



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:  
Chelsea Mason, Marketing Director  
626.449.2742 x22  
[c.mason@pacificasiamuseum.org](mailto:c.mason@pacificasiamuseum.org)



### **Pacific Asia Museum to Present New Korean Gallery**

June 14, 2012—Pacific Asia Museum will open a new Korean Gallery on October 4, 2012 as part of its continued renovation and reinterpretation of the permanent collection galleries. The Korean Gallery will not only have a new, larger location within the museum's galleries, but will also benefit from a thematic approach that will put a larger number of objects on view from the museum's permanent collection of Korean art.

In 2010, Pacific Asia Museum launched a long-range plan to renovate and reinterpret its permanent collection galleries. As a first step, the museum successfully opened the Introductory Gallery featuring *The Art of Pacific Asia* in March 2011. Through 2015, the museum will continue renovating several other galleries to better present its permanent collection to visitors and protect it for future generations through upgrades to climate controls, lighting and display cases.

Moving from its previous location in the north wing, the Korean Gallery will be in the Everett and Peg Palmer Founder's Gallery between the Angelyn and Ralph Riffenburg Gallery of Chinese Art and the Frank and Toshie Mosher Gallery of Japanese Art, enabling the visitor to move through the museum in a more

unified way, with the entire south wing dedicated to the arts of East Asia. The inaugural exhibition *The Arts of Korea* will introduce the history and techniques of Korean paintings, textiles, ceramics and other art forms through thematic displays, audio tours and interactive components. One section of the gallery will feature objects grouped according to three different belief systems—Buddhism, Confucianism and Shamanism. These objects will demonstrate their connections to those traditions as well as their broader historical significance. Additional contextual information for some of the works will be provided by various audio and visual aids. A second section of the gallery will examine how contemporary Korean artists draw inspiration from tradition and maintain dynamic connections with centuries of Korean artistic heritage. In a region with the largest Korean metropolitan community in the U.S., it is essential for Pacific Asia Museum to share the breath and depth of the Korean arts to execute our mission of furthering intercultural understanding through the arts. The new Korean Gallery will make Korean art and culture

more meaningful both to those who have never studied it before and to those who are already familiar with it.

The museum's Collectors' Circle supported this effort at their spring session by making possible the acquisition of three Korean paintings: *Grapevine* by Choi Seok-hwan (1801-?), *Fifth King of Hell* and *Amitabha Buddha with Two Attendants*, all from the Joseon dynasty (1392-1910). Choi's grapevines have long been admired for their combined effects of powerful brushstrokes, dramatic compositions with sweeping vines and masterful control of ink. The two Buddhist works are classic examples of religious painting in the Joseon period, reflecting stylistic changes from the Goryeo dynasty (918-1392) and revealing important aspects of Korean Buddhism. These acquisitions greatly enhance the museum's collection by meaningfully expanding the Korean painting holdings, and will be on view in the newly renovated Korean Gallery in rotations due to their light-sensitivity.

Major Support for the Korean Gallery renovation provided by the Korea Foundation and the Pasadena Community Foundation.

Additional funding for the Korean Gallery renovation project provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea, the Pasadena Arts & Culture Commission and the City of Pasadena Cultural Affairs Division, Mi Ryu Ahn, Mike and Sookie Garrison, Eunhak Bae and Robert Kwak, and Sangphil Nam.

Top Image: Choi Seok-hwan (1808 - ?), *Grapevine* [Mook Podo-do], Korea, Joseon dynasty (1392-1910), late 19th century, Ink on paper, Museum Purchase with Funds Provided by the Collectors' Circle, 2012.3.1

### **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](http://www.pacificasiamuseum.org) or call (626) 449-2742.

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