September 5, 2014
For Immediate Release
Contact: Jo Burke, NIU Art Museum, 815.753.1936, email: jburke2@niu.edu; or Beth Bjorneby, Center for Burma Studies at NIU, 815.753.0512, bbjorn@niu.edu

The Northern Illinois University Art Museum and the Center for Burma Studies at NIU, with support from the Allen Series Fund of the Division of Art History in the NIU School of Art, extends an open invitation to a free public symposium, *Imaging the Others: The Art of Ethnography in Modern Burma* to take place on Thursday and Friday, September 18 and 19, 2014. This program is offered in conjunction with the exhibition *Dressing Difference: Exploring Ethnicities in Modern Burma* on display at the NIU Art Museum, August 26 - November 15, 2014.

International scholars engaged with visual materials were invited to address the topic of depiction of minority communities in historic Burma/Myanmar (and environs) during this symposium. Several have chosen to explore the idea of imaging from within and from outside a culture through the ethnic representations presented in nineteenth-century watercolors found in bound books as well as through photographs from the early twentieth century.

The symposium will begin on the evening of Thursday, September 18 with an informal curators’ talk in the museum gallery and a mini-reception from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Catherine Raymond, Director for the Center for Burma Studies at NIU and Curator for the Burma Art Collection at NIU will be joined by co-curator, Sherry Harlacher, Director for the Denison Museum, Denison University, Granville, Ohio to welcome guests and discuss the curation of *Dressing Difference: Exploring Ethnicities in Modern Burma*.

The full day symposium on Friday, September 19 will begin with a light breakfast from 9-9:45 in Altgeld 315 to be followed by welcoming remarks before the Keynote Presentation by Dr. Laura Hostetler, University of Illinois, Chicago, Chair of the History Department. Morning sessions will include presentations by Dr. Catherine Raymond, Director, Center for Burma Studies, Curator, Burma Art Collection at Northern Illinois University; Dr. Sherry Harlacher, Director and Curator, Museum of Denison University; and Dr. Richard M. Cooler, Professor Emeritus, Northern Illinois University, former Director & Curator, Center for Burma Studies, discussing the following topics: *Illustrating Ethnicity in Modern Burma* (Raymond); ‘Short Pleated Skirts' and ‘Coloured Cloth Gaiters': Fred W. Carey and His Trek through the Chinese Shan States (Harlacher); *Collecting Hill Tribe Jewelry in the 1970’s* (Cooler).

-MORE-
Following a lunch break on one’s own, sessions will reconvene at 1:30 with presentations by Dr. Sandra H. Dudley, University of Leicester, Director of Exhibitions & Collections, Programme Director, Heritage and Interpretation; Dr. Bernard Formoso, Centre National de Recherche Scientifique, Paris Professor, Department of Anthropology, Paris-Nanterre; and Dr. Susan Conway, School of Oriental and African Studies, London. Their topics will include: Where are the Karen? Visualizing and Losing the Subject in Local and Outsider Representations (Dudley); Costumes and Symbolism on the Sino Burmese Border: The Cases of Lahu and Kachin (Formoso); Dress and Ethnicity: Portrayal of the Tai in the Albums of Northern Illinois University (Conway).

The symposium will conclude with commentary presented by discussant, Professor Emeritus F.K. Lehman (aka Chit Hlaing), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The complete schedule may be found on the NIU Center for Burma Studies website: www.niu.edu/burma

Parking is available in the Visitor Lot off Carroll Street ($5); and may also be found in Lot 3 at the northeast corner of Gilbert and College during the symposium.

###

Image:

Image of Kachin couple, anonymous, nd, watercolor on paper, from an ethnographic album, “Tribes of Burma”, circa 1900, h. 11 in. x w. 13 in, 2005 Purchase, Founders Memorial Library at NIU.

High res image available upon request.