

1st Place

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Chinese Opera—A resplendent pearl of the 5000-year-old dragon

Chinese Opera can be traced to the Tang Dynasty, which can be divided into several styles, such as Peking Opera, Kun Opera and Cantonese Opera. Chinese opera not only includes singing, but also contains dance and kung fu. With special stories and excellent moves, Chinese opera has been popular since the Song Dynasty. Nowadays, with the emergence of different kinds of music, Chinese opera can hardly attract adolescents. This leads the opera spiral into predicament. However, should we just let the art disappear without any attention given to it?

No matter how difficult it is, we should not let Chinese Opera die out. In September, 2009, this art was inscribed onto UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, which improves the value of Chinese opera. It is worth preserving. Being an invaluable intangible cultural heritage of a 5000-year-old country, Chinese opera contains abundant cultural deposits. On the platform of Chinese Opera, we can watch all kinds of operas such as legends of heroes, history operas and romantic operas. It records our history and shows the beauty of our culture. As a result, I cannot find a reason to abandon this art.

On the other hand, Chinese Opera can increase our “soft” power and increase our citizens’ sense of belonging. As we know, Cantonese Opera has been inscribed onto the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This means that we can prompt this to the whole world. In the last few decades, there are increasing number of foreigners who want to come to China and learn Chinese Opera. This not only shows people our amazing culture, but also promotes our tourist trade. As Chinese Opera is both flourishing and gaining popularity in the whole world, it is anticipated that our teenagers will be proud of it. Therefore, we are obligated to preserve this art form.

In order to encourage more teenagers to know more about Chinese Opera, we can organize stage performance in elementary and secondary schools. Take our school as an example, we can schedule some talks given by Cantonese opera actors. If there are more opportunities to know more about this art, students may have a desire to acquire more knowledge about it. There can be talks which show students the beauty of Chinese Opera, more students would pick up this hobby. If schools have the money, I suggest they can send their students to watch a live performance in Cultural Centre in Tsim Sha Tsui. They can also invite performers to share their experience with students. Besides education, there is another way to promote the art. That is the internet. In the mainland, there is an increasing number of youths who would like to keep this art alive. They use Tiktok to capture their performance and share it with the world. The majority of songs on Tiktok include elements of Chinese opera. Undoubtedly, this performing art is extremely beautiful and attractive. The blending of the elements of modern music and Chinese opera can make the song sound more amazing. They are potentially popular and it reflects that the internet is a good platform to attract the general public. It is suggested that people or KOL can invite famous performers to film a video related to Chinese Opera, like how they learn to sing, act, dance and do the acrobatic fight. Or we can interview the actors and introduce the elements of Chinese opera to the public. At the end of the video, KOL can tell the audience the challenges faced by the performers and encourage those who are interesting to sign up the classes offered by LCSD.

Since this intangible cultural heritage has been around for more than one thousand years, it is a gem to all mankind. Chinese opera is a pearl of both art and poem. It attracts vision from worldwide. We have to protect it. A decade ago, teenagers thought that it is a useless old-fashioned show. However, I hope in the next decade, they will think it is a gift from our forefather. We should not let it disappear.