



## Peaceful and Wrathful Deities of the Bardo

### Date

18th century

### Medium

Pigments on cloth

### Description

At the moment of death, according to Buddhist belief, we have an opportunity to attain an enlightened state of mind. However, our own karma brings up various visions, including terrifying ones. If we do not recognize them as mere projections of our own mind, we cannot reach the enlightened state or a good rebirth. This painting depicts the deities described in a fourteenth-century text “The Peaceful and Wrathful Deities, The Profound Teachings of Self-liberated Wisdom Mind” and the famous “Liberation

upon Hearing in the Intermediate State,” the treasure teachings (terma) discovered by the treasure revealer Karma Lingpa. These images illustrate a structured and vivid experience between death and rebirth when visions of light crystallizing into an appearance of the peaceful deities encourage the mind to realize their true nature and become free. If this opportunity is missed, then the visions of the wrathful deities appear, but at this stage it becomes more difficult to recognize their true nature. If the mind has at least a glimmer of such recognition, then the future birth would not be in the lower realms of existence. The teachings of the bardo allow practitioners to prepare and train their minds for this future eventuality. Often ritual specialists read these instructions to the deceased as the means of guiding them through this difficult process of transitioning to future existence.

### Dimensions

Object size: 46 5/8 x 34 in. (estimated) Image size: 45 1/4 x 32 5/8 in. Framed size: 57 3/4 x 44 1/4 x 2 1/4 in.