

Color Ningbo: A Coloring Game with Stunning Works and Backstories

Striving towards a modern coastal metropolis
建设现代化滨海大都市



An online coloring game about Ningbo in Eastern China was organized by *Ningbo Evening News* since late January to celebrate Chinese New Year. Among the city landmarks named for the drawings of global participants, people can find familiar “faces” such as Tianyi Pavilion, Drum Tower (*Gulou*), Tianfeng Tower, and Moon Lake Twin Swallows. The event successfully concluded on February 13th, featuring over 3000 creative artworks from both local citizens and foreign expats living in Ningbo. Backstories of some participants were shared and their close affinity with this coastal city in Zhejiang province was revealed.

City landmarks in the eyes of Foreign Expats

A unique and creative drawing of Tianfeng Tower made by Seyedeh Sara Ahmadi Nishaboori stands out for its special design (3650 colored calligraphic words of *Ningbo in Chinese characters* 宁波). Sara intended to use the 3650 colored Chinese words to symbolize her ten years of studying and living in Ningbo and send her best wishes for the promising future of Ningbo. This Iranian girl is currently a freshman at Zhejiang University and an enthusiast for Chinese culture who speaks both Mandarin and Ningbo dialects. Having lived in China for nearly two decades, she has first-hand experience of traditional Chinese customs and history, especially those of Ningbo.

Emily Hyeon-ah Godlewski, a four-year-old American student at the Access International Academy Ningbo (AIAN), also submitted her coloring page of Drum Tower. Her Drum Tower embraced a rainbow-themed rendition with many hues, reflecting her refreshing naivety and happy life in Ningbo. It was learned that the strong keenness of Emily on this coloring game and her choice of drawing Drum Tower stemmed

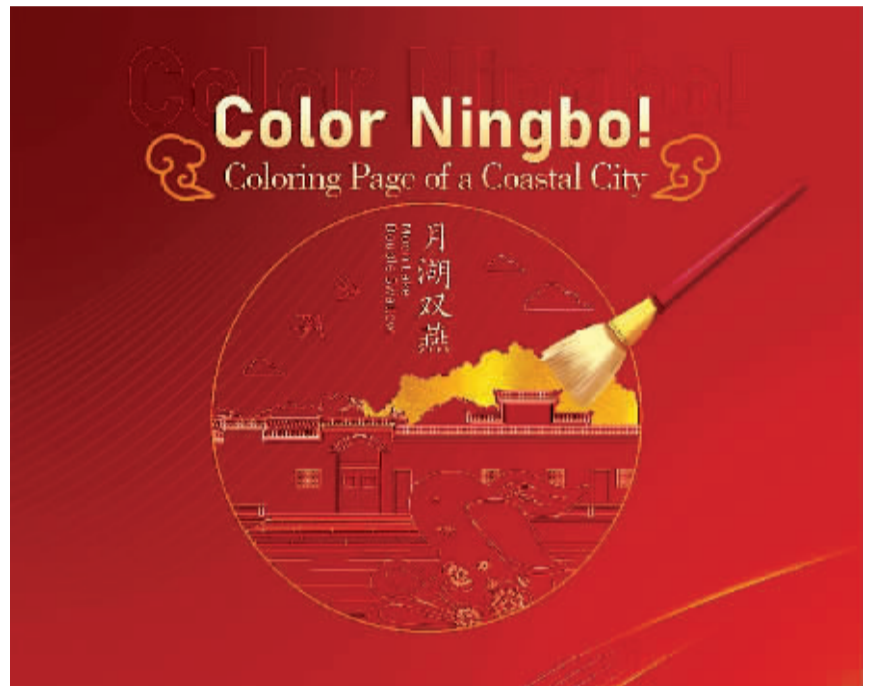
from the tower’s time-honored history and its perfect integration of ancient Chinese and Roman architectural styles.

Inspiring Story behind a Coloring Page of Tianfeng Tower

Amidst thousands of artworks, a special coloring of Tianfeng Tower—bathed in a gentle layer of red and orange light—deeply touched the journalist of *Ningbo Evening News*. The streetlights in the back of Tianfeng Tower were colored brilliant yellow and adorned with a zodiac rabbit to send new year’s wishes to Ningbo citizens. It is a work made by Chen Xuanyi, a hearing-impaired student who came to Ningbo around a year ago; she created this coloring during the Chinese New Year holiday. As revealed from her father and teacher, Chen is a positive and strong-willed girl. Painting is one of her favorite pastimes, and she hopes to go to university in the future.

Wishes from Local Students

Xu Nuo, a high school student at Ningbo Huaguang School, shared a coloring page depicting Ningbo’s landmarks in the ink-and-wash painting style, a traditional Chinese ink brush technique that can be traced back to the Tang Dynasty (690-705). She employed this special method to renovate her work with the time-honored history of this coastal city. The city landmarks on the coloring page are cloaked in a layer of misty softness on a tranquil night, portraying an image typical of Jiangnan (*South of the Yangtze*) dwellings that are also integrated perfectly with modern buildings. Follow-up interviews with her mother revealed that Xu has developed a strong interest in traditional Chinese culture, especially ancient Chinese architecture, from an early age. She has also been passionate about excursions around China in her spare



Poster by Lin Ying

time to inspire her artwork.

Unique would be an appropriate word for describing an exceptional coloring page completed using ballpoint pens of different colors in this game. Du Anqi, a local high school sophomore, created this artwork of nighttime Tianfeng Tower against the backdrop of streetlights. The tower’s main colors are red and orange, emitting warm yellow rays of light and harmonizing with the dark purple night sky. When asked about her choice of ballpoint pens rather than watercolor pens, she emphasized that ballpoint pens can flawlessly blend colors, blur crisp lines, and highlight the main colors. Unlike Du’s ancestral home in Shandong province, Ningbo has a mild winter and colorful natural scenery, allowing her to enjoy contrasting sentiments when celebrating Chinese New Year.

Another local high school student, Lao Haiming, expressed her best wishes to

Ningbo and her feelings for the new year on a digital coloring page. “The creation lasted about two hours. As a Ningbo citizen, I would like to present the beauty of nighttime Drum Tower with shiny lights on; it’s also the landmark I lived nearby and is familiar to me,” explained Lao. She also emphasized the rich culture and long history of time-honored Moon Lake, Tianyi Museum, and Ningbo’s City God Temple (*Chen-guangmiao*), particularly their harmonious integration with modern elements.

This activity was to provide local citizens, expats, and the world at large with a window into Ningbo’s history, culture, and modernization while sending new year wishes and embracing a new life.

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