



## Department of Asian and Asian American Studies & Center for India Studies

present  
a Distinguished Visitor Lecture

# *What the Buddha Saw: The Great Asian Philosophical Revolution*

**John Koller**

**Professor Emeritus, Department of Cognitive Science  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute**

Dr. Koller, who took his Ph.D. in Indian Perspectives" (in *Philosophical Dreams*, philosophy under S. K. Saksena, is ed. Douglas Shrader).  
professor of Asian and Comparative  
Philosophy at Rensselaer Polytechnic  
Institute. His research areas include  
Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, Philosophy of  
Religion, Mind and Self-identity, and  
Cognition and the Self. The author of 5  
books and some 50 journal articles and  
book chapters, he has given more than 70  
invited lectures and seminar  
presentations. Recipient of numerous  
awards for teaching and research, he has  
held fellowships at numerous prestigious  
universities, including the University of  
Madras and Columbia University. His  
recent publications include *The Indian  
Way: An Introduction to the Philosophies  
and Religions of India* and "Human  
Identity: Zen and Psychoanalytic



**Monday, December 3, 4 p.m. Wang Center, Lecture Hall 1**  
***You are cordially invited***

This talk will focus on the Buddha's vision of suffering, its causes, the removal of these causes and the way to overcome suffering (the four noble truths of Buddhism). It will emphasize the Buddha's vision of reality as an interconnected network of ever-changing processes, a vision that enabled him to see that the human attempts to achieve permanent and separate existence are the root cause of human suffering. It will also emphasize the Buddha's meditational methods, the practices of mindfulness that enable us to see ourselves as we truly are, dynamic, ever-changing, interconnected processes, thereby overcoming suffering. The philosophical revolution that the Buddha's vision and practice initiated was two-fold. First, because it emphasized the individual person's own efforts to transform his or her life, it gave a new importance and value to the individual in Asian thought. Second, because the Buddha's vision and practice were grounded in experience rather than religious faith or human reason, it ushered in a new age of pragmatism, avoiding the tendency to seek for absolutes as a basis for truth and practice.