



Newsletter

August 2011

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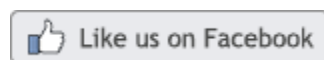
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Greetings!

Ramadan Mubarak to all observing this month of fasting and reflection. Ramadan began on August 1 with the new moon signaling the start of the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar and will end on August 30 with the celebration known as *Eid al-fitr*.

In this issue, we share exciting news about our Curator appointment, recent and upcoming artists and scholars, events and summer conservation at Shangri La. I hope you enjoy reading about these various on-site activities which have occurred since our first newsletter in May.

Also, I am pleased to announce that Shangri La is now on Facebook! This is yet another great way to stay connected, learn about programs and follow our work. Updates and photos are posted frequently so please visit our page and 'Like' us!



Deborah Pope

Executive Director, Shangri La

Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art

Introducing Shangri La's Curator of Islamic Art

Following an international search, Keelan Overton started in the position of Curator of Islamic Art at Shangri La on June 27. Overton holds a Ph.D. in Islamic Art History from the University of California, Los Angeles (2011) and a Masters Degree in Art History from Williams College in Massachusetts (2004). Overton first came to Shangri La as an intern in 2003 and returned as Assistant Curator in 2004-2005. She has since worked as a Research Assistant in the Art of the Middle East Department at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and as an Instructor and Teaching Assistant at UCLA. She is the recipient of a University of California President's Fellowship and a Theodore Rousseau Fellowship from the Department of Islamic Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which supported extensive travel and research in the United States, Europe, the Middle East, and India.

"We're delighted to have Keelan join our staff. She is a very thoughtful and well-regarded young scholar who is passionate about the educational importance of museums in today's society," explains Deborah Pope, Executive Director of Shangri La. *"At a time when we all need to have a better understanding of the Muslim world, Keelan's expertise will strengthen Shangri La as a center for Islamic art with programs for artists, scholars, students and the general public."*



*Dr. Keelan Overton,
Curator of Islamic Art at Shangri La*

At Shangri La, Overton will be responsible for the research, interpretation and display of Shangri La's collection, which includes more than 3,500 pieces of Islamic art. She will also develop programs to enhance Shangri La's role as a place for education, scholarly research and exchange including exhibitions, residencies for scholars and artists, and occasional symposia and publications.

Artists-in-Residence

Shangri La typically co-hosts two Artists-in-Residence annually with the University of Hawai'i at Manoa (UHM). While in residence, the artists pursue their own work and present some form of program such as a public lecture, class, or studio visits at the university. The artist-in-residence program has a deliberately flexible structure intended to provide the opportunity for reflection in an environment that is both visually stimulating and peacefully contemplative.

Zakariya Amataya. During his residency from June 17-July 7, Bangkok-based Thai poet Zakariya Amataya worked on new poetry and his first novel. Amataya is the 2010 winner of the prestigious Southeast Asia Writers Award: their first poetry winner who writes primarily in free verse and Thailand's first Muslim recipient. Amataya has published compilations of work including, *Mai Mee Yingsao Nai Bot Kavi (Poems without Maidens)* and *Will My Playground Have a Bomb?*

In addition to working on new poetry while in residence, Amataya presented a poetry reading at Shangri La on June 18 and performed with Hawaiian slam poet Kealoha and musician Taimane Gardner at the UHM Orvis Auditorium on June 25. Amataya and Kealoha also spoke at three public libraries throughout the community for informal talks in partnership with the UHM Outreach College.



Beyond Darkness and Salvation by Zakariya Amataya, Shangri La

Emre Hüner. In partnership with the Department of Art and Art History at the UHM, Emre Hüner will be in residence from August 11-30. Born in Istanbul and currently based in Amsterdam, Hüner works across a wide range of media. He is known for his drawing, video and animation installation works of futuristic, fantastical, layered worlds. We look forward to his public art lecture on Wednesday, August 24 at 6pm in the UHM Art Building Auditorium and a video screening at thirtyninehotel on Thursday, August 25 at 6pm. Both events are free and open to the public!



Emre Hüner, Visual Artist

Scholar-in-Residence



*Linda Komaroff,
Curator*

Dr. Linda Komaroff was in residence from July 24-August 6 gathering research for an essay contextualizing Doris Duke's collecting of Islamic art in relation to contemporary collectors and collections. Dr. Komaroff has served as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's Curator of Islamic Art and Department Head, Art of the Middle East since 1995. Her exhibitions at LACMA include *Letters in Gold: Ottoman Calligraphy from the Sakip Sabanci Collection, Istanbul* (1999) and *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353* (2003).

On July 30, Dr. Komaroff presented a public lecture at Shangri La discussing her most recent international loan exhibition [Gifts of the Sultan: The Arts of Giving at the Islamic Courts](#), currently on view at LACMA (June 5-September 5, 2011). Her lecture specifically touched upon gift giving in the great Islamic courts from Spain to India.

Events at Shangri La

Shangri La has been buzzing with a full and interesting program schedule over the past few months. Highlights are described below by date.

June 25. Palestinian filmmaker and human rights activist Mohammed Alatar presented a screening

of his documentary film *Jerusalem: The East Side Story*. A group discussion followed stemming from the movie's topic which provides a visual and oral history of Jerusalem and Jerusalemites, ranging from the policies of British statesman Lord Balfour in 1917 to current policies implemented by the Israeli government.

[Jerusalem: The East Side Story - Trailer](#)

June 29. Shangri La once again hosted thirty participants in *The Dynamics of Cultural Unity and Diversity in Southeast Asia*, a five-week residential institute presented by the East West Center's Asian Studies Development Program. This

Jerusalem: The East Side Story - Trailer

annual summer institute is funded through the National Endowment of Humanities and is designed to provide college and university teachers with the foundations for teaching broad undergraduate courses on specific regions and/or topics. The half day seminar at Shangri La was conducted by Dr. Muhamad Ali, Assistant Professor in the Religious Studies Department at the University of California at Riverside who spoke on the topic of *Authority and Islam in Southeast Asia: A History of Innovations and Contestations*.



Deborah Pope and Dr. Muhamad Ali

July 2. Returning to Shangri La, Dr. Muhamad Ali presented an illustrated lecture *So that You May Know One Another: Islam and Pluralism* drawing on scriptural and live examples to address why and how some Muslims are exclusive and act violently, whereas most are tolerant and pluralist. This event engaged a diverse audience in open dialogue about prevalent contemporary issues.

July 15. Middle Eastern undergraduate students participating in East West Center's Study of the U.S. Institutes ([SUSI](#)) for Student Leaders on Global Environmental Issues toured Shangri La on July 15. Funded by the Department of State, this five-week program provides an opportunity for the students to travel to Oahu, San Francisco, Boulder Colorado and Washington DC while developing a network of young leaders dedicated to create innovative and positive solutions for 21st Century environmental challenges.



Students from EWC's SUSI for Student Leaders on Global Environmental Issues visiting Shangri La, July 15

August 5. Aman Ali, co-creator of the 30 Mosques in 30 States project, presented a live and free storytelling show at the Center for Korean Studies Auditorium at the University of Hawai'i Manoa Campus. For *30 Mosques in 30 Days: Tales from a Ramadan Roadtrip*, the writer and standup comedian shared experiences from his roadtrip across America with Bassam Tariq during Ramadan 2010, Islam's holy month of fasting and reflection, as they stopped each evening at a different mosque in a different state. The two drove over 13,000 miles during their first trip and blogged about it daily on their site www.30mosques.com. They are visiting 30 states again this year and were only in Honolulu for 10 hours so it was a privilege to learn more about their exploration of what it means to be Muslim in America today. Their journey was ranked as one of the top stories of 2010 and received coverage on ABC News, CNN, Time, NPR, Fox News, the Huffington Post and Aljazeera English.

Information regarding upcoming programs can be found at www.shangrilahawaii.org. Please be mindful that reservations are required and seating is limited. If you aren't already on our contact list and would like to receive event flyers, email shangrilaevents@ddcf.org or call (808) 792-5503.

Summer Conservation

This summer featured new partnerships with Buffalo State College Art Conservation Department and Columbia University Historic Preservation Program as Shangri La provided an internship opportunity for one student from each program.

Tile Conservation. Treatment of the 17th century tile panels in the Patio continued this summer in partnership with Buffalo State College Art Conservation Department. Architectural conservator Molly Lambert spent four weeks on site to treat the tile panels and train intern Genevieve Bieniosek in treatment protocols. A large part of Bieniosek's 8-week internship focused on the removal of coatings, removing and replacing hard cements with softer lime

mortar, securing loose tiles, and removing discolored coatings. Bieniosek also assisted in the deinstallation and preparation of a 1930s commissioned Persian tile mosaic lunette at the Foyer landing for the upcoming *Beauty and Belief: Crossing Bridges with the Arts of Islamic Culture* exhibition being coordinated by Brigham Young University Museum of Art.



Alison Chiu,
Historic Preservation intern

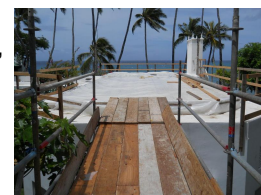
Cyclical Maintenance & Historic Preservation.

Columbia University Historic Preservation program intern Alison Chiu will spend a total of 11 weeks at Shangri La developing a system to adequately record Shangri La's building and grounds intensive stewardship efforts for present and future staff and researchers. As part of this project, Chiu created a user-friendly Microsoft Outlook master public calendar for maintenance and grounds daily, weekly, and monthly activities to improve the efficiency of communicating and tracking ongoing

cyclical maintenance tasks for this very hands-on crew. The calendar is only one component of an overall preservation plan drafted by Chiu. Her research and documentation is an eye opener of just how much work goes into maintaining the beauty of the architecture and grounds here at Shangri La year round. According to Chiu, *"the most intriguing aspect of Shangri La is how closely woven together the landscape, architecture and collections are. One of the highlights and greatest challenges of creating a preservation plan for the site has been to distill the immense scope of work performed by the facilities and grounds staff within the context of DDFIA's mission to promote Islamic art and culture. I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to work here at Shangri La and have learned a great deal about site stewardship in the process."*

September Closure

Please note that Shangri La's annual September closure to the public is scheduled to begin Wednesday, August 31 and will extend through Saturday, October 1. All on-site programs including public tours will resume on Wednesday, October 5. Shangri La's business operations will continue throughout the annual closure. While closed to the public, priority repairs and maintenance will be conducted including main house painting and completion of the roof repairs over the private wing.



Roof repairs in progress
over private wing

About Us

The mission of the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art (DDFIA) is to promote the study and understanding of Islamic arts and cultures. DDFIA plays a unique role in the growing dialogue among scholars, artists and the public about how to help cultivate mutual understanding.

DDFIA pursues its mission in two ways:

- Through [Shangri La](#) in Honolulu, which is owned and supported by DDFIA and undertakes a range of activities as a center for learning about Islamic arts and cultures; and
- Through the [Building Bridges Program](#), which is based in New York and awards grants to promote the use of arts and media to improve Americans' understanding of Muslim societies.



DDFIA, © 2002
David Franzen

Based in New York, DDFIA is one of three operating foundations supported by

the
[Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.](#)

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