

# LACMA FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

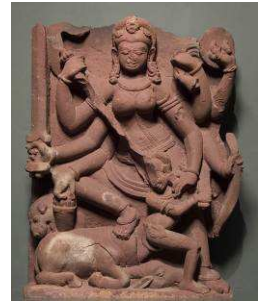
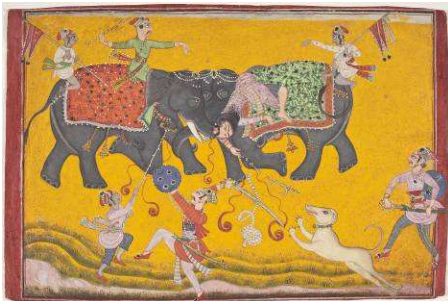
EXHIBITION: ANCIENT ART OF INDIA: MASTERWORKS OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART

ON VIEW: OCTOBER 19, 2011–JANUARY 29, 2012

LOCATION: MUSEO NACIONAL DE LAS CULTURAS, MEXICO

## LACMA'S COLLECTION TRAVELS FOR FIRST EVER EXHIBITION OF ANCIENT INDIAN ART IN MEXICO

MORE THAN 100 OBJECTS FROM MUSEUM'S PERMANENT COLLECTION WILL BE ON VIEW



(IMAGE CAPTIONS ON PAGE 3)

(Los Angeles, October 17, 2011)—The Los Angeles County Museum of Art's (LACMA) collection of Indian art will travel for the first ever exhibition of ancient Indian art in Mexico. The special exhibition, *Ancient Art of India: Masterworks of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art*, will be presented at the Museo Nacional de las Culturas in Mexico City. The show features 115 objects from LACMA's permanent collection—one of the most comprehensive groupings of South Asian art in the Western hemisphere—and explores the elaborate cosmologies of ancient India's three main indigenous religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism.

Ancient India's religious mythology and associated artistic imagery were among the most highly developed of all world cultures. Each of these religions constructed systems of the universe with multiple realms, which were populated by a diverse range of real and imaginary inhabitants.

Divinities, demigods, demons, mortals, and animals all interacted in a grand theater of life, the afterlife, and the endless cycle of time and rebirth. Numerous traumatic conflicts and heroic exploits were imagined in prose and poem and portrayed in a sophisticated tradition of sculpture, painting, and the decorative arts.

Drawn entirely from LACMA's renowned holdings, the exhibition will be thematically organized in five conceptual sections exploring the myriad inhabitants of India's perceived universe:

- **Deities:** Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain gods and goddesses
- **Demigods:** protective nature and fertility spirits associated with the earth and various celestial nymphs, musicians, and supernatural beings
- **Demons:** revered leaders and guardian figures with demonic powers and generic hordes of demonic warriors
- **Humans:** archetypical rulers who uphold virtue and preserve order by triumphing over evil, religious ascetics who conquer the temptations of the spirit and gain magical powers, and individuals typifying the plethora of life's activities and occupations
- **Animals:** the full spectrum of the animal kingdom, from powerful elephants to noble lions and cunning tigers to mischievous monkeys

*Ancient Art of India: Masterworks of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art* is curated by Stephen Markel, Harry and Yvonne Lenart Curator and Department Head and Curator of South and Southeast Asian Art, LACMA. Markel also wrote and edited the 151-page exhibition catalogue, which further explores and illustrates the museum's extensive collection of Indian art.

#### **About LACMA**

Since its inception in 1965, LACMA has been devoted to collecting works of art that span both history and geography and represent Los Angeles's uniquely diverse population. Today, the museum features particularly strong collections of Asian, Latin American, European, and American art, as well as a contemporary museum on its campus. With this expanded space for contemporary art, innovative collaborations with artists, and an ongoing *Transformation* project, LACMA is creating a truly modern lens through which to view its rich encyclopedic collection.

**Location and Contact:** 5905 Wilshire Boulevard (at Fairfax Avenue), Los Angeles, CA, 90036 | 323 857-6000 | lacma.org

**Hours:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: noon-8 pm; Friday: noon-9 pm; Saturday, Sunday: 11 am-8 pm; closed Wednesday

**General Admission:** Adults: \$15; students 18+ with ID and senior citizens 62+: \$10

**Free General Admission:** Members; children 17 and under; after 5 pm weekdays for L.A. County residents; second Tuesday of every month; Target Free Holiday Mondays

**Images (page 1)**

(Left) Unknown, *Battling Elephants*, circa 1700, Gift of Jane Greenough Green in honor of the museum's twenty-fifth anniversary, Photo © 2011 Museum Associates/LACMA

(Center, Left) India, Uttar Pradesh or Madhya Pradesh, *A Dwarf Drummer*, circa 500, from the Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, Museum Associates Purchase, Photo © 2011 Museum Associates/LACMA

(Center, Right) India, Uttar Pradesh, *Buddha Shakyamuni*, late 6th century, Gift of the Michael J. Connell Foundation, Photo © 2011 Museum Associates/LACMA

(Right) India, Rajasthan, Kota region, Atru (?), *Durga Slaying the Buffalo Demon*, circa 850-900, from the Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, Museum Associates Purchase, Photo © 2011 Museum Associates/LACMA

**Press Contact:** For additional information, contact LACMA Communications at [press@lacma.org](mailto:press@lacma.org) or 323 857-6522.

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