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TIME TO SHINE!

History, culture and cutting-edge technology bring sporting jamboree to life



Hangzhou set to wow world with groundbreaking opening ceremony

By **SUN XIAOCHEN** in Hangzhou
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With a lot more to offer than just a visual spectacle, the 19th Asian Games' opening ceremony promises to wow the world with a high-tech showcase of the host's historic and cultural attractions.

The ceremony, which starts on Saturday night at the Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre Stadium, will deliver many historic firsts and is expected to provide a blueprint for the sustainable and digitally enhanced future of such gala events, according to the ceremony's creative team.

The breathtaking projections, depicting Hangzhou's past and present, onto the floor and background screens, the glass-free 3D animations of athletic action and the innovative lighting of the cauldron, which will involve a virtual torchbearer, will be among some of the showpiece moments of the ceremony, according to Sha Xiaolan, chief director and chief producer of the ceremony.

"More importantly, all of the technology, props and programs will help us present the rich history and profound culture of Hangzhou and Zhejiang, as well as the Chinese people's wish to unite all Asian nations, in an aesthetic and intensive way," Sha said at a news conference introducing the ceremony on Thursday.

The entire production is planned to last for about 115 minutes, beginning with a welcome show, followed by the delegation parade, traditional protocols and the main artistic performance.

The creative team has run five rehearsals since Aug 29, with preparations adjusted and fine-tuned to guarantee a smooth and glitch-free performance on Saturday night.



A light show around the Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre Stadium illuminates the city's skyline. The stadium will host another stunning display on Saturday when it stages the Asian Games' opening ceremony. HAGPP

"The final three dress rehearsals have helped us to accurately complete drills on all the equipment and visual elements. We are confident that we will put on a dazzling show the world will remember," Sha said.

A backup plan to perform an abridged version of the ceremony at a nearby indoor venue has also been prepared in case of any extreme weather, while the transport arrangements for the arrival and departure of about 50,000 spectators in a safe and efficient way have also been tested fully, said Li Yiqing, spokesperson for the operation center of the opening and closing ceremonies.

The concept of hosting large-scale events in an eco-friendly, sustainable and economic way has guided the production team to switch the traditional fireworks show with a virtual display projected onto curtain screens instead, and to use zero-emission methanol as the fuel to ignite the main flame.

"We have approached the event by following the guiding principles of delivering the ceremony in a green, streamlined, safe and excellent way," said Li.

The highlight of the show will see the sky lit up by millions of virtual sparks, each representing a participant of the online torch relay, which

will eventually form the shape of a person who will descend to the stage and light the main cauldron together with the final real-life torchbearer.

The online torch relay has attracted over 100 million users since the program was launched in June.

"It's the first time that such a method has been used to ignite the main flame of a major international sporting event, a method that has stood out from the previous patterns and reflects the essence of sport, which is to involve people," said Sha.

"It also conveys the message of building a global community of all mankind for a bright, shared future."

The artistic performances will feature local characteristics, such as the autumn equinox, one of China's 24 solar terms that celebrates the harvest season in fall, the surging tide that has witnessed the historical changes of Hangzhou and the Liangzhu civilization, which dates back some 5,000 years.

During the delegation parade, 10 iconic sightseeing spots at Hangzhou's famous West Lake will be projected onto the oval-shaped floor screen, allowing athletes from across Asia, and the audience, to enjoy the city's picturesque scenery in an immersive way.

Big birthday bash boosts the feel-good factor

By **WANG XIN** in Hangzhou
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A group birthday party was held at the 19th Asian Games' Main Media Center in Hangzhou on Wednesday night, creating unique, shared memories for over 40 volunteers born in September.

It featured colorful performances, such as singing and dancing, video messages from family members and heartwarming wishes from other volunteers.

"The celebration took on the

theme of growth to create feelings of encouragement and warmth, and to recognize their potential ... to make the 19th Asian Games a complete success," said their supervisor Fu Jin.

A total of 583 volunteers from Zhejiang University have been providing services at the MMC since Sept 9. They include 24 international students from nine countries, including Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Republic of Korea. The Chinese volunteers come from 16 ethnic groups, including Han, Zhuang, Dong, Yi and Kazak.

"The volunteers' diversity reflects the games' inclusiveness," Fu said.

Lee Khar Jie, a Zhejiang University junior from Malaysia who was born in September, said: "I was greatly moved at the party, especially when watching the heartwarming video messages. Even though we might not have known each other for too long, I feel encouraged, remembered and taken good care of by them as very good friends and teammates."

The party took place at the MMC's V-home, a 700-square-meter space

set up by and catering to the center's volunteers.

About 37,600 volunteers in total have been recruited for the Hangzhou Games, including students from 46 universities in Zhejiang province, international representatives, and specialists in such areas as medical care and rare languages. Most are aged around 20.

They have been nicknamed *xiao qinghe*, which literally translates as "little lotuses" and is pronounced like the word for "genial" in standard Mandarin.



A volunteer readies cakes for a group birthday party on Wednesday. WANG XIN / CHINA DAILY

Hangzhou ready to host smart, safe Asian Games

High-tech systems and personnel are primed to deliver

By LIN SHUJUAN in Hangzhou
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Hangzhou, along with five other cities in Zhejiang province, is ready to host a smart and safe Asian Games, which will officially open on Saturday, said Chen Weiqiang, chief spokesman for the Hangzhou Asian Games and the Hangzhou Asian Para Games.

"The Hangzhou Asian Games — the third Asiad to be hosted in China — is an Asian Games held in the new era. Many high-tech applications have been installed to deliver a smart and safe Games," said Chen, who is also executive secretary-general of the Hangzhou Asian Games Organizing Committee.

"We have overcome a lot of challenges and are now fully equipped to successfully hold the Games. All competition equipment and support and operations teams are in place," he added.

For the first time, "online torchbearers" from around the world will together light the flame of the Games during the opening ceremony, Chen said.

The digital torch relay was launched on June 15, in sync with the physical one. More than 100 million people online, who passed on the torch by shaking their mobile phones, had participated in the digital relay as of Wednesday.

"We've opened a new era in our preparations for the Asiad; it is the era of digitalization," Chen said, adding that smart control systems, enabled by 5G technology, internet of things, big data and artificial intelligence, among other technologies, have been installed at major competition venues.

"Smart viewing" is on offer for those keen on having an immersive experience of the Games without buying a ticket, according to spokesman Mao Genhong, who is also deputy secretary-general of the Hangzhou Asian Games Organizing Committee.

"Space is limited at the venues, so many people will want to watch the Games via online viewing platforms," Mao said.

Tickets for the competitions were in such demand that most of them



Volunteers practice raking the sand for the Asian Games baseball and softball competitions at the Shaoxing Baseball & Softball Sports Centre. WANG GANG / CHINA NEWS SERVICE



Asian Games elements can be seen on trains in Hangzhou as the city, along with five others in Zhejiang province, prepares to host a smart and safe event. XINHUA

were sold out soon after they went on sale online on July 8. When offline ticket sales opened on Aug 23, there were not many tickets left to sell, according to Mao.

Almost all tickets released so far have been purchased, particularly those for popular competitions such as badminton.

"During 74 days of ticket sales (as of Tuesday), we've had 340 million visitors to the Asian Games website," Mao said.

To ensure a safe Games, the HAG-OC has built a three-dimensional medical emergency network, which

consists of the medical points and clinics at the venues, the comprehensive outpatient clinics in the Asian Games Village, designated hospitals, emergency transport ambulances and ambulance helicopters, according to Mao.

"We have set up a total of 133 infirmaries, 127 FOP (field of play) medical points, and 83 medical points for spectators, which are equipped to provide basic medical treatment, first aid, and referrals," Mao said.

"For those sports with a high probability of injury, such as mountain

"We have overcome a lot of challenges and are now fully equipped to successfully hold the Games."

Chen Weiqiang, chief spokesman for the Hangzhou Asian Games

biking, we have set up medical helicopters to prepare for life-saving rescue. Altogether we have 1,884 medical staff on duty to ensure medical security during the Games."

In addition, the organizing committee has carried out a series of preparations for the prevention and control of infectious diseases, the safety of drinking water, and the health and safety of the public, according to Mao.

"We have established a smart infectious disease monitoring and early-warning system, which includes real-time monitoring of people who have a fever, diarrhea and other symptoms," Mao said. "This will allow us to carry out emergency treatment and timely detection."

Facts and figures

- Hangzhou is the third city in China to host the Asian Games, following Beijing in 1990 and Guangzhou in 2010. The 2026 event will be held in Japan.

- With 12,417 registered athletes, the Hangzhou Asian Games feature more participants than the Olympics. About 11,000 athletes competed in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, and about 10,500 are set to participate at the Paris Games in 2024.



- The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is set to compete in the Hangzhou Asian Games, marking the country's first participation in an international multi-sport event since the 2018 Asian Games in Indonesia. Nearly 200 athletes are expected to represent the DPRK in Hangzhou, as it brings its three-year hiatus from elite international sports to an end.

- Esports makes its debut as an official medal sport at the Hangzhou Asian Games.

- For the first time in Asian Games history, boxing will be a qualifying event for the Paris 2024 Olympics.

- This Asiad aims to be as environmentally friendly as possible, and has adopted a low-carbon green policy with sustainable venues powered by "green" electricity.

- The eco-friendly approach of the Hangzhou Asian Games includes the inauguration of just 12 new venues out of the 56 being used. The others have all been renovated or repurposed for the event.



- Advanced technology at the Hangzhou Asian Games features mosquito eradication bots and fully automated cleaning machines.

- Hangzhou Asian Games is the first cashless Games, with Hangzhou being a cashless city.

- Hangzhou boasts the world's largest bike sharing system, with more than 75,000 bicycles available for public use around the city.

OCA ATHLETES COMMITTEE ELECTIONS DATE 21-09-2023
TOTAL VOTES CAST: 1484
TOTAL VOTES CAST %: 12.5%



“Surging Tides” — The emblem

Designed by Yuan Youmin, a student at China Academy of Art, the emblem consists of six elements: a Chinese fan, the Qiantang River, a tidal bore, a running track, the Wi-Fi signal icon and the glowing red sun of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA). The fan represents the cultural heritage unique to the southern regions of the Yangtze River. The Qiantang River and a tidal bore are the core elements of the emblem, showcasing the natural landscapes of Hangzhou and the courage of the people. The running track represents the sports themselves. The Wi-Fi signal icon illustrates that Hangzhou is a national hub for the digital economy.

The emblem symbolizes that the great cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era is gathering greater momentum and the unity of the OCA Family, marching forward, hand in hand. According to the Hangzhou Asian Games Organizing Committee (HAGOC), the emblem embodies the character of our times and the Olympic spirit. Original and highly recognizable, the emblem also underscores the host city's profound heritage and singularity, expressing people's aspirations for staging a successful Asian Games and building a community of a shared future for Asia and mankind.

“Eternal Flame” — The torch

The design was completed by a team led by Bao Tianqin, Chen Yunjia and Gu Conglian, teachers at China Academy of Art, and guided by Wang Yun, dean of the Industrial Design and Research Institute at the academy.

The torch for the 19th Asian Games was named “Eternal Flame” and its design was inspired by the Liangzhu Culture, dating back nearly 5,000 years, which is a testament to the longevity of Chinese civilization. The torch was shaped in a way that “grows” from bottom to top, with an overall height of 73 centimeters and a net weight of 1.2 kilograms.

The base of the torch is embossed with eight water veins symbolizing the evolution of civilization and representing the eight major river systems in Zhejiang. The torch body is designed based on the evolution of dermatoglyphic fingerprint patterns specific to the Liangzhu Culture, which are naturally intertwined and exquisite.

It is named “Eternal Flame” to illustrate how Chinese civilization has been passed on from generation to generation. The top of the torch is characterized by structural elements to emulate jade *cong* that was discovered at the Liangzhu site, and is threaded with Chinese heritage, natural scenery and local customs. This pays tribute to the inheritance of Chinese culture and simultaneously represents ancient, modern and future China. The design is intended to shine a brilliant light on this hollowed part in the history of Chinese civilization.

“Eternal Flame” also demonstrates the intelligent manufacturing capabilities of Zhejiang province. The raw materials are digitally mapped to the blockchain, and are fully traceable to ensure authenticity. For the metal part, the AA 1070 rotary-forming process was adopted with the surface being laser-engraved and anodized. The grip, made of recycled raw materials, is eco-friendly, light and easy to hold, and the fuel is heated with biomass gas, which is safe, clean and reliable.

Natural icons of design

The local environment, culture and technology combine in Games' vibrant graphic design schemes, **Ma Zhenhuan** reports

‘Meeting the World’ and “Harmony of Colors”, the core graphics and color schemes of the 19th Asian Games, blend elements of silk and internet technology in a beautiful array of designs.

They convey a key message of unification for the Olympic Council of Asia members, as well as representing the vibrant, modern city of Hangzhou, according to the chief designers.

Incorporating elements of sports, Chinese culture, and Hangzhou with international aesthetics, the design of the core graphics and color schemes mirrors the visual signage of the Games' emblem, mascots, slogan, and sports pictograms. Altogether, they create the overall atmosphere and main aesthetic of the 19th Asian Games.

The core graphics scheme, “Meeting the World”, draws inspiration from silk, a quintessential cultural element of host city Hangzhou. Hailed as a paradise on earth by Italian explorer Marco Polo, the city was a key link on the Maritime Silk Road.

“The idea is derived from mountains and rivers in Zhejiang, as well as smart-cloud computing, Hangzhou's backbone industry,” said Cheng Zhaohui, designer of the core graphics and professor at the China Academy of Art.

With Hangzhou considered China's “internet capital”, the design team added different-colored spots, which can be superimposed to create a surface similar to a visual representation of a cloud network, Cheng said.

Entitled “Harmony of Colors”, the color sys-

tem is dominated by Rainbow Purple and complemented by Glowing Red, Mist White, Laurus Yellow, Glimmering Blue, and Lake-and-Mountain Green. Varying hues not only merge into each other through juxtaposition and overlapping, but also add luster to Rainbow Purple.

Compared with the previous edition of the Asian Games, this time the colors are presented as a gradient, according to Guo Jinyong, the designer of the color scheme.

Guo said the colors appear to morph if viewed under different lighting.

“Poetry is the source of inspiration for our creation. The main idea of ‘Harmony of Colors’ comes from a poem by Su Shi, a poet of the Song Dynasty (960–1279). The poem reads: ‘West Lake may be compared to Xi Shi (one of the “four beauties” in ancient China); Whether she is richly adorned or plainly dressed,” said Guo.



Each color was inspired by a poem describing Hangzhou.

Rainbow Purple was inspired by a line by Tang Dynasty poet Bai Juyi (772-846). “At sunrise riverside flowers more red than fire; In spring green river waves grow as blue as sapphire,” the poem in question, *Memories of Jiangnan*, reads.

Glowing Red was inspired by the transient twilight described in *The Lakeside Temple at Dawn*, written by Song Dynasty poet Yang Wanli (1127-1206): “Green lotus leaves outspread as far as boundless sky; Pink lotus blossoms take from sunshine a new dye.”

Glimmering Blue, the color of clear skies and water ripples, was inspired by the Su Shi line: “The brimming waves delight the eye on sunny days; The dimming hills present a rare view in rainy haze.”

Laurus Yellow, representing the laurel flow-

“Shan Shui” — The medal

Designed by Zhang Junjie, director of the Industrial Design Department of the China Academy of Art, and led by Jiang Yuqin and other design teams, the medal of the 19th Asian Games takes its shape from ceremonial jade *cong*, representing the Liangzhu Culture. The traditional circular medal is encompassed by a rounded square border, making it truly unique and highly recognizable.

The design on the face of “Shan Shui” depicts the natural landscape of Hangzhou — protruding lines outline misty hills, a rippling lake and undulating mountains on the front, while the rear features the logo of the Olympic Council of Asia.

“Shan Shui” highlights Hangzhou's ecological importance, with its beautiful scenery, clear water and rolling hills. The depiction of mountains symbolizes the heights that athletes aspire to conquer. On the way to the summit, athletes strive and challenge themselves, and surmount one peak after another.

The ribbon is hand-stitched on both sides with a brocade pattern and features environmentally friendly printing techniques.

The bridge-shaped buckle at the top of the ribbon symbolizes the famous water towns of the Yangtze River Delta region.

er and fragrance, was also inspired by Bai's poem.

Lake-and-Mountain Green was cited in a line from a poem penned by Gong Zizhen, a literary master in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

Mist White was inspired by the poetry of Liu Yong (987–1053), from the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127).

The color scheme with its silk-themed core graphics showcases time-honored Oriental aesthetics.

The designers also wanted people to consider the colors' impact in unity, hinting at the importance of solidarity during the Asian Games.

The core graphics and color system have been applied to venue decoration, TV broadcasts, ceremonies, cultural activities, urban landscaping, vehicles, uniforms, tickets and licensed products, according to the Hangzhou Asian Games Organizing Committee.

Fang Xiaoying contributed to this story.

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“Memories of Jiangnan” — The mascots

Designed by an art team led by Zhang Wen and Yang Yihong, two young teachers from the China Academy of Art, the mascots of the 19th Asian Games are a group of robots proclaiming the host city's profound heritage and contemporary vibrancy. The combination — Memories of Jiangnan — derives its name from a poem by Bai Juyi. This great Tang Dynasty (618-907) poet wrote, “When I recall Jiangnan, Hangzhou brings back most of my memories.” The name itself speaks volumes about Hangzhou's heritage, scenic splendor and drive for innovation.

The event's mascots, Congcong, Lianlian and Chenchen, were designed with the cultural and technical prowess of Hangzhou in mind. Inspired by the host city's rich heritage, designers of the mascots for the Games made the trio of cute characters to represent the three UNESCO cultural heritage sites in Hangzhou, namely the Archaeological Ruins of Liangzhu Culture, West Lake and the Grand Canal.

The mascots, transcending time and space, are designed to inspire everyone to reach for their dreams. They stand for not only the joy of sports, but also the culmination of cultural and economic development, so much so, that they match with the character of Hangzhou and proudly join the ranks of the emblem and slogan of the 19th Asian Games. The trio of robots acts as an envoy of the Olympic spirit, peace and friendship. Together, they are calling out to Asia and the world, inviting everyone to meet in Hangzhou for the 19th Asian Games.

“Meeting the World” — The core graphics

Designed by Cheng Zhaohui, a professor of the School of Design Art, China Academy of Art, under the theme of “Meeting the world”, the core graphics of the 19th Asian Games are inspired by silk, a quintessential cultural element of Hangzhou, representing its importance along the ancient Maritime Silk Road. The design incorporates both traditional and modern styles, with a combined approach of static and dynamic touches to depict the graceful yet flexible, fine yet smooth, gentle yet vibrant traits of silk unfurling in the air. It represents the artistic concept of “meeting the world”.

The core graphics imagine the OCA family's reunion in Hangzhou and the diversified Asian sports culture to be showcased by the 19th Asian Games. Additionally, the silk unveils to reveal a modern version of the painting scroll *Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains*, the traditional masterpiece depicting the oriental fascinations of the regions south of the Yangtze River. The interweaving elements, such as mountains and rivers in watercolor or ink wash, and smart cloud computing constitute an expansive space of visual delights and boundless imagination.

The five lines in the core graphics are superimposed to outline the dynamic movement of the ribbon. The softer part on the left represents the West Lake, the middle represents the surging water of Qiantang River, and the right hand side features the water of the Grand Canal.



Setting the tones for a memorable Games

Visual design and color system tap into the unique landscapes, history and culture of the host city and the Jiangnan region, **Ma Zhenhuan** reports

Glowing Red

Laurus Yellow

Lake and Mountain Green

Rainbow Purple

Glimmering Blue

Mist White

The mascots for the 19th Asian Games, the fan-shaped emblem of the event, the torch, and the medal design, not only fully encompass the unique aesthetics of the Games, but also those of the host city and of Jiangnan, the region south of the Yangtze River.

These designs showcase the characteristics of Hangzhou and China and contribute to a precious cultural and artistic legacy.

Song Jianming, a professor at the China Academy of Art, has been engaged in the overall visual image design of the Asian Games and the Asian Para Games, including the emblem, mascots, torches, medals and the pictograms representing the different events, as well as the Games' core graphics and color system.

"Showcasing Asian style, highlighting Chinese characteristics, and embodying the charm of distinctive Jiangnan culture are the three principles followed in the visual image design of the Asian Games," Song said.

Song added that the Asian Games is the largest comprehensive sports event in Asia, which means that the design should reflect the diverse cultural characteristics of all the competing countries and regions. Meanwhile, as the host of the 19th Asian Games, it is also necessary to demonstrate the poetic and aesthetic characteristics of Jiangnan.

"Harmony of Colors" — The color system

Designer: Guo Jinyong, executive director of the Color Research Institute of the China Academy of Art, conceived the color system of the 19th Asian Games, under the theme "harmony of colors". It is inspired by a famous poem by Su Shi from the Song Dynasty (960-1279), which reads: "West Lake may be compared to Xi Shi (one of the 'four beauties' in ancient China); Whether she is richly adorned or plainly dressed". Drawing on the essence of Chinese color culture and the characteristics of Hangzhou, the designers have developed a color system dominated by Rainbow Purple, and complemented by Glowing Red, Mist White, Laurus Yellow, Glimmering Blue, and Lake-and-Mountain Green, which altogether exquisitely depict lucid waters and lush mountains, and a vibrant city embracing innovation and sports.

Rainbow Purple is the dominant color of "Surging Tides", the emblem of the 19th Asian Games, a color implying reunion and unity, vibrancy and innovation. Imbued with the ethos of "the sun and the moon reflecting the glory of the new era", it conveys an auspicious and energetic image and underlines the visual identity of the 19th Asian Games.

Among the auxiliary colors, Glowing Red is inspired by transient twilight, Mist White by light ink wash painting, Laurus Yellow by laurel flowers and their fragrance, Glimmering Blue by clear skies and ripples in the water, and Lake-and-Mountain Green by the lush mountains and natural landscapes. Varying hues of the colors not only merge into each other, and are juxtaposed and overlap, but also add luster to the leading color of Rainbow Purple.

As one of the main design elements, the emblem is not just the symbol of the event but also a foundation for the designs of other visual products, including the slogan and mascots. It was inspired by Hangzhou's natural landscapes, which feature unique Jiangnan characteristics, especially the river.

Rainbow Purple is the dominant color of the "Surging Tides" emblem. It was inspired by the great Tang Dynasty (618-907) poet Bai Juyi, as he says in *Memories of Jiangnan*, "At sunrise riverside flowers more red than fire; In spring green river waves grow as blue as sapphire."

Inspired by the main host city's rich heritage, designers of the mascots for the Games, Zhang Wen and

Yang Yihong, made the trio of cute characters to represent the three UNESCO cultural heritage sites in Hangzhou.

Having lived in Hangzhou for more than 10 years, the two teachers at the Hangzhou-based China Academy of Art drew inspiration from every corner of the city and dug deep into the local culture, and that of the city.

Song said that the aesthetics of the current era not only feature local characteristics but also international ones, noting that beauty is a universal language.

"Creating a coherent aesthetics system for the Games is necessary for the world to remember the 19th Asian Games and the host city even

after the event concludes."

When thinking of sports, images of physical fitness, agility and athletics are often invoked. The labeling of "aesthetics" comes more as an afterthought, a side effect of an athletic performance, rather than an imperative characteristic of sports.

According to the Hangzhou Asian Games Organizing Committee (HAGOC), the aesthetic system of the 19th Asian Games is a harmonious and unified cultural and artistic one, with features of the host city and invocations of the Olympic spirit.

The 1990 Beijing Asian Games let the world know about China in the early stages of reform and opening-up, as it was the first large-scale international sports event hosted by

China. The 2010 Guangzhou Asian Games then showcased the country's remarkable ongoing development. Now, this year's Asian Games will enable the world to see the current confidence of the Chinese people, said Song.

Yang Meng, deputy director of the Press & Public Relations Department of the HAGOC, hailed the visual designs for the Games as the embodiment of the unique qualities of the city, such as the well-protected natural environment and the fast-developing internet industry.

"As the most important and direct visual element of the Asian Games, the mascots should be able to reflect the overall style of the 19th Asian Games, and also be creative and friendly. Factors such as 3D effects, materials, and marketing should also be put into consideration," Song said.

Almost everything about the host city — including its natural landscapes, history, culture, technology and people — is the source for the aesthetics of the Asian Games.

Visual elements such as the emblem, mascots, venue colors and sports pictograms, the most recognizable symbols of the event, are part of the system. What's more, cultural activities, ideology and merchandise also reflect the Games' aesthetics.

Fang Xiaoying in Hangzhou contributed to this story.

Landscapers ensure an even greener Games

Hangzhou undergoes horticultural makeover prior to hosting continental sporting gala

By XU HAOYU in Hangzhou
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Hangzhou has given its landscaping a new green sheen and floral flourish ahead of the Asian Games.

The event's host city had expanded urban green spaces by more than four square kilometers and constructed 32 provincial-level public parks by the end of July.

It also planted over 28,000 trees along the roadsides, adding foliage to more than 260 kilometers of subway lines and 50 kilometers of expressway. The provincial capital likewise upgraded nearly 440 flower containers with nearly 50,000 seasonal blooms. Two-dozen downtown locations underwent other horticultural improvements, such as reseeding and enhanced seedling care. And Hangzhou also planted an additional 12,000 trees and over 1 million shrubs, while cultivating floral arrangements at more than 200 destinations.

It opened the Asian Flower Garden in Qianjiang Century Park on Sept 6.

"We've been preparing for the games for nearly three years," said municipal gardens and cultural rel-

ics bureau official Cheng Erping.

Another official from the bureau told Qianjiang Evening News: "The games is an international sports extravaganza and serves as an important platform for showcasing Hangzhou's charm and achievements. This calls upon landscaping experts to come together to present the region's beauty to the world."

Cheng points out Hangzhou is known for its landscapes, so the recent upgrades should integrate nature with its unique urbanity.

"We've manipulated the blossoming periods of Hangzhou's signature blooms, including osmanthus, lotuses and roses," she explained.

"We're using our technical capabilities to ensure a profusion of blossoms for guests from around the world."

More than 230 projects have been initiated in the city's Gongshu district to improve roadways, landscaping and lighting. They cover 19 categories, such as games' venues, thoroughfares, hotels, commercial complexes and residential communities. The intersection of Fengqi, Qingchun and Huanchengxi roads, as well as another site at No 8 Huanchengxi Road, now host "pocket" parks.



Many renovated and newly created green spaces in downtown Hangzhou provide a natural welcome to athletes and guests from around the world. GAO ERQIANG AND WEI XIAOHAO / CHINA DAILY

One of these mini green spaces features a flowerbed arrangement called *Yunduanshaishi* (Cloud Race) that's shaped like a giant fan decorated with such elements as the games' emblem, osmanthus blooms and athletes. Red flowers spell out characters that read, "It's Hangzhou I adore", quoting Tang Dynasty (618-907) poet Bai Juyi's poem, *Memories of Jiangnan*.

The *Xinhua* (Eternal Flame) flower display looks like commemorative coins "engraved" with Hangzhou's UNESCO World Heritage sites — West Lake, Liangzhu and the Grand Canal — as well as water ripples and flames to depict the passing of the games' torch. *Xihushengjing* (West Lake Scenic Beauty) uses lotus leaves and folding fans to harken to the iconic water body's splendor.

Ge Juan, who lives nearby, says: "The Asian Games aren't just about the athletes' performances but are a

festival for people from home and abroad. And that celebration has begun."

A pocket park on the north side of the historical district's Dadou Road is, perhaps, indicative of the improvements made in the lead-up to the games, which have also attracted a growing number of visitors from the neighboring areas. Authorities improved lighting, trimmed overgrown branches that blocked walkways and planted foliage in previously barren soil. They also increased botanical variety while planting over 400 square meters of shrubs, including hydrangeas and Chinese pink herbs. Part of the lighting improvements include illuminated art installations that assume such shapes as dandelions and the moon.

"There wasn't much to see in this area before," said local resident Chen Yi.

"But it's a different story now. At night, you can read ancient poems projected on the ground a few steps in front of a light that's shaped like the moon. Sometimes, at night, I can't help but recite the poem to both the moon by my side and the moon in the sky."



Digital tailor is the perfect fit

Cutting-edge digital technology ensures the ceremonial team and volunteers at the Asian Games look sharp,
Wang Xin reports



The ceremonial dress is an improved cheongsam, or *qipao*, which reflects the traditional beauty of the East, with its pattern designs mainly inspired by elements from the Qiantang River tide and the "Ten Scenes of West Lake" in Hangzhou.



Tapping into the host city's high-tech ethos, the design and production process of the ceremonial attire for the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, made by Boya Fashion Co in Shaoxing of Zhejiang province, was heavily influenced by digitalization.

The outfit sets include award ceremony dresses for women with matching footwear, and uniforms for male flag bearers, which feature coordinated ties and shoes. Boya produced more than 800 ceremonial dresses and over 300 uniforms, as well as more than 20,000 sets of clothing for volunteers.

Themed "Clouds in Twilight", the ceremonial attire is one of the important visual images of the Hangzhou Games, designed to reflect the spirit of the Games and display Chinese culture.

Li Yajian, president of Boya Fashion, pointed out that the ceremonial dress is an improved cheongsam, or *qipao*,

which reflects the traditional beauty of the East, with its pattern designs mainly inspired by elements from the Qiantang River tide and the "Ten Scenes of West Lake" in Hangzhou. These include: the Su Causeway; Breeze-ruffled Lotuses at Quyuan Garden; Lingered Snow on Broken Bridge; Leifeng Pagoda at Dusk and Three Pools Mirroring the Moon, which, as the name suggests, should be visited at sunset or on moonlit nights.

The colors are in keeping with the color system of the Games, consisting of Rainbow Purple, Laurus Yellow, Mist White and Lake-and-Mountain Green. The flag bearer uniforms mainly feature Laurus Yellow and Mist White, with extra orange decoration on the ties, which symbolizes the autumn harvest.

"Actually, it was not easy to get this opportunity to serve the Games," Li recalled.

"Our application of the digitalized techniques, customized services and prompt response to the Games' personalized demands were the main things that helped us stand out among the competition. We have made hundreds of adjustments to the details," Li added.

Established in 2000, Boya Fashion has made a concerted effort in implementing digitalization into its tailor-made services since 2014. Now a leader in customized clothing services, Boya Fashion has taken its products to markets in Europe and South America, and is also looking to introduce its digital tailoring services to more overseas markets.

"We have been improving our digital tailoring system for personalized clothing customization, so as to better cater to diverse individual preferences, body types and styles through innovative and distinctive designs," said Li.

"The making of the ceremonial attire is greatly different from the traditional production process. We started with a digital blueprint incorporating dynamic 3D effects," Li further explained. "After the design was complete, we ordered the customized fabrics, which are specially made from mulberry silk. Then, our skilled artisans drew the patterns by hand, followed by precise structural tailoring and hand sewing."

"Normally, it would take about five days to complete one single set of the ceremonial attire," Li added.

It is worth noting that the silk fabric used will not only be comfortable and cool for the wearer, but also symbolizes the city of Hangzhou, which is known as China's "silk capital."

"Digital techniques have played a vital role in the making of the ceremonial attire, especially in the design and tailoring, as we have to ensure the dresses and uniforms can perfectly fit

the wearers' different body shapes," said Li.

With augmented reality technology, the company's cutting-edge system can automatically generate precise measurements for tailored suits, based on digital data converted from a set of three-dimensional front, side, and rear images.

"That means the attire can be produced to match individual's body from the start, that they will not have to bother with multiple traditional measurements or have to try the dress on in person to make adjustments," said Li.

The ceremonial attire, which will be in the international spotlight at every award ceremony, is expected to showcase the culture and characteristics of both Hangzhou, as the host city, and China to audiences from across the world, according to the organizing committee of the Hangzhou Asian Games.