Symposium
Seeing the Unseen: Spirits in Asian Popular Religious Traditions
Fowler Museum at UCLA

Lenart Auditorium
Saturday, October 28, 2017
10 am – 4:30 pm

Spirits and spirit mediums are central within the practices and rich visual cultures of many Asian popular religious traditions. With the use of paintings, costumes, musical instruments, and other elaborately detailed objects, priests and shamans manifest spirits that influence and guide human fortune. This one-day symposium gathers national and international experts to examine multiple traditions from Vietnam, Laos, Korea, India, China, and Myanmar, as well as the ways contemporary cultures and diasporic movements are transforming and sustaining spirit practices.

Presented in conjunction with the exhibition How to Make the Universe Right: The Art of Priests and Shamans from Vietnam and Southern China at the Fowler Museum from July 30, 2017 – January 7, 2018. All works on view are part of the Barry and Jill Kitnick Collection generously donated to the Fowler Museum in 2015. The symposium is co-sponsored by the UCLA Confucius Institute.

Parking available in UCLA Lot 4, 221 Westwood Plaza, directly off Sunset Blvd | $12/day

RSVP [here](#)
Symposium Schedule

Morning Session

10:00 – 10:15 am  Welcome and Introduction  
Terri Geis  
Fowler Museum Director of Education and Interpretation

10:15 – 10:45 am  Yao Shaman Priest Robes and Masks: Symbols of the Mystical Powers, Cosmic Order and Traditional Values  
Trian Nguyen  
Associate Professor of Art and Visual Culture, Bates College, Maine

10:45 – 11:15 am  In the Country of Gods, Demons, and Heroes: Documenting Theyyam Rituals in Kerala, India  
Neelima Jeychandran  
Post-Doctoral Fellow, Africana Research Center, Pennsylvania State University

11:15 – 11:45 am  Dongba Ritual and Art in Southwest China  
Charles McKhann  
Professor of Anthropology, Whitman College, Washington

11:45 – 12:00 pm  Q&A with speakers

12:00 – 1:30 pm  Lunch break

Afternoon Session

1:30 - 2:00 pm  Things Fall Apart, Temple Statues, Shaman Paintings, and the Problem of Decay  
Laurel Kendall  
Chair of Anthropology Division and Curator of Asian Ethnographic Collections, American Museum of Natural History, New York

2:00 – 2:30 pm  Vietnamese Spirits in Exile: Worshipping the Mother Goddess and the Left Eye of God in Southern California  
Janet Hoskins  
Professor of Anthropology and Religion, University of Southern California

2:30 – 3:00 pm  Splendour and Sacrifice: Documenting Taoism in Northern Laos  
Tara Gujadhur  
Co-Director, Traditional Arts and Ethnology Center, Laos

3:00 – 3:15 pm  Q&A with speakers

3:30 – 4:30 pm  Reception in Fowler Museum Art Council Amphitheatre.