



The arch returning to China after 96 years overseas becomes the centerpiece of today's Tou-Se-We Museum. — Dong Jun

From orphans in old Shanghai,

AN ENDURING TESTAMENT TO MULTICULTURALISM

Zhu Ying

It was an orphanage about 150 years ago, and today its site is a tribute to the craftsmanship of the boys who lived there. Beyond an orphanage, it is one of the birthplaces of the *haipai* (Shanghai-style) culture, or the unique East-meets-West culture of Shanghai.

Tou-Se-We Museum in Xuhui District keeps alive a slice of the city's heritage, displaying unique multicultural items such as a woodcarving piece of the Virgin and Child dressed in ancient Chinese imperial robes and sitting on traditional furniture carved with dragons and clouds.

The name of the museum

comes from Shanghai dialect. Its site was originally a muddy, hilly section in the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). In 1864, the Society of Jesus in Shanghai purchased the land and established an orphanage for boys.

Some 10,000 youngsters spent their childhood in the orphanage, which provided both educational programs and vocational training.

They attended four years of primary school, followed by two years of middle school where they learned craftsmanship in arts classes at night. After that, they were offered two years of skills training before being assigned to workshops for painting,