image on display but also in playing the role of models themselves, often depicting themselves with wings. "We are not angels – you never see angels this old," says Ung with a smile. "We are meant to be like Icarus, fleeing for our freedom and observing the world below us."

The five chambers in the exhibition – 'Memory', 'Ritualism', 'Lightness', 'Ceremony' and 'Paradise' – each have their own colour splashed across the surrounding walls: red, blue, black, yellow and white. These are five colours rooted to a millennia of Chinese traditions and they add a vibrant look and feel to the show.

The first chamber is a mosaic that's made up of a series of delicate and historically sensitive images. The artists say it represents Macao's 500 years of history

and memory. Upon entering the teal blue room that follows, however, visitors are greeted to a collection of photographs that have bamboo structures as their common denominator. In one piece – a massive installation in the centre of the room – a comparison is drawn between a Chinese pavilion and a tomb at the Batalha Monastery, which is around 100km north of Lisbon and was built to commemorate the victory of the Portuguese over the Castilians at the battle of Aljubarrota in 1385. "In

addition to a series of significant large-scale images," says Ung, "we include a large bamboo sculpture in this section, representing the synthesis between the octagonal tomb in the Batalha Monastery and the typical Chinese pavilion style."

Ironically, 'Lightness' is the black room in the middle of the exhibition space. Here, a new visual experience awaits, a video shot in a 'secret room' in Macao. Bodies move in a gravity-free environment to a cappella songs performed by the Water Singers, an



Artists Ung Vai Meng
(left) and Chan
Hin lo pose next to
'Icaro' [Icarus]

all-female vocal group that's also native to the city. The bodies here represent the ascension to heaven and the fall to hell.

Icarus, the rebel son who did not listen to his father and flew too close to the sun before it melted his waxy wings, is the central theme of the yellow 'Ceremony' chamber before we reach our final 'Paradise' room, a white space at the end of a long corridor. Here, the works portray an original world of ordinary people and have been designed with a special purpose in mind: the interior is filled with objects – regular items of everyday life that are allowed a ritual dimension through art. "For me," says Ung, "this room is the focal point of the exhibition. The secular and the religious elements come together, just as they do in our memory of things."

Art, heritage and Macao

Although both artists and the curator agree that the exhibition is 'not intended to promote local art in general', Ung does believe that the art movement in Macao is 'gaining momentum' at the moment, with a 'number of artists representing Macao in events around the world'

like YiiMa is doing in Lisbon. He notes that Macao artists displaying their work at the Venice Biennale, such as Lam Sio Man and Heidi Lau at May's 58th edition, are a 'good example' of this.

"If I had to describe it," says Barros, "I would say this is an exhibition that features the heritage of the city and how it has changed throughout the years. The best example of this is perhaps the work 'Central' [which is a Portuguese word in this context, meaning 'power plant' in English. It is in the first chamber]. The picture was taken in what once was a major building in the city but has since been demolished. However, I want to highlight that this is not an exhibition about heritage. There is no subliminal political message on how to preserve it or even the necessity to do so. This is about what is left behind in our memory."

Ung agrees, citing a book he wrote on other artists which was published in English and Chinese in 1998. "When I wrote 'Pearls of Memory'," he says, "I did an exhaustive research on local heritage. I catalogued a series of objects I thought were of importance to the collective memory. But this exhibition is not about that. It is about the symbolism behind these items. It is about art." ●

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Johann Strauss I: *Seufzer-Galopp*, Op. 9

Künneke: *Vetter aus Dingsda*

- Strahlender Mond (Bright Moon)

Lehar: *Der Zarewitsch*

- Einer wird kommen (Someday I'll find him)

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Culture

Pillars of the community

Text **Rafelle Marie Allego** Photos **Cheong Kam Ka**

Whether they're fleeing a revolution, looking for decent domestic work or even preparing to launch a Grand Prix, Indonesians have been migrating to Macao for more than half a century. Welcome to a vibrant community that has been integral in building our city.

When it comes to China's SARs, Hong Kong is usually championed as being the multicultural melting pot. However, Macao should not be forgotten as it is also home to an incredibly diverse mix of cultures. Out of the 658,900 people living in the city, a total of 193,470 are classed as non-permanent residents. And out of these, the biggest group is the Mainland Chinese – 62.3 per cent of all non-permanent residents. Next comes Filipinos – 17 per cent – and then the Vietnamese at 7.7 per cent. But how many Indonesians do we have here? The answer: a lot more than you would perhaps expect.

Macao's Indonesian community makes up three per cent of all non-permanent residents, which may not sound much but that's actually around 5,761 people. And that doesn't include the thousands more with Indonesian heritage who are permanent residents, some of them descendents of families who have lived in the city for generations. The Indonesian community is an important backbone to Macao and we can see this colourful culture across the city, from the restaurants to the domestic helpers.



Association of Returned Overseas Chinese Macau

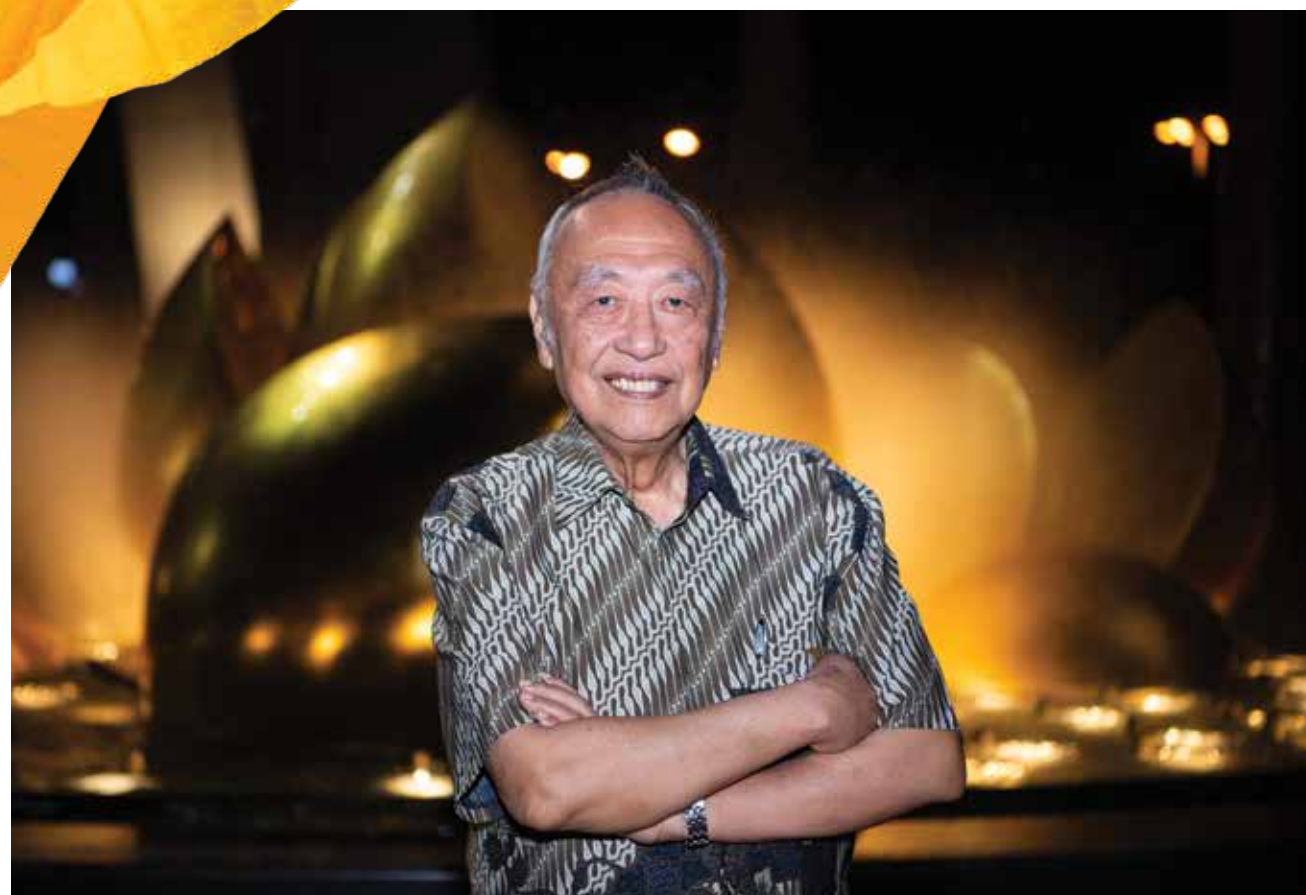
Two distinct groups form the Indonesian community – those who've been in Macao for a number of generations and those who have come in recent years as economic migrants. Those who have been here for years are often ethnic Chinese who left Indonesia in the 1950s and 60s when it gained independence and underwent restructuring. Due to anti-Chinese sentiments, Chinese-Indonesians became targets of violence, with many being forced to remain as Indonesian citizens. There were limitations set on their businesses, making it illegal for non-indigenous people to trade in rural areas. Indigenous Indonesians – or 'Pribumi' – were seen, at the time, as more important to groups like Chinese-Indonesians, who had once been granted privileged

economic and social status under Dutch rule. Because of growing negative feelings towards this subgroup – as well as the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949 – many youths chose to leave for China. Many of them came to Macao.

Speaking our language

One man who came to China in the 1950s is the president of the Executive Board for the Macao Association for the Promotion of Exchange between Asia-Pacific and Latin America (MAPEAL) and polyglot – he speaks 13 languages – Gary Ngai Mei Cheong. Born in 1932 in Semarang, the capital of Indonesia's Central Java province, to a sixth generation Chinese-Indonesian family that originated from Fujian province in southeast China, Ngai's background personifies Macao's Indonesian community – multicultural and diverse.

Gary Ngai Mei Cheong



With a knack for learning languages since boyhood, Ngai easily picked up Dutch from his father and teachers, then Mandarin and Javanese from his mother. He also learned English and Japanese in school, as well as Bahasa, which became the national language after Indonesia gained independence in 1945. When the PRC was established in 1949, however, Chinese communities abroad were full of feelings of patriotism, with the teachers in Ngai's Mandarin-based secondary school encouraging students to return to the 'motherland'. He was inspired and left for China in 1950 despite his family opposing his decision.

Ngai soon wound up in Beijing and it wasn't long before he was being trained as an interpreter due to his linguistic skills. He graduated from Renmin (People's) University in 1956 and then worked as one of the country's senior interpreters for leaders like Peng Zhen and Deng Xiaoping. He even translated for the PRC's founding father Mao Zedong, an experience he says felt 'normal' due to the sheer amount of other interpreters who would all work simultaneously. At this time, he also learned French, German, Italian, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish on his own, translating in those languages as well.

In 1961, Ngai married Molly, an Indonesian-Chinese woman from the capital of Indonesia's North Sumatra province, Medan, who, in 1961, also moved to China. Earning only small wages every month until 1979, the couple found it difficult, especially when Molly fell pregnant. "She hardly had any milk," says Ngai. During the Cultural Revolution, between 1966 and 1976, the family spent four years living in Heilongjiang, China's northernmost province, in a cowshed, braving harsh winters.

Ngai's mother-in-law escaped to Macao after the anti-Chinese riots in Indonesia in 1965 and 1966. In 1978, his wife and two children joined her – she joined the Overseas Chinese Association of Macao, an organisation Ngai became an advisor for – in the city to look after her. He joined them later, aged 47, facing a new life. "It was hard at the beginning," he says. "Macao was a small place and I could not find a job." However, Ngai, ever the linguist, soon learned Portuguese and Cantonese.

“
Chinese-Indonesian people are one of the forces that built Macao.

Ngai's first job, however, was at public broadcaster TDM as a translator in the newsroom, eventually working his way up to the role of deputy director of programmes for its Chinese radio channel. He also became a technical adviser to Macao's last governor, Vasco Joaquim Rocha Vieira, in the period running up to the 1999 handover of administration. As part of that role, he compiled the Chinese news every day, giving Vieira and the Portuguese government local perspectives.

"I do not regret my decision to go to China," says Ngai, who has been a pillar of the community in Macao for many years, with roles such as associate director of the Cultural Affairs Bureau, founder of the Macau Sino-Latin Foundation and vice-president of the now-defunct Macau Social Sciences Association all under his belt,

among many other high profile positions. "On the positive side, I really understood China from the top to the bottom and I made a contribution to the new state. On the negative side, we suffered a lot. I never considered moving back to Indonesia, where I have many relatives. Anti-Chinese sentiment remains and what could I do there?"

"Being an Indonesian-Chinese," continues Ngai, "we've been trying our best to keep our cultural identity, which contains excerpts of both cultures." He describes Macao as having a unique identity to those of its neighbours – 'Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Shanghai and other Chinese cities' – a point where East meets West, with a bridge to Latin-speaking countries as well. "It is a city not only of gaming but of culture," he concludes.

Food, glorious food

Another couple of Indonesians who also personify Macao's Indonesian community are the founders and owners of the popular Medan Indonesian Restaurant on Rua de Marques de Oliveira in St Anthony's Parish. Sisters Lee Kam Chi and Lee Iok Pui – who are 13 years apart in age and didn't grow up in the same house together – left Indonesia for China in the 1960s, both prepared to never return to their homeland, leaving their families behind them.

Lee Kam Chi is now 94 years old and her sister is 81 years old – but they still have a hand in their restaurant, whose most popular dishes include 'nasi kuning' – assorted yellow ginger rice – and 'nasi uduk' – assorted pandan rice – as well as the classic Hainan chicken rice. However, it hasn't been an easy road for the siblings. When they arrived in China, Lee Kam Chi worked as a maths and Chinese



The first Medan restaurant at 20 Rua de Silva Mendes;
(below right) Lee Kam Chi as a young lady

teacher in Foshan, while Lee Iok Pui studied at Jinan University for a degree in mining and geological engineering. After she graduated in 1962, she joined her sister in Foshan.

When the Cultural Revolution began and the political environment in China became unstable, Lee Kam Chi decided to come to Macao alone to seek new opportunities. After she found a small place to stay in, her brother arrived to join her with his two children in tow. Lee Kam Chi tried her hand in different sectors like teaching, accountancy and even tailoring but all didn't work out because she couldn't speak Cantonese at that time. However, when she was younger and still in Indonesia, she liked being in the kitchen to observe meals being prepared. Chefs liked her curiosity and enthusiasm to learn, so they taught her.

Lee Kam Chi, therefore, decided to play to her Indonesian roots and open a restaurant in Macao. Medan, named after her hometown, was born on 2 September 1972 at 20 Rua de Silva Mendes. It wasn't easy, though – Macao was home to many Indonesian restaurants at the time, so the industry was fiercely competitive. Lee Kam Chi was also new to the city and



Susanni Aryanto

couldn't get the help she needed, so she had to settle with Medan being a self-service snack store until 1974. In 1975, however, her sister joined her from Foshan, where she had been working as an administrator, and together the sisters moved their store to Avenida de Horta e Costa in 1976, launching the full-blown restaurant and bringing with them their distinctive Indonesian flavoured desserts and pastries.

At the time, Lee Kam Chi's nephew Lee Chi Kan – one of her brother's sons – was only seven years old. As he recalls, while growing up, he and his four-year-old brother would help at the restaurant when they had no classes, waiting on customers and manning the cash register. But the

hard work of cooking and creating the dishes went entirely to the two restaurant owners, with Lee Lok Pui also on the day-to-day operations and customer relations, and Lee Kam Chi responsible for production and quality management.

When the sisters first launched Medan as a restaurant, most of its customers were fellow Chinese-Indonesians. But as the eatery grew in popularity, the sisters slowly began to see a steady stream of locals chowing down on their dishes. They say that some locals began to come in three or four times a week. As they were conveniently located near a number of schools, many of the sisters' customers were also students. Many students based overseas today also



Tasty Indonesian snacks from Medan Restaurant; (below left) Lee Kam Chi shows off her restaurant's fare; (below right) Medan's stall at the Indonesian Culinary and Cultural Carnival is a hit



continue the tradition of visiting Medan as soon as they arrive back on home soil for the flavours they missed while they were away.

"It wasn't easy when I first started the business," admits Lee Kam Chi, who, along with her sister, has lived in Macao ever since the launch of her restaurant. But, she says, through the support of the restaurant's customers and Lee's own growing family, they were able to succeed. She says that, at the beginning, she only paid about MOP 150 a month during the 1970s to cover the restaurant's rent. However, she notes that, obviously, that cost has risen dramatically over the years – adding, she says, to the challenges of owning a restaurant without actually owning the property. But, she concedes, over the eatery's 47 years and through countless hardships, the shop has survived and become an indispensable part of the community, familiar to both new and old Indonesians in Macao.

Here's Johnny

Johnny Sitou, chairman of the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce Macao and vice-president of the Association of Returned Overseas Chinese Macau, was one of the people behind this year's Indonesian Culinary and Cultural Carnival – the first festival of its kind in the city, attended by hundreds of people. It was a colourful – and tasty – affair that served to champion not only Indonesian cuisine but the city's Indonesian community. Held near the Taipa Houses Museum between 20 and 23 September, the event – jointly organised by the Association of Returned Overseas Chinese Macau and the Indonesian Consulate General in Hong Kong and Macao – saw residents and visitors experiencing the best Indonesian food, as well as live music and dance, and stalls including Indonesian art and crafts.

Sitou has an interesting story behind him. His entire family fled to Macao from Indonesia in 1965 and 1966 when he was just three years old. They had to flee because his father was a personal assistant to the then President, Sukarno, who was put under house arrest in 1967 following the mid-60s political turmoil before dying of kidney failure, still under house arrest, in 1970. In the few years leading up to 1967, the situation was too dangerous for Sitou's family, so they had no choice but to take flight. According to Sitou, this was an incredibly difficult time for his father because he had been used to holding a high position in the Indonesian government. The family were also unable to take any money with them when they fled for Macao. This took a mental toll on Sitou's father but, after a time, his dad started a business and 'the situation got better'.



INDONESIA: THE FACTS



Number of Indonesian
non-permanent residents
in Macao in 2008

3,478

Number of Indonesian
non-permanent residents in
Macao in 2019

5,761

Population of Indonesia
in November 2019

271.7 million

Percentage of the country
that is Muslim

87.1%

Percentage of the world's
Muslim population living in
Indonesia

12.6%

World ranking in terms
of population

**4th
biggest**

Official language

Bahasa Indonesia

*(However, more than
700 languages are spoken
in Indonesia, including
English, Dutch and local
dialects like Javanese)*

Big Indonesian festivals

**Eid al-Adha and Eid
al-Fitr, plus Nyepi,
the Day of Silence,
in Bali**

The day Indonesia became an
independent country
17 August 1945

National dish

Nasi goreng

National bird

Elang jawa

(the Javan hawk-eagle)

Flag colours

Red over white

Bahasa Indonesian
for 'I love Macao'

'Aku cinta Macau'

Nasi goreng

"During the 60s, many [Indonesian immigrants in Macao] became taxi drivers," recalls Sitou. "Some of them also opened restaurants and some of them worked in the construction business." Sitou says his family's situation was not unique, as many Chinese-Indonesians went through a similar ordeal. However, he notes these people gradually became integral to Macao society as a whole.

Newcomers to the domestic scene

In more recent years, Macao's Indonesian population has grown due to the influx of domestic helpers from the country, many who arrive on limited-term contracts. Unlike before, these new migrants mostly come from Java and Sumatra – and they are not of Chinese ethnicity. Macao's Indonesian domestic helpers used to be a vulnerable community as there were few places to go with complaints or to get support due to the fact there was no local Indonesian consulate.

Macao's Peduli – Indonesian Migrant Workers Concern Group was created in 2004. It is one of three organisations supporting Indonesian migrants and their rights in the city, alongside the Indonesian Migrant Workers' Union, created in 2008, and the Jaringan Buruh Migran Indonesia, created in 2018. As George Young – one of Peduli's founders – shares, the word 'peduli' simply means 'care', as the organisation was created to provide support for Indonesian migrant workers who may be experiencing problems, like passport troubles. Since there was, until fairly recently, no guarantee of protection due to the absence of an Indonesian consulate, Peduli stepped in whenever it could to dissipate any conflicts or to protect the migrants.

However, when the Indonesian Consulate General in Hong Kong also began to serve those workers in Macao in January 2017, Peduli's function from mediator morphed to that of community builder, occasionally performing at local events when invited. Ari Widyawati, one of Peduli's traditional dance performers, notes how grateful they are when receiving invitations to perform at events, usually practicing three times a week. "We finish our work at 9pm," she says, "and we take a rest for one hour. So we have practice at 10pm until 12 midnight." If the dances aren't ready, says Widyawati, they find more time to practice.

The traditional dancers also gather for big Islamic festivals like May's Eid al-Fitr, also called the 'Festival of Breaking the Fast', the holiday that Muslims celebrate to mark the end of Ramadan, and

July's Eid al-Adha, also called the 'Festival of the Sacrifice', an Islamic holiday honouring the willingness of Ibrahim to sacrifice his son as an act of obedience to God's command. They celebrate with other ethnic groups at the Macau Mosque – the only mosque in the city – in Ramal Dos Mouros. In Macao, there are five purely Indonesian Muslim groups – Halaqoh, Matim, YPW, Irsyad and Jemaah Masjid. Peduli president Siti Romlah Jamat – also known as Jus Jus Romlah – says the association has existed for 10 years, with their birthday every year coinciding with Indonesian Independence Day on 17 August.

Muslim women head to the Macau Mosque;
(right) men worship at the mosque



António Sammarful



António Sammarful

A community to celebrate

The influx of domestic helpers has only further strengthened Macao's Indonesian community. And the community was certainly on full show at September's Indonesian Culinary and Cultural Carnival, an event that brought many Indonesians together, some even shocking each other when they found they shared the same heritage.

One man who attended was Gilbert Humphrey, better known as Beto Beбето, the host of Macao's only Indonesian radio show, TDM's 'Kumbang Toh!' programme. Humphrey comes from excellent Indonesian stock, his great-grandfather being the driving force behind the Macau Grand Prix, the late Theodore 'Teddy' Yip Tak Lei. Teddy Yip, who was instrumental in developing the city as the tourist destination it is today as well as being a Formula One team owner in the 1970s and brother-in-law

to gaming magnate Stanley Ho, was born in Medan with Hakka ancestry but arrived in Macao in the 1940s. His legally adopted son Willy Yip Hing Wah – also Yip's biological nephew and Humphrey's grandfather – was invited to move to Macao in the early 1960s. As a result, Willy Yip moved his whole family to the city from Indonesia and helped grow their family business.

Humphrey took the time at the carnival to seek out Lee Kam Chi so they could swap stories about their families over the generations in Macao. Lee Kam Chi also showed off her restaurant's cuisine to visitors during the event and she and her family also received praise from Sitou during the carnival's opening ceremony for Medan as it is Macao's longest standing Indonesian restaurant.

"I would say [Chinese-Indonesians] are one of the forces that built Macao," said Sitou at the start of the carnival. He likens them

to ethnically Chinese immigrants from Myanmar and Cambodia, who similarly came to Macao in the 1950s and 60s during politically tough times in their homelands and who also contributed greatly to Macao's growth and development. "So many Chinese people chose to leave their countries," he concluded, "and settle down either in China, Macao or Hong Kong."

The carnival showed off Macao's Indonesian community to the public – and it showed how colourful, lively and important it is to the city. Organisers hope it will become an annual event, so every year locals and tourists alike can discover one of the city's most important ethnic communities. A community that brought you a restaurant like Medan, a radio programme like 'Kumbang Toh!', the city's famous Grand Prix and a host of people who are committed to protecting and preserving their culture for future generations to come. ●

Performers dressed in traditional Indonesian attire wow the crowds at the Indonesian Culinary and Cultural Carnival

Association of Returned Overseas Chinese Macau

Macao Orchestra 2019-20 Concert Season

Amor-Beethoven

Love-Beethoven



Soprano
Marysol Schalit

2019 / 12 / 31



Accordion
Ksenija Sidorova

2020 / 2 / 14



Violin
Rainer Honeck

2020 / 3 / 21



Conductor
Lü Shao-Chia

2020 / 1 / 11



Maestro / Pianista | Lead / Play
Rudolf Buchbinder

2020 / 7 / 24 - 25



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Social Affairs

Our friends in the south

Text Raquel Dias

China moved closer to Argentina and Brazil at the eighth edition of the Global Tourism and Economy Forum in Macao. The South American nations were the forum’s partner countries this year and they made gestures that could attract Chinese tourists their way in the years to come.

In Macao, on the eve of the 20th anniversary of the handover of its administration to China, it’s easy to think about quite how much the city has transformed over two decades. However, it’s also worth considering how dramatically China has changed over the same period. And one of the best indicators of the country’s rapid progress and growth in economic might is the amount of outbound tourists who head off on holiday from the Middle Kingdom every year. In 2007, for instance, 40.95 million people left for a trip abroad but, by the end of this year, that number will have increased to more than 166 million.

This dramatic increase, which shows that almost four times as many people make outbound trips from China now compared to just 12 years ago, means that Chinese tourists are highly prized around the world, bringing, in many cases, great spending power with them. So it’s no surprise that South American nations like Argentina and Brazil are making moves to get in on the action.

In fact, Brazil and Argentina are going one step further than just trying to attract Chinese tourists to their shores. They are both looking at easing up their visa procedures and ensuring there are smooth experiences for investors and travellers who come in from the Asian giant. Argentina and Brazil are working on mutual acceptances for Chinese tourist visas, allowing Chinese travellers to visit both countries easily.

This issue of Brazilian and Argentinian visas for Chinese tourists was one of the hottest topics at the eighth Global Tourism Economy Forum. GTEF, which took place for three days between 13 and 15 October in Macao, where it has been held annually since 2012, ran under the theme of ‘Tourism and Leisure: Roadmap to a Beautiful Life’. Chinese leader Xi Jinping has often uttered the phrase ‘beautiful life’ over the past few years, reflecting the people-orientated development approach of his government.

During the forum’s three days, a plethora of roundtables, debates and presentations showcased exactly how the tourism industry

could improve people’s quality of life, as well as focusing on how to keep the industry growing sustainably. Up to 2,000 participants took part, including ministerial officials in tourism and its related fields, industry leaders, experts, scholars and participants from countries and cities across the globe.

Visas made easy

Details on Argentina and Brazil easing up their visa procedures came from speakers at the forum, including Argentinian Tourism Minister Gustavo Santos. Brazilian Tourism Minister Marcelo Álvaro Antônio also spoke, saying his country was ‘going through an important process now’ and, at the same time, highlighting Brazil’s ‘closeness to China’. The Brazilian minister welcomed Chinese investment in Brazil’s tourism sector, adding that he hopes to see closer bilateral co-operation through tourism.

Just under 60,000 Chinese tourists visited Brazil last year. And that figure has huge potential to grow, according to Gilson Machado Neto, president of the Brazilian Tourism Board. Álvaro Antônio added that there were potential areas for China’s investment in his nation, including at resorts and theme parks, as well as in its transportation infrastructure. He said China can become ‘our biggest partner in tourism’. Brazil is working to allow the issue of electronic visas to Chinese tourists in order to facilitate exchanges between the two countries.

Both Argentina and Brazil were partner countries at this year’s GTEF, hosted by Macao’s Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture in co-operation with several organisations such as the Madrid-based United Nations World Tourism Organisation. At the forum, Argentina signed an agreement on mutual visa exemption with Macao, allowing travellers from Macao to enter Argentina for up to 30 days without the need for a visa. This measure will be effective from halfway through this month.

Normally one country is the partner nation to the forum, so it was doubly advantageous for the eighth edition to have Argentina and Brazil playing the role. The Chinese province of Jiangsu also partnered the event. Macao's Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, said, in his closing speech, that the city's government was 'glad to partner with these emerging markets, namely Argentina, Brazil and the Chinese province of Jiangsu' to discuss 'the strongest strategies that prepare us for the changes in the tourism industry' and to 'link us with the reflection on how tourism and sustainability connect under the framework' of the UN's 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. The agenda is a commitment to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development worldwide by 2030. Argentina's agreement to the dual acceptance of visas to Macao passport holders

was big news at the forum. Other news included an announcement that Argentina and Brazil will exempt Chinese people who have visas for the United States or Europe from the visa requirement. The two countries, both members of South American trade bloc Mercosur, might be long-standing rivals in football but they are hand-in-hand when it comes to presenting themselves as a single tourism market, especially to those living in China and Southeast Asia who may need to travel up to 25 hours by air to reach the other side of the world. At the forum, both Gustavo Santos and Marcelo Álvaro Antônio were adamant as to the importance of the role that China could play in their tourism industries. "We consider our relationship with China," said Santos, "to be one of friendship [and that] can lead to trust." Antônio said: "China has the potential to become one of the great partners of Brazil in tourism."

Iguazú National Park, Misiones Province, Argentina



Jonathan Lewczuk/Shutterstock



Opening ceremony of the Global Tourism and Economy's eighth edition in Macao

Chinese tourists and millennials

Tapping into the Chinese outbound tourist market, as shown by Argentina and Brazil, is an important goal for many countries across the globe. But there are challenges for South American countries. The CEO of Ivy Alliance Tourism Consulting, Wang Xinjun, says: "Just in the first half of 2019, the number of Chinese outbound trips reached 81.29 million. However, millennials are the

“*Millennials are the backbone of the Chinese tourism industry. Middle class young adults want to experience the world.*”

backbone of the Chinese tourism industry. Middle class young adults want to experience the world.” The problem, says Wang, is that numbers show that Chinese tourists leaving for South America are often in their 50s and 60s. This is a generation that traditionally prefers to travel in groups and sticks to its habits. “The main challenges for South American countries,” says Wang, “are therefore distance, ensuring safety for travellers and high costs.”



Efforts are being made to combat these challenges in South America. Dácio Pretoni, international adviser at Brazil's CNS, or National Confederation of Services, who was also present at the forum, says: "We now understand what the Chinese tourist needs in order to feel comfortable travelling. We understand that he needs to have a kettle in his room, that he would probably choose to go to eat at a Chinese restaurant over a local eatery. He is also likely to have very few days left for vacation and tends to prefer travelling in a group. So the trick is to adapt our market to these specific needs."

Pretoni explains that, in order to help adapt Brazil's market, it is not only necessary to 'change perceptions' but to actively promote measures which would facilitate easy access to visas. In this sense, Chinese citizens can not only soon apply for e-visas, they can also do so from 'a lot more locations in Mainland China'. "Investments will be made in the training of guides in the Mandarin language," says Pretoni, "and also in the technology side of things, an aspect ever more important for tourism nowadays. We're also taking care of utilising WeChat, optimising the Unionpay network and so forth."

Clockwise from top left: outgoing Macao Chief Executive Fernando Chui Sai On addresses GTEF; Argentinian Tourism Minister Gustavo Santos at the event; vice-chairman and secretary-general of GTEF, Pansy Ho, gives the closing remarks; Brazilian Tourism Minister Marcelo Álvaro Antônio on the microphone

Nachi Vilardo, market director for Inprotur – Argentina Tourism Board, who is in charge of the touristic promotion of Argentina worldwide, gave a presentation at the forum. She said: "Just last year, the number of Chinese tourists travelling to Argentina reached the 50,000 mark. That might not sound much to you here but for us was a significant increase." Argentina received 6.9 million tourists in 2018. Its tourism industry has been significantly growing and it is putting in a lot of effort to develop the sector. "We now have nine new airlines flying to the country," says Vilardo, "and 16 others have increased their offer by at least five per cent."

President of Brazil's CNS, Confederation of Services, Luigi Nese, intimated at the forum that the country enjoys a healthy tourism industry with the amount of arrivals growing steadily since 2010. But he also said that 'Brazil received only 56,333 Chinese tourists' last year, adding that that figure only 'represents 0.9 per cent of all

WHO IS JETTING IN NEXT?

GTEF 2020 welcomes Italy and Gansu as partners

The 2020 edition of GTEF will have Italy as its partner country and Gansu as its featured Chinese province. Italy, which celebrates the 50th anniversary of its diplomatic relations with China next year, is the first G7 country to have joined the Belt and Road Initiative, China's global development strategy involving infrastructure developments and investments in 152 international organisations and countries. Italy's G7 membership means it is part of an international intergovernmental economic organisation that consists of the seven largest IMF-described advanced economies in the world. It will be the first time Italy has joined GTEF.

Italy, during Roman times, is steeped in Silk Road history. As is Gansu province, which houses the Silk Road Museum, home to many artifacts from the ancient trade route, in its city of Jiuquan. Gansu, in north-central China, is also known for the striking Overhanging Great Wall in the city of Jiayuguan, as well as its overall beauty as a province. The ninth edition of the forum will be the second time Gansu has been invited to Macao. It was also the featured province at the inaugural edition. Next year's forum will be held in Macao towards the end of the year.

The eighth edition closes as speakers take to the stage





A woman in traditional clothing at the GTEF's Jiangsu dinner

the tourists' who come to the South American country. Nese added that 'a lot still has to be done' in order to attract more Chinese tourists to visit.

Macao: reinvesting and reinventing

During the three-day forum, Macao's Chief Executive Fernando Chui Sai On, who remains as CE until December 20, pledged that the local government will strengthen Macao's role as a hub for linking China with the rest of the world. He also reinforced the idea that the SAR is dedicated to developing into a world centre for tourism and leisure, as well as noting that tourism has always been an important pillar

of Macao's economy. And he said that the city will continue to strengthen its communication and co-operation with international tourism organisations, adding that the local government hopes that through GTEF, more countries and regions will appreciate that Macao is a 'friendly and open international tourism partner which pays strong emphasis on the tourism industry'.

Vice-chairman and secretary-general of GTEF, Pansy Ho, highlighted in her closing remarks the positive impact the tourism industry could have on the lives of local communities. "Investments are not only channelled into conventional hospitality products," she said, "but also in cross-sectoral

areas including infrastructure, transportation, gastronomy, arts, information technology, sports and education. With these upgrades, tourists are not the only beneficiaries but the whole destination, the whole community and all its people."

"Through GTEF," concluded Ho, "I hope we have also showcased how Macao itself is another living proof of the transformational power of tourism. In Macao, not only have we continued to reinvest but to reinvent. Blessed by our national policy, Macao is ready to take on another wave of development as we continue to integrate into the Greater Bay Area framework." •

2020

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Identity, history and heart

Text Raquel Dias

Macao may be toasting the 20th anniversary of the handover of its administration to China but it's also two decades since the International Institute of Macau – an organisation dedicated to preserving the city's culture, history and identity – was launched.

Over the past 20 years, the International Institute of Macau – or IIM – has grown up alongside the SAR, dedicating itself to championing the city on a global level as well as preserving the collective memory of the people. The non-governmental organisation, which is devoted to ‘giving a significant contribution to the development of Macao’ has promoted the cultural, social and economic identity of the territory ever since it started its activities in June 1999. But of all the projects it has undertaken over the years, one fact is truly apparent: its love of ink and paper. IIM is a big publisher of books covering city life, culture and everything in between.

On entering IIM’s headquarters inside a residential building in Rua de Berlim, visitors are immediately impressed with the extensive collection of publications on display. “And these are only a few of the books we have published over the past 20 years,” Rufino de Fátima Ramos, secretary-general of the institute, explains. Among the many titles, there is one clear common subject: Macao. It’s easy to marvel at the effort that is continuously being done by the institute to promote the city’s history, culture and heritage. “We have published a total of 258 books,” adds Ramos, proudly, “which gives us an average of 12 volumes a year over 20 years. And that is not

counting the titles that we have co-edited or those which were sponsored by third parties.”

Ramos says IIM’s main focus is to ‘preserve the identity of Macao’. But it isn’t just about the city as the institute, which calls itself a ‘Macao-founded and based institution, with a Portuguese matrix and a universalist scope’, is also based on the other side of the globe, in Lisbon. “Lisbon is halfway to everywhere,” says the president of IIM’s board, Jorge Rangel. “From Macao it is difficult to connect with

Africa or Brazil but the Portuguese capital cuts that distance in half. [This means] I can easily contact a writer who lives in Angola or in any of the ‘Casa de Macau’ in São Paulo, for instance.” The ‘Casa de Macau’ – or ‘Macao House’ – are associations around the world founded by members of the Macanese diaspora, dedicated to promoting Macao and the Macanese culture.

A constant evolution

Since IIM was founded 20 years ago, the city has changed profoundly. However, the institute has done a great job of adjusting with the times. “Our primary focus was always that of preserving Macao’s identity,” says Ramos. “That is why a lot of our effort goes into reaching out to the different hubs of the community, namely in Brazil and Portugal. However, in recent years, we have also attempted to reach the Chinese community in Macao, mostly to share the city’s rich past.” To this end, IIM now has published a total of 50 books in Chinese, either as translations or original publications. The other books it has published are mainly in Portuguese or English.

“We understand the Macao identity to be everything that makes the city special and unique,” explains Rangel. “A great part of this is the Portuguese, the Chinese and the myriad of other influences which, thanks to the geopolitical situation of Macao, have impacted the city. The effort made by local public and private institutions has been comprehensive and has provided a solid support in preserving and valuing the local identity. Such is the case when it comes to the Forum for Economic and Trade Co-operation between China and Portuguese-speaking

Countries, the Cultural Week of China and Portuguese-speaking Countries, the Lusofonia Festival and so many others.”

Ramos believes the institute is also on the right path to help in the promotion of local heritage. “To preserve the identity of Macao is a very broad goal to have,” he says. “That is why we have to be constantly perfecting our practices to fine-tune them.” Initially the institution focused on publishing books on the history of Portugal and Macao but soon it realised that it had to shift its approach. “The stories we were sharing happened too long ago,” says Ramos, “in a past no-one could relate to. So we decided to start talking about subjects that were of interest to all. That is when we started doing lectures in Chinese and publishing books on local folk tales and the history that directly relates to the people of Macao. It was here that we noted a lot of interest.”

Bookworms to the core

“I love books,” says Rangel, pointing at the multiple tomes of all shapes and sizes lining the solid wood shelves in IIM’s headquarters. “The digital options do nothing for me. Nothing beats the feeling of taking a fresh book off the shelf. I think you can see that devotion from looking at my office.” Books are the ‘great keepers of memory’ for Rangel. Without them, he believes, all the ideas that were once exchanged would be lost in time. “A book is what is left beyond our physical existence,” he adds.

Ramos also believes that books play a vital role in society. He reckons they help fill gaps that are left out of the education system. “No-one teaches the history of Macao in local schools,” he claims. “Without books, it is difficult to form

Rufino de Fátima Ramos, secretary-general of IIM, says it’s important to preserve Macao’s identity



a local identity. Teaching what happened in the past is a great way of connecting the different communities as they all had a role to play [in the development of Macao]. Learning history also helps with understanding the culture that we are inserted in.”

‘Really knowing Macao is different to knowing of Macao’, according to Ramos. “In fact,” he says, “we talk to a lot of people who tell us that the city’s face and the city’s soul are two opposites. That is why we see recent immigrants as our main market, in the sense that they are avid learners and are curious. They are also a big reason why we now publish so many works directly in Chinese.”

IIM does a lot more than publishing books, however. The institute also organises a multitude of events that take place all over the world throughout the year, including photography exhibitions in Portuguese-speaking countries, video contests, summits and book launches, each showcasing IIM’s commitment to preserving, discussing and promoting Macao’s cultural identity. “Thanks to our vast network of collaborators and partnerships with [other] institutions,” says Rangel, “we are able to take our exhibitions all over the world.” He adds that one of IIM’s photographic exhibitions, ‘Macao is Spectacular’, has been travelling for more than five years and has already been on display in at least 50 cities in Brazil alone. “All of this is at no extra cost to us, due to the help of the network we have created over the past 20 years,” he concludes.

Learning from the past

If anyone knows the Portuguese-speaking lands of the world, it’s Jorge Rangel. The 10th generation Macao resident has lived in or at least visited most of those countries. And he has a passion for history. However, Rangel does not believe that IIM should become, for all intents and purposes, a guardian of local history. “We can,” he says, “contribute to the promotion of local history through creating researching opportunities, events, photography contests and so forth.”

Ramos agrees that being solely responsible for local history is too much responsibility for one organisation to shoulder. However,



Views inside IIM's headquarters;
(right) books line the shelves
inside IIM's offices

he does see the value of passing on historical stories where possible to the people of today’s Macao so they can learn about its yesterday. “For example,” he says, “most people don’t know how the local people saved Macao from becoming like Indonesia [which was once controlled by the Dutch], for example. In 1622, the Dutch tried to invade the city. They had a meticulous plan and knew exactly when the city was at its most vulnerable as all of the Portuguese military had left to escort the great commercial ship, the ‘Barco Negro’ [‘Black Boat’, which was leaving Japan]. However,

without the aid of the military, the local population – which consisted of the Chinese and Macanese communities, as well as some high-society women and Catholic missionaries – resisted.”

“In the end,” continues Ramos, “luck was on their side as one of the missionaries used a cannon to destroy – by chance, some say – the Dutch powder magazine, leaving the enemy with no ammunition.” Ramos says that when he recounts this tale and other historical accounts to people in Macao, he is reminded of how important it is to pass them on and to what extent a lot of local historical events remain largely unknown by the city’s populace. He is always reassured that he is ‘following the right path’ with IIM when he realises the ‘sheer interest’ that people have in Macao’s long and rich history.

Nevertheless, to Rangel it is important to remember that history is not the only factor that makes up a local identity. He says other aspects are ‘traditions, festivals, the local way of living and the cultural exchange among the youth’, as well as ‘the pride one takes while representing Macao in international events and competitions’. “I think that,” he adds, “fortunately this sense of belonging is growing stronger and this is what IIM will continue to preserve and promote.”

“

People say that the city’s face and its soul are two opposites. That is why we see recent immigrants as our main market, in the sense that they are avid learners and are curious.

What the future holds

“What I wish for IIM in the next two decades above all else is its continuity,” says Rangel. “I hope the new generation will continue to believe in the future of Macao, even if that means a different political framework from that in which the SAR was established. On the other hand, I believe Macao has been able to survive all the typhoons – be them natural or political in nature – that have struck the city during its multiseular history.”

Ramos agrees that the future looks bright and he points to the

institute for being an organisation that is motivated to change. IIM has embraced social media in all the three languages – English, Portuguese and traditional Chinese – and has, he believes, understood the needs of the younger generations. However, he also emphasises the importance of new blood joining the institute’s ranks in the future. “We need young people to carry on the project,” he says. “We are becoming too old.”

Whatever its fortunes, IIM has for 20 years been an important cog in the preservation of history and culture and promotion of identity in Macao. And it is ready to rise to the challenges of the future – not least how it stands out in the Greater Bay Area. Rangel dubs this the ‘greatest challenge of the century for Macao’. “The SAR has entered into an accelerated changing phase,” he says, “the rhythm of which will become higher as the city prepares to embrace the changes during its integration within the Greater Bay Area. I believe that, precisely because of this important integration, Macao has to stand out and reinforce its singular heritage, history and identity.” If anyone can promote this ideology to the local people in the city, it’s the International Institute of Macao. ►



Recommended reads

Some of the best IIM publications



China's Belt And Road Initiative: The role of Macao and the Portuguese-speaking countries

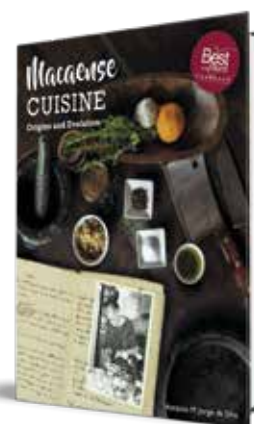
This book covers arguably one of the most important diplomatic and economic projects of our times. It explains the importance of this Chinese initiative in simple yet comprehensive terms while also highlighting the role of Macao and Portuguese-speaking countries in the Greater Bay Area.

Authors: Thomas Chan, Paul Mooney, Paulo G Figueiredo, José Luís Sales Marques

Macaenses: The Portuguese In China

This is a fascinating tale of Portuguese descendants in Macao and their experiences in regions of China. An important investigation into the Portuguese arrival in the city from the middle of the 16th century.

Author: António M Pacheco Jorge da Silva



Macaense Cuisine: Origins and Evolution

A great read for any gourmand who wishes to know more about the history of Macao's gastronomy and how to prepare it. This book will make you hungry.

Author: António M Pacheco Jorge da Silva

The Portuguese Community In Shanghai

This pictorial book is 'dedicated to the memory of the proud Portuguese community who once lived in Shanghai'. It tells the forgotten story of a community which, in its own unique way, made a mark on the city.

Author: António M Pacheco Jorge da Silva

Bos Podi Papih Ku Yo?

Although this book whose title literally translates to 'Can You Talk to Me?' is not written in English, it makes our list because it is a homage to Macao's own language: Patois. It's less a must-read – unless you understand the language that once echoed through the streets of Macao – and more of a must-see if you are interested in its historical importance.

Author: Silvio Moreira de Sousa



Intangible Heritage of Macao

A photographic collection of Macao's 12 intangible heritage elements ranging from the city's processions to the festival of the drunken dragon. This book takes readers through a journey of Macao's rich culture – a melting pot of East meets West – that is today more important than ever to safeguard.

Author: Macaulink

Pioneers of Macau: The History of 14 Chinese Citizens that Helped Build the City

A great way to learn the history of Macao. This book profiles 14 great people that despite being unknown to the majority of the public, made the city what it is now. It falls under the 'Summa of the East' collection of books which are dedicated to explaining the essential elements of Asian cultures and their encounters with the West.

Author: Mark O'Neill

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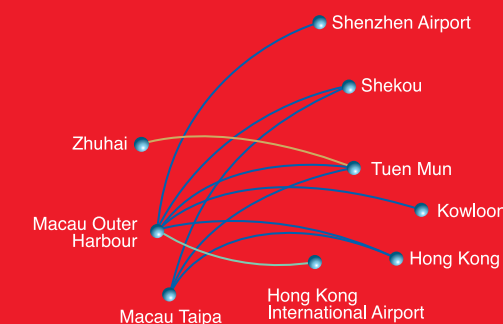
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History

Curious curations

Text **Rafelle Marie Allego**

Macao is home to more than 30 museums – but only a handful are so far off the beaten track, they deserve attention. We’ve curated a list of eight which offer unique glimpses into the past.

The interior of the Heritage Exhibition of a Traditional Pawnshop Business where the tools of the trade are displayed within glass cases



Macao – a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2005 – is a city steeped in history. Visitors and locals can see remnants of the past on the streets and in the alleyways, from the most famous sites like the Ruins of St Paul’s to the lesser-known gems such as the beautiful Dom Pedro V Theatre. However, much of Macao’s historical treasures are not out in the streets and parks. They are in the SAR’s museums – and some of these fantastic buildings are more off-the-wall and unique than you’d think at first glance.

There are 32 museums in Macao. That’s a lot for a city that covers just 32.9 square kilometres of land. And that includes the most obvious – such as the Macao Museum, which overlooks the city from the fort above the Ruins of St Paul’s, the Macau Museum of Art and the Mandarin’s House – as well as the small and niche establishments that offer an alternative glimpse into the past. Here is a list of eight museums that you may not already know – but you certainly must visit.

Heritage Exhibition of a Traditional Pawnshop Business
Espaço Patrimonial uma Casa de Penhores Tradicional
典當業展示館

You don’t have to pawn your favourite watch to get into this small museum – entry is free. Situated along Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro, the restored Tak Seng On Pawnshop represents a time when pawn businesses greatly impacted Macao’s economic growth. Established in 1917 – only a few years after the end of the Qing dynasty and at a time when the Republic of China was just beginning – by wealthy local merchant Kou Ho Ning, the shop flourished in the heyday of Macao’s pawn industry but it was closed in 1993 due to a decline in the industry and lay vacant for many years. From 2000, however, it was restored by the government’s Cultural Affairs Bureau and today it can be seen in all of its historical glory.

Inside the museum – which, in 2004, received an Honourable Mention in the UNESCO 2004 Asia-Pacific Awards for the Conservation of Cultural Heritage – visitors can examine the equipment while admiring the wooden interior design. There are the old pawnbroker’s business records to see, as well as the shop counter, pawn goods in the fortress-like storehouse and multi-layered shelving across the facility. Be transported back 100 years as you wander through this little piece of history.

Antonio Sanmarful

Exhibition Room of Master Lu Ban's Woodcraft Works

Sala de Exposição dos Trabalhos de Carpintaria do Mestre Lu Ban
魯班先師木工藝陳列館

Exit the Heritage Exhibition of a Traditional Pawnshop Business and follow a narrow street and you shall find the Exhibition Room of Master Lu Ban's Woodcraft Works. This museum, which opened to the public in July 2015, sits in the Carpenters Guildhall in Rua de Camilo Pessanha – a guildhall that was constructed around 1840 as one of the earliest professional association bases in Macao's history. It was restored

in 2013 and 2014 and now pays homage to master artisan Lu Ban, a woodworker par excellence from China's distant past. The structural engineer and carpenter, who lived around 500BC in the East China region, is revered as a god of builders and contractors.

Woodwork is considered as one of Macao's oldest professions. And it's showcased to great effect in this museum. To the right of Lu Ban's altar is a one-room exhibition filled with diagrams and drawings of traditional woodcrafts and carpentry works. At the centre is also a display of the traditional tools that were used in this age-old craft. The items are encased in

glass boxes stacked on top of each other to form a large 'Lu Ban lock' – a kind of ancient Chinese puzzle made of six bars. There are more than 80 tools in the exhibition, including saws, ink markers and drills. Due to competition from neighbouring areas that are better equipped to produce furniture and also due to younger generations losing interest in this craft, Macao has lost its reputation as a carpentry capital. But with this museum, the Macao Carpentry Trade Union – which worked with the government to carve out the project in the first place – hopes to inspire future generations to take up woodworking.

A large wooden Lu Ban lock is displayed in front of an altar, right next to the entrance to the Exhibition Room of Master Lu Ban's Woodcraft Works



António Sanmarful



Eric Tam

Phonographs and gramophones on display in the Sound of the Century

Sound of the Century

Som de um Século
留聲歲月

In this two-storey private emporium, you've got to book ahead for a viewing. But if you're into old sound machines, then this place is a must-visit. It took Tai Peng Electronics and Appliances founder Henry Chan more than 20 years to create as he collected vintage sound pieces from all over the world, with many of the items coming from Western showrooms

and private owners. Upon entering the first floor, visitors see a fully functioning jukebox that still plays pre-1980s music. There are also old telephones, vintage television sets and old sound recorders on the same floor. Going up the spiral staircase to the level above is where the true magic lies as you're greeted by a room that's full of preserved phonographs, gramophones, cylinder recorders and music boxes that all still play tunes when their handles are cranked. There are, in fact, more

than 200 antique gramophones, telephones and radios here.

Each piece is exquisite, coming with its own story that the guided tour does justice to, allowing visitors to get to know each piece on display personally. As Tai Peng director Brian Ho shares, the museum, which sits in Rua das Estalagens, has received guests from all over the world who want to rekindle fond and nostalgic memories when they listen to old melodies on these antique machines. To see – and hear – this collection, book a place online via Tai Peng's website.



Former Chong Sai Pharmacy

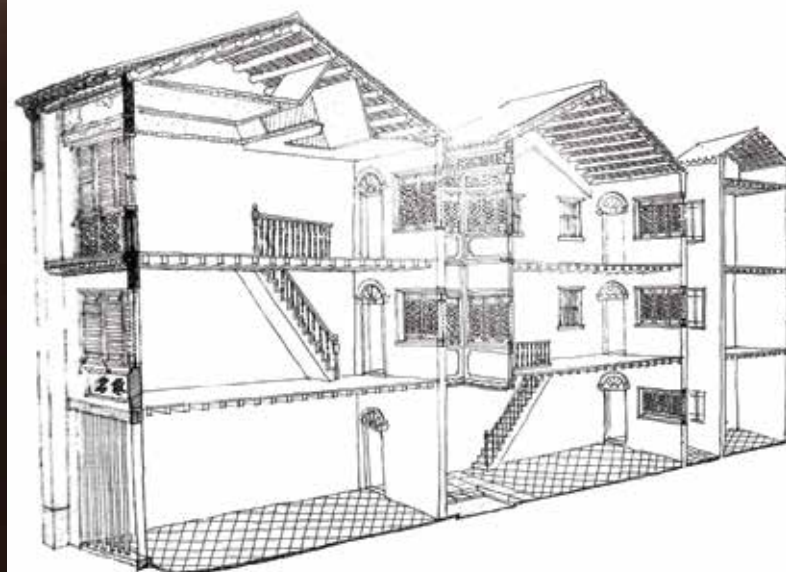
Antiga Farmácia Chong Sai

中西藥局舊址

On the same narrow street that Tai Peng inhabits is the Former Chong Sai Pharmacy. This old medical base was established by the father of modern China, Dr Sun Yat-sen, some time before 1892 – and, by early 1894, it became one of the first recorded pharmacies and clinics operated by a Chinese doctor but offering Western medical services in Macao. Restored and revitalised by the government, the building is a perfect combination of both old and new – with the antiquated architectural features and relevant furniture preserved, modern amenities have also been added. The government, since it acquired the former pharmacy in 2011, has been able to preserve how the building would have looked in the 1890s, while also incorporating modern features, such as plumbing and electricity.

The museum is an architecturally fascinating place to walk through, seeing the contrast between old and new, while learning about the way construction was done back then. It also offers a great experience for those who wish to learn more about Dr Sun Yat-sen and his contributions to society in the late 19th century, while also remembering how important pharmacies like this were to Macao and the health of its citizens in days gone by.

A passageway inside the preserved Former Chong Sai Pharmacy (left); a section drawing of the former pharmacy (below)



The Na Tcha Exhibition Room

A Sala de Exposições do Templo de Na Tcha

大三巴哪吒展館

We all know the Ruins of St Paul's but a treasure trove of history you may not know is the Na Tcha Temple just up the street. This tiny place of worship, built in 1888 in homage to the child god of war Na Tcha, is one of the designated sites in the Historic Centre of Macau that's on the UNESCO World Heritage List. And to its left is an archway through the old city walls

that leads to the entrance of a rounded exhibition room housing all things Na Tcha – the deity's legend, the customs and beliefs tied to the child god and an assortment of objects that are used in Na Tcha's birthday celebrations, such as religious incense burners, lion heads and firecrackers.

Front and centre of the museum, which was unveiled in 2012, is the deity's iconic sedan-chair and there are also eight illustrations hung on the walls that were made by local cartoonist Ah-Cheng depicting Na Tcha's origins. A small television

set plays a video about Na Tcha festivities on a loop, providing background noise as visitors wander through the exhibition. Also on show are construction remains from an archaeological dig that many believe come from the western wing of the original St Paul's – or Church of Mater Dei – that was destroyed by fire many moons ago. There's another Na Tcha temple at the bottom of Mount Hill but this temple next to the Mater Dei facade remains the more popular sister, especially due to this small yet fascinating museum next to it.

The iconic sedan chair in front of illustrations of Na Tcha by cartoonist Ah-Cheng inside the Na Tcha Exhibition Room



Treasure of Sacred Art of St Joseph's Seminary

Tesouro de Arte Sacra do Seminário de S José

聖若瑟修院及聖堂

Up a narrow flight of granite steps located in one of the narrow back roads behind the Government Headquarters of Macao is St Joseph's Seminary and Church, a beautiful building constructed in 1758 in the classic Baroque style – a rare find in Asia. In one of the church's side chapels, there's a piece of bone from the arm of St Francis Xavier, the Catholic missionary who co-founded the Society of Jesus in the 16th century, on display. Religious tourists from across the globe flock here to see the relic. St Francis played a key role in Christianity's spread throughout Asia before he died on Shangchuan Island in China in 1552. A piece of his humerus was taken from there and transported to Macao.

A visit to this famous church should certainly include a look at the sacred bone, however an equally fascinating gem lies just outside the church doors. The Treasure of Sacred Art of St Joseph's Seminary museum sees two floors of exhibition space, with a huge variety of artworks, religious artefacts and antiques on display. Gaze at statues, church vessels and vestments dating as far back as the 17th century. There is also a section dedicated to the Jesuits' contribution to print and to the understanding of the Chinese language through their extensive translation work. Whether you are Catholic or not does not matter – this museum is for anyone who is interested in religious history.

Religious statue inside the Treasure of Sacred Art of St Joseph's Seminary

António Sammarful



Eric Tam

Lou Kau Mansion

Casa de Lou Kau

盧家大屋

In a sideroad between Senado Square and Cathedral Square stands the two-storey Lou Kau Mansion, a UNESCO World Heritage site that was built in 1889. For those escaping the crowds at the Ruins of St Paul's, this museum provides a quiet historical experience. It was once owned by Chinese businessman and philanthropist Lou Kau – the wealthiest man in the city in the late 19th century – who was the first person in Macao to be awarded a gambling franchise. But tragedy struck in 1906 when the Guangdong government reversed its policy on gambling and the decision left the 59-year-old bankrupt. He later hung himself on a beam in this mansion.

Compared to the more familiar Mandarin's House, this house is far smaller and isn't much of a 'mansion' at all. However, its charm lies in its fusion of styles, bringing in European elements through the use of stained glass windows alongside the traditional furnishings that were found in homes built during the late Qing Dynasty. The decorative motifs also integrate subtle Western influences alongside oyster shell applications to the windows, neo-classical balustrades and perforated wooden ceilings. This is a museum that will take you back in time.

View of the atrium inside Lou Kau Mansion (left);
a display inside the mansion (below)



Eric Tam

Macau Timepiece Museum 澳門鐘錶博物館

Who wants to spend a few hours looking at clocks? Many people, it seems, as this small yet superbly planned museum – which doesn't have a registered Portuguese name – is popular with visitors. It's situated to the side of the main road that leads up to the Ruins of St Paul's and it's a ticking emporium of timepieces, particularly those that symbolise Macao's important role in China's horological history. Italian Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci first brought the chiming clock to Macao in 1582, which he then gifted to Chinese Emperor Wanli in Beijing in 1601, so the city has enjoyed a rich history in horology – and this private museum co-owned by Fong Wing Ngai and Wang Dong pays testament to that.

The earliest pieces at the museum, which opened in September last year, date back to the 17th century, spanning nearly 400 years, with some having undergone restoration processes so they can tick once again. The museum holds more than 100 timepieces and chronometers from across the ages. There is even an area dedicated to the luxury Italian watch brand Panerai as museum curator Fong Wing Ngai is a big fan – all the timepieces in the museum belong to him. A recent addition to the space is the Contemporary Watches area that features a variety of rare and limited edition pieces, including the much-celebrated Audemars Piguet Royal Oak Offshore Chronograph Special Shaquille O'Neal Edition. How the world has changed since Matteo Ricci's day... ●



António Sammarful



Antique clocks in the Macau Timepiece Museum; some pieces in the Panerai collection at the museum (above right)


António Sammarful

TEN OTHER MUST-VISIT MUSEUMS

- 1 Macao Museum**
Museu de Macau
澳門博物館
112 Praceta do Museu de Macau
Macao's main museum takes you through the SAR's long and rich history.
- 2 Museum of Sacred Art and Crypt**
Ruínas de São Paulo
天主教藝術博物館與墓室
Rua de Dom Belchior Carneiro
A small museum of sacred art next to a crypt containing a tomb that might have belonged to St Paul's College founder Father Alexander Valignano.
- 3 Mandarin's House**
Casa do Mandarim
鄭家大屋
10 Travessa de António da Silva
The former residence and family home of the late Qing theoretician and reformist Zheng Guanying contains many historical treasures.
- 4 Holy House of Mercy Museum**
Santa Casa da Misericórdia
仁慈堂博物館
Off Senado Square
This former 16th century medical facility contains an array of religious artefacts.
- 5 The Patane Night Watch House**
O Posto do Guarda-Nocturno no Patane
沙梨頭更館
52 Rua da Palmeira
Explore the history of the night watchmen here. Exhibits include photos, antiques and information on this old tradition.
- 6 Lin Zexu Memorial Museum**
Museu Lin Zexu de Macau
澳門林則徐紀念館
Avenida Almirante Lacerda
This small museum is dedicated to early 19th century Commissioner Lin Zexu, who sought the prohibition of the opium trade in Macao.
- 7 Maritime Museum**
Museu Marítimo
海事博物館
1 Largo do Pagode da Barra
Learn about Macao's fishing heritage, Portuguese explorations and all things maritime.
- 8 Communications Museum**
Museu das Comunicações
通訊博物館
7 Estrada de Dom Maria II
This three-storey museum offers a look into the development of communications in Macao over the years, including its stamps.
- 9 Macau Museum of Art**
Museu de Arte de Macau
澳門藝術博物館
Avenida Xian Xing Hai
This five-story building offers up 4,000 square metres of art exhibitions.
- 10 Museum of Taipa and Coloane History**
Museu da História da Taipa e Coloane
路氹歷史館
Rua Correia da Silva
Located in Old Taipa Village, this museum goes into the history of Taipa and Coloane's fishing villages.



Painting from The Patane Night Watch House

The background of the entire page is a photograph of several wind turbines. The turbines are dark silhouettes against a sky that transitions from a deep purple at the top to a bright orange and red near the horizon, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The turbines are positioned at different heights and angles, creating a sense of depth and scale. The overall mood is serene and hopeful, reflecting the theme of renewable energy.

Portuguese-speaking countries

The winds of change

Text Neil Ford

In 2017, Cabo Verde was planning to become the first country in the world to generate all of its electricity from renewables. This year, that ambitious target has been scaled down – but it isn’t stopping the African island nation from striving to quickly become as reliant as it can on renewables. We take a look at the giant strides that are being made.

Think of a country that champions renewable energy. Most likely you’re thinking about Sweden? The European country’s mission to cut out all fossil fuels from electricity generation and to become the world’s first 100 per cent renewable energy nation by 2040 is high profile news. Or maybe you’re thinking about Costa Rica? The Central American country already produces 95 per cent of its electricity from hydro, geothermal, solar and wind and aims to become entirely carbon-neutral by 2021. Even images of China may be conjured up in your mind due to the Middle Kingdom’s pledges to generate 35 per cent of its electricity from renewables by 2030. The Asian giant already

boasts by far the largest amount of solar panels and wind capacity of any nation in the world. A country you probably haven’t thought of, however, is Cabo Verde. The Portuguese-speaking African island nation that lies about 600 kilometres west of Senegal in the Atlantic Ocean may be small with just under 550,000 residents across its 10 volcanic islands but it’s becoming a mighty voice in the global debate for renewable energy. So much so that in 2017 it pledged to become the first country in the world to generate all of its electricity from renewables by 2025, therefore pipping the likes of Sweden and Costa Rica to the post. That was 2017, though. Since then, the government of Cabo Verde has downgraded its

renewable energy target to a more realistic – yet still reasonably testing – level. Indeed, the 100 per cent target in under a decade had seemed incredibly ambitious to many commentators at the time but the government now appears to have accepted that it cannot be achieved. At the end of last year, the country’s Minister of Culture Abraão Vicente described that target as ‘technically impossible’. Last November, the government unveiled its new Power Sector Master Plan 2018-2040, which was put together with the help of international consultants. It set targets of increasing the proportion of renewables in the generation mix from 18 per cent last year to 30 per cent by 2025 – and then 50

per cent by 2030. It also aims to achieve 90 megawatt wind power and 160 megawatt solar generating capacity by 2025. The government announced that it will invest EUR 127 million – MOP 1.12 billion – over the three years between 2019 and 2021, with more than EUR 400 million – MOP 3.53 billion – to be invested between 2019 and 2030. It aims to ensure ‘the transition to a safe, efficient and sustainable energy sector with the aim of reducing dependence on fossil fuels while ensuring universal access and energy security’. Some of this money is to be directed at upgrading the nation’s existing infrastructure, including fitting all the street lights with LED equipment that will cut power consumption.

Further to this, at the end of this September, the government also sought new investment, including in the renewable energy sector, at a two-day Cape Verde Investment Forum that was held in Boston, USA. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Olavo Correia says: “As a small island country and fragile from the environmental point of view, we need to be more resilient, so we have to make a serious commitment to renewable energies and the use of renewable endogenous resources, especially at the levels of wind and solar energy.” It was the country’s enthusiasm for renewables that led to the Economic Community of West African States’ (ECOWAS) Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency being based in Cabo Verde.

Cabo Verde had vied with Costa Rica to become the first country in the world to achieve 100 per cent renewable power production but it now appears to have handed the title to its Central American rival as renewables already generate almost 100 per cent of Costa Rica’s electricity – although its government includes large hydro in this figure. This is a technology that’s not generally included because of the damage inflicted on flora and fauna and human settlements during construction. The challenge is even bigger in Cabo Verde, however, because the country comprises nine inhabited islands – its other island is uninhabited – that are too widely spaced to allow for the development of a national grid through the construction of subsea transmission interconnectors. According to figures from the Ministry for Industry, Commerce and Energy in June, the national electrification rate in Cabo Verde has now reached 93 per cent. This means that it missed the goal of universal access to electricity by

the end of 2018 – but it is still one of the highest rates in Sub-Saharan Africa. Connecting the remaining households is difficult because they mainly live in remote rural areas, so off-grid or micro-grid solutions are likely to be needed in the future. The previous target of reducing energy consumption by 20 per cent between 2016 and 2030, mainly through cutting transmission losses, remains in place in the new master plan. This should mean that less new capacity will be required to achieve the government’s other goals. National generating capacity stands at 150 megawatts but how much more will be needed by 2030 will be influenced by how fast the tourist sector grows.

New projects

Until the end of last year, solar power accounted for just one per cent of Cabo Verde’s generation mix. However, in December a 1.3 megawatt solar project was completed on the island of Sal. The 3,880 photovoltaic (PV) modules are both rooftop and ground mounted, with bifacial PV panels used on rooftops. Bifacial panels absorb 90 per cent of their energy directly from the sun but the remaining 10 per cent is reflected off the ground. Construction costs of US\$2.7 million – MOP 21.8 million – were provided by the company that operates it, Aguas de Ponta Preta, which is the island’s power and water utility, plus a loan from Caixa Económica de Cabo Verde. The government plans to launch a series of competitive tenders for the right to develop and operate new renewable energy projects. One tender already underway is for a contract to build and operate a five megawatt solar power plant in the northwest of Boa Vista island. In March, the Ministry for Industry,

Mindelo city on the island of São Vicente in Cabo Verde



Travelbild / Alamy

Commerce and Energy whittled down the number of bidders to a shortlist of nine companies or joint ventures, including Voltalia and Alten Africa.

The selected operator will receive a 25-year contract to supply electricity to the island's grid. Construction costs are estimated at US\$8 million – MOP 64.6 million – and first electricity is due in 2021. Alten Africa is already at various stages of developing other PV projects in Africa, including a 120 megawatt facility in Nigeria, a 55 megawatt project in Kenya and a 45 megawatt scheme in Namibia.

Under a project funded by the Global Environment Facility-United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), solar powered irrigation systems are starting to replace diesel-powered alternatives, which are more expensive to run. Even if all homes have access to electricity, this will not cover agricultural production. UNIDO partnership project manager Alois Mhlanga says: "Knowing that Cabo Verde has a huge potential in the field of renewable energy sources, with more than 3,500 hours of sunshine per year, we came in to help take advantage of modern solar technology."

Further renewable energy projects would qualify for the EUR 400 million in risk guarantees set out in the Portuguese budget for 2019 that has been made available in support of the Lusophone Compact, a financing programme to promote the economic and sustainable development of Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa. The compact was signed between Portugal and the African Development Bank at the end of last year and Cabo Verde was the second African nation to sign up.

The strategy remains the same: to develop sufficient wind and solar power generating capacity on each Cabo Verde island to allow oil-fired

generators to be taken off-line or just kept as back-up. The development of cost effective battery technology would make the challenge a great deal easier by allowing electricity from intermittent projects, such as wind projects and solar farms, to be stored for days or even weeks. At present, battery storage costs remain high but under the Power Sector Master Plan 2018-2040, the government of Cabo Verde has set a target of achieving 640 megawatt-hour energy storage by 2025 via a pumped storage plant on Santiago island and batteries on smaller islands.



We need to be more resilient, so we have to make a serious commitment to renewable energies, especially at the levels of wind and solar energy.

Desalination and pumped storage

Pumped storage hydro projects require water to be pumped from a lower reservoir to a higher one when there is surplus power production. It is released again when demand is highest or there is otherwise insufficient power production elsewhere, with the water used to drive turbines that generate electricity.

Overall, pumped storage projects consume more electricity than they generate but are

extremely useful in covering peak demand and effectively act as ingenious batteries. Cabo Verde has little rainfall between November and July, so the reservoirs will not be significantly replenished for much of the year. However, there has been some discussion of desalinated water being used to fill reservoirs, suggesting that they will be relatively small.

In addition, Cabo Verde has identified an alternative to battery storage that makes economic sense: desalination plants that can produce both fresh water and electricity. The archipelago currently relies on diesel-powered desalination plants to produce most of its water, with the result being that drinking water costs US\$4.42 – MOP 35.70 – per cubic metre, a high rate by international standards. In a recent paper on Cabo Verde's energy strategy, Erik Nordman of Grand Valley State University in the US says: "Integrating desalination and pumped storage could make the system more efficient by reducing curtailments."

Spain's international desalination giant Acciona Agua and Cabo Verde's own construction company Sade are currently completing desalination plants on Sal and São Vicente islands with combined production capacity of 10,000 cubic metres a day. They will supply drinking water to at least 100,000 people – and the government intends that all new plants will only run when wind farms are operating at high capacity.

The country's wave power potential has also attracted international interest. Resolute Marine Energy has announced that it wants to test its 'Wave20' desalination technology in Cabo Verde in 2020 and 2021. Seawater is drawn in to the reverse osmosis plant, with about one-third turned into drinking

water and the remainder used to generate electricity. The American firm believes that it can produce water at US\$1.25 – MOP 10.09 – per cubic metre. In a statement, Resolute Marine Energy said that its technology was ideal for 'industrial/agricultural operations in developing countries and small island developing states' and 'to displace the diesel-electric desalination systems'. It added that it produced water 'without the need for massive infrastructure investments in pipelines, canals and electrical production and transmission assets'. In addition, Germany's SINN Power has undertaken a feasibility study into developing a wave power project off the coast of São Vicente.

Falling costs

The cost of manufacturing wind turbines and solar panels has fallen dramatically over the past decade and is continuing to fall, particularly for solar panels. Operating and maintenance costs for both technologies have

also declined worldwide but it remains to be seen how much of these benefits can be replicated in Cabo Verde. The country has not been able to derive as much benefit from the falling costs as most countries. Power company Cabeólica has 25.5 megawatts of generating capacity spread over the islands of Santiago, Sal, São Vicente and Boavista but all use 850 kilowatt Vestas turbines, which are small by international standards.

Technicians who maintain and repair wind and solar projects are able to cover a number of different schemes in most countries. In Cabo Verde, however, projects are located on separate islands. Local people will presumably be trained to maintain them but technicians will have to come from further afield if more serious repairs are required. Similarly, millions of people in other parts of Africa – particularly East Africa – have benefitted from small scale solar power units that can cost as little as US\$100 – MOP 808 – because suppliers cover many thousands of homes. The same technology could be

Engineers construct a wind turbine in Cabo Verde



distributed in Cabo Verde but the costs would almost certainly be much higher because of the tiny size of each island market.

However, Antão Manuel Fortes, chief executive officer of Cabeólica, has a rosy view of the future. He says that Cabo Verde's political stability, its 'political will to prioritise renewables', its legal and regulatory environment, its 'growing credibility' and its sustainability policy are all important factors 'that provide reassurance for investors in the development of projects in the renewable energy field'. However, he adds that the country's main challenge 'is still the small size of the market as each island's limited demand for electricity makes it difficult to design suitable projects that increase capacity at a reasonable cost while respecting technical restrictions regarding grid stability'.



Wind turbines out in the Cabo Verde wilds

“

Cabo Verde has a huge potential in the field of renewable energy sources, with more than 3,500 hours of sunshine per year.

Fortes, who has more than 30 years' experience working in the energy and water sectors in Cabo Verde, says that over Cabeólica's almost eight years of operation, the company has 'played an important role in consolidating the sustainable energy policies' implemented and has 'significantly reduced imports of fossil fuels for generating electricity'. So, for Fortes, Cabo Verde's ambition to have its supply based entirely on green energy is a realistic one, 'depending on the timing for implementing this target and on how much investment it requires'. "The target of 100 per cent renewables by 2020, set by the previous government," he says, "was actually very ambitious, if not unrealistic, but it has been moderated with the current government's objectives, which aim for phased achievement of coverage rates, as it is technically and

economically possible, with updated targets of 30 per cent by 2025 and 50 per cent by 2050, which makes these targets more achievable and perhaps more realistic." Fortes adds that 'we anticipate total dominance of renewables in the country in the near future'.

While renewable energy costs are higher in Cabo Verde, the price of thermal power is also greater because of the cost of importing relatively small volumes of oil. Electricity is still more than twice as expensive as in the United States, for example. Power plant feedstock accounted for a fifth of the country's entire import bill in 2015, so reducing this would help to stabilise national finances, particularly given currency fluctuations. Moreover, wind speeds of up to 10 metres a second offer some of the best wind resources in Africa, comparable with those on offer in Egypt and Morocco.

So Cabo Verde is unlikely to achieve its ambition of becoming the world's first nation to produce all electricity by renewables. But the country is nevertheless making great strides towards becoming 100 per cent reliant on renewable energy in the near future. And that would surely make it a model for the rest of the world, even if the likes of Costa Rica and Sweden get there first. You won't forget Cabo Verde in a hurry now, will you? ●

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Zoom

A decade in pictures

Text **Matt Fleming**

Macao Magazine celebrates its 10th anniversary this month so, to toast the milestone, we bring you some of our favourite images that have appeared in our 55 issues over the past decade. Each photo proves that our city is exciting, colourful and always dynamic. From our sun-kissed skies to the glamour and glitz of our entertainment complexes, the SAR is home to almost unlimited photo opportunities and we are dedicated to capturing this beauty. So, we've spent the past few weeks poring over our past issues and whittling down our best images that were taken by some of the city's most talented photographers. Enjoy a sumptuous snapshot of the past decade in pictures...

Issue 31, November 2015

The iconic Macau Tower which opened in 2001 is captured from Sai Van Lake.

Photo by Julius Santos

Issue 1, October 2009

Lo Heng Kong makes a brew in the run-up to our first issue. In 1997, he gave up his job as an interior designer and founded the Chinese Teism Association of Macao. Photo by Carmo Correia



Issue 4, July 2010

'Jade Rabbit, the Imperial Lantern' designed by architect Carlos Marreiros marks Macao's presence at the 2010 Shanghai Expo. The rabbit has a 10-metre balloon head and changes colours at night. Photo by Eric Tam

Issue 18, September 2013

A Buddhist monk in Macao performs a ritual during the Hungry Ghost Festival. On the 15th day of the seventh month in the lunar calendar, it is believed that the realms of heaven and hell are opened and Buddhists perform rituals to absolve the sufferings of the deceased.
Photo by Manuel Cardoso



Zoom



Issue 21, July 2014
Lei Weng Si, Wushu athlete from Macao, wins four medals in Goa, India at the third Lusophone Games.
Photo by Cheong Kam Ka



Issue 22, May 2014
The often overlooked treasure of Macao: the former Leal Senado library sits right in the tourist heart of the city on Avenida Almeida Ribeiro. Containing more than 20,000 books, the collection's history dates back to 1873.
Photo by Eric Tam



Issue 26, January 2015
A dancer celebrates the 15th anniversary of the Macao SAR in the colourful 'Parade through Macao, Latin City'.
Photo by Cultural Affairs Bureau



Issue 32, January 2016
This circular pedestrian walkway bridge, newly built in 2016, creates an almost labyrinthine image against the famous backdrop of the Cotai Strip.
Photo by António Sanmarful



Issue 28, May 2015
A man scours the newspapers at Lung Wah Tea House. Located behind the Red Market, this half-a-century old institution has stood the test of time.
Photo by António Sanmarful



Issue 33, March 2016
Local Cantonese opera artists perform 'The Legend of the Purple Hairpin' at the 27th Macao Arts Festival. The romantic tragedy, written by Chinese playwright Tang Xian-zu, also features Macao opera star Chu Cha Wa.
Photo by Cheong Kam Ka



Issue 38, January 2017
Actresses take part in the 'Parade through Macao, Latin City' to mark the 17th anniversary of the Macao Special Administrative Region. The parade has now been renamed The International Parade.
Photo by Cheong Kam Ka



Issue 42, September 2017
People's Liberation Army Macao Garrison and local firemen work together to clear the streets after Super Typhoon Hato strikes the city on 23 August 2017.
Photo by Cheong Kam Ka



Issue 47, July 2018
A dragon boat looks menacingly on in the still Macao waters. Every year, on the fifth day of the fifth month of the lunar calendar, Macao sees dozens of teams race against each other at the International Dragon Boat Races at Nam Van Lake.
Photo by António Sanmarful

Issue 48, September 2018

A ceramic man gazes skywards in the 'Exhibition of Shiwan Ceramics from the MAM Collection' at the Macao Museum of Art. Shiwan ceramics hail from a district in Foshan and were developed in the region during the 16th century. Photo by António Sanmarful



Issue 52, May 2019

Devotees at the Cathedral of Macau celebrate Easter Sunday. Photo by Eduardo Martins



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