

# The 10th China Art Festival brings culture to the public

By **JU CHUANJIANG**  
and **ZHAO RUIXUE**

**2,000**  
performances  
during the festival

**9.8**  
billion yuan

invested in construction and renovation of facilities related to culture and the arts.

For Li Zhichen, a Jinan local in his 30s, the opening ceremony of the 10th China Art Festival in Shandong province exceeded expectations.

"I thought it would last at least one and a half hours, but it was only some 15 minutes," Li said.

The opening ceremony was followed by a traditional Chinese local opera named *People's Secretary*, one of the 87 shows (including operas, dances, musical dramas, plays, and puppet) that are expected to be staged during the art festival.

Those shows will also compete for the Wenhua Award, the top arts award granted to professional performers by China's ministry of culture.

"The show was so touching that I was not able to hold back tears. It made the opening ceremony very impressive," Li said.

The ongoing art festival, which closes on Oct 26, features 600 organizations from China and abroad.

It includes some 2,000 performances, such as symphony orchestras, dances, musicals, operas and ballets.

Some 350 of them will compete for the Qunxing Award, granted to amateur artists by China's ministry of culture.

A total of 150 art exhibitions will be held during the festival at which spectators can view renowned works by Leonardo da Vinci as well as European and American painters.

Held every two or three years since 1987, the China Art Festival has developed into the most comprehensive high-end art event in China, according to its organizing committee.

"The festival has become a grand gathering that allows artists to display China's spirit and strength, which has contributed

to the prosperity of the nation's traditional culture over the past 26 years," President Xi Jinping was quoted as saying in a letter at the opening ceremony.

Xi hopes the festival will be a "carnival of arts and a festival for all".

Cai Wu, minister of culture, said the festival combines traditional and modern arts. It also combines Eastern and Western traditions.

"When a country prospers, arts will blossom," Cai said.

Guo Shuqing, governor of Shandong, said at the opening ceremony that the province will spare no efforts to stage a fantastic art gala.

## Grassroots art

The ongoing art festival has benefited city dwellers and residents of rural areas alike, organizers said.

Local farmer Wang Haijian said that many touring art troupes have performed in his town in recent years.

"I enjoy the performances very much, and it diversifies my life," Wang Ying said.

Zhang Ying did not realize she had a gift for singing Lvju, a traditional local opera, until she was invited to try by an art troupe, the native of a county-level city in Qingdao said.

"The opera has enriched my life. I won't miss any operas as



Women perform a traditional dance during the 10th China Art Festival.

PHOTOS BY JU CHUANJIANG / CHINA DAILY

long as they (opera performers) perform here," Zhang said, adding there are also other cultural activities, such as dances and films.

The local government of Shandong is also working hard to boost cultural and artistic industries.

In the past three years, more than 50,000 cultural activities have been held in schools, villages, communities as well as public squares in urban and rural areas across the province.

More than 20,000 tickets for performances and exhibitions are distributed for free to people like migrant workers and those with physical disabilities.

More than 59,000 cultural hubs and 60,000 reading rooms have been built at rural areas.

Shandong has invested 9.8

billion yuan in construction and renovation of the culture and art facilities.

Those include 16 culture and art facilities such as museums and theatres.

One of them is the 5.65-billion-yuan Shandong Culture and Art Center, where the opening ceremony was held.

Covering an area of 32 hectares, the complex features a theater, a gallery, a museum, a cinema, shopping malls, as well as facilities for the creative industry.

The Shandong government has signed a contract with the China Performing Arts Agency to guarantee there will be at least 280 performances staged in the giant center every year.

The province spent 280 million yuan to cultivate cultural



Visitors appreciate paintings at an art show held during the festival.

works during the past three years.

The move has created more than 1,100 grassroots cultural projects and 62 excellent operas, musicals and dramas. There are

39 nominated artists to compete for Qunxing Award at the 16-day festival, making Shandong on the top list among all the participating provinces, municipalities and autonomous

regions, according to the local government.

Contact the writers at [juchuanjiang@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:juchuanjiang@chinadaily.com.cn) and [zhaoruixue@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:zhaoruixue@chinadaily.com.cn)