



The Queen with Sir Joseph Hotung in the centre of the gallery featuring the Ming dynasty group of twenty glazed ceramic tiles made of stoneware and *fahua*-type decoration

THE QUEEN REOPENS THE SIR JOSEPH HOTUNG GALLERY OF CHINA AND SOUTH ASIA AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

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HER MAJESTY Queen Elizabeth II reopened the Sir Joseph Hotung Gallery of China and South Asia at the British Museum in London on November 8th, 2017. It was twenty-five years ago, in 1992, when the Queen unveiled the original gallery.

Dressed in magenta, Queen Elizabeth was greeted at the newly refurbished gallery by Sir Joseph Hotung, a philanthropist and long-term benefactor of the British Museum, as well as an acclaimed collector of Chinese art; and Sir Richard Lambert, Chair of the Trustees of the British Museum. The Queen was also welcomed by Jane Portal, Keeper of Asia at the British Museum, who is responsible for overseeing the gallery renovations

and redisplay of the museum's renowned collections.

As the Queen toured the gallery, highlights in the early China collections were pointed out by Professor Dame Jessica Rawson and Dr Yi Chen, Curator of early China. Jades were shown by Carol Michaelson. Paintings were viewed with Dr Yu-ping Luk, Basil Gray Curator of Chinese Paintings. Early Ming ceramics and lacquer were discussed with Jessica Harrison-Hall, Head of the China section, all supported by Project Curator Wenyuan Xin and Mei Xin Wang. South Asian highlights were shown by T. Richard Blurton, Head of the South Asian section.

Sir Richard Lambert emphasised that the first phase of the reopening, with the rest of the gallery set to be



The Queen is greeted by Jane Portal, Keeper of Asia at the British Museum



The Queen with Sir Richard Lambert, Chair of the Trustees of the British Museum



T. Richard Blurton, Head of the South Asian section, guides the Queen through the gallery displays



The Queen with Sir Joseph Hotung and Carol Michaelson, Curator in the Department of Asia

fully open to the public from December 14th, was a “huge moment” for the museum and the “culmination of a lot of work”. He said, “It is a really important gallery for us because we get millions of visitors here every year from China and Asia—and it is beautiful”.

The Queen, who is a keen rider and horse lover, especially liked the Silk Road display and the magnificent Tang dynasty pottery horses. She also spent considerable time in the Ming display, and took great interest in the gallery and its contents during her visit.

Sir Joseph Hotung, who donated generously to help cover the cost of the renovation work, said the reopening of the gallery was “very exciting” and “magnificent”. He also showed the Queen around the jade gallery, which contains his personal collection currently on loan to the museum. Everyone in attendance was delighted that the splendid gallery has reopened, allowing the public once again to enjoy the diverse and spectacular collections of Asian art at the British Museum.



Jessica Harrison-Hall, Head of the China section, highlights the bronze figure of the Daoist deity Zhenwu, the Perfected Warrior. Photograph courtesy of the Embassy of China in London