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Sun Museum Presents “Folklore in Ming and Qing Porcelain”
Discovering Ming and Qing Popular Culture through Paintings on Porcelain

(Hong Kong, 17 October 2019) Sun Museum is pleased to present an exhibition, entitled **“Folklore in Ming and Qing Porcelain”**, from 22 October 2019 to 8 February 2020. On display are 46 pieces of porcelain selected from seven private Hong Kong collections. They include blue-and-white, famille-verte, famille-rose, and *doucai* wares, all painted with characters and scenes excerpted from plays, novels and folk tales.

Starting in the Yuan Dynasty, Chinese opera became one of the most popular culture in the society. Some of the opera scenes are illustrated on porcelain. By the late Ming dynasty, the advancement of printing technology had led to the publishing of many popular plays and novels as illustrated books. To cater for the new trend, potters depicted interesting scenes from these books such as *Romance of the Western Chamber*, *The Peony Pavilion*, *Mandarin-Duck Girdle*, and *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*.

For example, one exhibit depicts **“Empty City Ruse”**, a famous story taken from *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. The image shows Zhuge Liang playing his zither on the city gate, appearing relaxed and calm. A boy is sweeping the pavement of the gate. The scene is in stark contrast with the one outside the gate where the anxious Sima Yi and his soldiers are charging towards the city. When Sima Yi saw this scene, he was tricked into thinking that the city must be heavily guarded and decided to turn back, enabling Zhuge Liang to flee the city.

Another exhibit is decorated with **“Guo Ziyi’s birthday celebrations”**. It shows a rollicking scene of Guo’s birthday party depicting a total of 51 figures, all rendered with scrupulous brushwork. Guo made a significant contribution to quelling the An-Lu Disturbances and was awarded the title Prince of Fenyang. Due to his many offspring, he became a symbol of longevity, wealth and honour.

The exhibition also includes a number of porcelain with auspicious motifs, such as one showing a scene of **“plucking a branch of osmanthus from Palace of the Toad”**: Chang’e passes an osmanthus branch to a scholar riding on a sea of mist, an act that indicates the scholar has ranked first in the final palace examination. Other painted stories are derived from *The Peony Pavilion*, *Mandarin Duck Girdle*, *Celebrating a Harvest Year*, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* and *Stories to Caution the World*.




Mr. Yeung Chun Tong, Director of Sun Museum, remarked, “The porcelain on display in this exhibition are unique. Made in the 17th and 18th centuries, they are decorated




with vivid stories reflecting the popular culture of their time. By showcasing these remarkable pieces of porcelain, we hope to let visitors understand more about the social life in the Ming and Qing dynasties and help them appreciate the extraordinary integration of the art of literature, porcelain and painting on these craftworks.

In addition, Sun Museum will present six public lectures on Chinese culture starting 26 October, 2019 (Saturday). Delivered by the Director of Sun Museum, Mr. Yeung Chun Tong, this new series explains how Chinese artists feature auspicious meanings and educational legends with motifs of flowers, fruit, trees, birds, animals, and insects.

Sun Museum is housed on the 4th floor, SML Tower, 165 Hoi Bun Road, Kwun Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong. Opening Hours: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Tuesday to Saturday. Closed on Sunday, Monday and Public Holidays. Free Admission.

Photos with caption:

	<p>Photo 1: The exhibition showcases over 40 pieces of porcelain made in the late Ming and early Qing periods. They mainly feature stories excerpted from folklore, history and auspicious motifs. Popular stories such as <i>Romance of the Western Chamber</i>, <i>The Peony Pavilion</i>, <i>Romance of the Three Kingdoms</i>, <i>Investiture of the Gods</i> and <i>Legends of the Sui and Tang Dynasties</i> are vividly illustrated.</p>
	<p>Photo 2: Ms. Rachel Leung, Associate Curator of Sun Museum, was introducing different folklores illustrated on the porcelain during the guided tour.</p>
	<p>Photo3: Visitors enjoying the art pieces in the exhibition "Folklore in Ming and Qing Porcelain".</p>

	<p>Photo 4: Vase with famille-rose decoration featuring Empty City Ruse (<i>Romance of the Three Kingdoms</i>) Yongzheng reign, Qing Dynasty Collection of Songde Tang Height 42.8 cm</p>
	<p>Photo 5: Large rouleau vase with famille-verte decoration featuring Guo Ziyi's Birthday Celebration Kangxi reign, Qing Dynasty Collection of Songde Tang Provenance: Cleveland Museum of Art Height 75 cm</p>
	<p>Photo 6: Baluster jar and cover with famille-verte decoration featuring Plucking Osmanthus Branch from Palace of the Toad Shunzhi reign, Qing Dynasty Collection of Songde Tang Height 52 cm</p>

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About Sun Museum

Sun Museum, a non-profit institution established by Simon Suen Foundation, is housed on the 4th floor of the SML Tower along the Kwun Tong waterfront (165 Hoi Bun Road) with a total area of 12,500 sq. ft. It fosters the development of arts and culture in Hong Kong and China through organizing feature exhibitions, seminars and other educational activities. Mr. Yeung Chun Tong is the Director of Sun Museum.