



Royal Textile Academy



ANNUAL REPORT - 2017

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**Her Majesty Gyalyum Sangay Choden Wangchuck**  
*Royal Patron of the Royal Textile Academy of Bhutan*



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background

Culture promotion and preservation is one of the main pillars of Gross National Happiness, the guiding development philosophy of Bhutan. While undeterred efforts are being initiated by the Royal Government to preserve and promote our unique culture and traditions as part of our unique national identity, it is also the responsibility of all Bhutanese citizens to contribute in their own meaningful ways.

The Royal Textile Academy (RTA) of Bhutan is a registered Civil Society Organization founded in May 2005 under the Royal Patronage of Her Majesty Gyalum Sangay Choden Wangchuck. Textiles are an integral component of our culture and the RTA has been established with the vision to preserve and promote the unique textile arts of Bhutan.



## 1.2. Mission

*RTA is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Bhutanese textiles in particular, and the thirteen arts in general.*

We strive to promote the unique culture and traditions of Bhutan by creating international awareness and encouraging international collaboration to promote mutually beneficial exhibits and educational programs.

## 1.3. Objectives

The objectives of RTA are to:

- i. Provide a national center for professional training in weaving, design and production of Bhutanese textiles;
- ii. Develop scholarship programs for staff training and internships in conservation and museum studies;
- iii. Collect and document important textiles that are part of Bhutan's cultural heritage;
- iv. Develop and display exhibitions for local and international venues;
- v. Develop a conservation center devoted to preservation and restoration of Bhutanese textiles and other artifacts;
- vi. Administer ongoing cultural and educational programs, workshops, study groups and lectures on Bhutanese culture and arts;
- vii. Act as a vital symbol of National Pride and bring international recognition to Bhutan's artistic achievements.

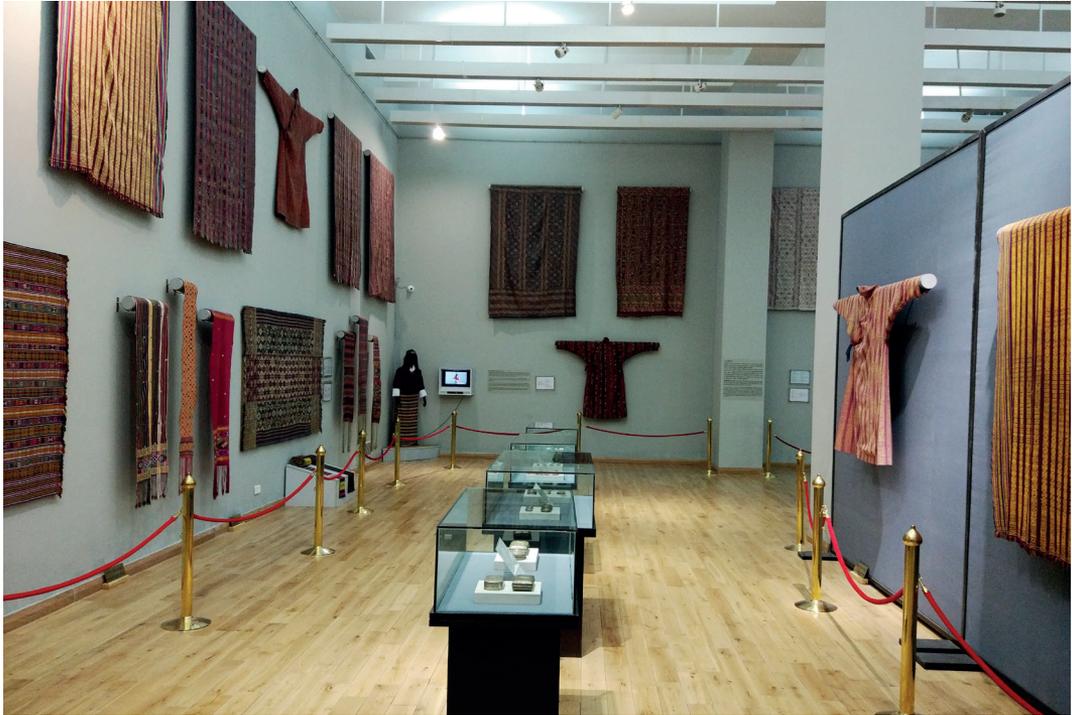


## 2. PROGRAMS

The RTA consists of two program divisions namely (1) the Textile Museum and (2) the Weaving and Conservation Centre; and a Central Administrative Division. In future, the Academy will also include a Cultural Heritage Centre and the mission of the RTA will evolve and expand to include the preservation and promotion of various other traditions and culture such as oral traditions, etiquette and other art forms through mediums that appeal to the younger generation.

### 2.1. Textile Museum

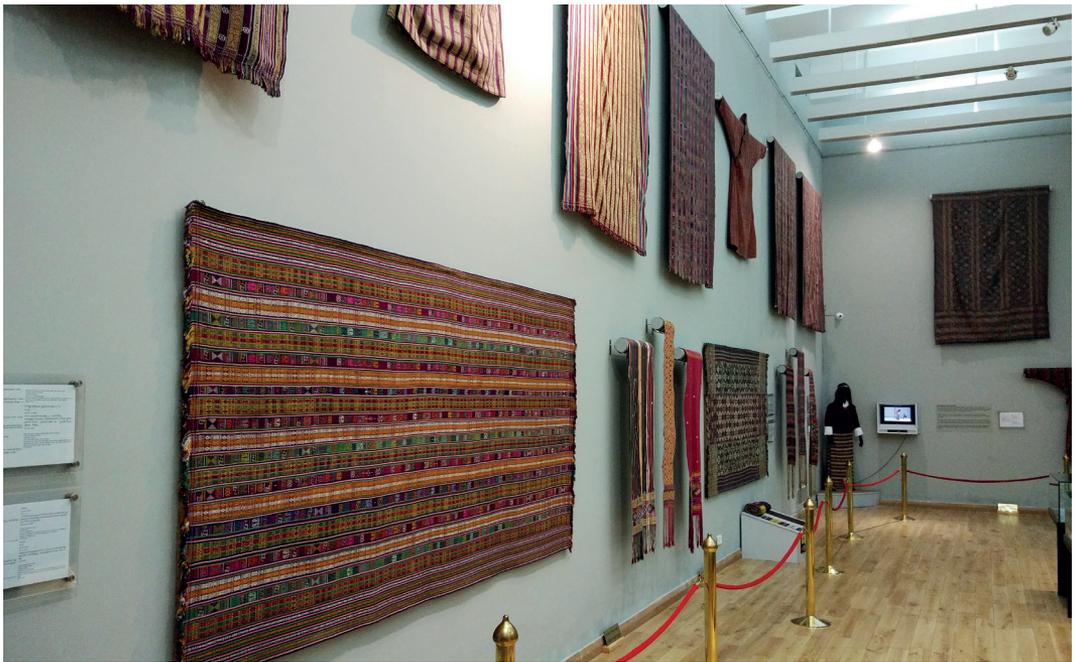
Museum houses three galleries: the upper gallery dedicated to a permanent exhibition; the lower gallery for annual exhibitions and a third gallery dedicated for temporary exhibitions. Each of these will have a different purpose in attracting and maintaining an audience.



### 2.1.1. Upper Gallery

The upper gallery is dedicated to a permanent exhibition “Thagzo: The Textile Weaves of Bhutan” which gives the visitors a comprehensive look at the various types of textiles used in Bhutan and other regional costumes. It showcases an assortment of intricate supplementary weaves displayed alongside simple, casual cotton stripes & plaids. It houses various themes such as ‘Regional Costumes’, ‘Master pieces from the Loom’ and ‘Religious and Sacred Arts’. We also have on display the prize-winning textiles from the National Design Competition.

The audience is mostly tourists, many of whom visit Bhutan once in their lifetime and state guests. Keeping this in mind, the Museum agreed to maintain a permanent display in the upper gallery. Individual pieces are replaced when conservation is recommended.



*The Thagzo exhibition in the Upper Gallery of RTA*



*Her Majesty the Queen Mother Sangay Choden Wangchuck inaugurating an exhibition titled “Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel: The Founding Father.”*

### 2.1.2. Lower Gallery

An annual exhibition is planned for the lower gallery which is more topical such as “A Tribute to Drukgyal Zhipa,” in celebration of His Majesty the Fourth King’s 60 Birth Anniversary in 2015 and “Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal: The Founding Father,” in 2016, in celebration of 400 Years since his arrival in Bhutan. Such exhibitions are not only interesting to foreign visitors but are also of interest to the local audience.

## 2.2. Weaving Centre

The Weaving Centre is managed by a weaving committee. The 'Skills Development Training for Weavers' administered by the Weaving Centre is designed to train women in the different weaving techniques, the art of yarn dyeing (natural), marketing and colour combinations and basic book keeping skills. The goal of this training is to equip the weavers with adequate skills and knowledge leading to more women as well as men, actively pursuing the art of weaving.

The looms and equipments as well as materials are provided by the RTA and the products from the weaving programs are sold at the Museum Gift Shop. The weavers are also provided a nominal stipend to meet travel and incidental expenses.



*Weavers in the Weaving Centre of RTA.*

## 2.3. Conservation, Collections and Research

The Curators manage the Conservation and Collections unit assisted by museum assistants. The Conservation unit at the Royal Textile Academy is focused primarily on conservation, restoration and acquisition of textiles.

Collections have been prioritised on Bhutanese textiles and the related objects. The collections policy and plan was developed in 2001.

With the plans to include all the other 12 traditional arts in the future, there is a need to include related artefacts in the collection and to increase the number of staff in these areas and train them on the conservation of these artefacts.



*One of the conservators at work*

## 2.4. Construction Project



### 2.4.1. Third Phase: The Offices

The construction of the Offices at the RTA began in January 2015. This is a professionally designed office building with adequate underground parking to be rented. Funds generated from the rental of these office spaces will contribute to the sustenance of the RTA and in fulfilling our mandate.



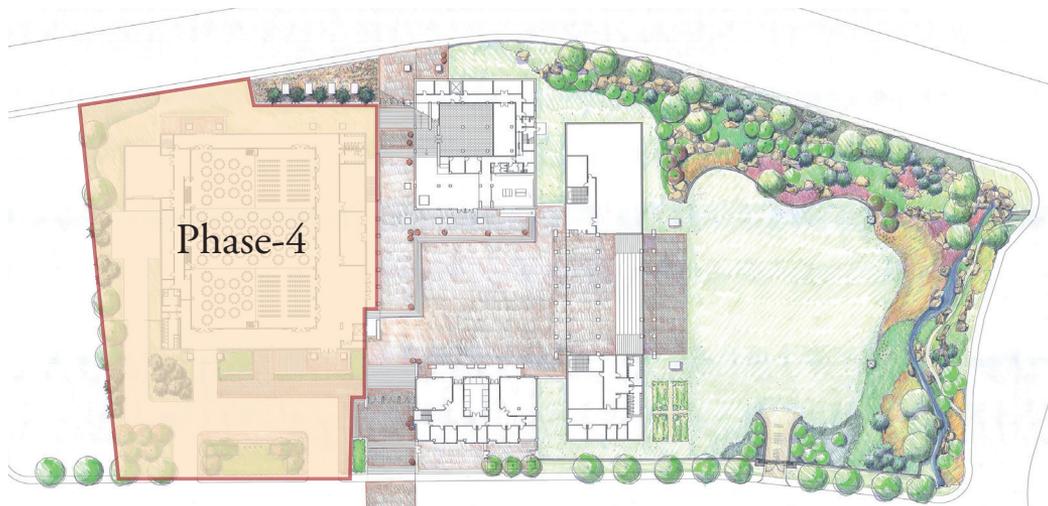


## 2.4.2. The Fourth Phase: Cultural Heritage Centre

In addition to its principle mandate of promoting and preserving the textile arts, the RTA will also include a Cultural Heritage Centre in the near future.

The Centre will work towards the preservation and promotion of the various traditions and cultures of Bhutan including, oral traditions, etiquette and other art forms.

This phase also includes a large conference centre which will greatly benefit the MICE, tourism and the hospitality industry in Bhutan. Through the rental of the conference centre, we hope to be able to generate additional income for the sustainability of the RTA. Two levels of basement parking will also be included in this phase.



## 3. ACTIVITIES

### 3.1. “Thagzo: The Textile Weaves of Bhutan”

This is the permanent exhibition in our upper gallery. This exhibition showcases textiles woven on traditional looms, an assortment of intricate supplementary weaves displayed alongside simple cotton stripes and plaids to textiles that have been carefully cut and sewn together. It houses textiles and other artefacts under various themes such as ‘Regional Costumes,’ ‘Master pieces from the Loom’ and ‘Religious and Sacred Arts.’



## 3.2. Royal Visit and State Guests

The Royal Textile Academy (RTA) was honored by a Royal visit on 9 January 2017

The Royal Patron of the RTA, Her Majesty Gyalyum Sangay Choden Wangchuck received His Majesty The King, Her Majesty The Gyaltsuen, His Majesty the Fourth King, Her Majesty Gyalyum Tshering Yangden Wangchuck and Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princesses at the Royal Textile Academy. Their Majesties and Their Royal Highnesses visited the “Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel: The Founding Father” and “Tashi Gomang: A national treasure of Bhutan” exhibitions.



*His Majesty The King, His Majesty the Fourth Druk Gyalpo, Their Majesties the Queen Mothers, Their Highnesses Prince and Princesses with staff of the Royal Textile Academy and the Textile Museum.*

## Her Imperial Highness of Japan visits RTA

Her Imperial Highness Princess Mako of Akishino of Japan visited the Royal Textile Academy on 3 June 2017.

Her Imperial Highness was received at the RTA by the Director General of the Department of Culture and staff of the Royal Textile Academy and the Textile Museum. Her Imperial Highness took keen interest in our exhibits in the Museum as well as interacted with the weavers at the weaving centre.

Her Imperial Highness's humility and grace has touched many Bhutanese and further boosted the friendly relations between Japan and Bhutan.



*Her Imperial Highness Princess Mako of Akishino of Japan with staff of the Royal Textile Academy and the Textile Museum.*

### 3.3. Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel: The Founding Father.

An exhibition titled, “Zhabdrun Ngawang Namgyel: The Founding Father” was inaugurated on 21 September 2016 to commemorate the 400 years of legacy of our founding father Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel and to pay our humble tribute to the Zhabdrung, his life and legacy.

The exhibition, was on for public display for six months consisted of sacred artefacts belonging to the Zhabdrung and his successive reincarnations. Sacred relics belonging to Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel, Chogley Jigme Tenzin and Chogley Yeshey Ngodrup were loaned from Gasa, Jarogang Lhakhang, Simtokha, National Museum of Bhutan and Hongtsho Tashigang were on display.

Simultaneously, an exhibition titled “Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel– A Biography Through Kuthangs” was also inaugurated at Royal Textile Academy.



*Her Majesty the Queen Mother Sangay Choden Wangchuck inaugurates the exhibition on Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel.*



*Launching of a book, titled “Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel: A Biography through Kuthangs,” by Her Majesty the Queen Mother Sangay Choden Wangchuck.*





*Her Majesty the Royal Queen Mother and the dignitaries at the opening of the exhibition.*

### 3.4. Tashi Gomang: A National Treasure of Bhutan.

His Eminence Tsugla Lopen Samten Dorji Rinpoche inaugurated an exhibition on Tashi Gomang: A National Treasure of Bhutan on 5 November, 2016 at the Royal Textile Academy.

The Tashi Gomang Project, under the Royal Patronage of Her Majesty the Royal Grandmother Ashi Kesang Choeden Wangchuck, for the very first time in Bhutan's history, together with the Royal Textile Academy, in collaboration with the Central Monastic Body and the Royal Government of Bhutan, presented a culturally and spiritually noteworthy exhibition of the Century.

“The Tashi Gomang: A National Treasure of Bhutan” exhibition was specially showcased for a limited period of time for viewing as well as blessings for both Bhutanese and international audiences visiting the Kingdom of Bhutan.



*Exhibitors from RTA preparing for the exhibition*



Though the Lam Manips that accompanied these sacred Tashi Gomangs, singing spiritual songs of devotion and realization to their listeners, were initially from the Central Monastic Body; the responsibility was handed over to Gomchens (lay monks) who were better suited to the Tradition as they were more involved with the communities and villages. These custodians have all but dwindled down to only two surviving Lam Manips: Manip Kunzang Tenzing (72) and Manip Kinley (84) today.

Under the Royal Patronage of Her Majesty the Royal Grandmother, His Excellency Dr. Thierry Mathou and Tshering Tashi formed the Tashi Gomang Project to record, conserve and revive the Tashi Gomang and its Lam Manip tradition to ensure the continuity of this exceptional tradition.

The Tashi Gomang Project has been able to record 34 known and registered Tashi Gomangs in the country, out of which 29 were specially showcased at the Royal Textile Academy (RTA), Thimphu for a limited period of time.





*The Tashi Gomang built by Zow Balip and blessed by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel was placed in the Utse or the main tower of the Punakha Dzong. This Tashi Gomang was the jewel of the exhibition.*



*The Exhibition included an interactive portion, where visitors can view the monks of the Central Monastic Body performing the lhabsa truelsey and soelkha daily as well as viewing Lam Manip Kunzang Tenzing teaching the apprentice Lam Manip gomchens from Sinphu Goempa, Trongsa*

### 3.5. The Mellow

#### *Exhibition and sales*

The Royal Textile Academy of Bhutan (RTA) in collaboration with CDK Designs hosted an exhibition and sale on 12 April 2017 at the RTA Gallery. The exhibition and sales titled, ‘The Mellow’ was a collection inspired by expression of stillness and calmness of water. It also featured a fashion show as a part of the opening event.

The event was graced by HRH Princess Euphelma Choden Wangchuck as the Chief Guest.

The exhibition and the sales was open for the public from 13 April 2017 for the duration of three months at the RTA gallery.



### 3.6. Educational Programs for Students

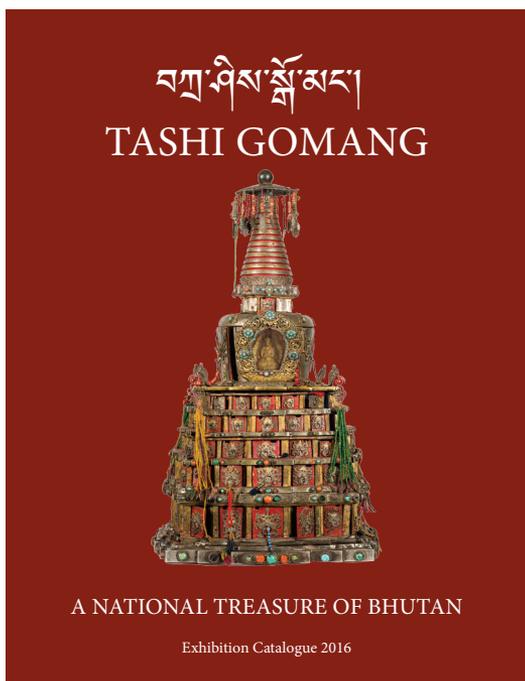
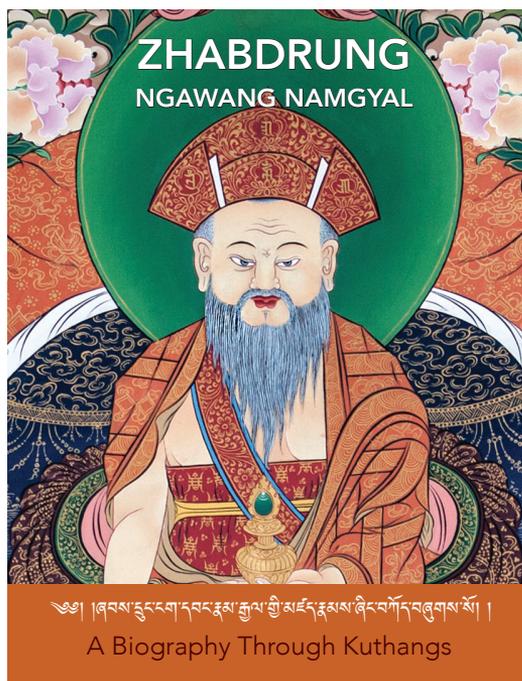
The RTA, as part of our regular programs, continued to conduct educational programs for school students in Thimphu. During their visits to the RTA, the students tour the galleries of the Textile Museum and Weaving Center guided by our curators. They are briefed on the importance of our Bhutanese textile art, its evolution, and the different names and patterns of Bhutanese textiles.



### 3.7. Research, Publications and Productions

As part of exhibitions organized in 2017, publications and documentaries were also produced.

1. Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel: The Founding Father
2. Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel: A Biograpy Through Kuthangs
3. Tashi Gomang: A National Treasure of Bhutan



## 3.8. Weaving Centre

### 3.8.1. Weaving and dyeing program for students

In 2016, the weaving centre conducted two programs for the students. In the winter weaving program for students, about 24 students participated from December 2016 to first week of February 2017. It was a successful program to keep them engaged productively during their break. They availed opportunity to learn and further their weaving skills. At the end of the program, they were awarded training certificates.

The program is organized annually by the Royal Textile Academy.



## 4. FINANCIAL REPORT

The RTA sustains with support from the donors and supporters to execute its planned activities. The organization is audited by the Royal Audit Authority as required by the CSO Act of Bhutan.

The following are unaudited financial report of the RTA for the fiscal year July 2016 to June 2017. The audited financial statement will be incorporated in the next issue of our annual report.





#### 4.2. Balance sheet of RTA (1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017)

Royal Textile Academy of Bhutan			
Chubachu, Thimphu			
Balance Sheet			
1-Jul-2016 to 30-Jun-2017			
Liabilities	Amount (Nu.)	Assets	Amount (Nu.)
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	<b>1,148,805</b>	<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>25,219,090</b>
Duties & Taxes	121,735	Antiques and Works of Art	16,299,231
Employees Deductions	(44,656)	Motor Vehicle	1,718,234
Bills Payable	991,830	Furniture & Fixtures	2,169,987
Gratuity	(365,259)	Guru Thangka	365,012
Health Contribution	3,884	IT-Equipments	2,221,824
RTA-Construction Phase 3	335,629	Kuthangs-Guru Tshenye & Khor Ngade Zangpo	776,267
Salary Payable	3,843	Miscellaneous Assets	271,106
Security Deposit	101,799	Office Equipments	873,759
<b>Capital Grant</b>	<b>5,149,129</b>	Office Equipment-SIST Software	523,670
Scholarship	1,923,931	<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>42,724,607</b>
Dr. Paulsen Reserve	2,100,849	Loans & Advances (Asset)	341,327
Education Program	(72,120)	Sundry Debtors	204,761
Life of Weavers - DVD	500	Bank Accounts	26,178,519
Museum Opening Budget	132,290	Fixed Deposit	16,000,000
Weaving Budget-COMO Foundation	962,698		
Weaving Program-MOLHR-Budget	97,980		
Zhabdrung Catalog	3,000		
<b>Excess of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>59,297,840</b>		
Opening Balance	48,258,766		
Current Period	11,039,073		
Diff. in Opening Balances	2,347,924		
<b>Total</b>	<b>67,943,697</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>67,943,697</b>





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