



Asian Art in Boston and Beyond **Sunday, October 11 – Friday, October 16, 2026**

The Society for Asian Art invites you on a tour to Boston, Cambridge and Salem in October to enjoy not only the fall foliage but also an astounding line-up of art collections. New England's enthusiasm for the Far East was ignited early on, with the establishment of the East India Marine Society in 1799, which brought together mariners from Salem who had navigated beyond the Cape of Good Hope or Cape Horn for exploration and trade. In the late 19th century, two 'orientalists' with Boston and Salem ties – Edward S. Morse (d. 1925) and Ernest Fenollosa (d. 1908) – taught and traveled widely in Japan and beyond, and later gave their considerable art collections to the **Museum of Fine Arts** in Boston. We will have in-depth, curator-led tours at both the MFA and the **Peabody Essex Museum** in Salem to discover renowned collections from China, Japan, Korea, South Asia and the Islamic world – including the opportunity at PEM to see a major retrospective exhibition about Isamu Noguchi and to marvel at the Yin Yu Tang House, an 18th-century Chinese house re-erected inside the museum. We will also see archaic Chinese jades and other important Asian art at Harvard's **Sackler Museum** and, for a detour to Egypt's past, an exquisite mummy case and other artifacts at the **Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East**. Rounding out our Boston sojourn will be guided tours at art lovers' favorites, the **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum** and **Institute of Contemporary Art**.

Images above:

Left: Dish with phoenixes and peonies, Jingdezhen, Jiangxi province, China. Qing dynasty, Kangxi period, 1662– 1722. Porcelain with transparent glaze and overglaze polychrome enamels. Gift of Sarah B. Jewell, the Conger Collection, 1991. E76737. Photo courtesy of the Peabody Essex Museum.

Middle: The MFA's larger-than-life painted wood sculpture, *Guanyin, Bodhisattva of Compassion*, underwent a year-and-a-half conservation project before being put back on view in 2016, and is the centerpiece of the MFA's contemplative Chinese gallery space that evokes the restrained elegance of Song period aesthetics. Chinese, Jin dynasty, early 12th century, Wood (*Paulownia tomentosa*) with polychrome and gilding, 141 x 88 x 88 cm (55 1/2 x 34 5/8 x 34 5/8 in.). Hervey Edward Wetzel Fund Photograph © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Right: Hwarot (bridal robe), Korea. 1700s or 1800s. Silk, paper, and cotton. Gift of Yamanaka and Company, 1927. #20190.F. Peabody Essex Museum. Photo courtesy of the Overseas Korean Cultural Heritage Foundation and the Peabody Essex Museum.

Tour Highlights

➤ Curator-led tours at three extraordinary museums:

- **Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA)**, whose Arts of Asia includes a collection of nearly 200,000 works—spanning some 6,000 years—from Japan, Korea, China, South and Southeast Asia, India, and the Islamic world. Highlights will include:
 - Chinese collections of imperial ceramics, ancient bronzes, monumental Buddhist sculptures, and 20th-century and contemporary work; of particular note is the collection of Chinese paintings, with many masterpieces from the Song and Yuan dynasties as well as the famed *Thirteen Emperors* scroll from the Tang dynasty (618–907), considered the oldest court painting in existence.
 - Korean collections -- one of the finest in the U.S. -- containing more than 1,000 works ranging from the Bronze Age to newly acquired contemporary ceramics. It is particularly rich in decorative arts—metalwork, celadon, and lacquers—from the Goryeo dynasty (918–1392) and Buddhist paintings from both the Goryeo and Joseon dynasties (1392–1910).
 - South Asian and Southeast Asian sculptures and decorative arts that emphasize the cultural exchange between these two geographic regions over the course of two millennia.
 - Islamic art collections -- one of the most important in the U.S. -- which explore art forms that are integral to all Islamic cultures, like Arabic calligraphy, while others focus on unique visual traditions such as that of Ottoman Turkey or Mughal India.
 - A contemplative Japanese garden, *Tenshin-en*, or the “Garden of the Heart of Heaven,” which represents a unique merging of two cultures: the profound symbolism of a Japanese garden with a feeling that evokes the rocky coastline and deep forests of New England.
 - Japanese prints from the largest collection outside Japan, with over 50,000 sheets from the 8th century to the present. *Note: Other Japanese galleries will be closed due to renovation work.*
- **Peabody Essex Museum (PEM)** in Salem, which holds more than 840,000 works of historical and cultural art covering maritime, American, Asian, Oceanic and African art, Asian export art, and two large libraries with over 400,000 books and manuscripts.
 - Our visit will include a series of curator-led tours focusing on the Chinese, Japanese, Korean and South Asian art collections.
 - A highlight will be the opportunity to see the special exhibition, *Isamu Noguchi: “I am not a designer”*, a major retrospective that offers a new perspective on the design work of Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988) -- encompassing sculpture, lighting, furniture, ceramics and designs for public spaces such as gardens, playgrounds and plazas.
 - Another particular delight will be the **Yin Yu Tang House**, a late 18th-century Chinese house from Anhui province that had been removed from its original village and re-erected inside the museum.

- **Harvard Art Museums** in Cambridge, where our visit to what was formerly known as the Arthur M. Sackler Museum at Harvard University will focus on its impressive collection of archaic Chinese jades (the widest collection outside of China) and Japanese *surimono*, a genre of woodblock prints. The collections also include outstanding Chinese bronzes, ceremonial weapons, Buddhist cave-temple sculptures, ceramics from China and Korea, Japanese works on paper, and lacquer boxes.

➤ **Private guided tours at:**

- **Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East** with Director **Peter Manuelian** focusing on the exhibition, *Egypt Eternal: 4,000 Years of Fascination*.
 - Free time to also visit other Harvard University museums on your own, including the **Fogg Museum**, renowned for its holdings of Western paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, photographs, prints, and drawings from the Middle Ages to the present; the **Busch-Reisinger**, which has significant works of Austrian Secession art, German expressionism, and 1920s abstraction; and the **Harvard Museum of Natural History**, which is renowned for its models in glass of flowers.
- **Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA)**, located in the South Boston Seaport District, which has been completely redeveloped with new and re-purposed buildings, and is housed in a stunning building on Fan Pier.
- **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (ISGM)**, founded by Gardner and opened in 1903 in her home styled after an Italian villa, to showcase her collection of European, Asian and American paintings, sculpture, tapestries, and decorative arts.

➤ **Possible visit to a private collection or artist studio (TBC)**

- Stay five nights at the four-star **Fairmont Copley Plaza**, located on Copley Square in the heart of Boston's Back Bay. Dating back to 1912, this grand, iconic hotel has the most opulent lobby in the city, with 21-foot-high gilded coffered ceilings, restored mosaic tile flooring, and plenty of gold and bronze accents. It is in walking distance to restaurants, shopping and other architectural gems including Trinity Church and the Boston Public Library. *Check-in time is 4 p.m.*



Itinerary in Brief

Sunday, October 11th
ARRIVE BOSTON

Reception

- Arrive in **Boston** no later than today by 6 p.m. United, JetBlue and Delta offer non-stop flights from SFO. Southwest Airlines offers connecting flights from SFO and OAK via DEN, AUS and MDW.
- Check in to the four-star **Fairmont Copley Plaza** beneath a highly-gilded, coffered ceiling with Empire style crystal chandeliers and Italian marble columns. The hotel has been long regarded as an institution since it opened in 1912.

RESERVED FOR SAA TOUR PARTICIPANTS

- Fairmont Rooms (250 Sq. ft.) with a choice of one queen or two double beds.
- Extra nights are available pre-tour only at \$425 including tax, excluding breakfast
- **Welcome reception and orientation** at the hotel at 7:30 p.m.

Monday, October 12th
SALEM

Breakfast

Visit the **Peabody Essex Museum** in Salem, MA, for curator-led tours of the:

- Newly opened Yu Kil-Chun Gallery of Korean Art and Culture, with its renowned Korean textile collection, exquisite 19th-century paintings — including the *Welcoming Banquet of the Governor of Pyeongan* screen (see below image of one panel) — and inspiring contemporary works by Nam June Paik (1932–2006) and other Korean and Korean American artists.



- Asian Export Art collection, foremost in the world, featuring more than 200 works of art dating from the 16th century, specifically luxuries made in Asia such as Chinese porcelain, Indian textiles and Japanese lacquer were superior to anything the rest of the world could produce.

- No-host lunch at the museum’s Atrium Café.
- Japanese collections – including paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, costumes and textiles -- first established at the end of the 19th century by Edward Sylvester Morse, who became one of the first Western scholars to visit modern Japan after it opened to travelers.
- South Asian galleries that follow the thread of Indian art through a shifting history of occupation and independence in the 19th and 20th centuries.
- Special exhibition, *Isamu Noguchi: “I am not a designer”*, a major retrospective that offers a new perspective on the design work of Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988). The exhibition shines a light on his remarkable design legacy encompassing sculpture, lighting, furniture, ceramics and designs for public spaces such as gardens, playgrounds and plazas. *RIGHT: Noguchi’s Akari Lamp*
- Also see the **Yin Yu Tang House**, a late 18th-century Chinese house from Anhui province that had been removed from its original village and re-erected inside the museum; and the newly installed **East India Marine Hall**, PEM’s foundational building and collection with a rich sampling of artworks and objects displayed in the museum during its earliest years, now updated with captivating stories and works that reflect the impact of maritime trade around the world.
- Return to Boston.
- Dinner and the evening are at leisure.



Tuesday, October 13th
CAMBRIDGE

Breakfast

- VIP visit at the **Arthur M. Sackler Museum** at the Harvard Art Museums with **Sarah Laursen**, Alan J. Dworsky Curator of Chinese Art, and **Yan Yang**, Curator of the Collection. Divide into two smaller groups for a tour of its renowned collections of Chinese jades, bronzes and Buddhist sculpture, and a viewing of *surimono* in the Art Study Center. *RIGHT: Seated Bear; Chinese, Zhou dynasty, c 1400-1300 BCE. Semi-translucent yellowish-green, evenly altered nephrite with patches of red cinnabar. Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum.*
- Free time to visit the two other Harvard Art Museums: **Fogg Museum** and/or **Busch Reisinger Museum**.
- Lunch on your own at various eateries in Harvard Square. *Options will be provided.*
- Guided tour at **Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East** with Director **Peter Manuelian** focusing on the exhibition, *Egypt Eternal: 4,000 Years of Fascination*. It showcases favorites such as the mummy case of Padimut (now able to be viewed in 360°); an elaborate teak and ivory reproduction of King Tutankhamun’s throne; the portrait of Idu, an Old Kingdom high official, in his underground tomb chapel; and the award-winning Dreaming the Sphinx augmented-reality experience for the [*Dream Stela of King Thutmose IV*](#).
- Free time to visit **Harvard Museum of Natural History**, best known for its stunning collection of 4,300 glass models of flowers; **Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology**; and/or the **Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments**.
- Dinner and the evening are on your own.



Wednesday, October 14th
BOSTON

Breakfast

- Curator-led tours at the **Museum of Fine Arts, Boston**, including:
 - Chinese art with Department Chair **Christina Yu Yu**, which spans nearly every era of Chinese history – from imperial ceramics, ancient bronzes, and monumental Buddhist sculptures, to 20th-century and contemporary work. It also has an impressive calligraphy collection.
 - Art from South and Southeast Asia with curator **Laura Weinstein**, which includes sculptures and decorative arts that reflect the sophisticated artistic traditions of India and the surrounding South Asian countries of Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka, as well as the Southeast Asian countries of Indonesia, Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.
 - Curator **Laura Weinstein** will also take us through the Arts of Islamic Cultures, which, in addition to works from the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia, celebrates works created across the globe within Muslim communities or societies.
 - PLUS... a special exhibition of work by Japanese Canadian contemporary artist, Naoko Matsubara, with **Sarah Thompson**, curator of the Japanese prints collection, *Note: The Japanese galleries are mostly closed due to expansion work, but we hope to see some of the MFA's celebrated Japanese print collection, the largest outside Japan with over 50,000 sheets from the 8th century to the present.*
- No-host lunch at the MFA's Garden Cafeteria (to break up the curator-led tours)
- Be sure to see the MFA's contemplative **Japanese Garden**, also known as *Tenshin-en*, or the "Garden of the Heart of Heaven." Representing a unique merging of two cultures, *Tenshin-en* combines the profound symbolism of a Japanese garden with a feeling that evokes the rocky coastline and deep forests of New England. *RIGHT: Tenshin-en at the MFA.*
- Free time to explore the MFA's other dazzling collections.
- Return to the hotel.
- Dinner and the evening are on your own.



Thursday, October 15th
BOSTON

Breakfast, Dinner

- During a leisurely morning, consider visiting **Trinity Church** or the **Boston Public Library**, both located across the street from the hotel.
- Morning guided tour at the **Institute of Contemporary Art**, located on Boston Harbor in the Seaport District. The current exhibition, *To My Best Friend*, presents a survey of more than 50 artworks by historically underrepresented and women artists at all stages of their careers – among others Laura Owens, Njideka Akunyili Crosby, Olga de Amaral, and Sarah Sze.

- Free time to walk along Fan Pier, with lunch on own in the Seaport District. *Options will be provided.*
- Private guided tour of the **Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum**, which houses significant examples of European, Asian and American art. Its collection includes paintings, sculpture, tapestries, and decorative arts. It was founded by Gardner, and opened in 1903. An auxiliary wing designed by Italian architect Renzo Piano, adjacent to the original structure, was completed in 2012. *BELOW: The Raphael Room at the Gardner*



- **Farewell dinner at Bistro du Midi**, a short walk from the hotel, in the private Wine Room overlooking the Boston Public Garden.

Friday, October 16th

Breakfast

DEPART OR EXTEND YOUR STAY

- Tour ends. Check-out and head to the airport, or extend your stay.

Fitness Level: MODERATE

This trip involves a stay in just one hotel. There will be standing and walking for extended periods during museum visits or tours. Walking is typically on flat terrain with elevators often available. While we encourage participation in all group activities, a tour participant can opt-out when necessary. We will be walking to restaurants in the evening, which will take 5 to 10 minutes. Travel insurance is recommended for this tour if there is any chance of a health event for you or a family member prior to or during the tour dates.

Health Requirements:

Participants should be in good health and with overall good mobility and should be comfortable participating in at least three to five hours of activity per day. Any condition that may require any individual accommodation or special medical attention must be reported at the time you make your reservation.

TOUR PRICE PER PERSON *(based on a minimum of 16 participants)*

Tour Cost, based on double \$2,495
Tour Cost, based on single \$3,545 including a single supplement of \$1,050

EXTRA NIGHT(S) AT THE FAIRMONT COPLEY PLAZA *(subject to availability, pre-tour only due to Head of the Charles rowing event on October 17th and 18th)*

\$425 per room per night, double or single occupancy

Rate for extra nights include taxes; and exclude breakfast.

TO RESERVE YOUR SPACE AND MAKE A PAYMENT:

Click on this link to access the Itinerary in Brief and complete the Registration Form:

<https://tri.ps/rxOhS>

Or simply call Meg MacDonald at Travel Muse to register over the phone: (617) 480-0250.

Full payment is due upon registration. Payment may be made by no-fee ACH electronic money transfer; or by major credit card with an add-on processing fee of 3.9%. To make an ACH payment, under “Payment Method” please select “U.S. Checking Account,” then enter your full name on your bank account, the bank’s routing number, and your account number (you will be asked to enter the account number twice).

Trip insurance is not required but is strongly encouraged to protect your trip investment should you cancel or need to interrupt your trip. To preview coverage provided by Trawick International, a flyer is attached for your review.

The Participant Travel Agreement including the cancellation policy may be downloaded from the Registration link.

For questions or assistance to register, please contact Meg MacDonald, Travel Muse Inc., at meg@travelmuse.net or (617) 480-0250.

What's Included

Accommodations	Five nights at the Fairmont Copley Plaza with a choice of one queen or two double beds.
Meals	Breakfast daily (vouchers are provided for up to \$45); one welcome reception with two glasses of wine or beer per person and appetizers; and one farewell dinner including wine
Transportation	Private coach for one day, Monday, October 12 th
Curator and Docent Tours	As indicated in the itinerary
Entrance Fees to Museums	As indicated in the itinerary
WiFi	Complimentary WiFi internet access at the hotel

What's Not Included

Arrival/Departure Expenses	To and from Boston
Airport transfers	To and from the hotel
Meals	Meals not otherwise included
Transportation	From and between sites by taxi or ride-share services, as indicated in the itinerary, unless otherwise noted

Payment Terms

Tour Cost

\$2,495 per person, based on double occupancy

\$3,545 per person, single occupancy (\$1,050 supplement)

Registrations and Payment Schedule

- Full payment is due upon registration. Payment may be made by no-fee ACH electronic money transfer; or by major credit card with an add-on processing fee of 3.9%.

Cancellation Policy

When a participant cancels, the following schedule of per person charges is incurred:

Written Notice of Cancellation received:	Refund / Cancellation Fees (Per Person): *
On or before August 12 th , 2026 (60 days prior)	Refund all monies minus \$500 non-refundable fee
After August 12 th , 2026	No refund

** Travel insurance is the best way to protect your tour investment. Information will be sent to you upon receipt of your Registration.*

An Itinerary in Brief is provided on the Registration weblink (powered by WeTravel). The complete Terms and Cancellation Policy are stipulated in the Participant Tour Agreement, which is posted on the Registration weblink and which you will need to provide a signature indicating that you have read and understand the Agreement.