

Tale of Two Cities attracts a million visitors

The former capital of China is hosting a major exhibition celebrating the cultural development of Nanjing and Edinburgh. The display has had to be extended after over a million Chinese flocked to see artifacts from Scotland.

A Tale of Two Cities opened in November last year and hosts Chinese and Scottish artifacts together in a representation of both cities' parallel development through the centuries. Chinese displays come from the Ming, Quing, and latter Republic eras.



Chinese museum visitors
view information about
Edinburgh

These share space in the museum with art from The National Gallery of Scotland, objects from the RCAHMS vaults, and some interesting items from Glasgow.

Following its huge popularity, the Chinese Government announced that the Nanjing/Edinburgh display at the city's museum was to be the centre-piece on China's International Museum Day – 18th May 2014.

The exhibition furthers a growing cultural partnership between Nanjing and Edinburgh.

External Affairs Minister Humza Yousaf commented last year:

“It is a great honour that Scotland has been chosen for this exhibition, which is one of the first full curatorial partnerships to be established between a Chinese museum and

an institution from another country. Scotland and China both share a strong appreciation for cultural heritage, and this exhibition will enable people in both countries to find out more about our respective cultures and history.”

There are plans for Edinburgh to host a Tale of Two Cities at a later as yet unconfirmed date, allowing Scottish residents to view Nanjing’s remarkable cultural legacy.



Director at Nomad
Exhibitions, Mr. Tim
Pethick
Minister for External
Affairs and
International
Development, Mr. Humza
Yousaf
Head of Education and
Outreach at RCAHMS, Ms.
Rebecca Bailey (Photo:
scotland.gov.uk)

Rebecca Bailey, Head of Education and Outreach at RCAHMS, also the exhibition’s curator, commented:

“A Tale of Two Cities has welcomed over a million visitors, well beyond our wildest hopes in terms of audience reach. To put that into perspective, our most substantial exhibitions attract a Scottish audience in the region 7,000 a month, a figure that is often exceeded in a single day in Nanjing.

“What was particularly striking, in addition to the huge numbers flocking through the doors, was the depth of their interest in, and engagement with, the material on show. It’s been wonderful to see the intense interest shown by Chinese visitors as they pore over the cases and exhibits.

“Throughout the museum, during the opening days, the one word that the Scottish team could understand amid the Mandarin was ‘Edinburgh’ – it seemed everyone was talking about the city!

“It’s been a privilege to be one of the first organisations in the world to collaborate with a Chinese museum on a project such as this one and we hope it will signal the start of more cultural engagement between Scotland and China in years to come.

“There’s clearly a huge interest in and appetite for Scotland and all things Scottish among Chinese people, and A Tale of Two Cities has given us a great opportunity to share skills and knowledge in exhibition curation and interpretation with our counterparts in China.”