

Taiwan, and more importantly, a clearer idea of what "real" aboriginal culture - as opposed to versions filtered through Japanese and Chinese eyes -- was like. Bayandalu, an aboriginal legislator, described the re-emergence of the collection as "divine assistance" for Taiwan's aboriginal people in their current quest to rediscover their cultural roots.

Planning

A number of formidable obstacles presented themselves from the start of the project. First, the Mackay collection consisted of several hundred items scattered through the ROM's departments of textiles, natural history, and Chinese Studies. The items had literally lain in drawers for almost a century and many were in poor condition. Most challenging was the fact that items were usually identified by no more than a paper tag in GLM's own handwriting with no more description than, say, "head-dress". Thus the enormous job of researching and cataloguing the items had to be carried out from scratch. To make things more challenging, the only scholars able to do this were Taiwanese. Shun Ye took the lead in this area, assembling a team and sending them to Toronto to investigate and photograph the items in order to carry out the necessary extensive research in Taiwan. When the first team of two scholars returned from their exploratory trip to Toronto in early 2000, they brought the news that the collection was in fact the gold mine that Stainton had suspected. The CTOT and Shun Ye shifted into high gear.

Shun Ye began the laborious research and contracted the ROM to carry out the physical preservation work that would enable delicate items to see the light of day again. The CTOT's first task was getting the ROM on board. ROM was nervous that the premise of the show, a missionary's collection of indigenous artefacts, might be construed as a celebration of imperialism. Also, now that they realised they had an extremely valuable collection on their hands, ROM became concerned about allowing the items to travel. The CTOT invited ROM curator Trudy Nicks to Taiwan (with PIF money) in order to set these fears to rest, having her meet with indigenous leaders, and see the Shun Ye facilities firsthand. ROM's management was concerned about the possible impact on their ties with China if they worked on a high profile Taiwanese show. This question was handled in direct talks with the ROM's head of collections, and with Director William Thorsell.

ROM agreed on the condition that they would not incur *any* expenses in mounting the show. The CTOT and Shun Ye jointly landed a wide array of financial sponsors including Taiwan's Council for Cultural Affairs, the Council of Aboriginal Affairs, Taipei City Government, Air Canada, the Intercontinental Hotel, Mitsubishi Motors Taiwan, Taian Insurance. Assistance in preparatory work was sought from the Taipei Fine Arts Museum, the Taiwan Historical Museum, and Toronto's Museum of Medicine.

While there was no suspicion that the *Treasures* were improperly obtained by Mackay, the ROM was concerned that Taiwan would not allow the items to leave once they had returned to Taiwanese soil. The CTOT therefore had to obtain a legal guarantee against seizure from the Taiwanese government. Since there was no time for legislation to be passed (which could take a year), a cabinet level decree was needed, and one was obtained from the Chairman of the Council of Aboriginal Affairs (Taiwan's DIAND).

All of these issues proceeded in tandem and the threat of catastrophe -- in the form of ROM's cold feet, legal problems, escalating costs, fragile artefacts, etc -- hung over the project throughout. It was only when the artefacts arrived in Taiwan 60 days before the show, accompanied by the first of three waves of ROM installers and greeted by Taiwanese paparazzi, Shun Ye and CTOT could feel secure about meeting the once in a century June 2 deadline.

The June 2 opening was a major success. Leading the list of dignitaries in attendance was former President Lee Teng-hui, with Council of Aboriginal Affairs Chairman Yohani Isqaqavut, ROM Curator Nicks, Mackay's octogenarian grandson John Mackay, Shun Ye Foundation Chairman Lin and CTOT HOM David Mulroney rounding out the line-up. Lee eulogised the important legacy GLM left behind, pointing out his contributions to