

FIVE BUDDHAS

A KOREAN ICON'S JOURNEY THROUGH TIME



SEPTEMBER 3-DECEMBER 4, 2016

PORTLAND ART MUSEUM, OREGON



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施主 雲空 敬

第五十八金童菩薩王佛

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With very few exceptions, the works of art on view in American museums have all undergone great journeys through both space and time. From their origins in an ancient kiln, a royal workshop, or an artist's studio, they have been cherished by unknown generations of owners before finding their way into the public eye. The objects in this gallery were acquired in Korea by Portland resident Robert Mattielli during the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Ranging in date from the fifth to the late nineteenth century, they exemplify the artistic genius of Korean craftsmen and illuminate the visual and material environment of court and temple. The focus of this exhibition is an exceptionally rare and beautiful Buddhist

icon in the Mattielli collection—a work that has undergone a most unusual journey, and will travel again in the near future.

Robert Mattielli arrived in Seoul, Korea, in the late 1950s as a civilian employee of the Eighth United States Army. He was hired to direct their Arts and Crafts program, where GIs could hone their skills in such endeavors as painting, ceramics, metalwork, or photography. Supervising workshops across the country allowed him to travel and indulge in his favorite hobby, collecting. As an artist himself, Mattielli was fascinated with anything that illustrated traditional Korean approaches to making things.

His tenure in Seoul coincided with a time when Korea was modernizing at an ever-increasing pace. From farmhouse to urban dwelling, everyone was eager to toss out the old and acquire the new. Mattielli eagerly gathered it all up, from stoneware pots to old locks, tables and chests, maps, scrolls, screens, and tools. He became a well-known figure in Seoul's sprawling antique district.

One day in the early 1970s, he watched as a "picker" brought in a handcart loaded with an attractive chest. Intrigued, he followed the cart into a shop, but the proprietor turned him away, saying the chest had to be repaired before it could be sold. Several days later he returned to find the chest was gone. But its contents were tucked in a back corner of the shop, next to a pile of boxes and cleaning supplies. Mattielli saw a hemp canvas, filthy and tattered and folded into a small rectangle. He gingerly unfolded it and recognized that it was a Buddhist painting—one of the

sort that were often appearing on the market in those days. He thought this one might be salvageable, if only in fragments. He bought it for ten dollars.

Mattielli took the painting to Ki Jung-myon, a well-known restorer whom he frequently engaged to repair and remount paintings. Ki argued against cutting up the painting, even though there were large areas of loss. He flattened and cleaned the painting and framed it as it is seen today. Ki's approach was wisely conservative: where there were large holes in the canvas, he simply filled the gap with white cotton cloth, instead of attempting to recreate the original appearance of the work. For many years thereafter, Five Buddhas adorned the dining room of the Mattielli home in Seoul, where it was seen by a large circle of friends, both Korean and foreign. When Robert Mattielli and his wife, Sandra, moved back to Oregon in 1985, the painting traveled with them.





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Robert and Sandra Mattielli have been passionate advocates for Korean art here in Portland, donating outstanding paintings, ceramics, and craftworks to the Museum. In the summer of 2014, the Museum approached them about possibly acquiring the *Five Buddhas*—just in time for the painting to be examined by a team of visiting scholars from the Korean National Research Institute for Cultural Heritage. NRICH was conducting a survey of the Museum’s holdings in preparation for a bilingual catalogue.

Several months later, NRICH reported their discovery that the *Five Buddhas* painting had been stolen from Songgwangsa, one of Korea’s largest and most famous monasteries, sometime in the early 1970s. The news was a stunning surprise, and the Mattiellis quickly offered to repatriate the painting to Korea. At the Museum’s suggestion, it was agreed to do so after a special exhibition and symposium, so that American audiences could view and learn about the icon. The Museum has been working closely with both the Korean Cultural Heritage

Administration (CHA) and Songgwangsa Monastery to facilitate the painting’s return to its original home.

In the past several months, thanks to information obtained from our contacts at Songgwangsa, our understanding of *Five Buddhas* has grown by leaps and bounds. We now know that

it was created in 1725 as one of seven paintings to adorn the interior of a Hall of Buddhist Ancestors (Buljojeon 佛祖殿). The hall itself had been built nearly a century earlier, in 1633, as part of a separate, walled compound at Songgwangsa dedicated to the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* (*Hwa’eom gyeong* 華嚴經), an important Buddhist text. Rich with visual imagery, the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* imagines the Buddha not as a historical human being but as a universal concept: an infinite number of Buddhas preside over countless, interpenetrating realms within a vast cosmos. The paintings that lined the interior of the Hall of Ancestors evoke the majesty of that vision by portraying fifty-three Buddhas, each garbed in a red robe and seated on a



12 detail

lotus throne. Stylistic evidence suggests that the artist in charge of the project was Ui-gyeom 義謙, a famous monk-painter who was active in southern Korea during the first half of the eighteenth century. This hypothesis is further supported by the fact that an inscription on one of the paintings, now largely obscured by damage, includes the name of one of Ui-gyeom's disciples.

An old photograph reveals that the Hall of Ancestors was intact as late as 1932—a minor miracle, considering the many times that fire and other natural disasters had wreaked havoc on other structures at Songgwangsa. Sometime in the mid-twentieth century, the building was remodeled, and two new doors were added on the façade. It is possible that the *Five Buddhas* painting and a twin were removed to accommodate the new doors. It was in the monastery's possession in the late 1960s, according to a survey published by the National Museum of Korea in 1970. However, a White Paper published in 1999 by the Jogye Buddhist Order of Korea, to which Songgwangsa belongs, lists the painting as stolen. We know that it was already in Portland at that time. How the painting made its way from the monastery to the antique market in Seoul remains a mystery. It is without question that if Robert Mattielli had not found it and had it lovingly restored, *Five Buddhas* would have been lost to history.



On December 5, 2016, *Five Buddhas* will be removed from the Korean Gallery and crated under the watchful eyes of senior monks from Songgwangsa. Two days later it will begin another journey, this time supervised by special art handlers, heading back to Korea. Songgwangsa plans to have the painting carefully conserved once more and eventually install it in a place of honor in a new museum at the monastery. Robert and Sandra Mattielli have been invited to see it in its new home.

This special exhibition is organized by the Portland Art Museum and curated by Maribeth Graybill, Ph.D., The Arlene and Harold Schnitzer Curator of Asian Art, with the assistance of Sangah Kim, The Mary and Cheney Cowles Curatorial Fellow in Asian Art. Ms. Kim, who recently traveled to Songgwangsa to research the *Five Buddhas*, is the author of the Korean text in the brochure and gallery didactics.

The Museum is deeply indebted to Robert and Sandra Mattielli for sharing *Five Buddhas* and other masterworks from their collection on this occasion. Professor Robert Buswell, Distinguished Professor of Buddhist Studies in the Department of Asian Languages and Literatures at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), provided valuable insight into Korean Buddhism and the history of Songgwangsa. Dr. Maya Stiller of the Kress Foundation Department of Art History at the University of Kansas generously shared her recent research on the Avatamsaka compound at Songgwangsa, and the *Five Buddhas* painting in particular. The Museum wishes to thank the Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea for generously sponsoring the exhibition, brochure, and the related symposium.

All photographs courtesy of Korean National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage (NRICH).

RECOMMENDED READING

Buswell, Robert E., *The Zen Monastic Experience*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.

오불회도, 시간 속 여정

2016년 9월 3일-12월 4일

<오불회도, 시간 속 여정>은 포틀랜드에 거주하는 미술품 수집가 로버트와 산드라 마틸리 컬렉션 중 특히 오불회도를 조명하고 마틸리의 한국 미술품 애호를 기리를 전시입니다. 로버트 마틸리씨는 1950년대 말 미국 제8군의 미술·공예 프로그램 담당자로 임명됨에 따라 한국과의 인연을 시작하게 되며, 그 후로 근 30년을 서울에서 생활하게 됩니다. 스스로 예술가이기도 했던 그는 한국 전통과 예술품에 매료되어 토기, 가구, 지도, 병풍 등을 수집하였습니다.

1970년대 초 어느날, 인사동 거리를 걷던 마틸리씨는 수레에 고가구를 싣고 가는 사람을 발견하고는 그를 따라 골동품점에 들어갑니다. 그 고가구에 보수가 필요하다는 말에 마틸리씨는 일주일 후 다시 골동품점을 찾지만 상점 구석에는 가구 대신 다섯 부처님이 그려진 구겨지고 찢겨진 그림만이 남아있었습니다. 비록 많이 훼손된 상태였지만 그림의 가치를 알아본 마틸리씨는 그것을 10달러에 구입을 하게 됩니다.

마틸리씨는 자주 왕래하던 미술품 복원가 기정면씨에게 그림 복원과 장황을 의뢰합니다. 마틸리씨와의 상의를 통해 기정면씨는 손상된 부분에 채색을 가하는 대신 그림의 얼룩을 최대한 없애고 훼손된 구멍에 면을 덧대어 원작을 최대한 보존하는 처리를 진행했습니다. 복원 후, 오불회도는 마틸리씨 집의 식당에 걸려 많은 한국과 외국 친구들에게 그 모습을 드러냈습니다. 1985년, 오불회도는 로버트와 아내 산드라 마틸리씨와 함께 미국 오리건주로 긴 여정을 하게 됩니다. 마틸리 부부는 포틀랜드 박물관에 많은 한국 미술품을 기증했으며, 이는 지역사회에 한국미술을 알리는 데에 큰 공헌을 했습니다.

2014년, 마틸리 부부는 포틀랜드 박물관에 오불회도 기증의사를 밝혀왔습니다. 때마침, 한국 국립문화재연구소에서 한국 소장품에 대한 한·영 카탈로그 제작을 위해 전문가들을 포틀랜드로 파견했습니다. 조사가 진행된 몇 달 후, 포틀랜드 박물관은 국립문화재연구소로부터 오불회도가 1970년대 초 전라남도 순천 송광사에서 도난당한 불화라는 소식을 접하게 됩니다. 이 소식을 들은 마틸리 부부는 기꺼이 오불회도가 원래의 집으로 돌아가는 것을 허락해 주었습니다. 박물관측의 요청으로 특별전과 오불회도 관련 심포지엄이 계획되었고, 한국 문화재청과 송광사, 조계종과의 협업으로 환수 절차가 진행되고 있습니다. 12월 초 환수 이전에, 오불회도는 특별전을 통해 고향으로 돌아가기 이전 마지막으로 미국의 관람객들과 소통을 하는 기회를 가지게 되었습니다.

지난 몇 달간, 송광사측의 도움으로 오불회도에 대한 많은 정보를 얻을 수 있었습니다. 오불회도는 1725년 제작되어 불조전 佛祖展에 봉안된 7폭의 오십삼불도 가운데 하나입니다. 화풍으로 보았을 때 17세기 말에서 18세기 초에 활동한 의겸 義謙 스님의 것으로 추정되며, 그림에는 의겸의 이름은 훼손되어 보이지 않지만 그 제자들의 이름이 기록되어 있습니다. 1960년대 후반 실시되고 1970년 출판된 한국 국립중앙박물관 사찰

특별조사 보고서에 오십삼불도가 기록된 것으로 보아 오불회도는 1970년대 초에 송광사를 떠난 것으로 추정되지만, 오불회도가 어떻게 송광사를 떠나 인사동의 골동품상으로 가게 되었는지는 알 수 없습니다. 하지만 오불회도의 여정에서 우리가 기억해야 할 가장 중요한 것은 마틸리씨가 이를 발견하고 복원하지 않았다면 이 귀중한 불화를 다시는 볼 수 없었을지 모른다는 점입니다.

2016년 12월 5일, 오불회도는 포틀랜드 박물관 한국 전시실에서의 특별전을 마치고 이틀 뒤 한국으로 돌아가게 됩니다. 오불회도는 서울 조계종에서 안정화 작업을 거친 후 내년 봄 송광사에서 봉안식을 가질 예정이며, 마틸리 부부 역시 오불회도가 원래 집을 찾는 모습을 함께 지켜볼 예정입니다. 순천에서 서울로, 다시 미국으로의 긴 여정을 마치고 고향을 찾는 오불회도에 다시는 함께할 수 없는 포틀랜드의 아쉬움과 그 여정을 축하하는 마음을 동시에 전합니다.

이 특별전은 포틀랜드 박물관과 알린·해럴드 슈니처 아시아미술 학에서 메리베스 그레이빌 박사에게 의해 기획되었고, 아시아미술 콜스 큐레이토리얼 펠로인 감상아의 도움으로 진행되었습니다. 포틀랜드 박물관은 오불회도를 포함한 컬렉션의 전시를 가능하게 해 준 로버트·산드라 마틸리 부부에게 깊은 감사를 전합니다. 또한, 심포지엄에서 강연을 맡아주신 로버트 버스웰 교수님과 마야 스틸러 교수님, 전시와 전시 설명서, 심포지엄을 후원해주신 한국 문화재청에도 감사의 말씀 드립니다.



CHECKLIST

1 Bowl-shaped Pedestal Stand

Gyeongju, Gyeongsangbuk-do province, Korea
Three Kingdoms period/Old Silla (57 bce–668 ce),
late 5th century
Stoneware with incised wave patterns and raised
bands

Gift of Robert and Sandra Mattielli in honor of
Maribeth Graybill, 2010.26.1

바리모양 그릇받침 鉢形器臺

한국 경상북도 경주
삼국시대 신라 (기원전57–668), 5세기 후반
토제
메리베스 그레이빌을 기념하여 로버트와 산드라
마틸리 기증, 2010.26.1

2 Round-bottomed Storage Jar with Long Neck

Gyeongsangbuk-do province, Korea
Three Kingdoms period/Old Silla (57 bce–668 ce),
early 6th century
Stoneware with incised wave patterns and raised
bands

Gift of Robert and Sandra Mattielli in honor of
Maribeth Graybill, 2010.26.2

긴목항아리 圓底長頸壺

한국 경상북도
삼국시대 신라 (기원전 57–668), 6세기 초
토제
메리베스 그레이빌을 기념하여 로버트와 산드라
마틸리 기증, 2010.26.2

3 Bottle with Stamped Designs

Gyeongju, Gyeongsangbuk-do province, Korea
Unified Silla period (668–935), early 8th century
Stoneware with stamped designs and a dusting of
natural ash glaze
Gift of Robert and Sandra Mattielli, 2011.85

도장무늬 병 印花文瓶

한국 경상북도 경주
통일신라 (668–935), 8세기 초
토제
로버트와 산드라 마틸리 기증, 2011.85

4 Four Bronze Seals

Korea, unknown artist
Goryeo period (918–1392), 11th/13th century
Bronze
The Robert and Sandra Mattielli Collection

청동 도장 靑銅印

한국
고려 (918–1392), 11/13세기
청동
로버트와 산드라 마틸리 컬렉션

5 Five Buddhas

Attributed to Ui-gyeom (Korean, active late
17th/18th century)
1725
Ink and mineral pigments on hemp
Originally from Songgwangsa Monastery, Korea;
conserved by Robert and Sandra Mattielli
(On view through December 4, 2016)

오불회도 五佛會圖

의겸 (생몰년 미상)으로 추정
1725
마에 채색
송광사; 로버트와 산드라 마틸리 부부에 의해
복원

6 Four Gentlemen: Prunus Blossoms, Orchids, Chrysanthemums, and Bamboo

By Kim Seokgu (Korean, active late 19th century)
Ink on paper
Gift of Robert and Sandra Mattielli in honor of
Donald Jenkins, 2004.7.3–6
(On view after December 6, 2016)

사군자도: 목매도·목란도·목국도·목죽도

四君子圖: 墨梅圖·墨蘭圖·墨菊圖·墨竹圖
김석구 (생몰년 미상)
19세기 후반
종이에 수묵
도널드 젠킨스를 기념하여 로버트와 산드라
마틸리 부부 기증, 2004.7.3–6

7 Wine Bottle with Dragon Motif

Bunwon kiln, Gwangju, Gyeonggi-do province,
Korea
Joseon period (1392–1910), 18th/19th century
Porcelain with underglaze blue painting
The Robert and Sandra Mattielli Collection

백자청화 구름용무늬 병 白磁靑畫雲龍文瓶

한국 경기도 광주 분원요
조선 (1392–1910), 18/19세기
청화백자
로버트와 산드라 마틸리 컬렉션

8 Storage Jar with Dragon Motif

Bunwon kiln, Gwangju, Gyeonggi-do province,
Korea
Joseon period (1392–1910), 19th century
Porcelain with underglaze blue painting
Gift of Robert and Sandra Mattielli in honor of
Donald Jenkins, 2004.7.10

백자청화 구름용무늬 항아리 白磁靑畫雲龍文壺

한국 경기도 광주 분원요
조선 (1392–1910), 19세기
청화백자
도널드 젠킨스를 기념하여 로버트와 산드라
마틸리 기증, 2004.7.10

9 Dongja (Altar Attendants)

Korea, unknown artist
Joseon period (1392–1910), 19th century
Wood with gesso and pigment
The Robert and Sandra Mattielli Collection

동자상 木製童子像

조선 (1392–1910), 19세기
나무에 채색
로버트와 산드라 마틸리 컬렉션

10 Chaekgeori (Still Life with Books and Scholarly Objects)

Korea, unknown artist
Joseon period (1392–1910), 19th century
Four-panel folding screen; ink and color on paper
The Robert and Sandra Mattielli Collection

책거리 冊架圖

한국, 작가 미상
조선 (1392–1910), 19세기
4폭 병풍; 종이에 채색
로버트와 산드라 마틸리 컬렉션

11 Subok Screen: Characters for Longevity and Good Fortune in Various Scripts

Korea, unknown artist
Joseon period (1392–1910), 19th century
Ten-panel screen; embroidery on silk

Museum Purchase: Partial gift of The Robert and
Sandra Mattielli Collection, with additional funds
provided by the Margery Hoffman Smith Fund,
Jerry Lamb, Virginia Nelson, Travers Hill Polak,
Erick Schless, and others, 2010.33

수복문자도 자수병풍 壽福文字圖刺繡屏風

한국, 작가 미상
조선 (1392–1910), 19세기
10폭 병풍; 비단에 자수
로버트와 산드라 마틸리 컬렉션, 마저리 호프만
스미스 펀드, 제리 램, 버지니아 넬슨, 트레버스
힐 폴락, 에릭 슈스 등의 기금으로 박물관 구입,
2010.33

12 Sun and Moon, Birds and Flowers

Korea, unknown artist
Joseon period (1392–1910), late 19th century
Pair of four-panel folding screens; embroidery
on silk
Museum Purchase: Funds provided by Mia Hervin
Moore in honor of her daughter, Amelia Sun
Moore, 2004.115a,b

자수 일월화조도 刺繡日月花鳥圖

한국, 작가 미상
조선 (1392–1910), 19세기 후반
각 4폭 병풍; 비단에 자수
딸 아멜리아 선 무어를 기념한 마리아 허빈 무어
기금으로 박물관 구입, 2004.115a,b

Cover: 5 detail



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