

## The Asian Arts & Culture Program at UMass Amherst Fine Arts Center

---

**CONTACT:** Sue McFarland, 413-577-2486 (aacp@acad.umass.edu)  
**WHAT:** *Healing the Earth: Tibetan Sand Mandala*  
**WHEN:** Wednesday, September 25 thru Friday, September 27  
**TIME:** 1:00 – 6:00 p.m. 9/25 & 9/26; 1:00-4:00 p.m. 9/27  
**WHERE:** Fine Arts Center Concert Hall Stage

The Asian Arts & Culture Program at the UMass Amherst Fine Arts Center opens its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season with an outstanding event that speaks to transformation and healing of our planet and ourselves. The Fine Arts Center Concert Hall stage hosts *Healing the Earth: the Tibetan Sand Mandala*, a visual artwork exploding with color and design, created on by eleven Tibetan monks. Produced by the Mystical Arts of Tibet, the monks travel throughout the United States and the world. General public viewing will be available from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily, on Wednesday and Thursday, September 25 & 26 and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Friday, September 27. A ticket will allow for multiple entries on the day of purchase. Tickets are available at the box office in advance or by walk up at the UMass Fine Arts Center Box Office. Please call 413-545-2511 for more ticket information.

Among all the artistic traditions of Tantric Buddhism, painting with colored sand ranks as one of the most unique and exquisite. In the Tibetan language this art is called *dul-tson-kyil-khor*. The literal translation means a "mandala of colored powders." Over a period of days, millions of grains of sand are painstakingly laid into place in a circular design drawn on a flat platform. The Mandala, using a traditionally prescribed iconography, includes geometric shapes and ancient spiritual symbols; it is used as a tool for re-consecrating the earth and its inhabitants. Though the beauty of the Sand mandala stands on its own--it is also a testament to the dedication and discipline of the monks who work ceaselessly for ten hours each day creating the image. By tradition, most sand mandalas are deconstructed shortly after their completion as a metaphor to reflect the impermanence of life. During the closing ceremony half the sands are distributed

to the audience as a symbol of healing blessings and the remainder is swept up and placed in an urn. The sand in the urn is carried and deposited in a nearby body of water. It is believed the waters carry the sand's healing blessings to the ocean, which in turn spreads the blessings throughout the world.

The mandala created on the Fine Arts Center Concert Hall stage represents the heavenly abode of the Buddha Akshobhya, (the Unshakable Victor for conflict resolution & peace). Heading the retinue of monks from the Drepung Loseling Monastery will be the honored Rinpoche Chung Tulku, a dedicated Tibetan monk and a reincarnation. Rinpoche rigorously studies and practices the entire spectrum of Tibetan Buddhism. He is an accomplished master and teacher in the areas of logic and debate, insight philosophy and meditation. In the wake of recent violence in schools and the world, it is hoped that by viewing the Sand Mandala audiences will be reminded of the importance of healing through peace, spirituality and tolerance in their respective communities.

The Asian Arts & Culture program cordially encourages you to participate in viewing this beautiful mandala and attending the closing ceremony.

The Fine Arts Center's Asian Arts & Culture and Center Series are sponsored by Baystate Health & Health New England. Asian Arts & Culture Program Season sponsor is the Pioneer Valley Hotel Group. The Tibetan Sand Mandala is supported by the local Tibetan community of Amherst & Northampton, UMass Students for a Free Tibet and the Jamphel Ningpo Ling Institute for Buddhist Studies. High resolution images are available at [www.fineartscenter.com](http://www.fineartscenter.com). Select Press Room.

###END###