



THE
RUBIN

MUSEUM
OF
ART

PRESS RELEASE

RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART ANNOUNCES 2019 THEME, “POWER: WITHIN AND BETWEEN US,” A YEARLONG FOCUS ON EMPOWERING VISITORS

Exhibitions, programs, and experiences will spark new ways of thinking about power, from inner to outer

Sharelines:

-  #OurPower: @RubinMuseum examines theme of power in 2019.
-  Experience how power exists within and between us in @RubinMuseum exhibitions, programs, and experiences. RubinMuseum.org/Power #OurPower

New York, NY, November 28, 2018 — The Rubin Museum of Art will dedicate its 2019 exhibitions, programs, and experiences to the theme of power, focusing on how visitors can activate the power that exists “within and between us.” Drawing on a diverse range of sources and perspectives, from contemporary art to scientific theories to Buddhist philosophies, the Rubin Museum will explore secular and religious systems of power as well as personal and collective agency.

“Given the tectonic shifts in existing power dynamics globally, many of us struggle with feelings of powerlessness. The art and philosophies in our collection offer us a starting point for beginning a deeper discussion with visitors about the nature of power, about our intentions, our actions, and our ability to make a difference” said Jorrit Britschgi, director of the Rubin Museum. “In 2019, we will bring together a diverse set of voices and experiences on power—offering thought-provoking and unexpected ways to think about power, both within and between us.”

The Rubin Museum’s 2019 exhibitions and programs highlight multiple perspectives and seek to empower visitors to think about their role as individuals and as a collective in creating, maintaining, and challenging existing systems of power. Historical and contemporary artworks and perspectives will complement one another throughout the year, opening up the possibility for new dialogues and juxtapositions.

Highlights of 2019 will include:

EXHIBITIONS AND ART INSTALLATIONS

Faith and Empire: Art and Politics in Tibetan Buddhism

February 1, 2019 – July 15, 2019

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The force of religion to claim political power is a global phenomenon, and Tibetan Buddhism once offered such divine means to power and legitimacy to rule. Through more than 60 objects from the 8th to the 19th century, the exhibition explores the dynamic historical intersection of politics, religion, and art, illuminating how Tibetan Buddhism presented a model of universal sacral kingship and how images became a primary means of political propagation. By placing Himalayan art in a larger historical context, the exhibition sheds light on an important but little-known aspect of power in the Tibetan tradition.

Sharing Power at the Long Table

February – December 2019

“The Long Table,” an open-source participatory project conceived by artist and activist Lois Weaver, will provide a forum for visitors and community groups to engage in a series of conversations on sharing power, structured by etiquette provided on “menus.” Audience-driven discussions will occur throughout the year, and the table will be free and open to the public for pop-up discussions.

The Power of Intention: Reinventing the (Prayer) Wheel

March 1, 2019 – October 14, 2019

Prayer wheels are ritual objects containing thousands, even millions, of written prayers and mantras. Inspired by these objects, as well as our own power to create positive change, this exhibition brings together select examples of traditional and contemporary art to illuminate the relationship between our intentions, commitments, and actions. International artists Monika Bravo, Alexandra Dementieva, Youdhistir Maharjan, Charwei Tsai, and Scenocosme take the Tibetan prayer wheel on a conceptual spin, with their works manifesting in visible and tangible forms the power of intention, commitment, belief, repetition, and accumulation.

- **January 16, 2019 – January 6, 2020:** Visitors can empower their own intentions by turning **The Wheel of Intentions**, an interactive installation in the lobby created by data artist Ben Rubin, Potion Design, and the Rubin Museum. Individual intentions will join those of other visitors as they travel up the spiral staircase and take visual form within “The Power of Intention” exhibition.

The Power of Non-Conformity (working title)

August 9, 2019 – January 6, 2020

Concepts from punk to pacifism converge in a group exhibition that reflects upon the themes of social consciousness, transgression and subversion, which are presented through a wide array of media including painting, drawing, video, sculpture and installation. This timely exhibition invites us to look beyond the surface and consider art’s transformative power to influence society and culture through the perspective of U.S. and international artists.

Select Objects on View in Masterworks of Himalayan Art and Gateway to Himalayan Art

May 31, 2019 – January 6, 2020

- Select objects from the Rubin Museum’s collection will be highlighted within the context of power. These works include representations of deities associated with female power and ritual objects that symbolize power. An

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audio tour and exhibition guide will accompany these highlighted objects and offer additional context.

- A special installation gallery will focus on Buddhist relics as power objects, featuring a collection of gems discovered in an ancient Buddhist stupa at Piprahwa in northern India. These gems are considered “contact relics”—objects of power believed to possess an enormous amount of blessings. Visitors will learn about their significance as well as the discovery of the stupa and its contents.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Brainwave: Power (February – April 2019)

During the annual Brainwave series, mind scientists will meet notable experts from all walks of life to question the idea that power is in the mind. Visitors will be a part of expanding the conversation on the intricacies of power: what it is and what it means.

Game of Thrones Tours (February – April 2019)

These tours examine Tibetan Buddhist art history through the lens of the HBO series “Game of Thrones,” along with the idea that “the Faith and the Crown are the twin pillars of the world.”

Compassionate Action Series (Summer 2019)

Summer talks and workshops will focus on giving people the tools to commit to intentions and enact change in their lives. Experts and facilitators will walk participants through the course, helping them realize their goals, stay committed, and find community along the way.

The Power of Non-Conformity Series (Fall 2019)

Visitors and expert guests will look at countercultural practices and how they have the potential to upend normative systems and ways of thinking, sometimes leading to a form of liberation. Artists, writers and thinkers will be invited to engage in onstage conversations, subversive suppers, and radical takeovers of the Museum, all designed to challenge visitor behavior.

MUSEUM EXPERIENCES

Rubin Museum Fete (May 7, 2019)

Festivities and engagement activities take over the Museum for this cocktail event and thematic celebration.

Block Party (July 21, 2019)

The Rubin Museum takes over 17th Street for a free, festive celebration focused on empowering families, with performances, art making, gallery activities, and activities led by community groups.

Dream-Over (Date TBD)

At the annual anticipated event, visitors sleep in front of a specially chosen work of art, learn what their dreams have to say, and experience the power of their own subconscious minds.

SPIRAL MAGAZINE

The third issue of *Spiral*, a free annual publication, will amplify the theme of power while going a bit further afield, featuring interviews and essays by scholars (**Donald Lopez, Karl Debreczeny**), influencers (**Kasia Urbaniak**), artists (**Sanford Biggers, Marina Abramovic, Kembra Pfahler**), and practitioners (**Kate Johnson, Lama Tsultrim Allione**).

About the Rubin Museum of Art

The Rubin Museum of Art is an arts oasis and cultural hub in New York City's vibrant Chelsea neighborhood that inspires visitors to make powerful connections between contemporary life and the art and ideas of the Himalayas, India, and neighboring regions. With a diverse array of thought-provoking exhibitions and programs—including films, concerts, and on-stage conversations—the Rubin provides immersive experiences that encourage personal discoveries and spark new ways of seeing the world. Emphasizing cross-cultural connections, the Rubin is a space to contemplate the big questions that extend across history and span human cultures.

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