



This Unique Statue of Mythical bird  
Is from our Burma Collection at NIU  
Is now on display in San Francisco  
at the Asian Art Museum

***Beyond Bollywood***, Aisan Art Museum in San Francisco





AMERICANS IN BURMA:  
*The Art of Collecting*



HISTORY AND LEGACY

1986-2002

2002-2023

THE CENTER FOR BURMA STUDIES

AT

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
Center for Burma Studies



The Center for Burma Studies at NIU is the only such research and curatorial institution in the US.  
NIU has the best Burma Art Collection outside of the country located in Southeast Asia.  
It is the only Center in the world which has a Burma Art Collection within a University.

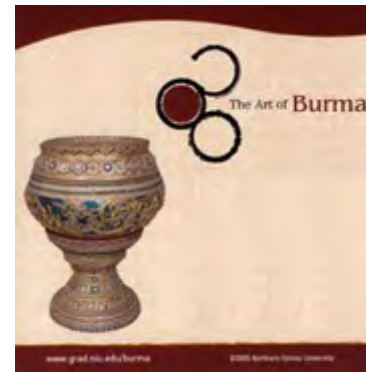


1. DONATIONS since the inception in 1986

2. PRESERVATION

3. EDUCATION

4. RESEARCH and PUBLICATIONS *The Journal Of Burma Studies* the only academic Peer reviewed Journal



5. EXHIBITION since 2004 (every two years) in conjunction with international Conferences and Symposiums

6. COLLABORATION

*Regional*

*National*

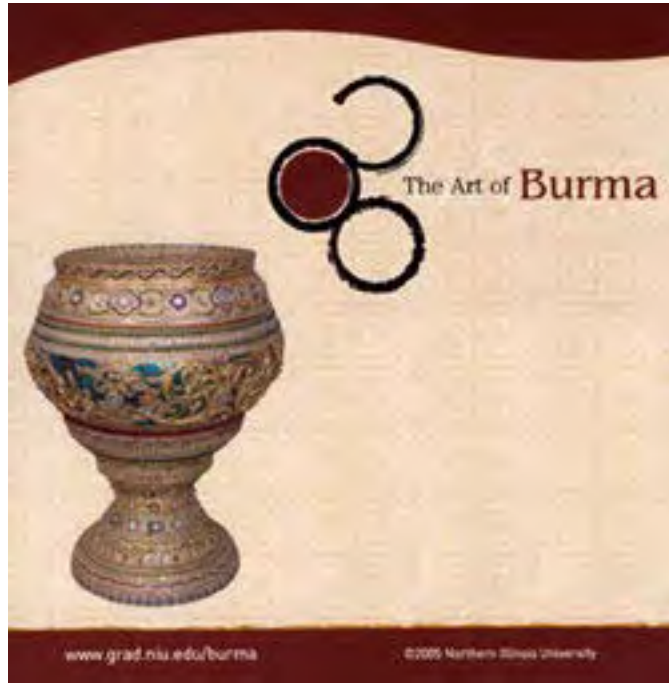
*International*

7. DIPLOMACY



## 1. DONATIONS since 1986

The Center for Burma Studies was founded in **1986** with a donation of **100 art objects**  
Today c.15,000 items including bibliographic holdings, maps, manuscripts and artwork



First online presence since 2005



Exhibition of Art of Burma at the NIU art Gallery in Chicago in 2005 ( review Chicago Tribune)







## 2. PRESERVATION

Thank you, to the BOT

The Center for Burma Studies at Northern Illinois University improves the **preservation, safety, and security** of c. 3,500 objects in its collections by upgrading its storage conditions.

Both graduate and undergraduate students assist with the project and receive training in object care and handling.

As the result of this grant the collection is accessible and visible. The collections is now used by various divisions of the university and by local community and international scholars.

Since 2022 we received more than 150 undergrads and graduate students from different disciplines and has welcomed dozens of outstanding national and international scholars.

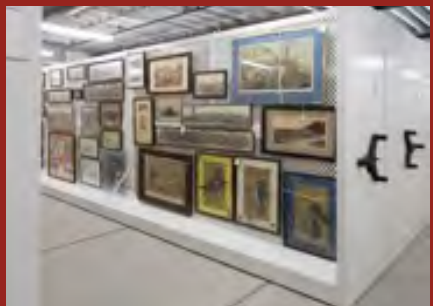


## Overcrowded storage in Swen Parson

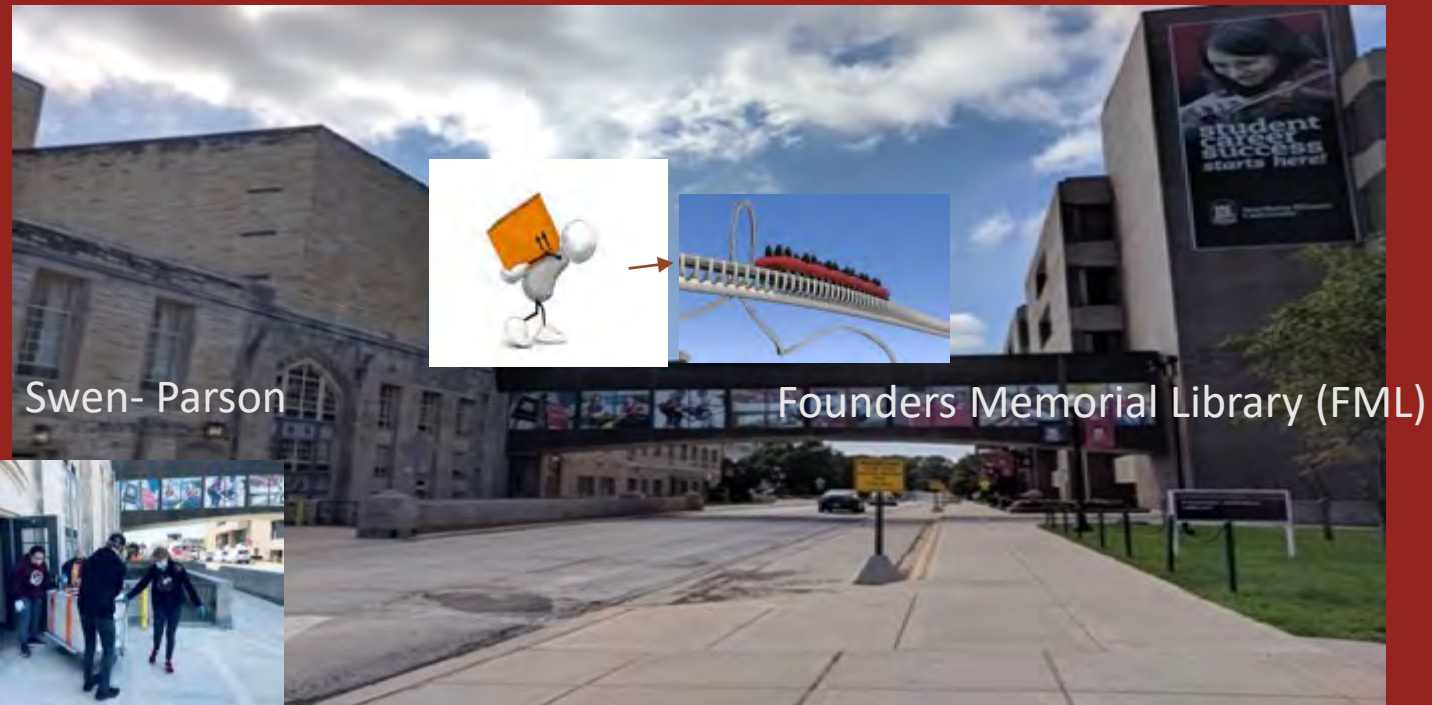


## MOVE DURING COVID

- In 2020 with the IMLS grant and the support of RIPS and BOT, compact shelving units were installed in the new storage space of 2,000 sq. ft located in the under basement of the NIU Founders Memorial Library during summer 2020.
- We moved all of the objects in late 2020 and early 2021 (approximately 3,500 items) from the basement and eighth floor of Swen Parson Hall to the new space located in the under-basement of the Founders Memorial Library.



New storage





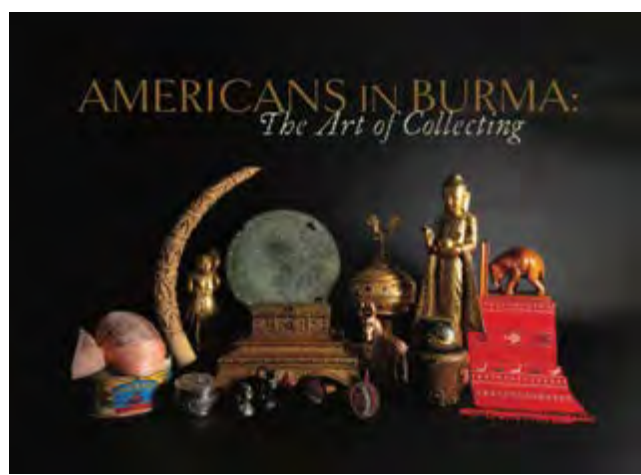
### 3. EDUCATION BRINGING BURMESE ART INTO THE CLASSROOM



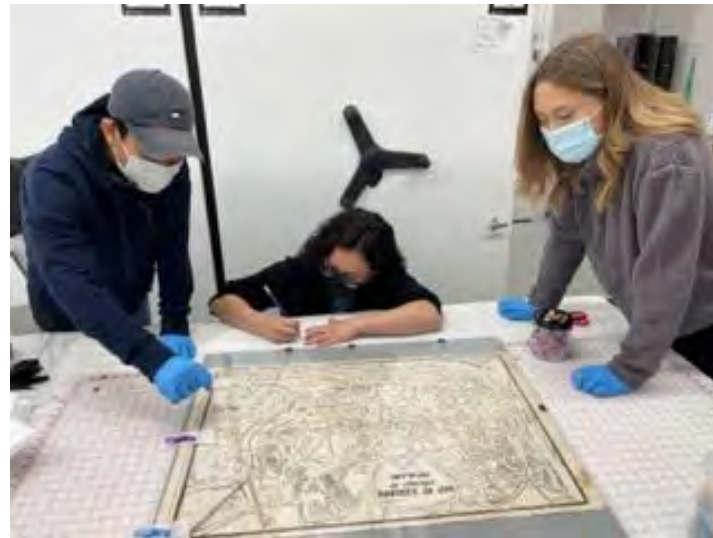
Burma Art sin Context  
ARTH 601 seminar, Hands On







Training students  
with our collections





**4. RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS** (our Center for Burma Studies at NIU holds the copyright of *The Journal Burma Studies*: likely the world's foremost peer-reviewed academic publication in the field of Burma Studies), produced bi-annual since 1997.

1997-2002-2009 First volumes published in SEAP Southeast Asia Press at NIU

2010-2016 Peer reviewed & Published by National University of Singapore (print & online)

2017- present Published by Hawaii University Press (print & online)

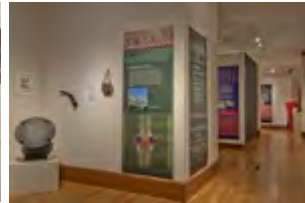




# 5. EXHIBITIONS Since 1986, the Burma Art Collection is used in a classroom for general education and for training



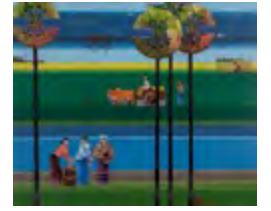
2023



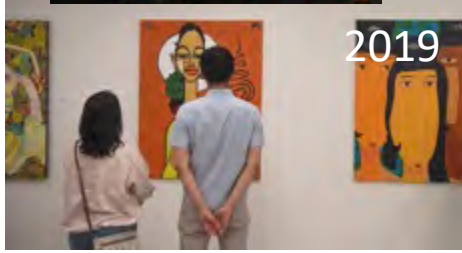
2021



2020-21



2019



2019



2018



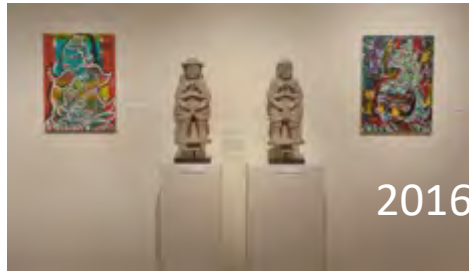
2017



2016



2016



2016



2016



2016



2016



2016

DONATIONS

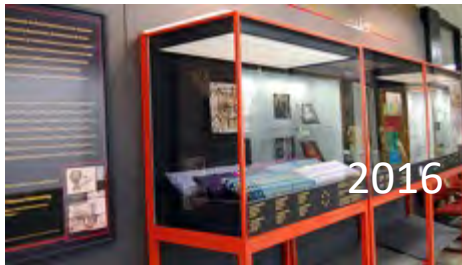
PRESERVATION

EDUCATION

RESEARCH

EXHIBITION

COLLABORATION



2016



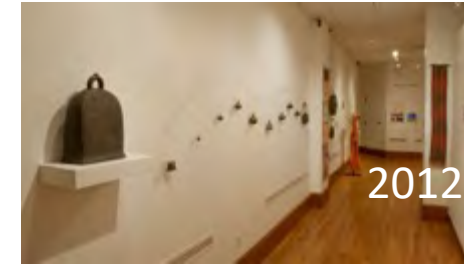
2015



2014



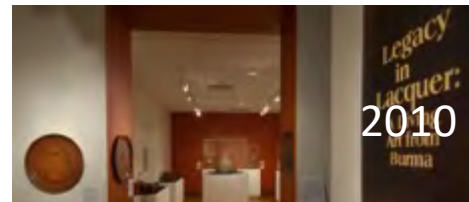
2013



2012



2011



2010



2009



2008



2006



From NIU  
to Burma  
/Myanmar



## 6. Collaboration

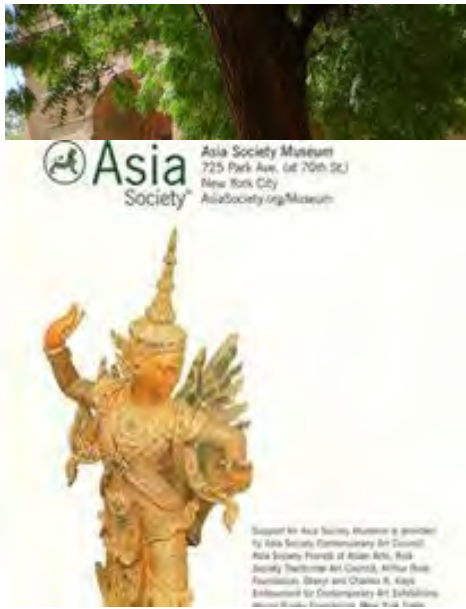
**Regional** with Community Colleges , with Local communities of Refugees ex. The Art of Surviving. The Journey of Burmese Karen Refugees of Illinois 2021 With the support of Luce Grant 2015-2020 and Luce Grant 2023-24.

**National:** with our collection at Museums in New York 2015, Cincinnati 2022, San Francisco 2023

**International:** Collaboration with Libraries, Museums and Universities in Burma/Myanmar and International Conferences in Asian and in Europe.



**Statues from the Burma Art Collection**  
On display at in San Francisco  
At the Asian Art museum 2023  
Cincinnati Art Museum 2022-23



Alumni in Yangon, Burma 2019



MoU signed



Alumni in Mandalay, 2019





## 6. COLLABORATION



**Inside NIU:** Interdisciplinary (with projects with the Center for Southeast Asia; and professors/students in Geography, Environment, Anthropology, Public Health, and Business).

**In Illinois** with the local communities of Burmese refugees in Rockford, Aurora, Chicago.

### Outside of NIU

2013 NIU visit 10 universities in Burma with the state department for collaboration

2013-2019 with **Exchange** with Libraries, Fulbright scholars, Museums

2014 IBSC in National University of Singapore

2015 Exhibit of pieces of NIU at the **Asia Society in New York**

2018 IBSC in Bangkok

2022 Exhibition with **Cincinnati Art Museum**

2023 Exhibition with Asian Art Museum in **San Francisco**

2023 IBSC with University of Zurich



Projects on Public Health & Environmental Studies 2014-19



Return of the 1,000 years old Buddha



# Repatriation & Diplomacy

## 2002-2012



Institute of International Education,



Burmese Ambassador in Paris  
HE U Kyaw Zwar Minn



National Museum of Yangon

The Saga of the stolen Buddha who travelled the world from Burma, to California, to New York, with NIU art historians was repatriated to Burma via Paris





Tai Manuscripts



Maps of T'ai Cultures in Asia

2013 T'ai Cultures at NIU in Honor of the coming of Princess Sirindhorn

Using our joint collections from NIU Library, CBS and the Anthropology as PR





Thank you for giving us  
this presentation  
opportunity and for  
your ongoing support!

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