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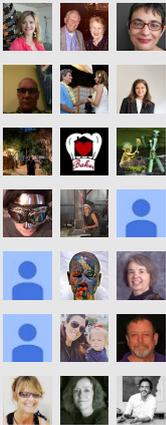
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MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2021

Buddhist Monks and Mixed Media Artists Reflect on Impermanence at PHES Gallery

By Lonnie Burstein Hewitt. Photos by Maurice Hewitt.



Creating the mandala.

PHES Gallery is a small but mighty space in Carlsbad owned by a warm and creative couple, furniture-maker **Paul Henry** and art therapist **Ellen Speert**. It has only been open five months but is already drawing attention from art-lovers in and beyond San Diego County.

Their current exhibition, **Impermanence**, features four top-level artists, all showing works expressing the idea of impermanence: **Andres Amador**, an earthscape artist from Northern California; printmaker/illustrator **Kathi McCord**; glass sculptor **Michelle Kurtis Cole**, and woodworker/furniture-maker **Wendy Maruyama**.

As a special attraction, six Tibetan Buddhist monks from the Gaden Shartse Monastery in Southern India were invited to create an ephemeral piece in the gallery, a sacred sand mandala which would take five days of painstaking work to complete as they filled in the initial outline with grains of colored sand.

ABOUT PICKED RAW PEELLED

San Diego Visual Arts Network presents these **MONTHLY** writings about the **Picked RAW** events posted on our site to show their inner goodies.

We encourage writers to develop their voice while writing about the many visual and cultural arts events occurring monthly in San Diego and County. We wish to avoid any "art speak" so anyone can understand and enjoy the reviews without a masters degree in art history.

You be the judge. Let us know if we succeed or not by joining us in the conversation, leave us a comment, tell us what you want to read, or better yet write for us.

Enjoy!

For information about SDVAN go to www.sdvisualarts.net or contact us at 760.943.0148 or info@sdvisualarts.net

BLOG ARCHIVE

▶ 2022 (4)

▼ 2021 (66)

▼ December (7)

[PHES Gallery Impermanence; Sparking like a Star i...](#)

[2021 Cannon Gallery Invitational](#)

[Buddhist Monks and Mixed Media Artists Reflect on...](#)

[Another Covid-time Christmas Brightened by Lighthe...](#)

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▶ November (4)



Creating the mandala: a close-up.

True to the spirit of impermanence, a basic concept in Buddhist thought, part of the process was the complete dissolution of the mandala outdoors on the afternoon of December 11. "It's not a destruction, it's a release," said Ellen Speert, who has been working with these monks for years. And it illustrates another Buddhist concept—non-attachment.

Also working in the spirit of impermanence and non-attachment is **Andres Amador**, whose large-scale earthworks are created out of natural materials that are then returned to the earth...or the sea.



Andres Amador: Washed Away. A piece created on a beach, photographed by a drone, and then washed away by a high tide. The tiny speck in the center of the piece is the artist.

Amador will be here in person in February, giving a talk at the gallery and doing a program with Ellen Speert at her retreat center, where participants will end up creating a communal piece on the beach in low tide. (For more about this, go to www.artRETREATS.com)

- ▶ October (10)
- ▶ September (2)
- ▶ August (4)
- ▶ July (6)
- ▶ June (3)
- ▶ May (5)
- ▶ April (7)
- ▶ March (5)
- ▶ February (6)
- ▶ January (7)

- ▶ 2020 (32)
- ▶ 2019 (34)
- ▶ 2018 (42)
- ▶ 2017 (48)
- ▶ 2016 (70)
- ▶ 2015 (86)
- ▶ 2014 (92)
- ▶ 2013 (70)
- ▶ 2012 (46)
- ▶ 2011 (117)

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LABELS

- Picked RAW Peeled (243)
- Picked RIPE (181)
- San Diego (103)
- Exhibits (98)
- Artists (87)
- A+ Art Blog (76)
- Daily Art Nag (58)
- Picked RAW (42)
- Picked Digital (39)
- Daily Art Jab (31)
- Talks (31)
- Opinion (24)
- News (19)
- Picked Honna (8)
- Advocacy (5)
- London (4)
- workshops (4)

LINKS

- [SDVAN](#)
- [DNA of Creativity](#)
- [Art Meets Fashion](#)

And then there's **Kathi McCord**, whose impressive graphite drawings address the destruction of our rainforests and invite visitors to demonstrate what's happening by erasing some part of a drawing themselves.



A detail from one of **McCord's** wall-size drawings.



Michelle Kurtis Cole's contribution to *Impermanence* features seven small, beautifully detailed corals, whose memory she's preserving in glass as they're disappearing in oceans.



One of **Cole's** hand-sculpted glass corals.

We didn't get to see **Wendy Maruyama's** piece, *The Tag Project*, honoring the thousands of Japanese-Americans sent to internment camps during World War II. It was removed to make room for the mandala-making but is back now, and we'll be going back to see it.

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- Agitprop
- Aristotle Georgiades
- Art Reviews Kevin Freitas
- David Fobes
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In these times of ongoing Covid and other uncertainties, the idea of impermanence can be a kind of comfort. Don't miss this fine, thought-provoking show, which is also impermanent, but will be here through February 13.

Impermanence at PHES Gallery

2633 State Street, Carlsbad, CA 92008

Gallery hours: Thursday – Saturday 2 p.m.-7 p.m. or by appointment

info@phesgallery.com/760-696-3022

Lonnie Burstein Hewitt is an award-winning author/lyricist/playwright who has been writing about arts and lifestyles in San Diego County for over a dozen years. You can reach her at hew2@sbcglobal.net.

Posted by Patricia at 8:35 PM



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