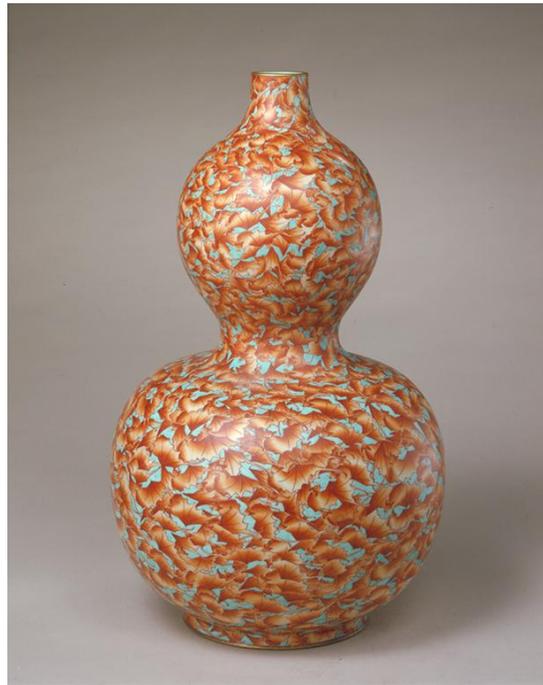


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 21, 2013



Vase, Qing Dynasty, Qianlong Period
© The Palace Museum

Treasures from Beijing's Forbidden City will be unveiled in Vancouver next Fall

Vancouver, BC – The Vancouver Art Gallery will be transformed into the Court of China's Emperors for the landmark exhibition *The Forbidden City: Inside the Court of China's Emperors*. From October 18, 2014 to January 11, 2015, nearly 200 treasured objects from the collections of Beijing's Palace Museum will come under the spotlight at the Gallery. This exhibition will mark another important milestone in the Vancouver Art Gallery's ongoing commitment to represent the historical and contemporary art of China and the Asia Pacific region.

"We are honoured to host this monumental exhibition. It will be the first opportunity, ever, for residents and visitors to Vancouver to view this magnificent collection of rare objects from China's Imperial Palace," said Director Kathleen S. Bartels. "We are thrilled to partner for the first time with CNOOC Limited and The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation, and grateful for their significant support in bringing this exhibition to Vancouver."

The Forbidden City in Beijing is a historic architectural site that has remained largely mysterious until recent years. It was the seat of imperial power for China's emperors for five centuries (1416-1911) during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. With nearly 10,000 rooms, 980 buildings, more than 90 architectural complexes, and over a million ceremonial, diplomatic and domestic artifacts spanning a remarkable period in global history, the Forbidden City today offers a unique opportunity to consider the political, social and cultural developments of late dynastic China. In 1925, the Forbidden City was re-named as Beijing's Palace Museum. In 1961, the Forbidden City was designated as one of China's foremost protected cultural heritage sites, and it became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1987.

The exhibition ***The Forbidden City: Inside the Court of China's Emperors*** will explore life within the Imperial Palace through the buildings, governance, life, treasures, westernizing and closing of the Forbidden City. Among the exhibition objects, there will be rare and valuable works that include paintings, ceramics, gold and silver wares, enamel and ivory objects, textiles and costumes. In addition, Palace models and blueprints, official documents, musical instruments, astronomical and medical instruments, and historic photographs will be on view. Audiences will encounter fascinating stories from 500 years of Chinese history and witness the exquisite artifacts that reveal the ceremonial, institutional and personal daily lives of China's emperors.

The Vancouver presentation of *The Forbidden City* is supported by CNOOC Limited as Presenting Corporate Sponsor, and The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation as Presenting Foundation Sponsor.

Mr. Robert H. N. Ho, founder of The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation, said "For many decades it has been my personal goal to provide people in the West, in particular in Canada, with better and more opportunities to appreciate Chinese culture. Eight years ago I established The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation to support cultural and educational projects such as this marvellous exhibition from Beijing's Palace Museum. Vancouver is often referred to as the gateway to Asia. I believe our city can be a cultural crossroad of unlimited potential. Our family foundation hopes to play a small part in supporting Chinese culture and education in our city."

Mr. Fang Zhi, Executive Vice President of CNOOC Limited and Vice Chairman of the board of Nexen Energy ULC, said: "Canada and China have strong cultural and economic ties that benefit both countries. As a proud investor in Canada, we want to see this positive relationship grow. We are very proud to share this piece of China's past with Canadians."

The Forbidden City: Inside the Court of China's Emperors is organized by the Palace Museum, Beijing, China, and the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. It is curated by Dr. Chen Shen (lead curator), ROM's Vice President, Senior Curator (Bishop White Chair of East Asian Archaeology); Dr. Wen-chien Cheng, the ROM's Louise Hawley Stone Chair of Far Eastern Art; and Dr. Sarah Fee, the ROM's Curator of Eastern Hemisphere Textiles and Fashion.

Presenting Corporate Sponsor:



Presenting Foundation Sponsor:



In association with
China Global: The Vancouver Society
for the Promotion of Chinese Arts and Culture

-30-

Images are available upon request.

MEDIA CONTACT: Debra Zhou, Communications Specialist
dzhou@vanartgallery.bc.ca, Direct: 604-662-4722, Mobile: 604-671-2358

About the Vancouver Art Gallery

The Vancouver Art Gallery is a not-for-profit organization supported by its members, individual donors, corporate funders, foundations, the City of Vancouver, the Province of British Columbia through the BC Arts Council, and the Canada Council for the Arts. We thank everyone for their continuing generosity.