

## Grand Launch of the Virtual Collection of Masterpieces

The Gyeonggi Provincial Museum and the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), in co-operation with the Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS), are hosting a **Website Grand Launch and Opening exhibition of the Virtual Collection of Masterpieces (VCM)** on 13 September 2007 at the Gyeonggi Provincial Museum. This will officially be graced by **Mr. Yang-Woo Park, Vice Minister of Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism**, accompanied by Mr. Yoo-Chul Won, Vice Governor, Gyeonggi Provincial Government, Mr. Joo-Sang Lee, Vice Chairman, Gyeonggi Provincial Assembly and Ambassador Wonil Cho, Executive Director, Asia-Europe Foundation.

The event takes place during the ASEMUS General Conference held in the same location. Over 40 prominent museum professionals from 25 countries, both from current ASEMUS membership as well as from museums in the extended group of ASEM countries, will be attending the ASEMUS General Conference. The meeting aims to gather old and new members of ASEMUS in order to review the development and chart future plans for the network

Since its establishment in the autumn of 2000 in Stockholm, with the support of ASEF, ASEMUS continues to address the issues of asymmetry in museum collections. It has since grown into a network of more than 60 leading museum institutions from both continents joining hands to facilitate the sharing of collections and joint heritage.

As one of ASEMUS achievement, the Virtual Collection of Masterpieces (VCM) is a web-accessible selection of images and information on masterpieces from museum collections from Asian museums and European museums with Asian collections. Led by a consortium of important Asian and European museums and supported by ASEF, the VCM features the finest examples of Asian creativity and culture. VCM connects museums in Asia and Europe through the direct engagement of curators. Currently 51 museums from 22 countries contribute to the VCM with a total of 986 masterpieces. **There are 29 museums from Asia and 22 from Europe.**

The Virtual Collection of Masterpieces (VCM) project would provide new opportunities to digitalise and communicate information on collections and to use new pedagogic and artistic means. Web visitors will be able to explore hundreds of masterpieces online:

**<http://masterpieces.asemus.museum>**

Through the VCM, we can see the diversity of meanings and interpretation of value. Each museum will present its masterpieces and share with the audiences in various contexts how an object becomes a masterpiece. Ideas differ. This makes the discussion interesting and leads to intercultural understanding and dialogue.

During its soft-launch at the International Council of Museums (ICOM) meeting in Vienna in August 2007, this project has attracted the interest of ICOM officials and International museum delegations from the ASEM member and non-member countries. This enthusiasm shows the great potential for VCM to develop a real virtual working and meeting place for museums professionals, a platform of collaboration and cooperation between Asian and

European museums, and a virtual showcase of Asia-Europe Museums Network (ASEMUS) in cyberspace.

**You are invited to the launch of the Virtual Collection of Masterpieces**

**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> September 2007 at 4pm

**Time:** 4pm

**Venue:** Gyeonggi Provincial Museum, Yongin City (40km south of Seoul), South Korea

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**Vitual Collection of Masterpieces**

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**ASEMUS** is a cross-cultural network of museums collaboration among the ASEM countries. Formed in 2001, it aims at promoting wider mutual understanding between the peoples of Asia and Europe by means of collaborative programmes of museum-based cultural activity and stimulating and facilitating the sharing and use of museum collections of mutual interest and of knowledge about them. The 70 member of ASEMUS Network has been set up to cope with asymmetry in museum collections in Europe and Asia. The network is strongly supported by the Asia Europe Foundation (ASEF).

**The Gyeonggi Provincial Museum**, a large three-story building with a blunt conical tower, sits at the top of a small mountain in Central Yongin city, half an hour South of Southern Seoul. Completed in 1996, the museum has held several exhibitions examining the cultural identity of Gyeonggi Province. The museum also excavates and researches Gyeonggi Province's history and culture, publishes academic research reports, and conserves and administers cultural properties. This museum is collecting, researching, and exhibiting cultural artefacts within our province. Natural History, archaeology, literature, folklore life, calligraphy and paintings, donated artefacts; outdoor exhibits are some categories our museum exhibits to tourists.

The **Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)** seeks to promote better mutual understanding and closer cooperation between the people of Asia and Europe through greater intellectual, cultural, and people-to-people exchanges. These exchanges include conferences, lecture tours, workshops, seminars and the use of web-based platforms. The major achievement of ASEF is the establishment of permanent bi-regional networks focused on areas and issues that help to strengthen Asia-Europe relations. Established in February 1997 by the partners of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), ASEF reports to a board of governors representing the ASEM partners. <http://www.asef.org>

\* **ASEM** (the Asia-Europe Meeting) is an informal process of dialogue and cooperation. It brings together Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Laos, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, The Netherlands, Pakistan, The Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam, the ASEAN Secretariat and the European Commission.

## VIRTUAL COLLECTION OF MASTERPIECES (PROJECT TEAM)

### **Leading institutions:**

National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, Netherlands  
Gyeonggi Provincial Museum, Yongin-City, Korea

### **Partners:**

National Heritage Board, Singapore  
National Museum of the Philippines, Manila, Philippines  
Shanghai Museum, Shanghai, China  
Musée du quai Branly, Paris, France  
Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Ireland  
Museum of World Cultures, Gothenburg, Sweden  
Asia Pacific Regional Organisation of ICOM (ICOM-ASPAC)  
Asia-Europe Foundation, Singapore

### **Contributing Museums:**

Austria	Vienna	Museum für Völkerkunde
China	Beijing	Palace Museum
China	Shanghai	Shanghai National Museum
Czech Republic	Prague	Naprstek Museum
Finland	Helsinki	Kulttuurien Museo
France	Paris	Musée du quai Branly
France	Paris	Musée Guimet
Germany	Hamburg	Museum für Völkerkunde
Germany	Munich	Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde München
Hong Kong	Kowloon	Museum of Art
Indonesia	Jakarta	Museum Kebangkitan Nasional
Indonesia	Jakarta	Museum Nasional Indonesia
Indonesia	Jakarta	Museum Sumpah Pemuda
Indonesia	Jakarta	Museum Basoeki Abdullah
Ireland	Dublin	Chester Beatty Library
Italy	Rome	Museo "Giuseppe Tucci"
Italy	Rome	Museo Nazionale Preistorico Etnografico "Luigi Pigorini"
Japan	Nagasaki	Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture
Korea	Seoul	National Museum
Korea	Seoul	Hanyang University Museum
Korea	Seoul	Sejong University Museum
Korea	Yongin-city, Kyonggi-do	Gyeonggi Provincial Museum
Laos	Vientiane	General Department of Museums and Archeology
Laos	Vientiane	Hong Prakaew
Laos	Vientiane	National Museum
Laos	Vientiane	Sisaket Museum
Laos	Vientiane	That Luang Museum
Malaysia	Kuala Lumpur	Muzium Negara
Netherlands	Amsterdam	Tropenmuseum
Netherlands	Leiden	National Museum of Ethnology
Philippines	Manila	National Museum

Philippines	Makati City	Ayala Museum
Poland	Warszawa	Muzeum Azji i Pacyfiku w Warszawie
Poland	Warszawa	National Museum in Warsaw
Poland	Krakow	National Museum in Krakow
Portugal	Lisbon	Calouste Gulbenkian Museum
Singapore	Singapore	Asian Civilisations Museum
Singapore	Singapore	Singapore Art Museum
Singapore	Singapore	National Museum of Singapore
Singapore	Singapore	National Archives of Singapore
Singapore	Singapore	NUS Museum
Slovenia	Ljubljana	Slovene Ethnographic Museum
Spain	Madrid	Museo Nacional de Antropologia
Sweden	Gothenburg	Museum of World Culture
Sweden	Stockholm	Museum of Ethnography
Sweden	Stockholm	Medelhavsmuseet
Thailand	Chiang Mai	Chiang Mai National Museum
Thailand	Chiang Rai	Rai Mae Fah Luang
Vietnam	Hanoi	Vietnam Museum of Ethnology, Bao Tang Dan Toc Hoc Viet Nam
Vietnam	Hanoi	Vietnam Fine Arts Museum
Vietnam	Hanoi	National Museum of Vietnamese History
United Kingdom	London	Victoria and Albert Museum