

# NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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## TEA HOUSE MOVES FROM NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART TO NEWPORT NEWS CAMPUS

Washington, DC, February 9, 1989 -- The National Gallery of Art and the Office of the Governor of Virginia today confirmed that efforts are underway to reconstruct an authentic Japanese tea house, recently displayed in the National Gallery, on the campus of Christopher Newport College in Newport News, Virginia. The tea house is being donated by the Japanese newspaper company, the Asahi Shimbun, and Nomura Securities Co., Ltd., but funding must be provided to cover the costs of moving and rebuilding. Governor Gerald L. Baliles has asked prominent Newport News business leaders to raise private funds to support the project.

The tea house was built in the National Gallery of Art in connection with its major exhibition, Japan: The Shaping of Daimyo Culture 1185-1868. It is a replica of the Ennan tea house completed in the late sixteenth century and still to be seen in Kyoto, the cultural capital of Japan. The tea ceremony was popularized in Japan when it was embraced by the daimyo warriors, feudal lords who ruled the Japanese provinces for nearly 700 years.

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"Placing the tea house at Christopher Newport College is a symbol of increasing cultural ties between Americans and the Japanese," said J. Carter Brown, director of the National Gallery. "Similarly, a Nō stage constructed at the gallery to present classical Japanese Nō theatre during the Japanese exhibition has been donated to the University of Maryland by the Yomiuri Shimbun. We are fortunate that these beautifully crafted artifacts representing important facets of the arts of peace developed by the daimyo culture will continue to be part of the cultural life in this area."

Nearly 300,000 visitors to the Japanese exhibition at the National Gallery saw the tea house in its specially designed Japanese garden setting. The house is constructed of cedar, oak, pine, and bamboo. It was fitted and finished using traditional tools and methods by Japanese carpenters. The interior is fully equipped for the tea ceremony and can seat eight to ten guests.

Governor Baliles saw the tea house during a visit to the exhibition Japan: The Shaping of Daimyo Culture 1185-1868 in January, and initiated efforts to have it reconstructed in Virginia. The governor, who has made international trade and foreign language programs hallmarks of his administration, said "This building will have significant cultural and historic meaning for those who visit and enjoy its setting. It also represents our friendship with the Japanese community in Virginia now and in the future."

The proposed site of the tea house at Christopher Newport College is in a grove of pine, wild cherry, and dogwood trees. A Japanese garden will be planted around the site.

The tea house move, requiring the dismantling of the building piece by piece and its painstaking reconstruction on the new site, will be undertaken by the same Japanese carpenters responsible for installing it in the National Gallery. Details of the move, which is expected to take several months, are still being arranged.

Sponsors of the tea house at the National Gallery of Art were the Asahi Shimbun, the Yabunouchi School of Tea, Nomura Securities Co., Ltd., and All Nippon Airways. The exhibition, Japan: The Shaping of Daimyo Culture 1185-1868, was made possible by R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., the Yomiuri Shimbun, and Nomura Securities Co., Ltd.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION about the tea house move, please contact the Information Office, National Gallery of Art, (202) 842-6359. For the Office of the Governor of Virginia, please contact Dr. Meredith Strohm, (804) 786-2211. For Christopher Newport College, please contact Dr. Terry Maris, (804) 594-7038.