



Young musicians from Tianjin Conservatory of Music perform in a previous Chinese Art Schools Week, an event held annually in China. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

CENTER STAGE

Major arts festival to showcase budding performers from schools across the country. **Chen Nan** reports.

Students and teachers from eight major Chinese art schools are set to treat audiences in Beijing to a month of performances including opera classics, dance and drama.

The shows are part of the Spring Flowers and Autumn Fruits — 2017 Chinese Art Schools Week, an art festival offering a platform for the performers at the National Center for the Performing Arts.

From Oct 8 to Nov 7, 11 performances will be staged at the NCPA. The schools taking part include the Beijing Dance Academy, Northeast Normal University and Tianjin Conservatory of Music.

The Spring Flowers and Autumn Fruits — Chinese Art Schools Week was born in 2008, says NCPA vice-president Zhao Tiechun.

So far, nearly 8,000 students and teachers from 21 art schools across the country have participated in the festival and performed in 107 shows, attracting more than 130,000 spectators.

"Ninety-five percent of the shows sold out, proving that audiences are interested in these young artists," says Zhao. "NCPA celebrates its 10th anniversary this year and Spring Flowers and Autumn Fruits — Chinese Art Schools Week is welcoming its 10th year in 2018. This festival is an important event to showcase young artists in Chinese colleges."

This year's festival will see a variety of programs, including traditional Chinese opera, dance, singing and theatrical drama.

Students and teachers from Beijing Opera Art's College will perform in an original Peking Opera, titled *The Teenager Ma Lianliang*, on Oct 14. The opera, which premiered in 2012, follows the story of the late Peking Opera master, Ma Lianliang (1901-66).



Some students from Beijing Film Academy (left), National Academy of Chinese Theater Arts (right), Beijing Opera Art's College (top left), and Northeast Normal University (top right), will test their star appeal at the Chinese Art Schools Week.



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Liu Lan, deputy Party secretary of the Beijing Dance Academy

On Nov 5, students and teachers from the National Academy of Chinese Theater Arts will stage *The Legend of the White Snake* and four other traditional Peking Opera pieces.

Xu Chao, the deputy Party secretary from the National Academy of Chinese Theater Arts, says *The Legend of the White Snake* is a classic piece by Peking Opera master Cheng Yanqiu (1904-58) and it has been revived by the famous Peking Opera actress Zhang Huoding, who is teaching at the National Academy of Chinese Theater Arts.

"Last year, we established a training center led by Zhang Huoding focusing on the Peking Opera techniques of master Cheng. The students under Zhang's guidance will

perform *The Legend of the White Snake* in the upcoming festival," says Xu.

Another one of the five shows is *Chao Jin Ding*, a classic Peking Opera piece known for its martial arts scenes, adds Xu.

"Some of the martial arts movements of *Chao Jin Ding* had long been lost and we spent years finding ways to revive them," says Xu.

About 2,000 students and teachers from the Beijing Dance Academy have performed in Spring Flowers and Autumn Fruits — Chinese Art Schools Week since 2008.

"We take the event as a great opportunity to train the students outside the school and connect them with audiences," says Liu Lan, deputy

Party secretary from the Beijing Dance Academy.

On Oct 10, students will perform in the original dance drama, *Jinggang, Jinggang*.

The dance drama is inspired by the Jinggang Mountains in Jiangxi province, where Mao Zedong established a rural revolutionary base in 1927.

Other festival highlights include drama-major performers from the Beijing Film Academy presenting a Chinese adaptation of the ancient Greek tragedy *Iphigenia in Tauris* by playwright Euripides, and two all-female choirs from Shenyang Conservatory of Music and Xinghai Conservatory of Music.

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Students raise funds for cause

By ZHANG ZEFENG
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In June, Sichuan University student Xu Bin and his teammates drafted business plans and organized working groups to "target" customers among fellow students and faculty members.

Their sales tactics paid off — in just two days, Xu's team sold around 455,100 yuan (\$69,000) of cosmetic products. The feat was part of an annual on-campus event called the L'Oreal Campus Charity Sales.

On Sept 21, an award ceremony for the campaign rolled out at Shanghai's Fudan University. Student groups from 15 Chinese universities, including Peking University, Nanjing University and Shanghai International Studies University, together raised around 5.7 million yuan for the event.

Xu's team won the top sales award.

"This is a great opportunity to practice business," says the 20-year-old marketing major.

"It allows business students like us to work on real projects without walking out of the campus."

Initiated by L'Oreal China and the China Youth Development Foundation, the event aims to raise money to help students in western China. All proceeds go toward educational purposes, according to the organizers.

The event attracted students from different majors to showcase their talent. Shi Yihong, 20, who studies teaching Chinese as a foreign language at Zhejiang University, says she worked with a very diverse team.

"We had members from different departments getting together to contribute to our business strategies," she says. "It also helped us to view a much larger market."

Shi used her field of expertise and developed advertisements in English and Korean to target international students on campuses. The team raked in about 382,000 yuan in total.

The students also found out that schoolmates from different countries and two all-female choirs from Shenyang Conservatory of Music and Xinghai Conservatory of Music.

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A team from Sichuan University wins the top sales award in an annual on-campus charity event. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

videos to "redefine" perceptions.

In the past, some would associate fair skin with beauty, but that perception is changing, Shi says.

"Actually, identifying your own unique qualities and respecting others who are different from you is also a form of beauty."

Many others say they have gained valuable experience and positive influences from the event.

Fudan University alumnus Wang Xingyu says participating in the campus sales potentially altered his career path. In 2014, Wang's team broke the sales record and won the first place. That achievement brought him a lot of confidence.

"Even though my specialty was international politics, the experience made me think about trying something beyond my field," says Wang, 25.

He later furthered his studies at New York University and spent a year working for a New York-based incubator and angel investor for various projects.

In June, Wang returned to China and set up a social enterprise called Village Note, focusing on tourism-based poverty elimination projects.

The company plans to take students to poverty-stricken regions to carry out social research. It has also been working on setting up writing camps to offer students creative writing lessons involving Chinese literary destinations such as Fenghuang county in Hunan province, home to famous writer Shen Congwen.

Wang says the campus activity made him understand that charity "isn't all about donating money or books. You can actually use commercial models to do philanthropy."

This year is the 15th year of the L'Oreal Campus Charity Sales. Since its launch in 2003, the activity has covered 26 universities from 17 cities.

"Over the past 15 years, we've witnessed groups of students participating in charity sales, harvesting new business ideas and entering society with love and responsibility," says L'Oreal China's vice-president Lan Zhenhen.



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