

## PRESS RELEASE

February 22, 2012

Contact: Tanja Baumann, Director of Marketing & PR

425.519.0759 or [tanjab@bellevuearts.org](mailto:tanjab@bellevuearts.org)

## Bellevue Arts Museum explores healing power of art with new exhibit

*Making Mends* on view March 1 – May 27, 2012

**BELLEVUE, WA** – While the therapeutic benefit of art has long been accepted, a surprisingly small number of exhibitions has focused on the work of artists seeking healing through their craft. This winter, Bellevue Arts Museum is pleased to present *Making Mends*, one of the first museum exhibitions in the Northwest to explore the healing power of art, on view March 1 through May 27, 2012. In light of the seemingly endless stream of crises within the past decade – from Hurricane Katrina to the Iraq War – *Making Mends* is an invitation into the personal struggles of a few, thus beginning a thought-provoking conversation surrounding our own battles, and what it is that drives the human spirit.

In media ranging from painting, photography and sculpture to ordinary table salt, *Making Mends* brings together the works of nationally and internationally known artists. Focusing not on brokenness, but rather on the sense of hope, the artists in *Making Mends* come to terms with traumatic experiences through the act of creation. "For these artists, the very process of making, as well as the communicative, communal nature of art which allows them to share their stories with others, becomes an outlet for their emotions, and the foundation on which healing begins," says BAM Curator Nora Atkinson. "What is produced in response is honest and compelling, exhibiting traces of their own fears and uncertainties alongside elements of catharsis, resilience and occasionally humor." Though some actions may be ultimately futile – like the stitching of a torn leaf which disintegrates even as it is mended – they nonetheless hold significance in their intention and belie a deep-seated human urge to seek comfort through hand-making.

Featured artists include: Debra Baxter, Ben Diller, Cynthia Giachetti, Joey Gottbrath, Margot Quan Knight, Catherine Grisez, Lynne Saad, Vik Muniz, Donna Sharrett, Ehren Tool, Paul Villinski, Anna Von Mertens, Barb Smith, Dietrich Wegner, Motoi Yamamoto, Jennifer Zwick and the Combat Paper Project.

### VISITING ARTIST: Motoi Yamamoto, March 1 – 4, 2012

From Thursday, March 1 through Sunday, March 4, BAM visitors have a unique opportunity to witness Japanese artist Motoi Yamamoto create a monumental "floor painting" as part of the *Making Mends* exhibition. Known internationally for his intricate labyrinths, Yamamoto works almost exclusively in the medium of salt, an element associated with death and funeral culture in Japan. About his work, the artist says: "The mainspring of my work is derived from the death of my sister from brain cancer at the age of 24.... Since then, I have had the dilemma, in grief and surprise, of thinking about what I had and lost...." A Q&A session will be held from 5 - 6pm on Free First Friday, March 2.

*Making Mends* is organized by Bellevue Arts Museum, curated by Nora Atkinson. Made possible in part by Washington State Arts Commission, The Seattle Foundation and ArtsFund. Media partner: Seattle Met, 91.3 KBCS, crosscut.com.

### ABOUT BELLEVUE ARTS MUSEUM

Bellevue Arts Museum is the Pacific Northwest's center for the exploration of art, craft, and design. The Museum connects people of all ages with the extraordinary works of Northwest artists while bringing national and international collections to its community. Dynamic educational programs provide unique opportunities to connect with art and artists; past or present, experimental or established. Each July, BAM hosts one of the largest and most treasured art festivals of the year, the Bellevue Arts Museum ARTSfair. BAM is located in the heart of downtown Bellevue, provides free parking and is wheelchair accessible. Please visit [www.bellevuearts.org](http://www.bellevuearts.org) for details.