

Honolulu Museum of Art

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‘DORIS DUKE’S SHANGRI LA: ARCHITECTURE, LANDSCAPE, AND ISLAMIC ART’ OPENS FEB 12

Exhibition highlights traditional works from across the Islamic World as well as art by contemporary artists inspired by Shangri La

WHAT: Doris Duke’s Shangri La: Architecture, Landscape, and Islamic Art

WHEN: Feb. 12-June 7, 2015

WHERE: Honolulu Museum of Art, 900 Beretania St., Honolulu

INFO: 532-8700, www.honolulumuseum.org (publishable)

High-res images available on request.

HONOLULU, HAWAII (Dec. 5, 2014)—The Honolulu Museum of Art presents *Doris Duke’s Shangri La: Architecture, Landscape, and Islamic Art* February 12 to June 7, 2015. The exhibition showcases objects of Islamic art from the spectacular Honolulu home of philanthropist and art collector Doris Duke (1912-1993) and new works by eight contemporary artists of Islamic background, all of whom have participated in Shangri La’s artist in residency program.

The works from Duke’s personal collection are being shown outside of Shangri La for the first time, in an exhibition that was organized on the centenary of her birth. After travelling nationally for two years, the show ends its journey in the objects’ “home”—Honolulu. Large-scale, newly commissioned photographs by Tim Street-Porter establish the context of the legendary five-acre property of Shangri La.

Open to the public under the auspices of the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art (DDFIA), Shangri La today maintains a collection of some 2,500 objects. With the estate able to accommodate approximately 20,000 visitors a year, the exhibition *Doris Duke’s Shangri La* is an extraordinary opportunity for thousands more to experience what guest curators Donald Albrecht and Tom Mellins call the “inventive synthesis” of architecture, landscape, and Islamic art that Duke achieved. In addition, the exhibition is a must-see even for those who have visited the Diamond Head property—most of the works in the show are not on view at Shangri La.

Honolulu Museum of Art

900 S Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96814
808-532-8700

www.honolulumuseum.org

Honolulu Museum of Art
Spalding House
2411 Makiki Heights Drive

Honolulu Museum of Art
First Hawaiian Center
999 Bishop Street

Honolulu Museum of Art
School
1111 Victoria Street

Honolulu Museum of Art
Doris Duke Theatre
Entrance on Kinau Street

Shangri La is also the site of scholar-in-residence and artist-in-residence programs. The contemporary works in *Doris Duke's Shangri La*, made in a variety of media and reflecting the mix of cultures at Shangri La, are by Ayad Alkadhi (b. 1971 in Iraq, lives and works in New York), Zakariya Amataya (b. 1975 in Thailand, lives and works in Bangkok), Afroz Amighi (b. 1974 in Iran, lives and works in New York), Shezad Dawood (b. 1974 in London, lives and works in London), Emre Hüner (b. 1977 in Turkey, lives and works in Amsterdam and Istanbul), Walid Raad (b. 1967 in Lebanon, lives and works in New York), Shahzia Sikander (b. 1969 in Pakistan, lives and works in New York), and Mohamed Zakariya (b. 1942 in the U.S., lives and works in Arlington, Virginia).

These contemporary works reflect each artist's response to Shangri La's hybrid of Islamic tradition and 20th-century modernism.

Situated among five acres of interlocking, terraced gardens and pools overlooking the Pacific Ocean and Honolulu's Diamond Head, Shangri La powerfully reflects Duke's aesthetic passions. Seamlessly integrating modern architecture, tropical landscape, and art from places throughout the Islamic world, the home incorporates unique architectural features such as carved marble doorways; decorated screens known as *jali* in Hindi; gilt and coffered ceilings and floral ceramic tiles. The interiors weave together artifacts such as silk textiles, jewel-toned chandeliers, and rare ceramics, many collected during her 1935 honeymoon around the world.

Duke continued for the rest of her life to commission and acquire new pieces from Muslim regions specifically for Shangri La. The installation reveals the travel and research that led to the creation of Shangri La; the process of its design; the atmosphere of life on the property during the nearly 60 years in which Doris Duke collected, commissioned, and lived amid the art; and the ways in which its beauty and fusion of cultures continue to inspire artists today.

"We're delighted to be exhibiting Shangri La at the Honolulu Museum of Art," says Deborah Pope, Executive Director of Shangri La. "Doris Duke's encounters with the Islamic world were transformative and Shangri La is her paean to the places and traditions she loved—a story told in many voices and from many perspectives in this exhibition and the accompanying book. Duke recognized Shangri La's fluid identity, paying homage to a pan-Islamic world while simultaneously embracing modern style and innovation. Those juxtapositions and paradoxes are the essence of Shangri La, part of what makes it so uniquely beautiful and so provocative and intriguing today."

EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

The art and objects on loan from Shangri La, ranging in date from the early first millennium B.C.E. to the 21st century and spanning Spain, North Africa, Central and South Asia and the Middle East, include:

- **ceramic vessels and tiles** from 11th–20th century Iran, including a star tile with phoenix from the Ilkhanid period, a molded bottle with a courtly scene from the Safavid period and a mosaic lunette from Isfahan commissioned for Shangri La in 1938
- **inlaid wood and mother of pearl furniture** from Spain, Syria, Iran, and India, including a large pair of elaborately carved doors crafted in Northern India in the 19th century
- **textiles such as Egyptian tent panels** and Ottoman Empire silk velvets
- **intricately beaded Turkish bindalli wedding dresses** and 19th-century clothing
- **enameled gold and ruby bracelets**, necklaces and earrings from Mughal India.

The contemporary work responding to modern-day Shangri La includes:

- giant projections by Shahzia Sikander that capture the paradox of Shangri La, a place created by an American woman and filled with items from many Muslim countries;
- lantern-like metal sculptures in the shape of missiles and rockets, evoking a sense of both violence and opulence, by Afruz Amighi
- a video installation by Emre Hüner capturing the hidden details of Shangri La, past and present
- calligraphic works by Mohamed Zakariya, inspired by the physical landscape of Shangri La and its setting on the ocean
- a poem by Zakariya Amataya, reflecting the influences of both Southeast Asian Muslim culture and American Beat poetry
- conceptual art by Walid Raad exploring the shadows and reflections of Islamic art
- a mixed-media work by Ayad Alkadhi that explores themes of immigration and displacement
- a textile painting by Shezad Dawood inspired by the unreality of Shangri La and its network of references

Today's Shangri La is brought to life in the exhibition through breathtaking large-scale photographs by Tim Street-Porter. One of the world's most celebrated photographers of the built environment—and a trained architect in his own right—Street-Porter has brilliantly captured both the overall splendor of the spaces at Shangri La and a multitude of their details: the unfolding of views through ornately tiled doorways, the glow of hanging lamps under richly carved ceilings, the play of light through intricate grilled windows and the opening of framed vistas toward gardens and ocean. Documenting the inspiration for

Shangri La and telling the story of its creation, the exhibition presents a trove of historic photographs, drawings, films and mementos.

These include:

- a perspective drawing for Shangri La's entrance foyer by designer René Martin of Morocco
- historic photographs of the playhouse as built, accompanied by photographs and drawings of its design source in Isfahan, the 17th-century Chehul Situn
- film of Duke's travels in Morocco, Egypt and Iran in 1938, with detailed footage of the historic buildings that influenced the design of Shangri La
- a personal scrapbook belonging to James Cromwell, Doris Duke's husband, of the honeymoon trip around the world that inspired the creation of Shangri La

SHANAMEH: THE EPIC OF THE PERSIAN KINGS

April 2-July 26, 2015

During *Doris Duke's Shangri La*, the Islamic art center's residency program welcomes Iranian filmmaker and graphic designer Hamid Rahmanian. As part of the residency, the Honolulu Museum of Art is partnering with DDFIA to hold *Shahnameh: The Epic of the Persian Kings*, an exhibition of Rahmanian's innovative illustrations of the *Shahnameh*, or *Epic of the Persian Kings*, one of the great classics of world literature. Consisting of some 50,000 verses, the *Shahnameh* was composed by the poet Ferdowsi in the late 10th to early 11th centuries, but its origins trace back much earlier, and it follows the history of the Persian empire from its mythical origins to the end of the Sassanian period in the 7th century.

In 2013, after thousands of hours of work over more than five years, Rahmanian published a critically acclaimed newly illustrated edition of the *Shahnameh*, reviving once again its significance for a contemporary audience. Intended to make the epic accessible to a new generation of readers, the bold, dynamic illustrations seamlessly update the traditional aesthetics of historic *Shahnameh* imagery. Rahmanian brilliantly took 15th- to 19th-century Iranian, Mughal Indian, and Ottoman miniature paintings as his source material, transforming them through digital editing into an entirely novel way of illustrating the text.

The exhibition is part of a larger series of events promoting arts and culture from the Islamic world, presented in conjunction with *Doris Duke's Shangri La: Architecture, Landscape and Islamic Art*.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

In addition to the museum's ongoing schedule of docent-led tours, special programming for *Doris Duke's Shangri La* includes lectures and panel discussions and residencies and performances by visiting artists.

For events at Doris Duke Theatre: Tickets for ticketed events can be purchased at honolulumuseum.org; no reservations are required for free events.

For events at Shangri La: Space at Shangri La is limited and programs fill to capacity quickly. Advance registration is required. Guests can sign up for email announcements and see an event calendar at www.shangrilahawaii.org. Online registration opens approximately two weeks prior to each event.

Lecture: Ganzeer | There's an Elephant in Every Room

Feb 12 • 4pm • Doris Duke Theatre • Free

Egyptian street artist Ganzeer (“bicycle chain”), who emerged as a galvanizing force during the Egyptian Revolution of 2011, highlights the social and political relevance of some of the artwork produced in Egypt over the last three years and why it frightens Egypt's newest leader, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. Ganzeer also explains why you don't need a crisis as obvious as Egypt's to create relevant art.

Lecture: Deborah Pope | Reimagining Shangri La: How Doris Duke Made and Remade her Honolulu Home

Feb 19 • 4pm • Doris Duke Theatre • Free

Deborah Pope, executive director of Shangri La, traces the evolution of Shangri La from Doris Duke's inspirational travels in India and the Middle East to the design and building of her modernist estate with its many references to Islamic architecture. For more than 50 years, the house evolved to accommodate a growing collection and a changing vision of the most private of retreats to a place for learning about Islamic arts and cultures. Question and answer to follow lecture.

Deborah Pope is the founding executive director of Shangri La, former residence of heiress Doris Duke (1912-1993) and now a center of Islamic art. Since 2000 she has overseen the restoration of the late 1930s architecture, research, cataloging and conservation of the collections and the development of programs to improve public understanding of Islamic arts and cultures. A life-long resident of O'ahu, she has worked in Hawai'i museums for more than 35 years.

Lecture: Ayad Alkadhi | Islamic Calligraphy and Design in Contemporary Art

Feb 28 • 4pm • Doris Duke Theatre • Free

Traditional Islamic calligraphy and design have found a new voice through the practice of many contemporary Middle Eastern artists. The presence of calligraphy and design in some of these works is used as a form of expression quite different from its original

purpose of literal communication and decoration (Islamic design and arabesque). Instead, its presence is used as a bridge to link past and present, a bridge to link contemporary thought to heritage and culture.

Alkhadi, a previous Shangri La artist in residence, will talk about the work of a number of contemporary artists whose art employs calligraphy and design in exciting, innovative ways, as well as some of his favorite examples of calligraphy and design from the DDFIA permanent collection, and how these examples inspired some of his recent work.

Born and raised in Baghdad, Alkadhi is now based in New York. His work focuses on cultural and political topics of Iraq and the Middle East. His use of Arabic newspaper on mixed-media canvases, as well as his use of calligraphy, connects elements of traditional medium to contemporary art. The collision produces images that ultimately express the artist's perceived existence at the crux of East and West polarities.

The Power Within: The Love Story of Mehrunissa and Khurram

March 13 • 7:30 p.m. • Doris Duke Theatre • \$15 • tickets available at honoluluuseum.org

March 14 • 5 p.m. • Shangri La • \$40 • includes buffet dinner

One of the greatest love stories of Mughal history is interpreted through dance, spoken word, music and poetry in an original performance by Shangri La artists-in-residence Dipankar Mukherjee and Krithika Rajagopalan. Mukherjee is creative director of the Pangea World Theatre, Minneapolis. Rajagopalan is creative director and principle dancer of the Natya Dance Theatre, Chicago.

In the Footsteps of Babur: Musical Encounters from the Lands of the Mughals

April 29 • 7:30 p.m. • Doris Duke Theatre • \$15, \$12 museum members

May 2 • 5 p.m. • Shangri La • \$40 • includes buffet dinner

Inspired by visual images and literary descriptions of exuberant music making in the Mughal courts, the Aga Khan Music Initiative brings together musicians from Afghanistan, India and Tajikistan to create new sounds by merging their talents, traditions, and musical instruments.

ACCOMPANYING BOOK

Exhibition guest curators Donald Albrecht and Tom Mellins have edited the accompanying 232-page book *Doris Duke's Shangri La: A House in Paradise*, published in September 2012 by Skira/Rizzoli. The book features a preface by Deborah Pope, Executive Director of Shangri La and a portfolio of photographs by Tim Street-Porter. It also contains essays by the editors about Shangri La's design and construction; by Linda Komaroff (Curator of Islamic Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art) about Duke's collecting in the greater

context of Islamic art collections in the United States; by Sharon Littlefield (former Curator, Shangri La) about the relationship of the collection to the architecture; and by Keelan Overton (Curator of Islamic Art, Shangri La) about the work Duke commissioned for Shangri La. The book is available at the Honolulu Museum of Art Shop for \$55.

Where the exhibition has travelled

Museum of Arts and Design, New York City (September 7, 2012-February 17, 2013)

Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach (March 16–July 15, 2013)

Nasher Museum of Art, Duke University (August 29, 2013–January 5, 2014)

University of Michigan Museum of Art (January 25–May 4, 2014)

Nevada Museum of Art (May 31–September 7, 2014)

Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery (October 23–December 28, 2014)

Doris Duke's Shangri La is presented with the support of the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art.

About Shangri La

www.shangrilahawaii.org

Shangri La was conceived by the 23-year-old Doris Duke in 1935, after her honeymoon with James Cromwell brought her through Muslim countries for the first time and concluded with an extended stay in Hawai'i. Deeply impressed by the cultures she had encountered, and inspired to create a haven for the Islamic art she had collected during those travels, she commissioned a home in Honolulu to be designed by Marion Sims Wyeth (1889-1982). Wyeth was known for his work on many of the notable Palm Beach mansions (including the exterior of the Marjorie Merriweather Post estate, Mar-a-Lago) and was later to design the Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach. Taking an active role in developing the plans for Shangri La, Doris Duke intended the architecture to be influenced by the Islamic artworks and artifacts she had collected, and envisioned a growing collection that would be shaped in turn by the architecture.

Three historic buildings by Wyeth occupy the five-acre property. The collection ranges from pre-Islamic material to early 20th century commissions and is particularly strong in material from the 17th through 20th centuries and in ceramic tiles and vessels.

Shangri La was opened to the public in November 2002 as a center for Islamic arts and culture. It is owned and operated by the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, which Doris Duke created in her will to promote the study, understanding, and preservation of Islamic art and culture. DDFIA is an operating foundation supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Shangri La offers public tours, presents lectures, performances and other special programs at the property, and since 2004 has

maintained scholar-in-residence and artist-in-residence programs on site. DDFIA also supports the use of the arts and media to increase Americans' understanding of Muslim cultures through the New York-based Building Bridges Program.

About Doris Duke on the Centenary of Her Birth

Born on November 22, 1912 in New York City, Doris Duke was the only child of John Buchanan (J.B.) Duke, a founder of the American Tobacco Company and Duke Energy Company. Upon his death in 1925, his fortune was divided between Doris, who was then only 12 years old, and the Duke Endowment—a foundation he established to serve the people of the Carolinas. Intelligent, daring, and independent, Doris Duke used her wealth to pursue her personal interests, many of which were considered unconventional during the period but today reveal her prescience as a free-thinking adventurer. Among other things, she was an environmentalist long before it was fashionable; a war correspondent in Italy during World War II; a horticulturist who bred a new hybrid of orchid; a bold experimenter who learned to surf before the sport was widely known outside of Hawai'i; and an early funder of AIDS research. Doris Duke's abundant interests also extended to foreign cultures. She developed a particular fascination with the societies and art of the Islamic world. On her many travels through these regions, she acquired countless treasures, most of which are now on display at Shangri La. In addition to collecting and commissioning art, she was both a patron and a participant of the performing arts, actively pursuing forms such as jazz piano and composition as well as modern dance—which she studied with celebrated choreographer Martha Graham.

A lifelong philanthropist, Doris Duke also contributed to a variety of public causes, including medical research and child welfare. When she was just 21, she established a foundation called Independent Aid through which she gave away the equivalent of hundreds of millions in today's dollars—often as anonymous contributions. At age 56, she then established the Newport Restoration Foundation (NRF) to save the rapidly disappearing 18th-century architecture in Newport, Rhode Island. Finally, through her will, she established her ongoing legacy by calling for the creation of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF), which has to date awarded more than \$1 billion in grants. (www.ddcf.org).

About the Honolulu Museum of Art

One of the world's premier art museums, the Honolulu Museum of Art presents international caliber special exhibitions and features a collection that includes Hokusai, van Gogh, Gauguin, Monet, Picasso and Warhol, as well as traditional Asian and Hawaiian art. Located in two of Honolulu's most beautiful buildings, visitors enjoy two cafés, gardens, and films and concerts at the theater.

In 2011, The Contemporary Museum gifted its assets and collection to the Honolulu Academy of Arts and in 2012, the combined museum changed its name to the Honolulu Museum of Art.

Locations:

Honolulu Museum of Art: 900 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu Museum of Art Spalding House: 2411 Makiki Heights Drive
Honolulu Museum of Art School: 1111 Victoria Street
Honolulu Museum of Art at First Hawaiian Center: 999 Bishop Street
Honolulu Museum of Art Doris Duke Theatre: 901 Kinau Street (at rear of museum)

Website: www.honolulumuseum.org
Phone: 808-532-8700

Hours:

Honolulu Museum of Art: Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sun. 1-5 p.m.; closed Monday.
The Honolulu Museum of Art Café: lunch only, Tues.-Sat., 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Honolulu Museum of Art Spalding House: Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sun. noon-4 p.m.
Spalding House Café: lunch only, Tues.-Sat. 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Admission (permits entry to both museums on the same day):
\$10 general admission; children 17 and under are free.

Admission is free to: shop, cafés, Robert Allerton Art Library, and the art school

Free days: First Wednesday of every month

Bank of Hawaii Family Sunday: The museum is free to the public on the third Sunday of the month, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., courtesy Bank of Hawaii.