

Mandala of Enlightenment: the Dhyani Buddhas & Tara: Goddess of Liberation
Paintings by Joan Bredin-Price

IDEA Space

May 29 – July 15, 2014



The Dhyani Buddhas: Lochana, 2008, gouache and mixed media, 63 x 43"

Joan Bredin-Price's two series of paintings – *Mandala of Enlightenment: the Dhyani Buddhas* and *Tara: Goddess of Liberation* – explore Tibetan Buddhist spiritual symbolism through the contemplative experience of a visionary American artist, rendering traditional imagery in contemporary media.

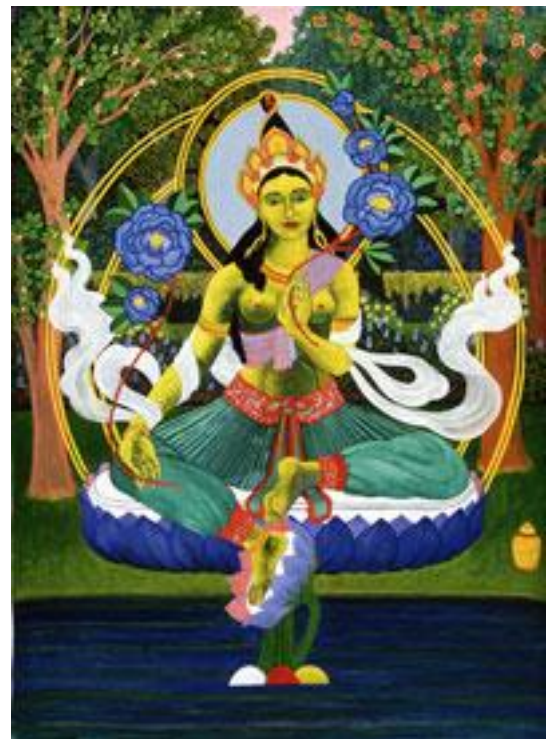
Mandala of Enlightenment: the Dhyani Buddhas

This portion of the exhibition comprises the *Dhyani Buddhas*: ten large mixed-media paintings of the five Buddha families used in Tibetan Buddhism as guides to spiritual transformation. The five Buddhas and their duplicate female consorts are to be studied, contemplated, and meditated upon as a method for freeing oneself from the suffering of the human condition. While iconographically accurate per the Tibetan *thangka* tradition, Bredin-Price's paintings are the original work of a Western Buddhist practitioner and artist. Her versions illuminate the vision of a strong spiritual feminist by portraying the five female consorts individually and at the same scale as their male partners. The goal of Bredin-Price's *Dhyani Buddhas* couples is to awaken one's five-nature being through a contemplative practice free of traditional gender bias. Through this awakening, the "poisons" of hatred, ignorance, pride, desire, and jealousy transform into their antidote wisdoms: the wisdom of ultimate reality; mirror-like wisdom; equality; discrimination; and all-accomplishing wisdom.

"These are remarkable paintings in terms of an imaginatively beautiful and evocative artistic interpretation of Buddhist imagery. Not only are they completely accurate in iconography, but also totally creative in their presentation that successfully offers a new 'western' way of interpreting the Buddhist icon tradition." – Dr. Marilyn Rhie, Buddhist Art Historian and Professor at Smith College

Tara: Goddess of Liberation

This section of the exhibition consists of five paintings that depict the female Buddha *Tara*. *Tara* is considered to be the embodiment of all of the Buddha's activities, and is identified as the premier deity of Tibet. Introduced to Tibetan Buddhism in the early 1980s, Bredin-Price became a *Green Tara* practitioner, which in turn opened an artistic pathway to the creation of numerous images of *Tara* over a twenty-year period.



Tara of the Golden Hue, gouache and mixed media, 29 x 37"

Joan Bredin-Price (1943-2013) grew up in an artistic family. Numerous family members were painters who belonged to the Pennsylvania Impressionists movement, and their world permeated her youth. She received formal training at Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and earned a BA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1965. Her paintings, which have mainly centered on the spiritual, more particularly the divine feminine, have been shown in the following institutions: Nacul Center Gallery (Amherst, MA); the former North Amherst Center for the Arts; Leverett Gallery (Leverett, MA); Tibet House (NY); the Jannotta Gallery at Smith College (Northampton, MA); and the Frost Library Gallery at Amherst College.

Exhibition Events:

Thursday, May 29, 4:30 – 6:00pm

Opening Reception and IDEA Cabaret: *Revealing the Mandala's True Colors: Healing by Opening into the Depths of Inclusiveness* featuring Dr. David Gardiner and Sarah Bender, Sensei

IDEA Space

Free and open to the public



Using the exhibition *Mandala of Enlightenment* as inspiration, Dr. Gardiner and Ms. Bender will discuss ways that contemporary Buddhism is changing America and Americans are changing Buddhism.

Sarah Bender: A Zen Buddhist, Sarah gives talks, leads classes and retreats, and works with individual Zen students at Springs Mountain Sangha in Colorado Springs. Sarah began her practice with the Honolulu Diamond Sangha in 1979 and has studied with Joan Sutherland, Roshi, and David Weinstein, Roshi, since 1997. From 2001 to 2006 she served as the meditation instructor for Springs Mountain Sangha, and in 2006 became the Sangha's first resident teacher. She was also the Cadet Chapel Buddhist Program Leader for the United States Air Force Academy for many years, and she leads occasional retreats for the Wet Mountain Sangha in Pueblo.



David Gardiner: Dr. David Gardiner has taught Buddhism and related subjects in the Religion Department of Colorado College since 1998. He began learning Buddhism in the late 1970's at Amherst College with Robert Thurman, and also with Tibetan lamas who lived with Dr. Thurman. This was followed by time in India and Nepal working under Tibetan teachers. He then went to the University of Virginia for his M.A. degree, where he studied Madhyamaka philosophy with Jeffrey Hopkins and Japanese Buddhism with Paul Groner. Dr. Gardiner completed his Ph.D. in 1995 at Stanford University in East Asian Religions. Alongside his work in teaching and research, he gives talks on Buddhism throughout Colorado, maintains a practice based on Tibetan traditions, and runs a non-profit educational Buddhist organization in Colorado Springs called BodhiMind Center.

Friday, May 30, 4:30 – 6pm

Lecture: *Dakini Wisdom: The Five Enlightened Consorts* by Dr. Judith Simmer-Brown

Film Screening Room

Free and open to the public



To complement the *Mandala of Enlightenment* exhibition, Dr. Simmer-Brown's talk will place American artist Joan Bredin-Price's feminist interpretation of Tibetan tradition in context. Judith Simmer-Brown, Ph.D., is Distinguished Professor of Contemplative and Religious Studies at Naropa University, and an Acharya, senior dharma teacher, in the Shambhala lineage of Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche since 2000. She is author of *Dakini's Warm Breath: The Feminine Principle in Tibetan Buddhism* and *Meditation in the Classroom*.

Thursday, June 12, 4:30 – 6pm

Lecture: *A Buddha's Vision, a Joyful Vision*, by Za Choeje Rinpoche Tenzin

Free and open to the public



Born in a Tibetan refugee camp in 1968, Rinpoche was recognized by the Dalai Lama as the 6th reincarnation of Hor Choeje Rinpoche of Eastern Tibet at the age of 16. Under the guidance of His Holiness and Yongzin Ling Rinpoche, He received extensive training in the traditional Tibetan Buddhist method of listening, contemplation, and meditation. In 2001, Rinpoche founded Emaho Foundation in Scottsdale, Arizona. Emaho's main mission is to assist with individuals' spiritual development, and to support humanitarian projects.

Friday, June 13, 1 – 5pm

Workshop: *Finding the Five Buddhas in our Body and Mind*
by Za Choeje Rinpoche

IDEA Space

\$25 per participant, pre-registration required

To register, contact Jessica Hunter-Larsen at 719-227-8263 or jhunterlarsen@coloradocollege.edu

Rinpoche's style of conversing, with laughter and openness, generates a comfortable environment for all people. One of most simple yet profound pieces of advice he often gives is "stop struggling against the struggles in life." His unique skill of teaching, and his ability to apply these teachings into daily lives, has helped many spiritual practitioners throughout the world.

The exhibition and events take place in the Edith Kinney Gaylord Cornerstone Arts Center on the Colorado College campus: 825 N. Cascade Avenue, Colorado Springs, CO 80903. For more information, visit www.theideaspace.com or contact IDEA staff at idea@coloradocollege.edu.

Summer Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 1 – 6pm