

WING LUKE MUSEUM

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From: Wing Luke Museum

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Wing Luke Museum Welcomes the Public to its 2023 Lunar New Year Fair

Seattle, WA: Wing Luke Museum brings back its annual Lunar New Year Fair in celebration of the 2023 Year of the Rabbit and Year of the Cat. On Saturday, January 28th, visitors and guests are invited to participate in a variety of new year festivities hosted by the museum including a free outdoor lion dance performance courtesy of local Chinatown-International District (C-ID) group LQ Lion Dance. Paid museum admission then grants access to an afternoon of family-friendly craft activities, art sessions, and an afternoon lion dance talk with two local practitioners.

Our fair is a perfect place for youth to connect with different Lunar New Year Traditions. From the loud sounds and colorful sights of the lion dance, to making colorful crafts inspired by the Year of the Rabbit and Cat—the celebration will be a blast. To help reduce potential day-of wait times, we are encouraging visitors attending the craft fair to purchase admission in advance via our website.

Information about the Lunar New Year Fair and schedule of events is available online at www.wingluke.org/LNY

Wing Luke Museum has recently relaxed its masking policy during its open hours on Thursdays through Sundays in accordance with King County COVID-19 health recommendations, but given the scale and estimated attendance this particular event will require visitors to mask up while on the Museum premises.

What does Lunar New Year look like? Lunar New Year, which falls on January 22nd this year, is a time when people come together to reconnect with family, loved ones, and community. It is a time to set new priorities for the coming year and engage in luck-building activities to bring good fortune. In this spirit, Wing Luke Museum makes an effort to create space and opportunities for sharing knowledge that fosters greater understanding, acceptance, and familiarity between cultures by bringing people together. In the current geopolitical and economic climate, community events during this time of year play a vital role in bringing vibrance and life to Chinatowns across North America, many of which continue to suffer economic hardship and cultural stigma.

For many families, Lunar New Year traditions are rooted in the C-ID - from banquets to family style meals at mom-and-pop restaurants, this holiday brings many people into our neighborhood to share in the celebrations and patronize local family-owned businesses.

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While restaurants are serving up delicious foods, Lion Dance teams are able to bless restaurants and businesses throughout the neighborhood and local organizations are bringing community members together to celebrate, all while finding ways to ensure the spirit of celebration can activate almost every space in our historic neighborhood.

To put it simply, Lunar New Year is a chance for everyone to see the C-ID brightened with celebrations and traditions. It encourages people from all across the greater-Seattle area to explore the restaurants, businesses, and historic spaces that make our neighborhood so special. At a time in which restaurants and businesses in the neighborhood continue to struggle with the lasting effects of the pandemic, Lunar New Year and all of the ways it inspires people to visit and engage with our neighborhood has become an important part of ensuring that the C-ID can continue to be a part of families' traditions and celebrations for years to come.

Why is it also the Year of the Cat? There are many Asian American communities that celebrate Lunar New Year, which include Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Tibetan Americans. In Vietnamese culture, the Year of the Cat replaces the Year of the Rabbit in the more commonly known East Asian zodiacs.

Why is celebrating Lunar New Year important to our communities? It's a time for us to celebrate our identities and who we are! Everyone should be able to feel proud of their heritage and traditions. Lunar New Year is a visible and vibrant holiday to hold and cherish—especially in the climate of ignorance and hate. Anti-Asian hate, unfortunately, is not new as we look at the breadth of American history. At the same time, we should also remind ourselves that even with pressures of being told to hide ourselves and assimilate, that Lunar New Year celebrations have continued despite all of the continued negativity and erasure.

Anti-Asian hate is held within the hearts of people who live in ignorance and in fear. We look to celebrate Lunar New Year with love and vibrancy, with compassion and with open hearts, and be the light against the darkness of hatred.

For anyone looking to learn more about Lunar New Year, Wing Luke Museum is offering special Lunar New Year walking tours for teachers and educators beginning in January and running through the Spring. Let us at the Wing Luke Museum lead your students on an exploration through Seattle's Chinatown International District to learn more about the celebrations and traditions that take place in our community for this special time of year. Lunch is included as a part of the experience to heighten the senses and make tasty memories. Walking tour is 90 minutes long, with no more than 1 mile walking distance and slight uphill inclines. Lunch at a local restaurant is 1 hour and a preset lunch menu is available that includes a rice dish, noodle dish, veggie dish, chicken dish, and appetizer.

Wing Luke Museum also offers guided gallery tours of our upcoming *New Years All Year Round* exhibit in our KidPLACE gallery, which celebrates foods, flavors and family gatherings. Learn more about the dishes on our family tables that make our Lunar New Year so special by joining

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us for a Guided Gallery Tour. Have you ever wondered why there are lion dances during the Holiday? What do the lions eat while they perform? Students will be invited to get into the holiday spirit by hearing stories surrounding the lion dance, foods and flavors and making a New Year Decoration to welcome in good luck for the upcoming year.

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The **Wing Luke Museum**'s mission is to connect everyone to the rich history, dynamic cultures and art of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders through vivid storytelling and inspiring experiences to advance racial and social equity. As a Smithsonian Affiliate, National Park Service Affiliated Area, and the only pan-Asian American museum in the nation, The Wing Luke Museum is a national treasure, preserving and sharing the personal stories of the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities. www.wingluke.org