

Asian Arts & Culture Program



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

What: Arya Tara: Sand Mandala Painting

When: November 14-17 from 10AM-1PM

Where: Fine Arts Center University Gallery UMass

Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets

Press release text and press-quality images are also available on our website at www.fineartscenter.com/press

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Visiting Tibetan Monks create healing Mandala in the Pioneer Valley

The Drepung Loseling Monks call this art “the architecture of enlightenment”.

Their magnificent Tantric Buddhist Mandala sand paintings are painstakingly poured grain by grain to generate energies for global healing. The Asian Arts & Culture Program and the University Gallery bring you this breathtaking four-day event. Watch the monks in their sacred process of creating a mandala, from the very first drawing to the release of the sands from the painting into a body of water to “carry the prayers & blessings all over the world”. This event will open on November 14 at 10AM with music and chanting at the University Gallery at UMass. Hours for public viewing are November 14 from 10AM –7PM, November 15, 16 and 17 from 1PM-7PM The Sand Mandala Closing Ceremony will be on Nov.17 at 4:30PM. All people are welcome.

“construction of the mandala broke all past attendance records for our museum. Some 45,000 visitors came to watch the monks.” Vidya Dehejia, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery at the Smithsonian Institute

From all artistic traditions of Tantric Buddhism, that of painting with colored sand ranks as one of the most unique and exquisite. The Washington Post calls it “ A universal expression of human subconscious... It transports you.” In Tibetan this art is called *dul-tson-kyil-khor*, which literally means “mandala of colored powders”. Millions of grains of sand are painstakingly laid into place on a flat platform over a period of days, sometimes even weeks. Formed of a traditional prescribed iconography that includes geometric shapes and a multitude of ancient spiritual symbols, the sand-painted mandala is used as a tool for re-consecrating the earth and its inhabitants. A record number of people have watched in awe as the monks lay down millions of grains of sand to create healing Mandala paintings.

Most Mandalas are destroyed shortly after their completion. This is done as metaphor of the impermanence of life. In a colorful ceremony with gongs, trumpets and chanted prayers the sands are swept up and placed in an urn to carry them to a body of water where they are poured in the waters to fulfill the act of healing. The waters then carry the sand blessings all over the world, for planetary healing. This **Sand Mandala Closing Ceremony** takes place at 4:30 on Thursday, November 17 in the University Gallery. All are invited to participate.

This week-long event will include **Educational Outreach for Public Schools**

November 15-17 from 10AM-1PM are one-hour gallery tours for schools.

Each tour is limited to 30 people and free of charge. Students and teachers will meet with monks, view the mandala being constructed, view a short video of the process and completion of the sand painting, and participate in a workshop on creating their own mandala painting.

Arya Tara: Sand Mandala in the UMass Fine Arts Center’s University Gallery

November 14, 15 & 16 from 10AM-7PM

November 17 from 10AM-4:30PM

Closing Ceremony on the 17th at 4:30 PM You are invited to join.

Free and open to the public

Other Tibetan Events Should Not be Missed!

YUNGCHEN LHAMO in concert

November 16, 8pm at Bowker Auditorium

General Admission: \$15, Students: \$7

For tickets call FAC Box Office 413-545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS

Tibet's internationally acclaimed diva and award winning singer and songwriter at the age of 25, walked over the Himalayas from Tibet to India, on a perilous journey to meet and receive blessings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The power and purity of Yungchen's voice gives heart to her spiritual devotion and performance. Join us for this evening concert to shower blessings to the people around the world.

The Bodhisattva Tara: Compassion in Action Teachings by Za Choeje Rinpoche

Friday, November 18, 7:30-9PM in Memorial Hall, UMass

Suggested donation at the door: Community members \$10; Students \$5

This public talk by Za Choeje Rinpoche will highlight the special role that Tara plays in the Buddhist practice and her place in the history and culture of the Tibetan people. Rinpoche was first identified by H.H. the Dalai Lama as the sixth reincarnation of Za Choeje Rinpoche. At the age of 16 he entered the Drepung Loseling Monastery where after ten years of study, he graduated with the Geshe Lharampa degree and then continued his studies at the Gyume Tantrik College in India. He is currently the head of the Emaho Foundation in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Co-sponsored by the Manjushri Institute of Buddhist Studies

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