

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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***20 in 2020 – Part 2: 2011 to 2020 International Focus***

December 5, 2020 to January 9, 2021

Opening Reception: Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, Noon to 5:00 pm

**Deborah Colton Gallery** is pleased to present ***20 in 2020 – Part 2***, a group exhibition featuring paintings, drawings, mixed media, photography, sculpture and video that reflect on highlights of Colton's twenty years in Houston serving the community with exhibitions from around the world and supporting our Houston art history. *20 in 2020 - Part 2* continues to celebrate Colton's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary for exhibitions in Houston and focuses on the internationally and humanitarian-conscious programming that Deborah Colton Gallery has always been known for, featuring the years 2011 to 2020. All works are available for acquisition and can be viewed on our website and Viewing Room after the exhibition opens. The Gallery is open Tuesday to Saturday, 10:30 am to 5:30 pm, and private appointments can also be arranged when requested.

In late 2011, Art & Culture Magazine summed up how most viewers perceived Deborah Colton Gallery, with the title of a feature story they did on the Gallery, "An Artful Life - Deborah Colton & Her Texas Home for International Contemporary Art." Certainly, the international programming that Colton created has always been a focus, starting with the first exhibitions in 2000 through the first decade of the millennium, as was featured in *20 in 2020 – Part 1*. This focus has been the unique trademark of Deborah Colton Gallery in Texas and with their artists, clients and supporters world-wide.

*20 in 2020 - Part 2* starts in 2011, when Deborah Colton Gallery featured a powerful solo exhibition of **Rania Daniel's *Urban Illusion*** where her paintings and photography reflected the changes taking place in Beirut at the time. Rania Daniel's thought-provoking art has been shown in several solo and group exhibitions since then, as have many other exhibitions relating to the Middle East – Arab World throughout Deborah Colton Gallery's history.

With rapid changes taking place in Eastern Europe at this time also, Deborah Colton Gallery focused on Russia, introducing at the first commercial gallery in the United States, **Olga Tobreluts** and **Oleg Dou** during FotoFest's 2012 *Focus on Russia*. Since then, both Olga Tobreluts and Oleg Dou have introduced many important new bodies of work at Deborah Colton Gallery and have had exhibitions world-wide after our gallery's international debuts. A few years later, another artist from Russia, **Ivan Plusch**, was introduced in the United States at Deborah Colton Gallery, and since then has been included in several solo and group exhibitions, including the solo exhibition, *The Promise of Eternal Life* at Deborah Colton Gallery in 2019. A recent group exhibition of these three artists, *Awakening: Contemporary Artists from Eastern Europe*, focused on how Tobreluts', Dou's and Plusch's works reveal their experiences due to this rapid period of change after the dissolving of the Soviet Union, and how their artistic careers have all taken a fast pace to achieve much acclaim throughout Europe and world-wide at young ages.

Continuing to build on the projects that Colton was involved since 2006 in the Middle East – Arab World, in May of 2012, Deborah Colton Gallery hosted the exhibition, *The Rule and its Exception* that focused on contemporary Middle Eastern art. **Sody Sharifi** was also featured in this provocative exhibition and Sharifi had several solo exhibitions thereafter at Deborah Colton Gallery, including *The Desert Belongs to Me* in 2013 and her outstanding solo exhibition during FotoFest 2014, *The Space Within*. In late 2014, Deborah Colton Gallery introduced the major solo exhibition, *Mapping Strife: Perceptions and Reality*, featuring artist from Egypt, **Khaled Hafez**, Baghdad-born/Iranian- Canadian, **Mahmoud Obaidi** and **Ferhat Ozgur** from Istanbul. Thereafter, Khaled Hafez had a major solo exhibition in 2015 at Deborah Colton, *Code of Hermes*, and Mahmoud Obaidi's work has shown in several exhibitions at Deborah Colton Gallery since then also. At a critical time in the history in this region of nations, the exhibitions reflected on the artist's perceptions of the times, and created an awareness for hopefully more international peace and harmony, which has always been a mission of Deborah Colton Gallery's programming. Along that same concept, Deborah Colton Gallery debuted in the United States a dynamic solo exhibition in 2017 which encompassed the entire gallery of **Fadi Yazigi: *Still Life...Still Alive...Still A Life***, which dramatically revealed the turbulent times in Yazigi's homeland of Svria where he lives. This exhibition revealed a promise of hope and the essence of positivity within the human spirit.

To expand on the concept further, after Fadi Yazigi's exhibition that revealed the positive strength of the human spirit, Deborah Colton Gallery did a series of exhibitions to further emphasize this. In 2017, **Satish Gupta**, from India, was introduced at the Gallery in the exhibition, *Visions*. Also included in this exhibition was **Amita Bhatt**, **Sharon Kopriva** and **Susan Plum**. *Visions* explored the journey of these four artists coming from different backgrounds and how they reveal spirituality in their works. Although Satish Gupta was the main focus of this exhibition, which introduced his work in the United States for the first time, all three other artists have had major solo exhibitions that encompassed the entire gallery at Deborah Colton Gallery since then. **Susan Plum's** conceptually and physically complex art has been influenced by her time in India, Nepal, Thailand and Mexico. With an expansive cosmic, universal vision, her solo exhibition, *Soul Retrieval*, was based on our reconnecting, healing and bringing harmony and balance to the earth on micro and macro levels of existence. Native Houstonian, **Sharon Kopriva**, has been showing at Deborah Colton Gallery since 2010 and has also had exhibitions world-wide during the past many decades. Kopriva's solos at Deborah Colton Gallery, *Illuminations* in 2014 and *Mediations, Migrations and Muses* in 2019, both focused on the search for spirituality and light in the forest and fields where Kopriva finds her inspiration. In an earlier solo exhibition at our gallery in 2011, *Cathedrals, Phantoms and Naked Dogs*, Kopriva also addressed tragic events that have happened throughout history to the human race, but always revealed a hope for more light and better times to come in the future. **Amita Bhatt's** first solo at Deborah Colton Gallery was in 2019, *Between Light and Shadow*, where Bhatt dug into world philosophies and mythologies to answer questions pertaining to our political as well as personal belief systems. Armed with humor, paradox, symbolism and mythology, Bhatt's work has always created complex worlds that implode and explode as she encouraged her audience to reflect on the endless cycles of conception and annihilation, highlighting the impermanence of all things.

Internationally accomplished artist, **Angelbert Metoyer** has been shown at Deborah Colton Gallery since 2008 and has had several solo exhibitions including at the gallery, including *Babies: Walk on Water* in 2013, *Seasons of Heaven* in 2015 and *Real Eyes (Realize) – An Artist Survey* in 2018. Metoyer's work constantly looks at a universal vision based on the past, present and far into the future. His work turns the attention beyond ideas of self-identity and personal experiences to notions of universal truths, metaphysics and questions about the human soul.

**Lowell Boyers**, who has shown with the gallery since 2004 with several solo exhibitions, also reveals a type of universal spirituality and internal self-actualization that exists in all humans, as we connect and live within nature on earth together at this moment in time. Works from Boyer's most recent 2019 solo exhibition, *Inscapes*, beautifully emphasized this, as his art continues to transcend. **Daniel Kayne's** work also reveals a pure, universal spirituality and kindness towards humanity.

Fascinated by the intrinsic order and beauty of nature, **Grayson Chandler's** work attempts to capture and abstract its character in a manner that is recognizable, yet unfamiliar. Deeply curious about the forces that govern human reason and faith, his work probes the amphibious network linking logic, intuition, consciousness, and emotion. Introduced by Deborah Colton Gallery in 2017 with his solo exhibition, *Tautologies & Memoir*, Chandler has been included in several group exhibitions and has had two other solos, *Cocoon* in 2019 and *Telos: After Thought* in 2020.

**Dorothy Hood** has always been known for creating epic paintings that evoked the limitless skies and psychic voids of space, years ahead of NASA images. Hood captured the earth's natural beauty through her worldwide travels, with vast horizons looking far into the universe. Deborah Colton Gallery hosted the first solo exhibition of Hood's works in Houston since 1990's, *Select Paintings by Dorothy Hood* in 2016. Since then, Hood's work has been exhibited at Deborah Colton Gallery close to a dozen times, including *Cosmic Attraction: Dorothy Hood & Don Redman* in 2018, and *Earth & Space: Dorothy Hood & Daniel Kayne* in 2020.

**Molly Gochman**, an interdisciplinary, conceptual artist and activist based in New York City, has been showing at Deborah Colton Gallery for over a decade. Gochman's *Lullabies* that was exhibited as a solo exhibition both at Deborah Colton Gallery and the MAC in Dallas in 2011, interweaved photography, sculpture, video and audio into an introspective and thought-producing installation. Gochman's solo exhibition *Drenched* during FotoFest 2018, explored through the contexts of Houston after Hurricane Harvey and India after the monsoon rains, the myriad of ways that water works to build, destroy, connect, devour, and grow. Looking at damaged photography from storms of homes created on aluminum and sculptures of fabric that reminded Gochman of India revealed the story. Gochman created a series of Panels discussing the negative effects this damage did to the human condition and offered healing events also during the length of the exhibition.

Japanese born, **Noriko Shinohara**, moved to the United States in 1972 and has revealed her journey with her artist husband, Ushio Shinohara, with humor, in her "Cutie and the Bullie" Series. Born in Tokyo, Japan, **Ushio Shinohara** is a Japanese Neo-Dadaist artist and International Pop painter, who has lived and worked in the United States since 1969. Ushio and Noriko were

first introduced at Deborah Colton Galley in 2015 with their exhibition, *Noriko and Ushio Shinohara: Love is a Roar-r-r!* Since then, they have both had solo exhibition at Deborah Colton Gallery, including *Ushio Shinohara: ACTION! Boxing Paintings and Sculptures* in 2016, and *Ushio Shinohara: Maltese Falcon, Noriko Shinohara: Cuties Love Letters from Malta Island* in 2020. Both Ushio and Noriko have created live art performances for Deborah Colton Gallery in various locations.

Venezuelan born - NYC based artist, **Harif Guzman**, had a grand solo exhibition encompassing the entire spaces at Deborah Colton Gallery in 2012, *Dying to Live*. Since then Guzman's work has been included in many exhibitions that the gallery has hosted throughout Texas. Guzman's work was created for this Texas debut and reveals his Venezuelan childhood in a petroleum-based region and his perceptions of Texas and Urban culture. **Alfredo Scaronia**, originally from the Dominican Republic and **Roberto Del Rio** from Mexico, were both shown often at Deborah Colton Gallery and our Art Fair booth in several cities around 2011 for many years. Mexican born artist, who is an Associate Professor of Fine Arts at Brandeis University, **Alfredo Grisholt** had the powerful solo exhibition *Canto y Calavera* in 2015 which encompassed the entire Deborah Colton Gallery. In this impactful solo exhibition of paintings and drawings, Grisholt created familiar motifs into more liminal forms that reflect on our current times and occupy a space between the real and imaginary. A new solo exhibition of Grisholt's work will be featured at Deborah Colton Gallery, *Rituals of Perception*, opening February 20, 2021 and will be exhibited through April 30<sup>th</sup>.

Deborah Colton Gallery also addressed concerns that relate to inequality and race within our own country through featuring many African American artists. **Nathaniel Donnett** was introduced at Deborah Colton Gallery in 2008 in a group show *A Time for Change*, and then had the solo exhibition *Black Plastic and the Paper Bag Kids in the Soulecastic Playground*. The work of the iconic Houston artist, **Bert L. Long Jr.**, was introduced to Deborah Colton Gallery in the solo exhibition *Bert Back and Beyond*, which was exactly one year after his passing, February 2014. Since then Deborah Colton Gallery has included Long's work in group exhibitions and art fairs and had the solo exhibition of his works, *Looking for the Right Time* in 2017. In 2019, Deborah Colton co-curated the Bert L. Long Jr. solo exhibition *Riding the Tiger* at the Houston Museum of African American Culture (HMAAC). In 2016, Deborah Colton Gallery curated the exhibition, in conjunction with Community Artist Collective, *Tribute: Women Artists of African Diaspora*, which included artists **Anna Johnson, Jean Lacy, Annette Lawrence, Delita Pinchback Martin, Sondra Perry, Alison Saar, Kaneem Smith, Renee Stout, Colette Veasey-Cullors and Erika Walker**. This exhibition was a pre-promotion for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration and fundraiser for Community Artist Collective, which was hosted at Deborah Colton Gallery.

Please view the Deborah Colton Gallery website for more details and installation images of our past exhibitions. Select videos that relate to many of the exhibitions highlighted *20 in 2020 Part 2* are on our Video Library section.

*20 in 2020 Part 3 - Houston Foundations* will open on January 16, 2021 and will be the last of this series. *Part 3* will focus on Colton's emphasis to create an awareness this past decade of Houston's artistic roots. With the establishment of **Houston Foundations** and the gallery's series of exhibitions, panels and lectures, *20 in 2020 - Part 3* will focus on many of the artists who have contributed to Houston being the vibrant and dynamic art city that it is today.

Respecting our past, being aware of our current environment, and looking far beyond into the future has always been part of the vision of Deborah Colton Gallery. The mission statement has been the same since our first exhibitions. Deborah Colton Gallery is founded on being an innovative showcase for ongoing presentation and promotion of strong historical and visionary contemporary artists world-wide, whose diverse practices include painting, works on paper, sculpture, video, photography, performance and conceptual future media and public space installations. The gallery aspires to provide a forum through connecting Texas, national and international artists to make positive change.

There will be many magazines and memorabilia available to take from this exhibition. Also there are specially reduced prices to celebrate this 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

On Saturday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, there will be an Open House and a Paul Horn – Jeff Wheeler curated Holiday event and yard sale, titled "Camp Lucky 3" at Deborah in the back gardens from noon to 5:00 pm. Limited admission and facemasks are required.