

Aisin Gioro Arts & Cultural Heritage Society Announces New Art Anthology Inspired by Intangible Heritage Craftsmanship

Merging ancient bookbinding with contemporary art, the Aisin Gioro International Art Prize will turn publication into ritual.

VANCOUVER, B.C, CANADA, October 27, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In an era of digital acceleration and fleeting imagery, the [Aisin Gioro International Art Prize](#) will turn to the timeless language of traditional craftsmanship. Each year, its annual anthology of prize-winning works will not be printed as a conventional book but created as a handcrafted scroll — reviving one of China's most refined historical binding techniques, the dragon-scale binding.

The dragon-scale binding, also known as fish-scale or whirlwind binding, originated in the mid-Tang dynasty during the historical transition from scrolls to bound books. Its structure consists of a base scroll and layered pages that overlap diagonally from right to left. Each page will be affixed beneath the previous one, forming a rhythmic, scale-like sequence. When rolled up, it will function as a scroll; when unrolled, it will open page by page like a book — protecting the leaves while maintaining ceremonial grace and readability.

This craftsmanship represents an intermediate form between the scroll and the codex, merging function with ritual beauty. The only surviving ancient artifact of this kind is preserved in the Forbidden City in Beijing. The making of a dragon-scale scroll involves more than ten meticulous steps — printing, cutting, folding, mounting, and rolling — all performed entirely by hand with precise attention to alignment and tension. Recognized as a form of intangible cultural heritage, it remains one of the rarest bookbinding techniques in Chinese history.



The only surviving example of a dragon-scale bound book is Kanmiu Buque Qieyun (□□□□□□□□), preserved in the Palace Museum. (Image courtesy of the Palace Museum)

The [Aisin Gioro Art Anthology](#) will adapt this ancient form for the contemporary era. Each annual volume will gather the prize finalists' works into a dragon-scale scroll, merging heritage craftsmanship with modern presentation — an embodiment of the Prize's central spirit: the union of tradition and innovation.

"A scroll unfolds like time itself," said Cecilia Aisin Gioro, Co-Founder and Chief Planner of the Prize. "Each layer of paper and silk mirrors the layers of human memory. By preserving contemporary works in this form, we wish to let art breathe in the rhythm of heritage — to turn documentation into devotion."

Each anthology will bear an official ISBN registration and will be distributed to major museums, libraries, and academic institutions around the world as a permanent cultural archive rather than a commercial publication. It will be presented annually during the Qingming Festival award ceremony — a season symbolizing remembrance and renewal in Chinese culture, when the past and present meet in harmony.



Prototype of the handcrafted "dragon-scale" scroll edition of the Aisin Gioro Art Anthology, created using traditional Chinese bookbinding craftsmanship.

Founded in Vancouver by descendants of China's last imperial lineage, the Aisin Gioro

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*Cecilia Aisin Gioro, the
Founder*

International Art Prize will continue a centuries-long family tradition of artistic and literary excellence. The Aisin Gioro family, whose ancestors ruled under the Qing dynasty, contributed to generations of artistic innovation — from imperial painting and calligraphy to architecture, ceramics, and poetry. Today, through this Prize, that legacy of creativity will find renewed expression on a global stage, connecting artists across generations and cultures through shared devotion to craftsmanship and imagination.

The Prize will welcome submissions from both adult and youth divisions, recognizing excellence in visual and sound arts. Its jury will include university professors, composers,

and cultural historians who will assess works not only for their artistic quality but for their ability to bridge memory and modernity. Operated by the Aisin Gioro Arts & Cultural Heritage Society, a

registered Canadian non-profit organization, the Prize will be dedicated to promoting intercultural dialogue and preserving intangible heritage through contemporary artistic practice.

The scrolls themselves will be created in collaboration with traditional artisans in China who specialize in mounting, binding, and restoration. Every element — from mulberry paper to hand-carved wooden spindle caps and silk brocade wrapping — will be crafted by hand. This process will embody the philosophy of life's continuous regeneration through art and culture.

Through the revival of dragon-scale binding, the Aisin Gioro Art Anthology will transform publication into ritual. Each scroll will become a vessel of memory — a tactile link between ancient craftsmanship and contemporary art. In preserving the new through the ancient, it will allow history to unfold not as nostalgia, but as a living rhythm of creation.

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Aisin Gioro Art Prize Handcrafted silk-bound scroll edition prototype for the upcoming Aisin Gioro Art Prize Annual, featuring traditional marbled brocade and wooden case.

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/860322255>

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