

# Eric Huntington

Updated 2021-06-25

## Education

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- 2013 PhD, University of Chicago  
South Asian Languages and Civilizations
- 2009 MA, University of Chicago  
South Asian Languages and Civilizations
- 2007 MTS, Harvard Divinity School  
Buddhist Studies
- 2005 MFA, Ohio State University  
Painting and Drawing
- 2003 BFA, Rhode Island School of Design  
Illustration
- 2000 BA with General Honors, University of Chicago  
Philosophy and Allied Fields

## Appointments

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- 2021–Present Rice University  
T. T. and W. F. Chao Assistant Professor of Transnational Asian Studies  
in the Department of Transnational Asian Studies
- 2019–2021 Rice University  
Annette and Hugh Gragg Postdoctoral Fellow  
in the Chao Center for Asian Studies
- 2017–2019 Stanford University  
Postdoctoral Fellow in the Ho Center for Buddhist Studies  
with an appointment as Lecturer in Religious Studies
- 2014–2017 Princeton University  
Cotsen Postdoctoral Fellow in the Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts  
with an appointment as Lecturer in Religion
- 2013–2014 Washington University (Saint Louis) [Shared with Saint Louis Art Museum]  
Korff Postdoctoral Fellow in Art History & Archaeology
- 2013–2014 Saint Louis Art Museum [Shared with Washington University]  
Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in South Asian Art  
(curated an exhibition of Tibetan art, catalogued the collection,  
donor outreach, conservation consultation)
- 2012 School of the Art Institute of Chicago  
Adjunct Faculty
- 2009–2011 University of Chicago  
2011 Lecturer for First Year Sanskrit  
2009–10 Teaching Assistant for Sanskrit

- 2003–2005 The Ohio State University  
Graduate Associate, independently teaching Beginning Drawing
- 2002–2003 Rhode Island School of Design  
2003 Teaching Assistant for Master Painting Techniques  
2002–03 Teaching Assistant for Introductory Painting I & II

## Publications

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### Monographs

- 2018 *Creating the Universe: Depictions of the Cosmos in Himalayan Buddhism*  
(Seattle: University of Washington Press) [\[link\]](#)  
[296 pp., 153 illus., 118 in color, 1 map, 7 x 10 in.]

#### Awards

- Edward C. Dimock Jr. Prize in the Indian Humanities, American Institute of Indian Studies, 2018 [\[link\]](#)
- Millard Meiss Grant, College Art Association, 2017 [\[link\]](#)
- Barr Ferree Subvention, Princeton University, 2017

#### Reviews

- David Shulman, “Buddhist Baedekers,” in *The New York Review of Books*, March 26, 2020 [\[link\]](#)
- Simon Wickhamsmith, International Institute for Asian Studies [\[link\]](#)
- Yi Ding, *Reading Religion* [\[link\]](#)
- Lan A. Li, *Isis* (History of Science Society) [\[link\]](#)

### Peer Reviewed Articles and Chapters

- 2019 “Ritual Structure and Material Culture in the *Guide to Bodhisattva Practice*” in *Readings of Śāntideva’s Guide to Bodhisattva Practice*, ed. by Jonathan Gold and Douglas Duckworth (Columbia University Press), 132–145 [\[link\]](#)
- 2019 “Seeing the Unseen: Vision, Space, and Time in a Tantric Mandala” in *Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment*, ed. by John Henry Rice and Jeff Durham (VMFA), 180–193 [\[link\]](#)
- 2018 “Himalayan Cosmologies of Offering: A Comparison of Newar and Tibetan Treasure-maṇḍalas in Practice and Art,” in *South Asian Studies* 34:2, 154–68 [\[link\]](#)
- 2017 “Image and Text in Newar Buddhist Ritual Manuals,” in *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art and Belief* 13.2, 175–205 [\[link\]](#)

### Essays, Articles, and Chapters

- 2021 “Buddhist Worlds of Colour in Text, Practice and Art,” in *Green Sky, Blue Grass: Colour Coding Worlds*, ed. Matthias Claudius Hofmann (Kerber), 116–127 [\[link\]](#)
- 2020 “Layered Cosmologies in Himalayan Buddhist Shrines,” in *Orientalisms* 51:5 (September/October), 48–57 [\[link\]](#)

## Book Reviews

- 2018 “Buddhist Spaces: Beyond Secularity,” a review of Justin Thomas McDaniel’s *Architects of Buddhist Leisure* for *Marginalia* [\[link\]](#)
- 2009 Booknote for Gudrun Bühnemann’s *Buddhist Iconography and Ritual in Paintings and Line Drawings from Nepal* in *Religious Studies Review*

## Other Publications

- 2012 Photographer and editor (uncredited) for Yumi Park, *Mirrors of Clay: Reflections on Ancient Andean Life in Ceramics From the Sam Olden Collection* (Jackson: Jackson State University and the University of Mississippi) [96 pp., 79 color photographs, 6 x 9 in.] [\[link\]](#)

## Fellowships, Grants, and Awards

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- 2019–2021 Gragg Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University
- 2017–2019 Ho Center for Buddhist Studies Postdoctoral Fellowship, Stanford University
- 2017 Dunhuang Buddhist Studies Workshop, Woodenfish Foundation and Dunhuang Academy (June)
- 2015 University Committee on Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences Grant, Princeton University
- 2014–2017 Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts Cotsen Postdoctoral Fellowship, Princeton University
- 2013–2014 Korff Postdoctoral Fellowship in Art History & Archaeology, Washington University
- 2013–2014 Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship in South Asian Art, Saint Louis Art Museum
- 2012–2013 Provost’s Dissertation-Year Fellowship, Division of the Humanities, University of Chicago
- 2012 Committee on Southern Asian Studies Dissertation Write-up Fellowship (Summer), University of Chicago
- 2007–2012 Graduate Aid Initiative Fellowship, Division of the Humanities, University of Chicago
- 2000–2003 Honors at Rhode Island School of Design
- 1996–2000 Dean’s List at University of Chicago
- 1996–2000 National Merit Scholar

## Invited Lectures

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- (2022) “Putting the World to Work: Applied Cosmology in Buddhist Thought and Practice,” National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute, *The Imagination and Imaginal Worlds in the Mirror of Buddhism*, Mangalam Research Center, Berkeley (June)

- 2021 *Approaching Buddhist Art*, a series of two lectures (“Images, Meditation, and Ritual” and “How to View a Buddhist Mandala”) at Dawn Mountain (June 16 & 23)
- 2021 “Embodied Buddhist Landscapes in India, Nepal, and Tibet,” University of Texas at Austin (April 15)
- 2021 “Approaching the Humanities through Visual Culture,” Medieval and Early Modern Studies Keynote Lecture, Rice University (April 10)
- 2021 “Four Views on Buddhist Maṇḍalas (at Dunhuang and Beyond),” Dunhuang Foundation (January 28)
- 2020 “In Light of Color: An Interdisciplinary and Transnational View on Buddhist Chromatics,” Transnational Asia Research Initiative, Rice University (November 19)
- 2020 “Himalayan Cosmologies of Offering,” University of Michigan (September 8)
- 2020 “Buddhist Visions of the After-Death,” Museum of Fine Arts Houston (January 30)
- 2019 “A Nepalese-Style Offering Ritual in Buddhist History,” at the *Dharma and Punya: Buddhist Ritual Art of Nepal* Exhibition Symposium, Harvard University (December 6)
- 2019 “Seeing the World in a Buddhist Temple,” Medieval and Early Modern Studies, Rice University (October 30)
- 2019 “Body/Landscape/Art: Buddhist Images and Corporeal Geographies,” Transnational Asia Research Initiative, Rice University (October 25)
- 2019 “Buddhist Cosmology at Work,” Buddhist and Silk Road Studies, Georgetown University (September 30)
- 2019 “Aesthetics of Place: Buddhist Art and its Contexts,” Center for South Asia, Stanford University (May 9)
- 2019 “Places of Art: Buddhist Imagery, Spatiality, and Landscape,” *Buddhist Geoaesthetics* conference, Brown University (May 3)
- 2018 “Visions of Buddhist Mandalas: Meaning, Form, and Function in Tantric Art,” *Focus* Series, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (December 7)
- 2018 “On Buddhist Images: Materiality and Constructedness in Religious Representations,” Ho Center for Buddhist Studies at Stanford (November 1)
- 2018 “Approaching Religious Visual Culture,” Religion Department Colloquium, Stanford University (February 15)
- 2017 “Re-centering Buddhist Cosmology: Concepts of Geographic Space in Text, Ritual, and Art,” Numata lecture at the University of Calgary (November 3)
- 2017 “Frames of Scale and Geo-Spatial Transformations in the Buddhist Maṇḍala,” *Asian Representations and Constructions of Space* Series, Stanford University (October 12)

- 2017 “Expressive Cosmologies: Depictions of the Buddhist Universe in Text, Art, and Ritual,” East Asian Studies Colloquium, Princeton University (March 29)
- 2016 “From Unity to Infinity: The Scalable Cosmos in Buddhist Offering Objects,” at *Scale: A Colloquium*, Princeton University (April 16)
- 2015 “Buddhist Cosmology in the Art of Bhutan,” Wonkwang University, Iksan, South Korea (June 20)
- 2010 “Spatial Representation in Buddhist Art and Image Consecration,” Faculty Seminar Research Lecture, Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan (July)

### Conference Papers

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- 2019 “Layered Mandalic Cosmologies in Himalayan Buddhist Shrines,” American Council for Southern Asian Art, Edinburgh (November)
- 2018 “Ritual and Representation: Performance to Vision in Himalayan Buddhist Offerings,” *Religion and Ritual: The Poetics and Performance of the Ineffable*, Symposium at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (April)
- 2017 “Disembodied Images: The Materiality of Objects in the Buddhist Landscape,” American Academy of Religion, Boston (November)
- 2017 “Cosmology as a Framework for Expression in Text and Image: Indic Sources and Buddhist Functions,” International Association of Buddhist Studies, Toronto (August)
- 2017 “Translocation and Transformation: A Geo-Spatial Cosmology of Tantric Mandalas,” Association for Asian Studies, Toronto (March)
- 2017 “Entering the Monastery, Exiting the World: Cosmological Murals in Buddhist Architecture,” College Art Association, New York (February)
- 2016 “Cosmological Murals at the Entrance to Sacred Spaces: The Bhavacakra and Cakravāla in Tibetan Buddhism,” American Academy of Religion, San Antonio (November)
- 2016 “‘Himalayan’ Cosmologies: Ritual and Representation in Nepal and Tibet,” College Art Association, Washington DC (February)
- 2015 “Creating Universes: Divergent Ritual Cosmologies in Nepalese and Tibetan Contexts,” American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, Georgia (November)
- 2015 “Buddhist Cosmology in Bhutanese Murals: An Iconographic Understanding of the Negotiation Between Kālacakra and Abhidharmakośa Cosmologies,” Asian Studies Conference Japan (ASCJ), Tokyo, Japan (June 20–21) and the International Workshop on Traditional Sciences in Asia, Kyoto, Japan (June 17–19)
- 2014 “Offering the Universe: Divergent Representations of the Cosmos in Nepalese and Tibetan Rituals,” Midwest Art History Society Conference, Saint Louis, Missouri (April)

- 2011 “Reading the Mysteries: Visual and Textual Encoding in a Newar Buddhist Ritual Manual,” South Asian Studies Association Conference, Richmond, Virginia (April)
- 2010 “Image Construction as Divinity Construction in a Buddhist Sculpture Manual,” North American Graduate Student Conference in Buddhist Studies, University of Toronto (April)

## Exhibitions

- 2014 Curator and designer for “Facets of the Three Jewels: Tibetan Buddhist Art from the Collections of George E. Hibbard and the Saint Louis Art Museum,” an exhibition of Tibetan paintings and sculptures at the Saint Louis Art Museum
- 2012 Co-Curator, designer, and photographer for “Mirrors of Clay: Reflections of Ancient Andean Life in Ceramics from the Sam Olden Collection,” an exhibition of ceramics at Jackson State University
- 2012 Museum layout & graphic design for “Awash in Color,” an exhibition of Japanese and Western color prints at the Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago
- 2010–2011 Curator for “Tibetan Art & Culture,” an exhibit of photographs and original drawings at the University of Chicago, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and The Ohio State University
- 2010–2011 Museum layout & graphic design for “Tragic Muse,” an exhibition of eighteenth and nineteenth century European art at the Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago

## Events Organized

- 2020 *Newar Buddhist Rituals*, two lectures and a ritual performance by Naresh Man Bajracharya, Tribhuvan University (Nepal), Rice University (February)
- 2010 *Vajrayāna Buddhism*, a week-long series of lectures and Sanskrit readings with Naresh Man Bajracharya, Director of Buddhist Studies at Tribhuvan University (Nepal), University of Chicago (May)

## Faculty Seminars, Working Groups, and Collaborations

- (2022) National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute, *The Imagination and Imaginal Worlds in the Mirror of Buddhism* (as faculty lecturer), Mangalam Research Center, Berkeley
- (2022) Borobudur Workshop (as faculty participant), Princeton University
- 2021 *Buddhist Bodies: An Introduction and Collective*, University of Winnipeg
- 2020 *Oceans, Waters, and Aquifers*, a comparison of fluid movements across spatial visualizations, dir. Lan Li, Rice University
- 2009 National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute, *Buddhist Traditions of Tibet and the Himalayas* (as participant), College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA

## Languages

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- Sanskrit (reading)
- Tibetan (reading)
- French (reading)
- Pali (reading)
- Hindi (reading)

## Professional Memberships

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- American Academy of Religion (AAR)
- International Association of Buddhist Studies (IABS)
- Association for Asian Studies (AAS)
- American Council for Southern Asian Art (ACSAA)
- College Art Association (CAA)

## Courses Taught

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### Studies in Asian Philosophy

Rice, 2021 (Aut)

### Religion and Art in Transnational Asia

[co-taught with Prof. Shih-shan Huang]

Rice, 2021 (Aut)

Rice, 2020 (Aut)

### Geographies of Religion in South Asia

Rice, 2020 (Spr)

### Tantric Buddhism (graduate level)

Stanford, 2019 (Win)

### Creating the Universe: Buddhist Science, Ritual, and Art

Stanford, 2018 (Win)

Princeton, 2017 (Spr)

Princeton, 2015 (Spr)

Washington University, 2014 (Spr)

### Buddhist Art and Material Culture: The Virtues of Objects

Princeton, 2016 (Spr)

### The Buddhist Individual: Society, History, and Gender

Princeton, 2015 (Aut)

### Visualizing Buddhism: Art, Religion, Philosophy

Princeton, 2014 (Aut)

Washington University, 2014 (Spr)

### Buddhist Heroes: Buddhism through the Literature of its Exemplars

School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 2012 (Spr)

### First Year Sanskrit (language)

University of Chicago, 2011 (Win)

## Field Work

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2015	Mongolia
2015	Korea and Japan
2013	Korea
2011	Kolkata and Ladakh, India
2009	Darjeeling and Sikkim, India, and Bhutan
2007	Northern India
2006	Central Tibet
2002	Japan
1994	Nepal