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The Hammer Museum Presents Mandala of Compassion September 27 – October 12, 2014



Los Angeles— The Hammer Museum is pleased to welcome the return of four highly respected Tibetan Buddhist monks—**Venerable Gelong Kalsang Rinpoche, Venerable Lama Nawang Thogmed, Lama Nawang Samten Lhundrup, and Lama Dorji Sherpa**—to create an elaborate sand mandala in the Lobby Gallery. This two-week program, presented in partnership with Ari Bhöd, the American Foundation for Tibetan Cultural Preservation, features the construction of a sacred sand painting embodying compassion. Millions of grains of colored sand will be sprinkled carefully on a flat surface over the course of two weeks, following precise and ancient instructions passed down over thousands of years.

This is the third time the Hammer has collaborated with Ari Bhöd to bring traditionally trained Lamas to the museum. In the first presentation, *The Mandala Project* in 2010, the Lamas broke attendance records for the Lobby Gallery when they created a mandala representing Guru Padmasambhava, the master who brought Buddhism to Tibet. The Lamas returned in 2012 to perform a healing ceremony in the Billy Wilder Theater.

The mandala that the Lamas will make this fall represents Chenrezig, the embodiment of the compassion of all Buddhas combined. The creation of this mandala is intended to help the viewer generate boundless compassion for all beings. Visitors to the Hammer can watch the Lamas create the Mandala and are invited to join the Lamas in pujas at the beginning and end of each day. The pujas include prayer and meditation intended to help bring to mind the qualities of the Buddha of Compassion. After spending two weeks creating the mandala with intense concentration, the final grains of sand are placed and then the entire sand painting is swept up in a final display of impermanence. The Lamas and the visitors bring the collected sand to the ocean and offer it as a blessing as part of the dissolution ceremony.

The mandala is a profound, universal symbol that translates literally to “center and its surroundings” and is a physical representation of our interdependence with the world around us. Mandalas are found in many forms, but always include a circle, a central point, and some form of symmetry. They can be created in sand, on paper or cloth, or built as 3-dimensional models or buildings. The vivid painted mandalas of Tibet are the most widely known.

Traditionally created as a tool for visualization and meditation, every single detail of a mandala—the design, the colors, and placement of symbols—is deliberate. The blueprints are considered sacred, with many layers of deep meaning and positive representation. Before beginning, traditional mandala artists generate the intention to benefit others and the motivation of compassion, which is believed to infuse the art or structure with unique spiritual and sacred qualities.

The public is invited to watch the Lamas create the mandala during the museum hours.

Please note: While the mandala will be on view during museum hours, the Lamas will not be present during their lunch, as well as from 7-8PM on Tuesdays-Fridays.

WEEKDAY VISITS:

We encourage those interested in spending more time with the mandala to visit during the week when the museum is quieter. Tuesday through Friday, visitors will be welcomed into the space as capacity allows. Please be advised that at times visitors may be asked to wait in line if the gallery is already at capacity.

WEEKEND VISITS:

Because of the fragility of the sand mandala and in order to accommodate expected high visitor turnout on the weekends, a **same-day timed ticketing procedure** will be in place on **Saturdays and Sundays**. Please visit hammer.ucla.edu for more information.

RELATED PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Artful Acts of Compassion

Sunday, October 5, 11am–1pm

Observe Tibetan Buddhist monks creating a Mandala of Compassion and get inspired to contribute to a community art project that fosters compassion for all. This program is a collaboration between the Hammer Museum and Tools for Peace.

Dissolution Ceremony & Procession to Pacific Ocean

Sunday, October 12, time TBD

Join the monks for a dissolution ceremony on the final day as the completed mandala is swept up, and the collected sand is brought to the Pacific Ocean to be offered as a blessing. All are welcome to participate in the dissolution ceremony and procession, but transportation will not be provided. Driving directions will be provided at the ceremony. [Check online for specific times closer to the date.](#)

Organized by Allison Agsten, curator of Public Engagement, with January Parkos Arnall, curatorial assistant, Public Engagement.

Part of the curatorial department, the Public Engagement program collaborates with artists to develop and present works that create an exchange with the institution and with visitors. Enacted both inside and outside the galleries, Public Engagement projects range from re-envisioned security guard uniforms to library and orchestra residencies.

The Hammer Museum's Public Engagement program is supported, in part, by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission.

Mandala of Compassion is supported by Catherine Glynn Benkaim and Barbara Timmer.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Venerable Gelong Kalsang Rinpoche

Venerable Gelong Kalsang Rinpoche is the former Vajra Master of *Rigdzin Drub-Pai Ghatsal*, His Holiness Chatral Rinpoche's seat in Pharping, Nepal. Ven. Gelong Kalsang Rinpoche is a fully ordained Bikshu monk and Lama of the Nyingma lineage. Ordained as a monk at the age of 11, Rinpoche studied with and has received empowerments and teachings from the foremost lamas of the Nyingma lineage of this era. Ven. Gelong Kalsang Rinpoche currently serves as Abbot and Spiritual Director at *Kunkhap Yoestal Thonkdol Choeling* in Nepal as well as the *Taiwan Nyingmapa Padmasabhava Pureland Buddhist Association* in Taiwan, where Rinpoche oversees activities, teaches and serves as spiritual advisor his students.

Venerable Lama Nawang Thogmed

Venerable Lama Nawang Thogmed served as the personal artist for His Holiness Trulshik Rinpoche for many years. He has planned, painted and directed the completion of traditional temple art and design for numerous monasteries and temples throughout Nepal. Renowned in the Tibetan monastic community in exile for the integrity of his work and strict adherence to the ancient traditions of "old Tibet", Ven. Lama Thogme is a master of ritual arts, and is often sought out to train many of the monks of the Nyingma and Kagyu lineages throughout India and Nepal. Lama Thogmed's specialty is in the complex art of mandala-making, specifically that of the sand mandala. Venerable Lama Thogmed is an accomplished practitioner and a fully ordained monk (Bikshu).

Lama Nawang Samten Lhundrup

Lama Lhundrup received his formal Buddhist training and instruction from numerous lamas, including His Holiness Trulshik Rinpoche and Venerable Lobsang Rinpoche of Norbu Linka Monastery. By the time he was a teenager, he had already completed his extensive training in the instruction on Tibetan Arts of Dharma Building and Housing for the Practice of Dharma. A master carver and craftsman, many of Lama Lhundrup's unique skills have been extensively employed at Ari Bhöd's retreat land Pema Drawa, where he has completed all of the hand-carving and intricate woodwork of the traditional Tibetan shrine and temple.

Lama Dorji Sherpa

Lama Dorji is an ordained Buddhist monk who has completed training and instruction since the age of thirteen with Gelong Kalsang Rinpoche. He has wide experience with many facets of Tibetan Ritual Arts and is fluent in numerous languages. He has traveled from Gelong Kalsang Rinpoche's monastery in Nepal to serve as assistant mandala artist.

ABOUT ARI BHÖD

Founded by the Venerable Lama Chödak Gyatso Nubpa in 2003, Ari Bhöd (The American Foundation for Tibetan Cultural Preservation) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and communicating the legacy of the ancient Tibetan Nyingma lineage tradition, a culture of peace that has remained vital through more than fifty generations of lifelong practitioners and lineage masters. For more information about Ari Bhöd, please visit www.aribhod.org

ABOUT THE HAMMER MUSEUM

The Hammer Museum—a public arts unit of the University of California, Los Angeles—is dedicated to exploring the diversity of artistic expression through the ages. Its collections, exhibitions, and programs span the classic to the cutting-edge in art, architecture, and design, recognizing that artists play a crucial role in all aspects of culture and society.

The museum houses the Armand Hammer Collection of old master, impressionist, and postimpressionist paintings and the Armand Hammer Daumier and Contemporaries Collection. The museum also houses the Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts—comprising more than 45,000 prints, drawings, photographs, and artists' books from the Renaissance to the present—and oversees the management of the Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden on the UCLA campus. The Hammer's newest collection, the Hammer Contemporary Collection, is highlighted by works by artists such as Lari Pittman, Kara Walker, Ed Ruscha, Barbara Kruger, Mark Bradford, Richard Hawkins, and Lynn Foulkes, among many others.

The Hammer presents major single-artist and thematic exhibitions of historical and contemporary art. It also presents approximately ten Hammer Projects exhibitions each year, providing international and local artists with a laboratory-like environment to create new work or to present existing work in a new context.

As a cultural center, the Hammer offers a diverse array of free public programs throughout the year, including lectures, readings, symposia, film screenings, and music performances. These widely acclaimed public programs are presented in the Hammer's Billy Wilder Theater, which is also the home of the UCLA Film & Television Archive's renowned cinemathèque.

HAMMER MUSEUM INFORMATION

Visit www.hammer.ucla.edu or call **310-443-7000** for current exhibition and program information.

ADMISSION TO ALL EXHIBITIONS AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

Hours: Tuesday–Friday 11am–8pm; Saturday & Sunday 11am–5pm. Closed Mondays, July 4, Thanksgiving, December 24, 25, 31, and January 1.

Location/Parking: The Hammer is located at 10899 Wilshire Boulevard in Westwood Village, three blocks east of the 405 Freeway's Wilshire exit. Parking is available under the Museum. Rate is \$3 for three hours with Museum validation. Bicycles park free and the Hammer is easily accessible via [public transportation](#).

Tours: For group tour reservations and information, call 310-443-7041.