

Sand Mandala



The word Mandala derives from the Sanskrit and means essence, having or containing. A mandala may be considered to reflect both the outer and the inner universes and is an aid to meditation. In Vajrayana Buddhism mandalas consist of an outer circular mandala and an inner square (or sometimes circular) mandala with an ornately decorated mandala "palace" placed at the center. Any part of the inner mandala can be occupied by Buddhist glyphs and symbols, as well as by images of its associated deities, which may "symbolize different stages in the process of the realisation of the truth."

The creation of mandalas, made of coloured sand, is an exacting and intensely artistic process. Tibetan monks undergo many years of training to accomplish this art. The rituals involved in the creation and destruction of sand mandalas go far beyond the mere placement of the sand in a pattern and involve a deeply spiritual motivation. The destruction of the mandala at the end of the period for which it is created demonstrates the principle of the impermanence of our lives and the futility of clinging to material life.

Before laying down the sand, the geometric measurements associated with the mandala must be drawn on the base. The sand granules are then applied using small tubes, funnels, and scrapers, until the desired pattern is achieved. A large amount of time and work is involved in arranging the sand in such intricate detail. The mandala is created one section of the diagram at a time, usually working from the center outwards. Every detail of the mandala, every pattern and color, has a symbolic and intrinsic meaning.

Green Tara



Green Tara is a female Buddha. It is said that she arose from a tear of compassion on the face of Avalokateshvara, in a time immeasurably long ago. She is considered to be the Buddha of enlightened activity and endows supplicants with fearlessness arising from a realized understanding of the ultimate nature of reality.

Tara is called the Noble Liberator, the Swift Saviouress, who clears all fears and gives all benefits. Her face is said to be as bright as a hundred full autumn moons that blaze forth the light of a constellation of a thousand stars. She is the expression of generosity, diligence, austerity, peace, patience and meditation. She is the Mother of all the Victorious Ones. She has the ability to gather each and every being, destroying all the enemies of joy. Spreading happiness and laughter, she liberates from poverty, disease, poisonous substances, quarrels, bad dreams and fear.

Although Tara manifests in 21 differing forms with differing associated qualities and colors Green Tara embodies the enlightened qualities of them all.