



THE FIRST ZEN INSTITUTE OF AMERICA

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會協禪一第國美

Film Series

The Tibetan Book of the Dead

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Friday, May 12, 2017 7:30 – 9:00 PM

113 East 30th Street New York, NY 10016

The Tibetan Book of the Dead is a film we screened back in May, 2010. We are screening it again because it was a signature piece by Leonard Cohen, an old friend of the First Zen Institute who passed away on November 7, 2016. The Tibetan Book of the Dead, or the Bardo Thodol, otherwise known as the “Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation” was written by the great Tibetan saint Padmasambhava in the 8th century. It is probably the most celebrated and widely read work of Tibetan literature outside Tibet. Depending on different interpretations, it is either a practical guide to prepare the soul for its next incarnation or an advanced guide for practitioners of Buddhist meditation. Either way, it is a difficult and abstruse text.

The Tibetan Book of the Dead is a pair of documentary films about death and dying, narrated by Leonard Cohen. Part I: A Way of Life, discusses the history of the Tibetan Book of the Dead, and its application in the Himalayas today, where it is used as a guide to help the deceased navigate the treacherous passage to the next life. It is also presented in the context of a modern hospice in California. Part II: The Great Liberation shows an old Lama and a young acolyte as they guide a newly deceased Himalayan villager through the afterlife using readings from the Tibetan Book of the Dead. The Tibetan Book of The Dead is being licensed through Alive Mind/Kino Lorber. 90 minutes.

Admission is free.

