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2.5 stars for
Via Vita in
Bellevue



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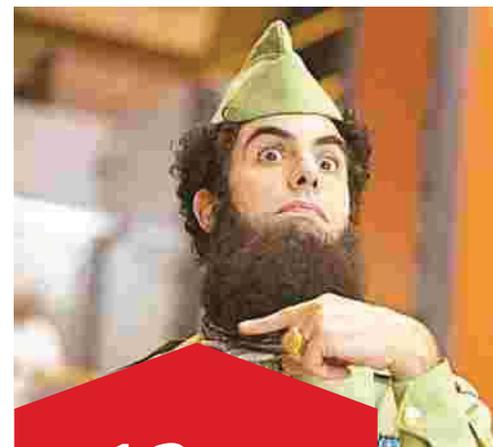
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'Making Mends' at
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'The Dictator'
uses its power
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VISUAL ARTS

Artwork tells stories of loss and healing

BY GAYLE CLEMANS
Special to *The Seattle Times*

If you've ever lost a loved one, sat with someone who is sick or felt deep empathy for the distress of unknown others across the world, you know the feeling of powerlessness that can arise from the inadequacy of words and the inability to alter events.

The internationally and nationally known artists in "Making Mends," a heartbreaking and soul-soothing exhibition at the Bellevue Arts Museum, have taken action, forging bold and tender works that offer respite and succor.

Art has functioned as a tool for healing in many cultures, from Navajo sand painting to Christian icons used in prayer. But in the contemporary-art world, with its aesthetic, conceptual and social-critical frameworks, it is a rare thing to find a large-scale, first-rate exhibition that focuses on the possibilities of healing through art. Organized by BAM curator Nora Atkinson, "Making Mends" is not an easy show. It exposes pain even as it suggests, powerfully and quietly, that art can be restorative.

Catherine Grisez's pieces are both gorgeous and grotesque. Exquisite jewelerylike chains, gems and beads spill forth from flesh-colored wound forms; they are on display as small, riveting, stand-alone scul-

EXHIBITION REVIEW

'Making Mends'

11 a.m.-5 p.m.
Tuesdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Free First Fridays, through May 27, Bellevue Arts Museum, 510 Bellevue Way N.E., Bellevue; \$7-\$25 (425-519-0770 or www.bellevuearts.org).

tures and can be seen in the accompanying video, disfiguring a face, dripping suicidally from wrists and encrusting the bottom of a foot. The jarring force of these images is assuaged by the delicate loveliness of the materials. Grisez suggests that even beauty can emerge from pain.

Atkinson was smart to greet visitors to this intense show with a visually delightful work. Paul Villinski's installation of birds made from shiny black LPs draws us in as the birds — symbols of hope or links to the divine in many cultures — seem to flutter across the wall. The title, "Diaspora," adds weightiness to the whimsy, as we're asked to think about forced migration and the scattering of people.

Dietrich Wegner's "Playhouse" is one of those works of art that you can just get right away. A rope ladder extends from the bulbous top of a big, bulky mushroom cloud; the symbolism is obvious and that's

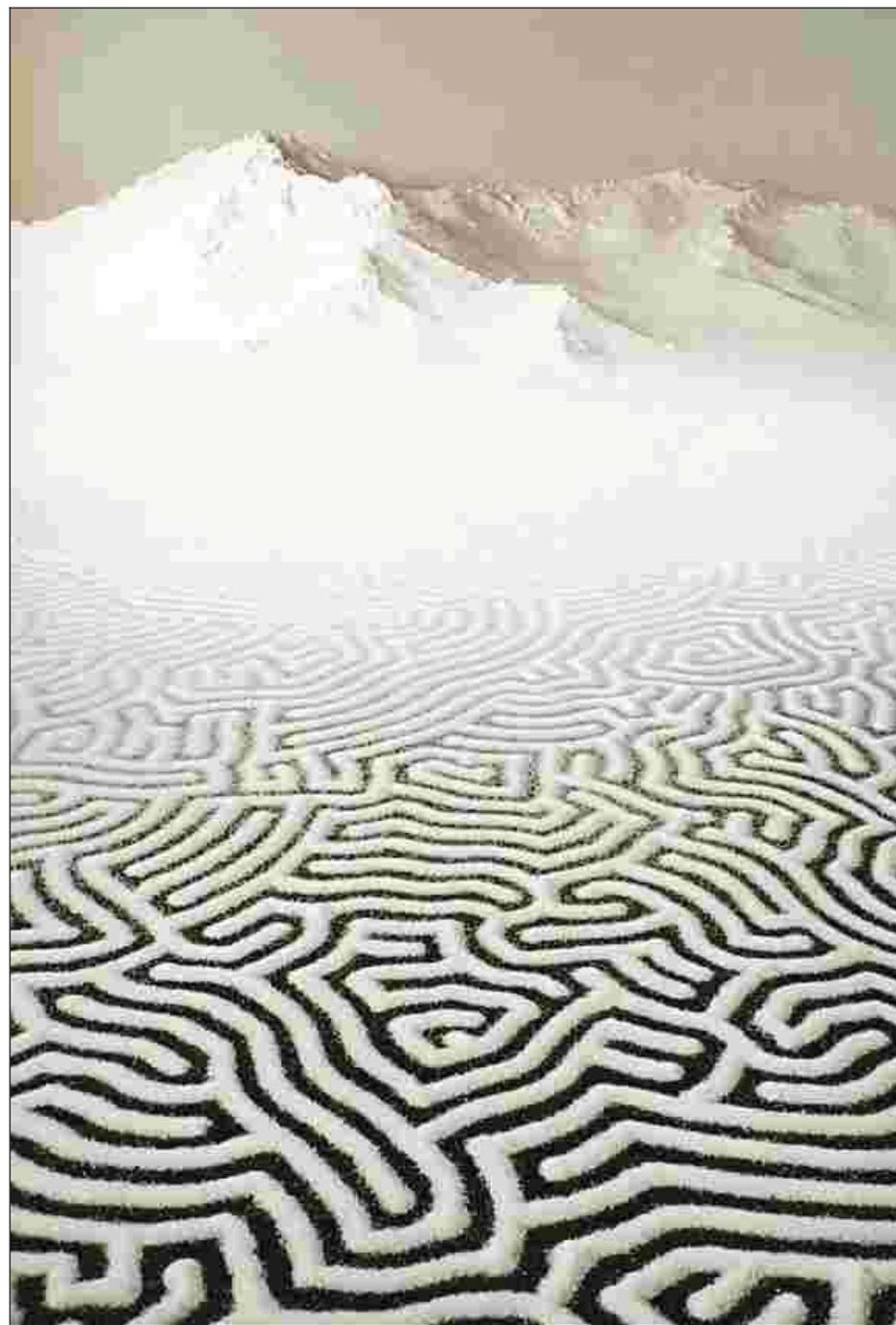
not a bad thing. But the work is also ambiguous: Does the ladder offer an escape from destruction or the hopeful, but literally unreachable, possibility that there is safety to be found within?

"Labyrinth" by Motoi Yamamoto is the other big installation in the show and it hits hard. Driven by a need to find meaning after his 24-year-old sister died from cancer, Yamamoto creates ritualistic site-specific installations.

On the floor of the gallery, Yamamoto forged white crystalline pathways out of salt, a material with funerary, purifying associations in Japan. At the far end of the installation, inaccessible mountains of salt seem to erode into the maze of rivulets. This ghostly topography conjures up ideas about searching and longing, destruction and creation, presence and loss.

The traces of repeated physical gestures are found throughout the exhibition, a potent extension of the Bellevue Arts Museum's focus on handcrafted techniques and art forms. The show feels personal and universal, vulnerable and valiant.

In the presence of suffering, action is often needed but elusive. These artists generously remind us that creative acts can bridge the abyss of damage and loss.



COURTESY MOTOI YAMAMOTO

Motoi Yamamoto created "Labyrinth" from salt, associated with funerals and purification in Japan, on the floor of the Bellevue Arts Museum. It is part of the exhibit "Making Mends."

VISUAL ARTS LISTINGS

Dates and times are subject to change. Call ahead to confirm.

Events

International Museum Day
TODAY Participating museums offer free admission. 10 a.m. today. Henry Art Gallery, 4100 15th Ave. N.E., Seattle, free (206-543-2280 or www.henryart.org). 10 a.m. today. Seattle Art Museum, 1300 First Ave., Seattle, free (206-654-3100 or www.seattleartmuseum.org). 10 a.m. today. Seattle Asian Art

Museum, 1400 E. Prospect St., Seattle, free (206-654-3100 or www.seattleartmuseum.org).

Ikebana International Seattle Chapter 19 Annual Exhibition
SAT-SUN More than 10 schools of Ikebana will display styles of arrangements. Demonstrations also will feature several schools of Ikebana. Tea and light refreshments will be served. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday. Seattle Asian Art Museum, 1400 E. Prospect St., Seattle, free (206-654-3100 or seattleartmuseum.org).

Screening: "Trimpin: The Sound of Invention"
THU Documentary follows Trimpin

as he designs a 60-foot tower of more than 500 electric guitars; builds an ensemble of marimbas that convert real-time earthquake data into music; and collaborates with the Kronos Quartet on an array of toy instruments. 7:30 p.m. Thursday. Henry Art Gallery, 4100 15th Ave. N.E., Seattle, \$5 (206-543-2280 or www.henryart.org).

Museums

Bellevue Arts Museum
ENDS 6/17 Knitted, Knotted, Twisted & Twined: The Jewelry of Mary Lee Hu.

ENDS 6/17 Push Play: The 2012 NCECA Invitational. 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Tuesday-Sunday, free admission every first Friday of the month (11 a.m.-8 p.m.), 510 Bellevue Way N.E., Bellevue (425-519-0770 or www.bellevuearts.org).

Frye Art Museum

ENDS 7/14 The Frye Art Museum is closed for renovations and will re-open July 14. (206-622-9250 or www.fryemuseum.org).

Henry Art Gallery

ENDS 9/16 "Glossodelic Attractors." Installations by Gary Hill.

ENDS 6/30 "Morning Serial: Webcomics Come to the Table."

ENDS 8/5 The Brink: Andrew Dawson. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m.-

9 p.m. Thursday and Friday, 4100 15th Ave. N.E., Seattle (206-543-2280 or www.henryart.org).

Museum of Glass

ENDS 6/17 "Beauty Beyond Nature: The Glass Art of Paul Stankard."
ENDS 1/31 "Classic Heat." A collection of large-scale glass hood ornaments by John Miller.

ENDS 6/10 "Gathering: John Miller and Friends."
ENDS 10/21 "Origins: Early Works by Dale Chihuly."

ENDS 1/31 "Scapes." A collaborative exhibit of glass works by Laura de Santillana and Alessandro Diaz de Santillana. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday,

noon-5 p.m. Sunday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. every third Thursday of the month, with free admission 5-8 p.m., 1801 E. Dock St., Tacoma (866-468-7386 or www.museumofglass.org).

Museum of Northwest Art

ENDS 6/10 "Everett DuPen: and His Legacy"

ENDS 6/10 "Tulipieres: The Tulip Vase Revisited."

ENDS 6/10 "Veruska Vagen: Somewhere in Time." 10 a.m.-5 p.m. daily, 121 S. First St., La Conner, Skagit County (360-466-4446 or www.museumofnwart.org).

Olympic Sculpture Park

ONGOING: Permanent outdoor art-

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