



East Bay Meditation Center

NOVEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

In This Issue

- State of the Center Winter Report
 - Congratulations to Spirit Rock Teacher Training Graduates
 - Artists of EBMC
 - Save the Date: Tune-Yards benefit for EBMC
 - Briefly Noted: Meditation Practitioner and Artist Ramekon O'Arwisters on Community Art
 - Neuroscience of Meditation: Dr. Helen Weng Wins Award
 - Love Is a Concrete Form of Access
-



EBMC Fundraising, Finances, Innovative Programs & More!



Our three times a year **EBMC State of the Center Report** gives you the most up-to-date information about East Bay Meditation Center's vital operations. In this year of the COVID-19 pandemic, Black Lives Matter protests and political unrest, the Report gives you a dynamic portrait of how EBMC rose to meet the challenges.

To read what's new and exciting, click [HERE](#).

Congratulations to Spirit Rock Teacher Training Graduates!

Seven EBMC teachers were among the twenty who graduated from the four-year Spirit Rock Buddhist Teacher Training program in a joyful ceremony on September 11, 2020. Music, Buddhist chanting, offerings of water and candle light, and congratulatory speeches marked the full authorization of the most diverse group of American vipassana Buddhist teachers in history. From our East Bay Meditation Center community, the radiant fully authorized teachers are Amana Brembry Johnson, Noliwe Alexander, Carol Cano, JD Doyle, Konda Mason, Louije Kim, and Victoria Cary.



Photo by Mike Labrum on Unsplash

For reflections on this memorable occasion, see the *Lion's Roar* article, "**Historic Class of Diverse Dharma Teachers Graduates**" by Andrea Miller.

Artists of EBMC!

Featuring Cheryl Derricotte & Unique Holland

"To be a better artist I need to first be a better human. I find that I am a better human when I have a daily meditation practice." -- Cheryl Derricotte



"My current work prioritizes the needs of Black women, particularly the need for rest, joy, and community. Centering love and care for Black women is a form of political movement-building." -- Unique Holland

Our "People of EBMC" newsletter column features two amazing artists who are members of the EBMC Sangha. To read the full interview, click [HERE](#).

[RETURN TO TOP](#)



Save the Date! Tune-Yards Benefit for EBMC!



Though we can't reveal much yet, please mark your calendars for **December 12, 2020** for an exclusive virtual event with the popular indie band Tune-Yards! Merrill Garbus, one half of the musical duo, is a longtime Sangha member who not long ago talked with the [New York Times](#) about the vital role that EBMC's White and Awakening in Sangha program has played in her commitment to social justice and challenging white supremacy. Stay tuned for more details, including special guests who will be joining this very special event to benefit EBMC!

 [Become a Friend of EBMC >](#)

Briefly Noted: Meditation Practitioner and Artist

Ramekon O'Arwisters on Community Art

"Participants arrive at Crochet Jam events believing that I am going to teach them how to make a rag rug, scarf, or a potholder. I take them on a completely different journey -- a journey designed to challenge how they think about themselves and the role and purpose of art as a means toward liberation, freedom, and creativity. I take them on a journey through my childhood, in which, I do for them what my grandmother, mother, and father did for me decades ago. I allow them to have an experience to safely make mistakes, observe, engage, explore in a way that is new for many people." -- from "[Crochet Jam: Radical Social Justice through Folk Art Traditions](#)" by Ramekon O'Arwisters, Oct 14, 2020

[Ramekon O'Arwisters](#) is an African American artist, best known for his fabric and ceramic sculpture and his community-art practice, Crochet Jam. He creates art using the folk-art tradition of rag-rug weaving. Ramekon's work has been exhibited in New York, North Carolina, Florida, California, New Mexico, Canada, and Japan. He taught a one-day community art workshop in the early years of EBMC, at our old location on Broadway at 22nd Street in downtown Oakland.

Neuroscience of Meditation: Dr. Helen Weng Wins Award



EBMC Sangha member, neuroscientist Dr. Helen Weng, has been awarded the 2020 Service Award from the Mind and Life Institute in recognition of her service work on grant and conference committees, and the Committee for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Dr. Weng has partnered with EBMC over the past five years to develop community-engaged research procedures to study the neuroscience of meditation. Dr. Weng thanked EBMC during her acceptance speech for the privilege of working together and for

providing a model for cultivating a multicultural contemplative community. For more information, click [**here**](#).

RETURN TO TOP



Upgrade your monthly giving > 

Love Is a Concrete Form of Access

by Candi Martinez Carthen,
EBMC Event and Program Director



In March 2020, East Bay Meditation Center quickly pivoted to offer all of our programming online, in response to pandemic-related closures. While online programming brought greater access to many, there was still work to be done to increase access to our offerings.

Since March 2020, we have been able to offer ASL interpretation for both core curriculum and social justice programming for 17 individual EBMC classes and our annual Spring Fundraiser. With the support of grant funding, we will continue to provide ASL interpretation for 1 to 3 classes each month, as well as Closed Captioning for all EBMC programs. We're also excited to report that we have a substantial list of ASL interpreters, including many who are Black, Indigenous and People of Color, to call upon.

See what's happening on our social sites:



EBMC's Mission Statement

Founded to provide a welcoming environment for people of color, members of the LGBTQI community, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented communities, the East Bay Meditation Center welcomes everyone seeking to end suffering and cultivate happiness. Our mission is to foster liberation, personal and interpersonal healing, social action, and inclusive community building. We offer mindfulness practices and teachings on wisdom and compassion from Buddhist and other spiritual traditions. Rooted in our commitment to diversity, we operate with transparent democratic governance, generosity-based economics, and environmental sustainability.

