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Sand art that's here until the next high tide



Andres Amador demonstrated his techniques Friday morning.

For sand artist Andres Amador, time is of the essence, and the beach is his canvas.

Amador has traveled to Boston from San Francisco this weekend to do elaborate artwork with nothing but a rake on beaches in the area.

He demonstrated his techniques Friday morning on the shores of Carson Beach, while the tide was out and the sand was damp, for youth environmental program staff from Save the Harbor/Save the Bay.

Amador first started making designs on the beaches of San Francisco 11 years ago. He became interested in the unusual art form while studying geometry and drafting similar shapes and patterns on pieces of paper.

Realizing there were constraints when dealing with smaller canvases, Amador decided to bring his creations to the outdoors.

"The beach is perfect for this because it's already set for me. I just have to

come with my rakes, and I don't have to clean anything up," Amador said. "There's something very freeing about it. There is something that, knowing that it won't last, allows me to let go and stop worrying about whether it turns out perfectly."

The tide typically washes his designs away within hours.

Amador's preferred stylus is a homemade concoction that includes a rake handle and a small gardening cultivator that he straps to the end of the handle with plastic fasteners.

The three-pronged cultivator churns up the wet sand and allows Amador to etch his dark circles and leafy designs.

"It's so great to be outside, at the beach, and in the fresh air with my bare feet in the sand," he said. "There is such a physical relationship occurring. I'm using my whole body, and I am feeling what's happening. It's just so satisfying on so many levels."

During his demonstration with Save

the Harbor/Save the Bay on Friday, members of the youth group swirled and pivoted along a small portion of Carson Beach, dragging the homemade rakes supplied by Amador.

Carlos Garcia, 17, spent his time creating the logo for the Spanish television channel Telemundo. From there, he spiraled out with twisting lines and patterns.

"You have to really concentrate on what's in your head and just do it," he said.

On Saturday, Amador will rely on the public's help to create an intricate sand design in East Boston, on Constitution Beach. Amador will hand out the blueprints of a flowery pattern to people who want to participate.

The free event is sponsored by Save the Harbor/Save the Bay and the state Department of Conservation and Recreation.

"We were looking for great ideas, and new ideas, to get people excited about the beach," Save the Harbor/Save the Bay spokesman Bruce Berman said. "[Amador] is amazing, and I am just in awe."

Amador is going to do his own solo design in the sand Sunday, on the beaches of Spectacle Island. Amador said he didn't know yet what he would rake into the sand but was sure it would stretch far across the shoreline.

"There's so much to explore with this technique," he said. "I could probably spend the rest of my life coming up with new things to play with."

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