

USC Pacific Asia Museum

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MEDIA PREVIEW
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2015
9:00am-10am
USC PAM COURTYARD
RSVP: jessica@lynwinter.com

USC PACIFIC ASIA MUSEUM ANNOUNCES NEW SPRING EXHIBITIONS

Visualizing Enlightenment: Decoding Buddhist Iconography
March 20 - August 2, 2015

Ikko Style: The Graphic Art of Ikko Tanaka (1930-2002)
April 2 - August 2, 2015

MEMBERS' OPENING FOR BOTH EXHIBITIONS
Friday, April 3, 2015, 6PM-7PM



Pasadena, Calif. - USC Pacific Asia Museum announced today the openings of two new exhibitions drawing from the museum's permanent collection of more than 15,000 objects from Asia and the Pacific Islands spanning more than five thousand years. Curated by Yeonsoo Chee, USC PAM Assistant Curator, ***Visualizing Enlightenment: Decoding Buddhist Iconography***, presenting Amida Buddha, a recent gift to the

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museum, will be on view in the Focus Gallery from March 20 - August 2, 2015 and ***Ikko Style: The Graphic Art of Ikko Tanaka***, featuring an in-depth survey of Ikko TANAKA's work, one of the leading graphic designers in Japan in the second half of the 20th century, will be on view in the Changing Exhibitions Galleries from April 2 - August 2, 2015.

The Members' Reception for both exhibitions will be on Wednesday, April 1, 2015 from 6-7:30PM at USC Pacific Asia Museum at 46 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101.

Visualizing Enlightenment: Decoding Buddhist Iconography

March 20 - August 2, 2015 The Focus Gallery

Visualizing Enlightenment presents exceptional Amida Buddha in USC Pacific Asia Museum's collection from the Kamakura period (1185-1333) in Japan. At over six-feet tall, Amida Buddha is a rare example of large-scale sculpture from the period, and was executed using the *yosegi* technique, in which a single image is carved from multiple pieces of wood and then joined together from the inside.

The intricately carved *mandorla* (body halo) and elegant lotus pedestal, where the Buddha gracefully stands, permit a glimpse of the purified Buddha-field of Amida Buddha. The calmness and compassion of the Buddha's facial expression gently affirm that all sentient beings can attain salvation through their faith in him. Every feature of the Buddha, from the *ushnisha* (the cranial bump of wisdom and spirituality) to his elongated earlobes and *mudra* (hand gesture), carefully elucidate the canon that proves him as an enlightened being, thereby encouraging worshippers to follow his teachings.

Buddhist art comprises a tremendous range of objects from paintings to sculpture to ritual objects. Amida Buddha served as a powerful pedagogical tool to help devotees visualize the teachings and philosophical ideas of the religion. Amida Buddha, meaning "Limitless Light" in Sanskrit, is the Buddha of the western Pure Land sect in East Asia. It is one of the most widely worshipped Buddhas in the Mahayana tradition due to a doctrine that assured salvation to commoners. With this prime example of Amida Buddha from the 13th century, this intimate exhibition in the Focus Gallery aims to explain some of the most common iconography of Buddhist art.

Ikko Style: The Graphic Art of Ikko Tanaka

April 2 - August 2, 2015 The Changing Exhibitions Galleries

Focusing on the core of his artistic practice, poster design, *Ikko Style* will provide a colorful look into how Ikko TANAKA's ideas were visualized and transmitted to a broad audience. Over 40 posters will be on view, all of which are part of the museum's permanent collection.

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Tanaka's style is provocative yet timeless, drawing visual idioms from his cultural background and redefining them with the collective imagination of the present time. Born in Nara, the cradle of Japanese civilization, educated in Kyoto, the imperial capital and the cultural hub of Japan, and starting his career in Osaka, the city of commerce and art patronage, Tanaka was well situated to be a successful graphic master in Tokyo, an international metropolis.

As a relentless promoter of visual expression, Tanaka strove to achieve universal aesthetic value beyond regional or cultural barriers, which can be seen in his countless designs of posters, logos, trademarks, books and packages. Through his vision, forms drawn from traditional *ukiyo-e* (pictures of the floating world) were reduced into striking abstract designs to promote cultural events. Using his aptitude for understanding visual elements from any form, Japanese written characters were transformed into effective and innovative graphic tools. Through Tanaka's celebrated work with fashion designers and corporations including Hanae Mori and Issey Miyake and Mazda Corporation, Tanaka was able to bridge the gap between fine art and the commercial sector.

The presentation of ***Visualizing Enlightenment*** is made possible by Stephen O. Lesser.

Major support of ***Visualizing Enlightenment*** and ***Ikko Style: The Graphic Art of Ikko Tanaka*** came from East West Bank, Peter Pan, Eva & Ming Hsieh and Joan Payden of Payden & Rygel.

Generous support of the exhibitions came from Margaret Leong Checca with Gayle & Ed Roski of Majestic Realty Co.

Additional support is provided by Joan Travis, Singpoli Capital, David Kamansky, Sun Yin USA, Jipan Yan, Arrow Recovery Group and Esense Beauty.

In-kind media support is provided by KPCC.

Image credits: (Left) Ikko TANAKA (1930-2002), *Close-up of Japan, London 1985* (Detail), Japan, 1985, Offset. Gift of Tanaka Ikko Design Room, 1990.9.5. (Right) *Amida Buddha* (Detail), Japan, Kamakura Period (1185-1333): First half of the 13th century, Wood, lacquer, gilt and pigments, Gift of Sharon Pierce in loving memory of her son, J. Christopher Johnson. Conservation funds provided by Sharon Pierce and the Collectors' Circle, 2013.6.1.

MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP

USC Pacific Asia Museum

Support USC PACIFIC ASIA MUSEUM by becoming a member today! As a member you will receive a wide range of benefits, including free admission to exhibitions, events and programs, store and class discounts, special member invitations, and subscriptions to USC Pacific Asia Museum newsletter and emails while supporting our mission of promoting intercultural understanding through the arts of Asia and the Pacific Islands.

Visit pacificasiamuseum.usc.edu or contact the membership team today at 626-449-2742 x 16 or membership@pam.usc.edu for more information on how to become a member.

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. Since 1971, the museum's mission is to further intercultural understanding through the arts of Asia and the Pacific Islands.

USC Pacific Asia Museum presented the first North American exhibitions of contemporary Chinese art after the Cultural Revolution, including in 1987, *Beyond The Open Door: Contemporary Paintings from the People's Republic Of China* and in 1991, *I Don't Want To Play Cards with Cézanne and Other Works: Selections From The Chinese "New Wave" and "Avant-Garde" Art of the Eighties*.

The museum is located at 46 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101. Hours: Wednesday through Sunday 10AM-6PM. Admission: \$10 for General Admission, \$7 for Students with a valid ID and Seniors (60+), Free for Children Ages 12 and Under, **Free for all Museum Members, USC faculty, staff, and students with current ID. Free for All Visitors on the Second Sunday of the Month.** For more information, please contact 626.449.2742 or visit pacificasiamuseum.usc.edu

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