

文化新人類計劃 2018 (Museteens)

Introduction

The Museteens programme has been organised for over 10 years, and aims to spark teenagers' interest in history, art, and design. It allows participants to broaden their horizons through participating in different exhibitions, talks, workshops and so on held by the Hong Kong heritage museum.

Interview

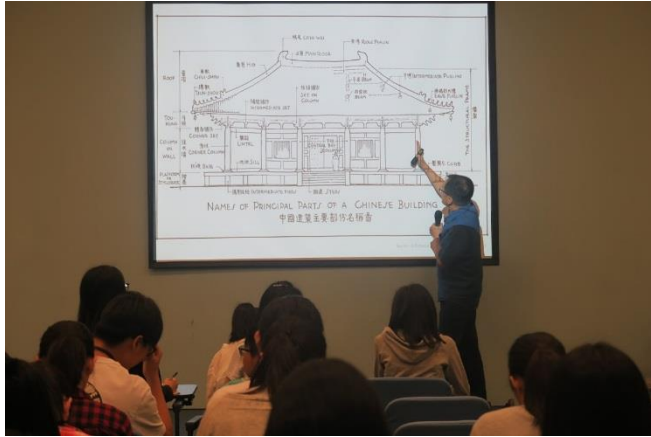
The selection process included an interview. Interviewees were chosen by an internal vote among the organisers. The interviewers gave us a cultural/historical artefact, before asking us questions about it. We had to describe its history, background, and our own thoughts about it. I was fortunate to pass the interview and became one of sixty students in this year's programme.

Exhibitions

T.T. Tsui Gallery of Chinese Art

Dr. Tsui established the gallery by donating over 700 pieces from his private collection to the Hong Kong Heritage Museum. The collection included China products, bronze, pottery sculptures and ceramics. These antiquities are displayed according to different aspects of life in the past: Food, entertainment, animals, and religion. We could see clear differences in the design of these exhibits between different eras. We also had a special opportunity to have a docent (specialised guide) to introduce exhibits to us, an experience seldom offered to regular visitors. Through their in-depth explanations, I understood more about the specialties and cultural differences across different dynasties.





Cantonese Opera Heritage Hall

Students today rarely choose to get into Cantonese opera, mainly because we now have much less exposure to it. In the past, most people went to opera houses at night as entertainment instead of watching TV. There are lots of costumes donated by famous opera singers, with outrageous and shiny golden decorations. The docent also introduced us to some classic and well-known operas, including 《六國大封相》, and she let us see the costumes of a famous Chinese opera actress, 鳳凰女. We were all astounded by the ornaments she had to use. As a Chinese citizen and a History student, I think we should be more aware of our nation's traditions and learn or research it, instead of becoming increasingly addicted to video games, cell phones and apps like Instagram or Facebook.



Workshops

Unlike previous years, the programme hosted multiple art workshops this year, instead of only guiding students around the museum and explaining exhibits to them. Some workshops were even held by professors from different universities. They taught us a lot of useful information about historical buildings like the Great Wall of China and the Imperial Palaces of Beijing. Different statuses and posts in the palace are reflected by differences in their architecture, their decorations, and the artworks inside. For instance, the dragon sewed on the emperor's clothes and the ornaments in the emperor's palace must be a golden dragon, with a total of five claws on each hand. After the professor's speech, we made our own artwork of the Forbidden City, like a model of the 太和殿 or a lantern decorated with dragons.



Internships

After the 11-day course, the museum gave us the opportunity of being a trainee docent. We had a six-hour internship to test our leadership skills and the knowledge we had learnt. A nearby kindergarten was visiting the museum, and we were their guides, which was a big challenge for my teammates and me. Though I was exhausted after leading the kindergarteners around the Children Discovery Gallery, the experience brought me immense happiness. The internship has not only given me sweet memories, but also taught me how to face challenges and the responsibility of being a leader of a small group of people. I was delighted that my words and guidance could pass the knowledge to the kids clearly.

Conclusion

To conclude, this programme has become a turning point for me. It broadened my horizons on our culture and history, and improved my self-confidence. I also made some new, like-minded friends after the programme, and I really enjoyed having conversations with them. These experiences cannot be taught and found during normal classes. I did not like art before, but after the programme, I now understand that art is not only about different techniques or colours, it also records a person's history or a period of history.

I wanted to express my sincere gratitude to the Integrated Humanities Department, especially Miss Flora Wong, for her nomination and support to let me attend such a meaningful programme. I am so proud and delightful to be one of the 'Museteens'!

