

Passion to Dance

All over the world, there are diverse groups of dancers, actors, or singers that represent the culture of Asian Arts. Whenever I hear the unique sound of Chinese music playing and witness dancers dancing to the music, joy and happiness fulfills me to see that the Asian Arts are still preserved and alive. Even though Asian Arts are rare as we usually see many hip hop and ballet dancers nowadays, I nevertheless hesitate to express my own culture through Asian Arts dancing. To recall, ever since I was little, my parents would take me to Chinese festivals where I first observed Chinese groups dancing with ribbons and fans. Also, a disabled Chinese group that danced and played music motivated me to first try dancing on my own. These awe-inspiring groups challenged me to yearn for improvement and self-satisfaction. Furthermore, various types of Asian Arts dancing and the Chinese Disabled Arts Troupe inspired me to discover my own character and become the dedicated Chinese dancer that I am today.

Beautiful dancers in exceptional costumes performing always leave me speechless. Mongolian, Chinese, and Vietnamese dancing are examples of different varieties of Asian Arts dancing that occurs around the world. As a child, I would watch dancers with different, stunning costumes during performances or on television. I remember seeing girls dancing with umbrellas, swaying to a Vietnamese song. But when I turn my head towards a different direction, I would see girls in red costumes with high boots, moving their arms in an eagle technique. Also, I was surprised to distinguish dancers imitating various animals such as the peacock, snake, and lion, while graceful dancers with long dresses and umbrellas contradicted the others with their graceful movements. There were so many different types of Asian Arts dancing, but as I grew older, I realized that they might not be so different after all. With each and every one of their bright smiles, I came to the conclusion that these dissimilar dances all have something in common: the passion and dedication reveal as they happily sway to the Chinese music. Nonetheless, watching these different dancers of all types of Asian ethnicities influenced

me to not just continue on as a mere observer of Asian Arts dancing, but to experience the beauty of it myself. I was enthusiastic to endeavor all the dissimilar forms of the dance after viewing the spectacular routines. Therefore, at a tender age, I first began Chinese dancing in AATF, hoping to try diverse cultural dancing and become as beautiful as the dancers that left me in amazement.

Similarly, one group of dancers changed my perspective of Asian Arts dancing forever. This particular organization, the Chinese Disabled Arts Troupe, taught me to embrace the magnificence of Asian Arts dancing. To be honest, at one point in my life, I thought, "Why is Chinese dancing important anyways? Not many people at my school share this commonality with me... I wish I danced hip hop instead of Chinese dancing!" Soon enough, I realized that I was wrong to have said these words. As soon as my mom and dance instructor exposed me to this Chinese disabled arts troupe, my viewpoint changed instantly. This group consisted of dancers that are mainly deaf and are unable to speak. At first, I felt sympathetic for them because they couldn't hear the music, let alone speak their minds when they have a problem. However, as soon as I observed their performance, I envied their graceful figures as they cooperated to create a fabulous performance that mesmerized the audience and me. Even though these dancers greatly struggled with counting beats and communicating, they all showed their self-reliance, integrity, self-confidence, and self-improvement by dedicating longer hours of practice than most people do. These dancers set aside their own obstacles and disabilities to come together as a group to show everyone that the disabled has the ability to achieve their dreams and passion. They made me realize that I also have the potential to succeed and accomplish my own goals if I commit my time and find my motivation to be persistent. This group especially taught me to endure the music and embrace every moment of the dance. Consequently, these passionate dancers have inspired me not to take Chinese dancing for granted. They have influenced me to devote my time and passion towards dance, and to be confident to show the world a beauty through sheer perseverance of Chinese dancing.

All in all, these different groups of dancers influenced my life of Chinese dancing today. I first joined AATF at an early age of six. Ten and a half years later, I am still expressing my love and devotion towards Asian Arts dancing. The observation of other dancers touched a nerve, and I finally realized that I was meant to dance. Not only that, but I also wanted to communicate my emotions through different techniques of Chinese dances, and spread the Asian culture of dancing throughout my community and beyond. Besides my love for this activity, folk dancing has nonetheless influenced me to become a unique individual of my own. I used to be concerned of other's critical judgments, but I am no longer afraid of what others might think of me. Instead, I am proud to expose my passion for the Asian Arts, and through dance, I am slowly gaining more confidence in discovering my true personality. Adding on, I truly believe that Chinese dancing is my escape from life's hardships and stress. As soon as I step foot on stage, the music flows through my head, and my body easily flows along. In the three to four minutes of the choreography, I've found pure happiness and now embrace my self-relief as I perform the routine that comes so naturally to me after hours of practice. Moreover, after observing different types of dances and dancers, I have finally discovered my self-confidence, happiness, passion, and identity through Chinese dancing.

Furthermore, Asian Arts dancing is a big part of my life that can never be replaced. From my experience of observing various styles and talents, my life has changed eternally. At last, I understand that Chinese dancing shouldn't be taken for granted, but in fact should be expressed in the most honorable way. While juggling between school, piano, and sports, I nonetheless dedicate my time for dance for at least six hours of practicing per week. However, even though it is challenging to manage my activities, I continuously maintain my passion for these extracurriculars by sacrificing my free time to accomplish these tasks. Not only that, but I attend performances for high organizations, companies, parties and etc. for more than 25 times a year. Although folk dancing is time consuming, it never fails to

keep my spirits high when I see the audience smiling brightly at me as I perform this unique type of dance before them. Knowing that I have made a change or affected someone's life by exposing them to Chinese cultural dance is all I need to motivate me to improve at dancing myself. As a whole, Chinese dancing isn't simply an activity that I enjoy, but it's shaped me to become that self-reliant and unique individual, teaching me to be more confident in my own being. Now, I truly understand that if I'm passionate for something, I should chase after it and not hold back despite of what other people think; I'm finally ready to take bigger steps towards achieving my dream to dance.