

The Awareness Project Presents The Mindfulness Arts Festival

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June Bowser-Barrett (left) and Karen Santos are among the actors who will perform three short plays specifically written for the Mindfulness Arts Festival to be held May 7 at the Cultural Center of Cape Cod.

The Awareness Project will present its annual Mindfulness Arts Festival at the Cultural Center of Cape Cod in Yarmouth on Saturday, May 7, from 10 AM to 3 PM. This all-day festival will feature artists exploring the theme of mindfulness including three short plays commissioned specifically for the event, two short films, and a presentation by artist, author and healer Suzanne Faith. Attendees can experience meditation sits and mindful movement sessions. Several local holistic healing and wellness vendors will be participating. There will also be coffee and snacks.

The Mindfulness Arts Festival is a pay-what-you-can event, with a suggested donation of \$10. No preregistration is necessary; attendees can drop in at any time.

Ms. Faith's talk will center on "The Magic of Flowers." She will explain how flowers can enhance cognitive function and improve mood. "Nature provides us with everything we need to create balance and harmony in our lives," notes Ms. Faith.

"Our goal is to promote the benefits of mindfulness through art," said Pete Cormier, founder and executive director of The Awareness Project.

After moving to Sandwich four years ago and joining the Sandwich Arts Alliance, Mr. Cormier said he became acquainted with many artists and playwrights, several of whom he asked to be involved with this year's festival.

One of the plays, "Knock, Knock," was written by Sandwich Arts Alliance member Karen McGarr, a local author and playwright from Mashpee. Mr. Cormier commissioned the piece specifically for the festival.

The second play, "Conversations at Walden," was also written specifically for the festival. "It's an 18-minute play set at Walden Pond in Concord and based on the words of Henry David Thoreau," said Mr. Cormier, adding that Thoreau was an "early mindfulness advocate."

The final play is by playwright Megan Nussle, artistic director of Campfire Quorum, a nonprofit theater company in Provincetown. Mr. Cormier said that he saw the company's production of "The Witch" last fall staged in the woods of Provincetown and based on that performance, commissioned Ms. Nussle to write the short play "Deliberately."

There will be two showings of the trio of plays: one at 11 AM and again at 1:30 PM, during which the plays will be run one after the other.

Other members of the Sandwich Arts Alliance who will be involved as actors are: June Bowser-Barrett, Diane Scharf, Heather Pannell and Karen Santos.

In 2021, the first Mindfulness Arts Festival was held via Zoom because of the pandemic. The two-and-a-half-hour festival followed a similar format as this year's event.

Mr. Cormier described the Cultural Center as the perfect venue for this year's event. "They have a great performance space in the Owl Room, and attendees can browse their galleries and visit their latest exhibit, titled 'Mural Muses XIII.' I also teach mindfulness classes there and they are providing support by letting me use their space," said Mr. Cormier.

In addition to the Mindfulness Arts Festival, Mr. Cormier and The Awareness Project will be holding smaller, similar events featuring the two plays "Knock Knock" and "Conversations at Walden" in the coming months at local venues, including the Mashpee Council on Aging on May 24 and the Barnstable Adult Community Center on June 21.

Mr. Cormier founded the Awareness Project in 2019 with the goal of making mindfulness more accessible.

“My vision is to promote mindfulness practices, because of their known health benefits,” said Mr. Cormier. “Art and short plays seem like the perfect medium to do so.”