

## Dallas Museum of Art Publishes Its First Catalogue of South and Southeast Asian Art

*The Arts of India, Southeast Asia, and the Himalayas* Surveys the Cultural and Artistic Significance of 1700 Years of Visual Art Over the Museum's Nearly Sixty Years of Collecting

The Dallas Museum of Art today announced the publication of the first catalogue dedicated to exploring the Museum's collection of over 450 works of South and Southeast Asian art. *The Arts of India, Southeast Asia, and the Himalayas at the Dallas Museum of Art* is the second in a series of catalogues documenting the magnificent works in the DMA's encyclopedic collection, following the 2009 publication of *The Arts of Africa at the Dallas Museum of Art*. The catalogue draws both from historical sources and from contemporary research to examine over 140 sculptures, architectural pieces, and other works of art that represent the many cultures and religions of India, Southeast Asia, and the Himalayas. Both visually and intellectually compelling, the catalogue celebrates the beauty and diversity of South and Southeast Asian art, as well as its social and historic significance.

The richly illustrated 264-page book was written by Dr. Anne R. Bromberg, Ph.D., the DMA's Cecil and Ida Green Curator of Ancient and Asian Art, with contributions by scholars Catherine B. Asher, Frederick M. Asher, Robert Warren Clark, and Nancy Tingley.

"The publication of this comprehensive new catalogue draws on the strengths of the DMA's South and Southeast Asian art holdings to offer important new contributions to the burgeoning body of scholarship in this field," said Maxwell L. Anderson, The Eugene McDermott Director of the Dallas Museum of Art. "This in-depth look at the Museum's collection supports the DMA's commitment to fostering cross-cultural dialogue on an international scale through a variety of avenues, including exhibitions, programming, institutional partnerships, and publications."

"By illuminating the many treasures of the DMA's South and Southeast Asian art collection, this catalogue seeks to expand our understanding of artistic production in one of the world's most culturally diverse regions," said Bromberg. "It has been a delight to embark on such a thorough exploration of the Museum's remarkable holdings in this area, which encompass nearly 1,700 years of art-making practices from India, Southeast Asia, and the Himalayas."

The DMA began collecting, exhibiting, and championing Asian art early in its history. The South Asian collection was founded on Indian art, and for that reason has experienced particularly strong growth in this area. Visitors can experience many objects from the collection that are currently on view in the Asian galleries and other galleries at the DMA. Highlighted works from the catalogue that are currently on view include:

- **Shiva Nataraja, South India, Tamil Nadu, Chola dynasty (11th century):** This bronze sculpture of Shiva, the Hindu god of destruction, shows him in his form as the Lord of the Dance. His dancing obliterates ignorance, signified by the dwarf beneath him. On special occasions, metal images such as this one were taken on procession both within the temple and in the surrounding area.

- **Vishnu as Varaha, Central India, Madhya Pradesh (10th century):** This sculpture portrays Vishnu, the Hindu preservation deity, as his incarnation of Varaha, with the head of a boar and the body of a human. He is shown triumphantly rising up from the ocean with the earth goddess, whom he has just rescued from the sea-demon that tried to drown her. Large figures of Varaha such as this one were often used to commemorate a king's victory in battle, drawing an analogy between the righteousness of Varaha and the monarch.
- **Shrine, India, Gujarat (late 18th to 19th century):** This magnificent shrine is covered with a silver veneer and represents a miniature version of the universe; imagery evolves from the earthly realm of human activity to the heavenly realm with celestial dancers and birds near the dome. The eclectic imagery makes it difficult to identify as either Jain or Hindu without the holy figure that would have been seated in the middle. Shrines such as this one were used in private homes as well as in devotional chapels in larger temple complexes.
- **Standing Buddha, Thailand, Lopburi style (13th to 14th century):** This gilt bronze statue of the Buddha stands with his hands out in a gesture meant to drive back floodwaters. The Buddha's spiritual wealth is reflected in the lavish material of his clothing and intricate decoration of his crown and jewelry. The artistic style is named after the central Thai city of Lopburi, which was both the political and artistic center of the region.
- **Thinking Bodhisattva, India, Gandhara, Hadda region (4th to 6th century):** This terracotta sculpture represents the last of the bodhisattvas that preceded the historical Buddha. This bodhisattva will be reborn as Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha. Here, he is meditating on that reincarnation.

Interest in Asian art at the Dallas Museum of Art has centered on special exhibitions for much of its history, beginning in 1938 with *Chinese Ancestral Portraits and Japanese Landscape Prints*. The DMA has collected and continued to build its important collection of the arts of South and Southeast Asia since the acquisition of the Tibetan Manjushri sculpture in 1955. In 1962 the groundbreaking exhibition *Arts of Man* led to a significant expansion of the DMA's Asian art holdings, with several works from the exhibition later entering the Museum's collection, including the Vishnu and attendants sculpture given by Mrs. John Leddy Jones, and the Durga and Vishnu wooden festival sculptures, both gifts of the Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Marcus Foundation.

The DMA's South Asian collection changed dramatically after the 1993 exhibition *East Meets West: Selections from the David T. Owsley Collection*. Mr. Owsley agreed to donate the exhibited works to the Museum, providing the core of the new Asian galleries that opened in 1996. Mr. Owsley will also be leaving his personal collection to the Museum in his estate. Mr. Owsley's generosity and connoisseurship continue to be important to the Museum's collection, and in 2000 the bronze Shiva Nataraja sculpture was purchased for the Museum in his honor by Margaret McDermott, the Hamon Charitable Foundation, and the Cecil and Ida Green Acquisition Fund.

Other significant acquisitions and gifts of South and Southeast Asian art over the past fifty years have included a pair of carved sandstone *jali* screens, purchased by the

Junior Associates; the figure of the elephant-headed god Ganesha, purchased by the Dallas Art Association following the *Arts of Man* exhibition; and a stone sculpture of Shiva's bull mount, Nandi, a gift of the Cecil and Ida Green Acquisition Fund and gift of David T. Owsley via the Alvin and Lucy Owsley Foundation.

### **About the Catalogue**

*The Arts of India, Southeast Asia, and the Himalayas at the Dallas Museum of Art* is written by Anne Bromberg, The Cecil and Ida Green Curator of Ancient and Asian Art at the Dallas Museum of Art, with contributions by Catherine B. Asher, professor of art history at the University of Minnesota; Frederick M. Asher, chair of the department of art history at the University of Minnesota; Robert Warren Clark, coordinator of the Tibetan Language Program at Stanford University; and Nancy Tingley, an independent curator of Southeast Asian art. The catalogue is published by the Dallas Museum of Art and distributed by Yale University Press. (Publication date: February 28, 2013; Price: \$65.00; ISBN-10: 0300149883; ISBN-13: 978-0300149883).

### **About Anne R. Bromberg**

Anne R. Bromberg, Ph.D., is the Cecil and Ida Green Curator of Ancient and Asian Art at the Dallas Museum of Art. Dr. Bromberg has been with the DMA for more than 50 years, since she began in 1962 as a lecturer. In 1975 she was appointed head of the education department. During her tenure at the DMA, Dr. Bromberg has served as the curator for several exhibitions including *Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs* (2008), *Domains of Wonder: Selected Masterworks of Indian Painting* (2007), *Pompeii A.D. 79* (1979), *Splendors of China's Forbidden City: The Glorious Reign of Emperor Qianlong* (2004), and *The Sensuous and the Sacred: Chola Bronzes from South India* (2003). Her forthcoming exhibition, *The Body Beautiful in Ancient Greece*, will open this May.

Dr. Bromberg has previously contributed to many publications related to the Museum's collections, including *Ancient Gold Jewelry at the Dallas Museum of Art* (1996), written by Barbara Deppert-Lippitz, *Gods, Men, and Heroes: Ancient Art at the Dallas Museum of Art* (1996), co-written with Karl Kilinski II, *Dallas Museum of Art: Selected Works* (1983), and *A Guide to the Collections: Dallas Museum of Fine Arts* (1979).

### **About the Dallas Museum of Art**

Established in 1903, the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) ranks among the leading art institutions in the country and is distinguished by its innovative exhibitions and groundbreaking educational programs. At the heart of the Museum and its programs is its global collection, which encompasses more than 22,000 works and spans 5,000 years of history, representing a full range of world cultures. Located in the vibrant Arts District of downtown Dallas, the Museum welcomes more than half a million visitors annually and acts as a catalyst for community creativity, engaging people of all ages and backgrounds with a diverse spectrum of programming, from exhibitions and lectures to concerts, literary events, and dramatic and dance presentations.

The Dallas Museum of Art is supported in part by the generosity of DMA Partners and donors, the citizens of Dallas through the City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs, and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

###

For more information, please contact:

Jill Bernstein  
Dallas Museum of Art  
214-922-1802  
JBernstein@DMA.org