



Art and Blessings To Welcome A Buddha

July 1, 2012

by Pat Rogers

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WATER MILL, NY.

The arrival of a new Buddha statue from Bali is something special. To mark the occasion, A Blessing Ceremony by a Buddhist Nun is being held today at 4 p.m. at The Furniture Garden in Water Mill. A photography series of the Buddha statues in the shop will be on view. All of the images were made by Daria Deshuk.

The Blessing Ceremony will be performed by Kelsang Gewang, a Kadampa Buddhist nun of the New Kadampa Tradition. The ritual includes offering water, rice and saffron to bless the Buddha and offer welcome to its new home, said Deanna Annis, owner of The Furniture Garden. It also encourages blessings of health, prosperity, abundance, love and peace.

"It's a celebration," said Annis. "It's a beautiful ceremony," said Annis.

In Bali, it's tradition to hold a Blessing Ceremony for Buddha statues, even if their new home is a temporary one, said Annis. It's a custom in Bali to offer blessings throughout the day to ordinary things such as banks, streets, schools or whatever crosses the person's path, she said. In Buddhism, the divine is a part of everything.

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"Inner Contrast Buddha" by Daria Deshuk.
C print on metallic paper, 36 x 24 inches.

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All of the Buddha statues in The Furniture Store are hand-selected by Annis during trips to Bali. All are hand-carved and most were made by Buddhist monks, she said. This is important as the spirit of the Buddha is breathed into each one so the spiritual is combined with the art of making it.

Selecting Buddha statues is not an easy task, she explained. She searches for beauty in material and execution that channel spirituality. The newest Buddha statue that is being blessed today took two years to find, she said. In reality, she explained, she does not pick the Buddha—it is the Buddha that picks you.

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“Gratitude Buddha” by Daria Deshuk. C
print on metallic paper, 36 x 24 inches.

Deshuk has been photographing the Buddha statues in The Furniture Garden for several years. Her art is figurative so it seemed a natural path to turn her attention to the statues.



“Inner Self Buddha” by Daria Deshuk. C-
print on metallic paper, 24 x 36 inches.

Her work also has an element of spirituality. In her artist statement, Deshuk writes:

My chosen imagery takes reality and the depths of the viewers understanding of these stolen moments to a level of universal and subjective intimacy. With paint and brush I strive to capture the essence and atmosphere of the ordinary and mindless vignettes of daily life represented as unique moments in space and time. Life and Art, experienced through creation connects me to love and a spiritual experience of being.



“Violet Light of Transmutation” by Daria
Deshuk. C print on metallic paper, 36 x 24
inches.



“Grounded Love” by Daria Deshuk, 2012. C
print on metallic paper, 40 x 60 inches.

Any trepidation about creating art from a single subject was allayed by Michael McKenzie, a friend who’s an artist and author of “Images We Love: Popular Art in America.” He pointed to Andy Warhol as an artist who was attracted to diverse subjects for his art but also made multiple images of a single subject—Marilyn Monroe.

"I guess Buddha is my Marilyn Monroe," quipped Deshuk.

The buddha photographs inspired Deshuk to make a series of paintings on mediation. Other recent series include "Heaven on Earth"; "Meeting Narcissus – Dasha Prints"; and "Kundalini Rising."

BASIC FACTS: Photographs by Daria Deshuk and hand-carved buddhas from Bali can be found at **The Furniture Garden**, 337 Montauk Highway, Water Mill, NY. www.thefurnituregardens.com

The Blessing Ceremony to welcome the new Buddha takes place today at 4 p.m. Buddhist Nun Kelsang Gewang leads the ceremony. Flowers are requested for those who wish to present an offering. It is Bali tradition for those approaching the Buddha to wear a sarong.

Daria Deshuk has exhibited across the United States. Her work has been exhibited at Guild Hall Museum in East Hampton, the New Jersey State Museum, Spanierman Gallery in East Hampton, Mark Borghi Fine Art (at Art Hamptons) in Bridgehampton and the Gerald Peters Gallery in New York City.

Deshuk was a member of P.S.122 Artist Space in the late seventies and worked and exhibited there for 10 years. Her studio is now in Bridgehampton, NY.

Deshuk's Buddha Series of photographs will be on view throughout the summer at The Furniture Garden. They will also be exhibited at Art Hamptons in July.

Daria Deshuk: <http://dariadeshuk.com>

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