

NSM HIGHLIGHTS

30th anniversary of China National Silk Museum: a new journey to embark on



China National Silk Museum marked its 30th anniversary on February 26, 2022. Located beside the West Lake and at the foot of Yuhang Mountains in Hangzhou, China National Silk Museum was established in 1992 and is the largest silk museum in the world with display items reaching up to 70000 pieces ranging from silk, embroidery, and intangible culture.

Since its founding, the China National Silk Museum has been committed to a number of international research networks and alliances, such as the International Association for the Study of Silk Road Textiles, and organized a host of international events, including the annual "Silk Road Week", as part of its efforts to spread silk culture to a broader audience.

Over the past three decades, the generations of staff in the China National Silk Museum have witnessed and engaged in the founding, development and flourishing of China's silk cultural displays. All the staff and the retired workers of the museum were also invited to participate in the forum to celebrate the 30th anniversary and awarded for the great contribution to the museum.

Besides, a series of visual items including the logo, slogan and illustration animation were released for the 30th anniversary drawing on the images of the interior decorations and landmarks in the museum as well as traditional silk culture to highlight the theme "farewell to the past and new journey to start".

In the next few months, the museum will hold a series of online and onsite events, exhibitions and programs to celebrate the 30th anniversary of its founding. "More enthusiasm will be devoted to developing into a world-class museum with peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit, and strive to promote silk culture and Silk Road spirits under the Belt and Road Initiative, promote mutual understanding and mutual learning among different countries and civilizations," said Zhao Feng, the chief director of the China National Silk Museum.



China National Silk Museum signs MOU with the British Museum



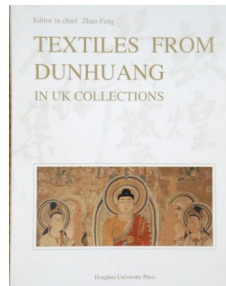
Online signing ceremony of the MOU between the China National Silk Museum and the British

The Director of the China National Silk Museum ZHAO Feng signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Director of the British Museum Hartwig Fischer on February 21, 2022, further strengthening cultural exchanges and co-operation between the two world-renowned museums.

The MOU, a first between the two museums, will last for five years until February 2027. It expresses the intention of the two museums to collaborate on academic research, information sharing, public education, promotion and publicity, and publication related to textiles from Dunhuang in the British Museum collection.

The China National Silk Museum and the British Museum share a long and fruitful relationship. Collaborations between the two sides date back to the early 2000s when Director Zhao visited the British Museum and worked closely with colleagues in the UK to study textiles in the Stein collection. This resulted in the publication of *Textiles from Dunhuang in UK Collections* in 2007. Subsequently, the collaborations have continued in several notable projects, such as *Textiles as Money on the Silk Road*, research on the silk wrapper of the Admonitions scroll, and dyes and dyeing techniques of Dunhuang silk artefacts. The most recent project, Silk Road Online Museum (SROM), launched by the China National Silk Museum in 2021, is also supported by the British Museum.

Textiles from Dunhuang in the British Museum are material traces of the ancient and complex network of trade and exchange known as the Silk Roads. At the signing ceremony, Director Fischer said that “The British Museum is keen to work with our partners to encourage greater understanding of this important collection.” Director Zhao expressed the wish to “find more common interests and extend our cooperation in more areas” in the future. Director Fischer also congratulated the China National Silk Museum on its thirtieth anniversary this year. “We are pleased to add to the celebration of this milestone in the signing of this MOU,” he said.



(Top) Textiles from Dunhuang in UK Collections book launch ceremony at the British Museum

(Bottom) ZHAO Feng at the Hirayama Studio (left) and the International Colloquium on the Admonitions Scroll (right) at the British Museum

Webinar on Revising the *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums*



On March 17, the webinar on revising the *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums*, organized by ICOM-China was held successfully. International experts from Asia Pacific area have commented on amendments to the document.

Professor Sally YERKOVICH, Chair of ICOM Standing Committee on Ethics, opened the webinar by introducing the role of the Standing Committee on Ethics (ETHCOM), what ETHCOM has accomplished so far, and the next steps. One of the major roles of ETHCOM is to help revise the *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums*. Right now ETHCOM is collecting feedback from national and international committees and alliances worldwide and will analyze the results starting from April 18, 2022.

Professor Kidong BAE, Chair of ICOM-ASPAC, proposed that museum is a house for the human's past, an inspiring platform for the current public, and it also stores profound resources for building the future. He stresses the importance of the new ethical standards for the new museum environment, including the considerations of the digital universe, digital privacy, and unbalanced information flows. Digitization has accelerated social development but it also causes some side effects, such as problems in humanity and inequality, so new ethical standards for "digital citizenship" in museums should be set accordingly.

Professor Feng ZHAO, Director of the China National Silk Museum, who is also the Member of ETHCOM and Board Member of ICOM-China, proposed five main suggestions for revising the *ICOM Code of Ethics*. First of all, Professor Zhao suggests editing the framework of CoE to make it better express the core values of the museum ethics once the new ICOM museum definition is decided.

He recommends reinventing the document to make it easier to be understood, learned, remembered, and widely acknowledged by the public. Secondly, the role of "conservation" in the current *ICOM Code of Ethics* is under-emphasized (only mentioned in articles 2.23 and 2.24) while it is one of the most significant roles of the museums. In the meantime, the modern and contemporary artworks are using various new materials, making them even harder to be preserved. Thus he strongly recommends adding a new chapter committing to the topic of "conservation". Professor Zhao also stresses on putting more attention on "digitization", considering more thoughtfully on how could museums remain its independence and integrity while positively striving for development and collaboration, and adding more updated international legislation and agreements after 2004 to the Principle "Museums operate in a legal manner".

Professor Julie HIGASHI, Member of ETHCOM and Board Member of ICOM-Japan, shares the results from the ICOM-Japan webinar on March 15, during which time Directors from 13 institutes participated the webinar and shared their points of view. She condenses the ICOM-Japan webinar into three major keywords: 1. multi-perspective, 2. authenticity, 3. integrity and respect. Multi-perspective means to encourage different narratives even though there is already one. Multi-perspective is different from diverse-perspective in emphasizing the different ways of looking at the same thing. Secondly, authenticity is of vital importance, especially in this digital age. To reach authenticity, ICOM-Japan proposes to put more energy into keeping the record straight. The third point focuses on integrity (especially in education) and respect (especially to the indigenous people).

Professor Zhigang YANG, Vice-Chair of ICOM-China, puts forward three major points. The first point is the conflict of interests in museum partnerships. The second point is the emphasis on the returning of artifacts. The third point is that during the pandemic, many museums have only been carried out in the limited situation of the pandemics, and not yet widely accepted, these new practices can be updated and clarified in the Code.

Dr. Kerya CHAU SUN shares with the participants the museum situation in Cambodia. She puts her attention mostly on three major topics: 1.Collections. Dr. Chau Sun wishes to deal with the fight against the illicit traffic of workarts mentioned in the chapters on COLLECTIONS. 2.Education. Through education, the museums can guarantee a real participation of communities. Education must also be inclusive in museums and especially non-profit. Museums have educational responsibilities because they increasingly welcome young schoolchildren or young people visiting with their families. And museums must be guarantors of the messages that they transmit. 3.Digital Museum. Dr. Chau Sun questioned: What exactly does “Digital museums” mean? Is it the use of new technologies? Is it the role of social media? Is it the “virtual museum”? She proposes that the revision of the *ICOM Code of Ethics* for Museums must add a chapter on the DIGITAL MUSEUM and the following factors must be taken into account: a. internet networks accessible to all, b. digital can never replace direct contact, c. emotion is more absent, d. the chapter must remain open to regular modifications according to the evolution of technology.

Professor Nestor CASTRO, Chair of ICOM-Philippines, states that it is important to revise the Code of Ethics now since a long time has passed since its last revision. First of all, a number of museums in the Philippines have a shift to a digital platform, however, there are also issues that have to be responded to related to this digital shift. He states that when revising the *ICOM Code of Ethics*, it is important to look into concrete cases, Facing various disciplines, it is necessary to consider: where do these different Codes of Ethics interface with one another, where do they conflict, and where do they complement one

another?

Professor Yi ZHENG, Professor of Department of Cultural Heritage and Museology and Director of Fudan University Museum, proposes three suggestions. Firstly, to put more emphasis on the education function and object-based learning in museums. The second point is to put forward higher requirements for research of museums. The third point is to draw a reasonable line between museums being non-profit and offering paid services.

Professor Laishun AN, Vice-President of ICOM and Vice-Chair of ICOM-China notes that the comments in the webinar are absolutely constructive for the formulation of the new Code of Ethics. The ICOM Executive Board will have its next meeting next week, and Sally will be invited to present the process of the revision of the Code of Ethics, and he looks forward to hearing some summarization from ETHCOM.

Professor Xiangguang SONG, professor of Peking University, puts forward several major points. The first is that the *ICOM Code of Ethics* should emphasize the basic characteristics, values, and spirit of public museums, to help the public understand the function and social values of museums.

Secondly, Professor Song stresses the importance of paying more attention to Digital Gaps. The *ICOM Code of Ethics* should try to eliminate the Digital Gap in this highly-digital society to reach genuine accessibility and equality. He also emphasizes the value of authenticity, especially in the digital era nowadays.

At last, President Shuguang LIU, Chair of ICOM-China, closes the webinar by stating that Chinese museums have the same nature as museums worldwide. Museums in China are facing a great opportunity for development as the government is emphasizing the significant importance of museums in building a great country. During this process, the attention and support from the global museum community are greatly appreciated. And Chinese museums will definitely contribute to the international museum communities in the future.

ICOM
International
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of Museums
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Webinar on Revising the *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums*

EXHIBITIONS

The Art of Time 2021· When Embroidery Goes Through Fashion

Curator: CHEN Baichao

Sponsor: Zhejiang Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, Zhejiang Provincial Cultural Heritage Administration

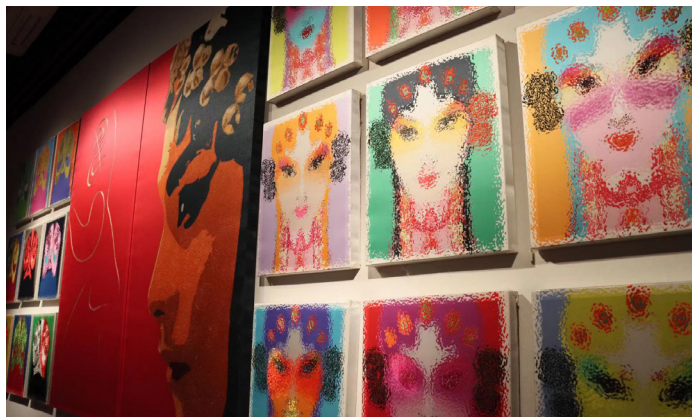
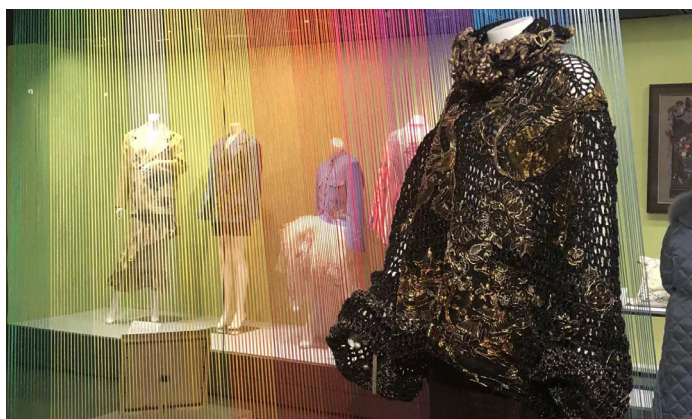
Organizer: China National Silk Museum, China Academy of Art

Place: 1st floor of Fashion Gallery, China National Silk Museum

Duration: 2021.12.17-2022.03.06

Since the beginning of Yao and Shun, Chinese embroidery has been based on the five colors of red, yellow, green, black and white, harmonizing with each other and symbolizing the five elements of fire, earth, wood, water and gold, thus defining the order of life and fashion standards in the world of the ancestors. After thousands of years of inheritance and development, the art of embroidery has been deeply integrated into the aesthetic life of the general public, reflecting people's pursuit of the great virtues, the great Tao and the supreme beauty that exist between heaven and earth.

Today, Chinese embroidery participate in every aspect of artistic life with its ar-chaic, elegant, exuberant, colorful and innovative Eastern beauty. Its cross-temporal and cross-media qualities coincide with fashion per se. The exhibition The Art of Time: When Embroidery Goes Through Fashion, jointly curated by the China Silk Museum and the Oriental Design Institute of the China Academy of Art, takes "fashion" as main axis and contemporary embroidery works as carrier to interpret the way of embroidery in the current fashion context.



Fashion in Hats: Western Fashion Hats of the 19th and 20th Centuries

Curator: ZHAO Fan

Sponsor: Zhejiang Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, Zhejiang Provincial Cultural Heritage Administration

Organizer: China National Silk Museum

Place: Conservation Gallery, China National Silk Museum

Duration: 2021.12.15-2022.03.24

As an accessory of clothing, hats not only have the practical functions of keeping out the cold, sun, rain and protection, but also play an important role in decoration. In the 19th and 20th centuries, the western fashion hats ushered in their heyday, acting as a symbol of fashion trend and status. Women's hats, in particular, came in large numbers with delicate and dignified style or absurd and exaggerated style. As time passes, fashion hats have further developed and changed from the types, styles, materials and color collocations, which can meet the needs of different occasions and different clothing types.

The exhibition sorts out the hats from the western fashion collection of the Museum, and reproduces the modern style of western fashion hats in the 19th and 20th centuries by exploring the historical background, artistic features, category functions and brand stories of fashion hats.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, various art schools emerged alternately, such as Neoclassicism, Romanticism, Arts and Crafts Movement, Art Nouveau Movement, Art Deco Movement and so on, which all influenced the aesthetic orientation of fashion hats. Meanwhile, the continuous infiltration of the Industrial Revolution and the emergence of new materials also provided a wider space for milliners. Every hat in this exhibition, classical or modern, manual or mechanical, is unique. Western fashion hats of this period, just like dancing elves, have left a brilliant and strong touch of color in Western clothing.



Fashion Silhouettes: Selections from China National Museum's Western Collection

Curator: WANG Yilan

Guidance Unit: Zhejiang Provincial Cultural Heritage Administration, Hangzhou Municipal Bureau of culture, radio, television and Tourism, Hangzhou Business Travel Group

Organizer: China National Silk Museum

Place: Fashion Museum, Hangzhou Tower

Duration: 2022.02.26-2022.5.22

Clothes are considered the second skin of the human body. It is the functional skin by protecting the human body from wind and rain, driving away cold, and keeping the body warm. It is also a cultural skin that silently tells the wearer's background, identity, aesthetics, habits, and even aspirations. This layer of skin has been negotiating with the human body for long, sometimes it is trying to narrow the women waists as slim as possible, while sometimes trying to expand the dress that would reach to the most impressive profile. Sometimes it has to be extraordinarily extravagant and overdecorated, and sometimes it serves just as simple, natural, and functional dresses. The costume silhouettes are mirrors of different historical times. The political, technological, economical, and conceptual changes during the development of the periods are also reflected in the daily garments people wear.

To kick off the first exhibition in the "NSM·Fashion Museum" in Hangzhou Tower on the occasion of China National Silk Museum's 30th anniversary, the museum selected about 80 pieces/sets of objects from its Western fashion collection. The exhibition shows costumes from the 18th to 20th centuries chronologically, for example, the 18th-century corset, 19th-century Romantic style dresses, among others. In the mid-19th century, independent designer emerged as a profession. The exhibition also features the works of famous designers such as Jeanne Lanvin, Pierre Balmain, and Yves Saint Laurent, accompanied by exquisite shoes, hats, and handbags, emphasizing the flourishing development of fashion design in the 20th century.



DAILY NEWS

- On January 4, the Labor Union of NSM organized the whole staff to carry out the New Year mountaineering activity.
- On January 14, the signing ceremony and opening meeting of "the Great Series of Chinese Silk Art " was held in Institute for Intercultural Dialogue on the Silk Roads (IIDOS) of NSM.
- On January 20, the exhibition "A World of Silks- Global Silk



Art", co-hosted by Guizhou Museum and China National Silk Museum opened at Guizhou Museum.

- On January 22, the social education activity "Calligraphic engraved on fabric" was successfully held by Textile Training Center of NSM to support the exhibition "The Art of Time- When Embroidery Goes Through Fashion".
- On February 21, A memorandum of understanding (MOU) signing ceremony was held online between the China National Silk Museum and the British Museum.
- On February 25, the celebration for the 30th anniversary of China National Silk Museum was officially held in Galaxy Hall of NSM.
- On February 25, the exhibition "Remaking Patterns -The Cultural and Creative Achievements of the 30th Anniversary of China Silk Museum" was held in NSM.
- On February 26, the stop-motion animation "Farewell to the past and new journey to start" was launched.
- On February 26, the "NSM·Fashion Museum" opened in Hangzhou Tower.
- On March 3, the handover ceremony of designed works from "Showcasing Quintessence of Liangzhu Civilization and in Search of Melody along Poetry Road" was successfully held in NSM.
- On March 3, 2022, the Hangzhou Municipal Bureau of Culture, Radio, Film and Television organized more than 20 travel agencies in the Yangtze River Delta to visit NSM and hold a special seminar at NSM.
- On March 5, the 2021 Volunteers Commendation Meeting was held in NSM.
- On March 6, the lecture "Rambling on about hats" was held at Xinyou Archive Center of NSM.
- On March 7, the Gansu Provincial Bureau of Cultural Relics organized relevant experts to hold a final acceptance meeting for the "Project for the Protection and Restoration of Textiles Unearthed from the Han Dynasty Beacon Tower in Maquan Bay, Dunhuang, Gansu Slips and Slips Museum" at NSM.
- On March 8, the "Spring and Summer Dress Collocation" lecture by the teacher Yuan Xiaomin from Zhejiang Sci-Tech University was held to celebrate the Women's day.
- On March 28, NSM organized a COVID-19 prevention and control emergency drill for all staff of the museum.

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