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Artist Andres Amador Returns to Constitution Beach

By John Lynds



San Francisco-based artist Andres Amador returned to Constitution Beach Friday to turn the wet sand at low-tide into a temporary piece of visual art with the help of the community residents.

For the past five years, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay has brought Amador out for a weekend to take part in the non-profits Better Beaches Program that provides free events and programs on public beaches from Nahant to Nantasket.

On Friday afternoon Amador encouraged participants, who were mainly Save the Harbor/Save the Bay staffers, East Boston YMCA summer campers and some curious beach-goers, to join in the fun of creating his unique beach art. Residents of all ages had a blast for several hours at Eastie's only beach helping Amador

“Working with sand rakes and teams of volunteers, Amador created mandalas in the sand between the high and low tide lines that last for just a few hours on Constitution Beach,” said Save the Harbor/Save the Bay’s Bruce Berman. “He had the help of Save the Harbor/Save the Bay’s Youth Environmental Education program staff and 200 kids from the East Boston YMCA.”

Amador’s artwork, which can span over 10,000 feet, is achieved only during low tide. Armed with dozens of

printed out sketches, Amador hands participants a rake, a sketch and has them get to work alongside him to create a magnificent work of art that only last a few hours.

After providing sand rakes to all participants and explaining some basic techniques, residents of all ages got to work in helping Amador create this large scale natural art on the sand.

Amador has called his art Playa Paintings and began doing these works around the country since 2004.

“The idea came to me while studying geometry, ancient architecture and crop circles,” he said. “Our ancestors created their magnificent works with very simple tools, but armed with great geometric insights. From there the art has evolved into many different styles over the years as the medium guides the exploration.”

Amador generally gives himself about two hours to work. However, as more people join in and help him he can do larger or more ambitious works. But everything must happen during the low-tide, and ideally during the window in which the tide is at its lowest.

Amador said he does this type of art because it gets him out to the beach and in the fresh air to experience the elements of sun or wind or rain.

“I do it because it brings me peace and focus,” he said. “Ultimately, I do it because of the joy of the challenge. The art form feels to me to be an exploration of the various ways to make large-scale creations. Over the years I have found a number of methods, and new ones continue to present themselves as I explore deeper. This year I purchased a copter with camera attached so that I can make the art and take photos at the landscape level in locations never before available to me. That has opened up whole new avenues of exploration. So I suppose I do it because the art form continues to delight me with possibilities. And truly, it’s always a good day at the beach.”

Amador has been featured by the BBC, CNN, Discovery Channel, and numerous TV programs and periodicals globally.