



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, February 8, 2011

**Media Contact**

Margaret Leong, Board Chair  
626-449-2742 ext 29  
Mleong4431@sbcglobal.com

**Pacific Asia Museum Announces Appointment of Executive Director Charles Mason**



PASADENA (February 8, 2011) - The Board of Trustees of Pacific Asia Museum is very pleased to announce that Charles Mason will be joining the museum as its Executive Director, effective May 16.

Mr. Mason, currently Chief Curator of the Gardiner Museum in Toronto, Canada has over 15 years of museum experience and has produced numerous exhibitions exploring a wide variety of Asian art forms from different cultures and historical periods. He has proven success in donor cultivation and acquisitions as well as in strategic planning and museum administration. Mason brings to this position a commitment to creating a collaborative working environment and a strong focus on engaging local communities with dynamic, participatory exhibits and programs. Throughout his career, Mason has helped build significant collections of Asian art, both historical and contemporary, and he has written on a broad range of topics, from Chinese painting and Japanese porcelain to the history of Asian art collecting in the West.

"Asia has always been a critical region of the world, but it is especially important today. Pacific Asia Museum has a wonderful mission with its unique focus on the art and culture of Asia and the Pacific Islands and is well situated to make a significant impact within the greater Los Angeles area and beyond. Having spent more than twenty years studying Asian art and culture, coming to Pacific Asia Museum is a terrific opportunity for me and I look forward to further developing the legacy that began here over 40 years ago," Mason said. Board Chair Margaret Leong Checca commented, "Charles Mason is a wonderful choice for Pacific Asia Museum. He is overwhelmingly qualified to lead the museum and position it for future growth."

Prior to his current position at the Gardiner Museum, Mason was Chief Curator and Curator of Asian Art at the Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art at the University of Florida and Curator of Asian Art at the Allen Memorial Art Museum at Oberlin College in Ohio. Mason received his

bachelor's degree in Chinese Language and History from Cambridge University in England and his M.A. in Asian Studies and Art History from the University of California, Berkeley.

"After conducting an extensive search and interviewing a number of exceptional candidates, Charles, with his distinguished knowledge of Asian art and culture and close working knowledge of museums of a similar size, emerged as the perfect individual to enhance the museum's mission and develop its full potential artistically and to further intercultural understanding within the broader community" said Katherine Murray-Morse, the museum's current Interim Executive Director. Ms. Murray-Morse, a former board member, is providing transitional management, following the departure of the museum's former Executive Director last August.

With the appointment of Charles Mason, the museum continues a yearlong celebration of its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. This year, the museum opens, *The Art of Pacific Asia*, located in our new permanent Orientation Gallery, *Visions of the Orient: Western Women Artists in Asia 1900-1940* on view March 3<sup>rd</sup> through May 29<sup>th</sup> and *40 Years of Building the Pacific Asia Museum Collection* on view July 7<sup>th</sup> through October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

*Pacific Asia Museum is one of only four institutions in the United States dedicated exclusively to the arts and culture of Asia and the Pacific Islands. The museum serves a broad and expanding audience of students, families, adults, and scholars through its education and outreach programs.*

*The museum presents a mix of contemporary and historic exhibitions in its galleries and has a permanent collection of 15,000 objects spanning 4,000 years. Pacific Asia Museum is located at 46 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, California, 91101. The Museum is open Wednesday through Sunday 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is \$9 general, \$7 students/seniors, and free for children ages 11 and younger. Admission is free every 4th Friday of the month.*

####