

Title:

The Chinese New Year Spectacular Will Not Fail to Impress

Word Count:

539

Summary:

The Chinese New Year Spectacular is a veritable feast of music, drama and dance that will fill a void in the hearts of the Chinese diaspora, many of whom, since Mao's destructive Cultural Revolution, are no longer aware of what their true culture is. But you don't have to be Chinese to enjoy the spectacular....

Keywords:

Chinese new year, spectacular, Chinese culture, ntdtv, china, music, dance, cultural revolution, myth, legend

Article Body:

As far as Chinese New Year's entertainment goes, New Tang Dynasty Television's Chinese New Year Spectacular is a relatively new kid on the block, having made its debut only three years ago. It can't be described as a variety show, and it's not really a Broadway musical, but it is different to anything else out there.

Before I attended the Spectacular's Canadian debut in Vancouver last month, I had some idea of what to expect, because my Chinese friends were raving about it, plus I had read some promotional materials put out by NTDTV. What they're attempting to do with this traveling show is revive the true Chinese culture which was destroyed by Chairman Mao and his communist successors.

Good old Mao razed temples, burned ancient manuscripts, tortured and killed intellectuals, monks, and anyone else he didn't like. To add insult to injury, he made everyone wear black pyjamas. During his reign, counting famines and everything else, Mao directly or indirectly managed to slaughter more people than the two world wars put together.

Nowadays, the communist party of China uses the Chinese New Year, the biggest celebration of the year for the Chinese, as a way to glorify itself and promote the communist philosophy of fight and class struggle. But Chinese Central TV's four-hour Spring Festival Gala of acrobatics, conjuring acts and comedy skits pales in comparison the Spectacular's elegant portrayal of the best of China's ancient culture.

In other words, it is traditional Chinese culture without the communist rhetoric, which must be a refreshing change for the Chinese—many of whom are no longer aware of what their true culture is, especially those born after the Great Cultural Revolution.

It was refreshing for me, too, but not for that reason. On the morning of the Spectacular, I woke up depressed—an unusual state for me. I didn't even feel like going at all, but I talked myself into it. As I became absorbed in the unusual music, the myriad of colours, the graceful movements of the dancers, I started feeling uplifted. There was a purity about the show, something immaculate and flawless, that made a deep impression on me.

If I have a complaint at all, it would be that there was only one number played by erhuist Xi Xiaochun. The piece she played was so haunting and beautiful that the audience was riveted for every second of it. The erhu is an ancient two-stringed instrument that can produce an amazingly wide range of notes. Apparently, Chinese music aligns with nature in that it is based on the five elements of metal, wood, water, fire and earth.

The theme of the Spectacular is "Myths and Legends," and some of the acts draw on ancient legends from the time of Buddha, Dao and Confucius—those wise beings from way back in China's 5,000-year history who taught compassion, virtue and selflessness. China's semi-divine culture comes through in the performances, leaving one with a wonderful feeling of... righteousness.

So, go to the Spectacular, and treat yourself to a unique experience. If you're unable attend the live show, just contact NTDTV and they'll send you a video.