

Pacifying the Dragon: Hamlin Park, December 3, 2017

Inspired by Hakka Chinese traditions from New Territories, Hong Kong, the Public Art Program in Shoreline held an event in Hamlin Park attended by about 35 people. In the original ceremony, a jar filled with food is buried to help cleanse the landscape after construction disturbance about every 30 years, thereby pacifying the dragon, or the embodiment of the landscape.

The audience watched performances by Nightingale Dance Troupe, and witnessed the burial of a large ceramic jar commissioned for the occasion from artist Jacob Foran. Filled with rice and sealed with messages, the audience helped shovel sand back in the pit and the mound was capped by a permanent memorial stone. A grant from 4Culture helped fund the project.



Nightingale Dance Troupe performance, with Dragon body-puppet



Public Art Coordinator David Francis reads a curatorial statement, with the ceramic jar commissioned from artist Jacob Foran in the background. The jar was then lowered into a six-foot deep pit.



Filling the jar with 140 lbs. of rice.



The memorial marker and mound.

City of Shoreline
Pacifying the Dragon

In the 21st year of the city's founding, this vessel was commissioned from local ceramic artist Jacob Foran who modeled the work on an ancient grain storage jar from China. From 1995-2015 the city grew rapidly and initiated numerous construction projects. A new light rail system is now underway that will increase the city's growth even more and whole city blocks have been re-zoned to anticipate urban density.

In some small Hakka villages in the New Territories in Hong Kong, an event called PACIFYING THE DRAGON is held every 30 years or so to cleanse the landscape after fields are cleared, trees are cut and roads built. The Lung On [On-Lung] ceremony cleansed the village of "foul accumulation" that years of harvest, building and landscape change have inevitably built up. The disturbance in the city that results from 20 years of growth has stirred a dragon from slumber and the vessel, filled with 150 lbs. of rice, will give something back. The dragon will be quiet.

Larger political events, the 2016 Presidential election, have also contributed a climate of fear and to some, harassment based on identity. We hope to pacify this dragon as well.

Nightingale Dance Troupe performed for the audience and the vessel was lowered into a pit 6' deep on Saturday, December 3, 2016. A grant from 4Culture helped fund the art project.

David Francis
Public Art Coordinator

Statement written on folded tin foil, buried in jar

City of Shoreline: Pacifying the Dragon

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