



Dear Friends,

We are delighted to extend our warm greetings to everyone attending SOMA Cross Cultural Works' 6th annual Lunar Fest NJ! This festival recognizes and celebrates Lunar New Year, the Year of the Snake. SOMA Cross Cultural Works is a 501c3 nonprofit whose mission is to celebrate the cultural diversity of our South Orange and Maplewood communities through education and support of artistic and cultural events.

As a non-profit organization, we are dedicated to collaborating with and leading our community in promoting creative and cultural diversity. We firmly believe that cultural diversity is a powerful force for personal growth and community development. It serves as a catalyst for meaningful dialogue, fostering intercultural connections that promote inclusion, understanding, and friendship.

While you're here, we invite you to savor the delicious flavors of our amazing local restaurants, enjoy the music and dance of our talented performers, and create special moments with your children at our cultural activity tables.

This event was made possible thanks to you and our incredible community. It took months of planning and was truly a labor of love for our dedicated planning committee. When thinking about the WHY behind Lunar Fest NJ, we all wanted to bring visibility to our AAPI community and to take up space together in a joyful way. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our amazing sponsors and vendors—this event wouldn't have been possible without your support. We are deeply grateful to our food vendors, choreographers, performers, committee members, and volunteers for their invaluable contributions.

Lunar Fest NJ 2025 promises to be a feast for the senses! Enjoy!

Festival Director: Lanny Cheuck / Co-Director: Chi Nguyen Brauner

Committee: Ran Baker, Yija Bu, Jessica Cabato, Beth Fung Ceglio, Mike Choi, Allison Lord Kim, Kelly McGauhey, Jessica Pace, Judy Tu, Cynthia Tiangco-Withers, Mingyi Xu

We join you in celebrating

LUNAR FEST NJ

Honoring the rich traditions of Asian arts and culture





HAPPY LUNAR NEW YEAR

The mission of the Division of Arts & Culture is to foster a creative community of artists and organizations, enhancing the quality of life for residents of Maplewood by ensuring that artistic and cultural experiences are inclusive and accessible to all.

Maplewood Division of Arts & Culture organizes and facilitates performances and cultural activities throughout the Township of Maplewood, New Jersey. Working independently and in conjunction with local arts and civic groups, DAC strives to establish Maplewood as a cultural outpost and arts destination. We also operate the Burgdorff Center for the Performing Arts, The Woodland, and the 1978 Maplewood Arts Center.

We partner with many local and regional organizations each year. We work together to elevate our partners through shared programming, promotions and outreach, and event sponsorships throughout the year. Our goal is to showcase the immense talent and creativity of our community and to support cultural partners in providing quality accessible experiences to an ever-broadening audience.







maplewoodartsandculture.org

Lunar New Year Celebrations

Lunar New Year begins with the first new moon of the lunar calendar and ends 15 days later on the first full moon. Celebrated in countries like China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam, its dates vary each year based on the moon's cycles.

China

In China, Lunar New Year is known as the Spring Festival. About 10 days before it begins, homes are thoroughly cleaned to remove bad luck. The holiday is a time to honor ancestors, reunite with family, and exchange red envelopes (lai see) with money. Festivities include dances, fireworks, and traditional foods like yuanxiao (sticky rice balls), fagao (prosperity cake), and yusheng (raw fish salad). The celebration ends with the Lantern Festival, when lanterns light up homes on the final night.

Korea

In Korea, Lunar New Year is called "Seollal," and the traditional greeting is Saehae Bok Mani Badseiyo. Families honor ancestors, and many wear traditional hanbok. Children receive colorful bags with money, and typical foods include Tteokguk (rice cake soup) and Jeon (savory pancakes). Popular games like yutnori, gongginori (jacks), and jegichagi (hacky sack) are enjoyed during the celebrations.

Vietnam

Tết, or Vietnamese New Year, is Vietnam's most important holiday, marking the arrival of spring. Preparations include cleaning the house and cooking traditional foods like bánh chưng, bánh dày, and sticky rice. Common greetings are "Chúc Mừng Năm Mới" (Happy New Year) and "Cung Chúc Tân Xuân" (Best wishes for the new spring). Customs include house visits, ancestral worship, calligraphy, and giving "lucky money" in red envelopes to children and the elderly.







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Schedule

12:00pm Opening Address Mayor Nancy Adams, Mayor Sheena Collum, Festival Director Lanny Cheuck 12:05pm Lion Dance Rutgers Vietnamese Student Association 12:15pm Chinese Traditional and Modern Dances Rutgers Chinese Dancing Troupe 12:25pm Vietnamese Fan Dance and Hip Hop Lion Dance Rutgers Vietnamese Student Association 12:35pm Welcome Remarks Dr. Monica Burnette, Seton Hall University 12:40pm Chinese Traditional Dance FA Dance 12:55pm Salutatory Remarks Assemblyperson Ellen J. Park 1:00pm Korean Sword Dance, Drumming, and Cultural Dances Woorigarak Korean Cultural Art Center Martial Arts Demonstration 1:40pm Zen Wushu Academy 2:00pm **Kpop Dance Covers** Haru Dance, Rutgers University 2:25pm Chinese Acrobat and Comedy Show Master Yang Xiao Di 3:05pm Student Vocal and Dance Performances HudsonWay Immersion School, Columbia High School Mandarin Program 3:30pm Japanese Taiko Drumming Exhibition Biwanko 4:00pm Dragon Goodbye Ceremony (Outdoors) Columbia High School Mandarin Program

What to eat

PARKING LOT

(See Parking Lot map on following pages)

Community Cafe: Uniquely flavored coffees and baked goods

Cousins Maine Lobster: Fresh Maine lobster

Fomo Momo: Tibetan momos with bold sauces and fillings.

Keo Ku: Traditional Korean BBQ

Kung Fu Tea: Classic and modern boba milk and fruit teas

K-Town Hero: Home of the Korean BBQ sandwich

Lunch Mommy: Healthy and delicious food with diverse offerings

Mochimoly: Go-to for the best mochi donuts

Pandang: Authentic Japanese and Thai cuisine

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What to do

GREAT HALL - 1ST FLOOR

(See Great Hall map on following pages)

Ausome Balloon Creator: Amazing balloon art by donation

Columbia High School Mandarin Program: Face painting, snake

hair extensions

PARLOR - 2ND FLOOR

(See Parlor map on following pages)

Boba Bear Bilingual: Bilingual Chinese board books and toys

Books by Yobe Qui: AAPI cultural books, toys, and gifts

Columbia High School Mandarin Program: Crafts and activities

Koa Good Inc: Kawaii stuffed animals and trinkets

Millburn Korean School: Korean language and cultural education

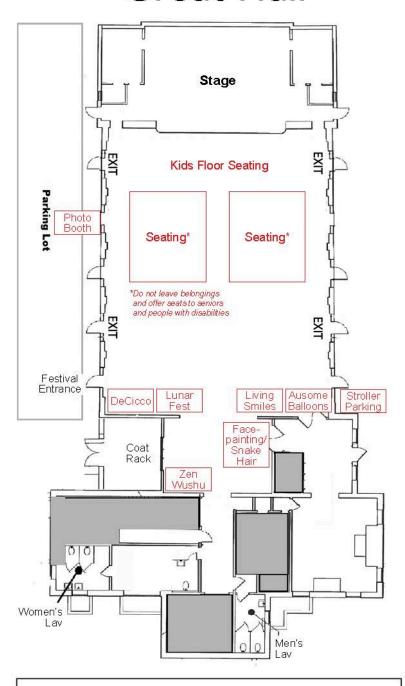
Oakland Road Art Club: Creative space for upcycling art materials

Somacycle: Convenient local recycling pickup service

Soma Studio Arts Atelier: Teaching strong art fundamentals

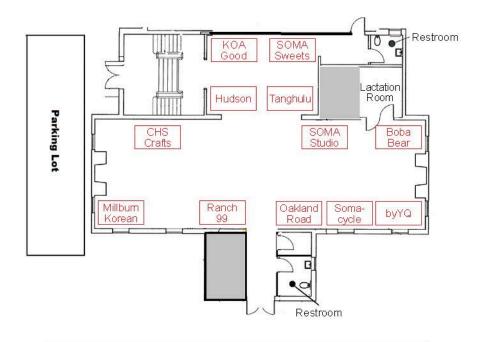
SOMA Sweets: Japanese and Asian sweets

Great Hall



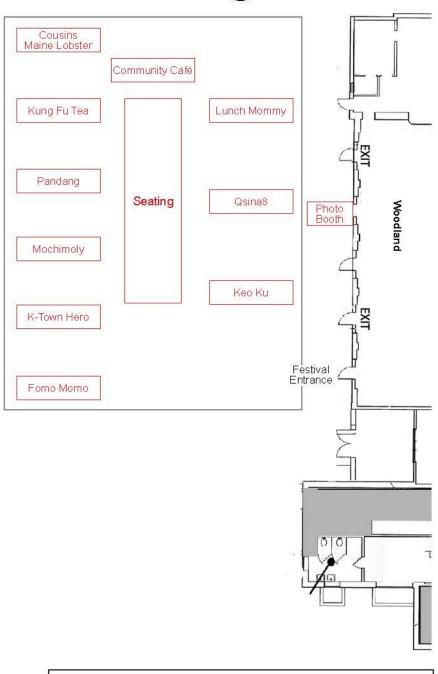
Woodland Rd.

Parlor



Woodland Rd.

Parking Lot



Woodland Rd.

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Elaine Zhal, DO Internal Medicine 翟曉靜醫師 Mandarin/English 中文/英文



Shih-Fen Chow, MD Internal Medicine 張世芬醫師 Mandarin/Taiwanese/English 中文/台灣話(閩南)/英文



Mindy Houng, MD Internal Medicine 宋玟貞醫師 Korean/English 韓語/英文

Specialty Care Providers | 駐診專科醫師



Sarah Fan, MD Cardiologist 范余興醫師 心臟專科醫生



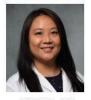
Ammie Patel, PharmD **Pharmacist** 艾米·帕特爾樂學博士 藥劑師 提供現場看診時間



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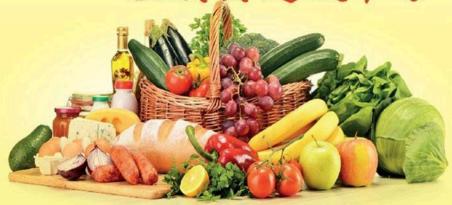
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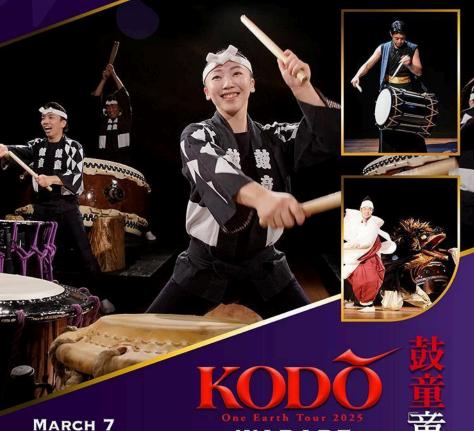
8:30 am-8:30 pm 8:30 am-8:30 pm

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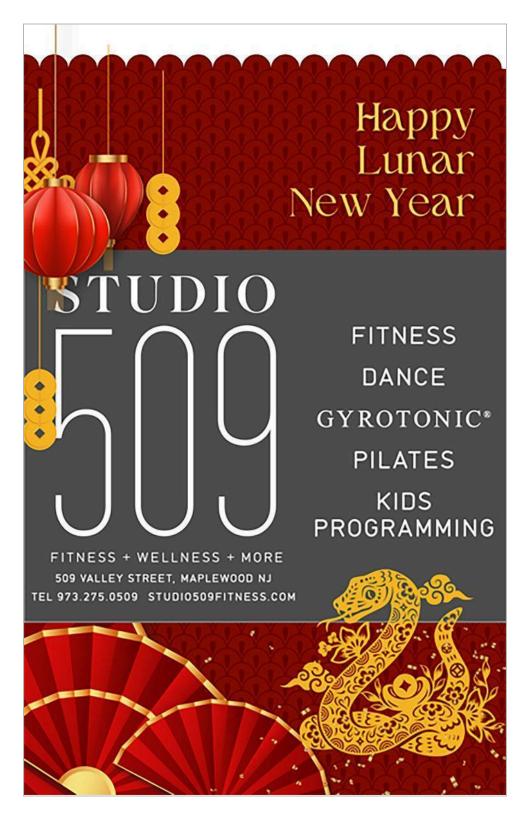




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Special Thanks

Master of Ceremonies Yija Bu

Speakers

Mayor Nancy Adams, Maplewood Mayor Sheena Collum, South Orange Assemblyperson Ellen J. Park, Bergen County Dr. Monica Burnette, Seton Hall University

Children's Activities

Maplewood Middle School South Orange Middle School Columbia High School HudsonWay Immersion School Millburn Korean School

Township of Maplewood

Mayor Nancy Adams and the Township Committee Stacey Ross-Trevor and the Department of Administration, Division of Arts and Culture

Graphics

Painting: Manman Huang, Artist

Digital Illustration: Allen Gaoiran, Gaoiran Studios Graphic Design: Mike Choi, Open Mind Design Photography: Tracy Sham, Tracy Sham Photography

Stage

Sound: Mike Choi

Lighting: Rod Withers, Johnny Jhun

ALL the Volunteers!

A special thank you to Ommer Khaw who dreamt up and organized Lunar Fest NJ for the past 5 years.

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Wishing everyone a most auspicious Year of the Snake!

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What to read



Happy Lunar New Year!



Chloe's Lunar New Year by Lily LaMotte



Legendary Cakes by Kerisa Greene



Let's Celebrate Korean New Year by Michelle Park



Ping's Perfect Pot by Helen H. Wu



I Love Lunar New Year! by Eva Wong Nava



Playing with Lanterns by Wang Yage



Boys Don't Fry by Kimberly Lee



Lunar New Year by Margaret McNamara



Happy Lunar New Year by Sesame Street



Baby's First Lunar New Year from DK Publishing



Lunar Tale by Stella Hong



The Lucky Red Envelope by Wengi Zhang



It's Your Year Baby Snake! by Ariel Hsu



The Chinese New Year Helper by Ying Chang Compestine



Amy Wu and the Lantern Festival by Kat Zhang



Lunar New Year! by Natasha Yim



Nian, the Chinese New Year Dragon by Virginia Loh-Hagan