Doris Duke



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In the 1950s and 1960s, Doris Duke was one of the few Western collectors pursuing Thai artworks, and in 1961 she established the Foundation for Southeast Asian Art and Culture to increase Western recognition and appreciation of these works. By 1964 Miss Duke had acquired roughly 2,000 diverse pieces of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century art primarily from Thailand, Burma, and Laos, ranging from textiles, household furnishings, and jewelry to teak houses and massive statues. She began to display her collection in 1972 at Duke Farms, her large New Jersey estate, and she continued to travel and collect widely in Southeast Asia throughout that decade. Most of the work found in SEAAC is from Thailand, and Doris Duke strongly believed in the preservation

of Thai art as a reflection of the people and culture from which it emerged. She worked for much of her life toward finding an effective way to share her knowledge and enthusiasm. Doris Duke: The Southeast Asian Art Collection honors her wish to bring greater public and scholarly attention to the excellent works she gathered. In addition, this beautiful book acknowledges the collection as an impressive whole before its dispersion to several major museums.
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