

Shanghai Culture Week opens today (with photos)

The opening ceremony and reception for Shanghai Culture Week, presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), the Shanghai Municipal Administration of Culture and Tourism and the Center for China Shanghai International Arts Festival, was held today (August 2) at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre (HKCC). The first programme, "The House of Wulong", a classic play of the Qi School performed by the Shanghai Jingju Theatre Company, was staged at the Grand Theatre of the HKCC immediately after the ceremony, marking the opening of Shanghai Culture Week.

Addressing the opening ceremony and reception, the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, said that, as an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchanges, Hong Kong is tasked with the mission of connecting China with the world and has a responsibility to promote traditional Chinese culture to the world. This year, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government established the Chinese Culture Promotion Office and organised the inaugural Chinese Culture Festival (CCF) designating Shanghai as its focal city. The LCSD is copresenting Shanghai Culture Week this time to enable members of the public and visitors to appreciate and experience the unique charm of Shanghai's culture and to foster cultural exchanges.

Other officiating guests included Deputy Director General of the Shanghai Municipal Administration of Culture and Tourism Mr Jin Lei and Vice President of the Center for China Shanghai International Arts Festival Ms Yang Jialu.

The opening programme of Shanghai Culture Week, "The House of Wulong", is a classic work by Peking opera maestro Zhou Xinfang (stage name Qilintong), performed by Chen Shaoyun, an esteemed performing artist of Peking opera and a recipient of the China Theatre Plum Blossom Award, who led national-class performers Lu Su and Yang Yang in the performance. The Shanghai Jingju Theatre Company will also perform the Shanghai-style Peking opera "Seven Heroes and Five Gallants" (Parts One and Two) at the Grand Theatre of the HKCC on August 3 and 4 respectively. This play recreates an exquisite set design and showcases the various skills of the actors in both civil and military highlights. Also, under the baton of internationally acclaimed conductor Tang Muhai, the Shanghai Chinese Orchestra will stage two performances of Shanghai-style Chinese music in "New Oriental Chinese Music Scene" (concert version) on August 5 at Hong Kong City Hall, and on August 6 at Tsuen Wan Town Hall. In the concerts, the Orchestra will showcase the beauty of Chinese music through the blending of traditional and modern styles.

"The Hong Kong Jockey Club Series: Fragrance of Time – In Search of Chinese Art of Scent" exhibition, currently being held at the Hong Kong Museum of Art (HKMoA) until October 16, is also one of the events of Shanghai

Culture Week. The exhibition features exhibits from the Shanghai Museum collection, all classified as national-graded treasures, as well as the collection of the HKMoA, which include ceramics, bronze objects, bamboo carvings, calligraphy and paintings spanning the Neolithic period to the 20th century, taking audiences on an olfactory journey over thousands of years. Moreover, the Jiading District Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Protection Office will organise the "Intangible Cultural Heritage Illuminates Life" Intangible Cultural Heritage Cultural Exchange Showcase at the foyer of the HKCC on August 3. ICH items of traditional craftsmanship and handicraft arts including Jiading bamboo carvings, Xuhang yellow grass-weaving, indigo-dyed cloth printing and dyeing techniques, the guqin-making technique, art of tea, Suzhou embroidery, and gold thread and gemstone inlay techniques will be featured. Through appreciating Jiading's ICH items, audience members can immerse themselves in the distinctive charm of Jiangnan and Shanghai cultures, forging a deeper understanding of traditional Chinese culture. Admission to the ICH exhibition is free.

The CCF, presented by the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and organised by the LCSD's Chinese Culture Promotion Office, aims to enhance the public's appreciation of Chinese culture and cultivate citizens' national identity and cultural confidence. The inaugural CCF is being held from June to September. Through different performing arts programmes in various forms and related extension activities, including selected programmes of the Chinese Opera Festival, exemplary local arts projects recognised by the China National Arts Fund, performing arts programmes from arts and cultural organisations, film screenings, exhibitions, talks and more, the festival allows members of the public and visitors to experience the broad and profound Chinese culture with a view to promoting Chinese culture and patriotic education as well as enhancing national identity amongst the people of Hong Kong, making contributions to the steadfast and successful implementation of "one country, two systems". For details, please visit the CCF website www.ccf.gov.hk.

The LCSD has long been promoting Chinese history and culture through organising an array of programmes and activities to enable the public to learn more about Chinese culture. For more information, please visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/ccpo/index.html.

