



For Immediate Release

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**DORIS DUKE'S MUGHAL INDIAN-INSPIRED BEDROOM-AND-BATHROOM SUITE AT SHANGRI LA
OPENS TO THE PUBLIC FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS OCTOBER**

The long-awaited unveiling of the Mughal Suite makes the most private section of Doris Duke's Shangri La accessible to the general public and offers a revealing look into the first chapter of her love affair with Indian art, jewelry and architecture, which in part inspired the property's creation.

HONOLULU, HI, September 12, 2014 — The Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art announced today that it will open the Mughal Suite at Shangri La to the public for the first time in the property's history on Saturday, October 11. This bedroom-and-bathroom suite is Shangri La's cornerstone— a set of rooms that Doris Duke (1912-1993) commissioned noted architect Frances Blomfield in Delhi to design while on her 1935 honeymoon with James Cromwell. The newly renovated suite reflects the rooms' earliest completed appearance in 1939 as documented by historical photographs in the architect's photo album. In addition to featuring architectural drawings, photos and film segments which chronicle the suite's history as well as the two-month sojourn in India that ignited Duke's lifelong romance with the art of the region, an exhibit in the Mughal Suite will showcase Duke's rarely viewed collections of sumptuous gold, diamond, ruby and emerald Indian jewelry, jewel-encrusted jade vessels, ivory figurines and enameled-gold decorative objects.

"Following many years of building preservation and art conservation, we're delighted at long last to unveil this glorious ensemble of rooms and to simultaneously showcase Duke's Indian collections," said Deborah Pope, executive director of Shangri La. "Duke traveled to India frequently throughout her adult life—it is a region of the larger Muslim world that she loved and that is not shown elsewhere in the house. With the opening of the Mughal Suite, visitors have access to the Indian collections and to this most private wing of the house—originally reserved for her personal use but by the terms of her will, soon to be open to the public."

"The setting of the Mughal Suite interior—with its luminous marble screens, opulent textiles and alluring furnishings—provides an incomparable setting for the display of Duke's beloved collection of precious Indian jewelry and decorative arts," says curator Sharon Littlefield.

From floors to ceilings, the Mughal Suite intimately incorporates Mughal-inspired art and architecture

through the use of carved marble, *jali* (perforated screens) and inlaid semi-precious stonework, which were created by craftsmen at India Marble Works of Agra whom were contracted by Blomfield. It is clear from the interior that as Cromwell noted in a letter to his mother, “(Doris) ... had fallen in love with the Taj Mahal and all the beautiful marble tile, with their lovely floral designs with some precious stones.”

Although Duke initially intended her marble bedroom-and-bathroom suite for a house to be constructed in Palm Beach, Florida, the last stop on her honeymoon prompted a change in plans and set the pivotal scene for Shangri La’s creation. Hawai’i, with its natural beauty, relaxed lifestyle and privacy, led the honeymooning couple to extend a planned visit of two weeks to a leisurely four months. In Duke’s own words, “Precisely at the time I fell in love with Hawai’i and I decided I could never live anywhere else, a Mughal-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 Hawai’i and build a house around it.” Hence the Mughal Suite captures both the transformative moment in 1935 when Duke fell in love with the art and architecture of Mughal India and the very origins of Shangri La itself, with the suite as its nucleus. It is also the first of many commissions, including work from contemporary designers and artisans in Morocco, Iran, Syria and India, that Duke would place in order to create her Honolulu home.

Early photographs of the suite served as one of the key sources for renovating the rooms for public viewing. The earliest paint schemes were also uncovered through microscopic examination of small samples of paint cut from the walls and the original colors faithfully brought back. Red velvet divans, mother of pearl furniture, pierced metal hanging lamps from Syria, Indian textiles, manuscript paintings, jades and jewelry, and ancient glass from Iran and Syria further recreate the brilliance of the original interiors.

Among the highlights of the Mughal Suite—and of Shangri La as a whole—are the stunning carved and inlaid marble panels of Doris Duke’s bathroom. Encircling the walls are 26 floral studies fashioned from slices of lapis lazuli, jade, carnelian and other semi-precious stones set into marble. They evoke the beautiful historic marble work of Mughal architecture but at the same time reflect the 1930s in their sensuous lines and simplicity of form. At the windows, carved marble screens of individualized floral studies complement the beauty of the space by opening it to natural light and sound outside. The modern and the historical are seamlessly united in this generous space by a 20th-century American patron, a British architect and the craftsmen of the Indian Marble Works in Agra continuing the artistic traditions of the 17th century.

Also original to the Mughal Suite’s design is the dressing room’s vaulted ceiling covered in plasterwork and inset with small mirrors, which was inspired by mirrored ceilings Duke saw in India and Iran. Designed by Shangri La’s supervising architect, Drew Baker, and made by Hawaiian craftsmen, the ceiling is intimate in scale. Each mirror was individually cut and set to fit within the starburst design. The striking composition is itself mirrored in the walls of the dressing room, producing a strong architectural statement that contrasts with the serenity of the garden landscape visible through the adjoining windows.

HOW TO VISIT

Admission to Shangri La is by guided tour only, and advance reservations are required. Small group tours start at the Honolulu Museum of Art (900 South Beretania Street), and visitors are transported to and from Shangri La by van. Tours are available Wednesday through Saturday, with tours beginning at 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., unless otherwise specified.

Regular Tours

As of October 11, the Mughal Suite will be included on the regularly scheduled guided tours of Shangri La. These tours feature the rooms of the main residence and portions of the grounds during approximately one and a half hours onsite. Tickets are \$25, which includes van transportation as well as admission to the Honolulu Museum of Art's permanent exhibitions. Discounted tickets are available for \$20 to Hawai'i residents with proof of local residency.

Visit the [Honolulu Museum of Art](#) website to book a tour online or call 808.532.3853.

Mughal Suite Spotlight Tours

Guided tours of the newly opened bedroom-and-bathroom suite, private garden and Mughal Garden will be offered two Saturdays per month following the October opening through December. These special tours will provide a visitor experience that focuses on the Mughal Suite and Doris Duke's early inspirations. Free to Hawai'i residents with proof of residency, registration will open one week prior to each designated Saturday. Due to limited space, reservations will be confirmed on a first-come first-served basis upon receipt of a completed tour request form available here on the [Honolulu Museum of Art's](#) website.

All other inquiries regarding tours should be directed to shangrilatickets@honoluluacademy.org.

ACCOMPANYING PROGRAMS

The opening of the Mughal Suite will be celebrated through July 2015 with a series of related public programs. Spanning the traditional to the contemporary, original performances, films, visual arts, lectures and other events will be presented with multiple community partners including the Honolulu Museum of Arts, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Kapi'olani Community College, the Hawaii International Film Festival and the Honolulu Biennial Foundation.

For information on upcoming programs refer to the attached Calendar of Events, visit www.shangriolahawaii.org or call 808.792.5503.

ABOUT SHANGRI LA

Built in Honolulu, Hawai'i from 1936-1938, Shangri La overlooks the Pacific Ocean and Diamond Head and houses Doris Duke's collection of Islamic art. Of the many homes that Duke inhabited, Shangri La is

the only one that she built from the ground up and filled from the inside out.

Doris Duke decided to build a seasonal home in Honolulu after her honeymoon in 1935, which took her through the Muslim world for the first time and included an extended stay in Hawai'i. Finding herself captivated by Islamic art and architecture and enamored with Hawai'i, Duke designed her new home in collaboration with American architect Marion Sims Wyeth to evoke the beauty and character of each.

The five-acre complex integrates a 14,000-square-foot house, the Playhouse, and a pool, comprising a series of interlocking spaces, both indoors and out: rooms, courtyards, lanais, terraces, gardens and numerous water features. While design and early construction were underway, Duke traveled extensively in the Middle East, visiting historical monuments and providing the architect with photographs of architectural elements to be incorporated into Shangri La's design. She also placed large commissions with contemporary artisans in India, Morocco, Iran and Syria to create art and architectural elements, utilizing traditional forms, patterns and means of fabrication. Throughout the property, traditional Islamic art and architectural forms blend with a modernist sensibility; for example the contrast between the ornate Moroccan living room ceiling and the adjacent glass wall that fully retracts into the basement is a key example of the synthesis of tradition and modernism that defines the house's aesthetic.

For nearly 60 years, Doris Duke continued to collect Islamic art, ultimately forming a collection of about 2,500 objects, many of which are embedded into the structure of the house. Iranian ceramic tile panels, carved and painted ceilings from Morocco, *jali* (perforated screen) doors and windows, and textiles and carpets create a living environment of Islamic art and architectural decoration. Today, Shangri La is nationally recognized for its high artistic value and as one of Hawai'i's most architecturally significant homes. It is open to the public for guided tours and educational programs such as lectures, performances and occasional symposia. Shangri La also supports residencies for contemporary artists and for scholars researching Islamic art.

Doris Duke's Shangri La: Architecture, Landscape, and Islamic Art, the first comprehensive exhibition of objects from Shangri La, is presently touring the country and will reside at the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery from October 23 until December 28, 2014 after which it will return to Hawai'i for display at the Honolulu Museum of Art beginning on February 13, 2015. For additional information about Shangri La, the Mughal Suite and the traveling exhibition, please visit www.shangrilahawaii.org.

ABOUT DORIS DUKE

Born on November 22, 1912 in New York City, Doris Duke was the only child of James 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 a large collection, 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. Additional information about Doris Duke and her foundations can be found at www.ddcf.org.

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