

中华外译读本

# 博物馆 英语

Museum English

刘芬 编著



天津大学出版社  
TIANJIN UNIVERSITY PRESS

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全国教育科学“十二五”规划 2015 年度教育部重点课题《博物馆文物资源在高等教育中的开发与利用研究》（编号 DIA150312）成果

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## 序 FOREWORD

知性温婉的刘芬老师来请我给她的新书《博物馆英语》写序，着实让我受宠若惊，我除了曾经给自己的小册子写过自序之外，还从没有给别人的著作写过序，因为我不够“资格”。这一次虽再三推辞但最终还是答应下来的原因是被刘老师对博物馆的那份狂热所感动，尽管我在文博行业里工作了 19 年，但还是第一次遇到如此狂热的“博物馆粉”。

刘芬老师任教于武汉工商学院，讲授英语阅读、英国文学、中国文化概论（双语）等课程，三年前成为湖北省博物馆的志愿者，利用闲暇时间风雨无阻地为观众讲解，尤其在为外宾提供优质英文讲解方面做出了突出贡献。在这里，她爱上了形形色色的文物，更爱上了这些文物所承载的博大精深的中国文化，她陶醉在博物馆里，陶醉在自己的讲述中，用她自己的话说：“从此掉进博物馆这个文化的‘深坑’，不能自拔。”

文博领域迫切需要外语人才，这是我多年混迹于文博圈的切身感受。我清楚地记得一个观众在参观大钟寺古钟博物馆外国钟展厅之后给我们留下一封信，指出展览中关于日本寺庙名称的英文翻译错误；也记得我们在推出新展览之前到处托人找合适的英文翻译；还记得 2008 年奥运会之前由北京外国语大学特聘外籍教授带队到各博物馆检查英文错误……毋庸置疑，文博圈的英文翻译水平亟待提升，文博人也曾想过办法自我拯救，比如我曾参与编写过《博物馆实用英语》。中国历史悠久漫长，中华文明灿烂辉煌，中国文物遗存丰富，需要更多的人做持续的努力，文博领域的英文翻译才会真正有所改观。在担任博物馆志愿者过程中，刘芬老师特别关注博物馆里的英语表达，以其深厚的英文功底，不难发现展览、书籍中关于中国文物的翻译是困扰博物馆已久的难题，于是她萌发为此做点事情的冲动，呈现在读者眼前的这本《博物馆英语》是她的初步尝试，相信她在不久的将来会推出更多关于不同类型文物的英文著作，在中国传统文化的复兴、传播和跨文化解读领域展现其才华。

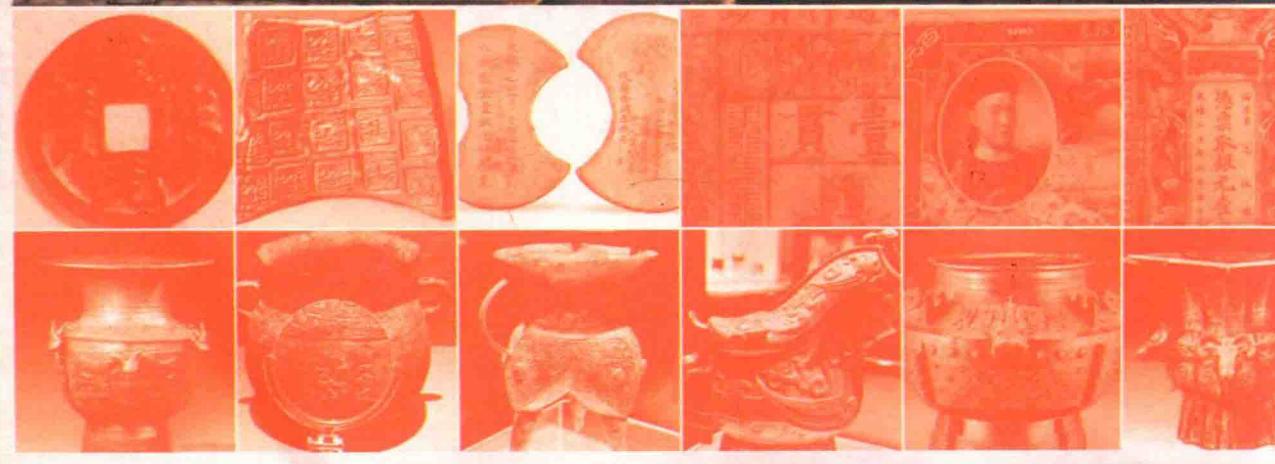
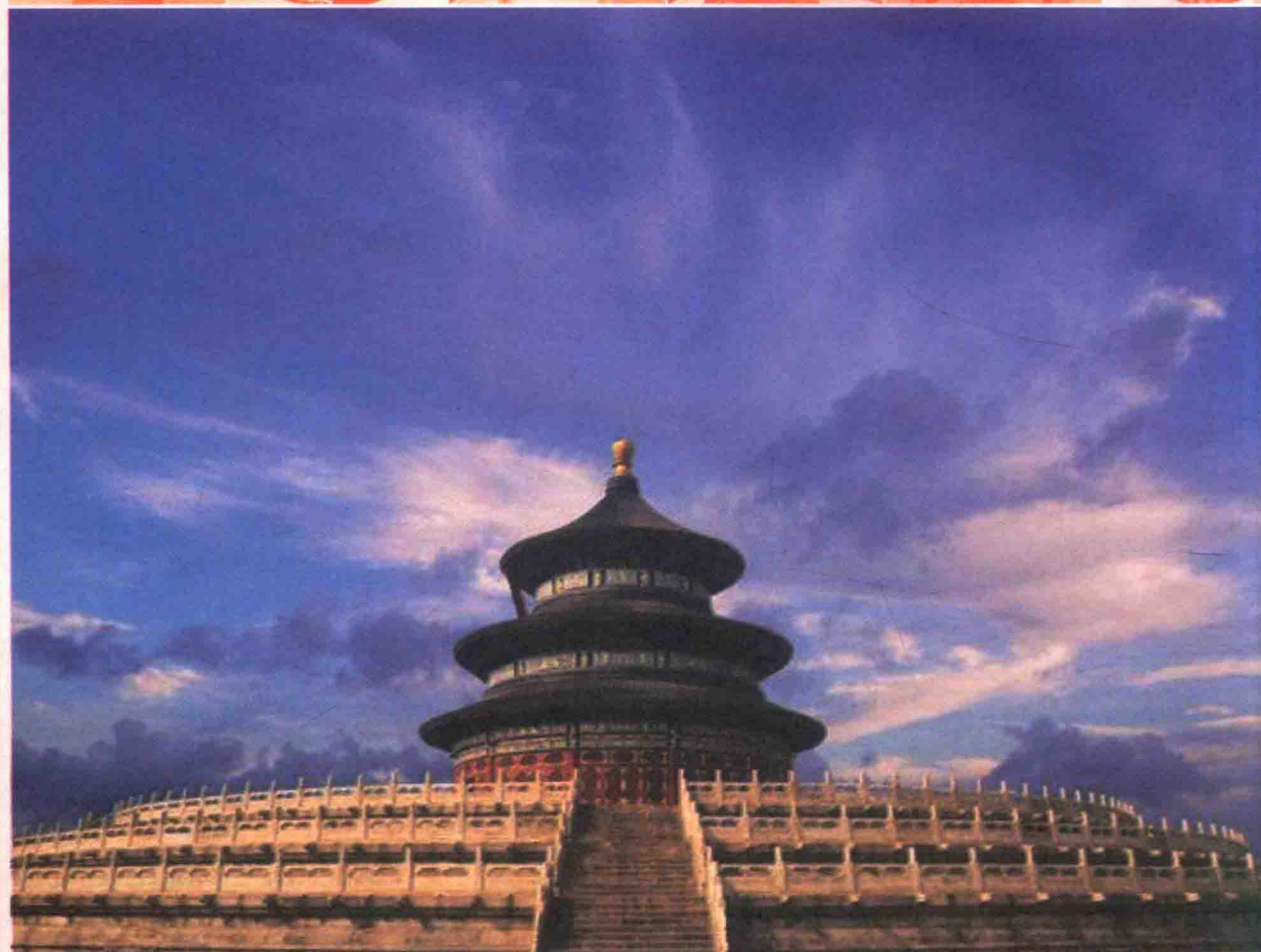
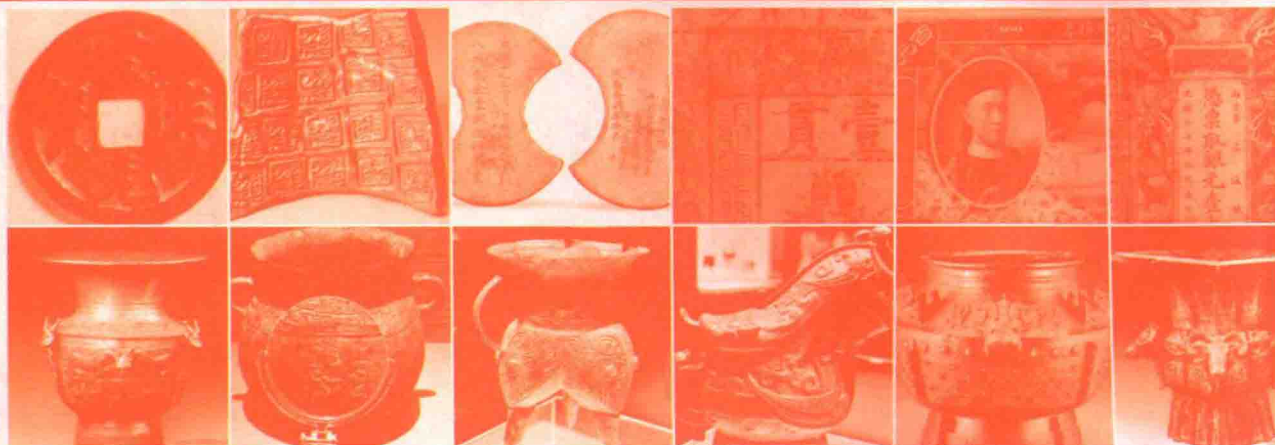
朋友们眼里的我是一个极爱折腾的人，放下北京安稳的博物馆工作，半路“出家”到高校确实不算是小的折腾，为此付出的代价和所受的苦也只有自己知道，但凡事都有两面，正因为这天南地北的折腾，我认识了一些极其有趣的人，刘芬老师就是其中之一。

不敢言序，权当为朋友呐喊加油了。

庚华写于武汉法华居

2017 年 11 月 18 日清晨

（庚华，中南民族大学民族学与社会学学院文物与博物馆学专业教授，2002 年毕业于中央民族大学民族学专业，获得博士学位。曾先后于湖北省随州市擂鼓墩文物管理处从事曾侯乙墓考古遗址管理工作、湖北省襄樊市文物管理处从事襄阳古城墙等古建筑管理与保护工作、中国大百科全书出版社从事编辑工作、北京古代建筑博物馆从事古代建筑的研究及展览策划工作、北京大钟寺古钟博物馆从事古代钟铃文物的研究及展览策划工作、北京孔庙和国子监博物馆从事儒学遗产的研究及展览策划工作）



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目录 CONTENTS

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- Chapter 1 **Museums** / 001
- Chapter 2 **Ancient Chinese Culture** / 014
- Chapter 3 **Ceramics** / 026
- Chapter 4 **Bronze Vessels** / 059
- Chapter 5 **Lacquer Wares** / 080
- Chapter 6 **Jade Wares** / 090
- Chapter 7 **Gold and Silver Wares** / 104
- Chapter 8 **Silk & Clothing** / 114
- Chapter 9 **Chinese Painting and Calligraphy** / 134
- Chapter 10 **Musical Instruments** / 155
- Chapter 11 **Ancient Chinese Currency** / 170
- Chapter 12 **Ancient Chinese Furniture** / 185
- Chapter 13 **Sculpture** / 197
- Chapter 14 **Ancient Chinese Architecture** / 209
- Appendix I **The Law of the People's Republic of China  
on Protection of Cultural Relics** / 244
- Appendix II **Regulations on Museums** / 295
- 后记 / 306
- 参考文献 / 310

# Chapter 1

## Museums



### 1.1 Museums

The word museum is originally from the Ancient Greek Μουσέον, which denotes a place or temple dedicated to the Muses (the patron divinities of the arts in Greek mythology).

The International Council of Museums<sup>①</sup> defined museum as “permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment, for the purposes of education,

① 国际博物馆理事会

study, and enjoyment”; while the UK Museums Association<sup>①</sup> defined that “museums enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They are institutions that collect, safeguard and make accessible artifacts and specimens, which they hold in trust for society.”<sup>②</sup> Therefore, “a museum is an institution that cares for (conserves) a collection of artifacts and other objects of scientific, artistic, or historical importance and make them available for public viewing through exhibits that may be permanent or temporary.”<sup>③</sup>

Museums are usually open to the general public, sometimes charging an admission fee. Some museums are publicly funded and have free entrance, permanently or on special days. Museums can be a reputable and generally trusted source of information about cultures and history.

On February 9, 2015 the State Council of China published the *Regulations of the Museums*<sup>④</sup> and defined museums as registered non-profit organizations that collect, protect and display evidences of human activities and their natural environment for the purpose of education, research and appreciation.

## 1.2 Types of Museums

There are many types of museums, from very large collections in major cities to very small institutions focusing on a specific subject, location, or a notable person.

Museums are usually classified into arts, craft, archaeology, anthropology and ethnology, biography, history, cultural history, science, technology, children museums, natural history, botanical and zoological gardens. Within these categories, some are specialized further, e.g. museums of modern art, folk art, local history, military history, aviation history, philately, agriculture, or geology. Another type of museum is an encyclopedic museum (commonly referred to as a universal museum). Encyclopedic museums have collections representative of the world and typically

① 英国博物馆协会

② [http://www.thefullwiki.org/Types\\_of\\_museum](http://www.thefullwiki.org/Types_of_museum)

③ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Museum>

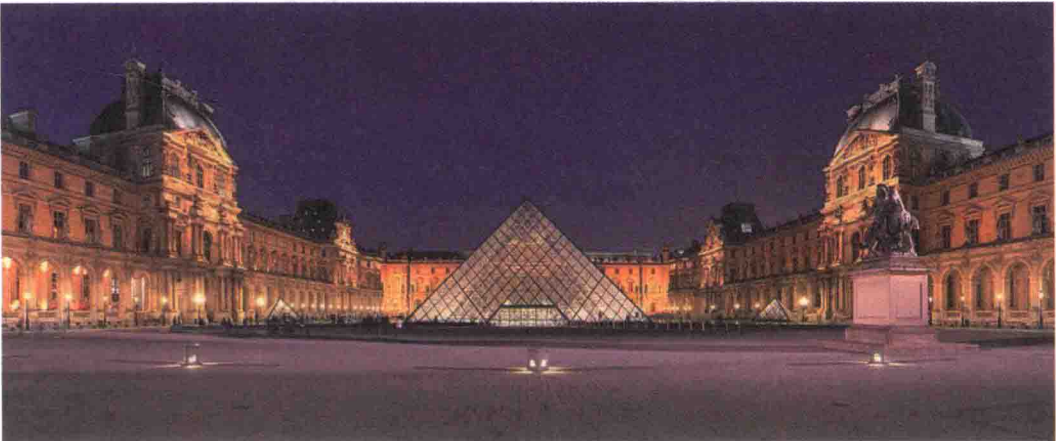
④ 2015年2月9日国务院办公厅颁布《博物馆条例》

include art, science, history, and cultural history.

Although most museums do not allow physical contact with the associated artifacts, there are some that are interactive and encourage a more hands-on approach. Modern trends in museology have broadened the range of subject matter and introduced many interactive exhibits, which give the public the opportunity to make choices and engage in activities that may vary the experience from person to person. With the advent of the Internet, there are growing numbers of virtual exhibits, i.e. web versions of exhibits showing images and playing recorded sound.

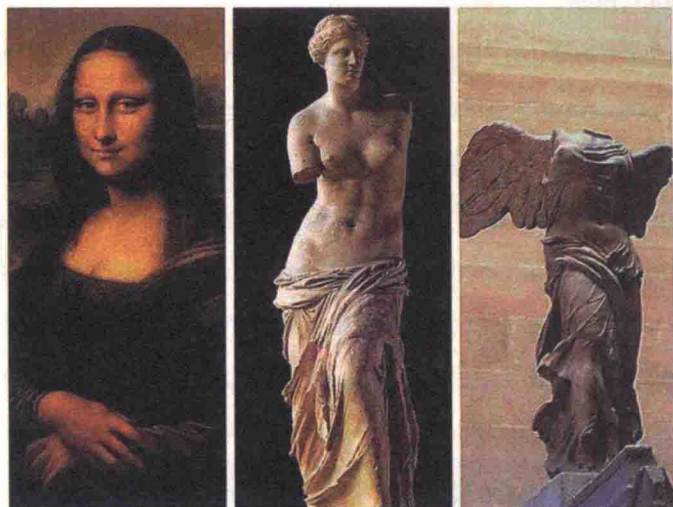
## 1.3 Famous Museums

The world's largest and most visited museums are the Louvre in Paris, the British Museum in London, the National Gallery in London, the State Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C., and the National Museum of China in Beijing.



Louvre or Louvre Museum (Paris, France)

The Louvre or the Louvre Museum is the world's second-largest museum and a historic monument in Paris, France. The museum is housed in the Louvre Palace, originally built as a fortress in the late 12<sup>th</sup> century under Philip II. As a central landmark of the city, it is located on the right bank of the Seine in the city's 1st arrondissement. Nearly 35,000 objects from prehistory to the 21st century are exhibited over an area of 72,735 square meters.



Three Masterpieces of the Louvre Museum:

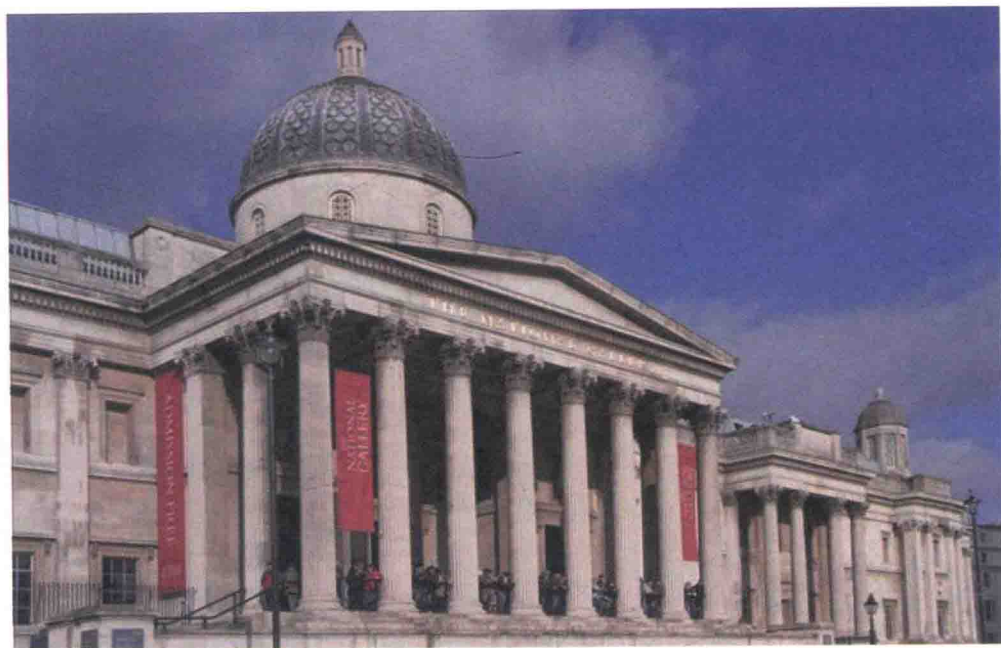
the Oil Painting of Mona Lisa (by Leonardo da Vinci), the Statues of Venus and the Winged Victory (Nike) of Samothrace



The British Museum (London, UK)

The British Museum has the largest and most comprehensive collection (numbering some 8 million works) in human history, art and culture of all continents, illustrating and documenting the story of human culture from its very beginning to the present. The origins of the British Museum lie in the will of the physician, naturalist and collector, Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), who collected more than 71,000 objects and bequeathed the whole collection which he wanted to be preserved intact after his death to King George II for the nation and in return for a payment of £20,000 to his heirs. The gift was accepted and on 7 June 1753, an Act of Parliament established the British Museum. The founding collections largely consisted of books, manuscripts and natural specimens with some antiquities (including coins and medals, prints and drawings) and ethnographic material. In 1757 King George II donated the “Old Royal Library” of the sovereigns of England and with it the privilege of copyright was received.

The British Museum opened to the public on 15 January, 1759. It was first housed in a seventeenth-century mansion, Montagu House, in Bloomsbury of London on the site of today’s building. From the beginning it granted free admission to “all studious and curious Persons”. (Source: [www.britishmuseum.org/](http://www.britishmuseum.org/))



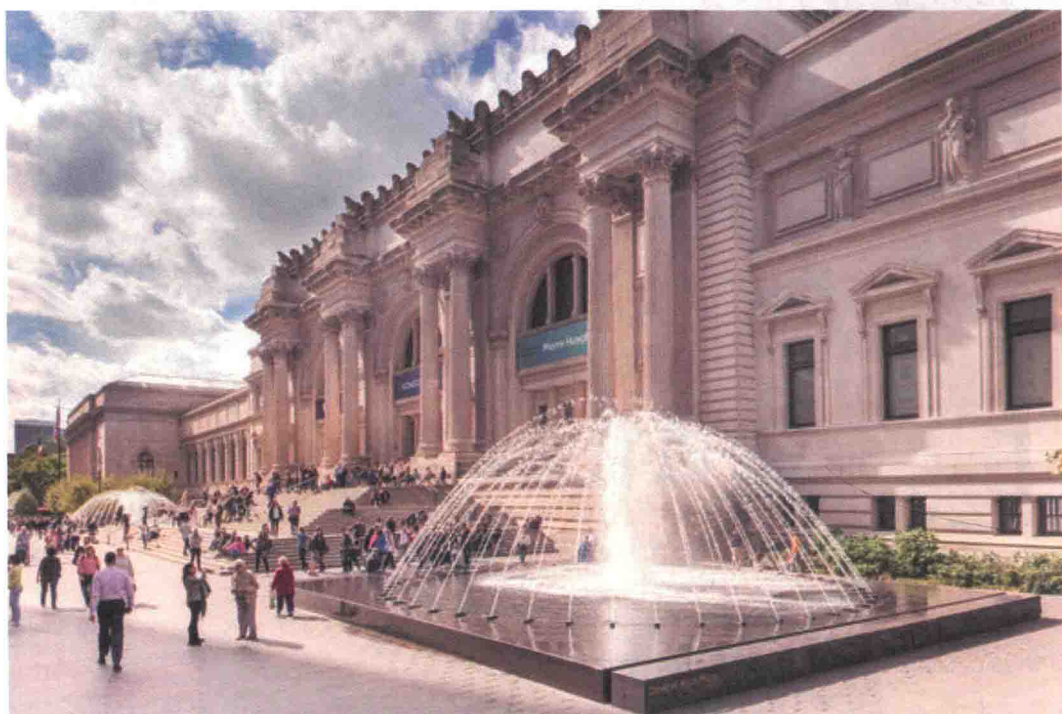
The National Gallery (London, UK)<sup>①</sup>

The National Gallery, located on Trafalgar Square of London, houses the national collection of paintings in the Western European tradition from the 13<sup>th</sup> century to the 19<sup>th</sup> century).



*Sunflowers* (Vincent Willem van Gogh, 1888 Oil on Canvas) (The National Gallery, London, UK)

① 英国国家美术馆



### The Metropolitan Museum of Art (the Met) (New York, USA)

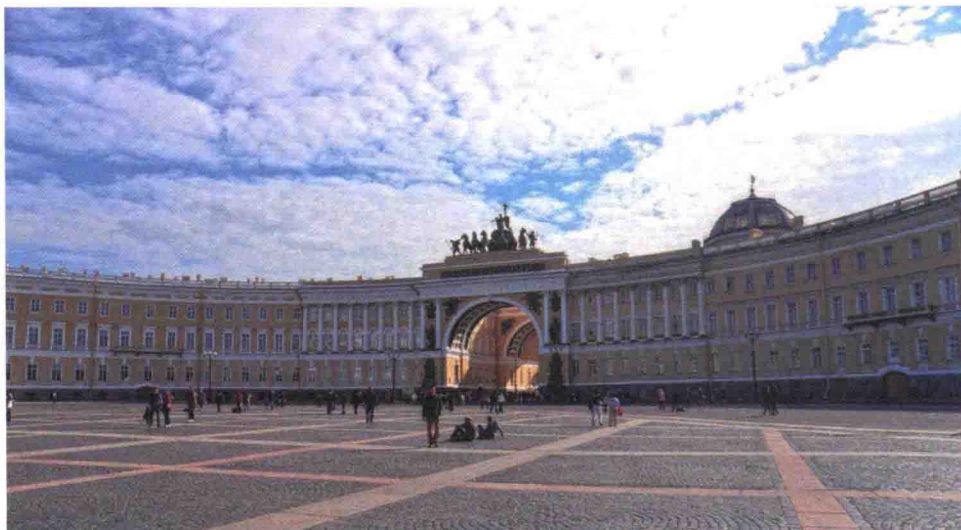
The Metropolitan Museum of Art (the Met) in New York City is the largest art museum in the United States. Founded in 1870 for the purpose of opening a museum to bring art and art education to the American people, it was opened on February 20, 1872 and was originally located at No.681 Fifth Avenue. The main building the Met Fifth Avenue, on the eastern edge of the Central Park along Manhattan's Museum Mile, is by area one of the world's largest art galleries. The Cloisters at Fort Tryon Park in Upper Manhattan, contains an extensive collection of art, architecture, and artifacts from Medieval Europe. The newly opened Met Breuer museum at Madison Avenue in the Upper East Side extends the museum's modern and contemporary art program. Its permanent collection includes over two million works divided into seventeen curatorial departments, consisting of works of art from ancient Egypt, paintings and sculptures from nearly all the European masters, and an extensive collection of American modern art. The museum is home to encyclopedic collections of musical instruments, costumes and accessories, as well as antique weapons and armors from the world. With 7.06 million visitors in 2016, it was the second most visited art museum in the world, and the fifth most visited museum of any kind.



Smithsonian Castle, the Headquarters of the Smithsonian Institution (Washington D.C., USA)

The Smithsonian Institution is the world's largest museum, education, and research complex, with 19 museums and the National Zoo. The institution was founded in 1846 with funds from the Englishman James Smithson (1765–1829) according to his wishes “under the name of the Smithsonian Institution, an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge.”

There are 19 world-class museums, galleries, gardens, and a zoo. They are African American Museum, African Art Museum, Air and Space Museum, American Art Museum, American History Museum, American Indian Museum, Anacostia Community Museum, Archives of American Art, Arts and Industries Building, National History Museum, Portrait Gallery, Postal Museum, Renwick Gallery, S. Dillon Ripley Center, Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Castle, Smithsonian Gardens, Freer Gallery of Art, Hirshhorn, National Zoo in Washington D.C. National Museum of the American Indian George Gustav Heye Center and Cooper Hewitt are in New York as well.

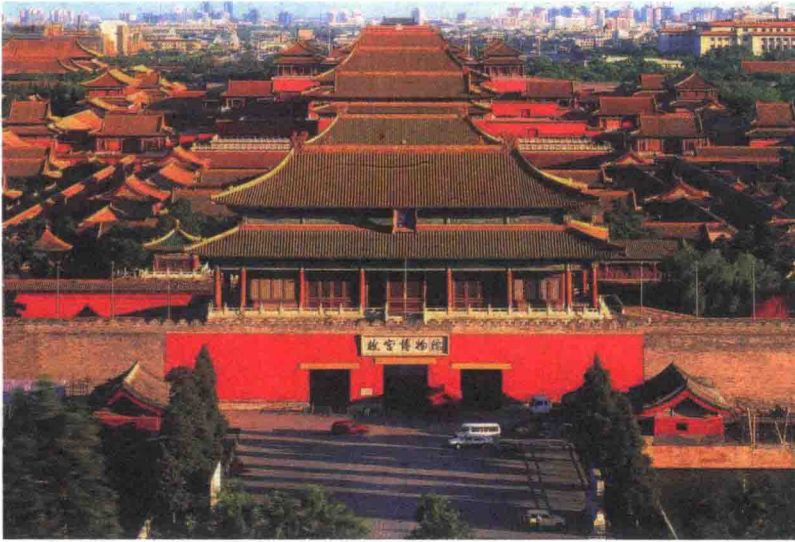


### The State Hermitage Museum (Saint Petersburg, Russia)

The State Hermitage Museum is the museum of art and culture in Saint Petersburg, Russia. As one of the largest and oldest museums in the world, it covers an area of about 90,000 square meters and has been open to the public since 1852. The Winter Palace Museum, a former royal residence of Queen Ekaterina II, was established on the basis of Queen Ekaterina II's collections of Rembrandt's paintings and other paintings. In 1922, it was integrated with the Hermitage Museum and was finally named as the State Hermitage Museum. Five buildings are open to the public, namely: the Winter Palace, the Small Hermitage, the Old Hermitage, the Hermitage Theater and the New Hermitage. These magnificent buildings and palaces in Baroque style are one of Saint Petersburg's important attractions.



National Museum of China (Beijing, China)



**The Palace Museum (Beijing, China)**

Established in 1925, the Palace Museum is located in the imperial palace of the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1616–1911) Dynasties. In 1961, the State Council designated the former imperial residence as one of China's foremost-protected cultural heritage sites, and in 1987 it was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. The magnificent architectural complex, also known as the Forbidden City, and the vast holdings of paintings, calligraphies, ceramics, and antiquities of the imperial collections, make it one of the most prestigious museums in China and the world.

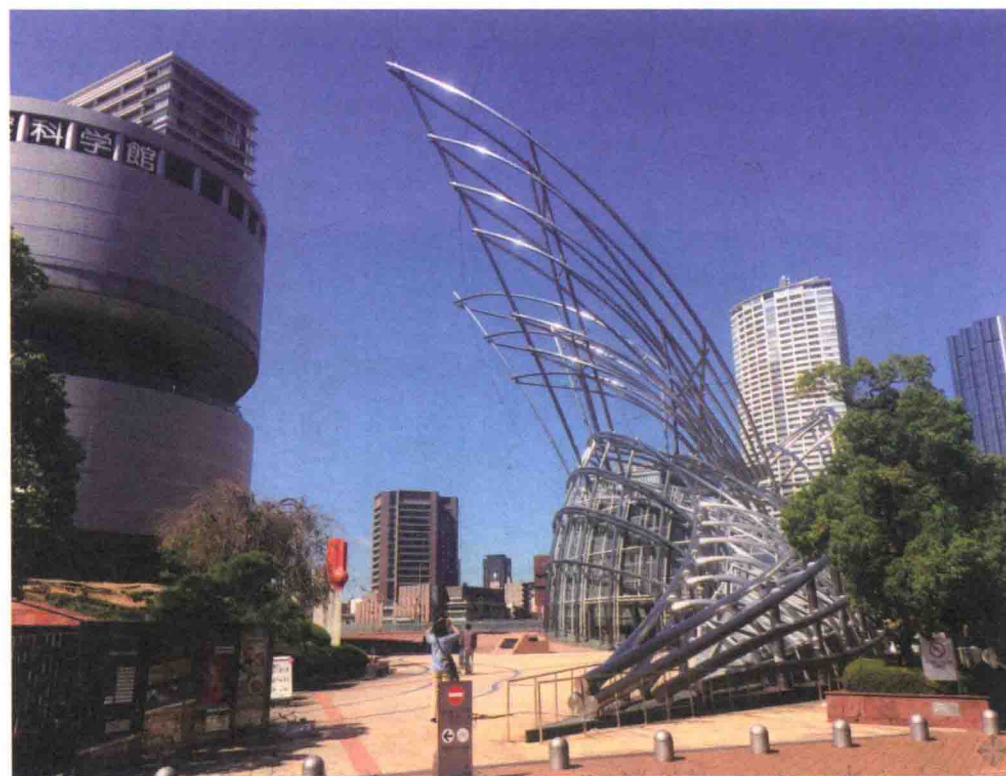


**Ashmolean Museum (Oxford, UK)**

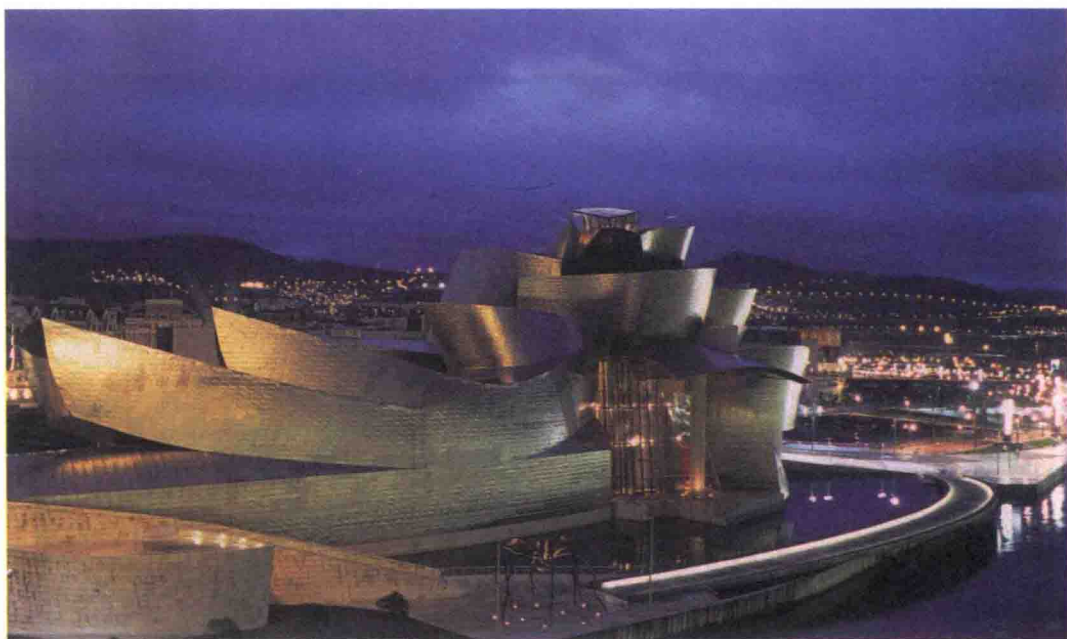
The Ashmolean Museum (the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology) on Beaumont Street, Oxford, England, is the world's first university museum. Its first building was erected during 1678–1683 to house the cabinet of curiosities that Elias Ashmole gave to the University of Oxford in 1677. The museum opened on 24 May 1683, with naturalist Robert Plot as the first keeper. After a major redevelopment, the museum reopened in 2009. In November 2011, new galleries focusing on Egypt and Nubia were unveiled. In May 2016, the museum opened new galleries of 19<sup>th</sup>-century art.



Musée d'Orsay (Paris, France)



National Museum of Art (Osaka, Japan)



Guggenheim Museum (Bilbao, Spain)



Oscar Niemeyer Museum (Curitiba, Brazil)