

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Art Gallery of Hamilton presents the talk  
Bound Together: Footbinding and Femininity  
in Late Imperial China**

In conjunction with the Art Gallery of Hamilton's current *Manchu Era (1644-1912) Arts of China's Last Imperial Dynasty* exhibition, the AGH presents the talk **Bound Together: Footbinding and Femininity in Late Imperial China** with Bata Shoe Museum curator Eizabeth Semmelhack, **Thursday, April 13** at 6 pm in the AGH's Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Pavilion.

This fascinating presentation will focus on why footbinding became a defining feature of Han Chinese beauty. Curator Ms. Semmelhack will explore how other meanings such as ethnicity, femininity and status were bound up in this 1000 year old practice.

The process of making a bound 'lily' foot involved tightly binding a little girl's feet from the age of five with cloth bandages, causing the arch to break and the toes to turn under and allowing the feet to painfully grow into a deformed shape, roughly half normal size. The feet of these crippled women were considered erotically attractive and a sign of a man's wealth to be able to afford a cloistered woman who was incapable of manual labour.

Elizabeth Semmelhack has been the curator of the Bata Shoe Museum since 2000. She was the coordinating Curator with Dr. Dorothy Ko for *Every Step a Lotus: Shoes in the Lives of Chinese Women from Late Imperial China* and has curated numerous exhibitions including *Heights of Fashion: A History of the Elevated Foot, Beads, Buckles and Bows: 400 years of Embellished Footwear*, and *Icons of Elegance: The Most Influential Shoe Designers of the 20th Century*. She has an M.A. in Western Art History from Tufts University and was a doctoral fellow in Asian Art History at Washington University.

Tickets for the **Bound Together** talk are \$10 for AGH Members and \$15 for General Public and may be purchased by calling 905-527-6610, ext. 250.

The Art Gallery of Hamilton is located at 123 King Street West in downtown Hamilton.

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