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“Gold Mountain: Chinese Californian Stories” opens Sun., Jan. 26 at the California Museum

***New exhibit underscores Chinese Californians’ often overlooked
but significant role in shaping history, revealing parallels to
immigration, race & civil rights issues today***

SACRAMENTO, CALIF. — Jan. 22, 2020: Today, the California Museum announced the long-term installation “Gold Mountain: Chinese Californian Stories” will open Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020. The new exhibit details the history of Chinese Americans in California from the 1840s to the present through a display of historic artifacts and photographs, accompanied by interactive video stations, games and activities. Underscoring Chinese Californians’ often overlooked but significant role in history, the exhibit reveals parallels to immigration, race and civil rights issues impacting the state and nation today.

“We’re thrilled to present the new exhibit ‘Gold Mountain,’” said Executive Director Amanda Meeker. “Although the role of Chinese Californians in building the transcontinental railroad is well-known, their other contributions to shaping our state over the last 175 years are often overlooked. This exhibit highlights their unsung role in the state’s past and present while revealing connections to current issues of race, nationalism and civil rights.”

“Gold Mountain: Chinese Californian Stories” explores the Chinese American experience in California from the Gold Rush to the present in six themed sections. Highlights of Chinese immigrants’ early achievements include their critical contributions to the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 as well as to building other infrastructure and contributing to the state’s agriculture, fishing and manufacturing. Later in the 19th century, the exhibit explores how Chinese Californians fought racist laws including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, a federal law pushed by California that prohibited immigration by Chinese laborers, and its enforcement through the incarceration of Chinese immigrants at the Angel Island Immigration Station from 1910 to 1940.

The exhibit also showcases achievements by Chinese Californians who have broken barriers in a wide array of pursuits. Among featured stories are those of Wong Kim Ark (circa 1873-1946), a native San Franciscan whose triumph in the landmark Supreme Court case *United States v. Wong Kim Ark* established birthright citizenship in 1898; and Anna May Wong (1905-1961), a Los Angeles native who became the first Chinese American movie star in the 1922 film *The Toll of the Sea*. The exhibit also presents the successes of local Chinese Americans. Examples include Frank Fat (1904-1997), an immigrant who started the popular restaurant Frank Fat’s in 1939, and Lisa Ling, a Sacramento native who is the only female Chinese American journalist on national news today.

On Sunday, Jan. 26, the California Museum will host the “Gold Mountain” Grand Opening celebrating the exhibit launch and the start of the Lunar New Year. The event offers free admission to all current exhibits with advance registration, plus an afternoon of related activities from 12 to 5 p.m. Festivities feature a discussion with exhibit subject Lisa Ling, host of CNN’s “This is Life with Lisa Ling,” and a lion dance performance by Leung’s White Crane Association of San Francisco.

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ABOUT CALIFORNIA MUSEUM:

The California Museum educates visitors on California's diverse history, arts, culture and unique influence on the world. Through interactive exhibits and engaging programs, the Museum inspires visitors to make their mark on history. Learn more at <https://www.californiamuseum.org>.

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For details on the exhibit or to download press kit, visit <https://www.californiamuseum.org/press-kit/gold-mtn>.

For details on the event and activities, visit <https://www.californiamuseum.org/gold-mountain-opening>.

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