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PRESS RELEASE

Hotel ICON celebrates official opening with inspiring design conference and gala dinner

Many industry leaders, internationally-renowned designers, staff, alumni and friends of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) gathered at Hotel ICON – a unique teaching and research hotel wholly-owned by the university – to celebrate its official opening.

The celebration started with the Hospitality Design Conference “Boutique & Lifestyle Hotels: Creating a Brand Icon through Design” jointly presented by the Hong Kong Design Centre and PolyU’s School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) on 21 September (Wednesday). Six highly-acclaimed architects and designers shared their insights and visions on hospitality and lifestyle designs, citing their contributions to Hotel ICON as case studies. The speakers included French botanist and landscape artist **Patrick Blanc**, fashion designer **Barney Cheng**, Conran & Partners’ Managing Director **Richard Doone**, graphic designer and PolyU alumnus **Tommy Li**, interior designer **William Lim** and award-winning architect **Rocco Yim**. All of them have contributed to different aspects of Hotel ICON, making it an iconic building in the industry.

Mr Richard Hatter, General Manager of Hotel ICON said, “Hotel ICON is the first of its kind in Asia. We are proud of the hotel and its link to local culture, which can be seen through various features of the hotel.” He added, “We are most delighted to learn that Hotel ICON has been shortlisted by the Canadian-based lifestyle magazine *Wallpaper* for the election of the World’s Best Business Hotels 2011. This year only two Hong Kong hotels have been named in the roll of honour.”

A gala dinner themed “Vision Unlike Any Other” marked the climax of the celebration. It provided a memorable occasion for the supporters and friends of PolyU and SHTM to celebrate the success of its hospitality and tourism education and research. Officiating at the occasion were: **the Honourable Marjorie Yang Mun-tak**, PolyU Council Chairman; **Mr Victor Lo**, Chairman of Hotel ICON Board of Directors and Honorary Chairman of the event; **Professor Timothy W. Tong**, PolyU President; **Professor Kaye Chon**, Dean of SHTM; and **Mr Richard Hatter**, General Manager of Hotel ICON.

Addressing the dinner, Professor Tong thanked all for making the Hotel ICON project a reality and he invited all the guests to witness this important milestone in the history of the School. He said, “SHTM has grown and adapted to the evolving needs of the hospitality industry with a distinctive vision of hospitality and tourism education. That vision, which is unlike any other, leads to the creation of a new education approach with Hotel ICON at its centre.”

Special programmes have been put up for the dinner, including a live band performance by Professor Tong, PolyU alumni and SHTM students. Their show not only earned loud applause from the audience but also received generous support from sponsors. A fund-raising auction further spiced up the evening with all net proceeds contributed to support the School’s future development.

Nearly everyone who has visited Hotel ICON was attracted by its indoor vertical garden located at the lobby. Its creator Patrick Blanc shared his concept of creating the masterpiece and how it reinforces the uniqueness of Hong Kong and its distinct nature before the dinner came to an end. The hotel is located in a building complex that also houses the SHTM campus, university staff

quarters, research, resource centres as well as faculty offices. The complex has become an impressive part of the city's skyline.

PolyU is determined to establish its SHTM as one of the best hotel and tourism schools in the world. The School has consistently grown and adapted with the needs of the industry since its inception in 1979. SHTM has already revamped more than 30 subjects within its undergraduate curriculum to tie in with the opening of its teaching and research hotel. Its new education approach, with Hotel ICON at its centre, will help to improve hospitality and tourism education locally, regionally and internationally.

PolyU's School of Hotel and Tourism Management is a world-leading provider of hospitality and tourism education. It was ranked No. 2 internationally among hotel and tourism schools based on research and scholarship, according to a study published in the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research* in November 2009.



Six highly-acclaimed architects and designers, who have contributed to different aspects of Hotel ICON, attended the Hospitality Design Conference "Boutique & Lifestyle Hotels: Creating a Brand Icon through Design". (From left) **Professor Kaye Chon**, Dean of SHTM; **Mr Barney Cheng**, fashion designer; **Mr Tommy Li**, graphic designer; **Mr Rocco Yim** of Rocco Design Architects Ltd; **Mr Richard Hatter**, General Manager of Hotel ICON; **Mr Richard Doone**, Managing Director of Conran & Partners; **Mr Patrick Blanc**, French botanist and landscape artist; and **Mr William Lim**, interior designer.



The Honourable **Marjorie Yang Mun-tak**, PolyU Council Chairman (middle), **Mr Victor Lo**, Chairman of Hotel ICON Board of Directors (second from right), **Professor Timothy Tong**, PolyU President (fourth from right), **Professor Kaye Chon**, Dean and Chair Professor of SHTM (third from right), and **Mr Richard Hatter**, General Manager of Hotel ICON (fourth from left) and guests on stage toasted to the official opening of Hotel ICON.



A live band performance by Professor Tong, PolyU alumni and SHTM students earned loud applause from the audience.

Press Contact : Mr Wilfred Lai
Division Head (Media and Community Relations)
Telephone: (852) 2766 5218
E-mail: pawilfred@inet.polyu.edu.hk

Ms Pauline Ngan
Marketing Manager, School of Hotel and Tourism Management
Telephone: (852) 3400 2634
E-mail: hmpn@polyu.edu.hk

Ms Mandy Soh
Marketing Communications Manager, Hotel ICON
Telephone: (852) 3400 1188
E-mail: mandy.soh@hotel-icon.com