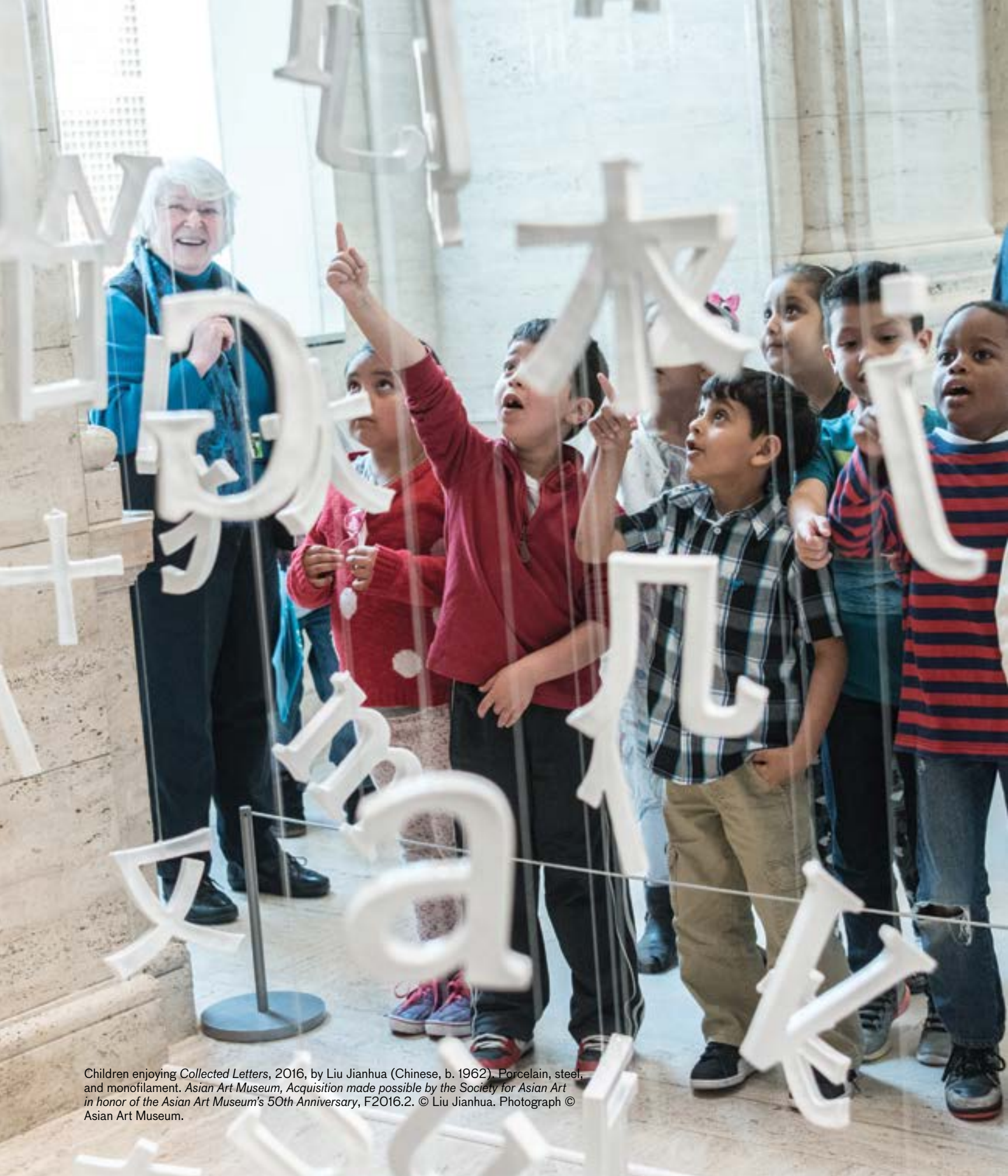




ASIAN ART MUSEUM
ANNUAL REPORT
Fiscal Year 2016



Children enjoying *Collected Letters*, 2016, by Liu Jianhua (Chinese, b. 1962). Porcelain, steel, and monofilament. Asian Art Museum, Acquisition made possible by the Society for Asian Art in honor of the Asian Art Museum's 50th Anniversary, F2016.2. © Liu Jianhua. Photograph © Asian Art Museum.

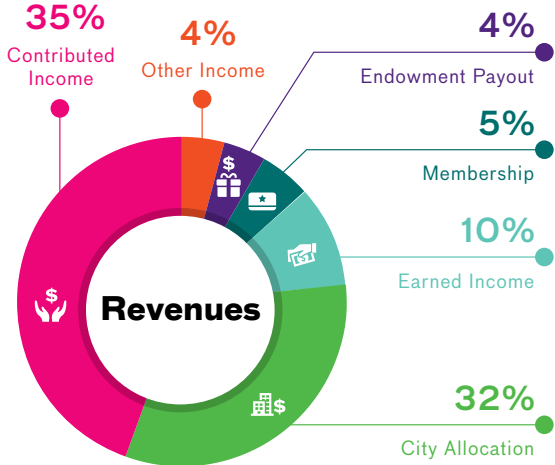
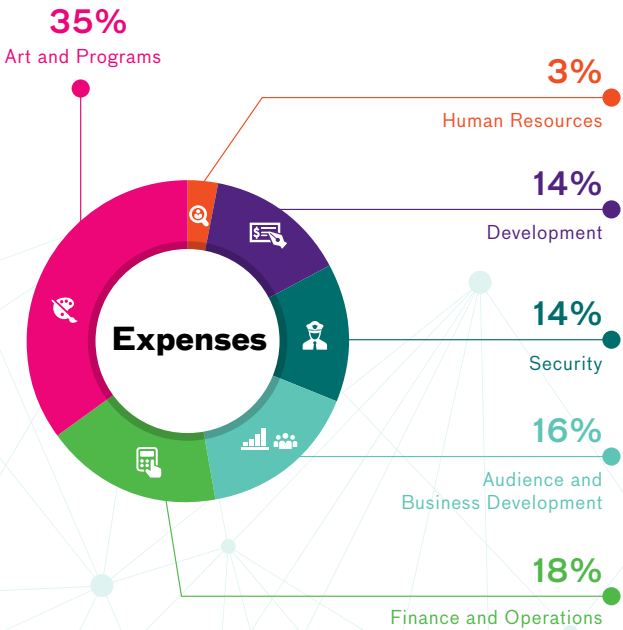
Awaken the past and inspire the next

The rich artistic traditions of Asia come alive in the historic heart of downtown San Francisco. Our collection of over 18,000 magnificent artworks — paintings, sculptures, bronzes, ceramics and much more — is one of the world's finest collections of Asian art. From the serene to the surprising, the ancient to the avant-garde, we are a museum like no other.

FISCAL YEAR 2016 OPERATING BUDGET

\$28.4 MILLION

UNAUDITED, FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2015 TO JUNE 30, 2016. THE ASIAN ART MUSEUM'S AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE.



Celebrating 50 Years, Thanks to You

DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,

Fiscal year 2016 coincided with the museum's 50th anniversary, marking an important moment to reflect on past accomplishments and consider future progress — both of which are made possible by generous supporters like you.

The conclusion of our first 50 years is an opportune time to step forward into the next 50 in a big way: by transforming the museum with an exciting new gallery space. Our new special exhibition pavilion is poised to be the premier venue for Asian art not only in San Francisco but also in the entire country. We're thrilled that our donors, in making this project possible, have invested in the museum's future in such a major way.

We are pleased to recognize donors for contributing a total of \$10.4 million in fiscal year 2016. In addition to our unparalleled permanent collection, with your support, we presented special exhibitions that shared the depth and breadth of Asian cultures, including influential Japanese art, rare Chinese maps and the luminous beauty of Korean lacquerware.

As America and Asia become more intertwined, the museum's role of sharing Asia's history and culture with broad global audiences has never been more relevant or essential. We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who partners with the Asian Art Museum to continuously improve and expand the myriad ways we achieve this goal.

Jay Xu
Director and CEO

Akiko Yamazaki
Chair, Asian Art Commission
and Asian Art Museum Foundation



Photograph © Asian Art Museum



Photograph © Asian Art Museum

“As America and Asia become more intertwined, the museum's role of sharing Asia's history and culture with broad global audiences has never been more relevant or essential.”



Transforming the Museum

Upgraded Koret Education Classrooms will allow the museum to serve thousands more schoolchildren every year. Rendering courtesy of WHY.

We're stepping forward into our next 50 years with an exciting new plan to better serve the audiences of today and tomorrow. In 2016, we announced that the museum will be adding a 12,000-square-foot special exhibition pavilion, poised to be one of San Francisco's largest exhibition spaces. We plan to break ground on the project in the first quarter of 2018. Great news for members and visitors — the museum will continue to be open with special exhibitions on view during this time.

The museum has selected internationally recognized architect Kulapat Yantrasast and the firm WHY to design the pavilion and update other spaces. Upgrades to our education classrooms, for example, will allow us to expand our reach and increase the number of Bay Area students and teachers served beyond the more than 35,000 school program participants the museum already welcomes each year.

As we envision our next 50 years, we see the museum continuing to serve as a hub for education, culture and community. This pavilion will enhance our ability to share transformative experiences with broad audiences and build cultural empathy.

Special Exhibitions

Each year, we present an array of exhibitions that offer new perspectives on Asian art, sharing rare and important objects from top museums across the globe as well as our own world-class collection.

BY THE NUMBERS



13

special exhibitions
and installations



411

artworks loaned
to the museum



9

artworks loaned
from the museum



1,795

public tours given to
12,504 visitors



31

languages other than English
spoken by volunteers



525

volunteers
provided support



Installation view of *Looking East*, 2015, Asian Art Museum. Photograph © Asian Art Museum.

“ Although the big-name Western artists may be an initial draw, the carefully composed disposition of more than 170 paintings, prints, drawings, photographs and decorative objects keeps opening new perspectives and fresh delights. The Asian’s spacious and coherent installation adds to the pleasure. ”

—SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE,
REVIEW OF *LOOKING EAST*



Installation view of *China at the Center: Rare Ricci and Verbiest World Maps*, 2016, Asian Art Museum. Photograph © Asian Art Museum.

“ For a small show, *China at the Center: Rare Ricci and Verbiest World Maps* covers a lot of territory — literally. ...We imagine 17th-century Chinese viewers consuming these maps the way we might dive into travel magazines or *National Geographic*. The maps offer portraits of the world — and as portraits often do, they reveal as much about their creators as they do about their subjects. ”

—THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Inspiring the Next Generation

Our school programs introduce arts and cultures from Asia to thousands of local students each year, engaging them in active inquiry and discovery of different peoples, ideas and art. Our generous donors ensure these programs are free to all students.

BY THE NUMBERS



37,691

students, teachers and chaperones served on school tours and through outreach programs at school sites



474

different schools visited the museum



992

school groups educated through storytelling and docent-led programs

HIGHLIGHTS

- Expanding school audiences to include college groups from more than 58 local colleges and universities.
- Graduating 10 new storytellers to tell stories in our galleries; storytellers guide about half of school tour visits.
- Launching the Free Family Pass program to neighborhood schools, encouraging students to bring their families to the museum and play the role of teacher.



Storytellers bring art to life for young visitors. Photograph © Asian Art Museum.

“ This trip had been the culminating activity of our month-long reading and writing unit about multicultural folktales, and the students were looking forward to it for so long. They truly enjoyed your storytelling and the galleries, as did I and the other chaperones! We most definitely will continue to embed trips to the Asian Art Museum into our unit planning! ”

—JESSICA LÓPEZ, TEACHER



The deity Simhavaktra (detail). China; Beijing or vicinity, Hebei province, Qing dynasty, reign of the Qianlong emperor (1736–1795). Dry lacquer inlaid with semiprecious stones. Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection, B60S600. Photograph © Asian Art Museum.

“ Dear Docent, Thank you for the awesome tour of Buddhism and Hinduism. My favorite part of the field trip was when we learned about creepy monsters because I like scary stuff. I plan on going again to the museum on a free Sunday with my family so I can be the one teaching them. ”

— JONATHAN, 5TH GRADER

A Place for Everyone

We welcomed diverse audiences to the museum for a vast variety of public programming, including Thursday Nights, engaging Family Fun Days, cultural celebrations highlighting different Asian holidays and traditions, and programs designed to illuminate our special exhibitions.

BY THE NUMBERS



54,081

visitors enjoyed



1,925

programs

HIGHLIGHTS

- Expanding museum offerings to include more programs tackling timely topics related to diversity, the environment, immigration, racism and the impact of war on cultural and artistic communities.
- Celebrating the fifth anniversary of the Artists Drawing Club. Artists Drawing Club gives local artists a platform to draw connections among ideas, time, cultures and the big picture. Through over 30 programs, more than 70 artists have presented new projects that focus on exchange, experience and interaction.
- Launching TAKEOVER and Tasting Menu, two new Thursday Night programs that connect visitors to art and culture through comedy, film, food and more.
- Developing and facilitating 27 family programs, which reached 23,351 visitors. These programs were created and led by six Art Speak high school interns.



2016-17 Art Speak Interns in front of Hung Yi's *Dragon Fortune*. Photograph © Asian Art Museum.

“ The Art Speak internship was the single most important experience in helping me realize that I belong in museums. Never in my life had I felt so deeply connected to my identity and learning about others in a welcoming space. I hope to continue working in institutions like the Asian Art Museum in the future, to preserve and share culture with communities. ”

— SAMYA BROHMI, HIGH SCHOOL INTERN



“ Children had the freedom to do whatever idea they wanted to do. ”

“ Great creative playtime, community-building activity ”

“ Freedom for kids to explore and build in a beautiful space. ”

Boy steps inside his creation at The Box Project, a museum workshop for parents and kids celebrating creativity. Photograph by Quincy Stamper.

Collection

Our collection of over 18,000 magnificent artworks is one of the world’s finest collections of Asian art — and it’s constantly growing thanks to generous donations and an active acquisition program.

BY THE NUMBERS



18,390

objects in the museum collection



193

total acquisitions

“ The Asian Art Museum is on a roll as it celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, with the recent unveiling of plans for a new temporary exhibition pavilion and, now, the announcement of a major gift of art. ”

— SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, ANNOUNCING GIFT OF THE GUND COLLECTION

HIGHLIGHTS

- Acquisition of the Gund Collection, a bequest of 140 Japanese works in ink on paper, including rare works by acclaimed masters.
- Acquisition of *Collected Letters*, a site-specific work by contemporary installation artist Liu Jianhua.



12,472

objects included in the online collection



247

objects newly displayed

Conservation

The museum is the steward of one of the world’s most significant collections of Asian art, and, with your support, our team of skilled conservators ensure every object receives the best possible care.

BY THE NUMBERS



2,300

artworks examined by conservators for exhibition, acquisition, loan and surveys



Approximately

80

works were treated in preparation for display



Close-up of the monkey hero Hanuman during consolidation of flaking pigments. Photograph © Asian Art Museum.

“ Caring for art requires constant stewardship. When we accept an artwork into our collection, we accept responsibility for its care and long-term preservation. Artworks are like living things — they age and decay as part of the natural progression of time. The Conservation department is charged with understanding how materials age or change, and doing all we can to slow this progression. ”

— KATHY GILLIS, HEAD OF CONSERVATION

Avery Brundage Founders Circle

On the 50th anniversary of its founding, the Asian Art Museum announces the creation of the Avery Brundage Founders Circle to recognize donors whose cumulative giving to the museum is \$1 million or more. **To learn more, please contact the Development department at 415.581.3771.**

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In Memoriam William K. Bowes, Jr.

Asian Art Museum Director Jay Xu and philanthropist Bill Bowes in front of *Dragon Fortune* in 2016. Photograph © Asian Art Museum.

Humble and kind — and always with a twinkle in his eye — Bill Bowes (1926–2016) was a rare breed: a native San Franciscan and an immensely successful venture capitalist who dedicated decades to actively supporting Bay Area institutions like the Asian Art Museum.

Bill had served on the board of the Asian Art Museum since 1992, where he oversaw some of our greatest successes. Thanks to Bill, our recent rapid upgrading of our digital capabilities, weaving modern technologies throughout our organization, has continually impacted visitor engagement and expanded the kinds of stories we can tell. In 2013, The William K. Bowes, Jr. Foundation underwrote our three-year plan to update

our digital strategy and infrastructure, enhancing and innovating visitor-facing technology. Today, digital permeates nearly every program and exhibition we offer audiences, an achievement we owe to Bill’s foresight, generosity, and belief that art is “good for the soul.”

In thanks for this leadership and many other examples of generous support over the past 24 years, in 2016 we officially renamed the museum’s south court the William K. Bowes, Jr. Foundation South Court, to honor Bill and his wife, Ute. Bowes South Court is the museum’s main public gathering place, a starting point for visitors to embark on their journey through millennia of art and culture.



Patrice Wilbur. Photograph by Drew Altizer Photography.

“It’s inspiring to think about the wonderful collection at the Asian Art Museum and how these works can help inspire people of all ages. I believe it is especially important to have kids interact with history, and the museum is exceptional at this.”

— PATRICE WILBUR, CONTEMPORARY COUNCIL MEMBER

“Most people connect to their culture by living within it. Since I immigrated to America when I was a baby, my only connection to my heritage was through stories and traditions — as told by my grandparents and parents. For me, the museum is a place where I can go and experience those stories that connected me to my cultural heritage, and also experience new ones.”

— DAVID LI, LUNAR SOCIETY MEMBER



David Li and Sarah Stroud celebrating at the Golden Gala After-Party, 2016. Photo courtesy of SnapFiesta.

“As passionate believers in arts education, we want the Asian Art Museum to thrive and grow so that it can continue its mission of inspiring visitors of all ages.”

— DAVID AND LINDA LEI, JADE CIRCLE MEMBERS



David and Linda Lei at 28 Chinese opening gala, 2016. Photograph by Drew Altizer Photography.

Annual Giving Circles

Your gifts to our Membership, Jade Circle and Nexus programs allow us to thrive as a vibrant hub for discovery, education and inspiration. To learn more, please contact the Development department at 415.581.3771.

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Jennifer Parson, Project Paper Conservator, discusses the recent treatment of a large-scale work for inclusion in *The Rama Epic* during a Nexus tour as Michele Alioto and Warren Felson look on. © Natalie N. Photography.

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Trustee Bill Kim, Susan Koret, Keum-jin Yoon, Bong-Hee Shin, and Consul General of the Republic of Korea in San Francisco Chae-Hyun Shin view *Mother of Pearl Lacquerware from Korea* at the Annual Director's Dinner on May 23, 2016. Photograph © Natalie N Photography.

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October 28, 2015

Golden Gala

February 11, 2016

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Dragon Fortune, 2014, by Hung Yi (Taiwanese, b. 1970). Baked enamel on steel plate. *Asian Art Museum, Gift of Victor Ou, InSian Gallery, F2016.3.*
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