

December 12, 2006

Dear Adventurous Carleton Alumni and Friends,

It is our great pleasure to invite you to join us for a journey into the heart of Chinese central Asia, a vast and varied land where all the great religions of the ancient world have left significant monuments, and armies and caravans of traders have contested for control of the rich resources found at both ends of the legendary Silk Road. Through the architectural and artistic monuments preserved across the region, you will have a chance to understand better the complex religious, cultural and political forces that have shaped the history of the peoples who live there.

The sites from the ancient capital of the Chinese empire, Chang'an (modern day Xi'an), through the oasis city states of Dunhuang and Turfan, to the central Asian city of Kashgar, vividly illustrate the rich multicultural heritage of this important global trade route. Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Manicheanism, as well as other religions, spread and flourished across the Asian continent from the 5th century BC to the 18th century AD. We are very excited to share our love and knowledge of Asian art and culture through the lens of this fabled region.

Along the way, we will also observe the rapid transitions that are sweeping through China today, transforming it into a dynamic political and economic force in the region and the world at large. I hope that you will join me and my husband Jim Smith, Registrar of the Carleton Art Collection, on this adventure in art and religion across China.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Ryor

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Chair, Department of Art and Art History
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