

## Art show includes Da Vinci, Picasso and Michelangelo

By **JU CHUANJIANG**  
and **WANG QIAN**

The ongoing European and American Art Exhibition in Jinan, Shandong province is attracting thousands of visitors with classic works of art, according to its organizing committee.

As a key part of the 10th China Art Festival, the expo named International Collection Art Days at Shandong Museum is open for free to the public from Oct 15 to 30.

It features 354 works of fine art including oil paintings, sculptures and manuscripts by artists from Europe and the United States.

It includes masterpieces by

renowned masters Leonardo da Vinci, Picasso, Michelangelo and Salvador Dali.

Xu Xianghong, head of the Shandong Department of Culture, said most of the work is on display in China for the first time.

"This is one of China's largest-scale art shows in terms of the quality and quantity of the works on display," Xu said. "It is very rare to see so many artistic treasures at a single exhibition."

A highlight of the show is a self-portrait by Da Vinci.

The oil painting, which was rediscovered 2009, is widely regarded as the only known painting by Da Vinci of himself.

Sanfo Vincenzo, director of Italy Culture and Art Center, said the work is seldom shown to the public.

"It is the first time and also the last time the art treasure will be displayed in China," he said.

After the expo, the painting will be stored at a museum in Italy, he said. Concurrent activities include a seminar on the artwork of international masters and an appreciation, collection and investment fair on European art.

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Visitors view some of the 354 works on display at the exhibit.

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A troupe from Brigham Young University performs the song and dance drama *Music of Life* during the festival.

## Performance festival in Shandong

By **WANG QIAN**

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More than 40 performances by international music and dance ensembles have been staged in cities across Shandong province during the ongoing 10th China Art Festival, local officials said.

Held every three years, this year's gala runs from October 11 to 26.

Another 10 shows will be presented during the festival.

Li Guolin, deputy head of the Shandong Department of Culture, said almost all performances are sold out.

Another 10 shows will be presented during the festival.

The artistic offerings include symphonies, musicals and dance recitals from the United States, Russia, Spain, France, Canada and India.

One of the shows is the Chinese edition of the Broadway musical *Mamma Mia*.

Set on a picturesque Greek

island, the play depicts the story of a bride-to-be trying to find her biological father by using a wealth of hit songs by ABBA, a Swedish pop band in the 1970s.

Since it debuted in London in 1999, *Mamma Mia* has been adapted to 14 languages.

It has developed into one of the most popular Broadway musicals with an audience of more than 45 million worldwide.

The Chinese language version alone has been staged 290 times in 19 cities nationwide.

"It is the first time for the show to be performed in Shandong."

It made a great stir with its fascinating plot and beautiful melodies," Li said.

Liu Ying, a Jinan local, said "it is amazing to enjoy such a high-level performance at home". She took her 6-year-old son.

Other shows include the *Music of Life* by a singing and

dancing troupe from Brigham Young University in the US, a Spanish flamenco version of *Carmen*, symphonies from the Orchestre National des Pays de la Loire in France, classical ballets from Russia and a show called Spectrum by the Yannick Rieu Jazz Quartet from Quebec as well as Indian dances and Yu Opera from Taiwan.

Some foreign shows also made special arrangements for the Shandong audiences.

A 90-minute performance by the Yannick Rieu Band staged in Jinan last Friday featured not only jazz but also local songs.

Song Haiying, president of Ya Rui Co, which is responsible for the Yannick Rieu Band's performances at the festival, said as society prospers, people have growing needs for quality artistic outlets.

"The festival gives us a good chance to expand the culture market in Shandong."

Song said the band's per-

formances will also be staged in the cities of Weifang, Heze, and Rizhao. Different from the previous artistic festivals, which only hold foreign shows in the host city, this year's event involves all 17 cities in Shandong.

A special fund by the provincial government was allocated as a subsidy to help more people afford tickets.

"It is in line with the principle of 'making the event a gala by the people, for the people and of the people,'" Li said.

The average ticket price for the foreign shows is about 40 percent lower than normal commercial performances, with the lowest price at only 30 yuan, Li said.

The festival's organizing committee spends 10,000 to 50,000 yuan (\$8,000) subsidizing tickets for each performance.

Tickets are distributed for free to local senior citizens, migrant workers and those with physical disabilities.