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Chinese Art from the Forbidden City

Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum (KHM) , 09.03.2026 [ENA]

The "Chinese Art from the Forbidden City" exhibition at Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum (KHM) unveils a breathtaking trove of 18th-century imperial masterpieces, jointly curated with Beijing's Palace Museum. Running until April 6, 2026, it showcases 76 rare objects—many debuting in Europe—crafted in jade, porcelain, lacquer, enamel, and intricate clocks, embodying the Qing dynasty's "Harmony in Diversity."

At its heart gleams the gilded bronze ruyi scepter with triple jade inlay, a virtuoso symbol of happiness and imperial blessing, its filigree work marrying technical brilliance with philosophical depth. A standout jade carved landscape fuses classical Chinese motifs with European baroque influences, elegantly bridging East-West dialogues on power and beauty. Snuff bottles in glass and calligraphy-adorned porcelain reveal miniaturist genius, where every curve whispers courtly refinement.

This display transcends artifacts, exploring parallels in imperial aesthetics: from Habsburg splendor to Forbidden City opulence. Timed for the 55th anniversary of China-Austria ties, it fosters profound exchange, inviting viewers to ponder universal ideals of harmony amid material splendor.

A luminous testament to craftsmanship, the exhibition elevates KHM as a global crossroads of art history.

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