The creation of Buddhist sculpture and painting is not complete when the artist lays down the chisel or brush. The object must be animated before it is worthy of reverence, before it “becomes the Buddha.” Rituals insert or attach relics and invite the deity to temporarily reside within the crafted object. Using case studies of Buddhist art in India, Tibet, China, Japan and Southeast Asia, the course examines the intertwining of art and ritual, and the actions that take place integral to the processes of donation and devotion. We will look at the roles of monks who perform the rituals, the patrons who sponsor the art and rituals, the texts that describe them, and objects which depict them. A trip to the Art Institute of Chicago to look at actual objects is planned, and we will discuss the contrast between the original intended setting and the “rituals” of art museums.