Provenance and Asian Art (Berlin, 11-13 November, 2026)

Berlin, Museum Island, Nov 11–13, 2026
Deadline: Jan 15, 2026

Christine Howald (Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin)

Provenance and Asian Art: Sharing Stories, Building Connections.

The Freer Research Center at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art and the Zentralarchiv and Museum für Asiatische Kunst (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin) of the Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz are pleased to announce their second in-person symposium dedicated to the provenance of Asian art, occurring November 11–13, 2026, on Museum Island in Berlin, Germany.

A dynamic international community of scholars and professionals will gather to share new and ongoing research, explore current challenges, and reflect on the evolving state of the field of provenance of Asian Art. This year's theme, Sharing Stories, Building Connections, highlights the collaborative nature of provenance work. Through panels, workshops, and small group discussions, participants will connect with peers, engage with key research resources, refine methodologies, and consider how provenance histories may be communicated to broader audiences.

We invite early-career and established scholars from a range of disciplines to submit proposals for presentations of 20-minutes maximum. This includes museum and archive professionals, provenance researchers, collectors, and independent scholars, among others. The organizers encourage colleagues from around the world to apply, especially those based in Asia. Please note that the program will be conducted in English.

Proposals should address current issues in provenance research on Asian art and reflect the symposium's theme Sharing Stories, Building Connections. Preference will be given to proposals that demonstrate collaborative inquiry and innovative perspectives. We welcome proposals that engage with a wide range of topics, including but not limited to:

- Case studies of individual objects, collections, or networks that highlight shared research efforts across institutions and/or disciplines
- Provenance research projects that exemplify cross-institutional or interdisciplinary partnerships, and thoughtfully consider the dynamics, challenges, and benefits of this approach
- Dealer histories that illuminate the roles of specific individuals or networks in the circulation of East, South, and Southeast Asian art, especially when researched in partnership with archives or other scholars
- Public engagement strategies that examine how museums, galleries, and cultural institutions co-

develop and share provenance narratives with wider audiences
- Ethical challenges in provenance research, including collaborative approaches to address illicit trade, colonial-era acquisitions, and wartime seizures
- Innovative methodologies and tools that support shared research practices and open access to provenance data
- The future of objects, with a focus on shared stewardship, storytelling, and questions of restitution and community involvement
- Critical reflections on how provenance histories are shaped, narrated, and shared
- Interdisciplinary partnership and how conservation scientists, archivists, legal experts, policymakers, activists, and others contribute to provenance research through shared expertise and dialogue

Please submit a 250-word maximum proposal and 150-word maximum biographical statement as a single Word document titled "LAST NAME_Asia Provenance Symposium" to AsiaProvenance@si.edu by midnight EST on January 15, 2026. Selected speakers will be notified in March 2026.

Organized by Dr. Joanna M. Gohmann (National Museum of Asian Art) and Dr. Christine Howald (Zentralarchiv, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin). Questions may be directed to them at the email address above.

Reference:

CFP: Provenance and Asian Art (Berlin, 11-13 November, 2026). In: ArtHist.net, Dec 4, 2025 (accessed Nov 13, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/51288>.