

HK Literature Festival to explore subtle relationships among literature, life and time

The opening ceremony of the 12th Hong Kong Literature Festival, organised by the Hong Kong Public Libraries of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, was held at Hong Kong Central Library (HKCL) today (June 28), launching this important biennial event in support of Hong Kong literature.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, the Acting Director of Leisure and Cultural Services, Dr Louis Ng, said that since its launch in 1997, the Hong Kong Literature Festival has carried the mission of promoting literary writing and reading through a variety of literary activities, with a view to enhancing public interest in literary arts and offering literature lovers an opportunity to exchange their thoughts.

At the ceremony, the winners of two pre-festival activities, namely the Literary Performance Competition and "The Bloom of Youth" Chinese Writing Competition, were awarded prizes. Students participating in the Literary Performance Competition selected and impressively role-played their favourite stories on the ceremonial stage. The winning entries of the two activities will be on display at the HKCL Exhibition Gallery throughout the festival period. Moreover, students participating in the creation exhibition zone were presented with appreciation certificates and also shared their views on the project.

Under the theme "Where Literature Meets Life", the festival runs from today to July 15. Over 30 interactive literary activities including a thematic exhibition, symposiums, guided reading sessions, an Interflow programme and Little Avid Readers' Storytelling Sessions, will be held.

The festival's highlight, a thematic exhibition entitled "I Write, Therefore I Am", will be held at the HKCL Exhibition Gallery from tomorrow (June 29) to July 15. With the theme of life, the "I Write, Therefore I Am" section is divided into four parts, namely "The Path to Growth", which records memories of growing up and the excitement of youth; "Working Life", which depicts hardship in career life; "Discourse of Illness", which reflects the dark side of society metaphorically; and "Reflections on Life", which reveals the meaning of life.

Another section is "Centenary Writings – Liu Yichang", which introduces the literary life of the renowned local writer Professor Liu Yichang and pays tribute to his contributions to Hong Kong's literary scene. The tie-in activity "Reading Liu's Works in Virtual Reality" will let the participants experience a new mode to appreciate the urban scenes that can be found in Professor Liu's literary works through the application of virtual reality.

The other section is the creation exhibition zone, with panels created by secondary students to showcase their thoughts on literary works from their own perspective.

Other highlights include three symposiums entitled "Literature and Life". In the light of illness narratives, travel literature, diaspora literature and growing-up narratives, the speakers will explore the infusion of life experiences, emotions and reflections on the significance of life and society in literary creation.

In the guided reading sessions, two winning authors of the 14th Hong Kong Biennial Awards for Chinese Literature will share their creative concepts. Tutors will analyse the underlying emotions and meanings of these outstanding literary pieces, thereby improving readers' appreciation of literary works in all their diversity. The two winning entries are "Glistening Rapids" and "One Day of Ibrahim".

Organised by local cultural groups, the new Interflow will be conducted in an interactive and innovative way to explore the fun in literature appreciation and creation of different themes. The programme is divided into three sessions, starting with "When Poetry Meets Sand Arts" to have a crossover presentation of both poetry and sand painting by combining music, stories and images. In "From Literary Work to the Musical: The Writing Adventure of Bui Bui", literary work will be transformed into a musical with dance and music for an audience of all ages to appreciate the story's messages on writing in a different form. Finally, in "Outdoor Fun with Literature", members of the public are invited to play a game and participate in a music and poetry recital. Literary appreciation will be converted into a rich audio-visual presentation.

In addition, six Little Avid Readers' Storytelling Sessions will tell different stories with adults and kids. Participants can experience the imagination of literary works through beautiful words and illustrations.

The Fans of Literature Festival will continue this year. Literature lovers are encouraged to become fans and to receive festival souvenirs and updates on future literary activities organised by public libraries.

All activities are free. Festival booklets are available at all public libraries. For more details, please visit www.hkpl.gov.hk/en/extension-activities/hklf/hklf12/event-cat.html. For enquiries, call 2928 4551.