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Documenting a Tibetan Wall Painting Reproduction

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ABSTRACT:

Peder Bøllingtoft, lecturer and conservator at The School of Conservation at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, and Knud Larsen, professor and architect from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, initiated a project on the preservation of Tibetan wall paintings, e.g. in Ladakh and other areas. A network supports the core group in relevant areas, among others David Jackson, curator at the Rubin Collection, N.Y., USA, as well as Arne R. Rasmussen, Kim P. Simonsen, and Mikkel Scharff from the School of Conservation in Denmark. The project's first two years were mainly devoted to development and planning while practical aspects of the project took off January 2008 when two lecturers from Tibet University in Lahsa, China, went to Denmark for 2 months with authentic materials to produce a full scale reproduction of a traditional wall painting. The painting technique is considered to have close similarity with tangkha painting, using similar pigments and binders. This presentation focused on the execution of the wall painting reproduction. Major steps during the painting process was documented in various ways, i.e. photographs, videos, sampling of all pigments and binding media (animal glue) after preparation and prior to application, as well as written notes and discussions on the techniques applied. The painting will further be documented and analyzed in various ways in order to obtain as much information about the typical structure and potential deterioration of the wall paintings. The knowledge and information gathered will be useful in future analyses, diagnosis and conservation of Tibetan wall paintings.

BIOGRAPHIES: Mikkel Scharff holds an MSc in Conservation and is Head of the departments "Paintings" and "Monumental art" at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Conservation (RDFA-SC). He lectures and carries out research in areas such as canvas painting conservation, technical art history (from Greek sculpture to contemporary art), analytical photographic techniques (e.g. X-ray and IRR), etc. He was co-ordinator of the ICOM-CC paintings group for six years in the 1990s. Peder Bøllingtoft holds an M.Sc. in wall painting conservation from the RDFA-SC, Copenhagen, 1992. From 1992 to 2004 he was employed as conservator at the National Museum of Denmark. Since 2000 he is a Lecturer at the RDFA-SC, responsible for the teaching in wall painting conservation, Department for Monumental Art. He has produced scientific research and publications within the fields of preservation of wall paintings and wall paintings technologies in Egypt, Germany and Scandinavia.

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