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# Rethinking Place in South Asian and Islamic Art, 1500–Present

Edited by Deborah S. Hutton and Rebecca M. Brown



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# 8 Shangri La

The archive-museum and the spatial topologies of Islamic art history

Sugata Ray

In 1935, the American heiress, art collector, and philanthropist Doris Duke (1912-93) embarked on a world tour that took her to a number of countries in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Among the many countries she visited on this tour was India, where she spent over two months traveling to Bombay (now Mumbai), Calcutta (now Kolkata), Delhi, Agra, Baroda (now Vadodara), and Jaipur. The visit left a deep impression on the twenty-two-year-old Duke. As her then-husband James H.R. Cromwell wrote in a letter to his mother, "While we were in Agra Pete [Doris Duke] had fallen in love with the Taj Mahal and all the beautiful marble tile, with their lovely floral designs with some precious stones." Indeed, Duke's visit to the seventeenth-century mausoleum in Agra, built by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan (1592-1666), led her to commission a new bedroom suite for an estate in Palm Beach, Florida, where she and her husband were planning to live upon their return to the United States. The suite was finally installed in 1938, in a new residence in Honolulu, Hawai'i. Duke's residence in Hawai'i would eventually become a museum of Islamic art, one of the few museums in the United States dedicated specifically for the "study and understanding of Middle Eastern Art and Culture."2

Today, visitors to Shangri La descend a long driveway shielded by dense foliage and first encounter the museum from an open-air courtyard. The low-lying façade leads into the foyer of the museum ornamented with a painted ceiling, colored glass windows, and a large geometric screen facing the central courtyard. Iznik tiles from Turkey cover the walls while nineteenth-century copper alloy basins from Iran, pierced metal lamps, and inlaid wood Syrian chests create a mise-en-scène of visual symmetry. Each of the subsequent rooms are thematically decorated, placed around the central courtyard, whose adjoining walls are covered in late thirteenth- through early twentieth-century Persian tilework. Some of the thematic rooms in the museum include the Damascus Room decorated with eighteenth-century wood paneling from Syria; the Syrian Room where visitors encounter nineteenth-century Persian and Bohemian glass, Ottoman silk velvets, Iznik ceramics, and eighteenth-century Syrian woodwork; the Mihrab Room with a magnificent 1265 luster *mihrab* (architectural niche) from Veramin, Iran; and the Mughal Suite inspired by seventeenth-century Islamic architecture from South Asia.

The museum itself is set in a carefully designed terraced garden that leads to the oceanfront. Here, one encounters the Mughal Garden, located off the entrance and oriented along the property's east—west axis. Water channels with lotus-style fountain-heads, four-lobed pools, and parterres in white stone with scented trees and colorful

flowers inspired by seventeenth-century Mughal gardens, certainly, provide a  $\mathrm{rem}_{ark}$  able visual juxtaposition to the deep blue Pacific Ocean only meters away from  $\mathrm{th}_{e}$  property.

By situating Doris Duke's museum within a history of the twentieth-century display of Islamic art in the West, this chapter rethinks the archive-museum as a space of knowledge-production. Indeed, over the past two decades, critical histories have questioned the conceit of the archive-museum as a panoptical repository of documents and objects. While this turn in history-writing has engendered productive ethnographies of the archive-as-subject, the spatial topologies that make the archive have, however, received scant attention. My chapter proposes that the turn to the archive-as-subject has to account for a spatial history of the archive as well. Reading Shangri La – the philanthropist Doris Duke's museum of Islamic art – as an archive-museum produced through interplay between architectural arrangements and objects housed in that space, I suggest that the history of the archive is also a history of spatialities that delineates visibility as a form of culture.

# The making of an archive-museum: Shangri La in Hawai'i

From its early twentieth-century origin, Doris Duke's Shangri La occupied a curious, albeit unusual, place within the transcultural histories of the display and collection of Islamic art. Designed by the Delhi-based British architect Francis B. Blomfield and fabricated by craftsmen from Agra, the marble panels inlaid with semiprecious stones and lattice screens used in Duke's suite in Shangri La were inspired by the Taj Mahal's delicate architectural design (Figure 8.1). As Cromwell described in his 1935 letter to his mother, "She got her cue from the Taj Mahal, and wanted to have her bed-room done in tiles like those in the Taj Mahal."3 Duke's marble bedroom and bath, with its flowering plants in pietra dura, marked the beginning of a long commitment to collecting Islamic art. The history of this particular commission from its inception in Agra to its fruition as the Mughal Suite in a new home on the island of O'ahu - has led scholars to read Duke's interest in Islamic art and architecture as representative of the crafts revival imperative of the early twentieth century.4 This inference is certainly accurate. In a rare autobiographical article written for Town & Country magazine in 1947, Duke herself acknowledged the importance of the Mughal Suite.<sup>5</sup> Reiterating the significance of this commission in stimulating her career as a collector and patron of Islamic art, Duke confessed that her new home in Hawai'i was built around the Taj-inspired marble panels and lattice screens that she had commissioned in 1935.6

A number of other commissions and purchases followed, and, over the next five decades, Duke acquired a substantive collection of paintings, textiles, and jewelry to decorate Shangri La, her new home on Oʻahu and her private retreat from "the constant attention accorded her by reporters and photographers in other places." As the only child of the tobacco magnate James Buchanan Duke (1856–1925), Doris Duke had inherited the considerable family fortune after her father's death. Subsequently christened "the richest girl in the world," Duke spent many of her early years fleeing from tabloids and the public eye. Indeed, early twentieth-century newspaper reports suggest that Duke's remarkable estate in Hawai'i was her private world, literally a Shangri La, a remote, secluded arcadia that allowed her to escape from both the paparazzi and the ostentatious world of the American aristocracy.

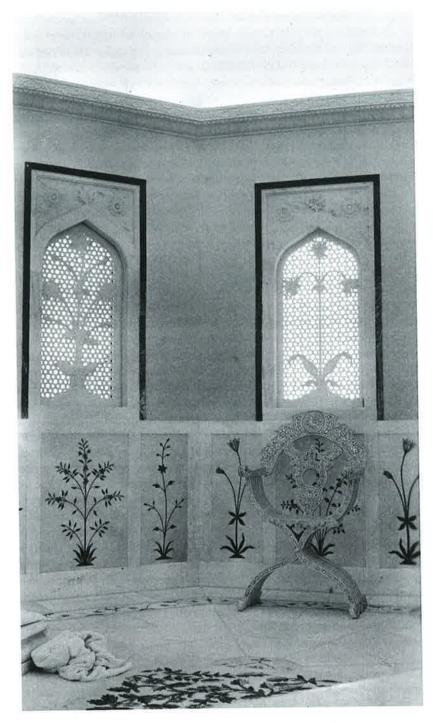


Figure 8.1 The Mughal Suite, Shangri La, Honolulu, Hawaiʻi, March–April, 1939 Source: Shangri La Historical Archives, Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, Honolulu, Hawaiʻi.

That the publication of James Hilton's best-selling novel Lost Horizon (1933) and the release of Frank Capra's 1937 film based on the novel had a direct influence on Duke is undeniable. At the time of its construction, the Duke residence in Hawaii had garnered the nickname "Hale Kapu" (literally "Forbidden House"), an epither bestowed on it by local newspapers. It was only in 1938, a year after Capra's film was released, that "Shangri La" was adopted as the official name for the Duke residence.9 In Hilton's novel, the secret Tibetan lamasery of Shangri-La was not merely a utopian space hidden from the world, but also a museum where all of the wisdom of the human race was carefully collected. 10 However, unlike those in conventional museums, the priceless books, works of art, and musical scores by Mozart and Rameau accumulated by a Belgian Capuchin missionary in Hilton's Shangri-La were not for public viewing. Rather, as Thomas Richards notes, the hidden lamasery of Shangri-La was imagined by the novelist as an archive-museum, an "unmapped library where a complete knowledge lies in a state of suspended animation against the day when it can again be brought to life to reanimate state control over knowledge amidst a world in ruins."11 The two estates - one in a lost valley in Tibet and the other in Hawai'i - thus shared the same name, both alluding to a utopian cloistered archive, hidden from the public gaze.

The word archive, originating from the Greek arkheion, a home or domicile, is also, as Derrida reminds us, a "dwelling, this place where they [the archives] dwell permanently."12 The archive thus comes into being through the act of domestication, the inhabitation of the privileged space of the home or the arkheion, marking the "institutional passage from the private to the public."13 It is in this passage - the placing and the spacing of the archive - that the archive reaches not only back to the past but also to the future. The promise of the archive (and the archivist), Derrida suggests, is "an affirmation of the future to come."14 Indeed, the residents of the Tibetan lamasery Shangri-La saw themselves as custodians of an encyclopedic archive-museum held in trust for a future when "a new world stirring in the ruins, stirring clumsily but in hopefulness" would seek "its lost and legendary treasures." 15 Put differently, for the residents of Hilton's Shangri-La, the imagination of a "future to come" lay in the gift of their archive, representative of the greatest of human achievements in art, music, and literature, to a post-apocalyptic world rising from the ruins of impending global war. Duke, on the other hand, did not share this ambitious aspiration and instead imagined her Shangri La as a private refuge. It was only in 1965 that she made plans to transform it into a center for the study of art and culture.16 It is in this that Duke's Shangri La appears to have differed from its namesake, the Shangri-La hidden behind the mountains in the valley of the Blue Moon. The eventual passage from private to public, from the home to the archive, was, however, already implicit in Duke's Shangri La from the moment of its conception, my chapter demonstrates.

This, then, leads to my primary contention. The conceit of the archive-museum as a stable epistemological system, a panoptical repository of documents and objects for the promised "future to come," has been questioned by critical histories in the past two decades. The move toward reading the "archive-as-subject" (ethnographies of the archive), rather than the "archive-as-source" (the study of objects and documents housed in an archive), has allowed us to think of the archive-museum as more than a space of knowledge accumulation. The archive-museum has emerged in scholar-ship as a site that is central to both the historical and historiographical production of knowledge.<sup>17</sup> While this turn in history writing has led us to rethink the politics of the

archive itself, the architectural and spatial imperatives that produce the archive have,

however, received scant attention.

My chapter proposes that the turn to the archive-as-subject must adequately account for a spatial history of the archive. As Derrida's etymological reading of the archive reminds us, the arkheion was the home in which the archive dwelled. It is precisely this topological nature of the archive - the spatial topology through which the archive is both shaped and shapes - to which this chapter draws attention. Could one read the structuring of Duke's Shangri La as an archive-museum with a particular spatial topology? How did this topological imaginary, in turn, determine Duke's collecting strategies? Reading Shangri La as an archive-museum produced through the interplay between spatial arrangements and the objects and artworks housed in that space, this chapter reconsiders the archive as a space of knowledge-production. I suggest that the history of the archive is also a history of specific spatialities that delineate visibility as a form of culture.

# Technics of display: genealogical antecedents

The genealogies of the technics of display deployed in Doris Duke's museum can be traced back to early twentieth-century exhibitions of Islamic art in Europe and the United States, in particular the 1910 Meisterwerke muhammedanischer Kunst (Masterworks of Muhammadan Art) exhibition in Munich, the Islamic art galleries at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the 1931 International Exhibition of Persian Art in London. As scholars have suggested, the mobilization of new strategies of installation and display in Munich, New York, and London provided an optical apparatus for both seeing and narrativizing Islamic art in the early twentieth century. 18 The curators of the 1910 Meisterwerke exhibition in Munich, for instance, used new forms of installation design to strategically unmoor Islamic art from contemporaneous Orientalist readings that presented non-Western objects through narratives of "fairytale splendor and the attitude of a bazaar" (Figure 8.2).19

In turn, the Munich exhibition prompted new display aesthetics that became central to reconfiguring the manner in which Islamic art would henceforth be presented to metropolitan audiences in Europe and the United States. Placing Duke's Shangri La within this history of the twentieth-century display of Islamic art, this chapter presents a method of reading the archive-museum as a simultaneous product and effect of spatial design. My aim is to examine the ways in which the installation design and the architecture of the museum can transform the meanings of specific objects and artifacts. Simultaneously, I examine how displayed objects shape the space of the archive-museum. In doing so, I map intersecting processes of collecting, designing, curating, archiving, and exhibiting that effect, and are effected by, the discipline of

art history.

The 1910 Meisterwerke muhammedanischer Kunst exhibition of Islamic art at Theresienhöhe Park in Munich emerges as a key moment in this history. Organized by Friedrich Sarre (1865-1945), the honorary curator of the Persian-Islamic department of the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum in Berlin, the exhibition included over 3,600 objects paintings, textiles, carpets, ceramics, and metalwork - borrowed by Sarre and his cocurator, the Swedish scholar and collector Fredrik R. Martin, from approximately 250 international collections. Although the 1910 exhibition had been preceded by a series of Islamic art shows in London (1876, 1885); Vienna (1891); Paris (1893, 1903);

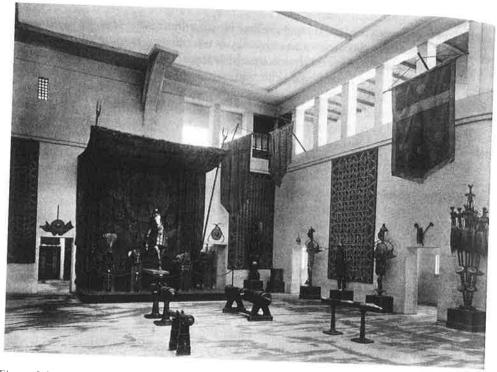


Figure 8.2 Room 72, Meisterwerke muhammedanischer Kunst, Munich, 1910

Source: Reproduced from Friedrich Sarre and Fredrik R. Martin, Die Ausstellung von Meisterwerken muhammedanischer Kunst, Munich: F. Bruckmann A.-G., 1912, 1.3. Artwork in the public domain; photograph provided by The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Stockholm (1897); Berlin (1899); and Leipzig (1900), Meisterwerke muhammedanischer Kunst was the largest and most comprehensive display of Islamic art to date.<sup>20</sup> In addition to the exhibition's sheer scale, its installation emerges as significant to a new twentieth-century approach to displaying and studying Islamic art.

Drawing on the Vienna Secession artist Josef Hoffman's modernist display aesthetics, the Munich exhibition presented artwork, carpets, and weaponry in single or double rows, set against neutral backdrops to accentuate the objects on display (see Figure 8.2). Individual works were placed on pedestals to further highlight their significance as "Meisterwerks." The exhibition thus made a radical departure from nineteenth-century expositions that presented Islamic art in settings meant to replicate the chaotic, colorful spaces of the Oriental bazaar. As Sarre's preface to the exhibition's commemorative publication emphatically declared:

A certain austere attitude of the rooms, the absence of coloristic effects and phantastic group arrangements, the effort to let works of art stand alone due to their quality, all this may have come along somewhat unprecedentedly. It resulted from a desire to go against the popular perception of Oriental art, against the fairytale splendor and the attitude of a bazaar.<sup>21</sup>

Indeed, this new technic of installation received international critical recognition. Artists such as Henri Matisse and Pierre-Auguste Renoir traveled to Munich to see the exhibition. Wassily Kandinsky reviewed the show in the Russian literary and visual arts journal Apollon.22 Roger E. Fry, the celebrated art critic and founding member of the Bloomsbury Group, declared, "It would be hard to exaggerate the importance of this exhibition for those who are interested in the history not alone of Oriental but

of European art."23

The reverberation of this new modernist display aesthetic was felt on both sides of the Atlantic. In the United States, it was the display of the Islamic art collections of Charles L. Freer, Edward C. Moore, Henry O. Havemeyer, and Henry Walters that revealed the significance of the 1910 exhibition in pioneering a new approach to the display of Islamic art, one that attempted to provoke the viewer's affective or aesthetic appreciation of specific objects on display. For example, the jeweler and silversmith Edward C. Moore's 1891 bequest of approximately 1,500 objects of metal and glasswork had been put on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1892 (Figure 8.3).24 Within a year of the Munich exhibition, Moore's bequest, along with the museum's growing collection of Islamic art, was moved to a new wing dedicated specifically to art from the Islamic world (Figure 8.4).



Figure 8.3 The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Floor 2, Room 26), The Edward C. Moore Collection of Oriental Glass, 1907

Source: Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY.

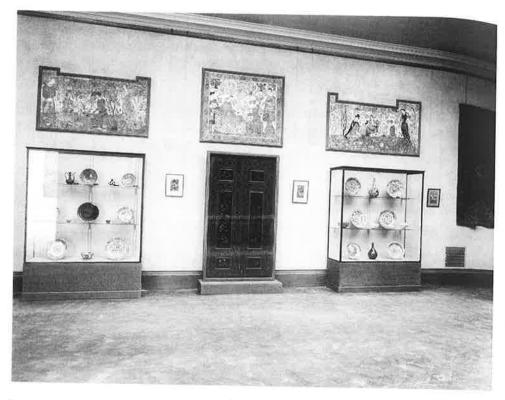


Figure 8.4 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, interior gallery view, Near Eastern Art – Persian Gallery, Location: Wing E, Gallery 14, 1912

Source: Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image source: Art Resource, NY.

Even a cursory comparison of two photographs of the Metropolitan Museum's Islamic art galleries reveals the transformation in display practices that occurred in the United States in this period. By 1912, the heavy wood vitrines initially used to exhibit the Moore collection had been replaced with modernist metal display cases produced by the museum's workshop. Simultaneously, the museum's curator of decorative arts, Wilhelm Valentiner, removed the dark velvet draperies that covered the walls of the gallery in favor of a neutral gray backdrop. Other strategies, such as the display of a select number of objects along with careful use of lighting to define and highlight form, further amplified the contemplative aesthetic generated by this installation strategy. Much like the 1910 Munich exhibition, the display at the Metropolitan engendered a formal aesthetic experience of Islamic art that eliminated contextual practices surrounding objects in situ.

Scholars have read the art history of the Vienna School, especially that of Josef Strzygowski (1862–1941), as pivotal to the early twentieth-century formation of an approach to Islamic art that eschewed ethnographic and contextual readings in favor of critical formalism.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, it was exhibitions such as *Meisterwerke muhammedanischer Kunst* and the display in the Metropolitan Museum's Islamic art gallery that gave concrete shape to art history's formalist concerns. Certainly, Strzygowski, along with his students at the University of Vienna, had played a key role in the development of formalism as an art historical methodology. Unlike earlier

contextual archaeologies, such as that of the Swiss scholar Max van Berchem (1863–1921), Strzygowski's 1901 Orient oder Rom, for instance, presented formalism as crucial to a comparative analysis of Islamic and Christian European art. However, along with the art history of the Vienna School, it was exhibition practices based on formal comparisons and visual taxonomies that unmoored Islamic art from the historicism

and contextualism of both archaeology and earlier Orientalisms.

Separating objects from their spatial contexts (imagined or otherwise), the neo-Kantian imperatives of this new museology lay in an introspective and intuitive study of form through the juxtaposition of objects from diverse geographical locations and historical moments. The 1912 display at the Metropolitan thus brought together early seventeenth-century Safavid painted ceramics, bequeathed by the Armenian antiquarian Dikran G. Kelekian (1868–1951), with nineteenth-century carpets, tiles, and paintings, foregrounding an abstract formal coherence in terms of motifs and patterns (see Figure 8.4). This tactical visual juxtaposition as a method of both archiving and art historical analysis was, I propose, an effect and product of the spatial layout and arrangement of the museum's gallery.

The creation of the concept of "Islamic art" through display strategies was, however, most powerfully articulated at the 1931 International Exhibition of Persian Art in London. Organized under the patronage of George VI of England and Reza Shah Pahlavi of Iran, the exhibition included a wide array of material, ranging from Achaemenid sculpture, Sasanian silver, ceramics, and mosaics to carpets, textiles, and manuscripts including the 1460 Bodleian Library Rubâiyât from which Edward Fitzgerald made his celebrated translation.<sup>27</sup> Yet again, the director and organizer of the exhibition, the American archaeologist and dealer Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969), used formal analogies to structure the display. The New York Times, in its review of the exhibition, noted that ceramics were used as "points of color focus" in the Gallery of

Honor to balance the adjacent display of carpets.<sup>28</sup>

Emerging from Pope's firm belief that visual form was intrinsically related to a "spiritual quality" based on cognitive and sensorial perception, the exhibition gave concrete shape to the curator's philosophical ruminations on color, line, and texture.<sup>29</sup> Yet, given popular interest in the 1931 exhibition, in part fueled by British newspaper reports interspersed with images of flying carpets and exotic dancers, it has become customary to read the *International Exhibition of Persian Art* as an Orientalist spectacle not very different from colonial expositions and nineteenth-century World's Fairs.<sup>30</sup> In effect, Pope's innovative installation strategy, his meditations on color and perception, as well as his commitment to the formalist art history of fin-de-siècle Vienna has been eclipsed in scholarship by reappraisals that see him merely as "the P. T. Barnum of Islamic art."<sup>31</sup>

The Second International Congress on Persian Art, held concurrently with the 1931 exhibition, however, makes Pope's intellectual aims clearly evident. Under the direction of Pope, the Congress invited renowned scholars of Islamic art, including Keppel A. C. Creswell, Ture J. Arne, and, most conspicuously, the Viennese art historian Josef Strzygowski. Strzygowski, who by then had made his Nazi sympathies and anti-Semitism public, gave a lecture on the formal relationship between European and Iranian architecture that purportedly revealed the Persian origins of "Aryan" art. The art critic Roger Fry, who had penned a laudatory review of the 1910 Munich exhibition, was also invited by Pope to write an essay for a publication that accompanied the exhibition. Pope's curatorial strategies had wide-ranging consequences for both the study and subsequent displays of Islamic art. Doris Duke, for instance, was in London during the 1931 International Exhibition of Persian Art. Given the

exhibition's extensive coverage in the British press, one assumes that Duke visited Burlington House. In the late 1930s, Pope would assist Duke in developing her own collection and facilitate a trip to the Middle East that drastically transformed the young collector's acquisition strategies. We thus see the imprint of the 1931 London International Exhibition of Persian Art in Shangri La from its very beginning.

### From London to Hawai'i

A 1937 sketch of the living room of Doris Duke's residence in Hawai'i by H. Drewry Baker, the Princeton-trained architect responsible for supervising the construction of Shangri La, shows a mural of the Maidan-i Naqsh-i Jahan in Isfahan, Iran, with the seventeenth-century Masjid-i Shah dominating the landscape (Figure 8.5). Models of the Masjid-i Shah had already appeared in Arthur Pope's exhibitions on a number of occasions. Not only had the curator included a wooden model of the portal of the Masjid-i Shah, designed by the British architect Arnold Silcock, in the 1931 exhibition in London, but the Safavid mosque also had been used as the central motif for the Persian pavilion at the 1926 Sesquicentennial International Exposition in Philadelphia. In London, the thirty-foot-tall model had received substantial popular acclaim, and images of the gate were repeatedly reproduced in London newspapers. A special supplement to the exhibition in the London Times even included an image of the model on its cover.<sup>33</sup>

Given Duke's familiarity with contemporaneous strategies of displaying Islamic art, it is not surprising to find her carefully weaving together the spatial design of Shangri La and the artwork to be displayed in that space. A black-and-white sketch by Baker, one of the early renderings of the design for the living room at Shangri La, shows a series of sculptures, most likely from China and Southeast Asia, on pedestals against the south wall of the room (Figure 8.6). Although Duke did not finally incorporate this arrangement, Baker's drawing attests to a careful consideration of objects and their display in relation to architectural space.<sup>34</sup> In the drawing, sculptures are interspersed with an Art Deco settee. The resultant effect is an austere space not dissimilar to the galleries of earlier Islamic art exhibitions in terms of spatial layout and display

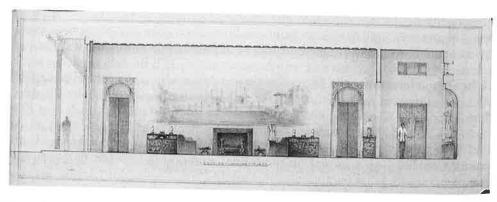


Figure 8.5 H. Drewry Baker, Wyeth & King, Drawing of an Unbuilt Scheme for the Living Room, Shangri La, Honolulu, Hawai'i, January 15, 1937

Source: Shangri La Historical Archives, Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, Honolulu, Hawaiʻi.

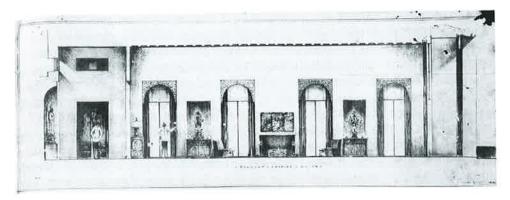


Figure 8.6 H. Drewry Baker, Wyeth & King, Living Room Section Looking South, Shangri La, Honolulu, Hawai'i, October 8, 1937

Source: Shangri La Historical Archives, Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, Honolulu, Hawai'i.

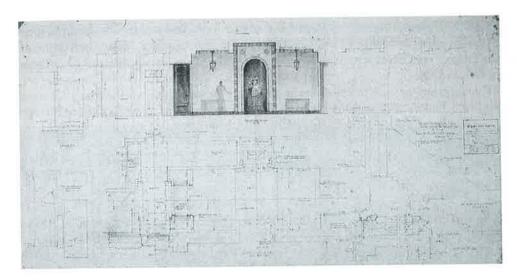


Figure 8.7 Marion Sims Wyeth, Wyeth & King, Architects, Sketch of the Guanyin Room (now the Mihrab Room), Shangri La, Honolulu, Hawai'i, December 15, 1937

Source: Shangri La Historical Archives, Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, Honolulu, Hawai'i.

technics. Much like the display of objects in the 1910 Munich exhibition, a backdrop and a pedestal carefully frame each sculpture. In keeping with the museum-like aesthetic, furniture in the room is limited to a single settee, perhaps to further facilitate an unobstructed contemplative gaze. Although this specific arrangement was not implemented, the careful ordering of space in relation to artwork demonstrated in the drawing would become characteristic of Shangri La's design.

In yet another drawing of an alcove, we see a late-fourteenth-century lacquer sculpture of the bodhisattva Guanyin purchased by Duke in October 1937 from Ching Tsai Loo, the Paris-based dealer of Chinese antiquities (Figure 8.7). Rendered within three

months of the purchase of the sculpture, Baker's sketch suggests that the display of the seated Guanyin in the alcove was part of the original architectural plan. A brief note from Duke affirms that the alcove was indeed designed with the sculpture in mind.35 Like the sculptures in the living room, the bodhisattva Guanyin was placed on a large pedestal and framed by a green backdrop. The design of the alcove was well in keeping with the living room's museum-like aesthetic. The space of Shangri La, then, has to be seen as more than an inert depository of artworks. Rather, Shangri La both actively

shaped and was shaped by Duke's growing art collection.

Without doubt, Duke's 1935 visit to India had sparked her interest in collecting art. Her acquisitions from this trip, however, reveal the absence of a coherent collecting strategy. Purchases on the trip included gold and silver brocades from Ganeshi Lall, an Agra-based dealer, and copper vessels, brass lamps, ashtrays, rugs, and household objects from the Jaipur-based S. Zoraster and Co.36 However, Ganeshi Lall's antiquities and jewelry store, established in 1845, provided important manuscripts and significant works of art to other international collectors and museums, At the behest of Edward D. Ross, the first director of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, the British Museum had purchased the celebrated Mughal painting Princes of the House of Timur (c. 1550-55, with additions from c. 1605 and 1628), often described as one of the largest and most significant of all Mughal paintings, from Lall in 1913.37 The Shangri La archive, on the other hand, confirms that Duke's purchases from the Agra-based dealer were largely limited to contemporary textiles.

The contours of a coherent collecting strategy emerged only in the late 1930s and paralleled Duke's personal involvement in the planning and construction of Shangri La. By the late 1930s and the early 1940s, Duke had marshaled an assemblage of advisors and dealers. Working closely with figures such as Pope; the Moroccan art dealer and designer René Martin; the Damascus-based antiquities firm Asfar & Sarkis; the Paris- and Tehran-based Iranian art dealer Ayoub Rabenou; Hagop Kevorkian, the New York-based dealer of Persian art; and New York University graduate student Mary Crane, Duke started acquiring significant examples of furniture, architectural tiles, paintings, and textiles from around the world. For instance, one of her most noteworthy purchases in this period was a 1265 luster mihrab from Veramin, Iran that she acquired from the New York-based dealer Kevorkian. That she competed with the Metropolitan Museum of Art to acquire the mihrab - one of six surviving Ilkhanid mibrabs and one of only two outside Iran - indicates a new interest in assembling key examples of art from around the world.38 Deliberately bringing together architecture and art in Shangri La, Duke installed this particular mihrab to keep, in her words, "the house in character."39

It was a 1938 trip to the Middle East facilitated by Arthur Pope that not only fundamentally transformed the aesthetics of Shangri La but also finally consolidated Duke's focus on Islamic art as the primary emphasis of her burgeoning collection. As the director of the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology (established in 1928), Pope wielded considerable influence in Iran, allowing him not only to organize the trip but also to arrange for Mary Crane, a graduate student at New York University who was working on her dissertation on Islamic textiles, to accompany Duke. The Iran excursion included visits to Persepolis, Shiraz, Isfahan, Tehran, Mashhad, and Tabriz among other key historical sites in the region. Duke returned to the United

States with a remarkable collection of Safavid tiles. With Crane's assistance, she also amassed a substantive archive of photographs and film footage of monuments in Iran, including the Chihil Sutun in Isfahan (c. 1647). These photographs, which demonstrate remarkable attention to tile patterns, architectural motifs, and decorative design, played an important role in Duke's future commissions, of which the guesthouse at Shangri La – based on the 1938 photographs of the Chihil Sutun – is a

significant example (Figure 8.8).40

While Duke's interest in reusing Islamic motifs in designing Shangri La has received considerable scholarly attention, her archive of photographs and film footage provokes another narrative, one that is entangled with the creation of early twentiethcentury Islamic art history and its exhibitionary orders. The 1910 Meisterwerke muhammedanischer Kunst exhibition in Munich, for instance, had led to the publication of a number of catalogs and books focusing on the objects on display. By the 1920s, photographs focusing specifically on the patterns and motifs that adorned the surfaces of structures and objects had become the preferred method of formalist art history. In process, the larger contexts of the structures were disregarded in favor of an archive of details that reduced each object or monument to its geometric essence. By extracting form from context, the art historian/archivist thus fabricated a universal, indeed cerebral, language of abstract design that provided a relation of general equivalence among disparate objects and monuments using the precision of the camera.



Figure 8.8 The Playhouse, Shangri La, Honolulu, Hawai'i Source: Photograph by the author.

Foremost among publications employing formalism as a technic of analysis was Pope's six-volume A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present, illustrated with 3,500 photographs. Duke possessed all six volumes, and her dealers in the Middle East and the United States corresponded extensively with Pope regarding the design of Shangri La. Indeed, it was Pope who introduced Duke to dealers such as Ayoub Rabenou and the Damascus-based firm of Asfar & Sarkis. In terms of the production of an archive of Islamic art, Pope and Duke's documentation projects in Iran were also closely interrelated. In addition to re-creating the Masjid-i Shah in Philadelphia and London, Pope was also the first American to extensively document monuments such as the Chihil Sutun and the Masjid-i Shah in Isfahan. Duke, too, spent much time at these sites, documenting in detail the tilework and decorative embellishments that adorned the structures.

In turn, Duke's archiving impulses significantly altered the aesthetics of Shangri La. Over the next few years, she both commissioned and acquired historical objects decorated with the motifs she had encountered and carefully recorded in Iran. It was this interest in Islamic tilework, palpably visible in her photographs of architectural decoration from Iran, that led her to acquire a large collection of ceramics and tiles in the late 1930s and the early 1940s, including the celebrated 1265 Veramin mihrab discussed earlier in the chapter. The detail-oriented formalism that had marked early twentieth-century art history and its exhibitionary practices had certainly inflected Doris Duke's incessant attention to archive, collect, and display the detail in Islamic art seen through tile panels, textile fragments, and architectural decoration. Duke herself acknowledged the connection between the environment of Shangri La and the artwork displayed there in her 1947 Town & Country article, in which she wrote that she "tried to keep the house in character, using original Near Eastern pieces."43 One could, then, read both the architecture of Shangri La and Duke's own emerging collection as intimately associated with her project of documenting Islamic form, patterns, and motifs. The photo library - an archiving practice that had gained particular popularity in the first decades of the twentieth century - thus gave material form to both the architecture and the collection at Shangri La.

# From art history to the museum

It was a desire to "keep the house in character" that prompted Doris Duke to construct a Mughal-style garden at Shangri La, designed on the basis of research on the 1642 Mughal Shalimar garden in Lahore conducted by the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Pakistan (Figure 8.9).<sup>44</sup> The Superintendent of Archaeology, West Pakistan Circle, had sent Duke photographs and plans of the Shalimar Garden in 1962, which were then used to redesign the space of the garden at Shangri La. Duke carefully reproduced the geometric patterns of the Shalimar brickwork. In 1969, she traveled to Kashmir herself to document the Mughal gardens in Srinagar. Although photographs from this particular documentation tour are now lost, archival evidence suggests that her trip was facilitated by the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University.<sup>45</sup> It is likely that Duke worked with Stella Kramrisch, the Viennese art historian and student of Strzygowski who was then teaching Indian art at the Institute, to plan this trip. The creation of the Mughal garden at Shangri La thus, indeed, reiterates the



Figure 8.9 The Mughal Garden, Shangri La, Honolulu, Hawai'i Source: Photograph by the author.

dominant role of detail-oriented formalist art history and its exhibitionary practices in the making of the museum space of Shangri La.

That the discursive spaces of the archive-museum in Honolulu, Hawai'i, came into being though a commitment to art history's methods, its vast collections of photographs, films, and reproductions of artworks, as well as its prescriptive apparatuses of framing objects, is perhaps best substantiated by stray references in Shangri La's archive itself. For instance, an early twentieth-century color reproduction of a folio from the Timurid prince Baysunghur's 1430 Shāhnāma in the museum's archive carries H. Drewry Baker's careful annotation: "This for dining room fret" (Figure 8.10).46 The manuscript, housed at the Golestan Palace Library, Tehran, had been first displayed in Europe in Pope's 1931 exhibition at Burlington House. Duke probably saw the manuscript during her visit to London in the same year. Subsequently, Baker, the architect responsible for supervising the construction of Shangri La, used the latticework decorating the pavilion in the fifteenth-century painting as a source for architectural decoration at Shangri La. Duke and Baker's engagement with reproductions from twentieth-century art history texts thus reveals a reciprocal relationship among exhibitionary practices, the archive of art history, and the spatial design of Shangri La. This reciprocity also allows us to reconsider the role of spatial design and archiving as fundamental to the making of the modern museum.

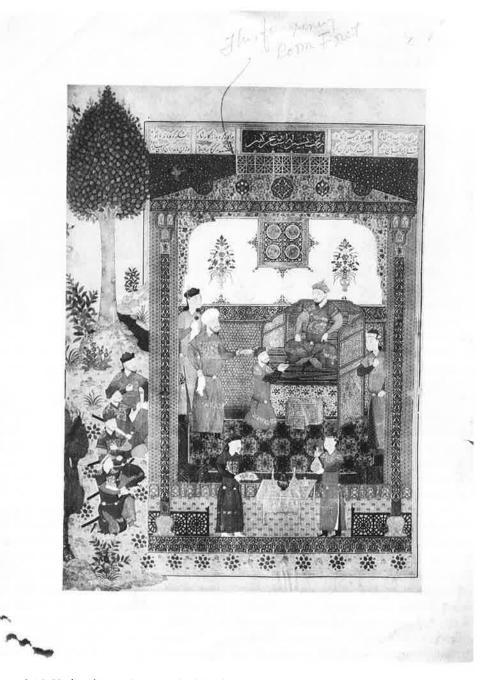


Figure 8.10 Undated reproduction of a folio from the Timurid prince Baysunghur's manuscript of the  $Sh\bar{a}hn\bar{a}ma$ , 1430, with annotation by H. Drewry Baker

Source: Shangri La Historical Archives, Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, Honolulu, Hawai'i.

Moving beyond analyses that focus solely on objects displayed in a museum, itself a legacy of earlier modernist art histories, an engagement with the spatiality of the archive-museum thus allows us to decipher the processes through which the museum emerged as a key site of knowledge production in the early twentieth century. Indeed, the use of motifs from a 1930s reproduction of a Timurid painting in designing the architecture of a museum only reiterates the relationships among the discipline of art history, architectural design, and museum praxis. While in the recent past the formalist frames of early twentieth-century museological and archival practices have been criticized as perilously disregarding the specific cultural contexts that generate particular expectations and narratives about design and motif, it is, nevertheless, difficult to ignore the role of exhibitions and modern museums as sites that were much more than mere spaces of disinterested knowledge accumulation. That the history of the archive is also a history of spatialities that delineate visibility as a form of culture is perhaps easy to perceive when one pays attention to the interplay between the architecture of the museum and the objects housed in that space. A close attention to this interplay, I suggest, might then allow us to rethink the archive-museum as a space of knowledgeproduction, as a space that led to the production of the field of Islamic art history in the early twentieth century.

# Notes

The research for this chapter was supported by the Scholars-in-Residence Program, Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, Honolulu, Hawai'i. I am greatly indebted to Deborah Pope, Carol Khewhok, Dawn Sueoka, Bethany Bannister-Andrews, and Maja Clark for their insightful advice and generous support during my residency at Shangri La in July 2013. My sincere gratitude to the Historians of Islamic Art Association for awarding this essay the 2014 Margaret Ševčenko Prize.

1 Letter from James Cromwell (from Calcutta) to Eva Stotesbury, April 1935, Doris Duke Papers on the Shangri La Residence, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation Historical Archives, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University (hereafter DDPSL).

2 Second Codicil to Last Will and Testament of Doris Duke, Honolulu, January 11, 1965, Doris Duke Papers, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation Historical Archives, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University (hereafter DDP).

3 Letter from James Cromwell (from Calcutta) to Eva Stotesbury, April 1935.

4 See especially Keelan Overton, "Commissioning on the Move: The Cromwells' Travels and Patronage of 'Living Traditions' in India, Morocco and Iran," in *Doris Duke's Shangri La*: A House in Paradise, ed. Thomas Mellins and Donald Albrecht (New York: Skira Rizzoli, 2012), 93-113; and Thalia Kennedy, "Doris Duke and Gandhi: Revitalizing Craft Tradition and the Mughal Suite at Shangri La," Shangri La Working Papers in Islamic Art 3 (July 2012): 1-32.

5 Doris Duke, "My Honolulu House," *Town & Country* (August 1947): 72–77.
6 Duke wrote, "But precisely at the time I fell in love with Hawaii and decided I could never live anywhere else, a Mogul-inspired bedroom and bathroom, planned for another house, was being completed for me in India, so there was nothing to do but have it shipped to Hawaii and build a house around it." Ibid., 72.

7 Honolulu Advertiser, September 19, 1935, cited in Don Hibbard, Shangri-La: Doris Duke's Home in Hawaii, unpublished report (Hawai'i: Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art,

November 2001).

As the New York Times reported: "Miss Doris Duke fled yesterday from her city home at 1 East Seventy-eighth Street after it had been besieged by a host of reporters, photographers and groups of the idly curious seeking a glimpse of 'the richest girl in the world.'" New York Times, "Miss Duke Flees to Jersey Estate; 'Richest Girl,' on Birthday, is Besieged at Home Here by Curiosity-Seekers," November 23, 1933.

- 9 The name Shangri La first appears in a June 13, 1938, letter from James Cromwell to Wil-The name Shangri La nrst appears in a June 15, 1842 making the Duke new Hilliam Cross Jr. Cited in Hibbard, Shangri-La. Franklin D. Roosevelt had given the retreat liam Cross Jr. Cited in Phobard, Spangir-La. Transchiper Take Property in now known as Camp David the name Shangri-La in 1942, making the Duke property in Hawai'i the first estate in the United States to be named Shangri La.
- Describing Shangri-La, Hilton notes: "Only indeed by a conscious effort did he [Conway] recall himself from the artist's mood to the connoisseur's, and then he recognized treasures that museums and millionaires alike would have bargained for" (James Hilton, Lost Horizon [New York: Pocket Books, 1939], 94–95). For a critical analysis of Hilton's novel, see Tomoko Masuzawa, "From Empire to Utopia: The Effacement of Colonial Markings in Lost Horizon," positions 7, no. 2 (Fall 1999): 541-572; and Donald S. Lopez Jr., The Prisoners of Shangri-la: Tibetan Buddhism and the West (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago
- 11 Thomas Richards, "Archive and Utopia," Representations 37 (Winter 1992): 105.
- 12 Derrida writes, "the meaning of 'archive,' its only meaning, comes to it from the Greek arkheion: initially a house, a domicile, an address, the residence of the superior magistrates, the archons, those who commanded. . . . On account of their publicly recognized authority, it is at their home, in that place which is their house (private house, family house, or employee's house), that official documents are filed." Jacques Derrida, Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 2.
- 13 While Derrida acknowledges that the "passage from the private to the public" does not necessarily lead to a displacement of the secret by the nonsecret, my chapter focuses on the architecture of the home itself as an archive, a site of "archontic power."
- 14 Derrida, Archive Fever, 68.
- 15 Hilton, Lost Horizon, 158.
- 16 Second Codicil to Last Will and Testament of Doris Duke.
- 17 The move from the "archive-as-source" to the "archive-as-subject" is discussed in Ann Laura Stoler, Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010). Scholarship on colonial museological practices has further delineated the ways in which the museum-archive emerged as not merely a repository of artifacts and antiquities but a powerful institution of knowledge production. See Tapati Guha-Thakurta, Monuments, Objects, Histories: Institutions of Art in Colonial and Post-Colonial India (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004).
- 18 For the history of the Munich exhibition, see essays in Andrea Lermer and Avinoam Shalem, eds., After One Hundred Years: The 1910 Exhibition "Meisterwerke muhammedanischer Kunst" Reconsidered (Leiden: Brill, 2010). David J. Roxburgh, "Au Bonheur des Amateurs: Collecting and Exhibiting Islamic Art, ca. 1880-1910," Ars Orientalis 30 (2000): 9-38, provides a broader history of Islamic art exhibitions in the West.
- 19 Friedrich Sarre and Fredrik R. Martin, "Preface," Die Ausstellung von Meisterwerken muhammedanischer Kunst, vol. I (Munich: F. Bruckmann A.-G., 1912), 1.
- 20 The exhibitions were hosted at the South Kensington Museum, London, in 1876; the Burlington Fine Arts Club, London, in 1885; the Imperial Austrian Trade Museum, Vienna, in 1891; the Palais de l'Industrie, Paris, in 1893; the General Art and Industry Exhibition, Stockholm, in 1897; the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin, in 1899; the Kunstgewerbemuseum, Leipzig, in 1900; and the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, in 1903. 21 Sarre and Martin, "Preface," 1.
- 22 Wassily Kandinsky, "Letters from Munich," Apollon 11 (1910): 13-17.
- 23 Roger E. Fry, "The Munich Exhibition of Mohammedan Art," Burlington Magazine 17,
- 24 The Edward C. Moore collection was on display at the Metropolitan Museum by 1892, making it one of the earliest displays of Islamic art in an American museum. The museum began hosting Islamic art exhibitions in 1910, the first of which was curated by Wilhelm Valentiner and focused on carpets from the museum's collection. For this history, see Marilyn Jenkins-Madina, "Collecting the 'Orient' at the Met: Early Tastemakers in America," Ars Orientalis 30 (2000): 69-89; and Priscilla P. Soucek, "Building a Collection of Islamic Art at the Metropolitan Museum, 1870-2011," in Masterpieces from the Department of Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, ed. Maryam D. Ekhtiar (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2011), 2-10.

26 For instance, Max van Berchem's Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1894–1903) was a multivolume study on Islamic inscriptions that located epigraphy within historical and social contexts. Josef Strzygowski, Orient oder Rom: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Spätantiken und Früchristlichen Kunst (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1901).

27 Catalogue of the International Exhibition of Persian Art, 7th January to 7th March, 1931, Royal Academy of Arts, London (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1931). For a history of the exhibition, see Barry D. Wood, "'A Great Symphony of Pure Form': The 1931 International Exhibition of Persian Art and Its Influence," Ars Orientalis 30 (2000): 113-130; and Kishwar Rizvi, "Art History and the Nation: Arthur Upham Pope and the Discourse on 'Persian Art' in the Early Twentieth Century," Muqarnas 24 (2007): 46-65.

28 R.H. Wilenski, "London's Persian Exhibition," New York Times, January 18, 1931, cited in Wood, "'A Great Symphony of Pure Form," 117.

29 Arthur U. Pope, "The Significance of Persian Art," in A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present, vol. 1, ed. Arthur Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1938–39), 1.

For instance, the January 14 issue of *Punch* carried an article on the exhibition with a drawing depicting "Oriental" dancers performing for a group of British men seated on Persian carpets. "The Persian Cult: Inaugural Dinner of the Worshipful Company of Hubble-Bubble-Makers," *Punch*, or the London Charivari, January 14, 1931. For similar Orientalist caricatures in British newspapers, see Wood, "A Great Symphony of Pure Form."

31 Stuart C. Welch, "Private Collectors and Islamic Arts of the Book," in *Treasures of Islam*, ed. Toby Falk (London: Philip Wilson, 1985), 26-31.

32 Roger E. Fry, "Persian Art," in *Persian Art*, ed. Edward D. Ross (London: Luzac and Company, 1930), 25–36.

33 "Persian Art Number," Times (London), January 5, 1931.

34 Baker's drawing is dated January 8, 1937. By July, René Martin, a Moroccan designer and art dealer, was commissioned by Duke to redesign the living room. The room as it stands today shows a closer affinity to the designs and drawings provided by Martin.

35 Duke wrote to Baker: "If the Circular Arch Over the Kwan-Yin [Guanyin] Looks Bad to You, Change it to Persian," http://thewalters.org/earth/Boddhisatva/boddhisatvaGuanyin. kml. The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation gave the sculpture to the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, in 2006. See Dawn Sueoka, "A Few of Our Favorite Things: Logbook," The Door to Shangri La (September 26, 2012), accessed January 10, 2015, http://blog.shangrila.hawaii.org/wordpress/?p=585.

36 List of goods shipped from Calcutta by Thomas Cook & Son, April 25, 1935, DDPSL. 37 Sheila R. Canby, ed., Humayun's Garden Party: Princes of the House of Timur and Early

Mughal Painting (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 1994).

38 The second Ilkhanid *mihrab* outside Iran is in the Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin. In addition to the *mihrab*, Duke also acquired a cenotaph cover, luster tiles, and a seventeenth-century Mughal painting from Kevorkian in 1941.

39 Duke, "My Honolulu House," 75.

40 See Keelan Overton, "From Pahlavi Isfahan to Pacific Shangri La: Reviving, Restoring, and Reinventing Safavid Aesthetics, ca. 1920–40," West 86th: A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture 19, no. 1 (Spring-Summer 2012): 61–87. Duke also commissioned tiles based on photographs of seventeenth-century Safavid designs from workshops in Isfahan.

41 Pope and Ackerman, eds., A Survey of Persian Art.

42 The Damascus-based antiquities firm of Asfar & Sarkis was established by Georges Asfar (d. 1995) and Jean Sarkis (d. 1955). Doris Duke had encountered the firm during her visit to Damascus in March and April 1938.

43 Duke, "My Honolulu House," 75.

44 Drawing of Shalimar brick pattern, 1962, Shangri La Historical Archives, Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, Honolulu, Hawai'i (hereafter SLHA).

45 Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) enabling Doris Duke to take pictures of the Certificate from NYU, Institute of Fine Arts (IF Certificate from NYU, Institute of rine Arts (IPA) chapting Described in Kashmir on behalf of IFA, DDP. According to a receipt from Mogul Architecture while in Kashmir on behalf of IFA, DDP. According to a receipt from Mogul Architecture while processed eighty-nine prints, eighty-nine negatives, and see Mogul Architecture while in Kasnmir on benan of the Preco Studios, Srinagar, Duke processed eighty-nine prints, eighty-nine negatives, and fiftysix transparencies during her visit, DDP.

six transparencies during her visit, DDr.

46 SLHA. I would like to thank Deborah Pope for helping me identify Baker's handwriting. For LVS. Wilkinson, and Basil Grav D. For SLHA. I would like to thank Deporan rope for neighing the decision, and Basil Gray, Persian a history of the manuscript, see Laurence Binyon, J.V.S. Wilkinson, and Basil Gray, Persian and Descriptive Catalogue of the Miniatures Explain Miniature Painting, including a Gracea and Description of University Press, 1931 (London: Oxford University Press, 1933).

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