1 Wood carvers in Bhutan prepare a stencil before crafting one of the lhakhang’s elaborately designed windows. The wood used to construct the lhakhang was skillfully hand hewn in Bhutan. Photo by Dorji Yangki

2 Hand-carved and colorfully painted dragonheads will be placed high on the four corners of the temple’s walls. Photo by Dorji Yangki

3 Dragons and other traditional Bhutanese symbols decorate the lhakhang door frame. Photo by Dorji Yangki

4,5,7 Carved and painted large window frames exemplify Bhutanese artistry and provide much-needed ventilation. Photos by Dorji Yangki

6,9,10 Artists express traditional Bhutanese devotion through their great attention to detail. Various elements of the lhakhang testify to the skills of the artists seen here at work in Bhutan before the temple was shipped to Washington. Photos by Dorji Yangki

8 Most of the buildings on the campus of The University of Texas at El Paso are known for their distinctive Bhutanese-inspired architecture. Photo courtesy The University of Texas at El Paso

Lhakhang (Traditional Bhutanese Temple)

More than 2,000 temples (lhakhangs) and monasteries scattered throughout Bhutan symbolize the importance that Buddhism continues to play in almost every aspect of Bhutanese life. Every village has a temple around which the life of the community revolves.

A team of skilled artists in Bhutan handcrafted the main architectural and decorative elements of this authentic Bhutanese lhakhang now under construction especially for the Festival. The windows, doors, columns, beam system, and railings were hand carved and painted in Bhutan before being shipped to Washington in late spring. The paintings, sculptures, and carvings that will decorate the lhakhang’s interior were also produced in Bhutan. The lhakhang will continue to have a life after the Festival: it will be rebuilt on the campus of The University of Texas at El Paso, where it will join other buildings influenced by Bhutanese architecture and design.

The temple was made possible with the support of The University of Texas at El Paso.