

## MATINEE LECTURE: THE WORLD OF CULTURAL & ARTISTIC IMAGINATION: INHERITING CULTURAL HERITAGE THROUGH RELICS OF THE MUSEUM

May 17, 2018 - WTIC hosted a Matinee Lecture about the heritage of the National Palace Museum and its treasures at Chi Chang Yuan/Gallery(寄暢園).

It was a sunny afternoon in May, as the ladies of the Welcome to Taipei International Club (WTIC) and their guests entered the elegant and prestigious Chi Chang Yuan/Gallery to attend a matinee lecture about the heritage of the National Palace Museum and its treasures.

Cheerful greetings of welcome were given to all by the reception committee, along with a gracious invitation by Mrs. Machiko Chang to view some of the gallery pieces in her gallery, before the lecture began. As we strolled among the exhibited pieces, a sense of wonder and awe was present. Each *objet d'art* was exquisitely presented. It felt like we had been transported from the ordinary world of Taipei to a special world filled with valuable treasures.

Our guest speaker was Ms. Lizette Lou, Senior Executive Officer of the National Palace Museum. Ms. Lou, a foreign language specialist (Chinese, French, Spanish and English), and specialist in Chinese and French history and culture began working at the National Palace Museum in 1985. In 1999, she was promoted to the position of Special Assistant in charge of International Relations. Ms. Lou held this position, serving under seven directors, until 2013, when she was transferred to her present position as Senior Executive Officer.

Our journey began on a hillside outside of Taipei, where the National Palace Museum is located. We were allowed glimpses of the underground storage vaults, and an overview of the three escape routes that the treasures took when facing invasion and insurgency threats before coming to Taiwan, in 1948 and 1949. The most important treasures, we learned were shipped and stored in Taichung until they were finally moved in 1965 to their present home in Taipei.

The museum's collection embodies a heritage of centuries of imperial collections which can be traced back to the Northern Sung period (A.D. 960 - 1126). The art objects within the National Palace Museum's collection are rare books and documents, bronzes, paintings, porcelains, jades, lacquers, enamel carvings, scrolls and others.

Lizette guided us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with clear explanations about the museum's forward looking programs; the museum's successful extensive renovation program, the opening of the museum's southern branch, at Taibao, in Chiayi County, international exchanges with world-class museums and agreements.

Without a doubt, this matinee lecture was one of the most thorough and detailed explanations about the heritage of the National Palace Museum, its' treasures and innovative plans for the future that we have experienced in a long time. Lizette Lou did a remarkable job.

Our matinee lecture was followed by tea time and animated discussions among members and their guests. This event was a wonderful way to spend an afternoon in May.

Written by Sue Babcock