

ASIAN ART MUSEUM
Chong-Moon Lee Center
For Asian Art & Culture
www.asianart.org



200 Larkin Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
T 415.581.3711
pr@asianart.org

News



PRESS CONTACTS:
Tim Hallman
415.581.3711
pr@asianart.org

Zejian Shen
415.581.3566
zshen@asianart.org



ASIAN ART MUSEUM 30th ANNUAL BELL-RINGING CEREMONY KICKS OFF 2016 AND THE MUSEUM'S 50th ANNIVERSARY

SAN FRANCISCO, DEC. 28, 2015—On New Year's Eve, the Asian Art Museum marks the close of 2015 and welcomes 2016 with its

annual Japanese Bell-Ringing Ceremony, inviting members of the public to reflect upon the passing year and literally ring in the New Year.

Following in a Japanese tradition practiced for centuries, a 2,100-lb., 16th-century Japanese bronze bell — originally from a temple in Tajima Province and now part of the museum's permanent collection — will be struck 108 times to curb the 108 mortal desires (*bonno*) that, according to Buddhist belief, torment humankind.

Now celebrating its 30th year, the bell-ringing ceremony also marks the beginning of the museum's 50th anniversary. Since 1966, the Asian Art Museum has awakened global audiences to the beauty and depth of Asian arts and cultures. The museum will host 50th anniversary celebration activities throughout 2016, with the bell ringing serving as the festive kick-off.

Bell-Ringing Ceremony
Thursday, Dec 31
11 AM–1 PM

Opening remarks about the Japanese New Year will be provided by community leader Yoshie Akiba. Zen Buddhist priest Gengo Akiba Roshi will conduct a blessing and lead participants in this inspiring ceremony, which will include a purification ritual and chanting of the Buddhist Heart Sutra. Rev. Akiba will begin the bell-ringing, and participants may then take turns ringing the bell to leave behind any unfortunate experiences, regrettable deeds or ill luck from the previous year, and herald the start of

MORE

a prosperous new year. Each toll is struck after the reverberations from the preceding toll have dissipated. In Japan, the last toll traditionally coincides with the first few seconds of the New Year. The Asian Art Museum's ceremony takes place during the day, from 11 AM to 1 PM.

Museum members are invited to a special members-only ceremony at 9:30. We make every effort to allow all our visitors an opportunity to participate in this ceremony. However, to ensure you have a chance to ring the bell, it is recommended that you arrive in Samsung Hall no later than 10 AM for the member ceremony or 12 PM for the public ceremony. Museum visitors wishing to participate will be assigned numbered tickets on a first-come, first-served basis starting at 10 AM in South Court; 108 groups of up to six people will be assembled to strike the bell. No advance reservations will be accepted. Hands-on art activities will also be offered in the education studios during this time. The cost is FREE with museum admission.

Major support for this program is provided by The Henri and Tomoye Takahashi Charitable Foundation. Additional support for the Asian Art Museum's education and public programs is provided by William Randolph Hearst Foundation, The Joseph & Mercedes McMicking Foundation, Dodge & Cox, and The Morrison & Foerster Foundation.

Other New Year Festivities at the Asian Art Museum

Omochitsuki!

Sunday, Jan 10
12–1 PM
Samsung Hall
Free with museum admission

Celebrate the Japanese New Year with Kagami Kai, an acclaimed local mochi-pounding group. Enjoy the colorful and exciting New Year's tradition of mochi pounding to make delectably sweet rice cakes, with lively music, energetic dance and traditional costumes.

Lunar New Year Celebration: The Year of the Monkey

Sunday, Jan 31
10:30 AM–4 PM
Museum-wide
Free with museum admission

stART tour (storytelling for kids ages 3–7): 10:30–11 AM
Hands-on activities: 11 AM–3 PM
China Dance School performance: 12–12:45 PM
Chinese American International School performance: 1–1:45 PM
Lunar New Year stories: 1–1:45 PM

Chinese Calligraphy: 2–3 PM

Animals of the Chinese zodiac with author Oliver Chin: 3–3:45 PM

Roll in the Year of the Monkey with talented dancers, musicians and stilt walkers at the Asian Art Museum's annual Lunar New Year Celebration. Students from the Chinese American International School and China Dance School and Theatre present traditional and modern music, as well as dances from China. Join in with a playful student-arranged version of the lion dance, which is believed to scare away evil spirits and ensure a bright beginning to the year. After the performances, enjoy author Oliver Chin's story about Chinese zodiac animals' characteristics and discover something new about yourself. To round out the day's activities, learn to walk on stilts and dance with ribbons along with West Portal Elementary School's Chinese Performing Art Program students in fun, interactive dances and enjoy a martial arts demonstration.

ABOUT THE 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 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.

Information: 415.581.3500 or www.asianart.org

Location: 200 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

Hours: The museum is open Tuesdays through Sundays from 10 AM to 5 PM, with extended spring and summer evening hours on Thursdays until 9 PM. Closed Mondays, as well as New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

General Admission: FREE for museum members, \$15 for adults, \$10 for seniors (65+), college students with ID, and youths (13–17). FREE for children under 12 and SFUSD students with ID. General admission on Thursdays after 5 PM is \$5 for all visitors (except those under 12, SFUSD students, and museum members, who are always admitted FREE). General admission is FREE to all on Target First Free Sundays (the first Sunday of every month). A surcharge may apply for admission to special exhibitions.

Access: The Asian Art Museum is wheelchair accessible. For more information regarding access: 415.581.3598; TDD: 415.861.2

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