

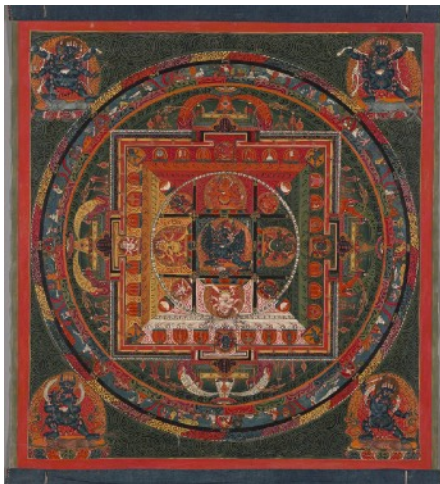


January – February 2020

No. 1

Come see the special exhibition,  
*Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment*,  
on view January 17 – May 3, 2020!

Here are some highlights.



Top Left: *The Melt*, 2017, by Tsherin Sherpa (Nepalese, b. 1968). Acrylic, ink and gold on canvas. Asian Art Museum, Museum purchase, 2017.44. © Tsherin Sherpa. Photograph © Asian Art Museum.

Top Right: *Luxation 1*, 2016, by Tsherin Sherpa (Nepalese, b. 1968). Set of sixteen panels; acrylic on cotton canvas. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund, 2017.195a-p. Photograph © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, photo by Travis Fullerton.

Bottom Left: Mandala of the Buddhist deity Vajrabhairava, 1650-1750. Tibet. Colors on cotton. Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection, B63D5. Photograph © Asian Art Museum.

Bottom Right: Vajrabhairava, 1400-1500 or later. China. Wood with paint. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation and Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund, 93.13a-oo. Photograph © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, photo by Travis Fullerton.



## IN THIS ISSUE

### Saturday, January 18, 2020

Member Event - *Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment*

### Fridays, January 24 – May 8

Spring 2020 Arts of Asia Lecture Series

Visions of the Afterlife in Asia with Instructor of Record Sanjyot Mehendale

### Sundays, January 26, February 9, February 23, March 22 & March 29

Spring 2020 Literature and Culture Course

The Literature of Soviet Central Asia with Emily Laskin

### Friday, January 31, 2020

Member Event - Making Excellent Impressions: The Trajectory of Contemporary Japanese Prints

### Tuesday, February 4, 2020

Member Event - SAA Roadshow at Bonhams

### Tuesday, March 3, 2020

Member Event - Annual Spring Dinner at Tong Kiang Restaurant

### Saturday, March 7, 2020

Member Event - Textiles of Japan: The Thomas Murray Collection



## UPCOMING EVENTS (subject to change)

### Friday, April 3, 2020

Annual Book Sale

### Saturday, April 18 - Sunday, April 19, 2020

A Weekend in Monterey at Orientations

While we work on the details for another fabulous weekend on the Monterey peninsula, we recommend that you book your hotel room now. More details to follow in the March - April newsletter.



## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome the following new members, who joined the Society in October and November. We are thrilled that you have decided to join us, and hope you find our programs and events interesting and engaging. Please don't hesitate to ask questions and give us feedback. Welcome!

Asha Bajaj

Tracy Barsotti

Susanne Baum

Janet Bliman

Beverly Galloway & Christopher Curtis

Pamela George

Sosanna Kuruvila

Dimity & Peter Liu

Ann & Fred Rice

Susan Romaine

Carmi Ticehurst

## Society for Asian Art

January - February 2020, No. 1

Members' Newsletter  
Edited by John Nelson  
and Susan Lai

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## MESSAGE FROM THE SAA PRESIDENT

As we enter this season of thanks and celebration, I'd like to express my appreciation for you, our members, and for your support and enthusiasm for our programs. Thank you!

I'd like to also thank the Society for Asian Art Board, committee members, and Office Manager Susan Lai for their diligent work all year to bring you rich, stimulating, and fun programming on many aspects of Asian art and culture. Besides planning programs, the Board has been working behind the scenes to strengthen the Society's long-term viability so we can continue to bring exceptional programming and support the Asian Art Museum for another 60 years and beyond.

To this end, the Board is making a few key changes. First, we are streamlining our membership levels and raising membership dues for the first time in over 6½ years. The increases are modest and necessary to keep pace with increasing costs. As a nonprofit, it is important for the Society to cover its costs. I hope you understand and will continue to support the Society at your current level of membership or higher. And please consider donating to the Society, including legacy gifts.

Another step the Board has taken to ensure the Society continues to thrive over the long-term, is the development and approval of an investment policy. The Board has also approved the charter of a new committee, the Investment Committee, which will oversee our endowment and investments. The Investment Committee will work with a fiduciary investment adviser, which we hope to have on board early next year. Following that, the Board will develop a spending policy to guide the Society's donations to the museum.

Finally, I wish you a wonderful holiday season. I hope to see many of you at our programs throughout next year.

May 2020 be a year of good health, and may you be surrounded by people you love!

Trista Berkovitz  
President



## LITERATURE AND CULTURE SPRING 2020 COURSE

### The Literature of Soviet Central Asia With Emily Laskin

**When: Sundays, January 26, February 9, February 23, March 22 & March 29**

**Time: 10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.**

**Place: Koret Education Center, Asian Art Museum on 1/26 & 2/23  
Community Room, Opera Place on 2/9, 3/22 & 3/29**

**Fee: \$115 Society members; \$140 non-members (after museum admission)**

Central Asia has been a cultural crossroads for millennia but for much of the twentieth century, while the region was part of the Soviet Union, little information about its people or its culture reached the West. At the same time, under communism, new ways of life and thought developed in Central Asia: literature in local languages flourished, and new ideas about socialism and equality mixed with older forms of Central Asian culture, producing a unique body of fiction and memoir. In this course, we'll start with two different takes on Soviet Central Asia in the 1930's: the Russian Andrei Platonov, who saw the region as a *tabula rasa* where socialism could be built from scratch; and Langston Hughes, who visited and found an analogue to the American south. Then we'll work our way through the twentieth century, with texts by Sadridin Aini, Chingiz Aitmatov, and Hamid Ismailov, through which we'll explore the modern and ancient history of this complex region.

*Emily Laskin is finishing her doctoral degree in UC Berkeley's Department of Comparative Literature, where she teaches Russian and English literature of the 19th and 20th centuries. She works in English, Russian, and Persian and her writing focuses on the literature of borderlands and regions where multiple linguistic and literary traditions coincide.*



Cup with calligraphic inscriptions, 1440–1460. Probably Uzbekistan; Samarqand, Timurid period (1370–1507). Nephrite. *Asian Art Museum, The Avery Brundage Collection, B60J619. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.*



# ARTS OF ASIA SPRING 2020 LECTURE SERIES

## Visions of the Afterlife in Asia



Left: Snuff bottle with a scene of Demon Queller Zhong Kui expelling evil ghosts, approx. 1800–1900. China; Jingdezhen, Jiangxi province, Qing dynasty (1644–1911). Porcelain with underglaze blue decoration. *Asian Art Museum, Gift of Richard P. Arens, 2010.426.a-b.* Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

Right: The night journey of the prophet Muhammad on the heavenly creature Buraq, approx. 1800. India. Opaque watercolors on paper. *Asian Art Museum, Gift of Shawn Ghassemi, 2007.13.* Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.

**When:** Fridays, January 24 – May 8 (No lecture on March 27 and May 1.)  
**Time:** 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
**Place:** Samsung Hall, Asian Art Museum  
**Fee:** \$175 Society members; \$200 non-members for the series (after museum admission)  
\$20 per lecture drop-in subject to availability (after museum admission)  
**Instructor of Record:** Sanjyot Mehendale, UC Berkeley

After our popular fall 2019 lecture series on the lesser-known religions of Asia, we expand our scope to explore beliefs about the afterlife and divine justice across Asia and view how different communities and religious traditions observe the passage of life to afterlife.

Please join us on a journey that will start with some of the earliest known traditions of Mesopotamia, the Abrahamic traditions, study ancestor worship in China, examine ideas about reincarnation across Asia, look at heavens and hells on the Silk Road, examine the Tibetan Book of the Dead, and follow the Night Journey of the prophet Muhammad. Distinguished scholars will address beliefs and practices from the Ancient Near East, Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Far East. The variety of beliefs is as broad as human imagination. Come hear about ghosts and spiritual beings from different traditions as well as burial customs of the Chinese diaspora during the 19th and 20th centuries.

### January 24

Dying While Living and Living While Dead: Themes Across Asian Afterlife Beliefs  
Christopher Moreman, CSU East Bay

### January 31

The Descent of Ishtar and the Epic of Gilgamesh: Afterlife in Early Mesopotamian Traditions  
Niek Veldhuis, UC Berkeley

### February 7

The Art of Reincarnation in South Asian Religious Traditions  
Melia Belli Bose, University of Victoria

### February 14

Visions of the Afterlife in the Bible and Dead Sea Scrolls  
Ron Hendel, UC Berkeley

### February 21

Gods, Ghosts, and Felicitous Writing: Visions of the Afterlife in Ancient China  
Jun Hu, UC Berkeley

### February 28

The Road to Hell: Buddhist Visions of Naraka at Qizil  
Sanjyot Mehendale, UC Berkeley

### March 6

Korean Traditions of the Afterlife  
Michael Pettid, SUNY Binghamton

### March 13

Pure Land, Hell, or Emptiness? Buddhist Visions of the Hereafter on the Silk Road  
Michelle McCoy, University of Pittsburgh

### March 20

Navigating the Afterlife Through the Tibetan Book of the Dead  
Jacob Dalton, UC Berkeley

### April 3

Beyond Life as We Know It: The Wondrous and the Monstrous in Japanese Notions of the Afterlife  
Mark Blum, UC Berkeley

### April 10

Afterlives and Afterworlds in the Islamic Garden  
Nerina Rustomji, St. John's University

### April 17

On Corpses, Ghosts, and Amulets in the Funerary Culture of Thai Buddhism  
Justin McDaniel, University of Pennsylvania

### April 24

Traveling Between Worlds: The Afterlife of Art and Ritual in Indonesia  
Kaja Maria McGowan, Cornell University

### May 8

If You Are Remembered, You Still Exist: The Bone Repatriation of Chinese Immigrants  
Summer Mei Ling Lee, Artist



## MEMBER EVENTS

### **Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment With Jeff Durham**

When: **Saturday, January 18**  
Time: **10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**  
Place: **Koret Education Center, Asian Art Museum**  
Fee: **\$15 Society members; \$20 non-members (after museum admission)**

Discover the mysteries of Tibetan Buddhist art with Jeff Durham, curator of the exhibition, *Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment*. Using some of the most fascinating paintings and sculptures in the exhibition, Dr. Durham reveals how art, meditation and ritual practice operate together to help the student “awaken” to the true nature of the mind. From traditional masterworks to contemporary visions, you will see how this artistic tradition promotes the practice of visualization, the key meditative technique in Tibetan Buddhism.

*Jeff Durham is Associate Curator of Himalayan Art at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco. His previous exhibitions range from small to large and include Divine Bodies: Sacred Imagery in Asian Art, A Guided Tour of Hell, and Enter the Mandala. During his nine years at the museum, he has published many academic articles focused on the issue of exhibiting sacred art in secular spaces. Prior to joining the Asian Art Museum, Dr. Durham was Professor of Religion at George Mason University in Virginia, St. Thomas Aquinas College in New York, and the University of North Carolina. A native of Ft. Worth, Jeff calls himself “the first Texan Sanskritist.”*

### **Making Excellent Impressions: The Trajectory of Contemporary Japanese Prints With Allison Tolman**

When: **Friday, January 31**  
Time: **1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.**  
Place: **Opera Plaza Community Room, 601 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco**  
Fee: **\$15 Society members; \$20 non-members**

Contemporary Japanese prints are renowned for their technical excellence and high level of creativity. Allison Tolman will talk about several artists working today, starting from the postwar period to the present day.

*Allison Tolman is a second-generation dealer of contemporary Japanese prints. She was raised in Tokyo and graduated from Yale University in 1981. She now resides in New York. She lectures frequently on Japanese prints and is actively involved in building private, corporate and museum collections of Japanese works on paper. She is an active member of the Japanese Art Society of America.*

### **SAA Road Show at Bonhams *Members Only Event***

When: **Tuesday, February 4**  
Time: **10:00 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**  
Place: **Bonhams, 601 California Street, San Francisco**  
Fee: **\$25 Society members**

Have you ever wondered what your Asian Art treasure is worth? Join us for a day of appraisals, learning and fun at the new premises of Bonhams on California Street. You can bring up to three items to be appraised by the specialists, be it porcelain, painting, calligraphy, textiles, netsukes, snuff bottles, jade carvings, bronze works, scholar's objects, Buddhist art or curios. If the item is too big to carry, bring a photo.

During a break from appraisals, William R. Sargent of Bonhams will give us a short lecture, *New Research on Chinese Export Ceramics: Or, How a Curator Knows What to Say*. In 2012 William R. Sargent authored the book *Treasures of Chinese Export Ceramics from the Peabody Essex Museum*. This lecture will revolve around how a curator knows what he or she knows: education, travel, connections, a suspicious mind, perseverance, serendipity, the internet, good files and better interns, and the willingness to take a few risks, are among the values that a curator brings to connoisseurship.

Light refreshments will be served after the lecture. Appraisals will continue thereafter.

Please note. If you sign up for 10:00 a.m., your appraisal will be in the morning. If you sign up for 11:30 a.m., your appraisal will be after the lecture and refreshments.



The Buddhist adept Virupa, approx. 1400–1450. China; Beijing, Ming dynasty (1368–1644). Bronze with gilding. Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, The Avery Brundage Collection, B62B20. Photograph © Asian Art Museum of San Francisco.



*Loving the Earth I* by Yoshiko Imamura. Etching and collage of silver leaf.

# Bonhams

AUCTIONEERS SINCE 1793



## MEMBER EVENTS

### Annual Spring Dinner

When: **Tuesday, March 3**  
 Time: **6:00 p.m.**  
 Place: **Ton Kiang Restaurant, 5821 Geary Blvd., San Francisco**  
 Fee: **\$60 Society members; \$70 non-members**

Join us to celebrate the Year of the Rat and the coming of spring in many cultures across Asia. We will feast on a tasty multi-course dinner on the second floor of one of our favorite Chinese restaurants, Ton Kiang. Sign up now to ensure your place at this most enjoyable social event. Wine will be served.



Year of the Rat

### Textiles of Japan: The Thomas Murray Collection With Thomas Murray

When: **Saturday, March 7**  
 Time: **10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**  
 Place: **Koret Education Center, Asian Art Museum**  
 Fee: **\$15 Society members; \$20 non-members (after museum admission)**

Textiles are an eloquent form of cultural expression and of great importance in the daily life of Japanese people, as well as in their rituals and ceremonies. Thomas Murray will speak to us about his Textiles of Japan Collection, composed of hand-made textiles used by country people, farmers, and fishermen. He will offer insight into Japan's complex textile history, discussing the Mingei Movement's philosophy that inspired his collecting, and warned that modernization would leave behind hand weaving and dyeing, encouraging the preservation of the craft and the traditional textiles.



Cotton tsutsugaki (freehand resist). Japan, 20th century. Photo courtesy of Thomas Murray.

This very fine and extensive collection has recently been published in a widely acclaimed and lavishly illustrated book, *Textiles of Japan*.

*Thomas Murray is an independent researcher, collector, lecturer and private dealer of Asian and Tribal art with an emphasis on Indonesian sculpture and textiles, as well as animistic art from other varied cultures. He also features Indian trade cloths from the 14th-18th centuries. A HALL magazine contributing editor for the last 30 years, he serves as their in-house expert on all tribal sculpture and textiles, with more than 50 publications.*



## UPPER CATEGORY MEMBER EVENTS

On Saturday, October 12, 2019, Sponsor and Donor members were invited to a private viewing and reception at Nanhai Art Gallery in Millbrae. Gallery Director, Edward Gui, led our group through *In Ink*, a grand survey of the latest trends in contemporary ink art, assembled as a centerpiece of Asia Week San Francisco 2019. The afternoon was filled with inspiration, contemplation and delicious food and lively conversation.

For next spring, we've invited scholars, Melia Belli Bose (University of Victoria), Nerina Rustomji (St. John's University), and Jacob Dalton (UC Berkeley) for intimate conversations with members who are at the Contributor level and above. Asian Art Museum Director and CEO Dr. Jay Xu has agreed to join us for a special Sponsor event. If you aren't already an Upper Category member, we hope you will join us or upgrade your membership!



Photo courtesy of Yingjun Li.



# REGISTRATION FORM

## How to Register

1. Go to our website, [www.societyforasianart.org](http://www.societyforasianart.org), sign up and pay online; OR
2. Print and fill out this registration form, and send it with a check or the credit card information to:  
Society for Asian Art, 200 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102.

SAA does not issue tickets or confirmations. You will be contacted ONLY if your registration cannot be completed. Requests for refunds are granted for cancellations received by the SAA office no later than one business week before the start of the event.

Paid Programs	Fee	Quantity	Subtotal
<input type="checkbox"/> January 18 Member Event - Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment with Jeff Durham	\$15 Members \$20 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> January 24 - May 8 Spring 2020 Arts of Asia Lecture Series: Visions of the Afterlife in Asia	\$175 Members \$200 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> January 26 - March 29 Spring 2020 Literature & Culture Course: The Literature of Soviet Central Asia with Emily Laskin	\$115 Members \$140 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> January 31 Member Event - Making Excellent Impressions: The Trajectory of Contemporary Japanese Prints with Allison Tolman	\$15 Members \$20 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> February 4 Member Event - SAA Roadshow at Bonhams <b>Choose and circle one time slot: 10:00 a.m. or 11:30 a.m.</b>	\$25 Members <i>Members Only Event</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> March 3 Member Event - Annual Spring Dinner at Ton Kiang Restaurant	\$60 Members \$70 Non-Members		
<input type="checkbox"/> March 7 Member Event - Textiles of Japan: The Thomas Murray Collection with Thomas Murray	\$15 Members \$20 Non-Members		

Total Amount \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Donations for Book Sale

We now accept books throughout the year for our annual Book Sale. So if you move, downsize or are tired of all the books collecting dust in your home, please donate them to our Book Sale. We are accepting books with Asian subjects only, be it art, culture, novels, history, travel, cooking, exhibition catalogues or others.

Due to construction at the museum, we are unable to accept book donations at the SAA office. You can drop off books at the Friday morning Arts of Asia lectures. If you have a lot of books, we are happy to pick them up from your home within the Bay Area. Please contact the SAA office at 415-581-3701 or [info@societyforasianart.org](mailto:info@societyforasianart.org) for details.

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### Read the Fall 2019 Issue Online

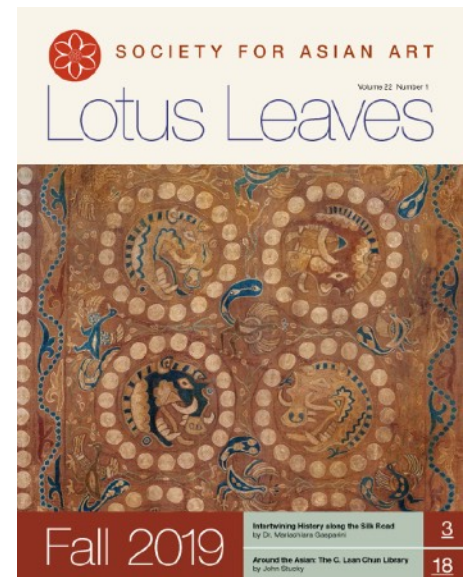
We are excited to present an article on the textiles that were traded along the Silk Road and how they impacted social and cultural life. Dr. Mariachiara Gasparini, Adjunct Lecturer at San Jose State University, is a specialist in ancient textiles, and is the author of a new book, *Transcending Patterns: Silk Road Cultural and Artistic Interactions through Central Asian Textile Images*. The issue concludes with an article by Asian Art Museum Librarian, John Stucky, about the history and collections of the museum's C. Laan Chun Library.

#### To access online issues of *Lotus Leaves*:

- Go to the SAA website, [www.societyforasianart.org](http://www.societyforasianart.org).
- Click on the “Lotus Leaves” tab on the banner along the top of the homepage. This will open the *Lotus Leaves* webpage.
- Click on “View PDF” of the issue you would like to read.

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Cover of Fall 2019 Issue of *Lotus Leaves*.  
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