

SHIMMERING ZEN

James Stanford presents
Shimmering Zen at
99 Kensington Church St, London W8 7LN
2nd -11th November 2017



American artist James Stanford presents *Shimmering Zen*, an extraordinary new exhibition of Contemporary Buddhist art, featuring modern *mandalas* that premieres as part of Asian Art in London 2017 week, opening at 99 Kensington Church Street on Thursday 2 November through Saturday 11 November.

Using historic Las Vegas neon signage and architectural elements from the 1950s and 1960s, shot in the Mojave Desert, Stanford artfully creates digital montages, mesmerizing designs using unique newly developed purpose specific technology. Stanford's group of intriguing digital reconfigurations convey and respond to the potency of the *mandala* as a symbol, and its influence and importance to Asian culture worldwide.

As a leading maker of contemporary *mandalas*, Stanford's work is an interpretation of the ancient traditions of Buddhism, drawing from historic metaphor, Chinese fable, and the aesthetics of the Tibetan *Mandala*. Born and raised in Nevada, Stanford grew up in a household of educators. As a young man, after a transformative and spiritual moment at the Prado Museum in Madrid opened his mind to a higher consciousness, this new spirituality became firmly entwined with his creativity. With the advent of Apple software, the tools of technology merged with his ambitious thirst for spiritual growth and education. This led to Stanford's personal commitment to Zen Buddhism and cemented his unique creative identity.

Stanford says of his work, "*Las Vegas neon signage, which I see as the former jewels of the desert night, have come together with the use modern technology, enabling me to weave it all together using the artifice of perfect symmetry into a spiritual object of meditation.*"

In Stanford's conceptually complex and visually sumptuous work, the *mandala* offers contemplation for both spiritual and material realities. Using a mix of traditional photographic and digital techniques, Stanford's works are made unique and compelling by vividly illuminated moving networks and layers.

Discussing his process, James Stanford says "*When I take a picture of a derelict sign I already begin to see and find the patterns and shapes that will form the final piece. Once I get the image in the studio I begin to layer the patterns created, making sure to save the patterns I particularly like; I never lose a layer of work, I simply continue to build and modify those patterns that appeal to me.*"

This visually stunning and intricately constructed modern *mandala* series, entitled *Indra's Jewels*, will be exhibited during at Asian Art in London 2017. James Stanford is a featured participant during the Dealer Open Evening event to be held at the gallery on Saturday 4 November.

The exhibition will be complemented by the official launch of Stanford's upcoming book of the same name, *Shimmering Zen*, at The London Library on Friday 3 November. The book is a compilation of 150 of Stanford's works created over the last 15 years and published in a large format hardback. *Shimmering Zen* offers an insight into Stanford's creative process and inspiration allied with original images of the signs, and accompanied by nostalgic tales of his Las Vegas life, including being on the set of *Viva Las Vegas* with Elvis Presley and Anne-Margaret.

The book *Shimmering Zen* (RRP £75) will be published by lanthe Press Limited: London and launched with the exhibition. It will include essays by the artist and the curator, and a foreword by Jeff Rosen, Vice President, The Higher Learning Commission, Evanston, Illinois. Rosen's book Julia Margaret Cameron's '*Fancy Subjects*': *Photographic allegories of Victorian identity and empire* was published recently by Manchester University Press.

James Stanford studied painting at the University of Washington (UW) (MFA) and the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) (BFA) and also practices photography, digital illustration and drawing. Dedicated to creativity and the fine arts, he has taught at UNLV and UW, established the Smallworks Gallery, and curated exhibitions at various venues, including the Las Vegas Contemporary Arts Centre. He currently lives and works in Las Vegas.

The exhibition and selling show is curated by Elizabeth Herridge, art historian, author and former Managing Director of the Guggenheim Hermitage Museum, Las Vegas as well as publisher, lanthe Press Limited: London.

Asian Art in London 2017 brings together over sixty of the world's top dealers, major auction houses and museums for an annual ten day celebration of the finest in Asian art. Visitors will converge in London for the 20th anniversary edition offering gallery selling exhibitions, auctions, receptions, lectures and seminars.

The *Shimmering Zen* Exhibition runs from Thursday 2 November through Saturday 11 November 2017 at 99 Kensington Church St, London W8 7LN.

Opening times are as follows:

Monday - Friday 09.30am - 6.30pm
Saturday, 4 November 10am - 9pm
Sunday, 5 November 10am - 6pm
Saturday, 11 November 10am - 6pm

The book *Shimmering Zen* (RRP £75) will be launched on Friday 3 November 2017 at The London Library, 14 St James's Square, London SW1Y 4LG 6.30-8.30pm. The event is free but places are limited and booking is recommended. To attend please email rsvp@damsonpr.com.

shimmeringzen.com

For further information or to RSVP please contact:

Amelia Hubert or Anna Beketov, Damson PR on 0207 812 0645 or shimmeringzen@damsonpr.com