

For Immediate Release

**THE
RUBIN**

**MUSEUM
OF
ART**

PRESS RELEASE

An Interactive Healing Space from New York's Rubin Museum of Art to Open at Canary Wharf for the London Design Festival

Inspired by Buddhist principles, the Mandala Lab will be free and open to the public in Union Square at Canary Wharf from 16 September – 25 November 2023

Featuring sensory experiences designed in collaboration with notable artists including Laurie Anderson, Peter Gabriel, Dame Evelyn Glennie, and more

MEDIA PREVIEW:

Thursday, 14 September

18:00

Including a sound journey, tour of the installation, and refreshments at TRIBE Canary Wharf

RSVP [here](#)

PUBLIC OPENING:

Saturday, 16 September

12:00 – 18:45

Including an outdoor sound experience of a live gong-and-water performance by Dame Evelyn Glennie and a sundown breathe-in at 19:00



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Mandala Lab installation view, Bilbao, Spain. Photos by Javier de Paz Garcia, courtesy of the Rubin Museum of Art.

LONDON, 5 September— On Saturday, 16 September, the Rubin Museum of Art will open its interactive and large-scale traveling [Mandala Lab](#) installation in Union Square at Canary Wharf as a highlight of the London Design Festival. Based in New York City, the Rubin fosters understanding and appreciation of the Himalayan region by connecting its art and ideas to contemporary issues that are relevant in our visitors' lives today.

Inspired by powerful Buddhist insights, the Mandala Lab is an interactive space designed to explore challenging emotions and consider how to transform them into wisdoms. The Lab features five thought-provoking and playful experiences—including scents accompanied by videos, a sculpture that invites collective breathing, and curated percussion instruments dipped in water—that guide visitors on an inner journey that supports connection, empathy, and emotional learning. As visitors journey through the space, they will examine feelings of pride, attachment, envy, anger, and ignorance—known as *kleshas* in Buddhism—that cloud our understanding of the world around us.

The Mandala Lab will open during the London Design Festival and remain on view through 25 November. On opening day (Saturday, 16 September), the Mandala Lab will be open from noon – 18:45 with a public [Breathe-In event](#) at sundown to celebrate the launch. At 19:00 renowned solo percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie will perform a gong-and-water performance in the Mandala Lab, which will be relayed as an outdoor sound experience for the public. Neuroscientist Dr. Tara Swart will outline the health and social benefits of the breathing pace generated by the Lab. Visitors will then be guided by Tibetan Buddhist teacher Khen Rinpoche Hungtrampa in the Breathe-In, a synchronized breathing meditation to invite feelings of serenity and well-being.

The London opening is the second international appearance of the Rubin's traveling Mandala Lab, a free-standing structure adapted from the museum's permanent Lab at their New York City location. This long term installation opened in 2021 and was designed by architecture firm Peterson Rich Office (PRO). The traveling installation, which debuted at the 2022 Wellbeing Summit for Social Change in Bilbao, Spain, was designed in collaboration with Madrid-based architecture firm **EXTUDIO** and design and production office **ENORME STUDIO**. The touring installation furthers the Rubin Museum's global programming and commitment to educating and engaging international audiences around Himalayan art and its insights. The Mandala Lab features contributions from artists across many disciplines to create an experience that evokes self-awareness and awareness of others.

- Artist-filmmakers **Laurie Anderson, Sanford Biggers, Tenzin Tsetan Choklay, Amit Dutta, Apichatpong Weerasethakul** and the late **Wang Yahui** contributed personal reflections and videos based on memories associated with specific scent, recreated by perfumer Christophe Laudamiel.
- International musicians **Sheila E., Billy Cobham, Sarah Hennessey, Taku Hirano, Peter Gabriel, Evelyn Glennie, Huang Ruo, and Shivamani** helped curate and select the featured instruments in the sound installation in which gongs are submerged in water, transforming their effect. **Gabriel**, who has advocated for a greater awareness of music's ability to heal, selected a 28-inch Paiste bronze gong in collaboration with sound artist Samer Ghadry.

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- Visual artist **Palden Weinreb** designed a pulsing light sculpture evoking the perfect circle of the Mandala, which references the forms of the natural world, and can be used to guide a synchronized breathing meditation.

Jorrit Britschgi, Executive Director of the Rubin Museum of Art, said: “We are excited to participate in the London Design Festival and demonstrate how Buddhist principles can merge with design practices to inspire meaningful experiences. The traveling version of our Mandala Lab is an important demonstration of the Rubin’s mission to bring awareness and understanding of Himalayan art to global audiences.”

Tim McHenry, Mandala Lab Project Lead and Chief Programmatic Officer of the Rubin Museum of Art, said: “The Mandala Lab as a travelling experience was always intended to meet people where they are, emotionally and geographically. Each of the experiences in the Lab can help visitors appreciate that the feelings we have about the world around can cloud our perspective. The Lab fosters opportunities for a greater clarity. Our hope is that all Londoners, whether or not working in the fast-paced business center of Canary Wharf, may come to see the Lab as a welcome chance to unpack their emotions in a safe and curated environment.”

Ben Evans, Director of the London Design Festival, said: “We are thrilled to be partnering with the Rubin Museum of Art and to present an installation that reveals how the power of design affects our minds and increase our capacity for mindfulness. The Mandala Lab will harness innovation and creativity to help Londoners better connect with their emotions.”

SUPPORT

The Mandala Lab, London is presented as part of the 2023 the London Design Festival.

The first traveling Mandala Lab was commissioned by The Wellbeing Project as part of the artistic programming for the 2022 Wellbeing Summit in Bilbao, generously supported by The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Global.

Lead support of the Mandala Lab is provided by the Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation, Barbara Bowman, Fred Eychaner, Noah P. Dorsky, Agnes Gund, the Estate of Lisina M. Hoch, The Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation, Rasika and Girish Reddy, Shelley and Donald Rubin, and the Tiger Baron Foundation.

Major support is provided by Bob and Lois Baylis, Sara and Joseph Bedrick, Anne and Albert Chao, Con Edison, Daphne Hoch Cunningham and John Cunningham, Anne E. Delaney, DeWitt Stern, Karen Dorsky, Jack Lampl, Max Meehan, Dan Gimbel of NEPC, LLC, The Prospect Hill Foundation, Sarah and Craig Richardson, Basha Frost Rubin and Scott Grinsell, the Andrew Sabin Family Foundation, Namita and Arun Saraf, Linda Schejola, Eric and Alexandra Schoenberg, Eileen Caulfield Schwab, Tsherin Sherpa, Jesse Smith and Annice Kenan, Taipei Cultural Center in New York, New York Life Insurance Company, and New York Life.

The Mandala Lab multiyear initiative is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council.

The Rubin Museum’s programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature.

The Mandala Lab multiyear initiative is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Mandala Lab London's campaign is underway and the supporter list is in formation.



ABOUT THE RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART

The Rubin Museum of Art in Chelsea, New York City, explores and celebrates Himalayan art, cultures, and ideas across history and into the present. With its globally renowned collection, centered largely around art from the Tibetan Plateau, the Rubin fosters understanding and appreciation of the art by interpreting and relating it to our shared human experience today. Inspired by the tenets of Buddhism, Hinduism, and indigenous religions, and aligned with ongoing research into learning, behavior, and the brain, the Rubin offers innovative exhibitions and programs that examine provocative ideas across the arts and explore the mind. Through this work, the Museum serves as a space for reflection and personal transformation, opening windows to inner worlds so visitors can better navigate outer ones. www.rubinmuseum.org

ABOUT THE LONDON DESIGN FESTIVAL

London Design Festival was launched by Sir John Sorrell CBE and Ben Evans CBE in 2003. Building on London's existing design activity, their concept was to create an annual event that would promote the city's creativity, drawing in the country's greatest thinkers, practitioners, retailers, and educators to a deliver an unmissable celebration of design. The launch of the first Festival took place at Bloomberg on 25 March 2003, with a show of support from design, education, government, and London organizations. 20 years later, this vision remains ever strong. www.londondesignfestival.com/about

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