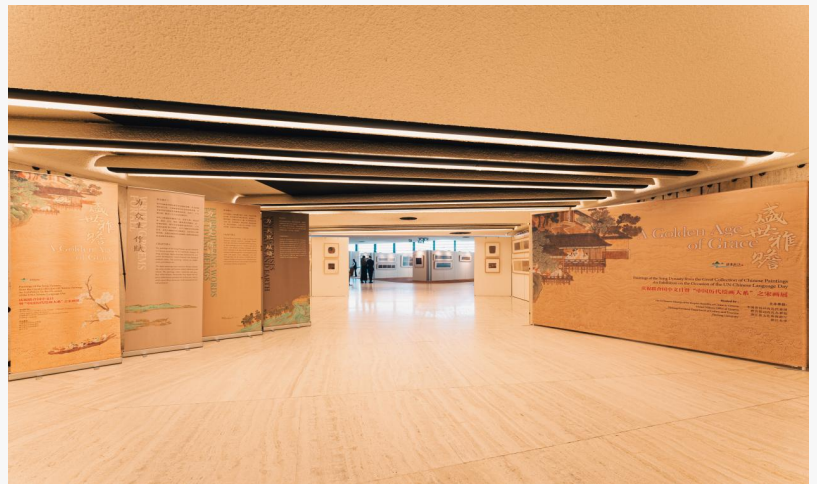


# A Retrospective Paintings Exhibition of the Song Dynasty on the occasion of the UN Chinese Language Day

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, April 21, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On April 20, coinciding with the seasonal division of "Grain Rain" and the United Nations Chinese Language Day, "A Gold Age of Grace" - a retrospective exhibition for celebrating the UN Chinese Language Day: paintings of the Song dynasty from the "Great Collection of Chinese Paintings Through Ages" opened at the Palais des Nations, Geneva. The event was co-hosted by the Chinese Mission to the United Nations Office at Geneva, the United Nations Office at Geneva, the Zhejiang Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, and Zhejiang University.

Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, warmly welcomed the ambassadors and distinguished guests who came to celebrate the UN Chinese Language Day this year. In her speech, she highlighted the significance of understanding the cultural heritage of different countries and regions, which she believes can serve as a basis for promoting intercultural dialogue and overcoming challenges. Valovaya described the Song painting exhibition as an extraordinary journey that showcases China's magnificent landscapes, exquisite art, and humanistic spirit. She concluded by congratulating all the people around the world who love, learn, and speak Chinese on this special day and expressed sincere thanks to the organizers for their enormous efforts to make this event happen, with splendid displays



Mr. Yang Jianwu, Director General of the Zhejiang Provincial Cultural Heritage Administration

leaving lasting impressions on the visitors.

Ambassador CHEN Xu, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland, extended his heartfelt congratulations on the offline celebration of the United Nations Chinese Language Day, which is being held for the first time in three years. He highlighted President Xi Jinping's Global Civilization Initiative's proposal and called for the principle of inclusive coexistence, exchange, and mutual learning between different civilizations. He expressed his hope that the event could help attendees gain a better understanding of China's history and culture, and appreciate the wisdom and strength embodied in different civilizations.

Mr. YANG Jianwu, Director General of the Zhejiang Provincial Cultural Heritage Administration, pointed out that the Song Dynasty condensed China's ultimate art aesthetic. As a business card of Chinese art, Song paintings are a common treasure of human civilization. Civilizations interact through diversity, learn from each other through interaction, and develop through mutual learning. He hoped that this exhibition would be a new starting point for exchange and cooperation between China and Switzerland, marking a new chapter of friendship between China and Switzerland.



Vocal performance of "Prelude to Water Melody" by German mezzo-soprano Eva Wennige



The exhibition, themed "A Gold Age of Grace," displays around hundred classic works from the



"Great Collection of Chinese Paintings Through Ages" in the form of high-definition printed replicas. The "Great Collection of Chinese Paintings Through Ages" is a significant cultural project on a national level, spanning throughout centuries of dialogue between China and the world. It is an impressive co-creation by Zhejiang University, the Zhejiang Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, along with 263 other cultural institutions and museums worldwide, comprising 12,405 pieces (sets) of Chinese paintings, featuring numerous renowned masterpieces.

The exhibition is divided into three sections: "Figure painting: writing poems for all," "Flower-and-Bird Painting: Embroidering Words for Living Beings," and "Landscape Painting: Singing Praises to Heaven and Earth". The figure paintings portray daily life of all cultural classes, reflecting the development of the social economy and the change of the painters' aesthetic taste during the Song Dynasty rule. The flower and bird motive paintings showcase nature's creations, including flowers, birds, fish, and insects, using superb techniques to vividly depict them, and express literary emotions through poetry, lyrics, calligraphy, and seals. The landscape paintings describe magnificent mountains and rivers. The artistic expression of Song painters was surpassing the superficiality of the landscapes, achieving highlights of the deep spiritual embodiment of mountains and rivers in their art.

The opening ceremony commenced with a string quartet reinterpretation of "Tea-picking Dance," followed by a captivating vocal performance of "Prelude to Water Melody" by German mezzo-soprano Eva Wennige, accompanied by the harmonious sounds of the ancient Chinese instruments of Guqin and Harp. The music dialogue of the ensemble shared the aspiration and true embodiment of China-Europe cultural dialogue, transcending the physical and cultural distances. The event also featured a special reciting performance by Cameron James Patterson, reciting two poems by Song Dynasty poet Su Shi, "Drinking by West Lake after a Rain", which depict the natural beauty of West Lake.

In the interactive activities area, Zhang Yiwen from the Zhejiang school of Guqin, Fan Junwen, an inheritor of the "Tea-picking" intangible cultural heritage, and Zhu Jianwei, a member of the China Calligraphers and Painters Association, collaborated in a majestic display of three traditional art forms - Guqin, Tea ceremony and calligraphy. Over 200 attendees, including Ambassadors and members of the UN international organizations were able to participated in tea-picking, brush calligraphy, fan painting, and Virtual reality experience.

This grand event, "A Gold Age of Grace" - a retrospective exhibition for celebrating the UN Chinese Language Day: paintings of the Song dynasty from the "Great Collection of Chinese Paintings Through Ages", will remain available for viewing at the Palais des Nations until May 3rd, 2023.

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