

# LAMO NEWSLETTER

Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation

Issue 7

January 2020

2019 was a year of achievement for us at Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation (LAMO). The year began with a huge excitement for the UNESCO Pacific Award that we won and we celebrated it in the presence of UNESCO Director for India, Mr Eric Falt. We won another award for 'Project in Influence- 2019' from Best in Heritage, that took place in Dubrovnik in September. Our achievements are possible only through team efforts, be it workshop or talk or screening or engaging in different activities. The visiting guests, interns and admirers always adds to the sparkle that we are in the process of achieving. Our core team has always stood upfront to take LAMO from milestone to milestone. Our journey has just begun and we hope that this is a journey of persistence and endurance to make Ladakh a better place in the field of Art and Media.



## Best in Heritage - Project of Influence 2019



The 18th edition of the 'Best in Heritage' took place in Dubrovnik from 25th-27th September and gathered a wide scope of heritage professionals coming from various geographical and working environments. Monisha Ahmed (LAMO's Executive Director), presented at the conference where LAMO was invited to take part and received 'The Best in Heritage award' for "Project of Influence 2019". The Best in Heritage features award-winning projects from the heritage sector, from around the world, in the preceding year and invites them to present their work. The audience then take a vote on what they consider to be the best project among those presented. LAMO was humble to have received the award from among a unique panorama of high quality achievements. The conference was organised with the International Council of Museums (ICOM), in partnership with Europa Nostra (supported by Creative Europe programme).a

## UNESCO Asia - Pacific Award Celebration



It was such a happy, joyous, wonderful and honoured moment to unveil the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation with Mr Eric Falt, Director, UNESCO New Delhi Cluster office, along with Dr Angchok Munshi (owner of Munshi house), Mr Stanzin Gyalton (owner of Gyao house), Dr Monisha Ahmed (Co-Founder and Executive Director, LAMO) and Tashi Morup (Projects Director, LAMO). Former Ambassador, Mr Phunchok Stobdan, gave the keynote address. LAMO received the 'Award of Distinction' from UNESCO Asia-Pacific, in November 2018, for its systematic restoration project that used salvaged and local building materials, and indigenous construction techniques while adroitly introducing modern amenities to assure its ongoing use as a dynamic arts space for local residents and visitors. The celebration was a proud moment for everyone at LAMO and for those who have long been associated with it.





## VIII International Cultural Forum, St. Petersburg Russia



In August LAMO hosted a delegation from the National Roerichs Committee, for a seminar on the acclaimed artists Nicolas and Svetoslav Roerich. To build on this partnership, Tashi Morup, LAMO's Projects Director, was invited to attend the VIII International Cultural Forum in St. Petersburg, Russia. With him in the photo is Michael Chiryatiev (centre with beard), Chairman of the St.Petersburg Branch of the National Roerichs Committee, and 2nd from left (in tie) is Deepak Miglani, Consul General of India, St Petersburg.

## Ladakh Literature Festival



The first ever Literature Festival of Ladakh began with an inauguration ceremony at the, towering Leh Palace. The 17th century historic building, its renowned inhabitants and the Old Town of Leh have inspired several stories in Ladakh. LAMO, alongside Tourism Department Leh and All Ladakh Tours Operators (ALTOA) were main organizers of the Literature Festival, 2019.

The Festival was the brainchild of Shri Rigzin Samphel (IAS), when he was Tourism Secretary to the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. He imagined this festival and provided us the much-needed support to hold it. LAMO played the key role in designing the program which was reworked thoroughly under the supervision and guidance of Divisional Commissioner Leh, Shri Saugat Biswas (IAS).

The first edition of Ladakh Literature Festival was conceived with the vision to bring together writers from Ladakh as well as other parts of the country. The focus of the festival was on the region's history, philosophy, art and architecture, culinary traditions, travel, wildlife and the environment and mountaineering. One of the ideas behind the festival was to reach out to people across the Himalayas, so that dialogue and exchange of ideas can take place in this region stretching from Bhutan in the east to Ladakh in the west.

It brought together writers, artists, filmmakers, musicians, journalists, storytellers, historians, environmentalists, mountaineers, culinary experts, and many more from different fields – with the aim of broadening channels of dialogue between creative practitioners from diverse fields. Performances too were held looking at traditional and contemporary forms of music and dance in Ladakh. Various workshops were organised looking at art, woodblock printing, graphic designs, music for differently abled kids and many more.

The festival was attended by people from all walks. It was exuberant affair of sharing and exchanging ideas. The festival encouraged the traditions of writing and storytelling in Ladakh. In the coming years it is hoped to reach out to more people, across the Himalayas, and also from other parts of the world who have an interest in this region.



## LAMO participates in Water Sanitation Program



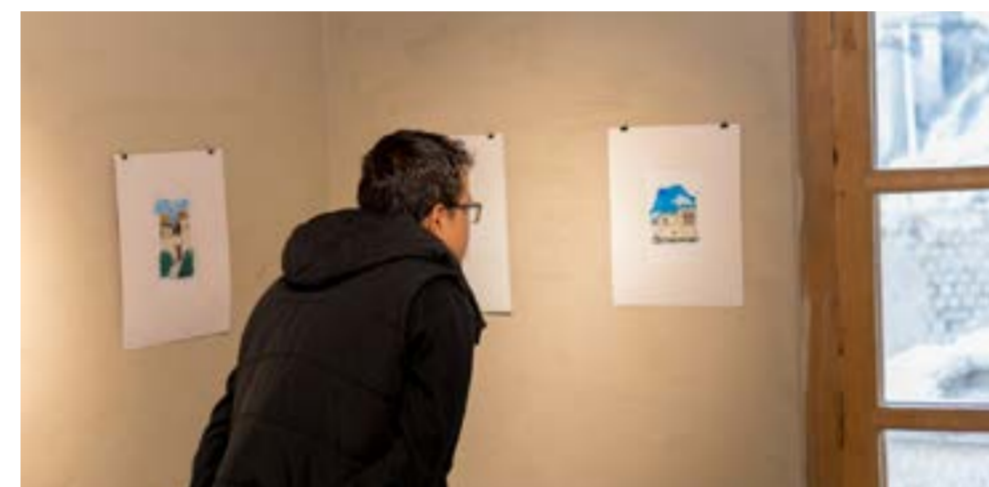
# Exhibition

LAMO was delighted to hold a number of exhibitions this year, covering a range of topics and reflecting the use of different mediums. This year started with Jigmet Angmo's exhibition of watercolours of landscapes of Ladakh and architecture of Old Town Leh. LAMO's Ars Officer Tsering Motup curated a group show on water in Ladakh, followed by one on prints of paintings from the Schlagintweit Expedition to Ladakh in 1854-58

## Water colour Art Exhibition



The myriad shades of a sunset, the endless stretches of land, a purple sky, the reflection of clouds in a placid lake, a solitary building, these are some of the images reflected in Jigmet Angmo's works as she explores the land and its built heritage. Jigmet works in watercolour, intrigued by the medium's delicacy, transparency, suppleness and unpredictability. But also appreciates the medium for its unforgiving nature, how sometimes one has to be willing to go with the flow and let your brush (and the paint) follow its own course. She prefers to work in small format, perhaps restricting the side of her work in some way confines the energy her painting exude, adding to their elusiveness.



## Western Explorers of the Himalaya



### Schlagintweit Expedition to India and High Asia 1854 - 58

In 1854, three brothers - Hermann, Robert and Adolf - carried out an expedition in India on behalf of the British government to map towns and villages, water bodies, glaciers, and mountain ranges. The brothers also sketched and painted the landscape. Joseph Sartorius followed in their footsteps in Ladakh, taking comparative photographs at some of the same locations they visited. The exhibition, curated by Joseph Sartorius, brought together prints of the Schlagintweit's paintings and his photographs.

The prints of the Schlagintweit's paintings were generously donated to LAMO by the Alpine Museum of the German Alpine Club, Munich, Germany. The exhibition was supported by LAHDC Leh, Jammu & Kashmir Tourism, and Museum Funkontinente, Munich.



During the exhibition, Prof Marcus Nuesser, from the Department of Geography, South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg, gave a talk on 'Nature and Culture in the Himalayas, Colonial Representation by the Schlagintweit Brothers'.





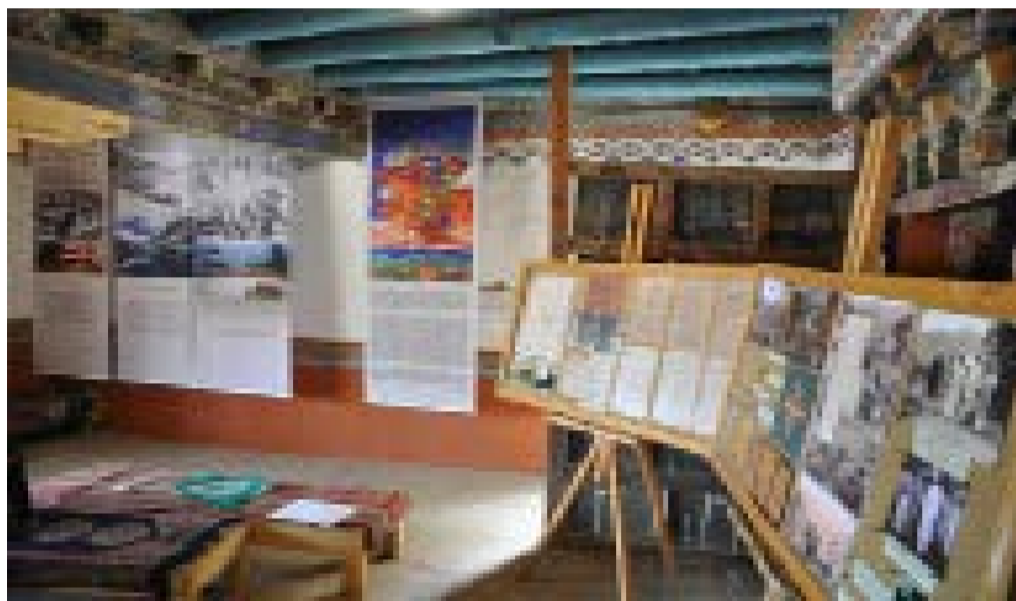
## India- Russia: Two Magnets



Russia - India: Two Magnets is an ongoing Cultural & Research project dedicated to the celebration of the 140th anniversary of the birth of Helena Roerich and the 145th anniversary of Nicholas Roerich and the 115th anniversary of Svetoslav Roerich and the 90th anniversary of Urusvati Himalayan Research Institute and the 600th anniversary of the departure of the founder of the traditional school of Gelugpa Je Tsongkhapa

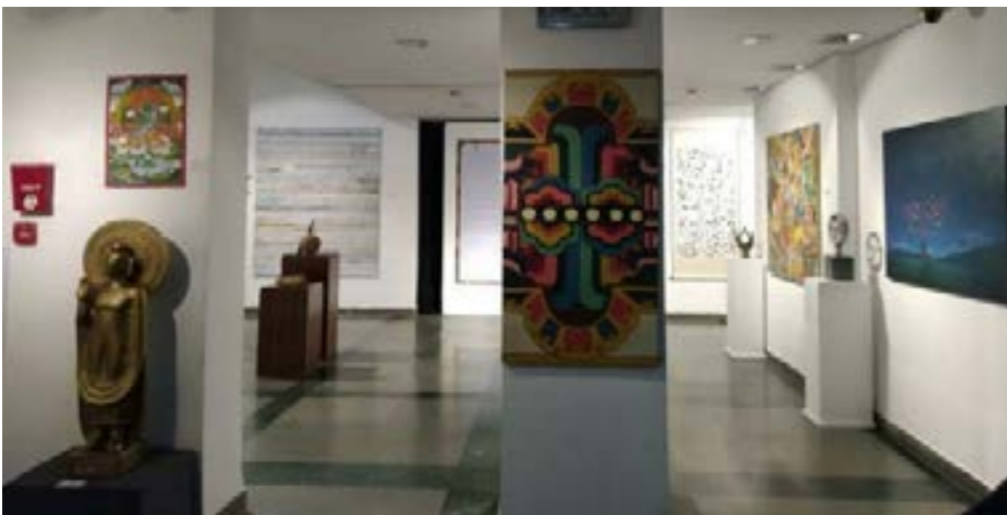


## How much water is enough water?



Opening the exhibition on water with a question pertinent to all our lives, Tsering Motup, the curator, goes on to show a variety of ways in which water impacts our lives. Focusing on Water in the lives of residents of Old Town he invites various artists to look at How Water plays an important role in everyone's life? And how it has a different narrative in the alleys of Old Town. The exhibition covered the work of several artists from images of those who worked on an ice project to sound art installations, poetry and video.

*The exhibition is an outcome of a project LAMO has been working on, with support from BORDA (Bremen Overseas Research Development Association), to study the impact of water in Leh and Kargil towns*



## INNER PATH FESTIVAL



LAMO was delighted to showcase the works of artists: Chemat Dorjey, Jigmet Angmo, Gurmet Kungyam, Isaac Gergan, Tashi Palmo and Stanzin Nyentak during the Inner Path Festival in New Delhi in October.

The Inner Path festival brings together art, films and philosophy that have a Buddhist focus.. This edition of the four day festival was threaded together by various events including the screening of international documentary films on Buddhism, a specially curated art and photography exhibition, a panel discussion involving artists and filmmakers, discourses by eminent Buddhist teachers and scholars and varied cultural programmes.

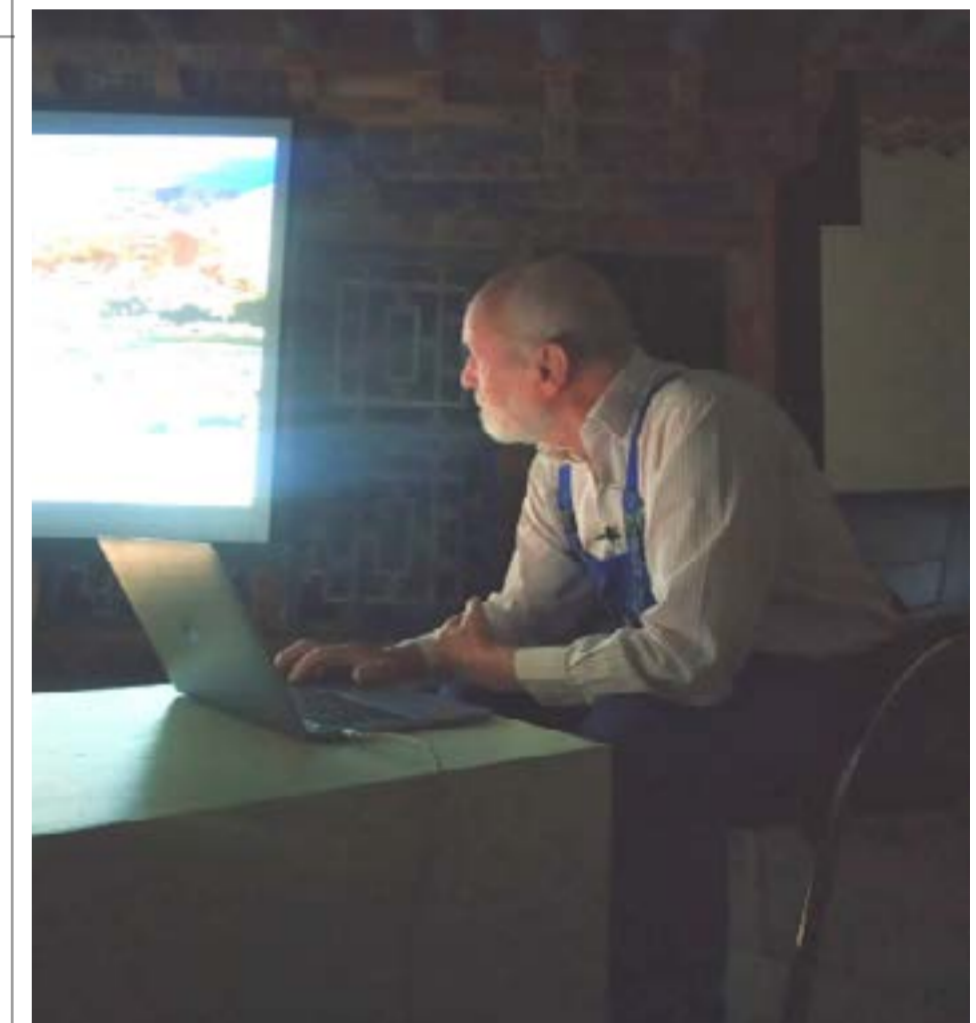
# Talks

## Living Waters - how can a digital museum address our complex water challenges?



Water, the primal fluid, has shaped rich civilizations across India, inspired art and architecture, stories and folklore, rituals and practices, poems, songs, music, film and dance. The Living Waters Museum (LWM), a digital platform, was launched in January 2017, to collect and collate rich and diverse traditions of water practices in India and build a repository of visualised knowledge, which can commemorate the past, inspire the present and be a source of learning for the future. Sara Ahmed, founder of the Living Waters Museum, talked about the process of developing the platform based on collaboration and across disciplines, engaging young people in project-based learning, essentially storytelling, around the many dimensions of water heritage, and its intersection with livelihoods, natural and built environments and the creative arts. Sara has been working on the political economy of water in India since 1986, and in her current work she explores the role of water museums in facilitating conversations on water heritage and governance.

## Photographic Projects in Mustang 1996-2017



## From Tabo to Alchi - revisiting early weestern Himalayas



Christian Luczanits's talk gave new data and interpretations for paintings of Alchi Monastery, as well as Tabo, Lalung and Dungkar. His recent research not only clarified some of the sources but also led to a rethinking of the standard interpretation of esoteric Buddhism in the Early Western Himalayan monuments dating from the 11th to 13th centuries. Christian proposed a new interpretation for the development of public esoteric Buddhism as it is reflected in these monuments.

Jaroslav Poncar is well known in Ladakh for his photographs that date back to 1974, the year the region first opened to tourists. Since then, his 'Photographic Journeys' have taken him to many parts of the Indian Himalayas, Tibet, Nepal, Burma, Cambodia and Yemen. This presentation of his focused on his visits to Mustang from 1996-2017. In the 1990's a research programme called the 'High Mountain Archeology' financed by the German government took Jaroslav along with conservation architect John Harrison (who restored the buildings in the LAMO Centre) and artist Robert Powell to document the architecture of Mustang. At the time, it was the only existing place where Tibetan culture and heritage still remained largely untouched. In 1998, the American Himalaya Foundation requested him to document the 15th century wall paintings in the temples of Lomanthang.

## Talk on Sexual Health



A lucrative discussion/ conversation took place on consent, identity, health, pleasure, communication and more on sexual health by Ishaan Pathak. Ishaan is a Sexual Health Educator and had done many workshops with different organisations.



## Weaving (Text)ile - A Talk



Dr Andrew Barnes, Professor of Writing at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York City, is a weaver interested in the intersection between text and textiles. Andrew practices Xtreme Xstitch which takes the traditional craft of cross stitching and pushes it beyond the conventional practice of putting into stitch quaint scenes.

## Talk on Photography



Photography has always had the incredible power of touching the hearts of all nationalities, languages and ages. Hamad Eid Al Shamari talked about his experience in photography. He is working as a professional photographer for the past 10 years. His photographs from his Ladakh visit is at Exhibition at the India Habitat Centre until 12th January 2020.

## Authors Talk by Tsering Norboo Martse



Tsering Norboo Martse, a prominent scholar and an excellent translator gave a talk about his work on 30th April 2019 at the LAMO Centre. He is credited to more than 30 articles and 100 poems on culture and language of Ladakh. His work is published in 'Sheraaza', the annual publication of the academy and has given many talks on AIR Leh and have written plays for the local television.

## Dr Jigmet Yangchan Talks on Water Conservation in Ladakh



# WORKSHOPS

## Woodblock Print Making



A three-day workshop on Wood Block Print Making was organized under the guidance of Japanese Artist Kenji Najima. More than 20 people participated. A new technique and process of print making using different types of colour, washi paper, baren, different wood cut tools and Japanese wood was taught and kept all the participants interested and engaged. An atmosphere of new learning in the old heritage house of LAMO was an enthralling experience for all.



## Media and Its Responsibility in Present Time



'Media and its responsibility in present time' was organized at the Kashmir University Satellite campus at Taru Thang on 9th January 2019 at 11: 30 am. The event was organized by Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation in collaboration with Kashmir University, Taru Campus. Various aspects and roles of Media was discussed with different Guests, students, professors and other participants.

## Life and Legacy of Guru Padmasambhava



A conference on the Life And Legacy Of Guru Padmasambhava was organized by India International Centre, Centre for Escalation of Peace, and Sahapedia on 29-30 January 2019. The conference was slated as one of the events celebrating the 50 years of diplomatic relations between India and Bhutan. The conference and an accompanying exhibition of rare and precious thangkas, paintings, sculptures and photographs were held at India International Centre. The program had eminent scholars and practitioners from Bhutan, Nepal, Thailand and across India speaking on various aspects of Guru Rinpoche's life and teachings. Speakers from Ladakh were Nawang Tsering Shaksपो, Tsering Norboo Martse and Tashi Morup.



## Heroes Elevate Empathy - appreciating the animal beings



In continuation of the earlier 'Heroes Elevate Empathy' projects conducted by LAMO together with Siddhartha School, the focus this time was to encourage students to consider the non human inhabitants of our planet, reflect on the natural world and the importance of animal in our eco-system. Led by LAMO's Arts Officer Tsering Motup, graphic artists Tsetan Angmo and intern Stanzin Deskyong, the three day workshop asked students questions about Animals and their habitats, making them reflect on their heroic qualities. While learning the fundamentals of line, colour and composition, the students created artworks based on various animals.

## Democracy, Governance and Sustainable Development - a workshop by Ashish Kothari



Leading environmentalist and founder of Kalpavriksh, Ashish Kothari, led a series of workshops at Central Institute of Buddhist Studies on Democracy, Governance and Sustainable Development in March. Organised together with LAMO, an interactive session with different NGOs of Ladakh was also held at the LAMO Centre.

## A bit of acting, writing and drawing



A Story telling workshop was led by Ahilya Dang, an intern at LAMO. She taught kids how to create a story through drawings and engaged them in a fun filled activity.

## Sound Workshp by Ashna and Thara



Interns from Flame University, Ashna and Thara, gave a sound workshop for students from Moravian at the Sound Studio at LAMO.

# ART RESIDENCY

## Artist Residency at LAMO



In a first at Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation, an Artist in Residence program was initiated and Rigzin Tsewang was selected as the finalist for our program. The program held from 20th November - 20th December 2019.

Rigzin Tsewang is a furniture designer who lives and works in Leh. He was born and raised in Leh and Shimla, and completed his graduation from Sriшти School of Art, Design and Technology, Bangalore in 2014. Rigzin specializes in Furniture and Spatial Design. He returned to Ladakh, inspired by the aesthetics and culture of his homeland. He hopes to invest his time in learning about Ladakhi traditional design and create works that are inspired by that as well as have a Scandinavian minimalist twist.

During the Residency period Rigzin researched and documented on the Ladakhi traditional furniture and he used that to create and design new works that reflected on local aesthetic.



## Artist Residency at KYTA



In September, Kyta India organised an Artist in Residence program for 5 weeks where Six Artists from different parts of the world came to create artworks of their own. Tsering Motup Sudho from Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation took part in the residency program.



In an interactive session between Kyta India residential fellows and local artist from different creative background of Ladakh, saw some intriguing presentations, performing arts and discussions at the LAMO Centre. This amazing initiative brought an opportunity to exchange the work and ideas of different creative minds in one room and explore a broad area of knowledge and studies.



# Film Screening

## Old Routes, New Journeys

Old Routes, New Journey is a film by Abeer Gupta. He is currently Director at Krishnakriti Foundation, Hyderabad. He is also Director at Achi Association India, an organization that works for the preservation of cultural heritage in Ladakh. His research is based in the western Himalayas, in Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir, around oral histories, material cultures, and visual archives focusing on ideas of cultural construction, hybridity and commodification. He has directed several documentary films and curated art, education and community media projects.



**Stalker**

Andrei Tarkovsky's Stalker embarks on a metaphysical journey through an enigmatic post-apocalyptic landscape. Adapting a science-fiction novel, Tarkovsky created a challenging and visually stunning work, his painstaking attention to material detail and sense of organic atmosphere further enriched by this vivid new digital restoration. Stalker envelops the viewer by opening up a multitude of possible meanings.

## Cemetery of Splendor

An experiential film screening which requires you to get your own pillow and a mat. Soldiers with a mysterious sleeping sickness are transferred to a temporary clinic in a former school. The connection between the sleeping syndrome and an ancient site beneath the clinic will drop you down to a different world. Cemetery of Splendour has received universal acclaim from critics. An online consensus reads, "Cemetery of Splendour gracefully eludes efforts to pin down its meaning while offering patient viewers another gently hypnotic wonder from writer/director Apichatpong Weerasethakul."



**A Separation**

Nader and Simin, a married couple, live in Iran with their daughter Termeh. Simin wants to move out of the country, but Nader is reluctant to do so as he wants to take care of his ailing father. A Separation 2011 Iranian drama film written and directed by Asghar Farhadi. A Separation won the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film in 2012, becoming the first Iranian film to win the award

# Heritage Walks



In a joint collaboration with India Heritage Walk, LAMO organized a walk from Chutay Ranthak, where the traditional water mills were located. The bakers' street to the main west entrance gate of the Old Town of Leh, called Sta-go. The walk took the participants through labyrinthine narrow pathways, passing old houses with intricate woodwork, places of worship and forgotten ruins. Tashi Morup, Projects Director, LAMO told the stories of each space with an interesting narrative from the past as well as an account of its contemporary usage. Myths and folklores were discussed to make the walk more interesting and more alive. The walk was organized on 28th February, 31st March, 11th May, and 29th June



World Heritage Day was celebrated on 18th April 2019 with great enthusiasm under the collective banner of Ladakh NGOs Forum. The main aim of the day was to spread awareness on heritage value of the historic buildings and sites that lies neglected. Students from different schools took part in the program and a heritage walk in the Old Town was led by Ka Sonam Gyatso from Leh Old Town Initiative (LOTI). The walk was led upto the LAMO centre, where everyone was given a brief tour of the organization to understand the tangible cultural heritage. Then a presentation was given by Dr. Sonam Wangchok at Himalayan Cultural Heritage Fund (HCHF) on Heritage sites of Ladakh, followed by a quiz for all the students and other participants.

# Guest Visits

## HH Skyabgon Chetsang Rinpochoy visits LAMO



## His Eminence Khamtak Rinpoche visits LAMO



## Lieutenant Governor Radha Krishna Mathur visits LAMO



## Filmy Owl visits LAMO

