

## PRESS RELEASE

### REVEAL HIDDEN CONTENT TO EXPERIENCE PAST AND FUTURE IN “THE SECOND BUDDHA: MASTER OF TIME”

***Rubin Museum exhibition opening February 2, 2018, highlights the magical legends of Buddhist master Padmasambhava through paintings, sculptures, and AR technology***

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Future and past converge @RubinMuseum with art depicting magical legends of #SecondBuddha. <http://rma.cm/2gx>



Padmasambhava projected teachings into the future, predicting the opportune time for them to be revealed. Discover through art and AR @RubinMuseum. <http://rma.cm/2gx>

**New York, NY (December 19, 2017)** — In 2018, the future will be both present and projected from the past at the Rubin Museum of Art, with a new exhibition where visitors will discover the legends of the tantric master Padmasambhava. An iconic figure in Tibetan culture celebrated as “The Second Buddha,” Padmasambhava is known for bringing Buddhism to Tibet and is believed to have concealed treasure teachings for future discovery. Opening February 2, “The Second Buddha: Master of Time” brings together 41 works of art from the 13th to 20th century with interactive technology, enabling visitors to discover hidden meanings in the artworks.

The legends of the Second Buddha carry universal relevance about triumph over obstacles, transformation, and notions of time. Launching the Rubin’s yearlong theme of “The Future,” the exhibition will highlight the interconnected nature of the past and future, especially the treasure teachings that Padmasambhava is said to have concealed in physical locations and his disciples’ minds for future discovery. Many of the stunning works on view depict these treasure teachings, which were revealed by disciples at opportune times centuries later. To parallel the discovery of these treasure teachings, visitors will also activate and reveal objects in the gallery to find their hidden meanings. Using Augmented Reality (AR) technology in the exhibition, visitors will discover concealed content in several artworks, and motion-responsive lighting effects will reveal select paintings’ inherent power. These

experiential elements will add another dimension to the narratives and themes depicted in these works of art.

“The traditional visual culture centered on Padmasambhava offers rich material to explore universal notions that transcend time and cultures,” said Elena Pakhoutova, curator. “Tibetans tie their cultural identity to stories about this famous enlightened master which have been written and rewritten over centuries and are still being told, retold, and expressed in diverse forms of visual and performed arts. The system of concealed treasure teachings continues to sustain the Buddhist tradition today. By presenting the legends embedded in this visual material for a contemporary audience, we invite visitors to think about the interrelated nature of the past and future, how it serves to construct our individual and collective identities, and how we ourselves enable a meaningful future.”

The exhibition is organized in three sections, the first of which introduces the legendary master Padmasambhava in the context of Tibetan cultural history. The other two sections delve into the concealed treasure teachings and the interconnected nature of the past and future. Through interactive AR technology, visitors will discover hidden content in the paintings and sculptures on view. Audio tour devices will also be available for a self-guided exploration of the exhibition. Scheduled performances by professional storytellers will make the images in the exhibition come alive.

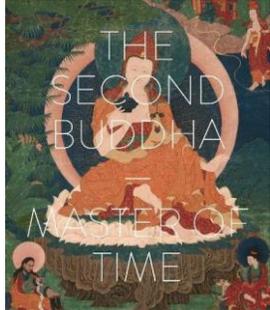
Select highlights of art objects include:



From left to right: Padmasambhava, Tibet; 15th century, Rubin Museum of Art C2005.16.36 (HAR 65459); Padmasambhava as Senge Dradok, Kham Province, Eastern Tibet; 18th century, Rubin Museum of Art Gift of Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation F1997.30.8 (HAR 633); Portable Shrine (Tashi Gomang) of Padmasambhava's Palace on the Copper-colored Mountain, Private Collection NYC

The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication, co-produced with Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College, and will travel to the Tang Museum in 2019.

In fall 2018, the Rubin Museum will hold a seminar organized in partnership with Columbia University and Skidmore College that will explore the significance of Padmasambhava in more diverse contexts and bring together scholars and representatives of Tibetan Buddhist traditions and practitioners.



Cover image of publication

“The Second Buddha: Master of Time” is organized by the Rubin Museum of Art, New York and the Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College, and the exhibition is made possible in part by the Ellen Bayard Weedon Foundation, E. Rhodes & Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, and contributors to the 2018 Exhibition Fund. The exhibition is curated by Elena Pakhoutova, and the design and installation are overseen by John Monaco, both of the Rubin Museum.

### **About Elena Pakhoutova**

Elena Pakhoutova is Curator of Himalayan Art at the Rubin Museum of Art with a PhD in Asian Art History from the University of Virginia. Her background in Tibetan Buddhist studies contributes to her interdisciplinary approach to art history. Her research explores dialogues in the visual traditions of Inner Asia, art and ritual, art production and patronage, text and image, and narrative in Tibetan visual culture. Her other interests include cross-cultural exchange, material culture, and contemporary Tibetan art. At the Rubin Museum she has curated several exhibitions, including most recently “Nepalese Seasons: Rain and Ritual,” “Collecting Paradise: Buddhist Art of Kashmir and Its Legacies” and “The All-Knowing Buddha: A Secret Guide” (co-curated with Karl Debreczeny).

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

The Rubin Museum of Art is an arts and cultural hub in New York City’s vibrant Chelsea neighborhood that inspires visitors to make connections between contemporary life and the art and ideas of the Himalayas 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 ideas that extend across history and span human cultures.

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