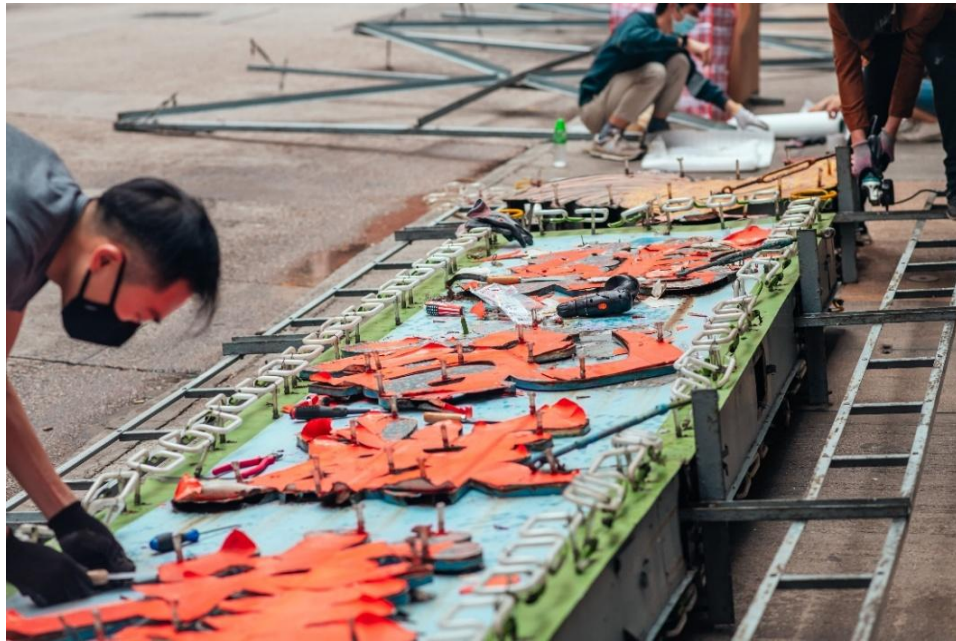


THE FADING LEGACY: NEON CRAFTSMANSHIP AS AN INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE



(Image courtesy of Kevin Mak @streetsignhk)

- Date:** 16 August 2025 (Saturday)
- Time:** 16:00 to 17:30
- Speaker:** Ken Fung and Kevin Mak, Founders of @streetsignhk
- Venue:** Multi-Function Room CD, H6 Conet,
G/F, The Center, 99 Queen's Road Central, Central, Hong Kong.
- CPD Points:** 1.5 CPD credit hours
- Language:** Cantonese
- Fee:** HK\$120 HKICON Members, HK\$135 for HKICON Friends, and HK\$150 for non-HKICON Members.
- Limited to 40 Participants.
- Registration for Friends and Non-Members opens on 28 July 2025.
- Please visit the HKICON website for registration:

<https://member.hkicon.org/events/20250816/>

HKICON

Hong Kong Institute of Architectural Conservationists
香港建築文物保護師學會

About the CPD

This talk addresses the significance of neon craftsmanship, which has recently been recognized as one of Hong Kong's Intangible Cultural Heritage items. It explores the current state of neon signs and their symbiotic association with local shops, while highlighting the threats posed by building regulations and urban development.

Neon signs are not only essential for advertising but also serve as unique visual culture of Hong Kong. However, their existence is increasingly jeopardized by regulatory pressures that often overlook their cultural significance. By drawing on documentation efforts and contemporary practices, this talk aims to reflect on the complexities of conserving these luminous artifacts. It will also encourage a broader conversation about the future of neon signage/ craftsmanship in Hong Kong and the need for innovative approaches to safeguard this unique aspect of the city's heritage.

About the Speakers

@streetsignhk was founded in October 2017 by architects Kevin Mak and Ken Fung, inspired by the distinctive "signboard-streetscape" of Hong Kong—a vibrant urban landscape shaped by layers of colorful signboards that define the city's streets. The group is dedicated to preserving this unique aspect of Hong Kong's urban identity, advocating for the recognition of signboards as cultural heritage, and promoting a sustainable signboard culture through design.

With an understanding of building regulations, @streetsignhk actively works to conserve signs at risk of demolition, while exploring their aesthetic and cultural significance. They refuse to merely witness the disappearance of these iconic structures due to evolving regulations and changing business environments. Instead, the group provides advice to shop owners, advocates for policy changes, and educates the public on the importance of safeguarding this visual heritage. Their mission is to create a sustainable environment where Hong Kong's distinctive signboard streetscape can thrive while addressing safety concerns.

@streetsignhk's journey began with the award-winning installation "Old Town Streetscape Projector" for the Hong Kong Tourism Board in 2017. Their first major exhibition, "PLAY to Proliferate - Sign City", held at Oil Street Art Space in Hong Kong, won the Good Design Award in 2019. Since then, they have developed a distinctive practice that integrates a growing archive of over 200 rescued signs from 150 local shops into contemporary exhibitions and design projects. Collaborating with a diverse range of creatives—including craftsmen, calligraphers, composers, and other designers—@streetsignhk continues to reimagine Hong Kong's sign culture through art and design.



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The group has curated or participated in over 20 exhibitions and collaborations worldwide, including at notable events such as the London Festival of Architecture (2019), Pascal Greco's Photography Exhibition in Lausanne (2021), the Hong Kong Biennale of Urbanism/Architecture (2022), DesignInspire (Hong Kong, 2019; Hong Kong & Tokyo, 2023), deTour Hong Kong (2022, 2023), "Neon Heart" installation at West Kowloon Art Park (2024) and Maison&Objet in Paris (2024). @streetsignhk's first foray into performance art was at "*Neon Sounds*" (2024), a live music and multimedia performance created in collaboration with Matthew Schreibeis and local composers, marking a new chapter in their creative exploration.

