



A countdown clock marks the number of days till the opening ceremony of the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 at Wulin Square in downtown Hangzhou, Zhejiang province on Monday. XIAO DA / CHINA DAILY

Aesthetics applies to sports as well as the arts at Hangzhou Asian Games

Extensive designs being made to encapsulate landmark event

By YUAN SHENGGAO

The 19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 will be held from Sept 10 to 25, 2022 in Hangzhou, capital of East China's Zhejiang province. China Daily is teaming up with the organizing committee of the Games to spotlight the preparation for and facts about the Hangzhou Asian Games.

The mascots for the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022, which is scheduled to be held in Hangzhou, capital of East China's Zhejiang province in September 2022, were unveiled in early April, presenting the public with the epitome of the Games' and the host city's unique aesthetics.

Before the mascots, the fan-shaped emblem for the event, Tides Surging, which was launched in August 2018, had attracted wide attention for its aesthetic features of Jiangnan, the region south of the Yangtze River.

Designs of the mascots and the emblem, both belonging to the aesthetics system of the Games, showcase the characteristics of Hangzhou and China, and leave a precious cultural and artistic legacy for the world.

Beauty is a universal language and creating an aesthetics system for the Games is necessary for the world to remember the Hangzhou Asian Games and the host city even after the event concludes.

When thinking of sports, images of physical fitness, agility and athletics are often invoked. The labeling of "aesthetics" comes more as an afterthought, a side effect of an athletic performance, rather than an imperative characteristic of sports. So, how important is aesthetics in sports, and international sports events such as the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022?

According to the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 Organising Committee, Hangzhou Asian Games aesthetics will be a harmonious and unified cultural and artistic system with features of the host city and the Olympic spirit. Moreover, aesthetics of the Games is expected to be accepted by the people and go throughout the whole process of the event.

Such visual elements as the logo, mascots, colors of venues and sports pictograms, the most recognizable symbols of the event, are part of the system. What's more, cultural activities, ideology and products developed for the market in the process of preparation and organization of the Games are also considered to reflect the Games' aesthetics.

Hangzhou aims to create the event into a grand gathering where Asian people are able to perceive and admire the extensiveness, profound-



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ness and inclusiveness of Chinese culture, and join hands with each other to embrace the future.

Almost everything about the host city, beautiful and attractive, including the nature, history, culture, industries and people, is the source of the development of the Hangzhou Asian Games aesthetics.

Yang Meng, deputy director of the Press & Public Relations Department of the Hangzhou Asian Games Organising Committee, hailed the visual designs for the Games as embodiments of the unique qualities of the city, such as the well-protected nature and the fast-developing internet industry.

For the logo, he said, as one of the most basic design elements, it is not just the symbol of the event, but also a foundation for the designs of other visual products, including the slogan and mascots.

"In the future, they will be closely combined with official activities and products in Hangzhou," Yang said.

Inspired by the host city's rich heritage, designers of the mascots for the Games, Zhang Wen and Yang Yihong, made the trio of cutesy characters to represent the three UNESCO cultural heritage sites in Hangzhou.

Just as their original aspiration goes, the mascots should stand for Hangzhou precisely. Having been living in Hangzhou for 14 years, the two teachers at the Hangzhou-based China Academy of Art drew inspiration from every corner of the city and dug the cultural connotations of

Hangzhou in an all-around way. Finally, they made it possible that the robot-shaped figures fully contain Hangzhou elements.

The aesthetics of the Hangzhou Asian Games is from the city, and in return, contributes to the city's overall aesthetics system.

Song Jianming, a professor at China Academy of Art and director of the design sector of the Games, said thousands of athletes and sports lovers will gather at this continental event in Hangzhou and the aesthetics, mainly embodied in visual designs, will be everywhere in the city.

Two years ahead of the Games, the elements of emblems and mascots are now actually seen around Hangzhou, from on airplanes, buses to small stamps and silk products.

According to Song, the formation of Asian Games aesthetics is systemic. "Hundreds of artists will be involved in the process and we'll launch a series of designs step by step, such as the emblem and mascots, sports pictograms and the color system, all of which will be widely used for cityscapes and products," said the director.

Yang said in the future, the existence of the Games' visual designs will be further highlighted with more decorations placed around the city.

Sculptures of mascots will be put at landmarks of the city and the construction sites of venues will be windows to showcase the aesthetics of the Games.

Also, cultural creations such as car-

toon productions will be launched with the promotion of preparatory work, according to Yang.

He said, "The visual designs of the Games, being published one by one, will stimulate people's eyes constantly and help to promote the event."

In addition to the exterior beauty, the urban aesthetics includes the culture of harmony and civilization of a city as well, a kind of in-depth and long-lasting beauty.

By organizing the Games, Hangzhou is seeking to upgrade itself, the plan of which consists of citizens' etiquette. The Asian Games aesthetics is expected to affect the society and better people's perception of the event, the city and life, thus to make the memories of the Games more profound and far-reaching.

As the preparatory work for the Hangzhou Asian Games is now in full swing, the formation and publicity of its aesthetics will be promoted and deepened further, according to HAGOC. Moreover, the work mechanism in this sector, and the research into and the application of visual designs will be strengthened to boost the development of the aesthetics of the whole city.



Scan the code to learn more about the Games!

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Historical and cultural legacies comprise an indispensable part of urban aesthetics, especially in cities with long histories and profound culture.

For a city, aesthetics is often related to its attractiveness, in particular the combined effects of various aspects such as the natural and architectural landscapes, the layout of public facilities, the main colors of its public spaces and the etiquette of people living there.

These developments, especially the cultural genes, are not achieved within a short time. Instead, they are closely connected with a city's history.

Hangzhou, capital of East China's Zhejiang province, has a history of more than 2,000 years and is home to three UNESCO cultural heritage sites: West Lake, the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal and the Archaeological Ruins of Liangzhu City.

Among them, Liangzhu is recog-

nized as bearing testimony to the existence of at least 5,000 years of Chinese civilization.

The historical and cultural imprints that were formed over the past two millennia have presented the distinctive temperament of Hangzhou and its people: classic, poetic, elegant and tender.

Song Jianming, a professor at the China Academy of Art who is adept at using colors for city aesthetics, is an active participant in the color planning of many projects in Hangzhou, such as the East Hangzhou Railway Station and the Olympic Sports Center.

In 2005 and 2006, Song led a team to walk around the city and take nearly 30,000 photos of buildings and streets in Hangzhou. Based on the investigation, Hangzhou made a plan of colors in urban areas.

Song concluded that the colors for Hangzhou should be light, just like an ink painting.

In his eyes, the culture and tradi-



A plane painted with patterns characterizing the Hangzhou Asian Games lands at Xiaoshan International Airport in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province on June 15. CFP

tions that formed in Hangzhou have been rooted in every aspect of the city.

"People in Hangzhou think highly of education on culture and aesthetics, which gradually endows the city with a kind of romance," said the professor, who is also in charge of the

visual designs for the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022.

As the host city of the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou 2022 and the 4th Asian Para Games Hangzhou 2022, Hangzhou is integrating its poetic temperament into the organization of the continental sports

event and also the creation of the Hangzhou Asian Games aesthetics.

Xu Deqing, director of the Press & Public Relations Department of the Hangzhou Asian Games Organising Committee, wrote in an article in early June in Hangzhou Daily that the civilized scenes and people in today's Hangzhou are a result of the deep-rooted civilization that has been bred in the city.

When designing visual products for the Games, historical and cultural elements, which partly indicate the city's aesthetics, cannot be ignored and are always an important source of inspiration to showcase Hangzhou features.

The mascots for the Games - three robots representing the UNESCO cultural heritage sites in the city, are embodiments of the most representative culture of Hangzhou with ancient patterns and symbolic colors. Tides Surging, the emblem for the event in the shape of a fan, implies the lingering charm of Jiangnan, the region

south of the Yangtze River. The design inspiration for the Hangzhou Asian Games is from the aesthetics of Hangzhou and in return, it is enriching the content of the urban aesthetics of the city.

Visual designs for the Games, including the emblem and the mascots, have been applied in the landscapes in Hangzhou, as well as the traditional products here, such as silk, tea, porcelain, fans and umbrellas.

According to Xu, the aesthetics of the Hangzhou Asian Games, having been penetrating into the daily lives of people in the city, will help shorten the distance between the public and the event, and let the beauty of the Games better soak into people's hearts. Hangzhou hopes to leave a cultural legacy to descendants by organizing the Games. As a historic event, the Hangzhou Asian Games, being organized in a Hangzhou way, will be part of the city's history and is expected to add extra colors to its profound culture.