

A BRIEF GUIDE
TO
THE SALAR JUNG MUSEUM
1966

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Sri Pattom A. Thanu Pillai
Governor of Andhra Pradesh
and
Chairman, Salar Jung Museum Board.



GOVERNOR
ANDHRA
PRADESH

RAJ BHAVAN
HYDERABAD
9th January 1966.

MESSAGE

The Salar Jung Museum, an outcome of the single-handed efforts of the late Nawab Yousuf Ali Khan, popularly known as Salar Jung III, is unique in its character and contents. The museum, being primarily an art museum, is enriched with a large variety of art-objects acquired from different parts of the World, both West and East. It provides a rare opportunity for visitors to study and compare the various trends and techniques in Art and Crafts produced in different parts of the World through the centuries.

The museums of to-day are lively cultural institutions which collect, preserve and interpret the relics of the ancient past through their research and exhibitions. Museum researches are published in the forms of Brochures, Catalogues, Guide Books, Folders and Leaflets which form the basis of the layman's understanding of museum exhibits.

I am sure the Guide Book brought out by the Salar Jung Museum will be of great interest and value for visitors.

(Pattom A. Thanu Pillai).



Nawab Salar Jung

Short history

The Salar Jung Museum at Hyderabad is a unique art collection rendered possible by the love of beauty and life-long efforts of a single individual. Mir Yusuf Ali Khan, better known to the world as Salar Jung III, was born on 13th June, 1889. He died on 2nd March, 1949. All his life he remained a bachelor and devoted his wealth and leisure to collecting art treasures wherever he could get them under the sun. He was a great connoisseur of art with a refined taste. His privileged position as the only scion of an illustrious and wealthy family from which five Prime Ministers were chosen by the Asif Jahi rulers, made easy the task that he set himself as a collector. He had wished to construct a museum of his collections and bequeath it to the nation but due to his sudden death he could not realise his dream. The Government of Hyderabad however, stepped into the breach and arranged the collections in the ancestral palace of the collector in the shape of a museum

which was declared open to the public by the former Prime Minister late Shri Jawaharlal Nehru on 16th December, 1951.

The collections were nationalised by a Compromise Deed arrived at between the heirs of the late Nawab, the Government of Andhra Pradesh, the Government of India and the Salar Jung Estate Committee which was administering the properties of the late Nawab under an ordinance of the Government of India. In 1961 the museum by an Act of Parliament was recognised as a museum of National importance and was placed under a Board of Trustees consisting of 11 ex-officio and nominated members, with the Governor of Andhra Pradesh as its Chairman.

Arrangement of the Museum

The museum is broadly divided into the Children's Section, the Eastern Section, the Western Section and the Library. The display is mostly country-wise. The Silver Room, the Jade Room and the Ivory Room are so arranged in view of the sameness of the exhibits.

Children's Section

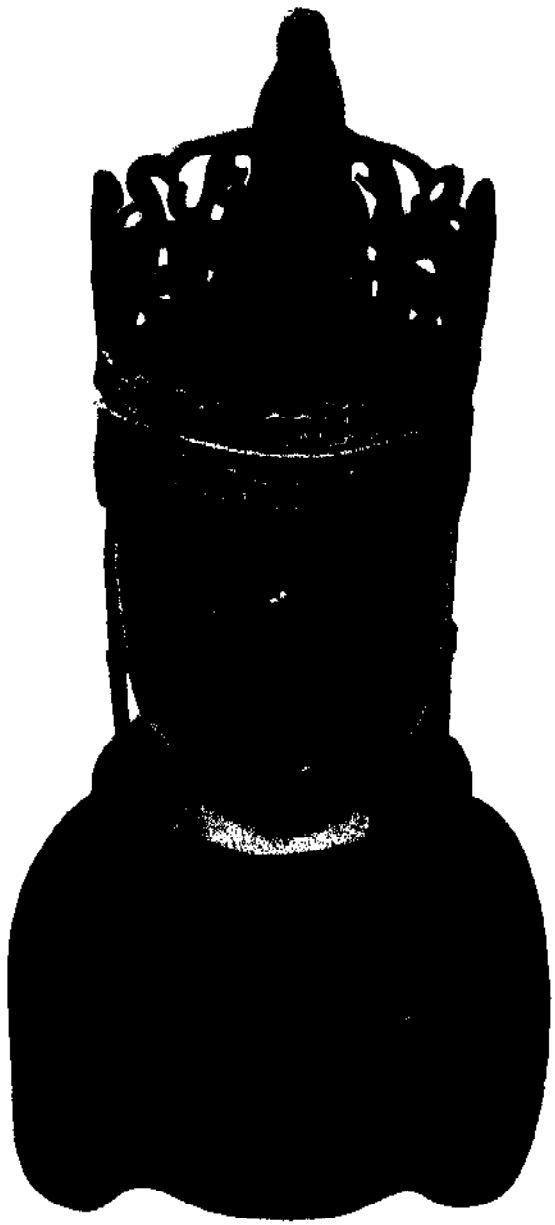
To interest the young and train their minds a separate Children's Section has been formed as an annexe of the museum where the entrance is free. The material of the collection has been utilised to shape the section in which toys of historical and artistic value are displayed, some exhibiting the high skill of the potters of Lucknow and Delhi in modelling and toy making. The European toys along with Chinese and Japanese figurines lend additional interest to the collections. The furnished doll houses, the electric toy train, the collection of music boxes and modern Japanese toys provide the children with entertainment along with visual education.

Eastern Section

The oriental exhibits arranged in more than 40 large and small galleries offer the visitor a vast and varied collection of art treasures. Chinese exhibits spread in the first 7 rooms contain oriental China of



Kwan-Yin
Chinese Bronze



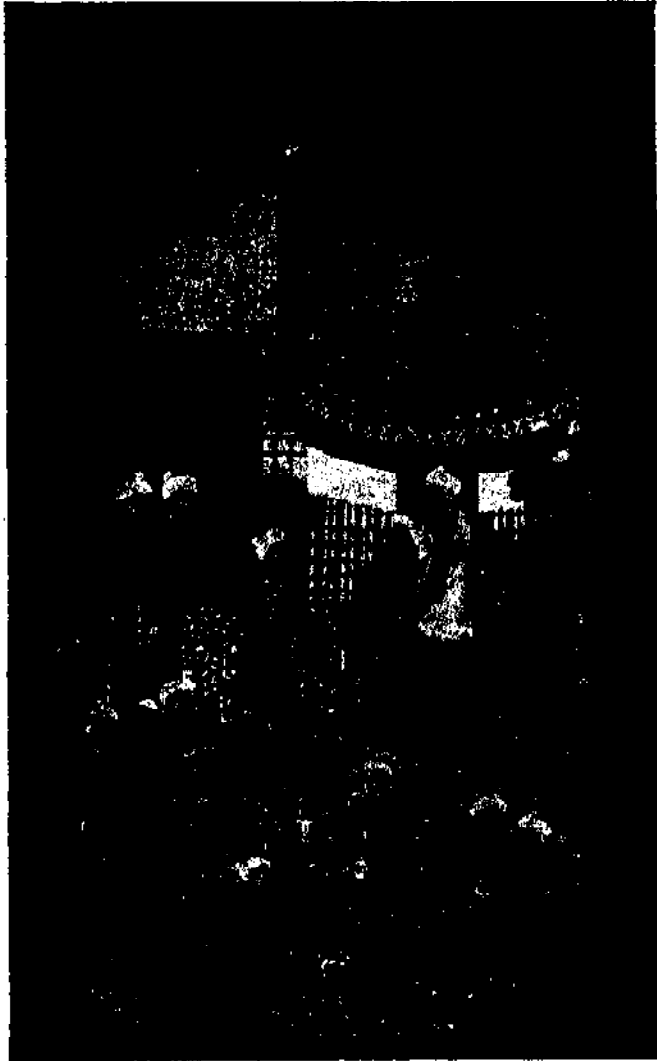
Buddha-head
Ming Period



Persian Porcelain Bowl
made for
Sir Salar Jung I



Captive Lion by Bihzad
(from Shah Jehan's Album)



Persian painting in the illustrated manuscript
"Rauzatul - Mohibbin"
Bihzad School. 1548 A. D.

Ming and Kang Hsi periods, Celadon Pottery of Sung and Ming periods, embroideries, ivory carvings, interior painted snuff bottles, lanterns, lacquered and inlaid furniture pieces and *coloissone* ware. The Jade panels depicting exotic themes such as "Verse writing in the Peach blossom pavilion," "Gathering water chestnut," "Welcoming the new year," "Making tea in the bamboo grove," "The goose lover" and "The most beautiful woman in China" are colourful pieces belonging to the late 18th century. The interior painted snuff bottles are artistic curiosities as the technique of painting of the bottles from inside is a baffling process. The collection of old China ranges from the green Celadon of the Sung and Ming periods to the Persian blue, *Famille Verte* and *Famille Rose* of the Ming and Kang Hsi Periods. The collection of Celadon is the largest in India and compares favourably with the two famous collections of the world, one at Ardbial and the other at Constantinople.

The Japanese exhibits in another 7 rooms, though not so valuable as the Chinese, are worthy of attention in their range and variety. The Satsuma and Imari ware, the needle work pictures, the lacquered and inlaid cabinets, embroidery curtains, Nikko furniture pieces and Sumarai swords and daggers go to form an impressive display. Among the needle work pictures, the "Water-fall" is surely an outstanding object of art.

The tastefully arranged Burma room with its wood carvings and lacquered bamboo-ware bring out the delicate and artistic craftsmanship of the Burmese people. In this room there are also a few wood carvings from Indonesia and Thailand.

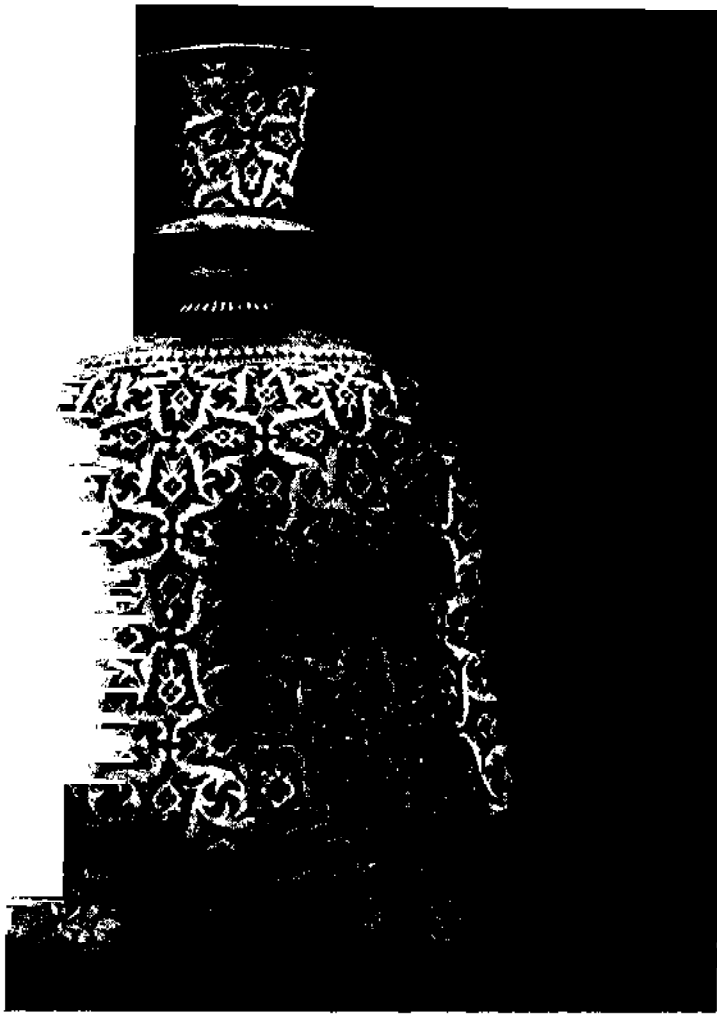
The Indo-Persian gallery displays copies of old Persian paintings, originals by the modern Persian painter Katcha Dorian, Moghul and Persian glass, Porcelain and lacquered doors. The two lacquered doors from Isphan carved and painted to depict drinking and dancing scenes in panels, wild life all over and inscribed with verses from Hafiz are indeed remarkable pieces. A cut glass decanter with gold work is a rare exhibit of the Mughal period.

In the Indian picture gallery there are a couple of Mughal miniatures from Shah Jehan's private album, a drawing in Chinese ink by Bihzad, an exquisite portrait of Aurangzeb on Ivory, several 17th century portraits of kings, princes and princesses and a large number of Delhi paintings, copies of old Mughal masterpieces. The Mughal school paintings are chronologically arranged in two other rooms adjoining the central portion of the building known as Aina Khana or "Hall of Mirrors." The Deccani, the Rajasthani and Pahari schools of painting are displayed in three other adjoining rooms of the Aina Khana. Miniature painting in India attained its zenith under the patronage of Emperor Jehangir. The Renaissance in Indian painting began with the Mughals when Persian painting acclimatized itself to Indian environment and gathered momentum. Mineral and vegetable colours were used which imparted glitter to the paintings. It was in the 19th century that the last classical school of Indian painting, the Pahari school, used chemical colours.

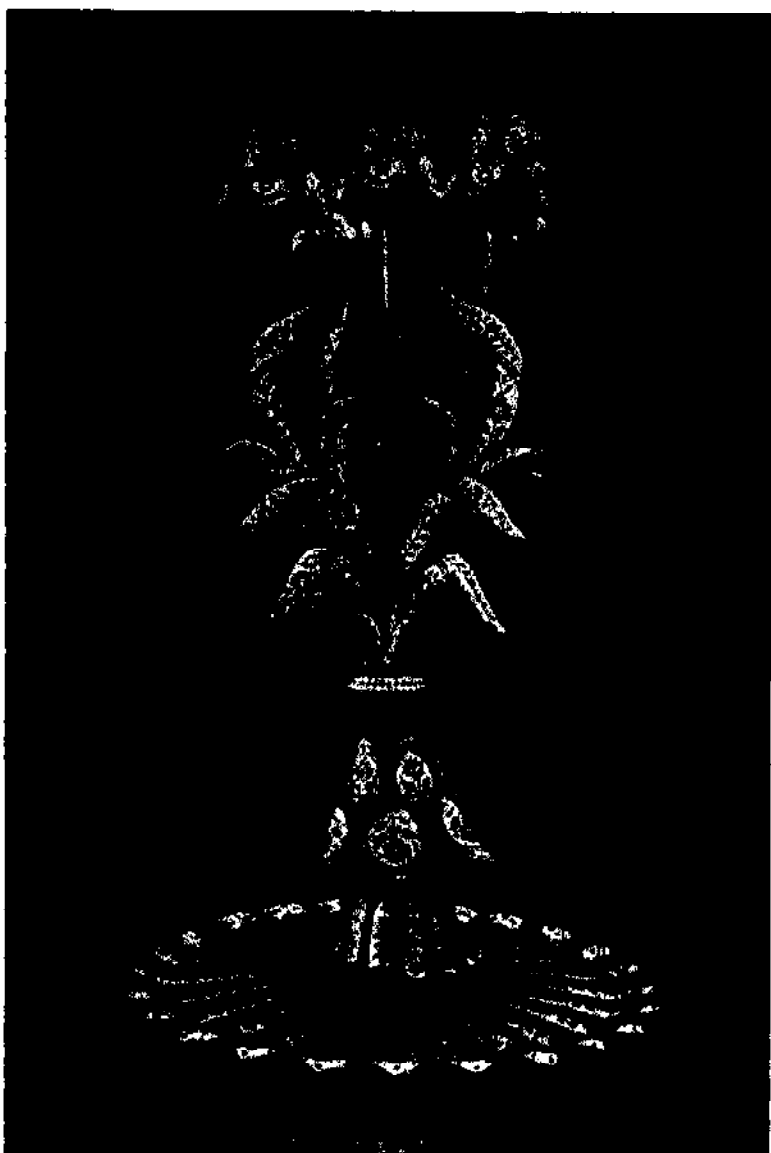
The rich collection of illuminated Qurans and classical works of eminent poets and authors written by master calligraphists and illustrated and adorned by expert artists of world renown occupy a pre-eminent position. Many of these manuscripts are unique and bear the autographs and seals of the kings in whose libraries they rested before their acquisition by the Salar Jung family. A Quran written in the thirteenth century by Yakut-al-Mustasimi, the court calligraphist of the last Abbasid Khalif, is a masterpiece of the Naskh style of writing. It bears autographs of three Mughal Emperors, Jehangir, Shah Jehan and Aurangzeb. Rauzat-ul-Muhibbin, a manuscript of Persian verse written by Mir Ali-al-Katib in 1548 is an illustrated work wherein the paintings have been executed by the artists of Bihzad School who flourished at the court of Sultan Abdul Aziz Bahadur Khan of Bukhara in the 16th century. The idea of depth produced by a gold background with a cluster of green trees in some illustrations is absolutely marvellous. It brings the human figures in the foreground almost into relief, although Persian



Krishna and Radha
Pahari School
19th Century A. D.



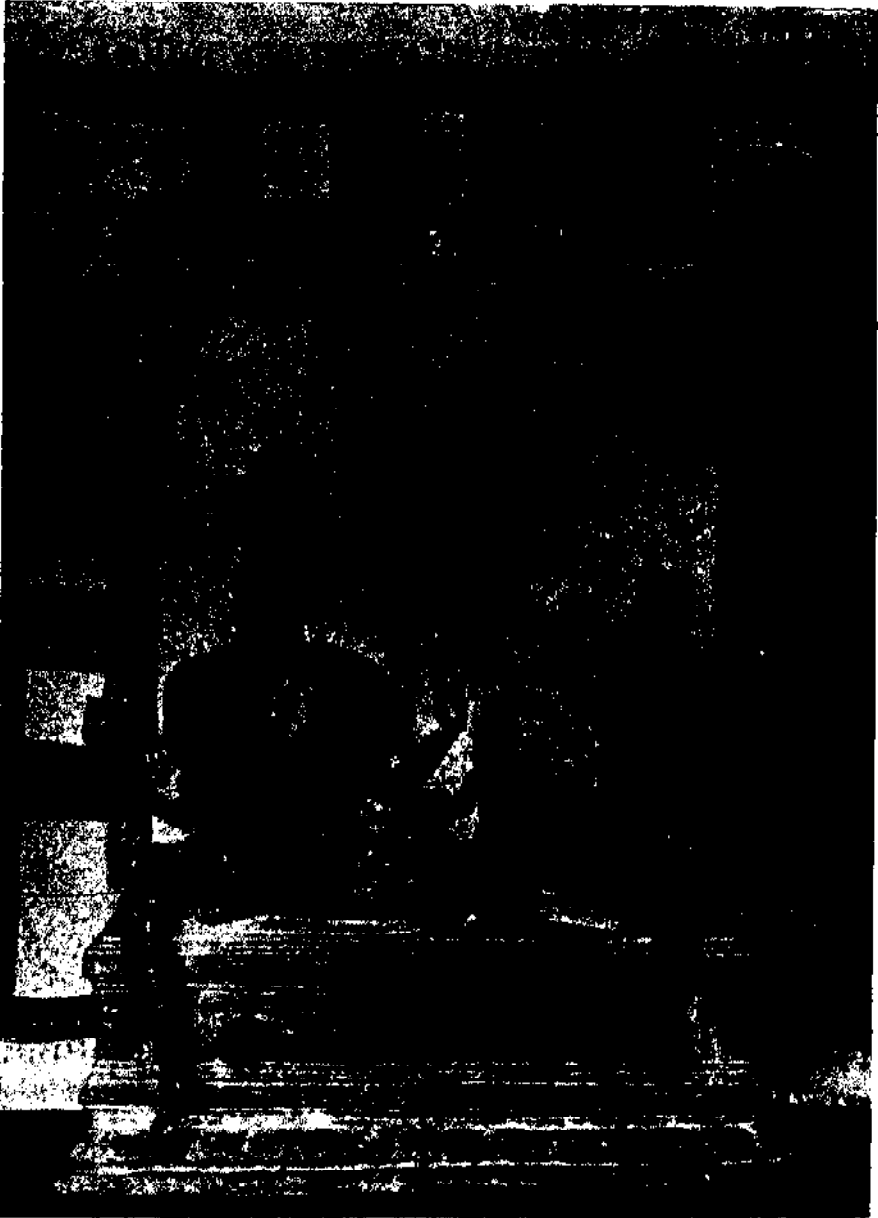
Hukka Bowl—Bidri
19th Century A. D.



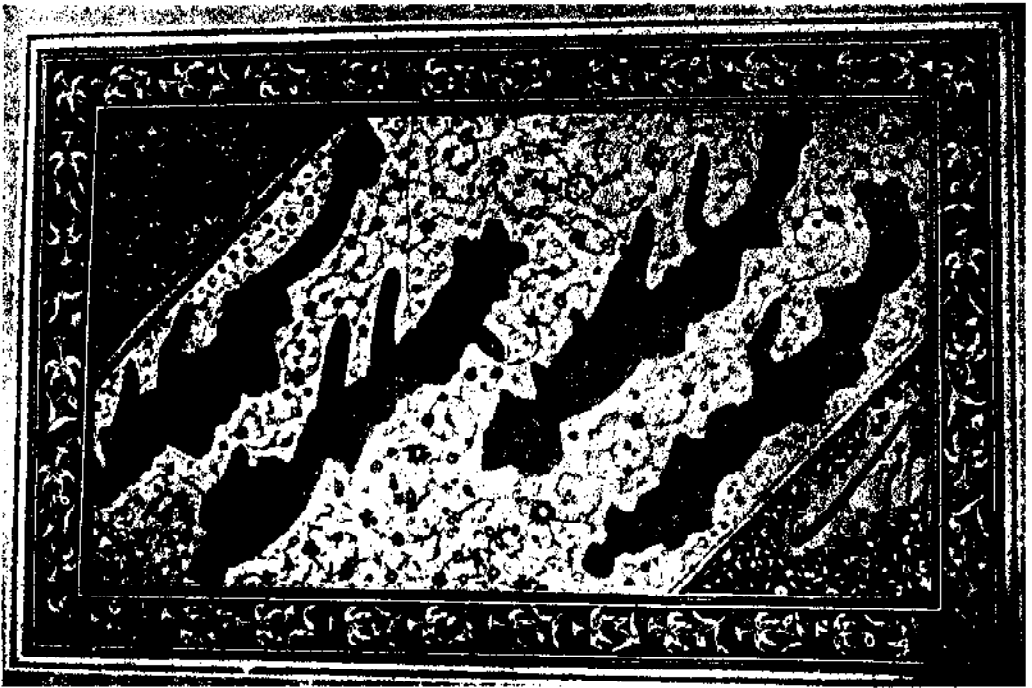
Candelabrum—Bidri
Aftabi Workmanship
19th Century A. D.



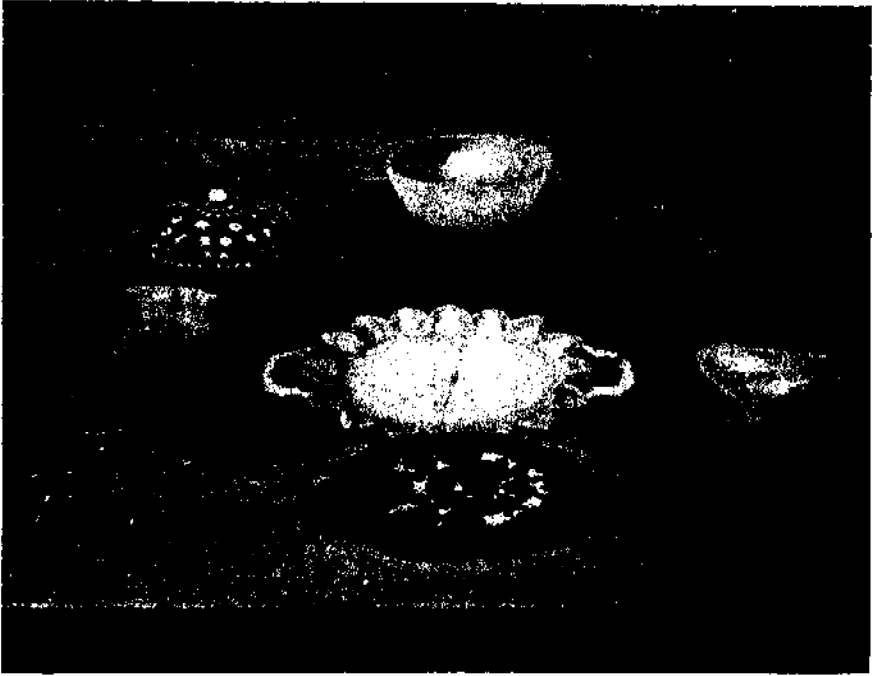
Bronze figure of Shiva
as Nataraj
Vijayanagar Period 16th Century A.D.



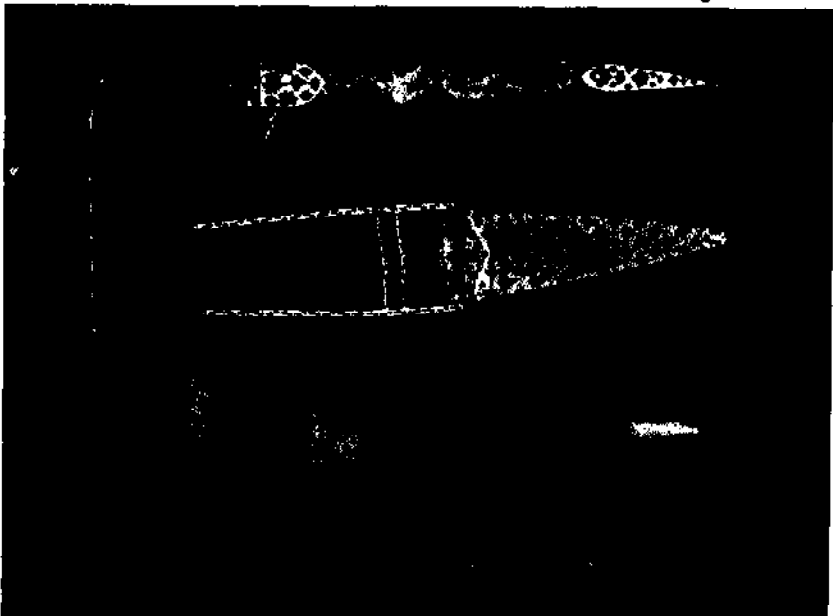
Sonaskanda
South Indian Bronze
17th Century A.D.



Calligraphic panel in
Nastaliq Script.



Indian Jade



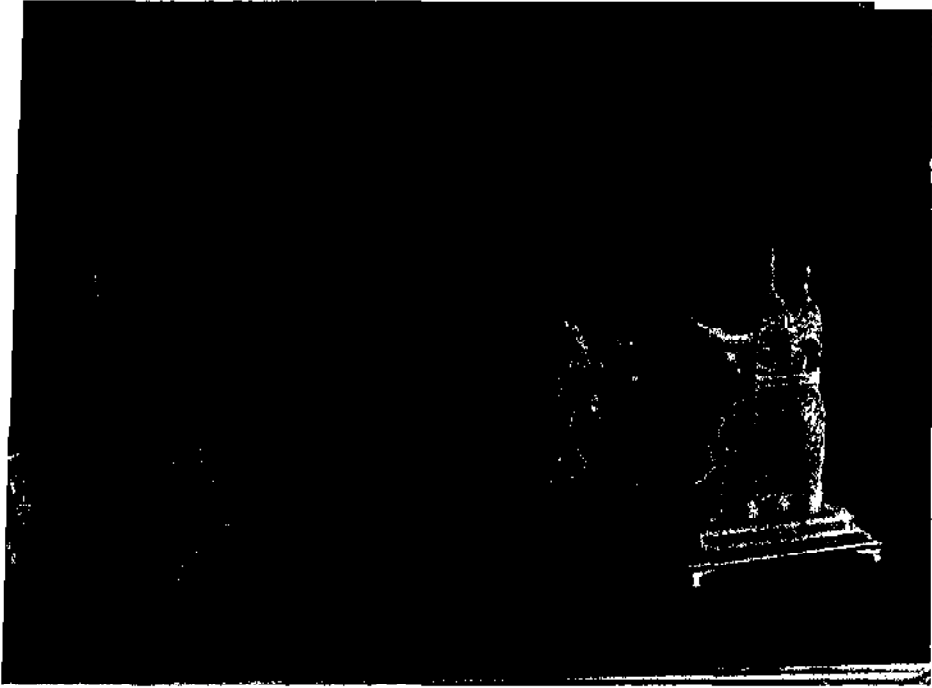
Moghul daggers

Top : Jehangir's hunting knife

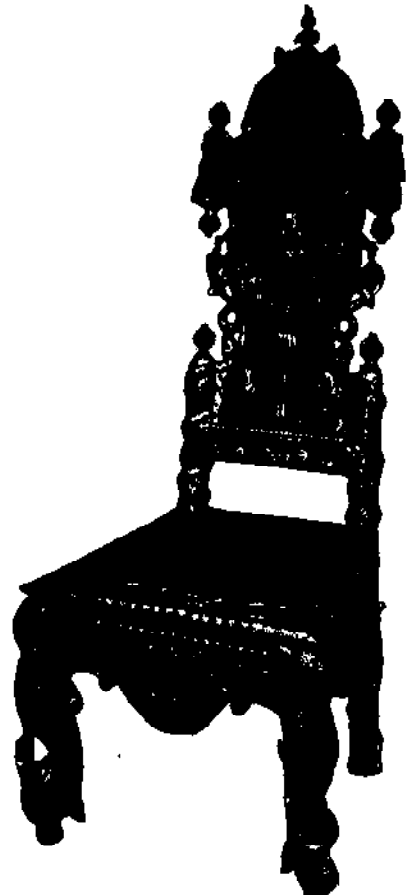
Second : Shah Jehan's enamelled Katar

Third : Aurangzeb's dagger

Fourth : Noor Jehan's Fruit Knife



Indian Ivory



Malabar
Carved Chair

paintings are generally considered to be flat. Another great manuscript is the poem book of the fifth Golconda King, Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah who built the Charminar and the Hyderabad city. It is in Deccani Urdu and contains early Deccani paintings. The scribe is the court calligrapher, Zainuddin Ali. The collection of manuscripts in the Museum and the Library is very rich in its contents.

India has always been famous for its textiles. Cotton was used to weave cloth in very olden times. The Museum collection, though mostly of the 19th century, is representative of the famous varieties of brocades and muslins. Kashmir shawls though limited in number offer the visitor delightful colour schemes and designs and depict the richness of the weaver's art. Among the old Indian costumes, a full robe of Dacca muslin is indeed a rare piece. The four Mughal curtains in red and green are also the proud possession of the Museum. It is believed that these came to Aurangabad from Delhi with Aurangzib.

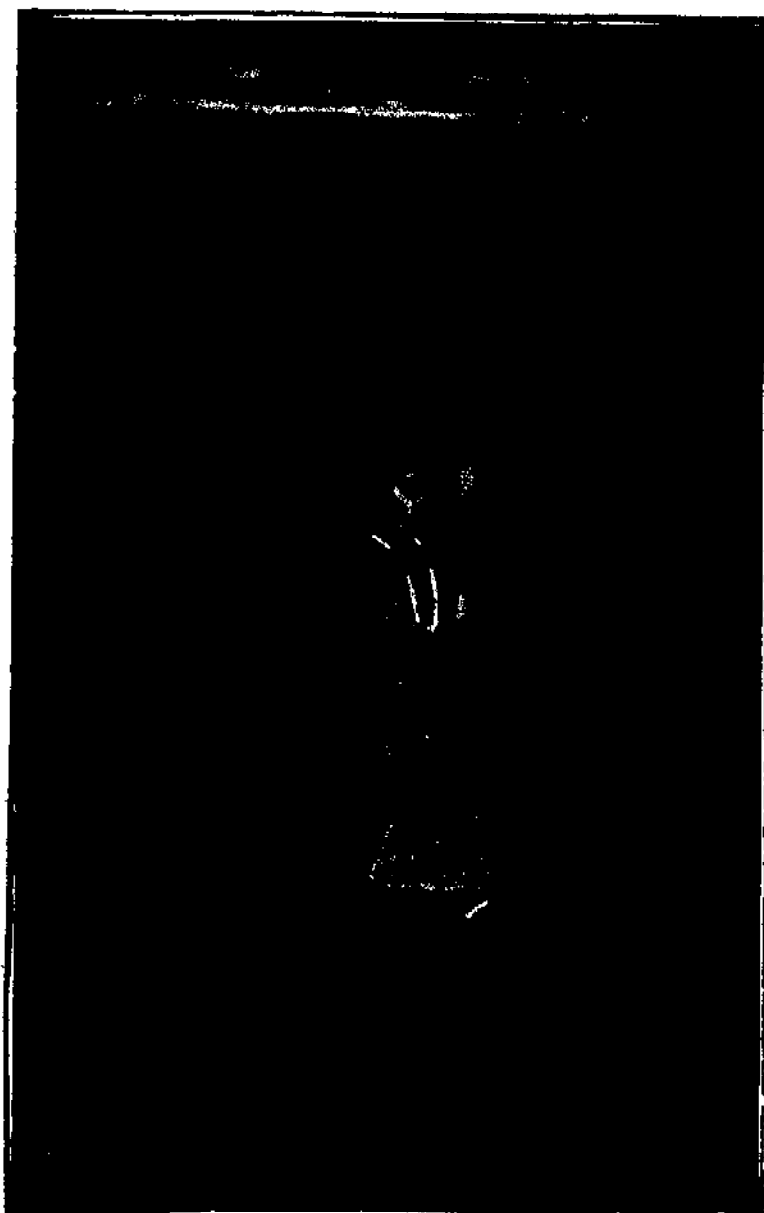
South India is represented by a few bronzes and the wood carver's art. The Somaskanda, the dancing Nataraja and a dozen smaller figures of the Tamil saints in bronze delightfully depict the Indian sculptor's art. The black stone figures of Mahavira and Parsvanath are inscribed pieces in Kanarese bearing dates of the 12th century A.D. Both the sculpture pieces are archaeological finds from the jagir villages of the Collector himself in the Raichur district. Specimens of Madura, Cochin and Calicut wood carvings emphasize higher levels of the Industrial Arts. Asiatic furniture suites spread in all the rooms of the Eastern Section show the fine wood carvings of Egypt, Damascus, Kashmir and South India. In the Indian furniture collection, there is also a set of ivory chairs associated with the name of the Warrior-Prince Tippu which exhibit the high skill of South Indian craftsman in ivory carving. The Bidriware collection in the Museum is probably the best in the country. It can boast of pieces which have been dated to belong to the 16th century. Both the techniques of "Aftabi" and "Tahnishan" are represented. The former method is to spread silver foil over the alloy of metal

and expose the alloy to form the desired pattern. The latter is inlay over the alloy in silver or gold.

The collection of Persian carpets is one of the most important possessions of the Museum. Practically all the famous looms of Persia are represented. The velvety metal thread carpets of Kashan, the Tree of Paradise carpets of Kirman, the multi-medallion and Arabesque carpets of North Persia and many others depict the typical designs and high skill of the looms of Tabriz, Isfahan and Herat. Some European and Indian carpets are also included in the collections. A magnificent carpet of metal thread, 24 feet long, and a delicately woven ivory carpet are the distinguished specimens of the Indian carpet industry.

The Silver room of the Museum mostly contains the heirlooms of the Salar Jung family. The silver trappings of the elephant, the horse and the chariot bullocks which were used on ceremonial occasions by Rajas and potentates of India can be seen now only within the museums. The Indian silver filigree of Kashmir, Calicut and Karimnagar conveys to the visitor the delicacy of the Indian silver-smith's art. The Karimnagar filigree pandan or betel nut container belonged to Salar Jung's mother and is a beautiful specimen of Indian silver filigree. The two other notable heir-looms are the silver punch bowl presented to Sir Salar Jung I in England in 1876 by Edward VII when he was Prince of Wales. Another presentation was a silver ewer and basin by the Duke of Edinburgh in the same year. Fish knives and forks belonging to George III also find a place in the Silver collection. Specimens of silver ware from Persia, Burma and European countries are also on view.

The Jade collection housed in a beautifully decorated room, named the Jade Room, is perhaps the finest assembled anywhere. Specially built-in-cabinets furnish a dazzling array of beautiful pieces of grape colour and pure white Jade. The encrusted spice boxes, mirror backs, hukka pipes, archery rings and a host of other articles hold the rapt attention of a visitor. The tradition of the family is associated by quite



A princess going for hunting on horse back
Mughal School.
16th Century A.D.



English Cut Glass



Mephistopheles and Margherita
Italian Wood Sculpture

a number of arms displayed in this room along with those of the Kings, Princes, and other potentates of India. Some of the outstanding arms are, an exquisite emerald and ruby fruit knife, once owned by Noor Jehan, the Emperor Jehangir's hunting knife, encrusted with diamonds, rubies and emeralds; Shah Jehan's enamelled Katar, Aurangazib's Jade dagger which he wore when he took the Golconda Fort; Tana Shah's jewelled sword and Aurangzib's plain sword. The sizeable arms collection in another three rooms contains practically all the varieties which were in vogue in the medieval times.

Western Section

The Western Section houses a choice but representative collection of Louis XIV, Empire and other European furniture; Dresden China, Wedgwood ware, Sevres China and cut glass pieces. An interesting statue in wood representing Mephistopheles and Margareta by an Italian sculptor is a masterpiece of its kind.

The marble statue known as the "Veiled Rebecca" by the gifted Italian sculptor Benzoni, exhibits the consummate skill of the artist in portraying the youthful beauty of Rebecca, although her body is draped in a tunic of heavy material, the face and neck are also covered with a veil. The graceful pose admirably conveys the charm of bodily contour and supple limbs and the carving of the shapely toes and texture of the fabric of the tunic further illustrate the technical skill of the sculptor. The statue, though a work of the 19th century, has the anatomical precision and life-like quality of a statue of the Classical Period.

The gallery of Western paintings displays originals by Landseer, Watts, Leighton, Cooper and by other well known Dutch, British, French and Italian painters. "The Watchful Sentinel" by Landseer, "Orphee et Eurydice" by Watts, "Ariandne Abandoned by Theseus" by Leighton, "Toulon" by Foster, "Cattle in Repose" by Cooper, "Piazza San Marco" by Canaletto, a couple of landscapes by Constable, "After the Hunt" by Chardin and a number of other paintings by European

artists adorn the walls of this section. Copies of the old masters include those of Rubens, Raphael, Botticelli, Titian, Velazquez, to name only a few, and these should appeal greatly to lovers of Western art and prove a veritable paradise to art students. Special mention must be made of two large oils—"The last Sacrement" by Montagean a wonderfully well-lit canvas in which the artist has used both daylight and torchlight with admirable skill; a still larger one "The Stigma Diabolican" by Vander Haghaen.

A rare piece in the Western Section is the Prayer book which contains 17 beautiful miniatures. It is dated 1456 and is more than five centuries old.

The Salar Jung Library is a component part of the Museum which has got more than fifty thousand manuscripts and printed volumes in Arabic, Persian, Urdu and English languages. The manuscript section is stocked with more than 7,500 books, out of which a number of them are considered to be rare. The Urdu and Persian manuscripts have been catalogued. The collection of Quran consisting of 368 items and another one of rare Arabic MSS are the other two printed catalogues available to the public. Genuine scholars and researchers are permitted to make use of the manuscript section of the Library. The printed section of the Library of all languages is open to the public during working hours of the Museum.

The collections of the Salar Jung Museum are not only inspiring to students of art and industry but have also an immense educational value in the training of the intellect and creation of love of beauty in the minds of ordinary people. As one is guided through this maze of art treasures, one cannot help wondering whether in the whole world, there ever was another individual collector like the late Nawab Salar Jung or a collection like the one exhibited in this Museum.



Veiled Rebecca
by Benzoni
1876



Cattle in Repose
by
T. S. Cooper



Sèvres Porcelain

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