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SAMA EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS MUSEUM'S TIBETAN ART COLLECTION

Loretto – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Loretto is pleased to announce the opening of *Tibetan Treasures: The Rezk Collection of Tibetan and Nepalese Art*. The exhibition, which includes approximately 70 objects of Tibetan and Nepalese art spanning eight centuries, opens October 28 and will remain on view through January 28.

The Museum's Rezk Collection is one of the major collections of Tibetan and Nepalese art in the United States. This exhibition marks the first time the collection has been shown to the public in more than fifteen years. *Tibetan Treasures* features approximately 90 objects, all made within the context of Tibetan Buddhism, including thangkas (scroll paintings), block prints, sculpture, and ceremonial and ritual pieces. These range in date from the twelfth century to the twentieth, and give a fascinating overview of the rich iconography of Tibet's unique form of Buddhism. Personifying abstract ideas as gods, demons, monsters, and saints, the objects in the exhibition bring Buddhist concepts to life in a resonant and marvelously imaginative way.

"One does not need to be an expert on Tibetan Buddhism to appreciate this material," said SAMA Curator for Visual Arts, Dr. Scott Dimond. "The mellow colors and serene expressions of the figures invite contemplation regardless of the viewer's spiritual orientation. At the same time, the intricacy of these pieces fosters a sense not only of wonder, but also of respect for the devotion with which the artists approached their subjects."

The Museum will celebrate the exhibition with a reception on Wednesday, November 2. The reception begins at 6 p.m. and will include wine and hors d'oeuvres. Cost is \$25 or \$20 for SAMA members. Reservations are requested by October 30 and can be made by calling the Museum at (814) 472-3920.

In addition to the reception, SAMA will offer other programs designed to provide a cultural experience and greater understanding of the *Tibetan Treasures* exhibition. Beginning Sunday, October 30, the Venerable Losang Samten will begin construction of a sand mandala in the Museum gallery, and will complete it by Thursday, November 3, at which time there will be a ceremony to return the sand mandala back to nature.

On Tuesday, November 1, the Museum will be showing a series of Buddhist-themed films in the main gallery. *Kundun*, *Vajra Sky over Tibet*, and *Why*

Has Boddhi-Dharma Left for the East? will be screened, beginning at 11 a.m. and continuing through 5 p.m. The screenings are open to the public free of charge.

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Loretto is located on the campus of Saint Francis University. Hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday. The Museum is open to the public free of charge. For more information, call the Museum or visit www.sama-art.org.

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.