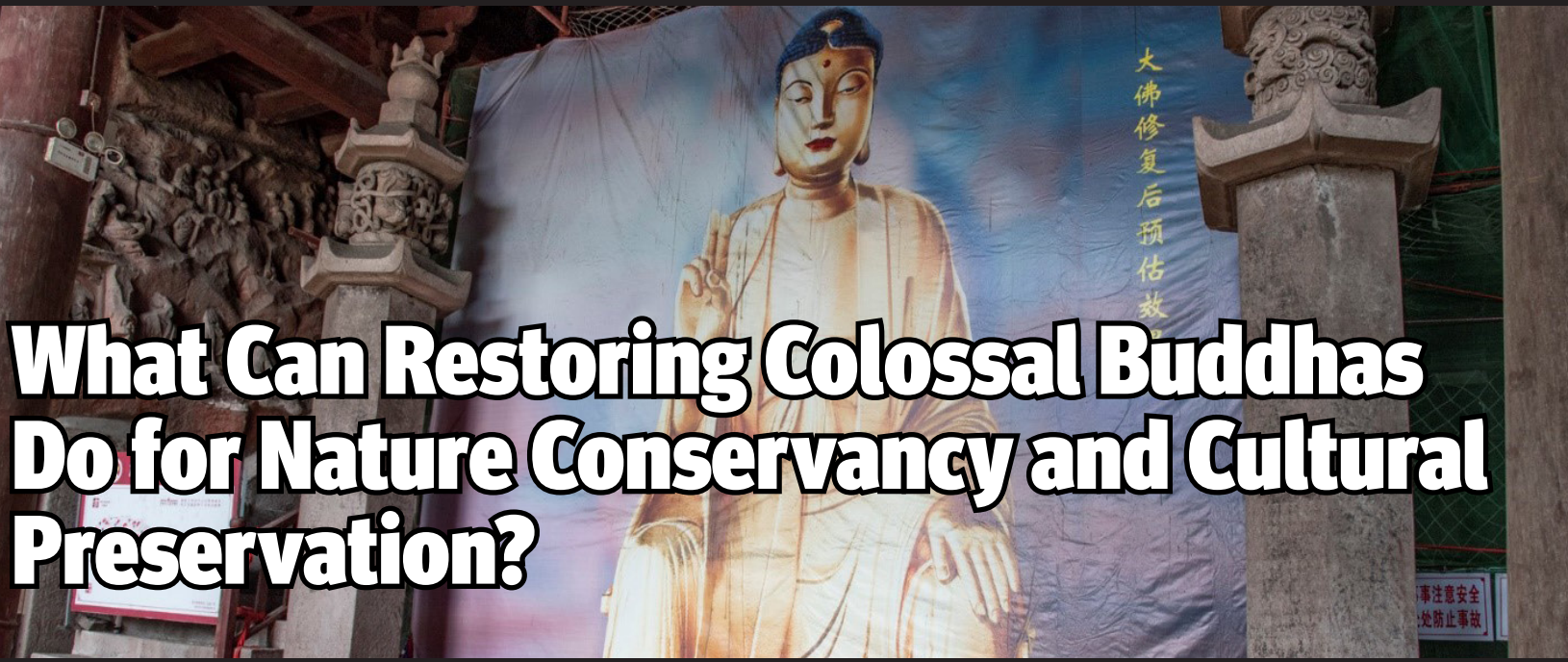


Transnational Asia Speaker Series



What Can Restoring Colossal Buddhas Do for Nature Conservancy and Cultural Preservation?

Wednesday, April 5, 2023 @ 4 PM CDT

Sewall Hall, Room 309

Also online via Zoom ([registration required](#))

In recent years, several high-profile restorations of centuries-old Buddhist monuments in southwest China have raised questions about the value and method of preserving religious icons in a society that reveres tradition but also has a long history of heritage destruction. Focusing on the case of the Laitan Buddha in Hechuan, this lecture brings a sustainability perspective to the debate by discussing how conservation practices and community involvement can contribute to a religio-environmental ethic that encompasses both nature conservancy and cultural preservation.



SONYA LEE is Professor of Art History, East Asian Languages and Cultures, and Religion at the University of Southern California. She is currently Director of the East Asian Studies Center and Chair of the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures. Dr. Lee has published widely on Buddhist material culture of China and Central Asia. She is the author of *Temples in the Cliffside: Buddhist Art of Sichuan* (University of Washington Press, 2021) and *Surviving Nirvana: Death of the Buddha in Chinese Visual Culture* (Hong Kong, 2010). She is also Editor-in-Chief for *Grove Art Online*, the premier online resource for the visual arts administered by Oxford University Press. Dr. Lee's research interests include the material culture of the ancient Silk Road, Buddhist sacred geography, art and ecology, heritage conservation, and collecting and display of Asian art in museums. Her current book project brings perspectives from new materialism and posthumanism into the study of the art and technology of wall painting of the Silk Road.

FACULTY HOST: Shih-Shan Susan Huang

COVID-19 POLICY: While masks are no longer required on the Rice campus, we encourage our in-person guests to wear one and have selected a venue to facilitate social distancing during the event.



RICE HUMANITIES

Chao Center for Asian Studies

The Transnational Asia Speaker Series is made possible through the generosity of the Ting Tsung and Wei Fong Chao Foundation.

Register at ow.ly/mMoZ50N9GxT
or scan the QR code above.