RENOVATION OF
THE FRINGE CLUB

Presentation by The Fringe Club
16 April 2010
History of the building

• Built in c. 1890 by The Dairy Farm Company
• Many subsequent major alterations to meet their operational needs:
  – Façades
  – Interior space allocation
  – Roofs
  – Floors
1890  Original Neo-classical style
1916 v Current day

1. Neo-classical style with plain coloured wall
2. Timber tiled roofs
3. Arch windows & verandahs

1. Bandaged brick work walls
2. Concrete flat roofs
3. Present arch windows are different from those of 1916
1970s Transition

- Dairy Farm moved out in early 1970s
- Building left unoccupied and derelict
- Fringe Club moved in, in Dec 1983
FRINGE CLUB HISTORY
Fringe Club adaptive reuse:
From cold storage warehouse to Contemporary Arts Space

• More than 10 stages of major repairs and facility installations over the past 26 years

• Using funds earned and raised

• Transformed into the current contemporary arts space

• Fringe has become an intangible cultural heritage asset

• Recognised as a successful model for adaptive re-use of old buildings
Before and After Repairs
Before and After Repairs
Before and After Repairs
Before and After Repairs

After
Facilities Installed

• 2 Studio Theatres
• 3 Exhibition Spaces
• A Rehearsal room
• F&B facilities – restaurant, bar & café, roof garden
• Offices
• Front-of-house ticketing & reception
Intangible Cultural Heritage Assets

• From 1984 – 2010 (26 year span):
  
  27 festivals
  8,000 stage performances
  1,370 exhibitions
  1,800 live band shows
  3,200 community outreach events
  60 artist residencies
  20 productions
  55 tours in 13 cities
• From 1984 – 2010 (26 year span):

Launched careers of many artists, among them:

**Theatre:** Philip Fok, Jim Chim, Anthony Wong, Tang Shu Wing

**Music:** Wong Kar Kui, Pong Nan, Elaine Liu, Amabel Liu, Eugene Pao, Taka Hirohama

**Dance:** Andy Wong, Abby Chan, Yeung Wai May

**Visual Arts:** Wong Shun Kit, John Fung, Movana Chen, etc.
Intangible Cultural Heritage Assets

- From 1984 – 2010 (26 year span):
  Cultural exchange Memorandum of Understanding between Hong Kong and:
  - Ho Chi Min City / Seoul / Singapore

Spotlight cities
- Melbourne / San Francisco / Honolulu / Bergen / Vienna / Kaiping / Guangzhou
Intangible Cultural Heritage Assets

• From 1984 – 2010 (26 year span):
  **Artists-in-residency**
  • Adelaide / Melbourne / Sydney / Taipei / Kaohsiung / Shantou / Guangzhou / Shanghai / Singapore
Community Heritage Award 2001

- Antiquities & Monuments Board

“The outstanding conversion of a cold storage warehouse into a contemporary arts space successfully demonstrates creative and effective adaptive reuse of historical building. The restoration is a long-term and difficult endeavor which has taken place for eighteen years with much effort and patience devoted to the worthy cause…”

FRINGE CLUB RENOVATION
Intangible Cultural Heritage Assets

• In 2006, Fringe was selected by the Chief Executive as his Community Project

• Confirmed funding from Jockey Club to:
  – Comply with statutory requirements on fire & building safety
  – Restore heritage features
  – Meet operational needs
PROPOSED CHANGES
Summary - Conservation Requirements

• Retain and restore character defining elements
• Restore window frames, shutters & doors
• Relocate air-condition and ventilation units from external walls and above main entrance
• Reopening blocked windows, resulting in relocation of G/F theatre
• Restore original tiled floor
Retention of Character Defining Elements: Polychromy

The Fringe Club building façade showing the character defining elements;

The **polychromy**, on the southern building and structural **polychromy** on the remaining buildings.
Conservation: Cabaret Theatre

• Maintaining façade
• Opening up original shop windows
• Retain encaustic floor tiles
List of Statutory requirements

1. 2 exits from each storey
2. Structural justification
3. Air-conditioners projecting more than 450mm to be removed
4. 50% of windows to be openable
5. Sprinkler system
6. Complying ventilation & A/C system
7. Upgrade staircase enclosure
8. Upgrade staircase widths
9. Enclose electrical equipment with fire resisting construction
10. Upgrade fire resisting construction and fire compartments
11. Grease traps for Kitchens
12. Additional toilets
Summary - Statutory Requirements

- Additional Staircases
- Means of escape enhancements
- Additional toilets
- Smoke lobbies
- Fire sprinklers

8% loss of total Floor Area
LG/F Layout Plan

Before

No major structural interventions

After
Relocating the G/F theatre

Before

Existing Fringe Theatre

Original shop windows to be opened up

After

New Fringe Theatre
Relocating the G/F theatre

To relocate, the following works are required:

- Remove two minor non-structural columns
- Remove central load-bearing column
- Lower floor

Before

After

Sightline issues
Relocating the G/F theatre – Lower floor

If floor is not lowered, **insufficient headroom for**

- Installation of theatre equipment
- Seating & control room
- Lighting & air conditioning etc.
Currently, there are **serious sightline issues** including one central column and two non-structural columns that obstruct vision from major areas of the room.
Relocating the G/F theatre

With column

With column removed
Relocating the G/F theatre

With column

With column removed
1/F Studio

Statutory requirements:
• Add corridor & staircase for Means of Escape

Operational requirements:
• Shift seats forward
• Remove column

Before

After
The 1/F Studio central column has been **obstructing the sightline** from the seating to the stage right.
1/F Studio Operational Requirements

- New means of escape corridor, lose 20% of floor area
- Seats have to be moved forward

Existing

Proposed

New staircase
Refurbishment of 1/F Studio

With column
Column in seats

Column Removed
Operational Requirement: Strengthen Roof

Roof needs to be strengthened for:

- Retention of roof garden use
- Removal of central columns

2 Options for roof strengthening:

1. **New beams** – Proposed by RSE, approved by Building Authority

2. **Internal Frame** – Reviewed by FC but initially rejected because of Internal layout and cost
Roof Strengthening: Option 1

New beams

Pros
• Cheaper and quicker
• Saves critical floor space; 28% already used for additional statutory requirements.
• Cleaner interior layout

Cons
• Causing interventions by the bedding of the beams into the existing walls of the building
• Not supported by AMO
Roof Strengthening: Option 2

1/F & G/F Internal Frame

Pros
- No embedment into the walls
- Probable support of AMO

Cons
- More expensive
- Additional works
- Takes more floor space
- Requires re-configuration of Theatre layouts
- Longer construction period causing inconvenience to FC operations
Roof Layout Plan

Statutory Requirement – Means of escape
Roof: New Means of Escape

New Staircase
roof

Exit route
Modern concrete roof of Building 2

• The location of the proposed staircase was chosen because:
  
  • The ribbed-beam roof where the proposed staircase is located was cast in the 1960s or later
Roof: New Means of Escape

The staircase roof is not visible from pavement

Does not change external appearance

Sight line drawing
1890

Original Neo-classical style

Building 2:
Chimney at the top of timber pitched roof

Building 2:
Projecting eaves, no parapet wall

Building 3:
Projecting eaves
Develop North Extension (FCC Building)

Building with the “bandaged brickwork” decoration developed
Original roof demolished
• “The Public Works Department, which first said the maximum height could be 36 feet, later changed its mind and said 33 feet and no more, to the eaves.”

• Board of Directors complied but added a Mansard roof which gave just that extra three feet in height some little way from the eaves.

• Complete re-construction of timber roof to a 36 feet high mansard roof.

• This re-constructed roof is not the present concrete flat roof.
1910 Features of The Main Shop at Central Depot

- Encaustic floor tiling around 1910 is similar to those currently existing in the g/f of Building 1 and FCC Main Building.

Existing encaustic floor tiling in Fringe Theatre (g/f building 1)
1913

Re-development of North Tip (Bldg 3)

- Still neo-classical design
- Present “coloured rendering simulating red facing brickwork” was the work of another much later renovation.

Same parapet wall as currently existing
1. Neo-classical style with plain coloured wall
2. Light weight canopy suspended by tie rods
3. Parapet wall

1. Bandaged Brick work walls
2. Concrete Cantilever
3. No parapet wall to the roof
1. Neo-classical style with plain coloured wall
2. Light weight canopy suspended by tie rods
3. Parapet wall

1. Bandaged Brick work walls
2. Concrete Cantilever
3. No parapet wall to the roof
The roof is still a pitched roof with central chimney.
1938

Building 3

- Original timber replaced by concrete flat roof
  Second floor (fotogalerie)

- Timber roof and brick chimney demolished.

- Replaced by flat roof, probably of concrete construction

- Looks the same as existing; but no chimney
• External rendering simulating red facing **bandaged brickwork** added during this period

• Deduced from the use of **Shanghai plaster** on plinth of building to replicate the exposed granite bases

• Practice was common at that time
1950 - 60s

- WWII damage not known
- Repair works carried out on the (third) concrete roof of Building 2
- 2 types of concrete damage under the slab:
  - The older spanning to the central column
  - The new ribbed beam construction spanning onto these beams.

Older beam spanning to central column

New ribbed beam spanning onto the older beam