



## PRESS RELEASE

SURROUND YOURSELF WITH THE SOUNDS OF HIMALAYAN WIND AT  
THE RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART

**Opening November 11, 2016, a new installation by Soundwalk Collective features recordings from Nepal's monasteries to complement "Sacred Spaces" exhibition**

**Sharelines:**

-  Hear new sounds of Himalayan wind and monasteries in #SacredSpaces exhibition 11/11 <http://rma.cm/1hh>
-  Soundwalk Collective and Francisco López's recordings of wind and #SacredSpaces transports visitors to high Himalayas <http://rma.cm/1hh>

**New York, NY, September 28, 2016** — In the second iteration of its "Sacred Spaces" exhibition, the Rubin Museum of Art will surround visitors with sound environments and visuals in "Himalayan Wind," including a major site-specific commission from the international art and genre-bending music group Soundwalk Collective. The installation continues *Sacred Spaces*' focus on devotional activities in awe-inspiring places, as the sounds were recorded during travels to the world's highest monasteries in the remote Mustang region of Nepal.

The immersive and meditative experience includes sounds like the whistle of strong winds at some of the highest located Buddhist monasteries in the Himalayas, the flapping of prayer flags, the chanting of blessings, the echoes of wind from the valley below, and the interplay of sound and silence. Entitled *Khandroma*, after a spiritual muse in Tibetan Buddhism, the piece will be presented as a multi-channel audio installation through state-of-the-art speakers. Visitors can also interact directly by playing individual tracks from the sound environments at dedicated listening stations featuring state of the art Audio-Technica LP5 turntables and M70x professional studio headphones. The deity Khandroma is an energetic volatile being, also known as "the one who traverses the sky," and therefore closely related to the sounds of the piece.

Earlier this year, Soundwalk Collective, in collaboration with sound artist Francisco López, recorded 120 hours of wind footage from more than 200 villages and monasteries in Upper Mustang, Nepal. They would reach each location in the morning, before the wind picked up strongly around noon, and then record and film until the evening. The recordings selected for the final installation were chosen for textural and tonal properties, and by monastery, to portray both the location of origin as well as the musical quality that is innate in the sound of the Mustang wind. In a nod to this recording process, the Rubin Museum will distribute limited edition vinyl

LP copies of *Khandroma* to visitors beginning at noon on days when New York City's winds exceed ten miles per hour.

“The valley of Mustang is known for the strongest wind in the Himalayas, with gales between force eight to ten on the Beaufort scale. There was no better place for us to capture the breath and soul of the Himalayan wind than in this valley,” said Soundwalk Collective founder Stephan Crasneanski. “Through all these recordings we have been trying to paint an ‘image’ of the wind, like the one carried by the prayers through the flutter of the *Lung-P’ar*, the white flags that are placed at all mountain passes to protect the travellers in their journey. The flags drift and their shadows dance against the immaculate, mineral, white stones of the mountains.”

Complementing the audio experience, a video installation filmed by Crasneanski shows cyclic kaleidoscopic imagery of prayer wheels and flags from Himalayan monasteries, an effect created by handmade kaleidoscopes that are built with glass and crystals and then mounted on the camera lens. The resulting images form inverted triangles, evoking a symbol in Tibetan Buddhism that represents the search for equilibrium and equanimity.

Visitors can also retreat from the winds in the expanded installation of the Museum's beloved Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room, which opened in 2015. Flickering butter lamps, the scent of incense, and the sounds of monks chanting will envelop visitors as they enter this re-creation of a traditional shrine that would be used for offering, devotion, prayer, and contemplation. The sounds heard in the Shrine Room will be new, original recordings from Soundwalk Collective's travels in Nepal.

“A sacred space can be a physical place, but more importantly, it is an opportunity to step outside of daily routine and distraction, and contemplate what is resonant and meaningful,” said Beth Citron, Curator, Modern and Contemporary Art at the Rubin.

The Rubin Museum's ongoing “Sacred Spaces” exhibition highlights a rotating variety of devotional places, allowing visitors to view art objects within an evoked cultural context while contemplating their own ideas about what sacred spaces mean to them.

*This exhibition has been made possible through the generous support of Christopher J. Fussner, Rasika and Girish Reddy, and Audio-Technica. Additional support has been provided by The Hoch 2009 Charitable Lead Trust, Manoj and Rita Singh, the Zakaria Family Foundation, and contributors to the 2016 Exhibitions Fund.*

*Himalayan Wind is organized by Beth Citron, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art; the Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room is curated by Elena Pakhoutova, Curator of Himalayan Art; the design and installation are overseen by John Monaco, Head of Exhibition Design, all of the Rubin Museum. Acoustic design and eight-channel speaker system by Daniel Neumann.*

### **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 Soundwalk Collective**

SOUNDWALK COLLECTIVE is an international art and genre-bending music group based between New York City and Berlin. Founded by Stephan Crasneanski, including members Simone Merli, and Kamran Sadeghi, they formed in Manhattan and have created concept albums, sound installations and live performances shown worldwide, including Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris) and CTM Festival (Berlin). The Collective combines nature, anthropology, ethnography, non-linear narratives, psycho geography and the exploration of recording and synthesis in their productions. Their source material is directly linked to specific locations, requiring long periods of investigative travel and field work. Their works feature collaborations with Berghain, Nan Goldin, Jean-Luc Godard; and Patti Smith in their homage to Nico in the album "Killer Road".

### **About Francisco López**

Francisco López is internationally recognized for his work in sound art and experimental music. He has realized hundreds of sound installations, projects with field recordings, and performances in seventy countries, including the National Music Auditorium (Madrid), PS1 Contemporary Art Center (New York), and Museum of Modern Art (Paris).

### **About Audio-Technica**

Audio-Technica is an innovative transducer company dedicated to enriching people's lives through sound. With more than 50 years of audio excellence worldwide, Audio-Technica manufactures headphones, microphones, and other products that capture and reproduce audio, heighten connections to the world, and create more meaningful and vibrant lives.

### **About Beth Citron**

Beth Citron is the Curator, Modern and Contemporary Art at the Rubin Museum in New York. Her exhibitions for the Rubin Museum have included "Genesis Breyer P-Orridge: Try to Altar Everything" (2016), "Francesco Clemente: Inspired by India" (2014), "Witness at a Crossroads: Photographer Marc Riboud in Asia" (2014), and the three part exhibition series "Modernist Art from India" (2011-13). She completed a Ph.D. 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 B.A. in Fine Arts.

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