



RUBIN  
MUSEUM  
OF ART

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***  
**March 2011**

***NEW EXHIBITION PRESENTS STUNNING WORKS  
FROM THE RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART COLLECTION***

New York—A new installation of masterworks representing the diversity of artistic achievements across the full arc of the Himalayas will open at the Rubin Museum on March 11, 2011. Together with the museum's new introductory exhibition *Gateway to Himalayan Art*, the installation will provide visitors with different pathways for appreciating the art from this region and allow them to more deeply engage with the art on view throughout the museum's six floors of galleries.

*Masterworks: Jewels of the Collection* will remain on view for five years, serving as a vital reference point for the museum's diverse exhibitions—ranging from *Mirror of the Buddha: Early Painted Portraits from Tibet* to *Hero, Villain, Yeti: Tibet in Comics*—which are all rooted in the fundamentals of Himalayan art.

The exhibition is organized geographically, setting the diverse regional traditions of West Tibet, Central Tibet, East Tibet and Bhutan in relation to the neighboring areas of India, Kashmir, Nepal, China, and Mongolia. Visitors can explore the major strands of the development of Himalayan art, covering a period of over one thousand years, as well as some regional artistic traditions in their wider cultural, geographic, historical, and stylistic interrelationships. For example, artistic traditions of Nepal and South-Central Tibet are juxtaposed with distinct early Tibetan examples. East Tibetan artistic traditions are similarly contrasted with artistic traditions of China and Mongolia.

Over the next five years, *Masterworks* will include representations of a wide range of Buddhist and Hindu deities, rendered in all major media including stone, metal, wood, ground mineral pigments on cloth, paper, appliqué, ivory, silk, ink, and papier-mâché. An inscribed metalwork lion throne from Karakorum Highway (now in northern Pakistan) is the exhibition's earliest work, dating to the early 7<sup>th</sup> century. Works from the 9<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup> centuries will also be on view.

Life-size facsimiles of an entire sequence of murals from the Lukhang, the Dalai Lamas' Secret Temple near the Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet, provide an exceptional opportunity for viewing Himalayan art at its most lavish. The original 18<sup>th</sup> century wall paintings—inaccessible to the public until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century—uniquely depict the most esoteric of meditation and yoga practices in vivid color and detail. Created with new photographic methods by Thomas Laird and Clint Clemens, this display of large-format, high resolution pigment prints allows for even better access to the paintings than is possible in the temple itself. Their presentation at the Rubin marks the first showing in the world of prints created using this technology, and also provides the first ever opportunity outside Tibet to view life-size Tibetan murals in their relationship to portable art from the region.

*Masterworks* will also highlight the museum's most notable recent acquisitions, all of which have rarely or never before been exhibited. Works of particular note on view during the first year of the exhibition include an immensely dense and colorful scroll painting of a group of protective deities from the 18<sup>th</sup> century; one of the few known large coral-studded masks from Mongolia in the world; and a recently restored embroidered image of Vajrapani that represents a unique image-making technique perfected by Tibetan Buddhist teachers under the lavish patronage of the Chinese court.

### **Support**



*Masterworks: Jewels of the Collection* was made possible, in part, with an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

## **About the Rubin Museum of Art**

The Rubin Museum holds one of the world's most important collections of Himalayan art. Paintings, pictorial textiles, and sculpture are drawn from cultures that touch upon the arc of mountains that extends from Afghanistan in the northwest to Myanmar (Burma) in the southeast and includes Tibet, Nepal, Mongolia, and Bhutan. The larger Himalayan cultural sphere, determined by significant cultural exchange over millennia, includes Iran, India, China, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia. The museum explores these rich cultural legacies—largely unfamiliar to Western viewers—from a variety of perspectives, offering multiple entry-points for understanding and enjoying the art of the Himalayas.

Admission to RMA is \$10 for adults; \$5 for seniors; \$5 for students (with ID); free for seniors the first Monday of every month; and free for children under 12 and for museum members. Gallery admission is free to all on Fridays between 6pm and 10pm.

Open Monday 11 am to 5 pm, Wednesday 11 am to 7 pm, Thursday 11 am to 5 pm, Friday 11 am to 10 pm, Saturday and Sunday from 11 am to 6 pm; closed on Tuesday. To reach the museum by subway, visitors may take the A, C or E to 14th Street; the 1 to 18th Street; 1, 2, 3 to 14th Street; F and M to 14th Street; N, R, Q, 4, 5 and 6 to 14th or the L to 6th Avenue. By bus, visitors may take the B20 to the corner of 7th Avenue and 17th Street.

## **For further information and images, please contact:**

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