

Stop and Chat about *Power and Beauty in China's Last Dynasty*

PRE-VISIT

Encourage people to visit first and come back afterwards to discuss. It's an experience; you don't want to give anything away! Be sensitive to the artist's concept: "It's Art about Art." Robert Wilson is a contemporary artist who designs theater and art experiences.

There will be a gallery layout plan available. Use it **only** as a way to orient visitors in navigating the exhibition. You can point out that there are 10 galleries so people don't miss anything.

Because of rooms that are very dark/very light, have loud sounds or flashing lights, some visitors, including parents with children, may want to know this beforehand (concern for visitor safety, sensitivities, children on the spectrum, etc.).

Offer some questions visitors can ask themselves while in the exhibition:

- What am I seeing, feeling, hearing, smelling? How are my senses taking it all in?
- How do I react to what I'm experiencing?
- What is surprising to me?
- How does the environment of a given room affect how I experience the art?
- What else do I want to know?

POST-VISIT

Based on visitor interest/questions, provide background information on the Qing dynasty and objects from Mia's collection. (There is a 2-volume catalog about the robes and related objects in your library/study: *Imperial Silks, volumes 1 and 2* by Robert Jacobson. There are also many resources on the IPE volunteers special exhibition part of the website.)

Use iPads or laptops to reference and answer questions about objects in the exhibition. Show people how to extend their visit through the Mia website when they leave the museum.

Talk about the way the exhibition inspires wonder and curiosity – think about seeing and experiencing the objects in a new way.

Discussion questions for post-visit conversations:

- What do you think or feel about your experience in the exhibition? Did you like it? What did you like/not like?
- How did each room's unique environment affect the way you experienced the art?
- How did the display of the objects affect you?
- How do the concepts of "power" and "beauty" show up in the exhibition?
- What does the exhibition remind you of?
- What connections did you make with your own life experiences?
- What surprised you about the overall exhibition?
- What object or gallery surprised you? What about it surprised you?
- Art is meant to *provoke* us. Did this exhibition provoke you? In what ways?
- Have you ever been to a museum exhibition like this? Where? What was included?
- What was your favorite room?
- If you were the exhibition designer, how would you arrange the rooms? (Pick any room/s to rearrange: think about colors, textures, sounds, smells, objects.)
- How did the lack of object labels and informational panels affect your experience?
- What 3 words come to mind after this experience?
- What would you say to friends about the exhibition and your experience?
- How would you describe this exhibition to: your family, your grandmother, your neighbor who is coming to see it next week?
- In what ways does this exhibit matter to you? To your local community? To the global community?