



Buddhist Art: Sublime Message and Sacred Symbols

A Guided Tour of the Asian Art Museum's Galleries



Buddhism: Philosophy or religion? Way of life or way of being? Its many facets bear witness to its diversity across time and geographies. However, its essence is deeply rooted and its sublime message of wisdom and compassion welcomes all who seek to practice it.

Buddhism and its arts have existed for more than 2,500 years, weaving their way with monks and pilgrims through broad areas of the Asian continent and across seas, mingling with the arts and styles of the cultures encountered along the way.

Buddhist artifacts, architecture, and art serve to teach and assist the believer in understanding the religion's complexity. Objects created for ritual use range in size from tiny votives to colossal statues. Ceaselessly intriguing and inspiring, and often of bewildering complexity, Buddhist imagery encompasses a pantheon of divinities ranging from humble teachers and compassionate saviors to ferocious multi-headed deities.

Learn about Buddhist iconography—which can seem as challenging as the search for enlightenment itself—through the lens of Asian art. All the principal sacred symbols, objects, and figures of Buddhist worship throughout Asia will unfold before you in the Asian Art Museum's galleries.

The *Buddhist Art: Sublime Message and Sacred Symbols* tour is conducted by specially trained museum docents. To reserve this tour for your group please call (415) 581-3624 or email groupvisits@asianart.org. General information about group visits and private tours can be found at www.asianart.org/visit.htm.

