



नेपाली महाबाणिज्यदूतावास, न्यूयॉर्क Consulate General of Nepal, New York

Press Release: The Rubin Museum of Art, New York to return two wooden Art works to Nepal

The Consulate General of Nepal, and the Rubin Museum of Art, New York, jointly announced today the return of two art objects from Rubin's permanent collection to Nepal. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Acting Consul General Mr. Bishnu Prasad Gautam, and Executive Director Dr. Jorrit Britschgi, on their respective behalf of the Government of Nepal, and the Rubin Museum of Art, at a ceremony organized at the Museum for this purpose.

The art works scheduled to return include upper section of a Frieze/*Torana* (17th century) and a Garland Bearing flying Apsara/*Gandharva* (14th century). The *Torana* was lost from the main door of Yampi Mahavihara/I-Bahi, Patan, Lalitpur. According to the Museum officials, the artwork arrived at the Museum in 2010. The work of flying Apsara is originally from *Keshchandra Mahavihara*, Itum Bahal, Kathmandu which was lost in 1999 and added to the Museum's collection in 2003.

Receiving the art objects, the Acting Consul General remarked, "The proactive and warm response and thoughtful collaboration from the Rubin have positively contributed to Nepal's national efforts to recover and reinstate the lost artifacts". He expressed deep gratitude to the Rubin Museum, its Executive Director, Board of Trustees, the Museum's scholars and officials for their initiative and cooperation in returning these artifacts back to Nepal. He also appreciated the support received from media, civil society, and others in this endeavour.

The Consulate General and the Museum collaborated to verify the origin of these arts, possibilities to return to the original sites, and repatriation. During this process, the Museum engaged two scholars of Nepali art to further examine and research the known provenance of the art works. Inputs to determine the ownership and origin of the art works were received from the Department of Archaeology of the Government of Nepal.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Jorrit Britschgi, Executive Director of the Rubin Museum commented, "As custodians of the art in our collection, the Rubin recognizes that we have an ongoing duty to carefully research the art and objects we collect and exhibit. The theft of archaeological objects continues to be a major concern in the art world. The Rubin's collecting activities adhere to the highest standards of ethical and professional practice related to provenance. We believe it is our responsibility to address and resolve issues of cultural property, including helping to facilitate the return of the two objects in question".

The Consulate General and the Rubin Museum expressed their willingness to work closely in promotion of art and culture, including Himalayan art, as these collaborative efforts contribute to preservation of the cultural heritage, and further strengthen the long-standing people-to-people ties between Nepal and the United States of America.

The Consulate General continues to work on the country's national efforts in repatriation of lost cultural properties.

Consulate General of Nepal
New York
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