



**NATIONAL GALLERY OF MODERN ART
MUMBAI**

have great pleasure in inviting you to a talk by

Happy Harun

Project Director, China Heritage Fund

on

**Restoration of the Palace Gardens in the
Forbidden City**

on **Thursday, 19th March, 2015**

at **6:30 pm, Registration 6:00 pm**

at **National Gallery of Modern Art
Auditorium, M G Road, Fort, Mumbai 1**



The Pavilion of Prolonged Spring under construction in the Forbidden City

Passed on by previous generations, our heritage is the symbol of our landscape; integrated into our history, traditions, language, legends, and culture. Threatened by environmental degradation along with changing social and economic conditions, the future of world heritage sites often remains uncertain, sparking an increasing interest in preserving and restoring these sites across the globe. With over 30 UNESCO World Heritage Sites in China alone, there is a

sense of urgency to protect these historic treasures. The China Heritage Fund (CHF) based in Hong Kong is an exemplar that aims to preserve and restore important cultural relics, heritage, and history throughout China, whose portfolio includes the first ever-large scale reconstruction project in the Forbidden City. Join **Happy Harun**, Project Director of CHF, as she discusses the landmark conservation project at the Palace Gardens.

Happy Harun is a graduate of Stanford University, and is China Heritage Fund's Project Director in Beijing. She has been involved with CHF's restoration projects from the outset.

Historical Background

The Qing dynasty Chinese Emperor Qianlong (1736-1795) considered gardens essential to a ruler's mental and emotional well-being. He built his first private garden in 1742 at the Palace of Established Happiness (Jianfu Gong 建福宮) located in the northwest quarter of the Forbidden City. Filled with exquisite pavilions, weathered rocks, sunken courtyards and winding galleries, this Garden became Qianlong's favorite retreat where he kept his most precious art collection.

In 1923, when the deposed Emperor Puyi still lived in the Forbidden City, the Garden burnt down. For three-quarters of a century, the devastated Garden laid unattended beneath a pile of rubble.

The "Hall of Rectitude Prayer Compound" was initiated in 1697 by Emperor Kangxi (Qianlong's grandfather) to take charge of all court rituals of Tibetan Buddhist worship. Elaborate redesign and reconstruction by the very devoted Qianlong eventually turned the site into the Tibetan Buddhist center for the Qing courts. The 14 structures in the complex also became imperial production centers and repositories of a large collection of Tibetan Buddhist sutras, sculptures, stupas, thangkhas and instruments.

