

For Immediate Release

Now Open: Rubin Museum Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room at the Brooklyn Museum

The installation will be on view within the Arts of Asia galleries as part of a six-year partnership between the two institutions

Sharing the Rubin's collection and curatorial expertise is a central component of the Rubin's transformation into a decentralized museum, and increases the number of visitors who can access and experience Himalayan art



Rubin Museum Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room installed at the Brooklyn Museum. Photo by Dave De Armas, courtesy of the Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art

New York, NY, June 11, 2025 The Rubin Museum Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room, one of the Rubin Museum's most beloved installations, opened today, June 11 in a dedicated space within the Brooklyn Museum's Arts of Asia galleries, where it will be on loan for six years as part of a dynamic partnership between the two institutions. The Shrine Room is accessible

with a general admission ticket to the Brooklyn Museum, which is available to all visitors at pay-what-you-can pricing.

“As a global museum, we are reaching more people in more places, which includes continuing to serve diverse audiences in New York City,” said Jorrit Britschgi, executive director of the Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art. “It’s fitting that the Shrine Room—described by many visitors as the heart of the Rubin Museum—will be at home at the Brooklyn Museum for the next six years, where visitors from across the city and beyond can experience Himalayan art in its cultural context. The Shrine Room also deepens Brooklyn’s representation of Himalayan art and creates new dialogues within its collections of Asian art, exemplifying the cross-institution collaboration that is a foundation of our new model.”

The Shrine Room presents more than 100 artworks and ritual objects, mainly from the Rubin Museum’s collection, displayed as they would be in an elaborate Tibetan Buddhist household shrine, where devotees would perform daily religious practices of making offerings, reciting prayers, and performing rituals. Contained within a room that recalls Tibetan architecture, original to the Rubin installation, the Shrine Room offers an intimate space for visitors to experience the display with all of their senses and the opportunity to experience Tibetan religious art in its cultural context.

Paintings known as thangkas, sculptures, musical instruments, and ritual implements made in Tibet, Nepal, and Mongolia from the 12th to the 21st centuries are arranged on traditional Tibetan furniture according to conventions of Tibetan Buddhist culture. The objects, such as vajra scepters and bells, offering bowls, pitchers, and a symbolic mandala offering are used in daily rituals and worship. Handheld drums, conch trumpets, horns, and reeds are used in rituals during prayer recitations. Ornamental textile decorations of brocade silk, made by traditional masters of appliqué craft, hung from the ceiling and on pillars, are also an integral part of a traditional shine room’s adornment. The Rubin Museum Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room is complete with simulated flickering butter lamps, recordings of Tibetan monks and nuns chanting prayers, and the subtle smell of unlit incense.

Since it first opened in 2013, the Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room has been one of the most popular installations at the Rubin Museum’s 17th Street building in New York City, experienced by more than 1 million visitors. At the Rubin, the Shrine Room highlighted each of the four major Tibetan religious traditions—Nyingma, Kagyü, Sakya, and Geluk—with a rotation of objects every two years. As an important part of this active and ongoing partnership, the Rubin’s curators will continue to rotate the objects at the Brooklyn Museum to highlight these four Tibetan religious traditions and provide cultural context and scholarship regarding the works on view.

The first tradition to be featured in the Shrine Room at the Brooklyn Museum is the Geluk Tibetan Buddhist tradition, last exhibited at the Rubin in 2015. The Geluk tradition, the youngest of the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism, was founded on the teachings of Tsongkhapa (1357–1419 CE) and his students. Main figures include earlier masters, the Indian teacher Atisha and his Tibetan disciple Dromton; Maitreya, the future buddha; the tantric deities Chakrasamvara, Vajrayogini, and Vajrabhairava; and Manjushri, an embodiment of learned wisdom. Protectors such as Yama Dharmaraja and Magzor Gyalmo also feature prominently in Geluk ritual practice.

The installation also includes an [interactive touch screen](#), which gives visitors the opportunity to learn more about the main elements of a Tibetan Buddhist shrine room: the objects that represent the Buddha's body, speech, and mind. They can explore a select group of objects and their significance in the tradition and devotional use.

The addition of the Rubin Museum Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room enhances the Brooklyn Museum's important collections of Asian art, which were fully reimaged in a major gallery renovation that was unveiled gradually from 2017 to 2023. The Shrine Room offers a unique approach to the display of historic works of art and encourages visitors to imagine the original religious and architectural contexts for other objects on view.

A central component of the Rubin's transformation into a decentralized museum is the formation of strategic partnerships to share its collection and curatorial expertise globally, exponentially increasing the number of people who can access and experience Himalayan art. This new model also includes traveling exhibitions and experiences like the Rubin Museum's *Gateway to Himalayan Art* collection exhibition which is currently on view at the Utah Museum of Fine Arts and touring nationally; expanded resources for artists and scholars like the annual Rubin Himalayan Art Prize, grant program, and Rubin Museum Distinguished Lecture of Himalayan Art at the Met; and multimedia educational initiatives like Project Himalayan Art, available online. This commitment includes ensuring that New York City communities and visitors continue to have access to the collection, with the Shrine Room at the Brooklyn Museum as the cornerstone of that access and a foundational example of the broader program.

The Rubin Museum Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room is organized and provided by the Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art.

[About the Rubin Museum of Himalayan Art](#)

The Rubin is a global museum dedicated to presenting Himalayan art and its insights. Founded in 2004, the Rubin serves people internationally through exhibitions, participatory experiences, a dynamic digital platform, and partnerships. Inspired and informed by Himalayan art, the Rubin invites people to contemplate the human experience and deepen connections with the world around them in order to expand awareness, enhance well-being, and cultivate compassion. The Rubin advances scholarship through a series of educational initiatives, grants, collection sharing, and the stewardship of a collection of nearly 4,000 Himalayan art objects spanning 1,500 years of history—providing unprecedented access and resources to scholars, artists, and students across the globe. rubinmuseum.org

[About the Brooklyn Museum](#)

For 200 years, the Brooklyn Museum has been recognized as a trailblazer. Through a vast array of exhibitions, public programs, and community-centered initiatives, it continues to broaden the narratives of art, uplift a multitude of voices, and center creative expression within important dialogues of the day. Housed in a landmark building in the heart of Brooklyn, the Museum is home to an astounding encyclopedic collection of more than 140,000 objects representing cultures worldwide and over 6,000 years of history—from ancient Egyptian masterpieces to significant American works, to groundbreaking installations presented in the only feminist art center of its kind. As one of the oldest and largest art museums in the country, the Brooklyn Museum remains committed to innovation, creating compelling experiences for its communities and celebrating the power of art to inspire awe, conversation, and joy.

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