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PACIFIC ASIA MUSEUM WINS PRESTIGIOUS MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY AWARD

Pasadena, June 24, 2010 - Pacific Asia Museum is pleased to announce they are a recipient of a 2010 MUSE Award for Audio and Visual Tours. Now in its 21st year, the MUSE awards competition recognizes outstanding achievement in museum media. The competition is an activity of the Media and Technology Standing Professional Committee of the American Association of Museums.

“It has been a pleasure to offer our visitors this unique audio tour, and we are delighted that other museum professionals have recognized the creativity of our approach. As an institution, we are dedicated to continuously reaching out to new audiences and providing innovative ways for all people to connect with art and culture. The Poetry Tour is a wonderful example of this creative, collaborative approach.” – Director Joan Marshall

Inspired by art and architecture throughout the museum, the innovative Poetry Tour at Pacific Asia Museum uses one art form to explore another, and links one viewer to another. Rather than providing facts about an object, the tour provides another person's vision as a means of interpretation and inspiration for the listener.

Pacific Asia Museum features an extremely wide-ranging collection representing Asian and Pacific Island cultures over thousands of years. Its mission is to share the human stories behind these diverse objects, helping make connections between eras and peoples. Within the Poetry Tour, the most humble daily tools share the stage with items from the imperial palace, linked by their ability to inspire.

In addition to being accessible via phone, the content can also be heard, downloaded, or read in transcript form at www.pacificasiamuseum.org, within the museum's "Digital Lounge."

Judges found Pacific Asia Museum's Poetry Tour to be "a very well thought-out audio tour with a pleasurable and imaginative use of sound and space. This tour should serve as a model of civic access to a wealth of cultural content."

The Poetry Tour was funded in part by the Katharine Audrey Webb Foundation. Sound production by Julian Bermudez and John Rabe. The tour's original poetry was written by members of the Pasadena-based "Poets on Site" performance group. Poets on Site has partnered with Pacific Asia Museum in the past to create live poetry and music events based on special exhibitions.

The MUSE Awards competition received over 200 applications from a wide variety of museums in North America, Europe, Australia and Asia. Entries included audio, cell phone, and interactive handheld tours, interactive kiosks and multimedia installations, podcasts, blogs, games, websites, online collection and image databases, videos, and e-mail marketing campaigns. This year MUSE Award winners were named from 12 distinct categories.

Seventy three judges – museum and media professionals from across the county – were involved in the process of selecting the winners. Winning entries were expected to demonstrate outstanding achievement in content quality; interface design; functionality; production quality; visual appeal; the user's experience; and the intent to which new directions were charted or old challenges resolved through technical innovation. A complete list of judging criteria and MUSE Award winners can be found on the Media and Technology website: <http://www.mediaandtechnology.org/>

Pacific Asia Museum was presented with the MUSE Honorable Mention Award for Audio and Visual Tours during a champagne reception on Sunday, May 23 at the 2010 American Association of Museums Annual Meeting in Los Angeles. Curator of Education Amelia Chapman received the award for Pacific Asia Museum, and was joined by Poets on Site representative Kathabela and musician Rick Wilson.

A special live presentation of the original poetry and music of the Poetry Tour will be presented on Saturday, July 31 at 2pm. No reservations required; the event is included with museum admission.

About Pacific Asia Museum

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's mission is to further cultural awareness and understanding through the arts. 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. Museum open Wednesday through Sunday 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is \$9 general, \$7 students/seniors, and free for museum members and children ages 11 and younger. Admission is free every 4th Friday of the month.

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

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Images are available from Pacific Asia Museum
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