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Imperial Silks: Ch'ing Dynasty Textiles in The Minneapolis Institute of Arts (2 Volume Set)

Robert D. Jacobsen

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Robert D. Jacobsen : Imperial Silks: Ch'ing Dynasty Textiles in The Minneapolis Institute of Arts (2 Volume Set) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Imperial Silks: Ch'ing Dynasty Textiles in The Minneapolis Institute of Arts (2 Volume Set):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Awesome textile artistry!By Jeffrey LimA great book to add to my collection of Asian textile artistry. A must have if you are into textile arts of Asia or have an Asian art library. This two volume book is probably definitive enough.7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. fabulous collection of imperial silks, beautifully presentedBy Ivor E. ZetlerThese 2 large and weighty volumes showcase the collection of imperial silks in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. The core of the collection was accumulated by William Colby, a San Fransisco attorney, during the 1920s and 1930s. There are 592 items described in these books and each object is generally illustrated on a whole page. More than half of the textiles (normally silk or satin) are shown in high quality color photographs.There was a strict delineation of the type of clothes worn by different stratas of Chinese society. This is borne out in the Minneapolis collection. A broad range of clothes as well as textiles are on view; robes, surcoats,religious attire, vests, aprons, hats, furniture covers, belts, pictoral hangings etc. Although I am no expert in this field, the vast majority of the items in the Minneapolis collection are attractive, colorful and interesting. Each item

is annotated. This beautiful set of books, luxuriously printed, has given me much pleasure over the years. It would be of great appeal to those interested in Chinese textiles and fabrics in general. Although the price seems expensive, I feel it presents good value.

This stunning two-volume book is the long-awaited catalogue of the exquisite collection of Ch'ing (Qing) dynasty imperial textiles and costumes from the collection of The Minneapolis Institute of Arts. This collection has a rich history. Approximately half of it belonged to the San Francisco attorney William E. Colby, who had amassed the collection throughout the opportunistic decades of the 1920's and 1930's, and was acquired by The Minneapolis Institute of Arts under the advice of Alfred Pillsbury. Now consisting of over 600 items, it is considered one of the finest and most comprehensive holdings of Ch'ing textiles outside of China. Only a few works from the collection have been exhibited over the past six decades, including exhibitions at The Minneapolis Institute of Arts in 1943 and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1945, both curated by Alan Priest. Not until 1977, the year in which the Asian Arts department of The Minneapolis Institute of Arts was established, was the entire collection been systematically supplemented, researched, and catalogued. The 1991 exhibition, *Imperial Silks of the Ch'ing Dynasty*, displayed more of the collection than ever before, and is the foundation of this present comprehensive catalogue written by Dr. Robert Jacobsen, the museum's curator of Asian Art. *Imperial Silks* opens with an overview of the archaeological record of silk in China and then divides the museum's collection of Ch'ing dynasty textiles into nine chapters of twenty-six basic categories of garments, decorative furnishings, and accessories. Arranged chronologically by type, about two hundred of the primary objects are accompanied by technical analysis. A glossary is also provided to clarify the terminology used for this study. An indispensable reference for libraries, scholars, collectors, dealers, and interested individuals alike, this catalogue will further promote our understanding of Chinese silk textiles, one of that nation's great accomplishments and one of the world's foremost artistic legacies.