

As one of the most important culture heritage in China, Imperial Examination was occupied only by literate male for 1300 years during the history. As a museum which constructed in the site of imperial examination hall, we continually work on the diversity and inclusion. Inspired by a novel written in classical Chinese which telling the legendary story of the female champion Little Hill, we have proposed to hold a series events on the topic of museums for equality this year (include a exhibition of the works of female artist, an invited exhibition for art installation, a series panel discussions etc.). Due to the influence of coronavirus, most of the activities could not be achieved in time. So I decided to separate them in different inter-dependant units, that is to say, I intend to realize the most possible part first with my team, and finish the other parts step by step.

In doing so, cooperated with a modern dance team of young people(the leader is a student from Sarah Lawrence College with LGBTQIA Redefine leadership track), by the way, most of them are the students who study in foreign countries and forced to come back under the influence of epidemic, meanwhile several professional musicians for a classical Chinese opera----*Kunqu*, we successful displayed a very inspired program named *Records of Flower in the Mirror*, and Flower in the Mirror is also the name of the novel which mentioned above. Most fortunately, this program is sponsored by ICOM-DEMHIST special projects grant.

The program adopted the form of immersion theatre which guides the visitors to explore in the open space of our museum; the main stage was set up near the archway of ancient eminent literate family. In fact, with the auditorium at the other side, this space was created at first for the performance when the body of new museum was been built, but this time is the first time it was been used for this function. The structure of the content adopted the form of Matryoshka doll, that is to say, one story comes from another and one story makes another story, at the intermission of every stage/story, the stage of performance also changed, which means the view of audience changed as well.

It's the first time we give a modern dance performance in the museum of our city Nanjing with the historical buildings as stage and background, furthermore, the combination of *Kunqu* is another innovation. *Kunqu* is one of the famous forms of opera in China whose origin could track back to 600 years ago in Jiangnan region which the principle city is Nanjing, the libretto of this opera was usually written by literate and for the literate, and the music of the opera is also very unique and poetic. This opera listed as Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible heritage of Humanity by UNESCO. As the modern building and historical part of our museum has an internal corresponding relationship, the modern dance performance inspired by classical literature also has a corresponding relationship with *kunqu*. During the design, we found that only display the two in the same stage is not enough, there must be a dialogue. So we renounced the vocal part of the opera, just use the instrumental part, which means bamboo flute, pi-pa and small drum, which do not viewed as a main body of the performance but a suitable regulator. That is to say, the dance performance plays the Yang part, and the instrumental performance plays the Yin part, and both of the two formed a unity. This is also the first time we present a new form of interpretation of our cultural heritage. The instrumental performance was operated by some young musicians, and mentored by two celebrated art master Mr. Wang Jiannong, the concertmaster of bamboo flute of *Kunqu* Opera Group of Jiangsu Province and Mr. Shen Yang, the first drum player of *Kunqu* Opera Group of Jiangsu Province. For the art director who in charge of communication of the two parts, we invited Dr Dou Xiaozhi, who got her master degree at University of Leicester and hold a successful kunqu exhibition in Cambridge UK during her period of visiting scholarship.

The performance was held from 24th July and 26th July, 2020 with a very successful opening ceremony and brotherhood/Sisterhood closing banquet. As another innovation for transmission, we didn't invite any public media, and rely only on the self recommendation by the audience themselves through the We media and received a phenomenal opinion.

Professor Lv Xiaoping, former Vice-president of Dramatist Association of Jiangsu Province evaluated this program as very successful which combined well the theme, space and performance. Mr Shi Jin, Vice-president of Dramatist Association of Nanjing, encouraged cultivates more art innovation through such kind of corporation and Mr. Gao Yijian, President of Chinese Culture Promotion Association of Jiangsu, praise the young artistes as a new vitality for the art circles, and present a very touching speech. During the three days, the program attracted more than 600 audiences and someone of them came from the nearby city like Shanghai and Suzhou.

After the performance, the program is far from over. First, we invited a young curator to write a review for the performance and will publish on the *Journal of Imperial Examination Culture*. Secondly, we will make some revision and adjustment, to make the performance as a regular on-site program. Third, we will attract more artist group to display their idea in the stage of museum, and promote the university student especially the student of drama and performance art to involve more in the culture activities of our museum. Last but not least, we also welcome every kinds of corporation in the structure of DEMHIST, in other word, to encourage communication and exchange between museums who devoted to diversity and inclusive, exchange performance resources, exchange performance program in the museum and promote a on cloud interaction.

Thanks again for the support from board of DEMHIST. Well begun is half done, now I am busy on curate a contemporary photography exhibition for two female artistes in another art space of our city. Next month I will organize a symposium on the topic of gender and feminism. I do hope to give some more breeze, some more fresh air to the culture atmosphere of our community and make a historical museum as a stage of voice-up for the young generation.

Imperial Examination Museum of China

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