

MUSETEENS REPORT

An Extraordinary Experience



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Form 4

INTRODUCTION

During the summer holidays, four of us joined the Museteens 2016. The programme was organized by the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, for teenagers in Hong Kong who are interested in heritage and culture, and are willing to promote them to other individuals. It was a valuable experience and we learnt a lot from it. In this report, we write mainly of our experiences and memories on these workshops, talks and the internship of the whole Museteens 2016 programme.

Highlights: Workshop

Workshops were an integral part of the Museteens, as they allowed us a glimpse into the actual workings of heritage and conservation in action. One of those workshops was a tutorial on making frames to place photographs in. Our group made the frames with gypsum powder (calcium sulphate dihydrate). After the powder was solidified, we painted a shiny and bright gold colour on the surface. Though only gold paint was used, different groups created their own variations of the frames. For instance, a group tried to use newspapers to create three-dimensional patterns, whilst another group created a unique texture.

Another workshop saw us learning methods on preserving artefacts. In our case, we learnt through interacting with actual collections of the museum, though limited to various posters, photos, clothes and wine bottles. What is preservation? It is to keep something as it is, especially in order to prevent it from decaying or being damaged or destroyed. We learnt how to best place the posters into the containers, clothes on the hangers, photos in the albums and lastly wine bottles into the containers. Through this workshop, we finally experienced heritage conservation. We all had great fun and learnt how museums preserved their artefacts.

Finally, we had a drawing workshop hosted by a famous Chinese artist. The most enjoyable part was that we could see our fellow, Daniel being invited to draw in front of all Museteens.



Heritage

One of the main objectives of the programme was to let students know more about preservation. The workshops gave us insight in its actual workings. With us learning appropriate ways to handle artefacts, we felt the importance of history and heritage; even the most unassuming poster had to be treated with great care, like a fragile ceramic piece. After the “artefacts preserving” workshop, we finally understood the seriousness of respecting heritage, and its contribution in making our society stand out from others.

Highlights: Talks

The talks were based on various topics. For instance, there were talks about Cantonese Drama, Modern Art, Chinese Paintings and Traditional Arts, and also talks on the daily operation of the museum and how to be a tour guide. Did you know that there are actually a lot of exhibits stored inside the warehouse of the museum? We would not have known this had we not attended the talk on how the museum operated! We got to know different parts of the museum, namely the warehouse, the data and resources centre, the office, the concierge and also the exhibition halls. Apart from this, we also learned that there are different units in the museum. For example, there is a counter and services unit which is responsible for communications and correspondences with visitors and guests, and responding to their questions.

We learnt a lot from the other talks as well, such as the talk about Cantonese Opera. Once the dominant form of entertainment in Hong Kong, this tradition has become relatively obscure amongst teenagers nowadays. Through the talk, we knew more on why and how Cantonese Opera gained such popularity comparable to Hollywood blockbusters of today. We learnt that the masks and costumes the actors don complement their respective roles. For example, the characters involved in action scenes would wear clothes that stretch more readily. For the generals, they would have flags stuck onto their backs.



Highlights: Internship

After participating in a series of training programmes including workshops and talks, we were required to finish an 8-hour internship. There were various internship activities for us to choose from, such as leading children to walk around the Children's Discovery Gallery and organizing "The Joy of Country Cooking" for children. This gave us the opportunity to put our knowledge acquired during the training programme into practice. From the internship, we gained valuable experiences in communicating and taking care of children. Museteens was intended to raise awareness of conserving endangered cultures, especially among teenagers. And now it is our responsibility to pass this precious culture to our next generation.



Highlights: Others

In addition to the above highlights, there were visits for us to broaden our horizons. We visited Tai Po Kau Nature Reserve. We saw lots of plants and insects and experienced mother nature. We understood the preciousness of life and learnt to respect the rules of mother nature, knowing how powerless us humans can become. The trip was a great opportunity for us to reflect on our ways of living and our attitudes towards environmental protection.

We also visited the Resource Centre in the Heritage Museum. We saw multiple collections which were under repair and restoration. We learnt of the immense time and effort gone into setting up an exhibition, and have become more respectful towards the staff in the Museum ever since. Without them, the museum would definitely not be able to function well and no one would be able to teach the visitors of Hong Kong's unique heritage and culture.



CONCLUSION

The whole programme brought us plenty of valuable experiences and learning opportunities which could not be taught in an ordinary classroom. The entire programme broadened our horizons greatly. It attracted our interest in exploring the heritage and culture from different perspectives. We found ourselves more aware and interested in exploring heritage and culture through various mediums. Heritage is not limited by size, shape or form: it does not necessarily have to be a piece of artwork, a poem or an exhibit. Every photograph is a reflection of culture, be it of the subject or of the influences and thoughts of the photographer. In fact, culture is everywhere but sometimes we may not be aware of it.

As “Museteens”, we think it is really important to protect our heritage and culture, and make them available for future generations. We are very enthused and proud to be chosen as “Museteens”. We would like to express our gratitude to the staff who organized such a meaningful, enjoyable, and insightful programme for us!