

**Classical
Chinese Carpets
1400-1750**

**15 October 2005
to 15 January 2006**



**Museum of
East Asian Art
Cologne**



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Opening hours:

Tue to Sun 11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.
Thurs 11.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m.
Closed on Mondays

Cafeteria:

Tue to Sun 11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.
Thurs 11.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m.

Parking facilities:

Car park at Museum

Public transport:

From Neumarkt tram station
lines 1 or 7 to Universitätsstraße

Entrance fee:

€ 6.50 / reduced €3.50

Guided tours:

Sun 12.00 a.m.
Tours for groups and school classes
by appointment, contact
Museumsdienst, Köln
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museumsdienstkoeln@netcologne.de

Seminar:

15 to 16 October
www.volkmanntreffen.de

cover

Lotuses, circa 1660,
213 x 160 cm. (detail)

back

Clouds, circa 1700,
179 x 253 cm. (detail)

- 1 *Foliated Dragons*, circa 1680,
140 x 206 cm.
- 2 Portrait of a military officer seated on
a Ming dynasty chair, with a floral
seventeenth century carpet.
- 3 *Lotuses with Medallion*, circa 1625,
164 x 308 cm.

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The Museum of East Asian Art in Cologne has great pleasure in presenting the first major, comprehensive exhibition on this little known and beautiful subject, with sixty rare and precious masterpieces drawn from European and US museum and private collections.

Chinese carpets are well known in western interiors today, because they have been imported for more than one hundred years. However, the

vast majority of such carpets represent merely the end of a very long tradition. By the second half of the eighteenth century, commercialism took over and carpets began to be mass produced, and as a consequence the art quickly waned. This exhibition will present Chinese carpets from the high period of the art, namely the late Ming and early Qing periods (sixteenth to eighteenth centuries).



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Carpets have been discovered in the deserts of western China dating from as early as the first century AD, although these appear to have been made further west in Central Asia, Iran, Egypt or Greece. From the fifth century AD, carpets can be seen depicted in paintings and stone carvings, but no identifiably Chinese examples are known to survive from this period. The

earliest known surviving fragments of Chinese carpets date from the early fifteenth century, and these are similar to examples that can be seen in the portraits of Ming emperors.

The exhibition will commence with examples of the oldest Chinese carpets extant. It will then present at least three monumental Imperial Palace carpets from the sixteenth century, and will show the

development of carpet design over the following two centuries. Adjacent to the carpets will be displayed examples of other works of Chinese art showing how similar patterns were used in other media.

These carpets were made in western China, in the regions of Ningxia and Gansu, where they were a principal medium of artistic expression. At the end of the seventeenth century, the Kangxi emperor (1662–1722)

made a visit to western China, during which he saw carpets being made and became fascinated by them. At this time, they were great status symbols furnishing the homes of the nobility and only being walked upon in silk slippers, and being spread out for important guests. The art of the carpet in China had reached its zenith, and the examples from this period that remain conjure a stunning picture of beauty and elegance.

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