

ASIAN ART MUSEUM  
Chong-Moon Lee Center  
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## NEWS



**Asian  
Art  
Museum**

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## ASIAN ART MUSEUM DIRECTOR DR. JAY XU APPOINTED TO LEADERSHIP ROLES AT THE TERRA FOUNDATION FOR AMERICAN ART AND THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

### Dr. Xu's Professional Expertise and Experience to Shepherd Organizations' Next Generation of Initiatives



**SAN FRANCISCO, April 22, 2019**—With more than thirty years of experience as a scholar, curator, and museum administrator, Dr. Jay Xu, Director & CEO of San Francisco's Asian Art Museum, has been appointed to leadership roles at two of the nation's most prestigious organizations fostering academic research and cultural advancement—the Terra Foundation for American Art and the American Academy for Arts and Sciences.

Beginning this spring, Dr. Xu will serve a four-year term on the board of the Terra Foundation for American Art, the Chicago-based organization dedicated to fostering the exploration, understanding and enjoyment of historical American art with an emphasis on international activities and programs. Through the Foundation's initiatives and grant-making over the past 14 years, American art has been viewed and studied globally, including France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Mexico, Brazil, Australia and China, among others. As a board member, Dr. Xu will provide oversight to the organization's efforts to further advance these initiatives.

Elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2015, Dr. Xu has now been tapped to participate on the Academy's Commission on the Arts, co-chaired by John Lithgow, Actor; Deborah Rutter, President, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; and Natasha Trethewey, Professor of English at Northwestern University.

The Academy includes some of the world's most accomplished leaders—from academia, business, public affairs, the humanities, and the arts—and is also a center for independent policy research. To this end, the Academy's Commission on the Arts will gather together a group of artists, arts leaders, philanthropists, educators, and scholars to reframe the national conversation about what role the arts can play in a diverse twenty-first century democracy. A primary focus of the Commission will be on developing an easily-understood set of metrics that arts advocates, educators, artists, and government officials from across the country can all use to re-focus the national conversation on the arts around core common issues.

"What an honor to join these esteemed organizations," says Dr. Xu. "Both the mission of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences' Commission on the Arts and the values of the Terra Foundation for American Art interlock powerfully with my vision of making art "for all"—a vision that guides my leadership of the Asian Art Museum every day. I look forward to convening and participating in the kinds of cross-cultural conversations that remind us of the immense richness and sense of place and purpose that only the arts can bring."

Dr. Xu obtained his PhD in early Chinese art and archaeology at Princeton University, and is the first Chinese American director of a major US art museum. His vision for the Asian Art Museum is to embrace and explore the interconnectivity between Asia and the rest of the world, and between traditional and contemporary artistic practices. Guided by this vision, the museum launched a \$90 million campaign in 2018 to invest in its future, one that will transform the visitor experience of its world-renowned collection, exhibitions and cultural programs.

The centerpiece of this transformation is the new, 13,000-square-foot Akiko Yamazaki & Jerry Yang Exhibition Pavilion and the East West Bank Art Terrace designed by architect Kulapat Yantrasast. Other elements include: dedicated spaces for contemporary art experiences; new approaches to displaying masterpieces in the museum's collection galleries; upgrades to education classrooms and new digital technologies for enhanced interpretation. The pavilion is scheduled to open in spring 2020.

Dr. Xu previously served as assistant to the museum director at the Shanghai Museum and curator of Chinese art at the Seattle Art Museum. He also served as head of the Asian art department and chairman of the department of Asian and Ancient Art at the Art Institute of Chicago. A dedicated, award-winning scholar of Chinese art, Xu is well-published, particularly on ancient Chinese bronzes and archaeology, and has lectured extensively on Asian art and museum practice.

### **Asian Art Museum**

The Asian Art Museum—Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture is one of San Francisco's premier arts institutions and home to a world-renowned collection of more than 18,000 Asian art treasures from throughout Asia spanning 6,000 years of history. Through rich art experiences, centered on historic and contemporary artworks, the Asian Art Museum unlocks the past for visitors, bringing it to life while serving as a catalyst for new art, new creativity and new thinking. [www.asianart.org](http://www.asianart.org)

### **Terra Foundation for American Art**

Since it was established in 1978, the Terra Foundation for American Art has been one of the leading foundations focused on the historical art of the United States. Headquartered in Chicago, it is committed to fostering exploration, understanding, and enjoyment of American art among national and international audiences. To further cross-cultural dialogue on American art, the foundation supports and collaborates on innovative exhibitions, research, publications, and educational programs. Recognizing the importance of experiencing original works of art firsthand, the foundation also provides opportunities for interaction and study through the presentation and ongoing development of its own art collection in Chicago. Implicit in such activities is the belief that art has the potential both to distinguish cultures and to unite them. [www.terraamericanart.org](http://www.terraamericanart.org)

### **American Academy of Arts and Sciences**

Founded in 1780, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences honors excellence and convenes leaders from every field of human endeavor to examine new ideas, address issues of importance to the nation and the world, and work together “to cultivate every art and science which may tend to advance the interest, honor, dignity, and happiness of a free, independent, and virtuous people.”