

SHANGRI LA

PRESS RELEASE
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**KENT SEVERSON APPOINTED CONSERVATOR AT SHANGRI LA,
DORIS DUKE FOUNDATION FOR ISLAMIC ART**



Honolulu, Hawai'i, April 3, 2012 —The Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art is pleased to announce that Kent Severson has been appointed to the position of Conservator at Shangri La effective March 26, following an international search. Shangri La is the Foundation's center for Islamic arts and cultures, housed in the

former Honolulu residence of philanthropist and collector Doris Duke (1912 – 1993) with its late 1930s architecture, extensive collections of Islamic art and 5 acres of tropical gardens.

Severson, a graduate of the New York University (NYU) Institute of Fine Arts Conservation Center training program, was most recently a conservator in private practice based in Boston and worked primarily for museums and other institutions. He has participated in archaeological projects in Turkey, Greece, Italy and Egypt for more than 20 years including serving as the Senior Field conservator for the NYU Excavations at Aphrodisias, Turkey. Since 2010, he has also been Visiting Instructor in Collections Care and Management for the Iraqi Institute for the Conservation of Antiquities and Heritage in Erbil, Iraq.

At Shangri La, Severson is responsible for overseeing the proper care and preservation of Shangri La's collection of Islamic art. Deborah Pope, Executive Director of Shangri La stated that "Kent's extensive experience managing complex projects and working with a wide variety of media and environmental conditions make him uniquely suited to addressing Shangri La's conservation challenges and guiding daily care and long-term preservation of collections. We're delighted to have Kent join our staff."

Shangri La is a five-acre site with three historic buildings designed by architect Marion Sims Wyeth (1889–1992) and built between 1936–1938 as a seasonal home for philanthropist and collector Doris Duke (1912–1993). Shangri La borrows architectural elements and artistic sensibilities from regions of the Islamic world and blends them with a distinctly Hawaiian landscape that features sweeping ocean views and exotic gardens. The collection ranges from pre-Islamic material to early 20th century commissions, in a wide variety of media. The collection is particularly strong in material from the 17th through 20th centuries, and in ceramic tiles and vessels. A significant portion of the collection is integrated into the historic architecture.

First opened to the public in November 2002, Shangri La offers guided tours, lectures and performances as well as residencies for artists and scholars and periodic symposia. It is owned and supported 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. For more information, visit www.shangriilahawaii.org and follow Shangri La on Facebook at Shangri La, Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art.

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