

For Immediate Release

THE
RUBIN

MUSEUM
OF
ART

PRESS RELEASE

**THE RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART ANNOUNCES
2023 EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMS,
INCLUDING GLOBAL PROJECTS FURTHERING
THE FIELD OF HIMALAYAN ART AND PROGRAMS
FOCUSING ON LIFE AFTER**

NEW YORK, NY, December 8, 2022 — The Rubin Museum of Art is thrilled to announce its schedule of exhibitions and programs in 2023. The year begins with the launch of the Rubin’s largest institutional project to date, **Project Himalayan Art**, an initiative to provide global access to resources promoting a broader understanding of Himalayan art. The year’s exploration of the theme Life After begins in March with the cross-cultural exhibition ***Death Is Not the End***, which examines ideas about death and the afterlife in the art of Tibetan Buddhism and Christianity. Live programming and the seventh issue of the Rubin Museum’s annual publication, ***Spiral magazine***, available in print and online, will further expand on these themes. Throughout the year the Rubin will host its first ever series of **professional development residencies** for artists, museum professionals, and scholars who live and work in the Himalayan region. And in the fall of 2023 the Buddhist monastery **Itumbaha** in Kathmandu, in partnership with the Rubin Museum and Lumbini University, will unveil its permanent display galleries for objects in the monastery complex.

“2023 will be an exciting year for the Rubin and for Himalayan art worldwide,” says **Rubin Museum Executive Director Jorrit Britschgi**. “We’re launching Project Himalayan Art, our most ambitious project to date; we’re exploring the uncomfortable topic of death and afterlife in a new exhibition; and we’re investing in efforts that foster mutual learning and collaboration around the world, especially with creatives and colleagues from the Himalayan region. All are ways to reimagine what a Museum can be.”

Additional information on the Rubin Museum’s exhibitions, projects, and public programs will be announced in the coming months.

**Project Himalayan Art
Publication, digital platform, and traveling exhibition
Organized by Elena Pakhoutova and Karl Debreczeny with twelve academic advisors
Launching January 31, 2023**

Project Himalayan Art is a three-part initiative that offers resources for learning about Himalayan art, with an emphasis on cross-cultural exchange. Its integrated components fill a gap in the learning space by encouraging the inclusion of Himalayan, Tibetan, and Inner Asian art and cultures into humanities and liberal arts curricula on Asia in higher education.

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The publication ***Himalayan Art in 108 Objects*** is the first cross-disciplinary, accessible introduction of its kind, contextualizing Himalayan art within historical developments in religious, social, literary, and material culture. Seventy-two international scholars from different fields contributed to this **publication, which will be available in spring 2023.**

The traveling exhibition ***Gateway to Himalayan Art*** is modeled after the introductory exhibition of the same name at the Rubin Museum. It will acquaint visitors with the fundamental visual language of Himalayan art and feature voices of people from Himalayan communities, including artists, practitioners, and teachers. The traveling exhibition is offered free to universities and its first stop will be **Lehigh University Art Galleries, opening January 31, 2023**, followed by the **McMullen Museum of Art at Boston College in September 2023.**

The **digital platform** Project Himalayan Art, a hub for the study of Himalayan art, will **launch January 31, 2023.** It combines materials from the exhibition and publication with multimedia content, such as 3D models, 360-degree object views, interactive maps, geography-based narratives, teaching resources, a glossary, and more.

Death Is Not the End

March 17, 2023 –January 15, 2024

Curated by Elena Pakhoutova, Senior Curator of Himalayan Art

Death Is Not the End explores ideas about death and afterlife through the art of Tibetan Buddhism and Christianity by bringing together objects from the Rubin Museum’s collection with loans from major institutions and private collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Morgan Library & Museum, Museum aan de Stroom in Antwerp, Wellcome Collection in London, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, San Antonio Museum of Art, and more. With over fifty objects spanning the ninth to twenty-first century, including prints, oil paintings, illuminated manuscripts, bone ornaments, thangka paintings, sculptures, and ritual items, *Death Is Not the End* invites contemplation on the universal condition of impermanence and the human desire to continue to exist.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a program series hosted and curated by musician Amanda Palmer. It will include conversations, workshops, and performances that explore the transformation that can occur after moments of transition.

Spiral Magazine 2023: Life After Issue

Available March 2023

Spiral magazine is the Rubin Museum’s annual free publication at the intersection of art, science, and Himalayan cultures. *Spiral* asks big questions at the center of our shared human experience with interviews, essays, poetry, art, at-home practices, and more. The seventh issue features interviews with professionals who help people navigate big transitions, from birth to death and everything in between, along with articles about life after in relation to art objects, science fiction, family history, and more. Read advice on how to write an ethical will, and gain insights into your own process of handling transitions through an art therapy exercise.

Professional Development Residencies

In March 2023, the Rubin is launching a professional development residency program for artists, museum professionals, and scholars who live and work in the Himalayan region. Residencies will serve to advance the resident's contemporary art, museology, or academic practice, cultivate long-lasting cross-cultural collaborations with partner institutions, and foster a network for learning. The Rubin will host three to five residents per year for two-to-four-week periods, providing travel, accommodation, stipends for materials and meals, and access to the Museum's resources and collection of over 3,800 artworks. Proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis. The first resident will be Swosti Rajbhandari from the Nepal Art Council, a leading nonprofit focused on promoting arts and artists of Nepal. Additional residents and details to be announced in 2023.

Itumbaha Galleries, Kathmandu, Nepal

In partnership with the Rubin Museum and Lumbini Buddhist University

Opening Fall 2023

The Rubin Museum and Itumbaha Conservation Society have worked with a master's class in museology and Buddhist collections at Lumbini Buddhist University, Nepal, to document Itumbaha's collection of over five hundred objects, as well as create three permanent display galleries for the objects in the monastery's vacant spaces. Itumbaha is recognized as the oldest and most important of the eighteen Buddhist monasteries in Kathmandu and it retains its original layout. The large complex is made up of several monasteries, courtyards, shrines, lanes, and many buildings that date back to the eleventh century. Earlier this year the Rubin returned a fourteenth-century wood carving of a garland bearing apsara to Itumbaha, which initiated the partnership. In the fall, the galleries will be unveiled to the public, telling the rich history of this important site and raising awareness of the cultural significance of historic collections in religious institutions.

Support

Leadership support for Project Himalayan Art is provided by the Henry Luce Foundation.

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Special support is provided by:

Dr. Bibhakar Sunder Shakya, to honor the memory and legacy of Professor Dina Bangdel, art historian, curator, cultural activist, and educator from Nepal.

Samphe and Tenzin Lhalungpa, to honor the memory and works of L.P. Lhalungpa, Tibetan scholar, broadcaster, and educator.

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About the Rubin Museum of Art

The Rubin Museum of Art in Chelsea, New York City, explores and celebrates the diversity and uniqueness of Himalayan art, ideas, and cultures across history and into the present. With its globally renowned collection, largely centered around art from the Tibetan Plateau, the Rubin fosters understanding and appreciation of this region by relating its art and ideas to our shared human experience today. Inspired by the philosophical traditions of Buddhism and Hinduism 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

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