

## Buddhism@VU

### What and why?

Annewieke Vroom organized the series Buddhism@VU (2007-2012) to bring Buddhist scholar-practitioners from different Buddhist traditions to VU University for creative academic reflection and exchange with each other, students, and thinkers from other religious or non-religious backgrounds.

[Buddhism@VU](#) created attractive learning occasions for students in Religious Studies. Witnessing different Buddhist voices gives a feel of the diversity natural to, in fact, all religious traditions. Interacting with live practitioners makes manifest the actual consequences of the philosophy studied in texts.

In 2012, with the start of a Buddhist program at VU University, the program has become part of the standard curriculum and activities of ACCORD (Amsterdam Center for the Study of Cultural and Religious Diversity).

### Overview of Buddhism@Vu Events (2007-2012)

- *2012- Japanese Zen-Buddhism and its engagement in war and violence. A view on Daisetz Suzuki.* Lecture by Brian Victoria, Soto priest and professor, author of the very influential book 'Zen at War'. A cooperation with André van der Braak and Zen Center Amsterdam.
- *2011- Buddhism, Christianity, and the Question of Creation.* Lecture by Perry Schmidt-Leukel, Professor of Religious Studies and Intercultural Theology at the University of Münster in Germany.
- *2011- Are you who you want to be? Buddhist ideas about who we are and can be.* A symposium about the purpose of Buddhist Chaplaincy in prisons, hospitals, the army and congregations. What is the purpose of Buddhist Chaplaincy? What is a healthy human being - someone who always calmly smiles like the Buddha? Three Buddhist educators share their experiences and aspirations: Alie Rozendal and Stef Lauwers, Buddhist Chaplains for the Dutch Department of Justice, and Tenkei Coppens, Zenmaster and founder of Zen River, an internationally oriented trainings-monastery recognized by the Japanese Soto school.
  - This was a multi-media program in close collaboration with [www.bodhitv.nl](http://www.bodhitv.nl), the Dutch website for young Buddhists.
- *2011 - Modern manifestations of an ancient tradition. Cultivating Buddhism in the Modern World.* Lecture by Heng Sure, monk in the Chinese Zen tradition who has taught Buddhist-Christian dialogue at Graduate Theological Union (Berkeley). Response by Annewieke Vroom. A project in cooperation with Dharma Realm Buddhist University.
- *2011 - Manifesting Suchness (Jp. Genjokoan), a Buddhist text by Dogen.* Lecture by dr. André van der Braak, philosopher and Zen teacher.
- *2011 - Who is this person, learning from East and West? A Dialogue between dr. Jan Bor (publicist in East-West philosophy), and drs. Annewieke Vroom (philosopher of religion).*
- *2010 - Buddhist Ethics in Light of Imperial-Way Zen.* Lecture and colloquium by Christopher Ives, professor of religion at Stonehill College, USA.
- *2009 - Suffering, Impermanence, No-self: A Triologue on the basic Buddhist insights (II)* With Ingrid Dassen, Buddhist coach, Meino Zeillemaker, teacher in Tibetan Buddhism and filmmaker, and Andre van der Braak, philosopher and Zen teacher.

- 2008 - *Suffering, Impermanence, No-self: A Trialogue on the basic Buddhist insights (I)*  
With Jotika Hermsen, Theravada teacher, Meino Zeilemaker, teacher in Tibetan Buddhism, and Andre van der Braak, philosopher and Zen teacher
- 2008 - *Diverse Religious Perspectives on Health Care*  
With lectures by and dialogue between professor Steven Heine on Zen Buddhism, prof.dr. Cees van der Kooij on Protestant traditions, and drs. Erik de Jongh on Monastic traditions.
- 2008 - *Dogen Symposium: interpretations of the Genjokoan*  
Lecture by professor Steven Heine, (International University of Florida, USA) responses by Zen teacher Nico Tydeman and Indian Philosophy expert dr. Bruno Nagel.
- 2007 - *Zen Buddhism and Inter-religious Dialogue*  
Double lecture by the famous Dutch Zen teacher Ton Lathouwers and Annewieke Vroom.
- 2007 - *A Buddhist-Christian dialogue on Evil*  
Speakers: prof.dr. William LaFleur ( University of Pennsylvania, USA) and prof.dr. Henk Vroom (in collaboration with VU Podium)

### Close collaboration with bodhitv.nl

Thanks to a genius introduction by Gert-Jan Mulder (director of BOS, Buddhist Broadcasting) at one of the Buddhism@VU events, a very pleasant cooperation with Anne Kleisen from Bodhitv started. It was named the *Word Wakker met de VU*-project. Read the students publications and Buddhist responses, and check out the film with our students expressing their views on Buddhism, at [www.Bodhitv.nl](http://www.Bodhitv.nl). Search on 'Word Wakker / VU' or follow below links.

- 2011: (<http://www.bodhitv.nl/bodhitv/word-wakker-met-de-vu-2011/>)”
- 2009: movie with students and their essays (<http://www.bodhitv.nl/bodhitv/word-wakker-met-de-vu-2009/>)
- 2008: movie with students and essays (<http://www.bodhitv.nl/bodhitv/word-wakker-met-de-vu/>)

This project was integrated in the course taught by Annewieke Vroom on Eastern Philosophy, which was rewarded by VU University with an Education Prize (5000 Euro) in 2008.

### Media

Many of the above events were followed-up by interviews with our speakers, see [www.buddhistmedia.com](http://www.buddhistmedia.com). Information about past editions of the series by year:

- 2011: interview with Heng Sure (<http://www.bosrtv.nl/uitzending.aspx?lntYear=2011&lntType=1&lntEntityId=1461>) and also the *bootleg* to Heng Sure's lecture.
- 2010: interview with Chris Ives (<http://www.bosrtv.nl/uitzending.aspx?lntYear=2010&lntType=1&lntEntityId=1284>)
- 2007: interview with Annewieke Vroom and professor Steven Heine (<http://www.bosrtv.nl/uitzending.aspx?lntYear=2007&lntType=1&lntEntityId=800>)
- 2007: interview with William LaFleur (<http://www.bosrtv.nl/uitzending.aspx?lntYear=2007&lntType=1&lntEntityId=875>)