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LANTERN FESTIVAL 2010 OFFERS EXPANDED ACTIVITIES IN RESPONSE TO WIDESPREAD SCHOOL CUTS IN ARTS AND CULTURE EDUCATION AMIDST ECONOMIC CHALLENGES.

New Workshops, A Special Exhibition, And A New Family Level Membership Will Ring In The Year Of The Tiger At The Ninth Annual Lantern Festival Celebration!

(LOS ANGELES, February 8, 2010) – Lantern fever is sweeping through Southern California as the Chinese American Museum (CAM), in partnership with El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, gears up for **Lantern Festival 2010 (LF'10)** on **Saturday, March 6, 2010, noon – 7pm!** A beloved community tradition making its ninth grand appearance at El Pueblo plaza, the birthplace of the city of Los Angeles and now home to CAM, LF'10 will spotlight a colorful re-creation of a traditional Chinese village street fair animated with a newly expanded selection of arts and crafts workshops and features, an exciting line-up of cultural stage performances, the premiere of a new Family Level membership to CAM, and a spirited new LF'10 t-shirt design renewing CAM's commitment to providing families and the general public with activities that educate as well as entertain.

This year's festival takes on greater significance in light of the ongoing cuts in arts and culture funding for K-12 classes and after-school programs across communities and specifically in California. "As schools face deeper budget cuts that threaten or have already eliminated arts and culture programs, and as personal incomes and savings continue to dry up, families are now seeking other ways of supplementing their children's education, at an affordable price," says Dr. Pauline Wong, CAM's executive director. "That's why we felt compelled to answer the community's call to not just continue to offer Lantern Festival free of charge to the public, but also expand our programming to offset the challenges experienced in the classrooms and personal wallets."

A hugely popular holiday in the Chinese culture, Lantern Festival occurs annually on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month to mark the closing of Chinese New Year festivities. As families wish for peace and prosperity for the coming year, colorful lanterns are adorned in homes and throughout the streets to celebrate this jubilant occasion.

Lantern Festival 2010 is a departure from most other street event celebration for Chinese New Year as the focus is on education and discovery rather than just entertainment. The festival's program presents the visiting public with hands-on opportunities to learn and appreciate the history, traditions and customs of this Chinese holiday through a variety of enriching activities and performances. Popular workshops such as kite-

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making, Chinese calligraphy, Chinese paper-cutting, origami, facing painting and the festival's signature lantern-making booth, will all be presented free to the public. Workshops new to this year's event include Chinese fan-making, Chinese zodiac metal etching, and tiger puppet making to celebrate the Year of the Tiger.

An al-fresco style exhibition of a traditional Chinese New Year dinner table will be available for the first time to deepen the public's understanding and enjoyment of the culinary customs of this holiday. Titled, *Lucky Feast*, the whimsical spread will feature fruits, vegetables, food dishes, and decorations that are considered lucky to eat or display in one's home or business during Chinese New Year.

A new Family Level membership offered at CAM will make its official debut at LF'10. Benefits include special access to museum events, and a Rewards Program that provides discounts to participating shops and restaurants in partnership with CAM. Members at this level will also receive reciprocal museum benefits to a variety of museums throughout Southern California – a substantial value that will save families money and promote time spent together and intergenerational learning.

Three acclaimed authors will be on-hand to autograph and do readings from their latest books: Popular children's author, **Oliver Chin**, *Year of the Tiger*; **Paula Yoo**, *Shining Star: The Anna May Wong Story*; and former *New York Times* correspondent **Bonnie Tsui**, *American Chinatown: A People's History of Five Neighborhoods*. A dramatic line-up of Chinese lion dances, martial arts, musical, magical, and acrobatic performances will round out the day's activities. A captivating shadow puppetry show and a spirited glow-in-the-dark silver dragon performance and parade will culminate the evening's fanfare.

Lantern Festival 2010 is made possible through the generous support of the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Time Warner Cable, El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument and the Friends of the Chinese American Museum.

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ABOUT THE CHINESE AMERICAN MUSEUM

The Chinese American Museum (CAM) is jointly developed and operated by the Friends of the Chinese American Museum (FCAM) and El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, a department of the City of Los Angeles. Located within the El Pueblo Plaza in downtown Los Angeles, CAM is housed in the last surviving structure of the City's original Chinatown. CAM's mission is to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of America's diverse heritage by researching, preserving, and sharing the history, rich cultural legacy, and continuing contributions of Chinese Americans. The Chinese American Museum is located at 425 North Los Angeles Street in El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, across from Union Station. Hours are 10 a.m.– 3 p.m., Tuesday – Sunday. Admissions are suggested donations of \$3 for adults and \$2 for seniors and students. Members are admitted free. For more information about the Museum, please visit our website at www.camla.org or find us on:

- **Facebook:** search for "Chinese American Museum"
- **Flickr:** http://www.flickr.com/photos/camla_org
- **Twitter:** ChinAmerMuseum