

Jinan's new cultural complex a star in 10th China Art Festival

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When newspaper reporter Sun Ye traveled from Beijing for the ongoing 10th China Art Festival, she was deeply impressed by the event's venues in east China's Shandong province.

"The Shandong Culture and Art Center, the festival's main venue, is so spectacular that I can't help but compare it to the National Center for the Performing Arts in Beijing," said Sun, adding that many people came just to take pictures of the building complex.

Located in the provincial capital Jinan and covering 32 hectares, the complex is composed of eight high-rise build-

ings and three egg-shaped pavilions that include a theater, a library, an art gallery and museum, a cinema, shopping malls and facilities for the creative industry.

The 136,000-square-meter theater, the stage for the festival's opening and closing ceremonies, has a 1,800-seat opera house, a 1,500-seat music hall and a 500-seat multifunction room.

Built with a total investment of 5.65 billion yuan (\$926.6 million), the massive complex was designed by renowned French architect Paul Andreu, who is also the designer of the National Center for the Performing Arts. It has become the new landmark for Jinan.

According to Xie Zhixiu, head of venue construction for the festival, the art and culture center is only one of the many state-of-the-art facilities the province has prepared for the festival.

To welcome the nation's top art gala held every two or three years since 1987, Shandong has poured in 9.8 billion yuan in recent years to build and renovate 55 culture and art facilities across the province, said Xie.

They include 16 newly built theaters, cinemas, galleries, and museums in cities of Jinan, Qingdao, Yantai, Weifang, Tai'an and Zibo.

Xie said the provincial and local governments will organize regular art activities at the

venues and keep most of them open to the public for free after the festival.

The Shandong government has signed a contract with the China Performing Arts Agency to guarantee there will be at least 280 performances staged at the Shandong Culture and Art Center every year.

The cities of Yantai, Weifang and Tai'an have reached agreements with the Poly Theater in Beijing to hold hundreds of performances in these newly built venues every year.

"The China Art Festival not only brings quality art performances to Shandong from around the country but also greatly boosts the construction of public cultural facilities in



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SUN YE
NEWSPAPER REPORTER

the province," said Xie.

In the past few years, Shandong has invested 17.7 billion yuan building a total of 151 public libraries, 160 culture and art centers, and 120 museums across the province.

More than 59,000 cultural outposts and 60,000 reading rooms have now been built in rural areas, providing services for 85 percent of the villages of the province, said Xie.

shandongspecial



The exhibition gives local art enthusiasts a rare opportunity to enjoy many representative works by artists from across the country.

Showcasing the top in creativity

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The exhibition shows the state of Chinese art over the past few years."

LIU DAWEI
CHAIRMAN
CHINA ARTISTS ASSOCIATION

A fine arts exhibition is underway in Jinan, Shandong offering art enthusiasts a rare opportunity to appreciate the nation's best works.

A total of 647 pieces representing the top work in China are on show at the Shandong Art Museum in the capital city of the East China province.

As a part of the 10th China Art Festival hosted by Shandong, the exhibition kicked off on October 12 with the theme of "Chinese Style, Paintings of the Times".

Consisting of works by artists nationwide, the exhibition features paintings, prints, watercolors, oil paintings and sculptures.

"The event aims to enrich Chinese fine arts and encourage painters to create more masterpieces," said Vice-Minister of Culture Dong Wei.

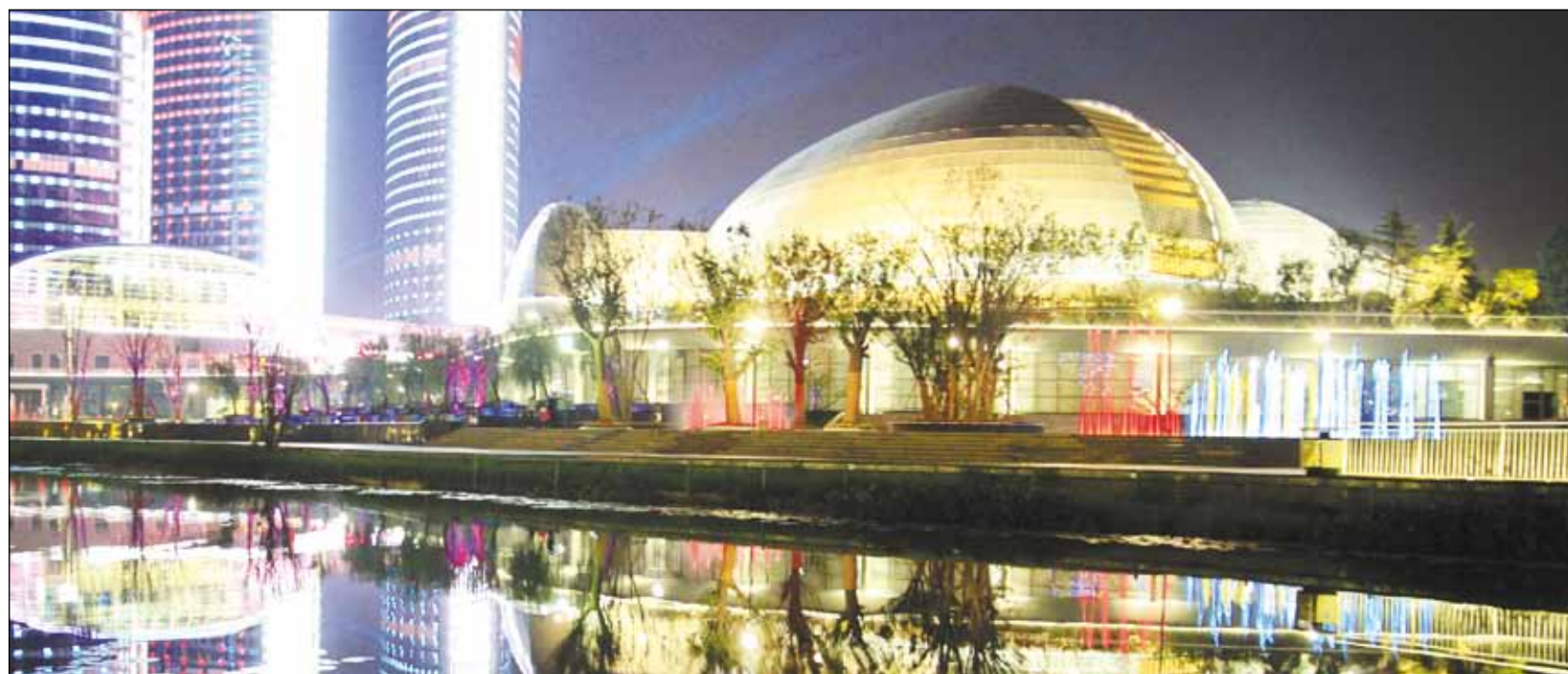
"The exhibition shows the state of Chinese art over the past few years, they are very

representative of our time," said Liu Dawei, chairman of the China Artists Association.

Works by artists in Shandong account for 26 percent of the total number on show, making it the leader among all the participating provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities.

During the exhibition, the museum will encourage artists to donate their works to libraries, schools and communities to promote education in fine arts.

The event is scheduled to close on Dec 30.



PHOTOS BY JU CHUANJIANG / CHINA DAILY

The Shandong Culture and Art Center's three egg-shaped pavilions are a characteristic design of Paul Andreu, who was also the architect of the National Center for the Performing Arts in Beijing.