

A Fuller View of China: Chinese Art in the Seattle Art Museum.* Josh Yiu. Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 2014 [Distributed by the University of Washington Press]. 210 pp.

Review by Mary Worrall

A Fuller View of China: Chinese Art in the Seattle Art Museum by Josh Yiu explores how the Seattle Art Museum's (SAM) Founding Director, Dr. Richard E. Fuller, built its Chinese art collection. Yiu, a former curator at SAM, has chronicled and analyzed Fuller's process and has opened the door to an intriguing examination of the collection. The story captures the development of the museum's collection and presents an account of a collector merging personal interests with institutional ones.

Fuller led the museum from 1933-1973 and the book follows his collecting path through the decades. The early chapters discuss Fuller's background, including the foundations of his collecting, an examination of his resources, and how he transitioned from collecting as a private individual to collecting for an institution. The book's third section speaks to his successes from the post World War II era into the 1970s, attributing them to an ability to build a strong collection through taking action, working with dealers, and cultivating a strong staff. The book closes by looking at the impact of Fuller's legacy, including how the foundations that he laid have enabled the SAM to work with contemporary artists and dealers.

The author notes that Fuller enjoyed a legendary status in the Seattle community during his lifetime and that this legacy poses a barrier in understanding him. This is reflected in text, as one might come away from this volume hoping for further insight into Fuller's life and of his role in the community, as both were intertwined with the building of the collection. There is a gap in his work, as Fuller's voice and words would ideally have played a bigger role in telling this story. This absence reflects the importance of capturing the stories of our own museum staffs for creating archives of our institutional histories. Regardless, this volume offers insight into process and serves as a study in museology.

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