

# USC Pacific Asia Museum Exhibition Announcement



**EXHIBITION:** *Insight: The Path of Bodhidharma*

**ON VIEW:** September 19, 2014 through  
February 15, 2015

---

The exhibition explores the portrayal of the Buddhist monk Bodhidharma (known as Daruma in Japan) and how this religious figure has become a popular icon through an array of objects from paintings and sculptures to decorative objects and toys.

Credited with introducing Chan (Zen in Japanese) Buddhism in China in the 6th century, the Indian monk Bodhidharma has become a well-known subject in Buddhist art, frequently depicted in ways that emphasize his non-East Asian origin and iconoclastic persona.



As Chan Buddhism gained popularity, various legends associated with Bodhidharma evolved, and artists began to depict those legends alongside his portraits. Traditional depictions of Bodhidharma were executed in ink monochrome with free expressive brush strokes, alluding to his teaching that focuses on the spontaneous nature of reaching enlightenment through meditation.

During the Edo period (1603-1868) in Japan, the traditional sternness of this pious monk's expression went through a radical change as he was often paired with a courtesan of

the pleasure quarters--a parody to expose the hypocrisy of society. Today, Bodhidharma's depictions are still widely found both in fine art and pop culture.

### **About USC Pacific Asia Museum**

USC Pacific Asia Museum is the only museum dedicated to Pacific Asia at a major research university in the United States. The museum's mission is to further intercultural understanding through the arts of Asia and the Pacific Islands. Since 1971, USC Pacific Asia Museum has served a broad audience of students, families, adults and scholars through its education and outreach programs.

46 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, California 91101 626.449.2742 [pacificasiamuseum.usc.edu](http://pacificasiamuseum.usc.edu)

Image captions:

TOP: Kano (Shushin) Chikanobu (1660-1728), *Daruma*, Japan, Edo period (1603-1868), Ink, paper, silk, wood, Gift of Dr. Jesse L. Greenstein, 2002.4.15

BOTTOM: Takashi Murakami, *Oval Buddha*, 2000, Plastic, silicone, Gift of David Kamansky, 2004.6.1A-E

Images may not be cropped, stretched, overprinted or altered in any way without express permission from USC Pacific Asia Museum. Images may not be published without the captions.

**CONTACT** Carol A. Chaplin [carol.chaplin@pam.usc.edu](mailto:carol.chaplin@pam.usc.edu) 626.449.2742 ext 22