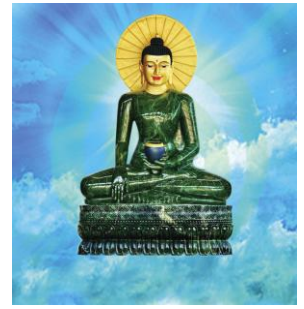




Unified Buddhist Congress in the United States of America
Vietnamese Buddhist Community-A Nonprofit Organization
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUGUST 2010

The Jade Buddha for Universal Peace Exhibition is Coming to Seattle

(Seattle, WA)—Now on the U.S. leg of its world tour, the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace Exhibition will be in Seattle from August 21st to August 29th at Co Lam Pagoda.

The Jade Buddha for Universal Peace is the largest Buddha ever carved from gemstone-quality jade. With a face painted in gold and measuring in at 2.7 meters high, it sits on an alabaster throne 1.4 meters high, weighs 4 tons and has been valued at \$5 million. Its size and beauty makes it a wonder of the world.

The Jade Buddha has been regarded as a great international achievement. Beginning with the discovery of a rare 18-ton boulder of translucent jade found in Canada in 2000, the Jade Buddha was modeled after the famous Buddha statue inside the Mahabodhi Stupa in Bodh Gaya, India because of its universal recognition by all Buddhists. Four prototypes were designed by an Australian and a Thai sculptor before being carved by skilled craftsmen in Thailand. The process took 5 years and on December 1, 2009, the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace was consecrated by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Sydney, Australia.

During the tour in Vietnam and Australia, the Jade Buddha has already received about 4.25 million visitors. The purpose of exhibiting the Jade Buddha around the world is for everyone, irrespective of their religion, to take a moment to reflect upon peace; peace for the world; peace in their relationships; peace for their families and friends; peace at work; and peace of mind. The hope is that such positive inspiration will bring joy and motivation to the lives of those who are able to see the Jade Buddha.

The exhibit also provides the opportunity to showcase some of the Buddha's relics, which are rarely exhibited in public.

The Jade Buddha for Universal Peace Exhibition at the Co Lam Pagoda schedule is as follows:

Opening Ceremony:	Saturday, August 21	1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Jade Buddha Exhibition:	August 21 - August 29	8:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Prayers for Peace Ceremony:	Saturday, August 28	4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Closing Ceremony:	Sunday, August 29	4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Press and visitors alike are invited and encouraged to join Co Lam Pagoda in a once in a lifetime opportunity to welcome the Jade Buddha to Seattle as a way to promote mutual understanding in the community and peace in the world.

A letter from the Governor has been received extending her warm greetings to those attending the exhibit of the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace, hosted by the Co Lam Pagoda in Seattle. The Co Lam Pagoda is working in hopes that August 21st will be proclaimed the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace Day for the city of Seattle and the State of Washington.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche, who named the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace, hopes that, "it will illuminate the world and bring inconceivable peace and happiness and help prevent the destruction that is happening in so much of the world, including war."

Post tour, the Jade Buddha will return to Australia where it will be housed at the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion in Bendigo, Victoria.

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CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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Greetings from the Governor

August 21 - 29, 2010

I am pleased to extend warm greetings to all of those attending the Festival of the Jade Buddha for World Peace, hosted by the Co Lam Temple in Seattle.

Carved out of an 18 ton piece of translucent jade, this statue has been modeled after the Mahabodhi Stupa in Bohd Gaya, India--the most famous Buddha in the world. This endeavor has been five years in the making, and project partners hope that the Jade Buddha will inspire peace in the hearts and minds of all who see it. After the completion of its worldwide tour, this incredible sculpture will be housed at the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion in Bendigo, Australia, where it will continue to encourage harmony and personal reflection.

In addition to promoting peace, events like this help us gain a greater appreciation for other cultures, as well as the importance of our diversity. This tour represents the hope for a brighter future and a broader place of understanding, where diverse groups of people come together in the spirit of friendship and cooperation.

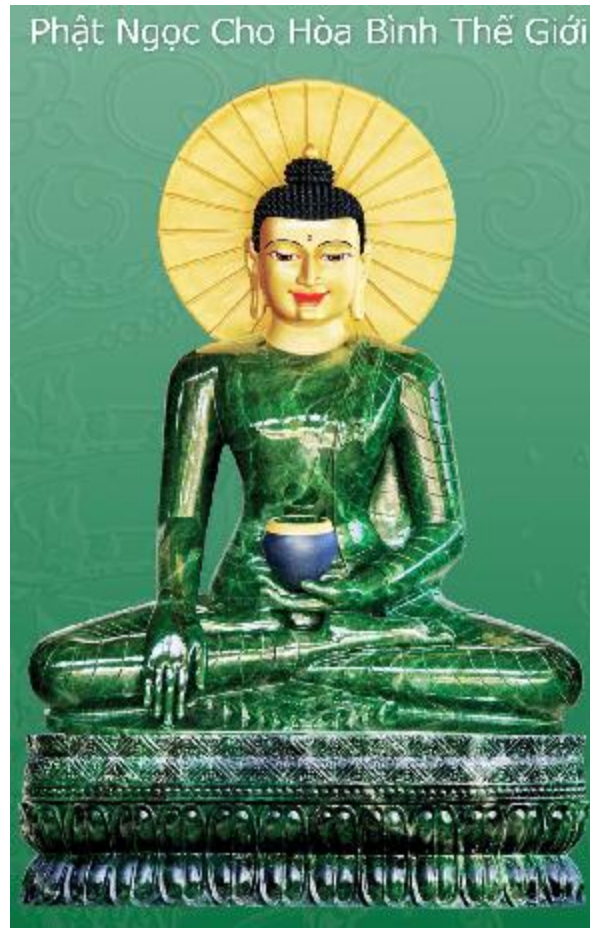
Thank you for coming, and please accept my best wishes for a meaningful event.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Gregoire".

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor

The Jade Buddha for Universal Peace Information Sheet



The Jade Buddha for Universal Peace is the largest Buddha carved from gemstone quality jade. It is 2.7 meters high and sits on an alabaster throne of 1.4 meters high. The Jade Buddha itself weighs in at around 4 tons and has been valued at \$5 million. Its size and beauty makes it a wonder of the world. The Buddha was carved from a rare boulder of translucent jade (called Polar Pride) which was discovered in Canada in the year 2000.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche named the Buddha the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace in the belief that this Buddha will inspire all beings to follow the peaceful path.

Rinpoche has said of the Jade Buddha, “It will illuminate the world and bring inconceivable peace and happiness and help prevent the destruction that is happening in so much of the world, including war.”

Modeled on the most famous Buddha in the world

The Buddha inside the Mahabodhi Stupa in Bodh Gaya (India) is the model for the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace. This Buddha was chosen because it is universally recognized by all Buddhists. The Mahabodhi Society at Bodh Gaya gave special permission for a detailed photographic study of the statue.

These photographs became the reference upon which the sculptors and carvers created the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace.

Polar Jade – the highest quality Nephrite

In the late 1990s, a remarkable new find of jade was discovered just south of the Yukon border in Canada. It contained stone so green, clear and vibrant that it was unlike any other jade ever found. Inspired by its surroundings, it became known as “Polar Jade”.

Under scientific investigation, Polar Jade has been found to be harder than any other variety of Nephrite. It shines to a brilliant polish which is one reason why there is an increasing demand for Polar Jade as a gem for precious jewelry and for carving fine art. Polar Jade was selected by the Chinese authorities for medals at the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Polar Pride - the find of the millennium

In the year 2000, the gem world was amazed by the discovery of the largest boulder ever found of gem-quality Polar Jade. This 18-ton boulder was named Polar Pride. It was immediately dubbed “the find of the millennium.”

Internationally-known author and gemologist, Fred Ward, writes about Polar Pride in his book *Jade*, “without doubt, this is the largest piece of gem-grade jade found in my lifetime and perhaps the millennium. Without going into too much into the geological formation, it is a very, very rare occurrence.”

Five years in the making

The Jade Buddha project began in 2003 when Ian Green received a phone call from Cheyenne Sun Hill, a jade jewelry designer in California. Sun Hill was also a Buddhist and since the year 2000 he had been looking for a temple to create a jade Buddha from Polar Pride.

Later in 2003, Green met with Kirk Makepeace, the President of the jade mining company in Vancouver, for his first look at Polar Pride. Green then spoke to his spiritual master Lama Zopa Rinpoche who divined that this jade boulder “must be made into a Jade Buddha as a holy object to be offered to the world.”

The next 5 years were devoted to raising the funds to make a deposit on the Polar Pride, selecting the best jade master carvers, shipping the boulder to Thailand, preparing a total of 4 prototypes, and carving and polishing the Jade Buddha. The Jade Buddha was completed in December 2008 and is now valued at \$5 million.

The Jade Buddha for Universal Peace was consecrated by His Holiness the Dalai Lama on December 1, 2009, in Sydney, Australia.

Milestones

- January 2003: Ian Green receives the phone call from Cheyenne Sun Hill regarding Polar Pride.
- April 2003: Ian Green meets Kirk Makepeace, President of the jade mine, and sees Polar Pride.
- April 2003: Lama Zopa Rinpoche has a vision of a giant jade Buddha and requests Ian Green to make this Buddha.
- 2004: Negotiations concluded with the mining company for purchase of Polar Pride in a series of installments.
- 2005: Negotiations concluded with Vanit Yotharvut of the jade carvers in Northern Thailand.
- 2005: Photographic study of the Buddha in Bodh Gaya completed.
- 2005: Shipping of Polar Pride from Vancouver to Bangkok.
- 2006: Polar Pride arrives for the Thai carvers.
- 2006: First prototype completed and Vanit Yotharvut meets Lama Zopa Rinpoche in Singapore to discuss the prototype.
- 2007: Blessing ceremony held by Thai monks as the project commences. Ian and Judy Green are in attendance.
- 2007: Australian Sculptor Jonathon Partridge makes the first of 5 trips to the carving factory.
- 2007: Second and third prototype completed.
- 2007: Cutting of Polar Pride commences.
- 2008: Fourth prototype completed and approved by Lama Zopa Rinpoche.
- 2008: (First half) Sculpting completed.
- 2008: (Second half) Polishing completed.
- December 2008: Final blessing ceremony in Thailand to conclude the carving process.
- January 2009: The face of the Jade Buddha is painted in gold.
- March 2009: A tour commences in Danang, Vietnam of the Jade Buddha.
- June 2009: A tour of Australia commences.
- December 2009: His Holiness the Dalai Lama consecrates the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace.
- February 2010: A tour of the USA commences.

An international achievement

The Jade Buddha is a great international achievement; it commenced with the discovery of a rare 18-ton boulder of translucent jade in Canada in the year 2000. It is based on the famous Buddha statue from Bodh Gaya, India and the prototype was

designed by an Australian and a Thai sculptor before being carved by skilled craftsmen in Thailand. It is currently on a world tour which will take it to Asia, Australia, North America and Europe.

World tour

The Jade Buddha for Universal Peace is being taken on a world tour which is expected to last several years. The tour commenced in Vietnam in March 2009 where over a three month period an estimated 4 million people paid homage to the Buddha. It then toured Australia where 250,000 people saw the Jade Buddha in the last half of 2009. Currently the Jade Buddha is on a tour of the USA and Canada which will last until May 2011. In the second half of 2011, the Jade Buddha will travel to Germany, England and other European destinations before going back to Asia in 2012. Eventually the Jade Buddha will go to its home at the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion in Bendigo, Victoria (Australia) where it will be a symbol of peace to inspire the world for millennia to come.

The tour of the Jade Buddha is dedicated to universal peace. It is hoped that the Buddha's presence will inspire everyone who sees it to find peace in their home, their schools and work, their family, and in their own heart.

The world tour has the blessing of Lama Zopa Rinpoche who said of the tour, "it is making it so easy for so many people to receive the blessings of the Jade Buddha."

The tour so far:

VIETNAM MARCH – MAY 2009, Attendance: 4,000,000

- Quan Am Temple, Danang, Attendance: 150,000
- Dai Tong Lam Temple, Ba Ria Vung Tau, Attendance: 300,000
- Pho Quang Temple, Ho Chi Minh City, Attendance: 350,000
- Hoang Phap Temple, Ho Chi Minh City, Attendance: 500,000
- Van An Temple, Dong Thap Vietnam, Attendance: 500,000
- Phat Tich Temple, Bac Ninh Vietnam, Attendance: 1,750,000

AUSTRALIA JUNE – DECEMBER 2009, Attendance: 250,000

- Brisbane Square, Brisbane Australia
- Wat Thai Buddharam
- Darling Harbour, Sydney
- Van An Temple, Sydney
- Minh Quang Temple, Sydney
- Phap Hoa Temple, Adelaide
- Museum of Western Australia, Perth
- Minh Quang Temple, Sydney
- Sydney Entertainment Centre
- Quang Duc Temple, Melbourne
- Quang Minh Temple, Melbourne

USA / CANADA JANUARY 2010 – DECEMBER 2010

- January and February 2010: Phat Da Temple (California)
- February 2010: Bao An Temple (Florida)
- March 2010: Kim Cang Monastery (Georgia)
- March 2010: Minh Dang Quang Nunnery (Florida)
- March 2010: Vietnam Temple (Texas)
- April 2010: Wat Buddhangersi (Florida)
- May 2010: Linh Son Temple (Massachusetts)
- June 12-20, 2010: Phap Van Temple (Ontario, Canada)
- July 25 – July 18, 2010: Tuong Van Monastery (Virginia, USA)
- July 24 – August 01, 2010: Truc Lam Monastery (Edmonton, Canada)
- **August 21 – August 29, 2010: Cổ Lâm Pagoda (Seattle, Washington, USA)**
- September 2 -12, 2010: Ngoc Son Tinh Xa Buddhist Association (Portland, USA)
- September 17 – 29, 2010: Tịnh Xá Ngọc Hoa (San Jose, USA)
- October 22 – 31, 2010: Bat Nha Buddhist Temple (Santa Ana, USA)

- November 5 - 15, 2010: Mắt Thương Nhìn Đòi - Compassionate Eyes (Huntington Beach, USA)
- November 26 – 28, 2010: Hawaii Convention Center (HCC) (Honolulu, USA)
- December 23, 2010 - January 2, 2011: Huệ Quang Temple (Santa Ana, USA)

Why paint the face of the Jade Buddha?

The face of the Jade Buddha was painted in gold after advice was received from Lama Zopa Rinpoche. The painting of the face has made the features of the face much clearer and as a result more inspiring. The original statue in Bodh Gaya is painted and it is a tradition in Tibet and Nepal for statues to have their face painted in non-reflecting gold. It is considered to be inauspicious to see your face reflected in the statue of a Buddha. The face was painted by Rajeesh, a renowned Nepali artist.

Highly regarded jade carvers

The carving of the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace was entrusted to Thailand's oldest and most highly regarded jade factory, Jade Thongtavee Co. Ltd. Jade Thongtavee was founded by Boonthong Yotharvut who studied jade sculpture techniques in China before setting up Jade Thongtavee in 1973. Jade Thongtavee now employs over 30 skilled craftsmen and women. Their work exhibits a delicate craftsmanship that is highly sought after by collectors and Buddhist temples. The carving of the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace was overseen by the son of the founder and current factory manager, Vanit Yotharvut.

Sculpting the prototype

Before the carving process began, large scale prototypes of the Jade Buddha were produced out of clay and fiberglass. All together, four prototypes for the Buddha were created before the final one was approved. Each prototype design was personally reviewed by Lama Zopa Rinpoche. Classically-trained Australian sculptor Jonathon Partridge worked alongside the Thai sculptors at Jade Thongtavee to create the final prototype for the carving of the Jade Buddha.

Skilled cutting and carving of the Jade Buddha

Once the prototype for the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace was approved, the cutting and carving of the Polar Pride boulder began. Cutting jade is a very slow process as diamond saws are used to grind their way through the boulder. Once the boulder was roughly cut it went through a process of refinement as the Buddha and lotus base gradually took shape.

The carving was overseen by the head carver at the factory. Partridge also visited Thailand in the final months to personally oversee the exacting details that were required to make the statue. In total it took nearly two years for Jade Thongtavee to design, cut and carve the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace.

Every chip of the jade boulder has been collected as mementos of the Jade Buddha. The workers at Jade Thongtavee were instructed to carefully collect every chip that came from Polar Pride during the carving process. These pieces of jade have been transformed into unique mementos of the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace. Memento items are available for a limited time at each tour venue.

Nephrite Jade – The Stone of Heaven

Nephrite or “true” jade has influenced civilizations in Asia, South America and the Pacific since the beginning of history. Wherever jade has been available, people have found value in it as a tool, a healing stone and as a connection to the gods. The hardness and toughness of jade was first exploited for tools over 5,000 years ago.

Jade conjures the magic of legend, especially in China where Nephrite Jade was known as the stone of heaven. Ancient Chinese myths told of jade being plucked from the rainbows and cast down to earth.

With such importance attached to it, the Chinese have traditionally valued jade above other worldly possessions.

Jade from the arctic regions of Canada

Deep in the heart of the Canadian North, under the shadow of rugged British Columbian mountains, lay beds of Nephrite Jade. First discovered in the 1960s, the jade deposits of British Columbia are without parallel in the world. However, jade mining in British Columbia is a difficult and expensive process. The earth is free of snow only three months of the year and being in a remote area, supplies must be flown in. Removing the jade requires a great deal of care during the long journey through rugged terrain.

One of the world's great jade Buddhas

There are several large jade Buddha statues at Buddhist pilgrimage places around the world. Famous jade Buddha statues exist at the Shwedagon Pagoda in Myanmar, Wat Phra Kaeo Temple of the Emerald Buddha in Thailand and at the Jade Buddha temple in Shanghai.

The Jade Buddha for Universal Peace is destined to take its place beside these Buddha statues as one of the most famous and revered in the world.

The value of holy objects

It is explained by the Buddha in the Sutra of the Mudra of Developing the Power of Devotion:

“The minute you see a holy object you create numberless merits, so no question if you actually make prostrations, offerings and so forth, you create far greater merit.”

In the White Lotus Sutra it says:

"Even just making one sound, or a cymbal offering, even just offering one single flower to the form of One who has Gone to Bliss (Buddha) on a stone wall, even if one makes the offering while angry, those living beings will gradually see ten million Buddhas. Anyone who puts their palms together completely, or even with one palm or just one time bows down in respect to a stupa which contain relics, even with a distracted mind (without virtue) verbally saying 'I prostrate to the Buddha' just one time or a few times, all those beings will achieve supreme enlightenment."

As Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche explained:

“Just by holy objects such as the Jade Buddha and the Great Stupa existing in the world, it makes it so unbelievably easy for us sentient beings, whether we are in this world or will be born in this world or are from other universes, to purify the obstacles for happiness, peace and realizations on the path, and also to achieve liberation and enlightenment. These holy objects make it so easy for us to create the causes of merit. Only then can one change the distracted negative emotional thoughts, the ignorant nature of the mind that harms you and harms the world.”

The Great Stupa of Universal Compassion

After the world tour the Jade Buddha for Universal Peace will finally be housed inside the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion which is being built in Bendigo, Victoria, Australia. The Great Stupa is based on the famous Gyantse Kumbum that was built in Tibet in the 15th century. The Great Stupa of Universal Compassion will be 50 meters (164 feet) wide and 46 (151 feet) meters high. It will be the largest stupa outside of Asia. It will be a place of pilgrimage for Buddhists of all traditions as well as a place of worship for the fast-growing Australian Buddhist community.

The Great Stupa has a vast collection of sacred Buddhist relics including those of Shakyamuni Buddha, Kasyapa Buddha and the 16 Arhants. These relics have been offered from many Buddhist traditions including Chinese, Tibetan, Thai, Burmese and Mongolian. Some of these holy relics are being taken on the world tour of the Jade Buddha.

The Jade Buddha for Universal Peace is a project of The Great Stupa of Universal Compassion Ltd., Sandhurst Town Road, Myers Flat VIC 3556 Australia. E-mail: info@stupa.org.au Phone: +61 3 5446 7568.

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