

Medicine Buddha Mandala

ONE



Colored sand is prepared by grinding rocks. When it is fine enough to be sieved through coarse cloth, powdered dyes are added to wet the sand. After it has dried, it is resieved several times and packed into labeled bags.

TWO



The precise lines and exact measurements of the mandalas are called "thig." These are drawn with particular care according to ancient texts.

THREE



Mandalas are constructed from the inside core out. Millions of grains of sand are trickled through metal tubes called "shakpur" until the mandala is complete.

FOUR



Often monks will wear surgical masks to make sure their breaths will not disturb the sands and also to show proper respect to the deities of the mandala.

FIVE



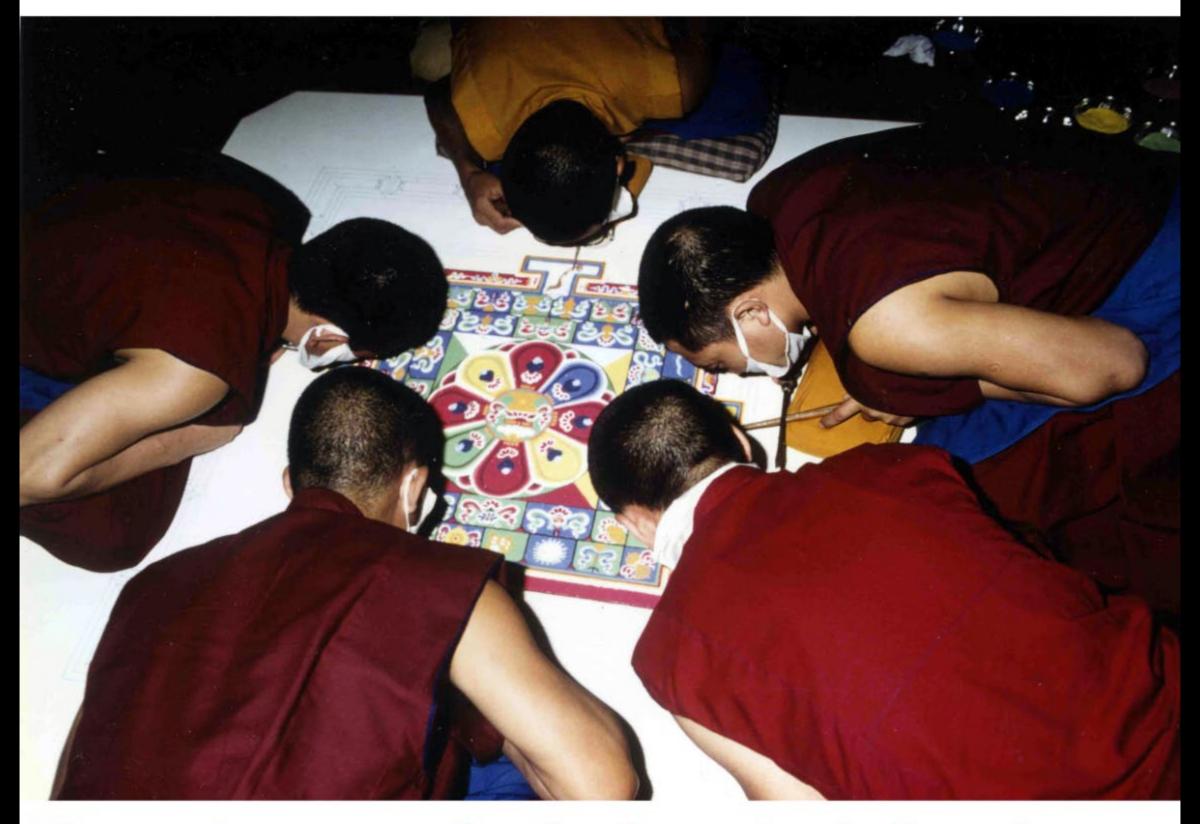
The monks are creating the 8 lotus petals and the 8 begging bowls which symbolize the 8 manifestations of the Medicine Buddha.

SIX



Monks continue to work on the Mandala of the Medicine Buddha. This deity is the manifestation of the healing energy of all enlightened beings.

SEVEN



The monks are creating the four gates to the palaces. Each gate has 4 levels representing the stages leading to enlightenment.

EIGHT



Detail of the center of the Medicine Buddha Mandala and the northern gate

NINE



Monks are creating the outer wall of the mandala palace

TEN



After the mandala is completed, the monks chant prayers of dedication.

ELEVEN



After the prayers are chanted, the monks destroy the mandala they have created. Hours of painstaking work are swept up in a practical experience of impermanence.

TWELVE



The sacred sands are dispersed into a body of flowing water as a blessing for the universe.



Close-up of the Amitayus Mandala. Amitayus Buddha is the Deity of Long Life.



Close-up of the Chenresig Mandala - the Mandala of Compassion