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Pacific Asia Museum announces *Auspicious Beauty: Korean Folk Painting*



September 15, 2011—Pacific Asia Museum presents the exhibition *Auspicious Beauty: Korean Folk Painting* in the Focus Gallery from October 7, 2011 to March 25, 2012.

Korean folk painting illustrates auspicious subjects such as birds and flowers, mythology, characters related to virtues, and scholars' objects. The exhibition will be divided by these themes, and discuss the meanings of each subject and the patrons who commissioned the works. The dates of the objects range from the mid-16th century to the early 20th century.

This exhibition includes a stunning eight-panel screen of flowers and rocks recently acquired by Pacific Asia Museum. The motif represents wealth and eternity, and would likely have decorated a women's personal space to fill the household with auspicious meaning. A screen such as this one would have been prepared as a wedding dowry and cherished as a family heirloom for generations.

Minwaha, or folk painting, during the Joseon dynasty (1392-1910) serves as an entry point to Korean culture, reflecting societal values, religious ideas, and popular humor. *Auspicious Beauty* introduces popular themes in *minwaha* and illuminates their meanings, functions and patrons. Usually placed in a room in folding screen format or hung on walls in scroll format, this genre

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illustrates various subjects such as scholars' equipment, characters related to Confucian virtues, and natural themes such as birds-and-flowers and a range of animals. These *minwha* not only decorated the rooms of many households but were also understood to bring good luck, ward off evil spirits, and depict moral virtues. In contrast to highly revered *literati* painting by scholar-gentlemen, *minwha* received little respect as an art form but continued to enjoy strong support among the growing middle class during periods of political stability.

Left Image: Dragon, Korea, Joseon Period, Paper, Pacific Asia Museum Collection.

Top image: Screen of Flowers and Rocks, Korea, Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910); 19th century. Ink and mineral pigments on silk, Pacific Asia Museum Collection, Gift of Dr. Don W. Lee in loving memory of his parents, Lee Bum-Soon and Min Young-Eui. 2009.16.4

Right Image: *Chaekkori* (Scholar's Items), Korea, Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910); 19th C., Ink and color on paper, Gift of Mr. & Mrs. R. William Jonhston. 2003.12.1

Related Programs

StoryTime

October 1, 10:30 a.m.

In preparation for *Auspicious Beauty: Korean Folk Painting*, we feature tales from Korea as part of our ongoing Silk Road Story Time series for families. Includes a craft, snack, balloon and admission to the galleries. Free for members or \$10 per family.

Korean Arts Council mixer

October 7, 3 p.m.

Enjoy the first day of *Auspicious Beauty: Korean Folk Painting* as well as a curatorial exploration of two key Korean items in the special exhibition *40 Years of Building the Pacific Asia Museum Collection* as part of the Art & Coffee series. After, chat over coffee with others interested in the art and culture of Korea and learn how to get involved in this exciting new museum council.

Free Family Festival: Celebrating Korean Arts and Culture

October 23, noon-4 p.m.

Enjoy free admission to all the galleries including featured exhibition *Auspicious Beauty: Korean Folk Painting*, plus performances, hands-on crafts, demonstrations, and fun activities as we celebrate Korean arts and culture! Co-sponsored by the Museum's Korean Arts Council.

Curator's Tour

January 28, 2 p.m.

Exhibition curator Yeonsoo Chee leads a tour of *Auspicious Beauty: Korean Folk Painting* for visitors.

About Pacific Asia Museum

Pacific Asia Museum is among the few institutions in the United States dedicated exclusively to the arts and culture of Asia and the Pacific Islands. The museum's mission is to further intercultural understanding through the arts of Asia and the Pacific Islands. Since 1971, Pacific Asia Museum has served a broad audience of students, families, adults, and scholars through its education and outreach programs.

Pacific Asia Museum is located at 46 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, California 91101. The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is \$9 general, \$7 students/seniors, and free for museum members and children under 12. Admission is free every 4th Friday of the month.

For more information visit www.pacificasiamuseum.org or call (626) 449-2742.

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