

PRESS RELEASE

**CONTEMPORARY WORKS BY TSHERIN SHERPA AND CHARWEI TSAI
COMPLEMENT RUBIN MUSEUM SHRINE ROOM IN “WISHES AND
OFFERINGS”**

*Opening October 26, 2018, “Shrine Room Projects” reflects on sacred
spaces, objects, and practices*

Sharelines:

-  Reflect on sacred sites, objects and practices in “Shrine Room Projects: Wishes and Offerings” @RubinMuseum
-  Works by Tsherin Sherpa and Charwei Tsai complement traditional Buddhist art in “Shrine Room Projects: Wishes and Offerings” @RubinMuseum

New York, NY, September 27, 2018 — With the Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room installation as an anchor, the Rubin Museum of Art will present related contemporary artworks by Tsherin Sherpa and Charwei Tsai in “Shrine Room Projects: Wishes and Offerings.” On view October 26, 2018–September 16, 2019, the featured works offer reflections on rituals, offerings, and aspirations—themes that connect directly to the Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room installation as well as to visitors contemplating their own wishes and offerings.

Sherpa’s “Wish-fulfilling Tree” (2016) represents a poignant response to the earthquakes that struck his home country of Nepal in 2015. The large-scale installation includes a seven-layer bronze mandala, an idealized representation of the universe, surrounded by rubble, debris, and found objects — all sourced from within five blocks of the Rubin Museum. “Wish-fulfilling Tree” is both a memorial to the destruction of the earthquake and a wish for the future, creating a relationship between cosmic aspiration and earthly reality.



Image: Tsherin Sherpa (b. 1968, Kathmandu, Nepal); Wish-fulfilling Tree; 2016; bronze cast mandala, found objects, and rubble; courtesy of the artist and Rossi & Rossi; photograph courtesy of Rossi & Rossi



Tsai’s video work “Incense Mantra” (2013) features burning incense that the artist inscribed with Buddhist mantras. As they burn, the mantras release their power into the environment, increasing the intentional aspirations of the artist.

Charwei Tsai (b. 1980, Taipei, Taiwan) in collaboration with Tsering Tashi Gyalthang (b. 1980, Dharamsala, India); Incense Mantra; 2013; HD black-and-white video with sound, 8 min.; courtesy of the artist

“By exhibiting these artworks alongside the traditions evoked by the Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room, visitors have the opportunity to experience the power of sacred practices across time and geography,” said Beth Citron, Curator, Modern and Contemporary Art at the Rubin. “These artists’ contemporary art practices illuminate how Buddhist iconographies have transformed and evolved and how they have been adopted in new ways.”

An ongoing focal point of the Rubin Museum, the Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room installation is inspired by traditional Tibetan household shrines and comprises objects from the permanent collection. Filled with flickering butter lamps, the scent of incense, and the sounds of chanting, it conveys the feeling of a space that would be used for offering, devotion, prayer, and contemplation.



Support for “Shrine Room Projects: Wishes and Offerings” is made possible by Bob and Lois Baylis, Ann and Matthew Nimetz, Christopher J. Fussner, Audio-Technica, and contributors to the 2017 Exhibitions Fund.

“Shrine Room Projects: Wishes and Offerings” is organized by Beth Citron, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, and Elena Pakhoutova, Curator of Himalayan Art. The Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room is curated by Pakhoutova.

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.

About Tsherin Sherpa

Born in Kathmandu, Nepal, in 1968, Tsherin Sherpa currently works and resides in the United States. From the age of 12, he studied traditional Tibetan thangka painting with his father, Master Urgen Dorje, a renowned thangka artist from Ngyalam, Tibet. After studying computer science and Mandarin in Taiwan, he returned to Nepal where he collaborated with his father on several important projects, including thangka and monastery mural paintings. In 1998, Sherpa immigrated to California where he began to explore his own style—reimagining traditional tantric motifs, symbols, colors, and gestures placed in resolutely contemporary compositions. He has exhibited across the United States, Europe, and Asia, including in the 8th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane (2015); “Beyond the Mandala — Contemporary Art from Tibet,” Volte Gallery, Mumbai, in collaboration with Rossi & Rossi, London (2011); “Scorching Sun of Tibet,” Songzhuang Art Center, Beijing (2010); “Tradition Transformed: Tibetan Artists Respond,” Rubin Museum of Arts, New York (2010); “Buddha in the Hood,” Red Mill Gallery, Johnson, Vermont (2010); “Sacred Images,” Alta Galleria, Berkeley, California (2007); “Contemporary Thangka”, Smith Andersen Editions, Palo Alto,

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California (2007); and in solo exhibitions at Rossi & Rossi, London (2012) and Hong Kong (2016). In addition to many private collections around the world, Sherpa's work can be found in the public collections of the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco; Queensland Art Gallery & Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia; Rubin Museum of Art, New York; and Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

About Charwei Tsai

Charwei Tsai was born in Taipei in 1980 and currently lives and works in Taipei and Saigon. Tsai graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design in Industrial Design and Art & Architectural History (2002) and the postgraduate research program at L'École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris (2010). Highly personal yet universal concerns spur Tsai's multi-medium practice. Geographical, social, and spiritual motifs inform a body of work, which encourages viewer participation outside the confines of complacent contemplation. Preoccupied with the human-nature relationship, Tsai meditates on the complexities among cultural beliefs, spirituality, and transience. Charwei Tsai has had solo exhibitions and projects internationally, most recently: "Water Moon," Institute of Contemporary Art, Villeurbanne/Rhône-Alpes, France, and "Hear Her Singing," commissioned by Hayward Gallery at Southbank Centre, London (both in 2017). Tsai has participated in numerous exhibitions in Asia, Europe, and the United States, and biennials including the Sydney Biennale, Sharjah Calligraphy Biennale (2016), Sharjah Biennial (2013), Yokohama Triennial (2011), 6th Asia Pacific Triennial (2009), and the inaugural Singapore Biennale (2006). Her works are held in public and private collections including Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Mori Art Museum, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, Yokohama Museum of Art, FRAC Lorraine, Kadist Foundation, Uli Sigg Collection, and Faurischou Foundation, Copenhagen.

About Beth Citron

Beth Citron is the Curator, Modern and Contemporary Art at the Rubin Museum of Art. Her exhibitions for the Rubin Museum have included 'A Lost Future: Shezad Dawood/The Otolith Group/Matti Braun' (2018), "Chitra Ganesh" (2018), "Henri Cartier-Bresson: India in Full Frame" (2017), "Genesis Breyer P-Orridge: Try to Altar Everything" (2016), and the three part exhibition series "Modernist Art from India" (2011–13). She completed a PhD in the History of Art at the University of Pennsylvania, and has taught in the Art History Department at New York University, from which she also earned a BA in Fine Arts.

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 "The Second Buddha: Master of Time" (2018), "Nepalese Seasons: Rain and Ritual" (2016), "All-Knowing Buddha: A Secret Guide" (2014) and "Collecting Paradise: Buddhist Art of Kashmir and Its Legacies" (2015).

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