Met helps kids celebrate New Year

2018-02-26

By Zhang Ruinan in New York |   
 China Daily USA |  
 Updated: 2018-02-26 14:05

Making hand-pulled noodles, drawing dragon masks, creating shadow puppets and painting Chinese fans, children took part in a Chinese Lunar New Year Celebration at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City on Saturday.  
It's the ninth year that the Met has hosted an annual Chinese Spring Festival. This year the theme celebrates the Year of the Dog.  
Although the festival features dozens of engaging programs for visitors of all ages, New York's children are the most active participants in a variety of activities, especially the hands-on kind.  
"I learned how to draw a dragon mask and paint a Chinese fan, I think it's very interesting and I'm looking forward to next year's celebration," said 10-year-old Tom who was showing off his mask to his parents.  
"It's meant for people from all different backgrounds, but we are hoping to find something that has more traditional Chinese aspects, because I'm Chinese so I want to find some more authentic Chinese experience for my kids; that's why we came today," said Elena, the mother of two Chinese-American children who were learning fan painting.  
"I'm glad to see my kids having a great time while being exposed to traditional Chinese culture. It's a good effort," she said.  
The museum's education department hosted the festival, and all of the programs were free with a museum general admission pass.  
"The festival is designed to bring people together and build awareness of Asian culture. We've been doing this for over nine years - it's becoming an annual tradition," said Sandra Jackson-Dumont, the museum's chairman for education.  
Before each performance, a presentation put the work in its cultural context, she explained. "It's not only about celebrating and honoring the Chinese Lunar New Year, it's also our mission to bring people together to learn about other cultures," she added.  
"I'm African American, my kids are here, my husband is here, and you can see our visitors are people with different backgrounds, so it's all about how people from different cultures come together and appreciate each other," Jackson-Dumont added.  
"Today we are celebrating the Lunar New Year, and the Year of the Dog. We are having all kinds of art-making performances, activities for families, for adult visitors, to celebrate Asian art and culture," said William Crow, managing museum educator.  
"It's really to help people know that arts and culture is something that happens everyday, and museums are places where you can not only witness arts and culture but you can also participate in arts and culture from all over the world," Crow said.  
"It's very exciting for both my kids and myself as well. We are here to learn different cultures, and we are interested in the Chinese culture," said Vernette Sexius, whose family was visiting New York.  
The six-hour festival also featured a traditional Chinese dragon dance and musical performances.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201802/26/WS5a93a3aca3106e7dcc13e1d3.html