

Honolulu Museum of Art

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EXHIBITION PORTRAYS SIX DYNASTIES CHINA IN A NEW MULTICULTURAL LIGHT

WHAT: Art in a Time of Chaos: Masterworks from Six Dynasties China, 3rd–6th Centuries

WHEN: April 28–August 21, 2016

WHERE: Honolulu Museum of Art, 900 S Beretania St, Honolulu, HI 96814

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

High-res images available on request.

HONOLULU, HAWAII (DATE GOES HERE)—As China continues its massive modernization, the staggering pace of construction has unearthed textbook-altering archeological finds, and today, more than ever, there is a direct connection between the past and present. Perhaps the most exciting discoveries are those that have revealed the Six Dynasties period to be characterized first and foremost by multicultural diversity—when traditional Chinese culture and influences from as far away as India and Persia came together to transform each other in innovative ways that would forever change the course of the future.

Going on view April 28 is *Art in a Time of Chaos: Masterworks From Six Dynasties China, 3rd–6th Centuries*, an exhibition organized by the New York–based China Institute Gallery, and opening first at the Honolulu Museum of Art before going to Manhattan in September. The show is an exceptional opportunity to see these recent archeological discoveries, some of which have never before been displayed outside China. The approximately 115 cultural relics, primarily from the Nanjing Museum and the Shanxi Provincial Museum, include ceramics, sculpture, calligraphy and painting, such as a set of remarkable carved and painted panels from the sarcophagus of a Central Asian official in the northern Chinese court.

The Six Dynasties is one of the most remarkable periods in China’s long history. A time of civil war and foreign invasion, it is often compared to the roughly contemporaneous Dark Ages in early medieval Europe. Yet this was also an age of great cultural and intellectual advancement. Painting and calligraphy emerged as fully matured art forms, while poetry

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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

and other literary genres reached new heights. The introduction of Buddhism brought about not only changes in philosophy and religion, but also in the arts, especially sculpture. In this exhibition, you can see the ways in which people lived, the objects such as ceramics that they used, and the pastimes such as music that they enjoyed.

Divided into four sections, *Art in a Time of Chaos* is the first exhibition to focus on artistic achievements in ceramics, sculpture, calligraphy and painting, while comparing the subjects and styles of the Southern and Northern dynasties. The ceramics section introduces developments in craft and decorative techniques as well as mythological elements and aspects of daily life during this period. In the sculpture section, works such as guardian tomb figures portray stylistic differences, while Buddhist sculptures reflect popular religious practices in Northern and Southern China. In the calligraphy and painting sections, works will be shown alongside the actual tools used to make these types of art. These sections will also portray how Chinese calligraphy and painting became separate art forms during the Six Dynasties period.

This exhibition was organized by the China Institute Gallery and the Nanjing Museum. It was curated by Willow Weilan Hai, Annette Juliano, Gong Liang, Shi Jinming, and Bai Ning.

This exhibition is made possible with generous support from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation and The Freeman Foundation. Additional support provided by Honolulu Star-Advertiser and Waikiki Parc Hotel.

Programming

Lecture

Silk Roads: Sassanians and Sogdians and Chinese Culture, 220-617

Morris Rossabi, Distinguished Professor at the City University of New York and Columbia University

May 17, 4 p.m., Doris Duke Theatre, Free

Historical accounts often portrayed traditional China as isolated and self-sufficient. This illustrated presentation challenges that view by revealing the significant influence foreigners had on Chinese religion, art, and economy in the period from 220 to 581. During that era, China was not unified, did not have a central government, and was plagued by repeated wars. Despite such political and economic chaos, Chinese culture was resplendent, and Iranians, such as the Sassanians and Sogdians, contributed to its effervescence in religion and the arts, which the illustrations will confirm.

Morris Rossabi is Distinguished Professor at the City University of New York and Columbia University, and has taught and conducted research on Chinese, Inner Asian and Islamic culture. Author and editor of more than 20 books, including *Khubilai Khan* and *A History of China*, he has participated in exhibitions at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the National University of Mongolia, he has also been granted fellowships and residencies from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Smithsonian Institution, the Smith Richardson Foundation, and Shangri La among other organizations. In 2015-2016 he lectured at the Rijksmuseum, Salzburg University and the University of Colorado.

This lecture is presented in collaboration with the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art and Shangri La. With travel support provided by Hawaiian Airlines.

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.

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.