

## Icons of Impermanence: Contemporary Buddhist Art

University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, Jul 6–08, 2012

Deadline: Apr 10, 2012

Jessica Main

Call for Papers (Conference):

"Icons of Impermanence: Contemporary Buddhist Art"

<http://ubcbuddhism.wordpress.com/2012/02/02/2345/>

UBC's Buddhism and Contemporary Society Program, funded by The Tung Lin Kok Yuen Canada Foundation, will hold a conference on contemporary Buddhist art July 6-8, 2012 at the University of British Columbia's Point Grey campus. Part of event series for Summer 2012 that includes the "Visions of Enlightenment" exhibition (May 10 - September 30), sponsored by the Canadian Society for Asian Arts, at the Museum of Anthropology, UBC.

Abstract submission deadline: April 10, 2012

Conference weekend: July 6-8, 2012

In Buddhism, as in other major religions, the visual arts have played a central role. Buddhist artists and artisans created images that inspired by their form and function. As Buddhism spread from place to place, it adapted local artistic traditions, creating styles and symbol-sets that not only represented Buddhism but, simultaneously, remained in touch with local sensibilities and culture. Portrayals of the Buddha and other important figures in stone, wood, bronze, and ink, for example, continue to anchor local communities, serve as their ritual center, and convey their teachings to new generations.

Today, a number of prominent Buddhist styles and symbols are recognized the world over—forming what is called traditional" Buddhist art. In the face of this broad recognition of the traditional, it is easy to forget that the processes of localization, transformation, and creation are still at work. As demonstrated by Nam Jun Paik's "Buddha" (1989), Mariko Mori's "Enlightenment Capsule" (1998), Xu Bing's "Where Does the Dust Itself Collect?" (2004), or Gonkar Gyatso's "Buddha in Our Time" (2007), contemporary artists draw upon Buddhist iconic, conceptual, and ritual traditions to create works that speak to present day struggles with identity, politics, social practice, and consumer culture. Buddhist artists combine new and old media and display influences from the many kinds of training available in a mobile, globalized world: whether in traditions des-

cended from the European fine arts, apprenticeship in the creation of Buddhist icons, or in the enclaves of the avant-garde.

How to submit an abstract:

We invite the submission of paper abstracts (150 words) and a brief CV (no more than 1 page) to [tobcsprogram@gmail.com](mailto:tobcsprogram@gmail.com) by April 10, 2012. We encourage papers that explore (1) any facet of contemporary Buddhist art, or (2) contemporary issues in relation to Buddhist antiquities and traditional art objects. Papers may, for example:

- explore definitions of “contemporary Buddhist art”
- interpret form or content of art works using theory in the visual arts
- describe specific works, particular artists, or artistic communities
- examine the transnational linkages of contemporary Buddhist art
- explore local and global issues in the preservation, management, trade, and exhibition of Buddhist antiquities
- examine the deployment of traditional Buddhist art for contemporary political, cultural, or religious purposes that differ from original context and use

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Reference:

CFP: Icons of Impermanence: Contemporary Buddhist Art. In: ArtHist.net, Feb 14, 2012 (accessed May 20, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/2685>>.