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Images available and free of copyright for the press during the exhibition

FOREWORD FROM THE PRESIDENT OF GUIMET



Yannick Lintz (DR)

The prestigious façade of the Guimet museum has never seen such a transformation since the building was constructed at the Place d'Iéna in 1889, the same year as the Eiffel Tower!

After being clothed in light in February in honour of the Year of the Dragon, the façade is now draped in red to celebrate the Year of China. An elegant, diaphanous tulle moulds its architectural contours, while strange mythical creatures from the past and the future come to rest on its window ledges.

To celebrate 60 years of diplomatic relations between France and China, and the year of Franco-Chinese cultural tourism, we needed to develop an exceptional programme and adorn the Guimet with an attire worthy of its treasures: those in our collections – amongst the finest in the world - and those generously lent to us by Chinese museums and private foundations in 2024.

To give a unique dimension to this extraordinary event, we needed an exceptional artist bursting with energy and creativity. We naturally turned to Jiang Qiong Er, a remarkable Shanghai-based designer and entrusted her with this unprecedented project. Through the scale and diversity of her creations, designed specifically for the spaces of the Guimet museum, Jiang Qiong Er elicits a vibrant Chinese tonality through space and time, transporting the visitor, with immense creative generosity, to different worlds infused with the colours and scents of China.

I would like to warmly thank the sponsors and partners who accepted to accompany Jiang Qiong Er in this bold and vibrant endeavour. Thanks to their support, from the steps of Place d'Iéna, we can open a monumental door to China, enabling our visitors to discover the eternal and contemporary facets of this fascinating country. Guided by these mythical creatures reinvented by artificial intelligence, we invite them to discover a 21st century China which never ceases to reinvent itself to celebrate, with staggering creativity, the greatness of its ancient civilisation.

Yannick Lintz President of Guimet

THE MONUMENTAL INSTALLATIONS



On the façade: ORIGIN

All life comes from the same source

"If we understand our own spirit, and the things that try to express themselves through our spirit, we will touch others, not because we have understood others or thought about them, but because all life shares a common origin." W. B. Yeats



Gardiens du Temps © Frédéric Berthet

To celebrate with splendour the Year of China at Guimet, monumental and spectacular installations are taking over the museum in a contemporary and highly imaginative interpretation of Chinese cultural and mythological symbols.

From April 2024 until February 2025, the Guimet welcomes internationally renowned visual artist and designer Jiang Qiong Er, originally from Shanghai, to enter into a creative dialogue with this leading centre for Asian Arts through a unique installation, *Guardians of Time*.



Gardiens du Temps © Frédéric Berthet



With *Guardians of Time*, Jiang Qiong Er revisits several emblematic areas of the museum, inviting visitors to intuitively follow the emotional and otherworldly path she conceived, and to engage with her in a visionary reflection on time, between traditional and technology, heritage and innovation, memory and imagination.

The façade of the building at Place d'Iéna is entirely covered in red tulle, adorning the museum with the colours of China, creating a bridge between past and present.

Small contemporary grottoes appear at the top of the rotunda and in the windows, as part of a façade which is "reborn" as a modern interpretation of the Mogao, Yungang and Longmen grottoes of China. These masterpieces of cave art have come to settle in the heart of Paris to create a fascinating and moving experience. This spectacular and striking façade invites passersby to discover the magic of the internationally renowned Chinese grottoes of Mogao in 1900, but also those of Altamira or Lascaux in Europe, stirring a sense of wonderment at the original artistic impulse that gave rise to these extraordinary works of art.

THE CREATURES

Wonderful creatures can be seen at the entrance to every grotto. Each one of these mythical creatures embodies a value essential to maintaining the balance of human society.

Twelve creatures, like the twelve signs of the European and Chinese zodiac. Hybrid, syncretic beings inspired by legendary Chinese creatures and created with the assistance of artificial intelligence. Each one tells a unique story, and in celebration of the Year of the Dragon, each incorporates dragon iconography in their morphology, bringing to mind a new, 21st-century bestiary.

As if emerging from the depths of the earth, these creatures remind us of our shared origin while reasserting the values that unite us. Each one carries a unique message, each makes its own call to restore the human spirit.



1- Authenticity

Return to the primary purpose, seek the kingdom of one's real self. Authenticity calls for truth.

2- Fraternity

Constant flow of harmony, unity beyond frontiers. Fraternity calls for giving.

3- Inclusion

Infinite dance of connections, return to the heart. Inclusion calls for meeting.

4- Peace

End of attacks, end of disagreement. Peace calls for eternal harmony.

5- Equality

Replacement of a coordinate system, change of viewpoints. Equality calls for justice.



Jiang Qiong Er (DR)

6- Benevolence

Clarity of vision, return to primal kindness. Benevolence calls for good will.

7- Time

Past, present, future, history and eternity. Time calls for living each moment to the full.

8- Exploration

Embark on a discovery, weave legends. Exploration calls for a journey with no end.

9- Bravery

The warmth of the sun and flames. Bravery calls for chasing away fear.

10- Nature

Green, virgin, nurturing earth.

Nature calls for reconnecting with the rhythms of life.

11- Wisdom

The perspicacity of an eagle, an open mind, optimism. Wisdom calls for real knowledge.

12- Freedom

Lightness of the soul, a movement towards infinity.

Freedom calls for joining the kingdom without the constraints of the present.

These mythical and emblematic creatures recall essential human values, they are the guardians of time.

Following the cycles of day and night, the four seasons, celebrations and joy, they express themselves on the façade, come to life, interact with the public at Place d'Iéna, which becomes a poetic, convivial and fun meeting place.



Gardiens du Temps © Frédéric Berthet



Entrance hall: INITIATION

The pillars of the entrance hall are covered in different shades of the propitiatory colour red, each with its distinct symbolism and poetic resonance in China: fiery red, cherry red, sienna, crimson, scarlet, carmine, vermillion, hibiscus, pomegranate, cinnabar.

Historic library: THE TWELVE CALLS

Visitors to the first floor of the historic library are immersed in a visual and sound installation, *The Twelve Calls*. Each of the twelve mythical creatures from the façade reappears in bronze, this time forming a circle: Authenticity, Fraternity, Inclusion, Peace, Equality, Benevolence, Time, Exploration, Bravery, Nature, Wisdom, Freedom.

Seemingly floating in the air, they appear to be whispering, their murmur of different languages enveloping the room, bringing to life centuries-old artwork, such as the Dunhuang manuscripts discovered in the Mogao grottoes.

Visitors feel the energy and vibrations in their heart.

A ladder of light to the heavens is projected from the rotunda. It creates a passage between heaven and earth, from the physical to deep understanding, until the realisation of the "spiritual calling".

The energy of human civilisation comes together at that moment, we become aware of our shared humanity.



Guo Yi @Studio One+



On the roof garden: HER VOICE - BRAVERY

On the roof garden from the end of May, as part of the installation *Her Voice – Bravery*, a gigantic net is being suspended above the rooftop of the museum, on which the collective poetic words of sixty Chinese women are embroidered, using a new "women's script" inspired by *nu shu*. Long ago, *nu shu* was the only script in the world created and used only by women. Now out of use, this writing system has been revived thanks to Jiang Qiong Er, with the assistance of AI, with a unique script embroidered into metal, emanating life and resilience, grace and spirituality.

Choose and affront
Hold tight and let go
Sincere and not surprised
Tenacity is a kind of energy
Decide to forget
Start over to be reborn
Change
But then?

Breathe freely
Light is a magic substance
Responsibility and forgiveness
Determination and separation
Ask no questions
Hold your grandmother tight in your arms
I love you

The generosity of a mother That is my example Don't worry I decided not to complain Be true to yourself each day Innocence is like water The sense of a mission

A dazzling smile
Yes
The root of love
Don't hesitate
Earth
Overcome the inertia
Dare
Yes
Move forward without fear
Life takes flight

In the rotunda: INTROSPECTION



The journey concludes in the rotunda on the fourth floor, which has been transformed into a modern cave, entitled *Introspection*. Inside the dome, surrounding an inky lake, is a scented partition made up of 5,000 bricks of Pu'er tea. Stones have been placed to evoke a mineral garden in the centre, capturing the creative energy of the grotto.

The dome becomes a space for meditation, but also for creation in connection with time, echoing the passing of the seasons through tea ceremonies, Chinese music and opera, poetry readings and gatherings...

Everyone becomes the guardian of their own time.



Guardians of Time © Frédéric Berthet

Daily events

Every two hours, each one of the mythical creatures in the rotunda take it turns to express themselves, staying true to traditional Chinese timekeeping where the day is divided into twelve intervals.

Three times a day, all the creatures come to mark this link between the past and the future. Once the sun has set, they can once again be seen on the illuminated façade of the museum, chatting and whispering, telling their unique stories. When silence returns, the rotunda lights up Place d'Iéna like a lighthouse, the creatures disperse, with only their dark silhouettes visible at the entrance of their individual grottoes, their haloes floating in the night like hanging lanterns.

With this exceptional and evocative sound and visual installation which draws on all technological resources, Guimet becomes a point of convergence for art. These twelve fabulous creatures invite us to enter the museum to come together through and around art.



Guardians of time (DR)

ABOUT JIANG QIONG ER



Jiang Qiong Er © Frédéric Berthet

Jiang Qiong Er is one of the few Chinese contemporary artists and designers who has earned international acclaim. Born into a family of artists, she was immersed in the wealth of Eastern culture from a very early age. Years of studies and creative experience in Europe enabled her to develop a global vision and a remarkably open mind. Her bi-cultural background gave her unique creative freedom, enabling her to combine traditions and inclusivity. She navigates between the two worlds with ease, harmoniously merging the East and West with art that transcends cultural barriers. Jiang Qiong Er's work reflects this duality, uniting tradition and the contemporary, local and international, in a striking visual harmony.

Her grandfather, Jiang Xuanyi, was one of the first Chinese artist to have studied abroad, and one of the first to introduce Western oil painting to China. Her father, Xing Tonghe, is the distinguished architect who designed the Shanghai Museum building. Growing up in an atmosphere steeped in traditional culture, Jiang Qiong Er embraced art from a very early age. At two and a half, she was already holding a paintbrush, at six, she began to follow the teachings of great masters such as Cheng Shifa for Chinese painting and Han Tianheng for calligraphy. Her studies led her to the University of Tongji, where she specialised in Art and Design, officially embarking on her artistic journey. After graduation, she went on to study at the Decorative Arts School in Paris, specialising in Furniture and Interior Design. This would be a decisive step in her artistic career, enabling her to both consolidate her artistic identity and broaden her creative horizons.

On returning to France, Jiang Qiong Er further developed her creative work in a wide range of projects in which she could fully express her dual culture through her art. From furniture to jewellery, Chinese painting to oil painting or images, she has always found the most appropriate means to express her creativity and inspiration. In all her creations, she skilfully blends Western and traditional Chinese art techniques in perfect symbiosis. But what emerges above all, is the way the spirit of her work reflects the rich history of Chinese culture which is interpreted with resolutely contemporary designs. Her work is an eloquent testament to her ability to transcend cultural barriers while remaining true to her origins.

As an artist, Jiang Qiong Er prides herself on being deeply rooted in Chinese culture while exploring diverse fields of creative expression, remaining open to the growing beauty of the outside world. Her work has found its place in distinguished museums in Switzerland, the USA, France and elsewhere, reflecting its international recognition. Jiang Qiong Er has also taken part in prestigious international exhibitions and received many awards and distinctions for her work. These achievements not only illustrate her artistic talent, but also her ability to transcend cultural barriers while remaining true to her Chinese cultural heritage.

In 2009, Jiang Qiong Er co-founded with Hermès the contemporary lifestyle brand Shang Xia, for which she was artistic director and CEO. In the ten years that followed, she devoted herself to promoting Chinese craftsmanship, traditional Chinese culture and Chinese contemporary design around the world. By blending the best of Western and Eastern cultures, she created a new contemporary lifestyle for the 21st century. Her artistic creations and designs were recognised and exhibited in the permanent collections of prestigious museums such as the British Museum, the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Guimet and the Museum of Decorative Arts. These accomplishments attest to her unique vision and her significant influence in the world of art and contemporary design.



Jiang Qiong Er (DR)

Jiang Qiong Er has been honoured by numerous international distinctions, including being named by Forbes as one of the 25 most influential Chinese in the world. In recognition of her exceptional contribution to cultural exchanges between China and France, the French government appointed her a *Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres de la République Française*. She has also been selected as one of the "50 personalities of the last 50 years" and received the distinction of *Chevalier dans l'Ordre National du Mérite de la République Française*. In addition, for her work in promoting cultural integration between China and Italy, the Italian government decorated Jiang Qiong Er with the Order of the Star of Italian Solidarity.

Today, Jiang Qiong Er focuses on anticipating time, drawing inspiration from the rich history and culture of China and the world. She engages in a dialogue with the present, forging links between the past and the future, heritage and technology. She creates a bridge between China and the world by creating a dialogue between memory and imagination. Through her work, she aspires to create new myths which will become part of history, illustrating her unique vision of the interaction between tradition and modernity.



Jiang Qiong Er (DR)

PROGRAMME

GUIMET x CHINA 2024 INAUGURATION WEEKEND



Saturday 27 April 2024 at 2.30pm, 3.30pm and 4.30pm

Choreography

Inspired by the artistic heritage of ancient China, this visit takes visitors on an imaginary journey and weaves a poetic story around classic Chinese dance and works from the museum's collections. *La Compagnie de Danse Chinoise de Paris* (Paris Chinese Dance Company) was founded by Wenhu Wang and is the first professional Chinese classical dance company in France.

Duration: 25 mins – Chinese Rooms – Free upon presentation of entrance ticket.



Saturday 27 April 2024 at 8pm

Silk and Bamboo Ensemble Traditional Chinese music

With Xiaoran Shi (erhu - violin), Wenqi Gu (guzheng – 21-chord zither), Dingfu Zeng (gu qin – 7-chord zither), Hongze An (sheng – mouth organ, bawu - flute) and Clément Zannit (dizi - flute)

The Silk and Bamboo Ensemble (Si zhu yue) is made up of graduates from the Haute École de Musique de Genève, from the class of Lingling Yu and Xavier Bouvier. The term "silk and bamboo" refers to the types of instruments the musicians play: *si* refers to the instruments with silk chords and *zhu* refers the to the traditional Chinese flute which is made out of bamboo. Most of the music performed in their programme was composed more than 700 years ago

Auditorium - €18, tickets may be purchased online or at the museum, free same- day tickets subject to conditions and availability.



Late-night opening

Saturday 27 April 2024 until 9pm

The Khmer Courtyard, the historic library, the 4th floor rotunda and the exhibit *T'ang Haywen, a Chinese painter in Paris (1927-1991)* will be exclusively open to visitors until 9pm. Last entry 8.30pm.



Chinese circus

The auditorium will be welcoming visitors of all ages for a magical show of visual performances, Chinese dance and circus acts performed by Chinese acrobats.

Auditorium - €18, tickets may be purchase online or at the museum, free entry for under 25s, free same-day tickets subject to conditions and availability.



The Chinese art of tea

Saturday 27 and Sunday 28 April 2024 at 11am, 2pm and 4.30pm (duration: 45 mins)

In the Chinese art of tea, *gong fu cha*, can be translated as "take time for tea." The art of tea, which was developed during the Song dynasty (960-1279), is a method of preparing and tasting extremely concentrated infused teas. The gestures, objects and teas selected (Wulong or Puer) make for a unique moment of sharing and pleasure which stirs the senses.

Trained in the Chinese arts of tea and incense, and in floral arrangements, Yunmei Hu will lead these sessions with a selection of spring teas.

Rotunda on the 4th floor - €18 (including entry to the museum), tickets available online

SPONSORS



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In partnership with

QEJ studio is a professional organisation based in Shanghai and Paris which provides administrative support to the artist and designer Jiang Qiong Er. Under her guidance, the studio managed the creation of original artwork, public exhibitions and supervises the design and production of related publications. QEJ studio manages all sales and marketing associated with Jiang Qiong Er's art projects.

With the support of

Trip.com Group is a leading global travel service provider which includes Trip.com, Ctrip, Skyscanner and Qunar. Through its platforms, Trip.com Group helps travellers from around the world make informed and cost-effective bookings for travel products and services. It enables partners to connect their offerings with users through the aggregation of comprehensive travel-related content and resources and an advanced transaction platform consisting of apps, websites and 24/7 customer service centres. Founded in 1999 and listed on NASDAQ in 2003 and HKEX in 2021, Trip.com Group has become one of the best-known travel groups in the world, with the mission "to pursue the perfect trip for a better world."

Founded in Paris in 1960, Roche Bobois is today a world leader in premium furniture design and accessories.

Present in 55 countries, the brand designs and offers creative and original collections in collaboration with renowned designers and Haute Couture fashion houses.

Around the world, Roche Bobois promotes its vision of French Art de Vivre, which combines innovation, creativity, know-how and environmental responsibility to offer each client a unique experience.

As a committed partner of the world of culture and arts, Roche Bobois regularly sponsors international creative and artistic initiatives.

Ardian is a leading private equity investment company, managing or advising \$164 billion of assets on behalf of more than 1,600 clients globally. Our broad expertise, spanning Private Equity, Real Assets and Credit, enables us to offer a wide range of investment opportunities and respond flexibly to our clients' differing needs. Through Ardian Customized Solutions we create bespoke portfolios that allow institutional clients to specify the precise mix of assets they require and to gain access to funds managed by leading third-party sponsors. Private Wealth Solutions offers dedicated services and access solutions for private banks, family offices and private institutional investors worldwide.

AD VITAM has been combining natural essential oils from plants in the West with Eastern healing philosophy to bring balance and harmony to the body and mind for 20 years, with a focus on aromatherapy products. Our organic essential oils offer effective care for those looking for a healthy life.

ATHEM is a Paris-based studio specialising in the staging of urban spaces which was created in 1985 by architects passionate about urban art. Initially known for its artistic creations on the buildings of Paris, over time the studio has developed a wider offering in premium and large-scale urban outdoor media. Today, just like an artist collective, ATHEM brings together creative, technical and technological resources to showcase cultural heritage, whether it may be a place, a brand, a product, an event or even a cultural or architectural creation. Aware of the implications of its activities, the company has made a commitment to a continuous improvement policy which is evaluated according to the ISO 20121 standard, an international CSR certification specific to the events industry.

FRENCH MEDIA PARTNERS

connaissance desarts

Connaissance des Arts publishes eleven monthly editions and around forty special issues and art books. The diversity of its publications gives readers an insight into the art of yesterday and today.

Also present on the internet through its website connaissancedesarts.com, the reference for all national and international news in the art world, including in-depth articles, portfolios, podcasts and videos.

Inrockuptibles

Discover the world of the *Inrockuptibles*: music, film, series, books, performing arts, art, photos, podcasts... For more than 30 years *Les Inrockuptibles* has been clearing the way for artists around the world who are building tomorrow's culture. Every monthly issue of *Les Inrockuptibles* includes reviews, news, reports, interviews, portraits, discussions and a 50-page "critics" section. Ten magazines a year, including 2 double issues, and a website lesinrocks.com with real-time news and over 30 years of archives.

Created by Linda Nguon, Banh Mi is an artist collective which represents Asia and Asian cultures through different means of expression: illustrations, podcasts, videos, reports and events. Banh Mi Media is the first French audiovisual medium that talks about Asia and Asian cultures, and it has its own YouTube channel as well as presence on other podcast media. Linda invites us to discover the different content available:

- Banh Mi Podcast: interviews with people with inspiring stories about Asia (45 to 60 mins)
- Banh Mi Sounds: immersive audio creations transporting you to major cities in Asia (5 to 9 mins)
- "Les tatas": an open and entertaining talk show presented by Laetitia, psychologist, Candiie, actor and comedian, and Linda, founder of Banh Mi.

PARIS PREMIERE Paris Première, a leading French cultural television channel for more than 30 years, supports culture in all its diversity: exhibitions, theatre, shows, cinema, music, festivals, etc. By partnering events in line with the spirit of the channel, Paris Première asserts its attachment to the world of arts, performing arts and entertainment. Paris Première is available on the digital terrestrial service (TNT), satellite, cable, ADSL and on mobile phones in France. In France, Paris Première can be accessed for free via TNT on channel 41, every day from 6pm to 9pm weekdays and from 10am to 1pm at the weekend.



SNCF Connect is the all-in-one sustainable mobility service, designed and developed by SNCF Connect & Tech. With more than 1.3 billion visitors and 209 million tickets sold in 2023, SNCF Connect enables you to manage your entire journey by allowing travellers to search for itineraries, find their transport cards and tickets (train, bus, public transport) as well as providing information about the status of traffic on train lines and other transport networks. A personalised all-in-one service that meets the needs of all travellers during their journey. Launched on 25 January 2022, SNCF Connect evolves with and for its customers, notably thanks to the 5,000 members of its Connect & Vous community (www.vous. sncf-connect.com).



The popular and exacting French radio station Europe 1 combines news, culture, discussions and art de vivre and is reactive and rigorous in the way it treats information, cultural events and stories. The radio station is known for its close relationship with its listeners, notably through games, and its main programmes focus on listeners by integrating their participation throughout the day, allowing them to comment and give personal accounts. Europe 1 is also a powerful digital ecosystem; its podcasts were downloaded over 192 million times 2022*. It's the leading general private radio station on social media with almost 5 million followers across all platforms**.

*Source: Médiamétrie – eStat Podcast 2022 **Internal source



CHINESE MEDIA PARTNERS



Founded in 1996, Hong Kong-based Phoenix Satellite TV is a major Chinese-language media group which address an international audience. With correspondents in sixty countries and a massive coverage of 500 million viewers in 190 countries and territories, Phoenix TV boasts the biggest audience of all Chinese-language media groups abroad.

栩栩华生 HUASHENG MEDIA Huasheng Media, China's renown pioneer in cultural and lifestyle content, is also the country's leading lifestyle publishing group. With more than eight international media brands, Huasheng Media has firmly established itself in various sectors, notably fashion, design, youth culture, photography and the arts. As the Chinese operator for New York Times Style Magazine China, Wallpaper China, The New York Times Life & Arts Magazine China and Another Man China, the group is a dominant player in the media landscape.



With a mission to "Inspire lives", lifestyle social medial platform Xiaohongshu inspires Chinese youth to share and discover the wonders of the world. Users can record their points of view as short videos, illustrations, etc., share their lifestyle and exchange on common interests. Xiaohongshu Art aims to inspire people to explore and integrate art into their lives.