

Vello Vaartnou VanTao Art



Vello Vaartnou about his art

Most artists reflect outside problems like environment, political issues, love, relations etc., but human's inner world or as I call them, inner landscape, has been always closer to me. This is what I try to express in my art – our inner world

of thought. Many of my works are meditation themes which are hidden into

pictures and are accompanied with relevant symbolism.

I do not like when artists talk about their over or under-goings. This is not necessary.

A picture for me is the visual expression of the psychic states expressed by senses.

Reality is not a chair or still life or landscape, reality is a state of mind. Color is the cleanest thing that can transmit a subconscious state.

My paintings do not carry a concrete message. Rather it's a rummaging in self-consciousness and sub-consciousness. This kind of art is richer than realistic art.

It has endless amounts of possibilities to evolve. Realistic art is too simple for me."

Master VanTao (Vello Vaartnou)

Vello Vaartnou is highly educated Buddhist monk, who has been active in

Buddhism over 40 years. Vello Vaartnou has always stood up for his firm, Buddhism based principles and is usually described as the first, the only one, the leader, the founder etc.

Vello Vaartnou founded the practical Buddhist tradition and the first Buddhist Brotherhood in Estonia (former Soviet Union) when all religious activity was punishable there. He has personally built 8 stupas, including the first stupas of Europe; prayer wheels and temples; translated and published Buddhist literature, created Buddhist thangkas.

At the same time, Vello Vaartnou is an internationally recognized artist with exhibitions held in Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, Netherlands, Austria, Finland, Estonia, Ukraine, USA (New York), Columbia, Argentina etc.

Born in Estonia, Vaartnou graduated from Estonian Art University (Etching) and was an acknowledged artist in Estonia already in the 1980s. After developing a growing interest in Buddhist and Taoist philosophy, he studied Oriental art, focusing on the 12th century Japanese art and 16th century Chinese art.

He has special interest in Yogacara philosophy and in his own words, he looks at world and art via Yogacara.

Vello Vaartnou's abstract and Buddhist paintings are very exclusive and are highly valued by art collectors. His artworks have found their way to Stockholm Ethnographic Museum, the Thai Royal family, University of California

Berkeley, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in Thailand, University of Western Australia as well as private art collections in Europe.

Vaartnou's gift as an artist can be best appreciated in hundreds of his original thangkas, where his knowledge of Buddhism and art comes together perfectly.

Many people are producing thangkas by copying them but original thangkas, grown from an understanding of Buddhism, can only be created by teachers who have deep knowledge of their subject. Such thangkas are an informative source for specialists, who are able to acquire knowledge from there.

In 1988, Vaartnou made the pages of The New York Times after founding

the first opposition party- the Estonian National Independence Party- against the communist power during the Soviet rule. Consequently he was expelled from the Soviet Union and he became a Swedish citizen.

In the 90s studied in Bhutanese monastery and Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu and later spent 8 years in strict solitary retreat.

In 2011, Australia granted a Distinguished Talent visa to Vaartnou and he relocated to Perth, Western Australia.

Today Vello Vaartnou is an internationally recognized thangka master. Since the 80s, he has created hundreds of original thangkas and was the first person to start creating traditional Buddhist paintings with computer designs. He is highly skilled in 3D Graphics and Vector Graphics and has used this media to create innovative Buddhist art - thangkas, statues, stupas, 3D projects etc.

Vello Vaartnou is also the author of two international academic conferences (Europe, Australia), two Buddhist encyclopaedias.

His latest voluminous project, an online Chinese Buddhist Encyclopedia was launched at UC Berkeley in 2012 and is one of the biggest online sources on Buddhism.



The 6th Dalai Lama

Vaarnou 2003



Guru

Vaarnou 2001



The 6th Dalai Lama

Vaarnou 2003



Tsangyang Gyatso

Vaarnou 2019



Akshobhya

Vaartnou 2003



Guru

Vaartnou 2007



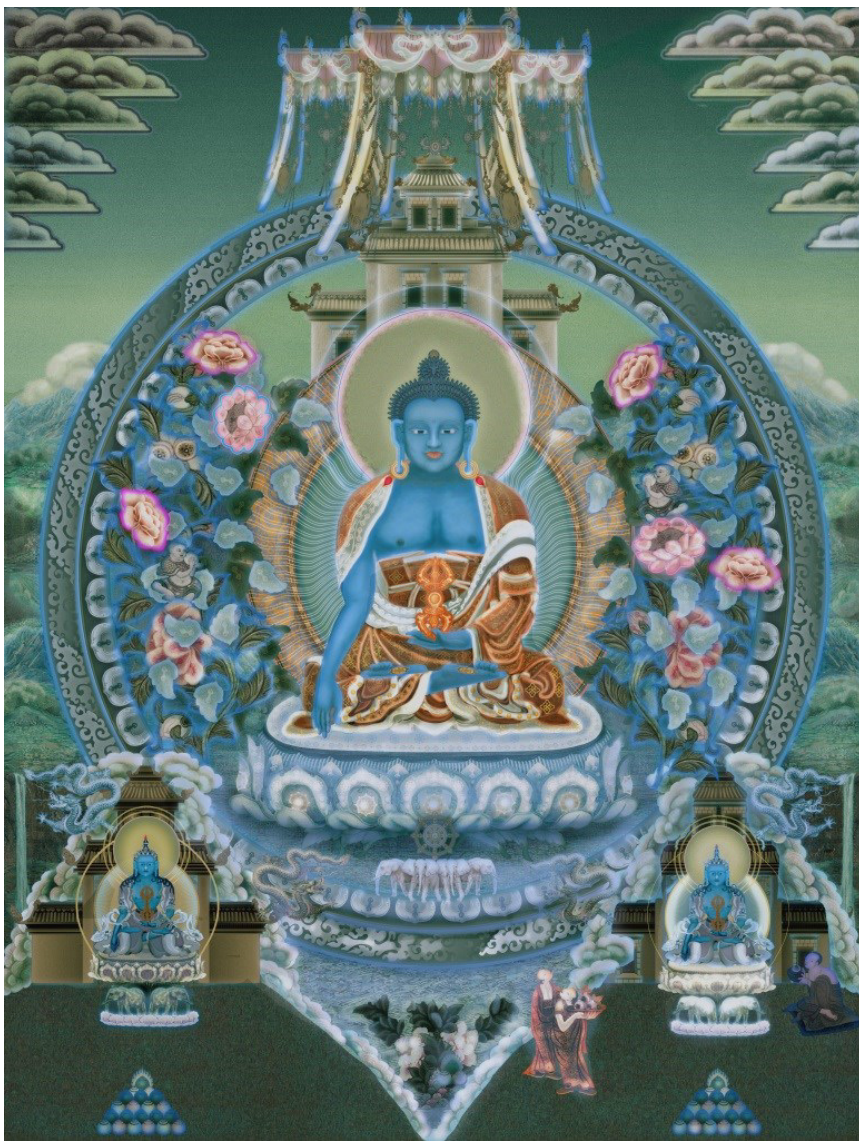
Manjusri

Vaarnou 2000



Amitabha Mandala

Vaarnou 2010



Akshobhya

Vaarnou 2010



White Tara mandala

Vaarnou 2019



Manjusri Potala

Vaarnou 2011



Amitabha mandala

Vaarnou 2011



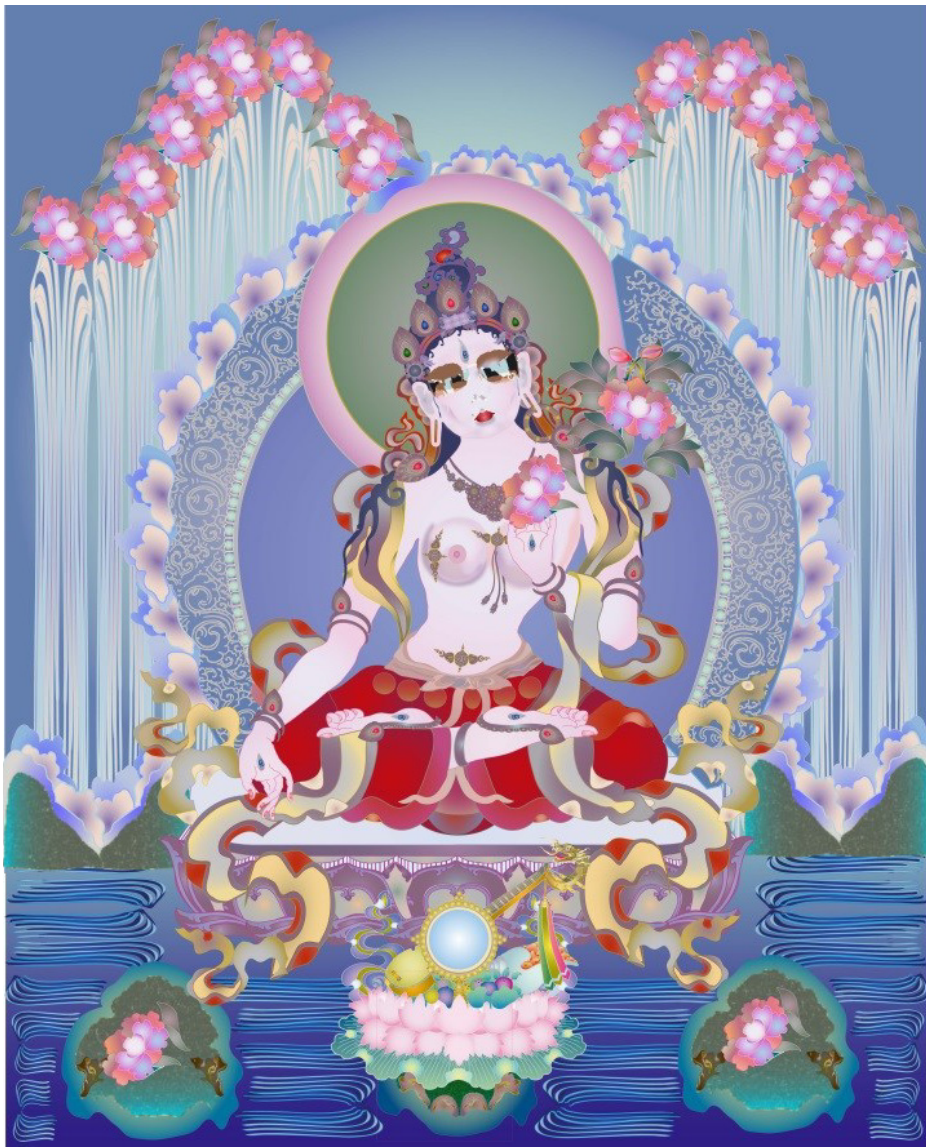
Guru with tiger

Vaartnou 2008



Padmasambhava mandala

Vaartnou 2015



White Tara with sunglasses

Vaartnou 2007



Manjusri with sword

Vaartnou 2017



Padmasambhava mandala

Vaartnou 2014



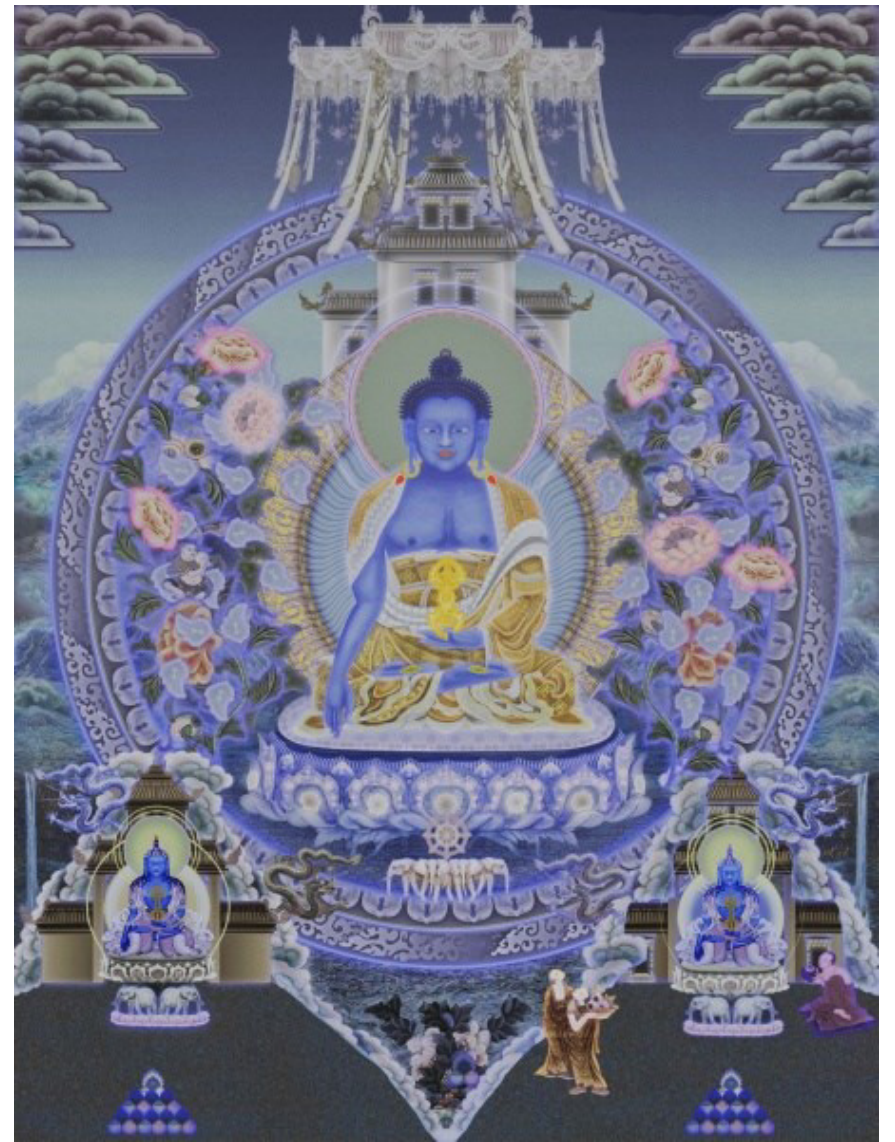
Manjusri Potala

Vaartnou 2005



Manjusri

Vaartnou 2008



Akshobhya

Vaartnou 2017



Manjusri light

Vaartnou 2017



Vaishravana

Vaartnou 2016



Manjusri throne

Vaartnou 2009



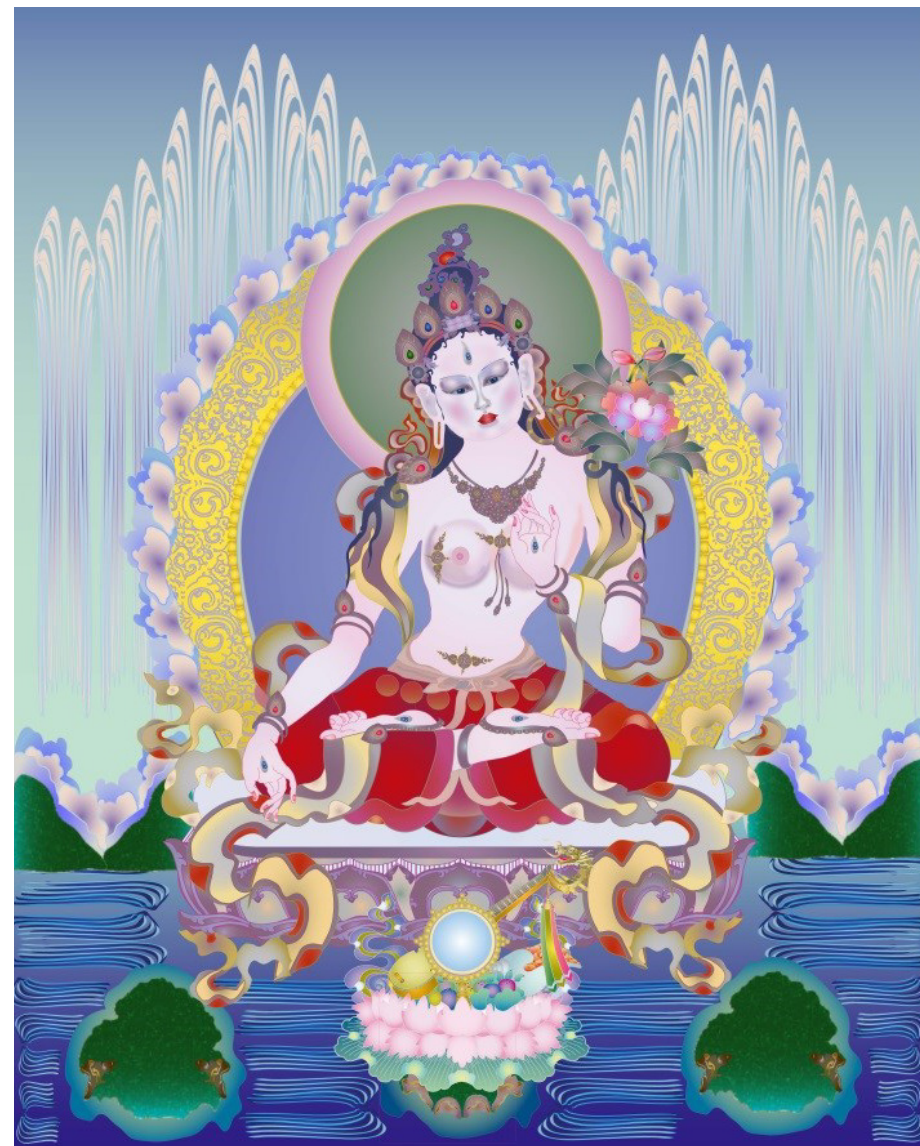
Manjusri Potala

Vaartnou 2011



Vaishravana mandala

Vaartnou 2005



White Tara

Vaartnou 2007



Guru Padmasambhava

Vaartnou 2017



Vaishravana mandala

Vaartnou 2009



Manjusri mandala

Vaartnou 2010



Padmasambhava

Vaartnou 2011



Vaishravana

Vaartnou 2015



White Tara with sunglasses

Vaartnou 2010



Manjusri

Vaartnou 2012



Guru mandala

Vaartnou 2018



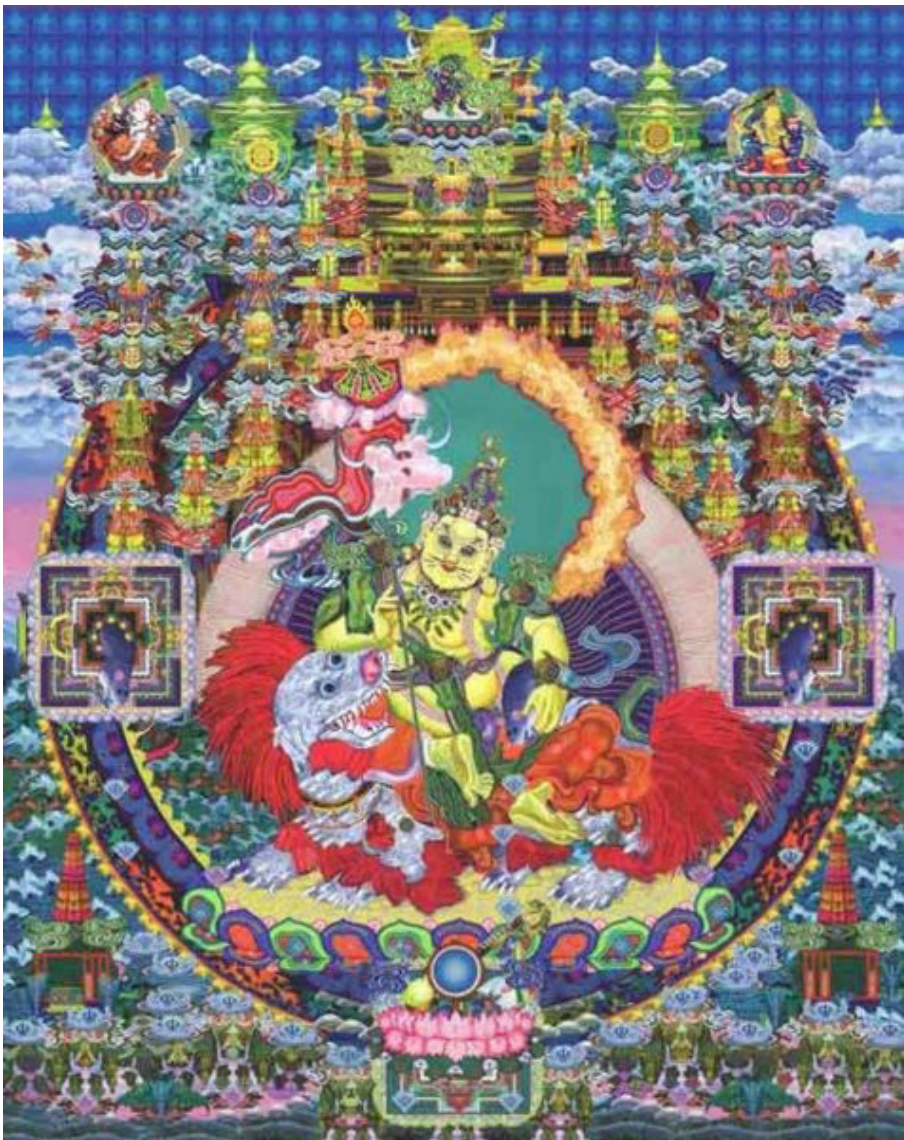
Manjusri Potala

Vaarnou



Guru Rinpoche mandala

Vaarnou 2017



Vaishravana

Vaartnou 2007



Tsangyang Gyatso

Vaartnou 2007



Padmasambhava

Vaartnou 2006



Padmasambhava

Vaartnou 2007



Vaisharvana

Vaartnou 2010



Guru

Vaartnou 2007



Amitabha mandala

Vaartnou 2007



Manjusri mandala

Vaartnou 2010



Vaishravana

Vaartnou 2018



Manjusri

Vaartnou 2017



Potala

Vaartnou 2016



Manjusri mandala

Vaartnou 2017



Guru

Vaartnou 2017



White Tara

Vaartnou 2018



Guru mandala

Vaartnou 2007



Vaishravana

Vaartnou 2008



White Tara

Vaartnou 2014



Guru

Vaartnou 2018



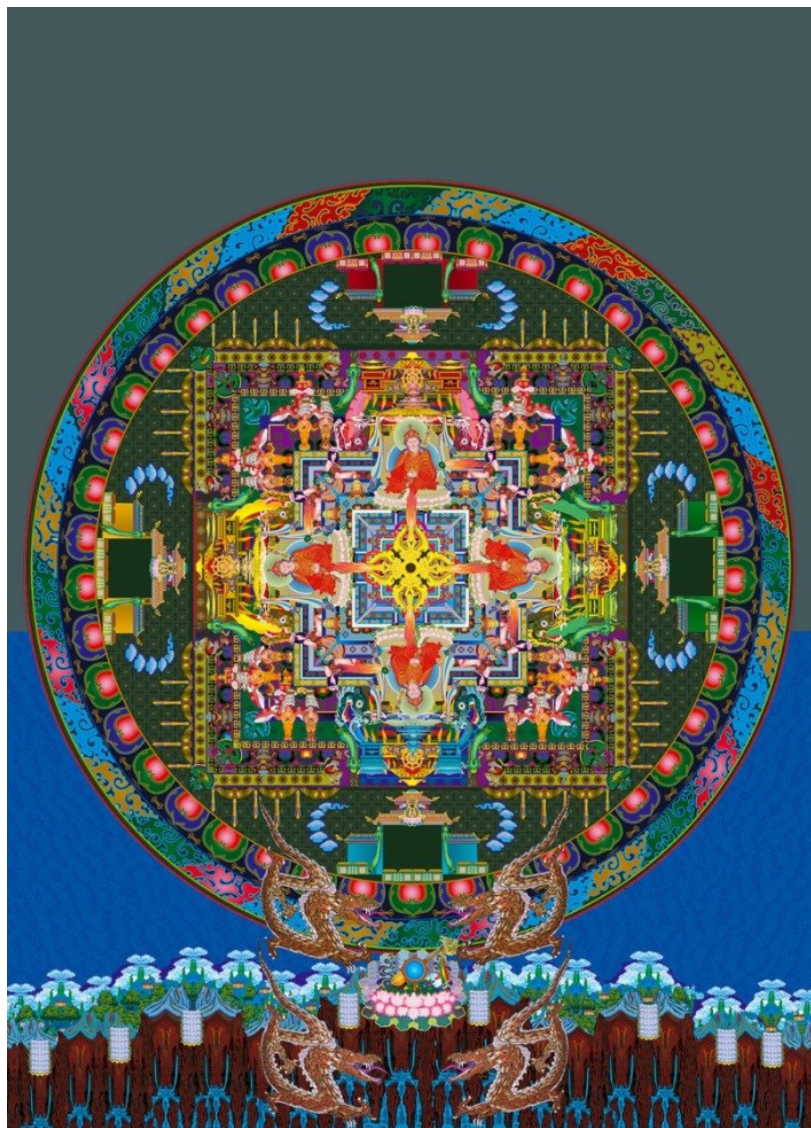
Vaishravana

Vaartnou 2017



White Tara

Vaartnou 2015



Mandala

Vaarnou 2018



Mandala

Vaarnou 2019



Guru Mandala

Vaarnou 2019



Guru Mandala

Vaarnou 2019



Guru Mandala

Vaarnou 2019



Guru

Vaarnou 2019



Abstract Art Exhibitions

- 1988 Mälärgalleriet, Stockholm
- 1988 München
- 1989 Zürich
- 1989 Finland, Vaasa museum
- 1989 Berlin
- 1989 Frankfurt Main
- 1990 Finland, Helsinki
- 1990 Tallinn, G-gallery
- 1990 Leningrad (St Petersburg)
- 1990 Mälärgalleriet Stockholm
- 1991 Sweden, Strängnäs
- 1992 Kiev, Ukraine
- 1992 G Gallery Estonia
- 1991 Tartu Art Museum, Estonia
- 1993 Mälärgalleriet, Stockholm
- 1994 Kathmandu Thangka Gallery
- 1995 Columbia
- 1995 Argentina
- 1995 Hongkong
- 1995 New York, East End Gallery
- 1997 Mälärgalleriet Stockholm
- 2008 National Library, Estonia
- 2009 Tallinn City Library, Estonia
- 2011 Perth Town Hall

Guru

Vaarnou 2019



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