

# THE NATURAL MANDALA TOUR

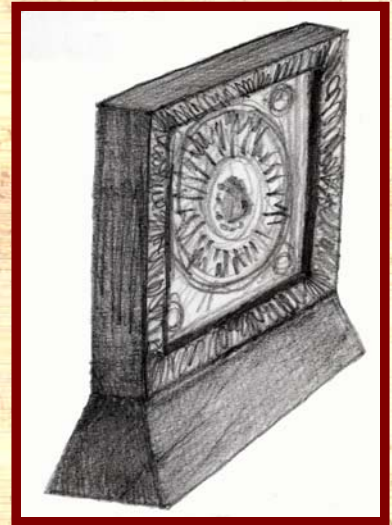
APRIL 2008 – The Harrison Public Library

This is the first public exhibition of The Natural Mandala and with it begins the tour that will eventually spiral out to many destinations along the horizon. It has been a long journey in getting here, but it finally has arrived. Long before the library doors were open, there was a lot of “buzz” about the exhibition amongst library goers and the Harrison, Ohio community. In fact, I was told that before it was in the library, many people had come to view it, despite limited advertising. There were a few snags along the way and modifications had to be made, but these all turned out to be for the best.

I completed The Natural Mandala in March 2008, having created it in a very small space within my apartment. The frame and the pedestal were constructed in the garage of my mother’s home. It wasn’t until this first exhibit at the Harrison Library that I was able to see the art within the frame and on its pedestal for the first time. Like many times before, I was so relieved that the sketch of my envisioned design looked actually how it appeared in the exhibition. It is always a very rewarding feeling when my vision, creativity and craftsmanship are in sync with one another. But to become good at this just means you have to have practice.



In a long line of firsts, this was the first time that I was able to see The Natural Mandala from any real distance. In my studio, a six-foot square work of art is really large. Working on it directly, even sitting back a few feet to contemplate it, means that I feel the fullness of the mandala. It was rather startling to see and feel my work in this very large space. Where most people found it to be very large, for me it became really dwarfed by the large contemporary room. In keeping with the spirit of “nature,” the room was very bright, open and intensely blue. In it, I felt the very expanse of the sky and sea. It was quite an



appropriate combination and this made the exhibit all the more “natural,” given the fact that April hosts the commemorative Earth Day on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and the International Plant Appreciation Day on the 13<sup>th</sup>. So, this made for

a very distinctive venue, both in time, place and space. It created an exceptional commencement for the tour, and might not have happened if it weren’t for the exuberance of head librarian, Maria Bach, to whom I will always be grateful. Some have questioned me as to why I chose the Harrison Public Library as my first exhibiting venue, and the answer is simple; I felt it would be the best possible way that I could offer thanks and show gratitude to the community in which I grew up and to be surrounded by family, friends and colleagues to help launch this voyage. What better premiere venue could there be to facilitate and commemorate the truest intent of The Natural Mandala?

The exhibit didn’t have “an opening” as might be expected, but on April 19<sup>th</sup> I attended the advertised “Meet the Artist” event. Now, this has already become a tradition with my tour, as it allows many people to view it and take it in several times before being given an opportunity to talk about it or ask questions. This day was filled with friends, family, people I hadn’t seen in a long time and many whom I did not know that came to meet me and express their appreciation for this work that I had created. To me, everyone there was special, but one of them capped off the day, as she is Cincinnati Enquirer’s premiere art critic, Sara Pearce, who wrote a very complimentary article and a posting for her blog. She shared with her readers that “...the mandala is a fascinating and intricate piece...” I was, and still am, very gratified to have my work affirmed by her learned scrutiny, as well you can imagine. All in all, it was a good start. I learned a lot from this first exhibit and began to look forward to the next stop along its path – which actually happened nearly by accident, through sheer synchronicity and became a very memorable place to exhibit The Natural Mandala.