

SYMPOSIUM CHINESE BUDDHIST ART NEW DIRECTIONS & PERSPECTIVES

Friday 29 & Saturday 30 August 2008
University of Sydney • Art Gallery of New South Wales
in conjunction with the exhibition *The lost Buddhas:
Chinese Buddhist sculpture from Qingzhou*

ART
GALLERY
NSW



The 1996 discovery of several hundred Buddhist sculptures on the site of the long-destroyed Longxing Temple in Qingzhou in China's northeastern Shandong province is significant for adding a new dimension to the established order of the history of Chinese art and changing views about the evolution of sculptural style in China.

The symposium aims to make available to the general public the most current and insightful perspectives on Chinese Buddhist art in light of the Qingzhou and other recent discoveries by bringing together leading scholars from Europe, the United States and Australia. The symposium will provide various interpretative contexts for Chinese Buddhist sculpture and situate scholarly research within an aesthetic framework which takes into account history, religious studies, art history and archaeology.

Chinese Buddhist art: new directions & perspectives is presented in conjunction with the exhibition *The lost Buddhas: Chinese Buddhist sculpture from Qingzhou* 29 August – 23 November 2008 at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

The symposium takes place over two days with Day 1 on Friday at the University of Sydney and Day 2 on Saturday at the Gallery.



The University of Sydney

With the support of the
CHIANG CHING-KUO FOUNDATION FOR
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VisAsia 
Celebrating Asian art and culture



AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR
ASIAN ART & ARCHAEOLOGY

SPEAKERS

Professor Helmut Brinker recently retired as head of the Department of East Asian Art History at the University of Zürich. He has organised and participated in a number of major exhibition projects of Chinese and Japanese art in Europe and the US and has published numerous books, essays, articles, and exhibition catalogues on Chinese art and archaeology, Buddhist painting in particular, and medieval Japanese religious sculpture and painting.

Edmund Capon, AM, OBE has had a distinguished career as director of the Art Gallery of NSW since 1978. The famous *Chinese exhibition* of 1977 first brought him to Sydney from the Victoria and Albert Museum. He has overseen the successful development of Australian, Asian and Western collections while maintaining his research interest in the arts of China. He has curated innumerable exhibitions and written and lectured extensively on Chinese art and archaeology and on artists such as Jeffrey Smart, Caravaggio and Giacometti.

Professor Albert Dien has taught at the University of Hawaii, Columbia University and Stanford University. His primary field of research is the early medieval period in Chinese history (220–589), and he has published many articles dealing with that period, including a study of early Chinese armour, the invention of the stirrup and its effect on Chinese warfare and, more broadly, on social and political institutions, and on the impact of the northern nomadic peoples on Chinese society.

Professor Angela F Howard is professor of Asian art at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. She is the author of *The imagery of the cosmological Buddha* (1986), *Summit of treasures. Buddhist cliff sculpture of Dazu, Sichuan* (2001) and with Wu Hung, Yang Hong, Li Song *Chinese sculpture* (2006). She is presently working on the Buddhist art of the monastic communities of Kucha, Xinjiang (200–650).

Dr Patricia Karetzky is the Oskar Munsterberg Chair of Asian Art, Bard College and Adjunct Professor at Lehman College, City College of New York. Her primary field of specialisation is Chinese medieval art, especially religious art, concentrating on Buddhism and Taoism. Her recent publications include *Buddhist art in China* (2002), and *Guan Yin Buddhist deity of compassion in China* (2004).

Professor Lothar Ledderose is Chair of the Eastern Asian Art Institute at the University of Heidelberg. His work has focused recently on the translation and analysis of Chinese Buddhist scriptures engraved on stone. He is the recipient of the 2005 Balzan Prize for the History of the Art of Asia.

Dr Liu Yang joined the Art Gallery of NSW in 1997 as curator of Chinese art. He is also an adjunct professor at the College of Fine Arts, University of NSW, and an Honorary Associate of the Department of Art History and Film at the University of Sydney. He has organised a number of exhibitions and has published widely on various topics in classical Chinese art, including two award-winning catalogues.

Lukas Nickel is Lecturer in Chinese Archaeology at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, where he teaches on early imperial China and on the archaeology of the Silk Road. His research focuses on Han period and early Buddhist archaeology and on cultural exchanges during this period. Beginning in 2002, he organised a joint Swiss-Chinese excavation of a Buddhist temple site in Shandong province.

Professor Jeffrey Riegel has been Head of the School of Languages and Cultures at the University of Sydney since 2007. A scholar of Chinese literature for 40 years, his research interests are in classical Confucianism and ancient Chinese literature, mostly focusing on the Qin and Han dynasties. He is currently working on a translation and study of the ancient Chinese philosophical text, the Mozi.

Professor Eugene Wang is the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Professor of Asian Art at Harvard University. He is a recent recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, and a Charles A Ryskamp Research Fellowship. He is widely published on Chinese visual culture and his most recent publication is *Shaping the Lotus Sutra: Buddhist visual culture in medieval China* (2005), a study of wall painting on the theme of the Lotus Sutra in medieval China.

Professor Roderick Whitfield is Emeritus Professor of Chinese and East Asian Art at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He is a Fellow of the Dunhuang Academy and Visiting Fellow of the Centre for Research in Chinese Calligraphy and Painting of the Palace Museum, Beijing. He has published widely on Dunhuang paintings in the British Museum (1982–85), on Chinese painting (*Fascination of nature*, 1993) and, in collaboration with Professor Youngsook Pak, on Korean Art, including *Handbook of Korean art: Buddhist sculpture* (2002).

Associate Professor Dorothy C Wong is Associate Professor, East Asian Art at the McIntire Department of Art, University of Virginia. Specialising in Buddhist art of medieval China, her research addresses topics of art in relation to religion and society, and of the relationship between religious texts/doctrine and visual representations. Her current research project examines the transmission of Buddhist art from China to Japan during the 7th and 8th centuries, and the subsequent transformations.

cover: *Standing figure of a Buddha* (detail) Northern Qi (550–77)
Courtesy of Qingzhou Municipal Museum and Shandong Provincial Museum

ART GALLERY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
ART GALLERY RD THE DOMAIN 2000
INFORMATION LINE 1800 679 278
www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au

Directions & parking

University of Sydney
Woolley Lecture Theatre N395
John Woolley Building, Science Road
Entry from Science Road

Parking on campus is extremely limited and there are few day-long options in surrounding streets. There is a good bus service from the city – any of the Parramatta road services stop at the Uni. On-campus parking charges are \$24 per day, ticket to be obtained from machine using \$1 & \$2 coins only. There is a parking station in Western Avenue. Rates are \$24 flat rate (valid to 6am the next morning) or \$4 hourly rate (to maximum \$8 – 2hr time limit).

Art Gallery of New South Wales
Art Gallery Road, The Domain, Sydney
The Domain Parking station is the most convenient place to park. It is open from 7am and the Saturday flat rate is \$8. The Gallery is a ten minute walk from either Martin Place or St James railway stations.

The lost Buddhas: Chinese Buddhist sculpture from Qingzhou
Art Gallery of New South Wales
29 August – 23 November 2008

Principal sponsor

Optimal
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PROGRAM

Chinese Buddhist art: new directions & perspectives

Friday 29 & Saturday 30 August 2008

Friday 29 August

Woolley Lecture Theatre
University of Sydney

9am REGISTRATION

9.30am Welcome

Edmund Capon AM, OBE
Director, Art Gallery of NSW
Professor Stephen Garton
Dean of the Faculty of Arts at
the University of Sydney

Session 1

Buddhist art and society

Chair: Professor John Clark
FAHA, CIHA, Australian Research
Council Professorial Fellow and Director,
Australian Centre for Asian Art and
Archaeology, University of Sydney

9.40am Some miscellaneous notes on early Shandong province as a fertile ground for Buddhist art and thought

Jeffrey Riegel

Shandong province was the land of 'transcendents' (*xian*) and their secret techniques for accomplishing longevity. A major religious centre was Mount Tai, the most revered of China's 'holy mountains'. Shandong is also credited with being one of the important birthplaces of *Wuxing* ('Five Activities') and *Yinyang* thought. When Buddhism took root in Shandong, its monasteries grew rich and powerful and Shandong monks played a large role in the translation of Buddhist texts into Chinese and hence in the spread of Buddhism throughout China.

10.25am A Northern Qi layman's views of Buddhism

Albert Dien

This lecture will focus on the development of the doctrinal aspects of Buddhism that affected the devotional practices in important ways by using the writings of Yan Zhitui, in particular his *Yanshi jiaxun* (Family Counsels of Mr Yan), to reconstruct the belief system of this high-ranking, well educated layman and his commitment to Buddhism.

11.10am MORNING TEA

11.40am Shadow Cave: Chinese Buddhist sculptures in context

Eugene Wang

The lore of Shadow Cave, allegedly located in the Western Region, gained currency in 5th century China. As an imaginary construct that orders perceptual and ritual experience, the proverbial grotto provided medieval Chinese with a model of experiencing Buddha images as focal devices in meditative processes. This lecture analyses the iconographic program of a Northern Wei cave at Dunhuang as an instance of the Shadow Cave.

12.25pm DISCUSSION

12.50pm LUNCH

Session 2

Buddhist scripture and icons

Chair: Dr Mark Allon
Senior Lecturer in South Asian Buddhist
Studies, Department of Indian and
Sub-Continental Studies, University
of Sydney

2pm Gangshan, the mountain where the Buddha preached

Lothar Ledderose

Gangshan is one of six mountains near present-day Zoucheng city, Shandong province where, in the second half of the 6th century, Buddhist inscriptions were engraved on the rock under the open sky. The passage from the Lankavatara Sutra describes the beautiful scenery in the land of Lanka where the Buddha once preached. As visitors read the text section by section, they are re-enacting the ascent to the mountain in Lanka, coming into the very presence of the Buddha.

2.45pm The role of Buddhist scriptures in the formation of a regional style during the Six Dynasties period

Patricia Karetzky

Three sites in Gansu province present innovative iconographical inventions that were demonstrably based on new scriptures. A continual stream of texts entered China from India and Central Asia and it often happened that the new deities, doctrines and ritual practices brought by the foreign monks required new pictorial solutions. Winning the patronage of local rulers of north China, the monks introduced new sources for projects that required local artists to picture the teachings.

3.30pm Buddha names: their presence and significance in 6th century Chinese Buddhist art

Dorothy C Wong

During the 6th century, the iconography of Chinese Buddhist art grew rapidly. This coincided with the introduction of Buddhist texts, new doctrine and an increasingly large pantheon characteristic of Mahayana Buddhism. One noticeable change was the large number of names for the Buddha that were being recorded. In this lecture examples of artworks that are rich in the recording of Buddhist names will be examined for clues to understanding Buddhist beliefs and practices of the time.

4.15pm DISCUSSION

4.30pm FINISH

Saturday 30 August

Domain Theatre
Art Gallery of New South Wales

9.30am REGISTRATION & COFFEE

Session 3

The making of Buddhist images

Chair: Jackie Menzies, OAM
Head Curator of Asian Art, Art Gallery
of New South Wales

10.00am Introduction

Edmund Capon

10.30am Stages in the making of Buddhist images in China

Roderick Whitfield

From India across Asia to China and beyond, Buddhist images were created in almost unimaginable numbers, ranging from the simplest of moulded or woodblock-printed images to colossal figures dwarfing those who made them. Large or small, the images of the Buddha were adorned with offerings such as flowers and music, in order to inspire people to follow his teachings and thereby reach salvation, but they differed considerably in character according to patronage and place.

11.15am MORNING TEA

11.45am Animating and adorning divine images: some thoughts on the religious essence of Buddhist icons

Helmut Brinker

Buddhist icons were generally deemed to represent the worldly 'shadow' or visible body of divinities and were often believed to be invested with miraculous power. Sculptural images in particular functioned to establish response to and of the unseen sacred. In this lecture, sculptures from Longxing Temple in Qingzhou and other recently excavated Chinese Buddhist images shall serve as illustrations and be discussed in this more general context.

12.30pm DISCUSSION

BOOKING FORM

Chinese Buddhist art: new directions & perspectives

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Session 4

Buddhist art in Shandong

Chair: Peter Skilling

Director of the École française d'Extrême-Orient office in Bangkok

12.45pm Shandong art and the Southern style

Angela F Howard

The 1996 discovery of several hundred Buddhist sculptures at the former Longxing Temple in Qingzhou caps several other prominent, albeit less well publicised, findings in Shandong province during the past 20 years. Sharing a common style and doctrinal content, this large body of sculpture was crafted primarily in the sixth century and forms a distinctive 'Shandong school'. The findings raise several important questions concerning the development of Buddhist art.

1.30pm

LUNCH & EXHIBITION VIEWING

2.45pm Buddhist beliefs and iconography in 6th century Shandong

Liu Yang

This lecture takes into account existing literary evidence as well as recent archaeological discoveries in Qingzhou and other locations in Shandong and neighbouring provinces to shed new light on Buddhist art in the region during the 6th century. It examines the prevalent Buddhist beliefs, which permeated many levels of local life, as well as Buddhist sculpture's distinctive imagery and the iconographic innovations that occurred during this time when Buddhist art in Shandong reached its apogee.

3.30pm Qingzhou sculpture in the religious landscape of the 6th century: tracing the rise of popular Buddhism in eastern China

Lukas Nickel

Over the last few decades, local archaeologists working in various parts of Shandong province reported the discovery of Buddhist stone and bronze sculpture. The majority of the religious images known so far date to the 6th century, making this century the most active period of sculpture production in Shandong history. This lecture will discuss the beginnings of lay Buddhist activity in Shandong and investigate the reasons for the sudden surge in figure donations during the first decades of the 6th century.

4.15pm DISCUSSION

4.30pm FINISH



Buddha head Northern Qi (550–77)
Courtesy of Qingzhou Municipal Museum
and Shandong Provincial Museum

One day \$80, \$70 AGS

Both days \$150, \$130 AGS

Includes: Morning tea & lunch
Exhibition viewing for Saturday or both day registrants only

Bookings & pre-payment are essential. Early bookings recommended.

	Non-members	No of tickets	AGS members	No of tickets	TOTAL
Friday	\$80		\$70		\$
Saturday	\$80		\$70		\$
Both days	\$150		\$130		\$

Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Dr)

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