



This conference is organised by the Education and Outreach Department and is for anyone with an interest in decorative arts and design, material culture and art and design history, including those working in these areas as practitioners, educators or students.

ASIAN ART AND IRELAND CONFERENCE

A DUBLINER'S COLLECTION OF ASIAN ART

THE ALBERT BENDER EXHIBITION

For further information and to book a place contact:

The Education and Outreach Department
National Museum of Ireland - **Decorative Arts & History**
Collins Barracks
Benburb Street
Dublin 7

Tel: +353 (0) 1648 6453
Email: bookings@museum.ie
www.museum.ie



National Museum of Ireland sites near you

- 1** Archaeology
Kildare Street
- 2** Natural History
Merrion Street
- 3** Decorative Arts & History
Collins Barracks

How to find us:

Buses to Collins Barracks:

90 (Aston Quay)
92 (St Stephen's Green)
25, 25A, 66, 67 (Wellington Quay)

Luas:

Collins Barracks:
Dedicated Museum stop - Red Line



SATURDAY 14TH NOVEMBER 2009
9.30am - 5.00pm

National Museum of Ireland - Decorative Arts & History

museum
National Museum of Ireland
Ard-Mhúsaem na hÉireann

This conference marks the opening of the exhibition, 'A Dubliner's Collection of Asian Art: The Albert Bender exhibition'. The majority of artefacts in this exhibition come from the collection donated to the National Museum in the 1930s by Albert M. Bender (1866-1941).

Bender was born in Dublin and emigrated to San Francisco, California as a young man. As a successful businessman and art collector interested in Asian art, Bender donated about 260 artefacts of Chinese, Japanese and Tibetan origin to the National Museum of Ireland in the 1930s.

This significant series of donations to the museum during the early years of Irish Independence included rare religious artworks and decorative arts objects in the areas of metalwork, ceramics and wood.

The conference programme consists of a series of talks that explore in more depth some of the themes touched on in the exhibition. Talks cover such diverse topics as the influence of Buddhism in Ireland and the iconography of Arhats.

Tickets: €25
Students, Senior Citizens, Unwaged: €15
Includes morning tea/coffee and light lunch.
Booking essential.

For further information and to book a place contact the Education and Outreach Department:
Telephone: 01 6486 453
Email: bookings@museum.ie

SPEAKERS

DR PATRICK F. WALLACE

Dr Wallace has been the Director of the National Museum of Ireland for more than twenty-two years. Before that, he was the archaeologist in charge of the National Museum's excavations of the Viking Age site at Wood Quay, Dublin. He is well known as a lecturer and has made several radio and television programmes. He has also lectured widely outside Ireland, notably at the National Geographic in Washington. In recognition of his work, he was awarded with a Knighthood by the Queen of Denmark. He is an honorary member of the Royal Institute of Architects in Ireland, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London and a member of the Royal Irish Academy.

AUDREY WHITTY

Audrey Whitty is curator of Ceramics, Glass and Asian collections at the National Museum of Ireland, Decorative Arts and History and curator of the exhibition, 'A Dubliner's Collection of Asian Art: The Albert Bender exhibition' which opened at the National Museum in November 2008. She is currently completing her doctorate at Trinity College Dublin on the Albert Bender donations of Far Eastern Art to the National Museum in the context of his cultural interests in Ireland and California, and is author of the forthcoming catalogue on the Albert Bender Collection.

YVONNE ALTMAN O'CONNOR

Yvonne Altman O'Connor has spent many years living in the US, in the San Francisco Bay Area where she first came in contact with Albert Bender's collections at the Asian Art Museum. Yvonne is currently engaged in research and writing and works with the Irish Jewish Museum in Dublin. Her talk at this conference will look at the Bender family, their origins and the Jewish community of Dublin in which they lived.

DR PHILIP MCEVANSONEYA

Dr Philip McEvansoneya is a lecturer in the history of art at Trinity College, Dublin with particular interests in British and Irish art of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He is currently researching the cultural biography of Sir William Gregory (1817-1892) of Coole Park, Co. Galway. This paper will explore Gregory's involvement with Ceylon where, while he was Governor, the plan to establish a National Museum of Ceylon was brought to fruition.

LORNA BARNES

Lorna Barnes is a consultant conservator for the National Museum of Ireland, specialising in inorganic objects such as glass and ceramics. She has worked as an object conservator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. She will be presenting a short paper on the results of investigations into the authenticity and provenance of two large stoneware funerary urns that are currently on display as part of the Albert Bender exhibition.

ALEXANDRA DURRANI

Alexandra Durrani is a conservator with the Conservation Department at the National Museum for more than five years. Her talk will focus on the paint analysis that she undertook as part of the conservation of one of the sixteen multicoloured figures, which were conserved for the Albert Bender exhibition. The figures represent military leaders and deities of Chinese religion.

DR MICHAEL RYAN

Dr Michael Ryan is an archaeologist and Director of the Chester Beatty Library. He is a former President of the Royal Irish Academy, Chairman of the Discovery Programme and Honorary Professor of Art History and Honorary Fellow at Trinity College, Dublin. Formerly Keeper of Irish Antiquities in the National Museum of Ireland, he is the author of numerous research articles and editor of several books on archaeological topics. He is co-author with Frank Mitchell of *Reading the Irish Landscape*. He is a member of the Executive Committee of ASEMUS, the Asia-Europe Foundation museum network, and Chair of ICOM-Ireland.

DEBRA BOWDEN

Debra Bowden is a qualified printmaker whose work has been exhibited broadly in Ireland. In 2006 Bowden became the first Irish artist to be awarded a scholarship to Awaji Island in Japan, to train with master Japanese woodblock printmakers. Her presentation will focus on how her practice is influenced by Japanese art, in particular Ukiyo-e, and will include a practical carving and printing demonstration.

RUTH STARR

Ruth Starr devised and presents the Arts of Japan course at Trinity College, Dublin and she also lectures widely on the subject. Ruth's research interests include the Japanese influence of Eileen Gray's (1878-1976) lacquer work and Japonisme in nineteenth century Ireland. Starr will present a paper on the impact of Japanese art and design on nineteenth and twentieth century Irish artists.

DR LAURENCE COX

Dr Laurence Cox is lecturer in sociology at NUI Maynooth and a member of the Irish Network for Studies in Buddhism. He is currently completing a book on the history of Buddhism in Ireland. For this conference, Dr Cox will explore the Irish encounter with Buddhism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He will focus on how Irish soldiers, civil servants, missionaries and academics disseminated knowledge of Asian Buddhism, how this was reflected by artists and intellectuals and in Irish popular culture, and the remarkable history of the first Irish people to become Buddhists.

DR JOHN CLARKE

Dr John Clarke is the curator of Himalayan Collections of the Asian Department at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Dr Clarke gained a PhD on the subject of traditional Tibetan metalworking at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London in 1995 and has written many articles on this subject. In his talk Dr Clarke will give an overview of Thangka painting - its origins, techniques and historical development - as well as focusing in on depictions of the Arhats, the disciples of Buddha.

DR JOSEPH LENNON

Dr Joseph Lennon is associate professor of English at Manhattan College in New York City and the author of *Irish Orientalism: A Literary and Intellectual History* (2004). His paper at this conference aims to put into context Bender's gift to the National Museum of Ireland, first providing an overview of Oriental interests in Irish culture, from medieval origin legends to Celtic modernism.