



## *News Release*

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### PHOTOCALL

**10.30AM, THURSDAY 5 JUNE 2014**

**ADAM HOUSE, 3 CHAMBERS STREET, EDINBURGH, EH1 1HT**

## **Chinese poster art to captivate UK audiences for first time**

Distinctive and colourful images – including ballerinas poised for battle, villagers enjoying a bountiful harvest and calendar girls from 1913 – feature in a rare exhibition of Chinese art at the University of Edinburgh.

The exhibition at Adam House in Chambers Street showcases more than 130 original posters, which are being displayed in the UK for the first time. The images offer a unique insight into the history and art of China from 1913-1997.

Poster art has a long heritage in China. It was used as an affordable means to persuade and engage the masses and during the Maoist period (1949-76), propaganda poster art was almost the only available outlet for artistic endeavour.

One poster in the exhibition depicts a smiling community gathered round a plentiful yield of crops under the strap line ‘Achieve Great Harvest Every Year’. It was produced in 1956 during the Great Famine, when tens of millions of lives were lost.

Other works demonstrate the popularity of calendar girls in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, while more recent designs encourage reform and modernisation, highlighting how much the country has changed in the last 101 years.

Further images with political overtones include former leader Chairman Mao portrayed as the sun, Communist society depicted as heaven and an image of an army of ballet dancers holding rifles as part of the Red Army.

The posters are exhibited in chronological order, reflecting popular artistic styles and influences of the time.

Professor Natascha Gentz, Director of the Confucius Institute for Scotland in the University of Edinburgh, said: “We are delighted to showcase this remarkable exhibition of poster art. We hope as well as being impressed by the quality of the striking images, the exhibition helps people gain a better understanding of Chinese history during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.”

The exhibition has been curated by The Confucius Institute for Scotland in the University of Edinburgh. The posters are on loan from the Propaganda Poster Art Centre in Shanghai.

*Poster Art of Modern China will go on show at the University of Edinburgh’s Adam House from 6 June – 12 July; 10am-6pm. Entry is free.*

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