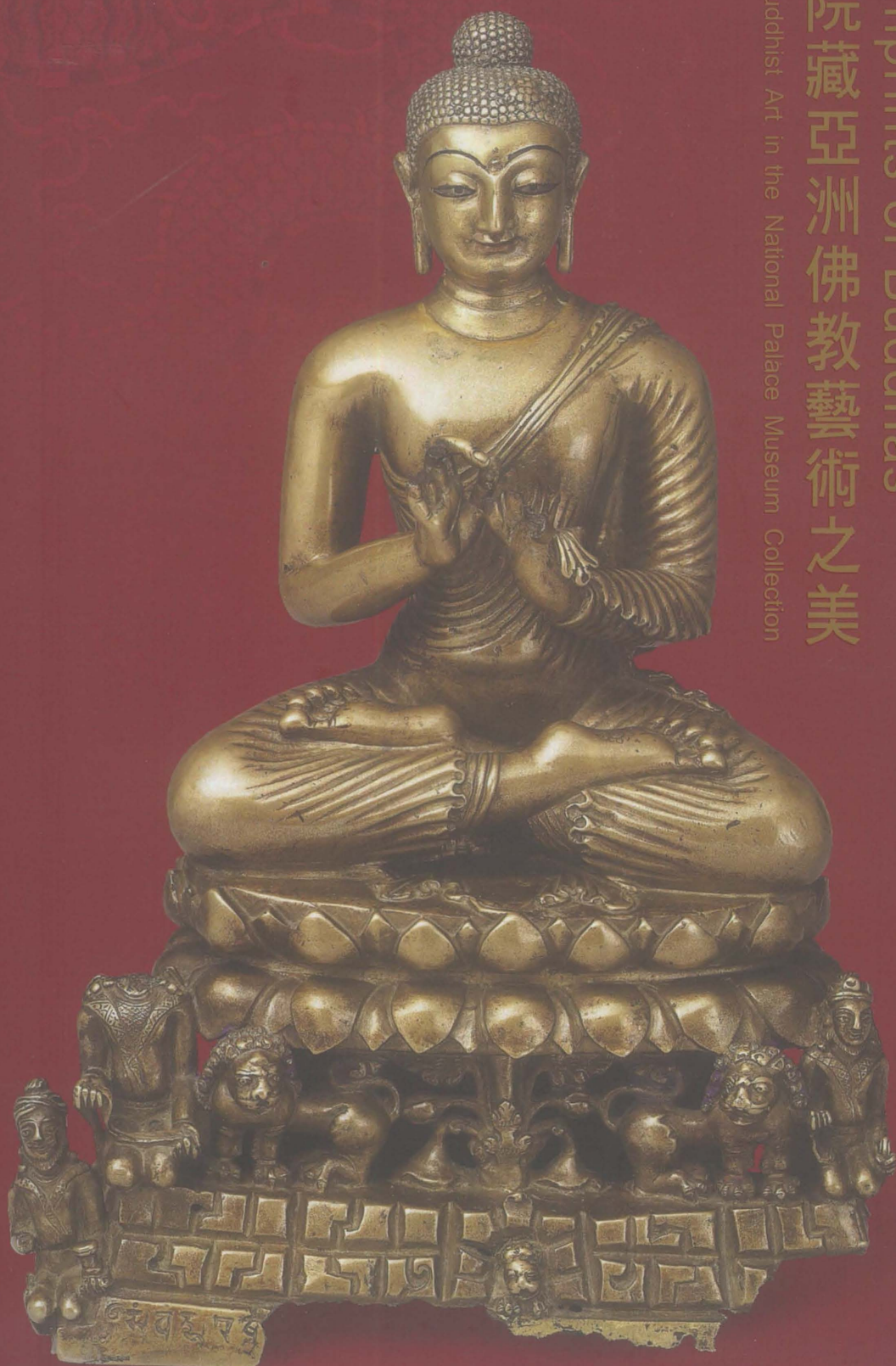


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Imprints of Buddhas

院藏亞洲佛教藝術之美

Buddhist Art in the National Palace Museum Collection

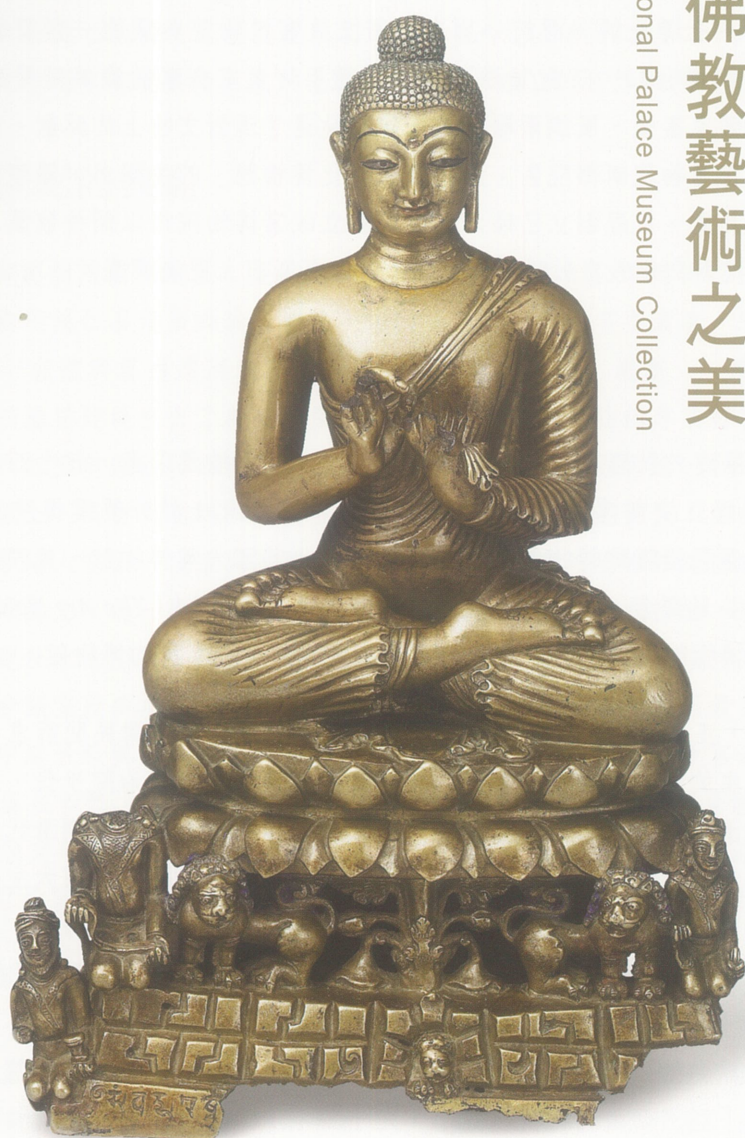


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國立故宮博物院
NATIONAL PALACE MUSEUM

金甌永固・玉燭長調——

「國立故宮博物院南部院區：亞洲藝術文化博物館」總序

「金甌永固・玉燭長調」兩詞分別出自國立故宮博物院典藏的一對寶器：〈金甌永固杯〉與〈玉燭長調燭台〉，這對寶器原是清宮過年時皇家合家歡慶共飲屠蘇酒時的儀式器皿，皇帝祝願：國家富強、風調雨順；本人親自挑選了這對文物上的銘款，請何傳馨副院長書寫在「國立故宮博物院南部院區：亞洲藝術文化博物館」的主樑上，讓這句祝詞永遠封藏於博物館建築最高處，祝願創立已臻九十年的國立故宮博物院得以開枝散葉，永續發展，通過南部院區的擴建對文化教育影響更廣更深，院務蒸蒸日上更為興隆。

奠基與傳承

故宮博物院肇建於民國十四年雙十國慶日，三十八年播遷來臺，五十四年與中央博物院籌備處合併更名國立故宮博物院（以下稱本院），在臺北士林外雙溪復院，發展迄今整整九十年，是一座蜚聲國際的博物館，與法國羅浮宮、英國大英博物館、美國大都會博物館及北京故宮博物院並駕齊名，近年來更榮膺英國倫敦〈藝術報〉（*The Art Newspaper*）評為世界最受歡迎十大博物館之一，名列第七，也是亞洲地區唯一上榜的博物館。

三十多年前，正當本院在國際間聲譽鵲起之際，也感受到臺灣民間訴求，鄉親們要求一座以宮廷珍藏為主的博物館與鄉土對話，於是故宮決策階層調整治院步伐，首先令本院圖書文獻處將典藏的清宮臺灣史料與臺灣與圖等歷史文獻編輯出版，並策劃清代臺灣史料展作為回應；器物處於八十三年在高雄市立美術館推出「國之重寶特展」，四大主題三百七十組件文物的特展，轟動南臺灣，也激勵故宮開始策劃「故宮文物菁華百品特展」，自八十六年開始在臺灣南部、中部、東部、澎湖等地作巡迴展出，以具體行動落實「平衡南北·文化均富」的民意訴求。九十年七月杜正勝前院長提出「故宮新世紀建設計畫」，九十二年元月選定嘉義縣太保市原台糖公司七十公頃土地作為南院基地，為了避免與臺北院區的發展方向重複，南院定位為「亞洲藝術文化博物館」，九十三年十二月十五日行政院核定故宮南院籌建計畫，原定九十七年開館營運，惟因陷入履約爭議，工程停滯。九十七年八月三十日林曼麗

前院長進行第一次修訂計畫，將開館時間延後到民國一百年。九十八年八月八日莫拉克風災帶來超大豪雨，當時博物館周邊水利工程未完竣，導致故宮南院基地全面淹沒，博物館建築設計等契約一一被迫終止。

馬英九總統上任後督促行政團隊積極進行通盤檢討，排除障礙，務實解決契約爭議，於九十九年十月二十二日在周功鑫前院長的帶領下，完成「國立故宮博物院南部院區籌建第二次修正計畫」，行政院核定一〇四年底開館試營運，博物館硬體工程委由內政部營建署代辦，博物館裝潢工程、策畫展覽、美術設計、各類軟體規劃及五十公頃園區景觀營造等，則由本院自行負責，重新啟動，故宮南院籌建計畫始有突破性進展。一〇二年二月六日動土興建，一〇三年六月五日上樑，工程進度順利，終於在一〇四年十二月二十八日如期開館試營運，作為本院九十週年院慶壓軸巨獻，也達成國家付予國立故宮博物院的使命。

建築：跨世紀的典範

「國立故宮博物院南部院區：亞洲藝術文化博物館」二十公頃博物館主體建築，由大元聯合建築師事務所姚仁喜建築師設計監造，設計構思源自中國書畫濃墨、飛白與渲染三種技法，形成實體、虛體與貫通滯洪湖及穿透博物館的連接空間。濃墨：一座位於基地西側的「實量體」，四層樓建築包含了典藏庫房與展示空間，基於博物館專業需求，實量體未開大型窗戶，九十八組圓筒點狀烤漆玻璃小窗，引進自然光線至參觀廊道，名曰「河圖洛書」，並以鋼構、混凝土、馬賽克磁磚與三萬多枚大小五種型制的鑄鋁圓盤，由內向外層層堆疊，呈現如青銅器般給人堅固、穩重與厚實的感覺。飛白：一座玻璃帷幕建構成的「虛量體」，在基地東側臨湖聳立，是一座穿透明亮的綠建築，以深遮陽結構式窗框，形成優美的弧形韻律，借入戶外絕佳水景園林，是博物館的公共服務空間；其間設置有接待大廳、圖書館、兒童創意中心、會議室及多功能演講廳（集賢廳）等等。渲染：在濃墨與飛白實虛量體中，以渲染筆意帶出中庭景緻與十二生肖獸首公共藝術，流線的至美橋連接故宮迎賓大道與博物館並通向景觀園區主幹道。姚建築師也藉由濃墨、飛白與渲染三座流動量體，代表中華、印度、波斯等三股文明彼此交流，相互融合，卻又各自獨立，交織出悠遠流長多元的亞洲文明，形成「國立故宮博物院南部院區：亞洲藝術文化博物館」主體建築設計的文化根源。

為善盡環保與節能減碳世界公民責任，故宮南院建築採取綠色工法、綠色材料、綠色設計、綠色能源，是一座已取得候選證書的鑽石級綠建築；建築設計結合最高等級防震措施，以二百一十枚五種型制隔震器規劃隔震設計，提昇耐震度；而近十四公頃的「至善湖」與「至德湖」同時兼具景觀、滯洪、防旱等功能，主體建築不僅防災抗震已達鑽石級智慧建築水平，亦正申請候選證書中。

展覽：宏觀、多元、國際

或許有人會問：「國立故宮博物院典藏以歷代皇室收藏為主，哪來亞洲藝術文物支撐一座亞洲藝術文化博物館？」本院的答案是：中華文明即屬東亞文明，自古以來通過陸地與海上絲路，各地文明在廣闊的泛亞洲地域交織聯繫，相互影響；若以宏觀角度探索，不難發現原被定義為中華文物中，蘊藏著多少亞洲元素；原被視為中亞、西亞、南亞，東南亞及東北亞的文物中，又有多少中華文明的縮影。例如大家所熟知的青花瓷，被認定為中國名瓷，但繪製青花的鈷藍釉源自中亞，藍白相映的美學據說是來自伊斯蘭世界，青花瓷自元代十四世紀起外銷中亞，遠播歐洲，最後風靡世界，各地競相仿製；十五世紀中期以後，明朝政府關閉寶船下西洋的海外市場之際，越南青花瓷也悄悄崛起；十七世紀初，中國製瓷技術通過朝鮮傳至日本，燒製成伊萬里瓷器，因明末清初中國戰亂與海禁，快速崛起於國際貿易瓷市場，對景德鎮與越南外銷瓷市場帶來嚴重威脅，說明文化交流彼此影響也相互競爭。又如喝茶的飲食文明開始於中國，隨著遣唐使、留學僧、茶馬古道、陸海絲路、移民足履及西方海上強權殖民勢力的興起等，茶文化遠播甚至遍布全球，與各地風俗民情結合，發展出有別於中華茶文化的喝茶方式。以上兩則例證說明文化是相互交融與影響的。

故宮南院配合博物館建築實量體展覽空間設計，設常設展廳五、專題展廳、多媒體展覽廳及借展廳各一等，本院在職與榮退研究同仁幾乎全體總動員，結合國內國外專家學者，組成十組策展團隊，由本人、何傳馨副院長、書畫處李玉珉處長及器物處蔡玫芬處長領軍，以宏觀的思維重新探索檢視本院典藏，並通過國際借展，策劃開幕十大首展，其中五個常設展分別為：「佛陀形影—院藏亞洲佛教藝術之美」、「錦繡繽紛—院藏亞洲織品展」、「芳茗遠播—亞洲茶文化展」、「奔流不息—嘉義發展史」及「認識亞洲—新媒體藝術展」，三個特展：「絢麗多姿—院藏南亞服飾特展」、「越過崑崙山的珍寶—院藏伊斯蘭玉器特展」與「藍白輝映—院藏明代青花瓷展」，以及兩個國際借展「尚青—高麗青瓷特展」與「揚帆萬里—日本伊萬里瓷器特展」。策展團隊以本院典藏為基礎，通過宏觀、多元與國際視野，為故宮南院策劃展覽，提供南部觀眾有別於臺北院區的藝術文化饗宴，為海峽兩岸建構第一座亞洲藝術文化博物館。

「國立故宮博物院南部院區：亞洲藝術文化博物館」，從提出籌建計畫迄今已超過十四年，歷經杜正勝、石守謙、林曼麗、周功鑫及本人五位院長，襄助最深的四位副院長林柏亭、張臨生、周筑昆與何傳馨，以及內政部營建署全力督促硬體工程興建下，終於今年十二月二十八日開幕營運，它將是海峽兩岸第一座以亞洲宏觀多元視野策展的博物館，希望能獲得觀眾喜愛，肩負起「平衡南北·文化均富」推廣教育使命，與臺北院區相輔相成，成為南臺灣文化建設新亮點。

佛陀形影—院藏亞洲佛教藝術之美

「佛陀形影—院藏亞洲佛教藝術之美」是書畫處處長李玉珉退休前率登錄保存處王鍾承、圖書文獻處劉國威與胡進杉、南院處朱仕甄與鍾子寅等為南院策劃的常設展之一。以佛教文物之美作為南院首展且為常設展的思考，奠基於兩個因素，其一，佛教是構成亞洲文化的重要成分之一，自西元前六世紀釋迦牟尼在印度創教以來，內容不斷豐富，在僧侶與信眾不斷弘揚下，早已傳播至中亞、斯里蘭卡、東南亞、中國等地，並從中國傳到東北亞的朝鮮與日本，在各地文化沃土的滋潤下，發展出許多「同中有異」的地方特色，造就出千變萬化的佛、菩薩、天王、護法等佛陀形影，進而使得亞洲佛教藝術顯得異彩紛呈、璀璨奪目。其二，是本院典藏的佛教文物豐富，除清宮原藏極為莊嚴華麗的漢傳與藏傳佛教經典及造像外，也包括彭楷棟先生（1912-2006）分別在民國九十三、九十五及九十七年捐贈的四百零七件以金銅佛為主的造像。彭楷棟先生佛教藝術收藏範圍博大，涵蓋東亞的中國、日本與韓國，南亞的印度、巴基斯坦、尼泊爾、喀什米爾及西藏，東南亞的緬甸、泰國、柬埔寨與印尼等，這樣恢宏的格局，正符合南院策展理念，也方能支撐起「佛陀形影—院藏亞洲佛教藝術之美」展覽需求。

本院與彭楷棟先生緣起於邀約展覽。民國七十六年，楷棟先生提供其珍藏二百一十八組件佛造像在本院舉辦「金銅佛造像特展」，由於展品質量兼具，風格卓越，廣受佳評，也對臺灣佛教藝術研究產生突破性的提昇作用。此後本院也開始擬定典藏計畫，編列預算，於八十四年購藏楷棟堂精品三十二件，闢室長期陳列，故宮與楷棟先生結緣更深。九十二年十一月，高齡九十二歲的楷棟先生決定為畢生珍藏覓一好歸宿，慨然將三百五十八件造像捐贈本院，翌年捐贈手續完成後，本院特別策劃「法象威儀—彭楷棟先生捐贈文物特展」，彰顯先生懿行。兩年後，楷棟先生又捐贈一尊〈四面佛〉；同年十一月先生仙逝，遺命再將陪伴他安度晚年的四十八尊造像悉數捐贈本院；九十七年本院再策劃「法象風規—彭楷棟先生遺贈文物特展」，感念先生一生對佛教藝術無私的奉獻。本院曾向先生承諾，故宮南院落成後當闢「楷棟堂」長期展出。根據本院前副院長林柏亭先生記述，當楷棟先生在日本家門寒風細雨中送別一生珍藏時，曾哽咽祝願：「願諸佛菩薩順利到臺灣故宮，供奉在更好的環境中。」南院「楷棟堂」揭幕開展，正可以告慰先生在天之靈，這四百零七組件主要為金銅佛菩薩造像，非但得到最好的保存維護與研究，也將在故宮南院常設展出。

「佛陀形影—院藏亞洲佛教藝術之美」常設展，共分「誕生的喜悅」、「佛陀的智慧」、「菩薩的慈悲」、「經藏的流傳」和「密教的神奇」等五單元，以時間為軸線，呈現院藏佛教文物之美與佛典的博大精深。策展團隊以圖文並茂方式編輯圖錄，並由策展人王鍾承與劉國威分別撰成〈感見參差形殊別—亞洲古代佛教造像風格〉及〈佛教經典在亞洲的文本流傳〉兩文，加強圖錄的論述。日前同仁囑我寫序，有感於若無楷棟堂捐贈，本院典藏是無法全面呈現亞洲佛教藝術之美的，遂請助理謝佩芸搜集整理資料，編撰〈十方金身歸故宮—記彭楷棟捐贈懿行〉作為附錄，以誌其人其事以及他對故宮南院亞洲藝術文化博物館的貢獻。

國立故宮博物院院長 馮明珠

中華民國104年端午

Preface

Eternal Stability and Constant Harmony

Introduction to the Southern Branch of the National Palace Museum - Asian Art and Culture Museum and its Inaugural Exhibition

The phrase “Eternal Stability and Constant Harmony” comes from the Gold Chalice of Eternal Stability and the Jade Candlestick of Constant Harmony, a pair of treasures in the National Palace Museum’s collection. These artifacts are ceremonial objects once used by the Qing imperial family during the New Year, in a ceremony in which the emperor drinks tusu wine from a special goblet and prays for peace, prosperity, and favorable weather for the coming year. I personally selected these inscriptions for Deputy Director Ho Chuan-hsing to inscribe on the main beam of the Southern Branch of the National Palace Museum: Asian Art and Culture Museum so that this celebratory inscription will forever be watching over the new museum from the top of the building. The National Palace Museum (NPM) has just celebrated its ninetieth anniversary; I hope it will continue to flourish, and that the opening of the Southern Branch will make an even stronger imprint on the cultural education in Taiwan.

Genesis and Legacy

The Palace Museum officially opened on October 10, 1925. It relocated to Taiwan in 1949 and merged with the Preparatory Office of the National Central Museum in 1965 to form the National Palace Museum (NPM). The new NPM resumed activity in the suburb of Waishuangxi in Taipei. Since the museum’s establishment ninety years ago, it has built a reputation for itself on the world stage and has been hailed as one of the world’s most celebrated museums, along with the Louvre Museum, the British Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Palace Museum in Beijing. Recently, the NPM was once again named one of the ten most popular museums in the world by *The Art Newspaper*, a UK-based publication. The NPM ranked seventh and was the only museum in Asia to make the list.

Over thirty years ago, at a time when the NPM’s international reputation was beginning to grow, the Taiwanese public pushed for the museum to reach out and demonstrate the relevance of the museum’s collection, which consisted mainly of former imperial artifacts, to local culture. As a result, the NPM’s top management reconsidered the museum’s direction and instructed the Department of Rare Books and Historical Documents to edit and display historical documents and maps of Taiwan in the Qing imperial collection, and organized several exhibitions of Qing dynasty documents on Taiwan. In 1994, the Department of Antiquities launched the “Great National Treasures of China” special exhibition at the Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts. The exhibition, which was divided into four sections, was warmly welcomed by the public in southern Taiwan. This resounding success motivated the NPM to organize a special exhibition that featured the best one hundred works from the museum’s collection, touring to

various places in central, southern, and eastern Taiwan and the outlying Penghu island. This exhibition was our way to achieve cultural equity between the northern and the southern regions of Taiwan.

On July 17, 2001, the former NPM Director Tu Cheng-sheng put forward a project entitled "The National Palace Museum in the New Century." On January 7, 2003, a 70-acre plot of land in Taibo, Chiayi County, owned by Taiwan Sugar Corporation, was designated as the site for the construction of the Southern Branch of the National Palace Museum, which would focus on the art and culture of Asia and take an approach that is distinct from the NPM in Taipei. The Southern Branch project was approved by the Executive Yuan (i.e. the cabinet) on December 15, 2004. The new branch was originally scheduled to open in 2008, but the project stalled due to a series of contractor disputes. On August 30, 2008, former Director Lin Mun-lee revised the project for the first time and postponed the opening to 2011; however, on August 8, 2009, Typhoon Morakot brought torrential rain to Taiwan and the site was completely inundated, as the peripheral drainage work had not been completed yet. The floods led to the termination of the construction and design contracts, and President of the Republic of China, Ma Ying-jeou, instructed his administration to review the project in order to resolve contractual disputes. On October 22, 2010, under the leadership of former Director Chou Kung-shin, the second revision of the project design was completed; after approval by the Executive Yuan, the opening date was set to the end of 2015. Under the new plan, the Construction and Planning Agency under the Ministry of the Interior would take charge of the infrastructure construction, while the NPM would be responsible for interior decoration, exhibition planning, art design, operations planning, and the landscaping of the 50-acre park. The project finally took off: ground was broken on February 6, 2013, and the beam was raised on June 5, 2014. After years of construction, the Southern Branch will launch a soft opening on December 28, 2015, crowning the series of celebrations for the NPM's ninetieth anniversary. The museum will be entering a new era.

Architecture of the New Century

The Southern Branch of the National Palace Museum's 20-acre main structure was designed by Kris Yao and his Taiwan-based firm ARTECH, which also supervised construction. The design accentuates the Southern Branch's identity as a museum of Asian art and culture. Inspired by elements of Chinese ink painting and calligraphy such as thick ink, half-dry strokes, and ink diffusion, the design includes three integrated spaces of curved black and white buildings and a bridge that spans over the lakes that may serve to contain the water during flooding time.

Thick Ink: A monumental four-story structure on the west side of the site that houses storage rooms and display spaces. The building has 98 cylinder windows covered with stippled varnish that allow natural light into the exhibition corridor. The design is inspired by "*The Yellow River Chart and Luo River Diagram*," an ancient Chinese mathematics and divination tradition. There are layers of steel structure and concrete, covered with mosaic tiles and aluminum cast disks, reminiscent of the sturdy bronze wares in the NPM's collection.

Half-dry Strokes: A glass structure stands erect on the east side of the site, next to the lake. The airy green building allows natural light to enter, while the glass walls introduce the watery landscape outside

into the interior spaces. The protective window shades form beautiful and rhythmic curves. This building will house the public service spaces, including a lobby, a library, the children's creative center, conference rooms, and a multi-purpose auditorium.

Ink Diffusion: An elegant museum courtyard in which the twelve Chinese Zodiac animal heads are displayed is situated between the structures inspired by the elements of thick ink and half-dry strokes. A streamlined bridge connects the boulevard leading to the museum with the park's main path. Architect Kris Yao uses the three structures—the thick ink black building, the half-dry stroke white building, and the ink diffusion bridge—to symbolize Chinese, Indian, and Persian civilizations. Each remains an independent structure yet integrates and interacts to form a multi-faceted Asia.

The Southern Branch was constructed as a green building in order to minimize energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions. It has been awarded with a diamond-grade certification. Only environmental-friendly methods and materials were used for construction, and the building was designed in such a way as to minimize environmental impact. In addition, the main structure was built with maximum earthquake resistance, using 210 seismic base isolators of five different kinds to protect the structure from earthquake damage, while the two 14-acre lakes not only serve as landscape art but also contain flood water that might be used in time of drought. This building project has reached the highest standard for smart building projects and is currently waiting to be granted the diamond-grade smart building governmental certificate.

Exhibition: Macro Perspective, Diversity, Cosmopolitanism

Some people may wonder how the NPM can have a sufficient number of Asian artworks to sustain the Southern Branch, since the core of its collection consists of imperial Chinese treasures. The fact is that Chinese culture has always been part of East Asian civilization. Historically, different cultures in the pan-Asian region interacted with and influenced each other; on the other hand, Chinese artifacts actually include many elements from other parts of Asia, and artifacts seen as originating from Central, West, South, Southeast, and Northeast Asia also show signs of Chinese cultural influence.

A good example of this cross-cultural pollination is blue and white porcelain, often seen as a quintessential Chinese porcelain. The cobalt blue pigments used for making blue and white porcelain originated in Central Asia, and the blue and white decoration itself is said to have come from the Islamic world. By the time of the Yuan Dynasty in the thirteenth century, blue and white porcelain had made its way to Central Asia and further afield, even to Europe, and eventually the craze for blue and white porcelain took the world by storm, leading to a great rise in the number of imitators. When Ming China (1368-1644) put an end to the treasure-seeking voyages in the mid-fifteenth century, Vietnam also started to produce its own version of blue and white porcelain. In the early seventeenth century, Chinese porcelain techniques made their way to Japan via Korea, resulting in the rise of Japanese Imari porcelain wares. As the Ming Dynasty gave way to the Qing, China was troubled by war and imposed a ban on maritime activities. Against this backdrop, Imari porcelain quickly gained popularity in the international

porcelain market and became a serious rival to China's Jingdezhen porcelain kilns and Vietnam's porcelain exporters. This story shows that cultures can influence and also compete with each other.

Another example is the tea drinking culture which originated in China but spread to other parts of the world owing to the Japanese mission to the Imperial China, monks studying abroad, the ancient tea route, the land and maritime Silk Roads, migrants, and the emergence of Western maritime colonial powers. Chinese tea culture spread to other areas and merged with local customs to develop into diverse ways of tea drinking. These two examples illustrate the concept of cross-cultural influence.

The Southern Branch of the National Palace Museum has five permanent exhibition galleries, one special exhibition gallery, a multimedia orientation gallery, and a gallery for loan exhibitions. Ten curatorial teams have been set up, consisting of current and retired NPM researchers, as well as experts and scholars from Taiwan and overseas. Ho Chuan-hsing (Deputy Director), Lee Yu-min (former Chief Curator of the Department of Painting and Calligraphy), Tsai Mei-fen (Chief Curator of the Department of Antiquities), and I led the teams in reviewing the NPM collections and inviting loaned collections to create ten exhibitions to inaugurate the Southern Branch. The ten exhibitions are described below.

Five permanent exhibitions:

- Imprints of Buddhas: Buddhist Art in the National Palace Museum Collection
- Boldness of Forms and Colors: Asian Textiles in the National Palace Museum Collection
- The Far-Reaching Fragrance of Tea: The Art and Culture of Tea in Asia
- Through the Annals of Time: A Brief History of Chiayi
- Understanding Asian Art: Multimedia Gallery Guide

Three temporary exhibitions:

- The Aesthetics of Diversity: South Asian Costumes in the National Palace Museum Collection
- Treasures from Across the Kunlun Mountains: Islamic Jades in the National Palace Museum Collection
- Radiating Hues of Blue and White: Ming Dynasty Blue and White Porcelains in the National Palace Museum Collection

Two exhibitions of loaned artifacts:

- The Enduring Beauty of Celadon: A Special Exhibition of Goryeo Celadons
- The Spread and Export of Imari: A Special Exhibition of Japanese Imari Porcelains

The curatorial teams used a broad perspective to review the NPM collections and plan exhibitions to inaugurate the Southern Branch, the very first museum to focus on Asian art and culture in the cross-strait region, and highlight the diversity and cosmopolitanism of Asian civilizations. We hope to bring the

museum goes in southern Taiwan a feast of art and culture that is distinct from what can be seen at the NPM in Taipei.

It has been more than fourteen years since the project for the Southern Branch was first proposed. Thanks to the tremendous efforts of directors Tu Cheng-sheng, Shih Shou-chien, Lin Mun-lee, and Chou Kung-shin and deputy directors Lin Po-ting, Chang Lin-sheng, Chou Chu-kun, and Ho Chuan-hsing, and the unreserved support of the Construction and Planning Agency, Ministry of the Interior, the Southern Branch is finally opening its doors to the public on December 28. It is the first museum with a perspective that covers all of Asia in the cross-strait region. We hope that visitors will love the Southern Branch Museum, which is entrusted with the important mission of achieving cultural equity between the northern and the southern regions of Taiwan, complementing the NPM in Taipei, a true cultural landmark of southern Taiwan.

Imprints of Buddhas: Buddhist Art in the National Palace Museum Collection

“Imprints of Buddhas” is one of the Southern Branch’s permanent exhibitions. It was curated by Wang Chung-cheng (Department of Registration and Conservation), Liu Kuo-wei (Department of Rare Books and Historical Documents), and Chu Shih-chen and Chung Tzu-yin (Department of the Southern Branch Affairs), under the leadership of Lee Yu-min (former Chief Curator of the Department of Paintings and Calligraphy) before she retired.

Buddhist artifacts were chosen as the subject for this inaugural permanent exhibition for two reasons. First, Buddhism is an important element of Asian culture: after Siddhārtha Gautama founded the religion in India in the sixth century BCE, Buddhism evolved and, with the support of Indian ruling houses and the efforts of the Buddhist clergy, spread to Central Asia, Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, and China, etc. From China, the religion also spread further to Korea and Japan. Since then, Buddhism has flourished and now exists in various incarnations around Asia, hence the large variation in the representations of Buddhist deities, all of which contributes to the diversity and splendor of Asian Buddhist art.

Secondly, the NPM has a rich collection of Buddhist artifacts. In addition to the splendid Han and Tibetan Buddhist scripture and statues in the former Imperial Qing collections, we are also fortunate enough to have 407 statues donated by Mr. Peng Kai-dong (aka Nitta, Muneichi, 1912-2006) in 2004, 2006, and 2008. Mr. Peng’s collection covers an extensive geographical region and includes East Asian works from China, Japan, and Korea, South Asian works from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Kashmir, and Tibet, and Southeast Asian works from Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and India. The inclusiveness neatly encapsulates the philosophy behind the Southern Branch. The grand scale of the collection has made it possible to organize an exhibition on this theme.

The relationship between the NPM and Mr. Peng Kai-dong started with an invitation to an exhibition. In 1987, 218 treasured items from Mr. Peng’s collection were exhibited in a bronze Buddhist statue exhibition entitled “The Crucible of Compassion and Wisdom: Special Exhibition Catalog of the Buddhist

Bronzes from the Nitta Group Collection at the National Palace Museum.” The quality and quantity of the works on display received acclaim, and the exhibition made a significant contribution to Buddhist art research in Taiwan. In 1995, the NPM drew up plans for a collection and created budget to acquire from Mr. Peng 32 outstanding pieces that were then displayed in a permanent gallery. This acquisition also strengthened the NPM’s relationship with Mr. Peng.

In November 2003, Mr. Peng, then 92 years old, decided to find a permanent home for his lifelong collection and donated 358 statues to the NPM. Once the donation process had been completed the following year, the NPM held an exhibition entitled “The Casting of Religion: An Exhibition of Mr. Peng Kai-dong’s Donation” to express our gratitude towards his generosity. Two years later, Mr. Peng donated a four-sided stele with Buddhist images, and after he passed away in November of that year, all 48 remaining statues in his collection were donated to the NPM. In 2008, the NPM organized “Enduring Splendor: A Special Exhibition of Mr. Peng Kai-dong’s Bequest” to commemorate his devotion to art.

The NPM promised Mr. Peng that when the Southern Branch was completed, his collection would be displayed in a permanent exhibition at the new museum’s K. D. Peng Gallery. According to former Deputy Director Lin Po-ting of the NPM, Mr. Peng bade farewell to his lifelong collection in winter rain in front of his home in Japan, sobbing and saying, “May the Buddhas and bodhisattvas arrive in the National Palace Museum in Taiwan safe and sound and be forever worshipped in a better environment.” We believe that Mr. Peng will approve the unveiling of the exhibition at K. D. Peng Gallery: the 407 statues he donated are receiving the best care and first-class research, and they will also be on display in the Southern Branch’s permanent exhibition.

This exhibition comprises five sections: “The Joy of Birth,” “The Wisdom of the Buddha,” “The Compassion of the Bodhisattva,” “Transmission and Transformation of the Buddhist Scriptures,” and “The Mystery of Esoteric Buddhism.” Each section presents the art objects in chronological order to show the beauty of Buddhist art and the splendor of Buddhist scriptures. The curatorial team created a catalogue full of pictures and textual information, and curators Wang Chung-cheng and Liu Kuo-wei also contributed two scholarly essays, “Buddhist Imagery Through a Kaleidoscope: Stylistic Formation and Evolution of Ancient Asian Buddhist Statues” and “Transmission of Buddhist Scriptures Across Asia,” to give the catalogue more theoretical depth.

When I was reminded the other day that I had to write a preface for this catalogue, I realized that without Mr. Peng’s donation, it would not have been possible for the NPM to present the beauty of Asian Buddhist art so comprehensively. This is why I have instructed my assistant, Ms. Hsieh Pei-yun, to collect information and provide an appendix to tell the readers about Mr. Peng’s life and his contributions to the Southern Branch.

Fung Ming-chu

Director of the National Palace Museum
Dragon Boat Festival, 2015



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