

'Ode' to art, Chinese culture

Local art and Chinese culture take center stage at the Chandler Center for the Arts, 250 N. Arizona Ave., Chandler, at 7 p.m., Nov. 15, as the American Chinese Arts and Culture Exchange Association presents its second annual "Ode to Peace," with the theme of "Embrace Thanksgiving: A Music and Dance Extravaganza from East to West."

The program will include a variety of artists and cultural disciplines from around the world.

Featured presenters include artistic director and coloratura soprano Yuyu Khoe singing the French opera coloratura classic "Indian Bell Song" from "Lakme," Zhou Jiang on piano, the violin duo Joy Pan and Lan Qiu, Zhigang Chen on cello, the Arizona Chinese Chorus, the Arizona Chinese Instrumental Ensemble, the Mesa City Band Trombone Quartet, the alternative band RadioDriveBy, the Arizona Asian American Association and more.

Tickets are \$15, and can be purchased at the Chandler Center for the Arts Box Office at (480) 782-2680 or www.chandlercenter.com. Tickets can also be purchased at the Eastern Art Academy, 1100 N. Alma School Rd., Suite 18, Chandler, and at Super Ranch 99 Market at COFCO Chinese Cultural Center, 668 N. 44th St, Phoenix. For more information visit www.acacx.com and www.facebook.com/acacxorg.

MCC offers sneak peek at new performing arts center Oct. 25

Mesa Community College is hosting an open house in celebration of the completion of its new 462-seat Performing Arts Center (PAC) 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 25, at its Southern and Dobson campus, 1833 W. Southern Ave., Mesa. The public is invited to be among the first to preview the venue as they enjoy light refreshments and tours of the completely renovated former movie theater.

MCC's talented students provide a sneak preview of music, dance and musical theatre that will be regularly showcased in this exciting state-of-the-art-venue. Students and faculty will lead guided tours, which will include behind-the-scenes areas

such as performance classrooms, music practice rooms and the scene shop, in addition to the main stage.

"We are excited to be able to open our doors to our community to showcase the talents of our vocal, instrumental and dance students in this long-awaited world-class venue," says Sue Anne Lucius, chairwoman of MCC's Music Department.

The PAC's inaugural season officially kicks off Oct. 30 and 31, with the dance performance "Who Dunit," presented by MCC's Dance Company with special guests On Tap and Propel, followed by the Act I Musical Theatre's production "Hairspray," Nov. 13, through Nov. 22.

Free admission is offered to patrons attending "Who Dunit" in costume on Oct. 31.

MCC's commitment to providing affordable arts and entertainment to the community couples the PAC shows with performances in the college's newly remodeled MCC Theatre. The theater's fall season launched with the family favorite "Rumpelstiltskin" Oct. 10. Additional information about upcoming shows and events at MCC's Performing Arts Center and Theatre may be found online at www.mesacc.edu/pac and www.mesacc.edu/theatre-shows, respectively.

Free creative aging classes through MAC

Mesa Arts Center's Creative Aging Program, now in its third year, is offering adults 55 and older three unique workshops in storytelling, movement and visual arts for free, through the end of November. Designed to offer social and creative outlets to enhance self-esteem, morale and physical health for older adults, the classes will be held at the Mesa Arts Center, One E. Main St., Mesa, and are free and open to the public.

Participants are asked to draw on life stories and will explore experiences through visual arts, movement and storytelling. Led by professional teaching artists, the workshops provide vital tools and opportunities for older adults

to maintain and improve physical and mental health.

"I feel so exuberant after I leave here," says Rita Hawkins, an 83-year-old participant in the program.

Workshops include "Mature Moving Me," a collaborative dance class for seniors that is appropriate for all levels and all abilities; "In the Round Sculpture," a series of hands-on sessions focusing on the creation of mixed-media abstract sculptures; and "What's Your Story," a 90-minute workshop that leads participants in transforming memories into recorded history or legend.

MAC's Creative Aging Program extends beyond on-site workshops to include

artist-in-residence programs in area adult resource centers, adult day cares and adult living communities, such as Oakwood Creative Care, Fellowship Square Living Community and New Frontier for Lifelong Learning.

In March, Mesa Arts Center will collaborate with the Arizona Commission on the Arts to hold a Creative Aging Summit to convene arts organizations, teaching artists and aging and healthcare service providers interested in the significant impact the arts can have on quality of life for older adults.

For more information, visit www.mesaartscenter.com/outreach/outreach-programs/Creative-Aging.

Dia de los Muertos at MAC

Dia de los Muertos Festival returns to the Mesa Arts Center from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 25, and 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 26. The ninth annual event celebrates the memory of departed loved ones.

The free festival will offer a nonstop schedule of live entertainment, participatory children's activities, a wide variety of food options, studio demonstrations and a mercado marketplace, featuring traditional and contemporary merchandise, jewelry and Mexican arts and crafts from more than 30 local artisans and vendors.

The centerpiece of the traditional Dia de los Muertos festivities is a community altar, where guests can leave mementos in honor of their loved ones who have passed. Altars created by community groups, schools and

families will also be on display for a festival contest sponsored by the Mexican Consulate and Mesa Association of Hispanic Citizens.

In the Bookmans Family Activity area, festival participants of all ages are invited to create a traditional sugar skull or ceramic pin or to contribute a paper flower to construct a large-scale, colorful skull over the course of the weekend. Families can also enjoy the Taylor Troupe Stiltwalkers and performances by juggler James Reid.

Featured festival performances include award-winning author Stella Pope Duarte with Liliana De Leon-Torsiello, Fiesta Mexicana Dance, Folklorico Lindo y Querido, Mariachi Pasión, Mariachi Corazón de Phoenix, Mariachi Juvenil los Primos, Mariachi Viva, Noemy Esparza, Nuance Jazz,



DAY OF THE DEAD: Arts and crafts, dancers, honoring the dead, cultural festivities and more will be offered at Mesa Arts Center's ninth annual Dia de los Muertos Festival. *Submitted photo*

Orchestra Kaliente, Sherry Finzer, Si Se Puede Foundation, Sol Gitana, Unidos en Armistad and more.

The festival will culminate in a performance and an open procession to the community altar led by Mariachi Pasión at 4:45 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 26.

Mesa Arts Center is located at One E. Main St., in downtown Mesa. There is no charge to attend the Dia de los Muertos Festival, and parking is free. More information can be found at www.MesaArtsCenter.com or by calling (480) 644-6500.

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