

2025 Chinese New Year Gala

A Prosperous Year of the Snake

(Farewell to the Old, Welcome the New; The Auspicious Snake Brings Blessings)

New Year's Message

The Agile Snake Welcomes Spring, Bringing Prosperity and Good Fortune!

The snake symbolizes agility, wisdom, and growth. On February 1, 2025, the **CEDP Chinese Centre** grandly hosted the *2025 Year of the Snake Chinese New Year Celebration* in Brighton & Hove. The venue was meticulously decorated to warmly welcome all guests. We gathered with local residents, the overseas Chinese community, cultural organizations, and friends who love Chinese culture. The event was filled with a festive atmosphere, laughter, and joy. More than **20 performance groups** from different regions delivered spectacular performances, and dedicated staff and volunteers ensured the smooth running of the event. The audience was fully engaged, immersing themselves in the festive celebration.

For **25 years**, the CEDP Chinese Centre has been committed to preserving and promoting Chinese culture. On this special occasion, we aimed to create a space filled with love and emotional connection—a home away from home. As we step into the Year of the Snake and bid farewell to 2024, we want to express our gratitude to friends from around the world. They are an integral part of the CEDP community.

This event was not just a **cultural extravaganza** but also a **heartwarming reunion**, filled with love, joy, and unity.



Guest Speeches: Celebrating the New Year Together



The celebration began with an enthusiastic introduction by the event hosts. The venue was adorned with festive decorations, exuding the essence of Chinese New Year. Councillor Mohammed Asaduzzaman, the Mayor of Brighton & Hove, attended the event and delivered a New Year speech, expressing his support for cultural exchanges between China and the UK.

Dr. Lu Hong, Chairperson of the CEDP Chinese Centre, along with board members Alex Wu and Dr. Ling Ren, also gave speeches. They reflected on 26 years of dedication and achievements, emphasizing that these successes were made possible by the hard work and passion of the organizers, board members, and volunteers. Their unwavering commitment has built a bridge connecting the Chinese community and Chinese culture, driven by their deep love for Chinese heritage and the mission of cultural preservation. Their efforts have enabled the CEDP Chinese Centre to thrive for over two decades!

Spectacular Performances: A Fusion of Cultures

As the music started, an incredible fusion of traditional and modern performances unfolded!

1. Band Performance – Durrington Band

Performers:

Ben Casse, Felix Cooper-Harding, Matt Raynsford, Harry Ward, Jack Slaughter



The Year of the Snake Celebration kicked off with an introduction by the hosts, followed by the first performance—a high school band. The band members, Ben Casse, Felix Cooper-Harding, Matt Raynsford, Harry Ward, and Jack Slaughter, delivered an electrifying performance. Notably, Jack’s mother was a longtime dancer at CEDP, making this a perfect example of CEDP’s 26-year legacy of passing down traditions across generations. The children of former performers have inherited their passion and continue to shine on the CEDP stage. Their powerful and captivating band performance showcased their unique musical charm!

2. Samba Dance

Performers: Marta Scott and team, Carol Theobald



Renowned dancer Marta Scott from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, has performed across Europe, Israel, and the United States, including on Broadway. Marta has been teaching Latin dance, jazz, and samba in the UK for 24 years. As the chief choreographer of Brighton Samba School, she and her team delivered a vibrant and exhilarating dance performance.

This special performance also featured a distinguished guest—Mrs. Carol Theobald, former Mayor of Brighton and a CEDP board member. Together, they showcased a beautiful fusion of cultures on the Chinese New Year stage, presenting an exotic and energetic samba dance that immersed the audience in a joyful and rhythmic celebration.

3. CEDP Stories

Speaker: Sadie Samuels (HSBC)



Ms. Sadie Samuels from HSBC shared her insights on CEDP, expressing her appreciation for the organization's efforts. We are especially grateful that she traveled from London to Brighton to support CEDP's Year of the Snake New Year Celebration. In her heartfelt and sincere speech, she highlighted how CEDP fosters interaction between the Chinese community and the local society, helping more people understand and experience Chinese culture.

4. Lion Dance

Performers: Master Qin & CEDP Team



The Lion Dance is a traditional highlight of Lunar New Year celebrations, symbolizing warding off evil spirits, bringing good fortune, and spreading joy. Master Qin and the CEDP Lion Dance Team delivered a spectacular performance, with the agile and fluid movements of the lion captivating the audience. This energetic and rhythmic performance infused the venue with vibrancy. As the Year of the Dragon approaches, the synchronized movements of the lion and dragon dances symbolize the joy and harmony that the new year will bring.

5. Poetry Recital – "My Homesickness"

Performer: Dr. Wang Weiqun (University of Nottingham)



The Spring Festival is a time for family reunions, but for overseas Chinese, it brings an even deeper sense of longing for home. Dr. Wang Weiqun, Associate Professor of Chinese at the University of Nottingham, who has lived in the UK for over 20 years, expressed her profound nostalgia for her homeland through her original poem, *My Homesickness*. As a dedicated participant of the CEDP platform and a member of the Tuesday Confucian Classics Study Group, she conveyed the emotions of living far from home through poetry, allowing the audience to deeply feel her heartfelt sentiments.

6. Vocal Performance – "Sheng Sheng Man"

Performers: Amy Tan, Victoria Li (CEDP Choir)



With its melodic and graceful tune, *Sheng Sheng Man* conveys deep emotions and poetic longing. Amy Tan and Victoria Li, members of the CEDP Choir, delivered a delicate yet powerful vocal performance, creating a mesmerizing auditory experience.

Their voices flowed like whispering drizzle, sometimes soft and lingering, sometimes soaring like a gentle breeze, weaving emotions and stories into the melody. The audience was fully immersed in the song's gentle rhythm, experiencing a profound connection through the power of music.

7. Vocal Performance – "Chinese Kung Fu"

Performers: Zhang Siyuan, Zhang Siqian



Amidst a powerful and dynamic melody, Zhang Siyuan and Zhang Siqian took the stage with confidence, delivering a bold and commanding performance of *Chinese Kung Fu*. Their strong and resonant voices perfectly matched the rhythmic and energetic tune, embodying the strength and grace of martial arts. This song not only conveyed the spirit of resilience and perseverance but also highlighted the unique charm of traditional Chinese culture. The audience erupted into thunderous applause, deeply immersed in the fusion of music and culture, experiencing the essence and philosophy of Chinese Kung Fu.

8. Dance – "After the Rain"

Performers: Zhang Chunye, Bi Ke, Wang Weiqun, Dr. Ouyang Xiaomei



The CEDP Weekend Dance Class presented the elegant Chinese dance "After the Rain", showcasing graceful and fluid movements. Zhang Chunye, a National First-Class Performer and CEDP dance instructor, along with Bi Ke, Dr. Wang Weiqun, and Dr. Ouyang Xiaomei, delivered a mesmerizing performance. The dancers moved lightly and effortlessly, as if portraying a world refreshed after a gentle rain, symbolizing clarity and hope in the post-rain sky. The audience was fully immersed in the dance's artistic expression, captivated by the unique rhythm and charm of Chinese dance. With continuous applause, this performance was not just a visual delight but also a true testament to the passion for dance.

9. Kong Fu Performance

Performers: Master Qin, Dr. Tom Harper



As the drums thundered, Master Qin and his student, Dr. Tom Harper, took the stage to deliver a spectacular martial arts demonstration. With steady posture and a seamless blend of strength and fluidity, Master Qin showcased the profound essence of traditional Chinese martial arts. Dr. Tom Harper's precise coordination reflected his dedication and passion for martial arts. This performance not only highlighted the power and elegance of Chinese martial arts but also underscored the unique charm of cultural exchange. The audience erupted into thunderous applause, fully immersed in this cross-cultural martial arts spectacle, experiencing the depth and spirit of Kung Fu.

10. Street Dance – "HWAA"

Performers: KCAMN (Girls from different Schools in Brighton)

Group Name: Kalilah, Natalie, Anya, Mariella, Chole



During this year's Spring Festival celebration, the street dance team KCAMN, consisting of five street dance girls from Brighton Women's College, presented an impressive performance titled "HWAA." Kalilah, Natalie, Anya, Mariella, and Chole brought their meticulously prepared work, blending dynamic street dance elements with a joyful festive atmosphere. The performance showcased not only their strength but also grace and rhythm. Through this dance, KCAMN not only demonstrated their solid street dance skills but also conveyed a positive and forward-looking attitude towards youth and the future. Their energetic and vibrant performance captured the essence of youth and vitality. With precise steps and smooth movements, their powerful and rhythmic performance won over the entire audience.

11. Lucky Draw

Organizers: Sonia, Martin



During the intermission, the CEDP Chinese Cultural Centre provided an exquisite lottery session for everyone. Sonia and Martin, this incredible duo, brought us this exciting moment. As an important interactive segment throughout the event, the atmosphere on-site was lively and energetic!

12. Drum Performance – "I Am a Small Bird"

Performer: Kenny Tusi (University of Sussex, Engineering Department)



Kenny Tusi from the University of Sussex's Department of Engineering brought us a powerful and rhythmic drum performance, delivering stunning sound effects and a strong emotional impact to the audience. With every strike of his drumsticks, Kenny energized the entire venue, conveying dynamic melodies and inner passion to each viewer. His cool and stylish performance reignited the excitement in the atmosphere, and his drum solo undoubtedly added a brilliant highlight to this year's Spring Festival celebration.

13. Chinese Idioms Performance

Performer: Wang Xingbo (5½ years old)



In this year's Spring Festival celebration, 5-and-a-half-year-old little actor Wang Xingbo delivered a lively and engaging performance of "Chinese New Year Idioms." As a member of the young class at the Chinese language school, he showcased classic Chinese idioms through his adorable and clever performance, bringing a fresh and unique Spring Festival blessing to everyone. His performance is sure to add warmth and joy to this year's celebrations.

14. Electronic Keyboard Performance – "Chinese Folk Suite"

Performer: Angela



Angela brought us an electronic keyboard performance of "National Style Suite." This piece blends traditional Chinese music elements and showcases the unique charm of the East through the electronic keyboard. With her delicate technique and heartfelt interpretation, Angela allowed the audience to feel the depth and poetry of Chinese traditional culture. Her brilliant performance added a rich artistic atmosphere to the entire celebration.

15. Sichuan Opera Face-Changing Performance

Performers: Master Qin, Dr. Tom Harper



We were treated to a wonderful display of Chinese traditional theatrical art—Sichuan Opera Face Changing. The performer, Teacher Qin, brought us a magical visual feast, perfectly demonstrating the charm of this intangible cultural heritage through the rapid transformation of face masks. Face changing is not just a skill; it is a manifestation of Chinese traditional cultural wisdom. In just a few seconds, the masks were cleverly switched! The Sichuan Opera face-changing performance was mesmerizing, with every second of transformation leaving the audience in awe. It is not only a part of Chinese traditional culture but also a brilliant gem in Chinese theatrical arts.

16. Dance – "My Motherland and Me"

Performers: Dr. Ouyang Xiaomei, Bi Ke



Dr. Ouyang Xiaomei and Ms. Bi Ke brought us a solo dance performance titled "Me and My Motherland." This self-choreographed dance was filled with deep emotion and grace. Through their movements, the dancers expressed their love and respect for their homeland, showcasing a pure and sincere heart. Every gesture carried profound emotion, and the dancers used their performance to narrate the deep connection with the motherland. The combination of emotion and melody in the performance allowed the audience to feel an inner warmth and strength, highlighting the unique charm of dance as an art form. This dance performance added a strong sense of patriotism to the New Year celebrations, allowing every viewer to feel the greatness and warmth of their country while celebrating the Spring Festival.

17. Dragon Dance

Performers: Master Qin & CEDP Team



At the end of this year's Spring Festival celebration, Teacher Qin and the CEDP Dragon Dance team presented an outstanding dragon dance performance. The dragon dance is not only an important feature of Chinese traditional festivals but also a symbol of unity and joy. During the performance, the dragon soared, and the performers worked in perfect harmony, creating a scene that was both majestic and full of energy, energizing the entire venue. Every movement of the dragon dance carried festive cheer and auspicious meanings, symbolizing that the new year would bring good fortune and blessings. At the host's invitation, the audience eagerly participated, sharing in the joy and unity brought by the dragon dance. Through this performance, everyone together welcomed the arrival of the Spring Festival, creating waves of good luck and happiness.

Traditional Activities & Immersive Experiences

In this passionate Chinese New Year celebration, the event featured not only spectacular performances but also immersive cultural experiences. These included activities like paper-cutting, calligraphy for Spring Festival couplets, traditional Chinese medicine, and making zongzi (rice dumplings). These workshops were designed to offer a more immersive experience of the grand traditional festival and to provide a platform for cross-cultural interaction and exchange. Both Chinese and Western audiences actively participated, creating a lively and vibrant atmosphere at the CEDP Chinese Centre.

The evening also offered a variety of delicious dishes, including dumplings and other traditional Chinese foods. During this joyful festival, we indulged in the authentic flavors of Chinese cuisine, experiencing the unique culinary culture that brings us together!





Other Wonderful Moments







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The CEDP Chinese Centre sincerely thanks everyone for their enthusiastic participation! In this loving big family, your presence has allowed us to collectively experience the unique joy of the Spring Festival. Regardless of national borders, we share this special celebration together. We are grateful for the blessings from friends who have studied and worked at the CEDP Chinese Centre around the world. A big thank you to all the staff and volunteers. And to all the performers, thank you for the wonderful shows you brought us—your hard work created a spectacular feast.

A special thanks to the many volunteers for their dedicated efforts in making 500 dumplings for the Spring Festival event, allowing over 300 participants to feel the warmth of home and taste the authentic flavors of the New Year, even while abroad. Thanks to Sun Peiying, Shang Yiru and their family, who, despite being in China for the New Year, actively participated and assisted in preparing over 500 dumplings. We also appreciate Dr. Ren Ling, Teacher Ju Hong, Nicole, Teacher Peihua, and Kenny for their enthusiastic support, helping to create an atmosphere of warmth and reunion for this Spring Festival event. It is through everyone's efforts that this celebration became even more heartwarming and complete!

We would also like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our partners: Sussex Interpreting Services, Brighton & Hove City Council, Fantuán, Pearls Bubble Tea, Full House, and Yunfeng Supermarket (listed in no particular order). Thank you for your outstanding support, which made this event truly meaningful!

Introduction to CEDP the Chinese Centre



The CEDP Chinese Centre was established in 1997 and was officially registered as an educational charity foundation in 2007. It currently has 9 board members, a management committee of 10 members, 13 advisory committee members, and over 100 volunteers.

- It provides an information and service platform for more than 3,000 families and individuals.
- The Centre organizes annual events for the Spring Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, and Mid-Autumn Festival.
- It offers a platform for Sino-British cultural exchange, language and business activities, and educational interaction, including but not limited to Chinese language learning, Chinese cultural activities, Chinese Day events, and China-UK business forums.
- The Centre hosts weekly Chinese wellness series activities, including but not limited to Tai Chi, Baduanjin (Eight Pieces of Brocade), choral singing, Confucianism and Tang poetry studies, Chinese classical dance, yoga, traditional Chinese medicine wellness lectures, and psychological counseling.
- It provides consultation services for various cooperative courses, including but not limited to education, guidance, work, internships, and employment mentorship.

At the same time, the CEDP Chinese Centre has organized over 1,000 online charity and public welfare events. In the future, we will continue to need your support and assistance, and we look forward to your participation.