

OPENING CEREMONY



The Nanjing Youth Olympic Games' cauldron is lit during the opening ceremony on Saturday. PHOTO BY WEI XIAOHAO / CHINA DAILY

BY THE NUMBERS

261,000 kg

Weight of the crane used in the aerial performance

7,200 kW

Estimated total power load

4,330 kW

Power load for the lighting and projection equipment

2,500

Number of computer-programmed lighting devices

2,000 meters

Total length of cables used

1,600

Number of fireworks set off

800

sq m  
Area of the ground projection screen

304

Number of LAX loudspeaker boxes used in audio system

168

people  
Hoisting capacity for aerial stunts

130 m by 78 m

Dimensions of ground projection screen

112

Number of large-scale projectors used

50

Number of technical support staff on standby for aerial safety

# Starting with a big bang

By SUN XIAOCHEN

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Despite a sudden downpour, the opening ceremony of the Nanjing Youth Olympic Games provided a warm welcome to more than 3,000 athletes from around the world on Saturday night.

A crowd of more than 60,000 applauded and chanted when fireworks lit up the sky over the Nanjing Olympic Sports Center Stadium, marking the beginning of the ceremony at 8:00 pm.

Following a short parade of delegations, which saw each National Olympic Committee represented by one athlete, Li Xueyong, president of the Nanjing Youth Olympic

Games Organizing Committee, and Thomas Bach, International Olympic Committee president, delivered speeches.

"Nanjing, ni hao! China, ni hao!" Bach told the crowd.

"This is your moment. Young athletes please join me, get your smartphones out and let's set a record of selfies. You are sending a strong message to the world about sharing, learning and making friends. Enjoy your Games," Bach said.

President Xi Jinping then declared the Games open, which drew overwhelming cheers and great applause in the packed stadium.

Featuring the theme of pursuing, building and fulfilling dreams, the

opening ceremony performance, dubbed "Light Up the Future", started with a boy actor holding an armillary sphere, an astronomy instrument invented in ancient China, to inspire the modern youth to learn from history and reach for the stars as they explore their future.

A giant model of the telescope emitted rays to kick off a series of shows, which combined group performances and films projected on the stadium's screen, to highlight ancient Chinese culture and civilization.

Chinese characters, bronze ware and blue-and-white porcelain as well as Yunjin brocade, a Nanjing local silk product, were highlighted before another performance focused on the

Silk Road, the ancient trade route that connected China and Europe.

After the performance, Six Olympic champions, including badminton great Lin Dan, short-track speed skater Zhou Yang and ping-pong champion Zhang Jike, carried the Nanjing YOG torch into the stadium, completing the final six legs of the relay.

Chen Ruolin, the Olympic champion diver, lit the cauldron in an impressive display.

In the finale, Chinese singers Zhang Liangying and Zhang Jie, South Korean star Kim Soo-hyun and Russian artist Molgun Galia sang the theme song, bringing the ceremony to a rousing conclusion.

WHAT THEY SAID

What amazed me most was the performance by the kids from Tagou Martial Arts School. It was the first time I had seen martial arts performed so high, with the young kids hoisted up in the air, upside down and for so long, doing all those aerobatics. And there was the rain as well. It was beyond astonishing.

ZHU YINYIN, 28-YEAR-OLD NANJING RESIDENT

The show is all about visual impact, which is consistent with the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics. The show is a 10 out of 10.

ZHANG SHUGUANG, WHO WORKS FOR A PUBLISHING HOUSE IN NANJING.

It was the first time I had seen an opening ceremony in the rain. They still got all the spectacular acts and pageantry done despite the downpour. It was clever how

the director blended the cultural heritage of the former capital into the singing and dancing, for example the porcelain dancers. But the makeup of the kids was way too much. It made them look less adorable.

LYU PU, A CIVIL SERVANT WORKING IN NANJING

Amazing. The performances were flawless and definitely a feast for a midsummer night. However, the costumes were

kind of from the last century. FENG HUI, NANJING RESIDENT

The telescope show and the blue-and-white porcelain show perfectly brought out Nanjing's rich cultural heritage. What was really impressive was that the show was not at all impacted by the rain; thumbs up to the actors and actresses.

ZHANG XIUPING, A SPORTS REPORTER