



Canada-China Friendship Society®
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Invitation to a Presentation

**Beijing's New National Museum:
The Shaping of China's Self-image**

by Dr. Victor Rabinovitch

Fellow and Adjunct Professor Queens University
(President emeritus, Canadian Museum of Civilization)

Tuesday January 22, 2013

Library and Archives Canada, Room 156
395 Wellington Street, Ottawa

at 7:30 p.m.

Refreshments and conversation following the presentation

Everyone is welcome.*

Little more than a year ago, the new National Museum of China on the east side of Tian'anmen Square was opened to the public. This is now the world's largest single museum building, designed around an atrium lobby that gives access to major galleries and reception rooms. 'New' is also 'old' as this museum is rooted in China's first national museum project from 1912 - one of the early examples of modernizing the country's institutions.

The new National Museum is located across from the Great Hall of the People, while the entrance to the Forbidden City (formally the 'Palace Museum') is a few hundred meters to the north. This location is symbolic, and enables visitors to have easy access to a related set of iconic sites. Already the museum is receiving record attendance, approaching the levels of the British Museum, the Met in New York, and the Louvre.

The approach taken in Beijing to present China's history and cultures contrasts with the Shanghai Museum, China's other great international class institution. Through explanations and photos, Victor Rabinovitch will analyze how the national museum shapes its style and narratives, and how this relates to the image and identity of modern China.

For over 11 years Victor Rabinovitch was CEO of the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the Canadian War Museum. He met frequently with the team responsible for Beijing's new National Museum project, and led the 2007-2008 exhibitions exchange between Canada and China. He is uniquely qualified to speak on how the new museum is presenting China's recent and ancient past and the implications for how China sees itself in today's world.

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