

**The M.K. Gandhi Center: Inner Peace and Sarvodaya at California State University, Fresno & Jain and Hindu Dharma Initiative**

# **Tangible Truths:**

## **Art Forms in Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism**

**April 18, 2024**

**9:00 AM to 5:30 PM**

**Peters Ellipse Gallery in Fresno State Library, 2nd Floor**

**This symposium aims to explore the complex roles of artworks in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism across Asia and throughout the world. Activated in transformative rituals and saturated with tactility and visuality, these art forms are created to capture the sublime, become important non-verbal communications, and assert their agency. They continue to shape human experiences in these religions.**



**Our Generous Supporters:**  
**The Uberoi Foundation for Religious Studies,**  
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**Register Here!!**

**Open and Free to Public**

**Organizers: Dr. W. Saam Noonsuk (noonsuk@csufresno.edu) and Dr. Veena R. Howard (vehoward@mail.fresnostate.edu)**



"M.K. Gandhi Center and Jain & Hindu Dharma Endowed Chair Initiative at Fresno State foster the values of nonviolence, inner peace, and wellbeing. The Spring 2024 symposium focuses on the various expressions of art that enhance spiritual, religious, and social experiences of humanity." -- Dr. Veena R. Howard, Professor of Philosophy



**8:45-9:00 AM** Registration

**9:00-9:15 AM** Opening Ceremony

**9:20-10:15 AM** Morning Keynote

Dr. Kaja McGowan, Cornell University

"Elemental Flight: Reassessing Kinnara/Kinnari in Jain, Buddhist, and Hindu Art"

**10:15-10:30 AM** Coffee Break

**10:30-11:30 AM** Session 1. Tangible Journeys to the Sacred Realms  
Moderated by Dr. Henry Delcore, CSU Fresno

Presentations:

1. Dr. An-Yi Pan, Cornell University

"To Behold, Visualize, and Grasp: Paths to Pure Land"

2. Dr. Wannasarn (Saam) Noonsuk, CSU Fresno

"Beyond the Chronicles: The Burying of the Relics, the Building of the Great Stupā, and the Climbing to the Sacred Realm"

**11:30 AM-12:00 PM** Discussion Session 1

Moderated by Drs. Henry Delcore and Veena Howard

Panelists include:

Drs. Kaja McGowan, An-Yi Pan, and W. (Saam) Noonsuk

**12:00-2:00 PM** Lunch

**2:00-3:30 PM** Session 2. Transformative and Liberating Power of Art in Hindu, Jain, Buddhist, and Gandhi traditions  
Moderated by Dr. Veena Howard, CSU Fresno

Presentations (30 minutes each):

1. Dr. Nalini Rao, Soka University of America

"Interaction and Transformations: Jain, Buddhist and Hindu Narrative and Symbolic Paintings"

2. Dr. Debashis Banerji, California Institute of Integral Studies

"Ritual Prescription and Creative Freedom: The Case of Durga"

3. Dr. Nachiket Chanchani, University of Michigan,

"Touch Me (Not)"

**3:30-3:45 PM** Coffee Break

**3:45-4:45 PM** Afternoon Keynote

Dr. Lisa Owens, University of North Texas

"Tangible Traces: Artistic Process as Multireligious Experience"

**4:45-5:15 PM** Discussion Session 2

Moderated by Drs. Veena Howard and W. (Saam) Noonsuk

Panelists include:

Drs. Lisa Owens, Nalini Rao, Debashis Banerji, and Nachiket Chanchani

