

SPENCER MUSEUM OF ART

THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

For immediate release

***The Sacred and the Secular* explores Buddhism's vivid impact on Asian art**

Fall 2005

Asia Gallery

MEDIA CONTACT

Hillary Pedersen, exhibition organizer, 785.331.4172, hillary@ku.edu

Mary Dusenbury, Guest Curator of Asian Art, 785.864.0143, madair@ku.edu

Bill Woodard, Director of Communications, 785.864.0142, dradoowb@ku.edu

PROMOTIONAL IMAGES & CAPTION INFO AVAILABLE @: <http://www.spencerart.ku.edu/newsroom>

*Newsroom PC Users: right click on file, "save target as"

**Newsroom Mac Users: control click on file and download link to disk

Terms of Use—Promotional Images

Images are made available to approved news outlets solely for use in stories and reviews relating to the specified Spencer Museum of Art event or exhibition, and must be identified with the credit information provided. Any reproduction of all or part of the images for other purposes (i.e. to illustrate non-exhibition related stories, or for commercial sale in any regard) is strictly prohibited. Please note also that these are large files, prepared specifically for optimal reproduction value (300 DPI, JPG).

Lawrence, KS—Buddhism originated in India in the fifth-century B.C.E., when Prince Siddhartha renounced his privileged lifestyle to discover the truth about existence. He came to believe that all existence is suffering, that desire causes suffering, to cease desire is to cease suffering, and to cease suffering one must follow the teachings of the dharma, or Buddhist law. Buddhism teaches that our present world is an illusion, and that to break free from this illusion and the cycle of rebirth is to reach enlightenment and become a Buddha. From India, Buddhism spread eastward through Central Asia, China, Southeast Asia, Korea, and Japan, becoming one of the world's major religions.

This fall, an exhibition in the Spencer's Asia Gallery aims to illustrate how Buddhism is manifested in Asian art. Organized by Hillary Pedersen, last year's Carpenter Foundation Intern in Asian art and a KU doctoral candidate in art history, *The Sacred and the Secular: Buddhist Imagery in Religious & Popular Contexts* will be on view through February.

Most of the works selected for the exhibition were created after Buddhism had become well enough established that different schools of Buddhism had emerged—represented visually by very different artistic styles and practices. On view will be prints, paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, and Buddhist objects and texts from a variety of geographical sources, including China, Japan, and Tibet. Some objects have been used in ritual and worship practices, while others incorporate Buddhist motifs and themes as decorative elements in secular objects. The incorporation of Buddhist imagery into non-

sacred visual media illustrates an intersection between the sacred and secular realms. Pedersen says the exhibition is intended to provoke thoughts of how religious imagery is used, and about the possible definitions of religious art.

-30-

Spencer Museum of Art

**The University of Kansas
1301 Mississippi St
Lawrence 66045-7500
785.864.4710**

Also find the Spencer...

- **On the Web:** www.spencerart.ku.edu
- **E-mail:** spencerart@ku.edu

Gallery hours

Tues., Wed., Fri., & Saturday 10 AM—5 PM

Thurs. 10 AM—9 PM

Sun. Noon—5 PM

Closed Monday

- **Free parking in Lot 91 after 5 PM on weekdays and all day weekends, excepting home football games.**
- **Parking garage adjacent to Kansas Union is \$1 per hour weekdays, free on Saturdays and Sundays (but unavailable on home football games).**