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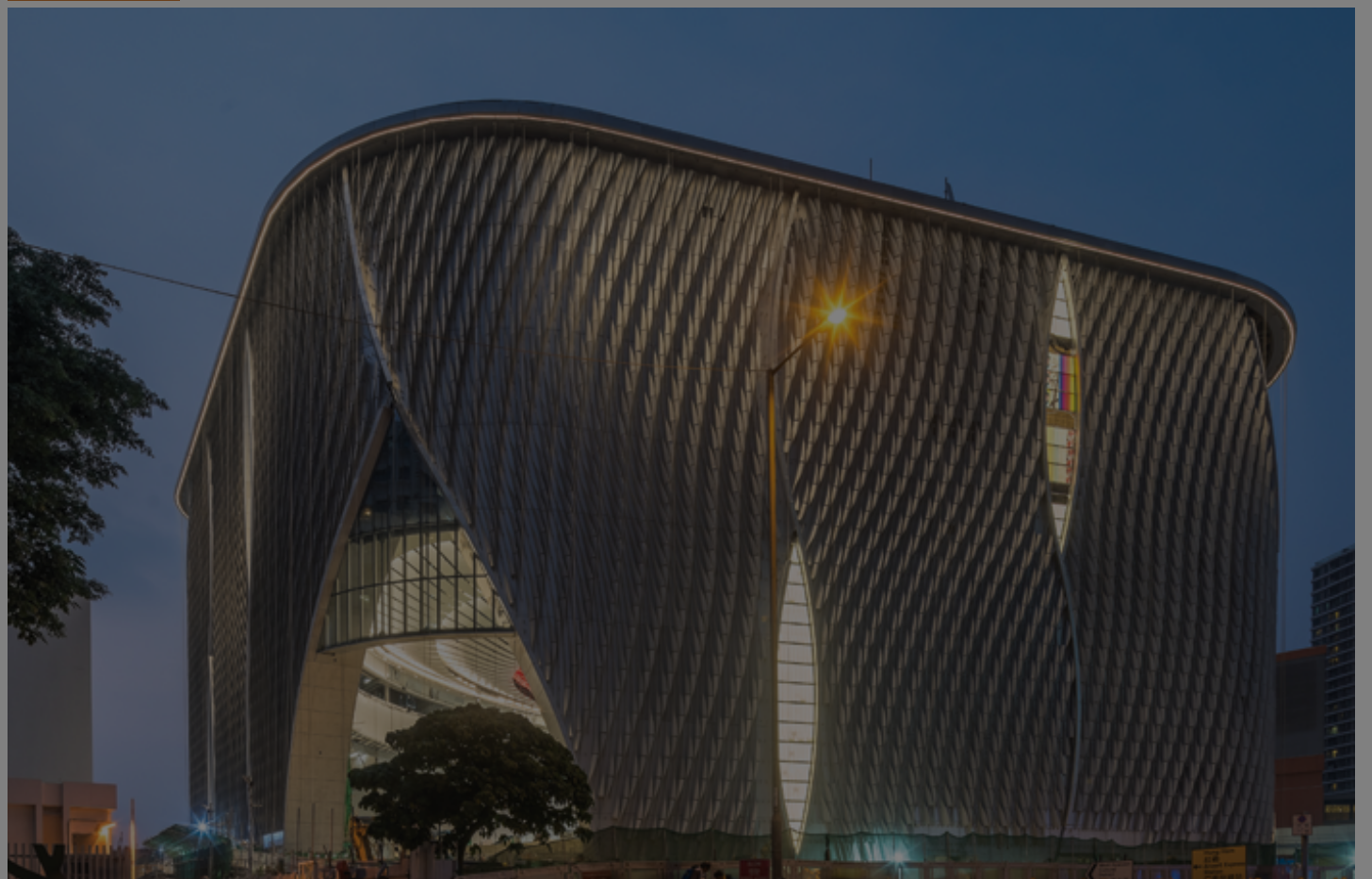
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Asia Cultural boom in



An [article in *The Stage*](#) reports on the opera houses leading a cultural boom in Asia. Nick Awde describes how the boost in Western-style cultural complexes across Asia is creating global job opportunities for those with skills in opera, musical theatre and technical roles.

The article notes that:

Opera houses are spearheading the explosion across the globe of new cultural complexes, particularly in the eastern hemisphere, joining up with the existing older centres concentrated in Europe and North America. These hubs are huge projects expressly designed as totems of national investment in global culture, currently most evident in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Central Asia and the Gulf.

Describing new projects in Hong Kong and Beijing, the article also focuses on Kazakhstan:

In Central Asia, Kazakhstan moved its capital in 1997 from Almaty to Astana and started the construction of a modern, planned city. The UK's Foster and Partners became involved and one hard-to-miss result is the giant Pyramid of Peace and Accord, a global peace project that also includes a 1,300-seat opera house along with a national museum of culture.

More prominent, however, is Astana Opera, promoted as the third largest in the world and boasting a 1.6-tonne chandelier in a 19th-century-style building. The main hall holds 1,250 seats and the chamber hall, 250.

Image: evening view of the Xiqu Centre, West Kowloon Cultural District, Hong Kong

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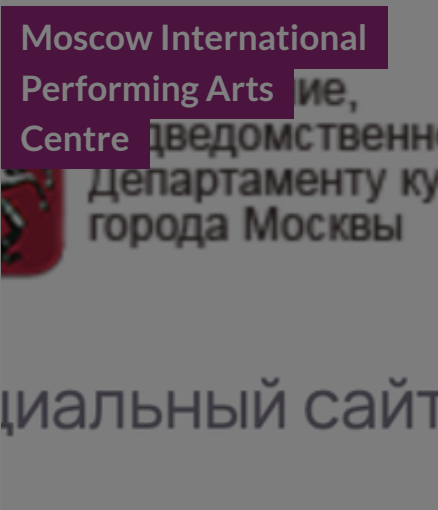
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