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Promoting Arts Education to Enrich Leisure Life

Aims of the Macao Society for Education in Art

We always hear the saying “to rest is to prepare for a longer journey ahead”. In other words, the purpose of the short break after work, the two days off during weekends, and the winter and summer holidays is to nourish our mind, and allow our exhausted body to take a short break and relax.

Teachers of Macao, are the important human resources to promote school operation. They must engage in teaching and research. In order to teach new curriculum, they not only have to acquire the knowledge of related fields, but also have to make use of leisure time to gather information and prepare for the lessons. Moreover, they need to compile teaching materials and design multiple assessment tools so as to make their teaching more interesting and informative. Besides, it is also necessary for teachers to take part in administrative work and student activities. Therefore, being a teacher is a demanding task, whether in physical or mental sense. As teachers have to repeat the same trivial tasks year after year, they may feel bored, weary, alienated and even tired of their job. If they make use of their free time to participate in leisure activities conducive to personal growth, they not only can relax their body and mind, but also relieve the pressure from work and prevent occupational burnout.

The Macao Society for Education in Art (hereinafter referred to as “M.S.E.A.”) aims to promote local arts education, enhance the quality of the general public, unite local arts educators and institutions, care for the development of arts education, and improve the professionalism of arts education. Every year, M.S.E.A. gathers a group of arts teachers to develop their artistic expertise. It has held various activities, including “Snow Ball Art Education Project – Full Contact with 3D Visual Art for Secondary Students” organised by the Outer Harbour Youth Activity Centre of the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau and co-organised by M.S.E.A.; arts education exchange activities; irregular exhibitions of visual arts works by members of M.S.E.A., artistic creation experience sharing sessions and other seminars, etc. Members joining these activities include full-time arts teachers, local artists and undergraduate students majoring in arts or design. They also cooperate with M.S.E.A. to help with its activities, thus their leisure life can also be enriched.

Promoting Arts Education

Take a look at the 24 hours we have every day. Besides the time we spend on rest, the remaining time are allocated to work and leisure activities. Most people hold the view that one should be proactive when working, whereas leisure should be restful and relaxing. Thus, work and leisure are believed to be at two extremes. According to the traditional point of view, work represents virtue, diligence, frugality, thriftiness, and cherishing one’s good fortune. However, there is a wide variety of

leisure activities, such as watching television, surfing on the internet, singing karaoke, playing computer games, travelling, etc. All these recreational activities are very tempting, which could directly affect teachers to participate in wholesome leisure activities. Therefore, the main reason for teachers’ failure to participate in leisure activities is their “values concerning time allocation”. Thus, when organising leisure activities, the major concern should be the schedules of teachers. Currently, teachers do not show strong interests in joining leisure activities of arts education or artistic creation. It means that not every teacher can engage in seemingly overlapping leisure education. This phenomenon also highlights the difficulties of promoting teachers to participate arts education or artistic creation as a leisure activity. Except for the new leisure activities mentioned above, heavy workload at school, long working hours, failure to coordinate their leisure time with that of their companions or family, too much housework, having to take care of their children, etc. also contribute to teachers’ lack of time to participate in leisure education.

Nurturing People with Aesthetic Education and Returning to the Origin of Arts

The most paradoxical thing about arts education and artistic creation lies in the fact that the original purpose of education and creation will be lost if arts education and artistic creation become a money making tool. However, arts education must satisfy the basic social needs in order to be more practical. In addition, only through the existing conditions and the environment of formal schools can arts education have the opportunity to develop and prove its value. Imagine this relationship as a chain. When this chain of interest is hidden or broken, no matter how arts teachers are keen on art education, they will also detest it. In fact, the ultimate goal of teachers who truly love arts is to have abundant time to devote themselves to arts education, personal creation and personal development in their fields of arts, so as to become a teacher good at both arts and education. Therefore, how to seize opportunities and develop themselves in the realistic environment, and how to strike a chord with other teachers to make them enjoy teaching arts and artistic creation are in fact the greatest challenges ever posed to arts educators in order to test their wisdom. Only when the original teaching philosophy of arts education is maintained or the value of arts is created can the benefits of leisure activities be truly achieved. However, it is very difficult to achieve this in formal education. As in a class of over 40 students, there are only two to three students who like arts lessons and over 90% of them do not show any interests. Hence,

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“教育暨青年局2014年馬年利是封”換領辦法：

市民只需以一種顏色的印花於2014年1月20日至1月30日在辦公時間內前往下列地點換領馬年利是封2包，數量有限，換完即止。
印花刊載於2013年11月至2014年1月期間出版的《百分百家長》和《教育文摘》2本刊物內。

Troca de envelopes de laisi da DSEJ do Ano do Cavalo 2014:

Para obter os envelopes de laisi da DSEJ, do Ano do Cavalo 2014, os cidadãos necessitam apenas de reunir os selos, de qualquer cor, contidos em duas publicações - Pais 100% e Educação e Nós - editadas entre Novembro de 2013 e Janeiro de 2014 e trocá-los por envelopes de laisi, dentro do horário de expediente, entre os dias 20 e 30 de Janeiro de 2014, nos locais abaixo mencionados. Um selo de qualquer cor pode ser trocado por dois (2) pacotes de envelopes. A quantidade de pacotes para troca é limitada, pelo que termina quando estes se esgotarem.

Method of obtaining DSEJ's red envelopes for the Year of the Horse 2014:

To obtain DSEJ's red envelopes for the Year of the Horse 2014, residents only need to collect the stamp from any of the 2 periodicals of DSEJ – the “100% Parents” and the “Education Digest”- published between November 2013 and January 2014 and exchange the stamp for the red envelopes at the following locations during office hours from 20th to 30th January 2014. One stamp of any colour can be exchanged for 2 packs of red envelopes. Limited red envelopes are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

換領地點資料如下：

教育暨青年局 (DSEJ) —地點：澳門約翰四世大馬路7-9號一樓；辦公時間：星期一至四上午9時至中午1時，下午2時30分至5時45分；星期五上午9時至中午1時，下午2時30分至5時30分；聯絡電話：28555533

教育資源中心 (CRE) —地點：澳門南灣大馬路926號；辦公時間：星期一至五上午10時30分至晚上7時，星期六上午10時30分至下午5時40分；聯絡電話：83959200

氹仔教育活動中心 (CAET) —地點：氹仔濠景花園24至26座地下；辦公時間：星期一至日上午10時至晚上9時30分；聯絡電話：28841284

德育中心 (CEM) —地點：澳門台山新街利達新邨三樓；辦公時間：星期一至星期六上午10時至晚上10時；星期日上午10時至晚上7時；聯絡電話：28403200

成人教育中心 (CEP) —地點：澳門祐漢看台街313號翡翠廣場三樓；辦公時間：星期一至星期六上午9時至晚上10時；星期日上午9時至下午6時；聯絡電話：28422780





most students of formal education are reluctant to receive arts education, which is indeed an influential subject. They take arts lessons only because they are obliged to do so and, indeed, they bear a contemptuous attitude towards the subject of arts. Although teachers have put countless effort into teaching the students, they are like casting pearls before swine. Only if teachers use their leisure time to teach a group of students who love arts can they experience the significance of “teaching is learning”. Instead of spending time on keeping class discipline, preparing for administrative supervision by school leaders, and urging students to submit their homework on time, teachers only need to concentrate on how to fully achieve the effect of aesthetic education. If teachers can fully devote themselves to teaching arts, they can feel secured and obtain inner peace. They can try this idea out in their leisure time. By doing so, they can bring arts education back to its essence of “nurturing people with aesthetic education”. Like formal education, leisure education also educates students, but it gives more liberty to teachers and it requires less administrative work. There is never a clear-cut line between life and work.

Leisure education gives teachers satisfaction and happiness, and enriches their life. Others may show no interests in arts teachers’ work. However, if it is beneficial to their personal growth, teachers will view teaching as a way to recharge and refresh themselves. Then, naturally, they can feel happy, thus broaden their expertise, and win respect from others.

Sharing Expertise through Voluntary Leisure Activities

Leisure activities should not be confined to certain types. On the contrary, they should be diverse and we believe that they are created to meet the needs of the participants. The leisure activities we design are all non-compulsory and non-profit activities. They engage participants in social life and provide them with a platform to share their expertise. The leisure activities organised by our society are mainly arts activities. Through leisure arts education, teachers can improve their expertise and efficiency in formal teaching. They can also enhance their reputation in the artistic field, and higher reputation would bring them higher income in return too. The most important thing is that these activities will exert favourable influence on teachers’ characters, help relieve their pressure from work, make them feel happy and improve their quality of life.

To Teach Is to Learn

The attractive point of our leisure activities is they uphold freedom and innovative thinking. They are not compulsory and teachers take part in the activities on a voluntary basis. We

arrange and organise the activities after they are signed up. We impose no age restrictions on the tutors invited but definitely require them to share the same educational philosophy with us. Besides, we recruit students of arts institutions as our teaching assistants. It is because they are a very special group of people. They have more leisure time than others and the way they spend their leisure time will directly affect their personal growth and future development. Therefore, we particularly provide them with chances to obtain diverse forms of “other learning experiences”. We hope that they can learn from our experienced teachers something that they cannot learn from their higher education institutions.

Combining Arts and Creation to Attract More Teachers to Participate

With the implementation of the education reform policies like the “System Framework for Private School Teaching Staff of Non-tertiary Education”, “Formal Education Curriculum Framework” and “The Code of Conduct for Teachers”, Macao’s education sector is becoming more and more systematised. The positive effect is that it has reduced teachers’ working hours and has given them more leisure time. However, some teachers feel lost because of the extra leisure time. Thus, the notion and the subject of “leisure education” are in urgent need of development. It is the top priority to explore how teachers can utilise their free time to engage in meaningful leisure education, relieve their pressure, rebuild themselves and refill energy to achieve physical and mental balance. Arts education plays a very important role among all leisure activities. In a society where “introducing arts to life and bringing arts close to life” is advocated, arts education and artistic creation are undoubtedly one of the best leisure activities. Thus, how to help Macao’s teachers enrich their leisure life to the fullest extent through arts education and artistic creation activities has become an important issue in the future. At present, the Macao SAR government and Macao’s associations mainly hold leisure activities about sports and personal entertainment. Thus, we believe we can introduce more arts activities, such as international arts camps, exchange activities of arts education and artistic creation between Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao, courses of Macao traditional handicrafts, public speaking activities, etc. These activities are believed to be able to attract teachers with different interests and allow them to enjoy their leisure life.

Macao Society for Education in Art
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