

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **Visions**

Satish Gupta - Sharon Kopriva - Susan Plum - Amita Bhatt

April 29 through June 24, 2017

Opening Reception: Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 8:00 pm

**Deborah Colton Gallery** is pleased to present *Visions*, a group exhibition featuring paintings, drawings and sculptures by Satish Gupta, Sharon Kopriva, Susan Plum and Amita Bhatt. *Visions* explores the journey of four artists coming from different backgrounds and how they reveal spirituality in their work. The exhibition opens Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, with a reception with the artists from 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

A versatile artist, Satish Gupta is India's celebrated painter, sculptor, poet, writer, printmaker, skilled draftsman, muralist, designer, calligrapher and ceramicist whose work is influenced by his Zen philosophy.

"Sometimes what is left unsaid is more important than what is said. Silence can communicate on a much deeper level than words, this emphasis on an eternal silence is an essential part of Zen"

Winning the Sanskriti Award at an early stage in his career, Gupta's work honed through a deep engagement with mysticism and Zen spirit and has been exhibited in more than 37 solo shows at important art institutions throughout India and abroad, including in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kolkotta, Dubai, Bahrain, Antananarivo, London, Paris, Altea, Murcia, Amsterdam, Ljubljana, Vancouver, Ottawa, San Francisco, New York, Washington and Melbourne. His works are in the permanent collection of the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi. Recently Satish Gupta's sculptures and paintings were acquired by The Museum of Sacred Arts, Brussels and were exhibited in the show "Forms of Devotion" in Thailand and in the Shanghai Museum of Modern Art.

Satish's 23 foot sculpture in copper "The Buddhas Within" is currently exhibited at the Prince Of Wales Museum (CMVS) in Mumbai. In early 2017 he painted live at the National Ethnographic Museum in Ljubljana along with a showing of his calligraphic scrolls. His sculpture 'Mandala' was exhibited as one of the finalists for the prestigious The Art Laguna Prize 2017 at Arsenal in Venice. Satish's large sculpture "The Sun God" can be seen at the International Airport in New Delhi. He has also created a 30 feet long mural for the Bengaluru International Airport. Another monumental 5 piece metal sculpture ranging from 11.5 feet to 35 feet in height and weighing over 22,000 pounds inspired by the five primal elements, is located at the Jindal Center in New Delhi. His sculptures, wall murals and paintings are the signature works at the Leela Palace Hotel in New Delhi and The Ritz Carlton Hotel in Bengaluru. Satish's "Utsav Murti of the Goddess Linga Bharavi" resides in the main temple at Sadhguru's Isha Foundation in Coimbatore. His Holiness, the Dalai Lama wrote a foreword for Satish's book of short stories and haikus "I am the dewdrop, I am the ocean." and Deepak Chopra has written the foreword for his portfolio "Zen Space". The artist collaborated with India's Prime Minister, Narendar Modi on a sculpture-painting "Om Namoh Shivaya" for a charitable cause which was auctioned by the Sotheby's. Known for its special meditative quality, Satish Gupta's art is created at his studio Zazen on the outskirts of Delhi, surrounded by a Zen garden of his own design.

Sharon Kopriva, a Texas native, currently works in Houston, Texas and Hope, Idaho. She earned her MFA in painting from the University of Houston in 1981. Since her inauguration with the "Fresh Paint" exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston in 1985, Kopriva has exhibited nationally and internationally including at The Menil Collection, Houston; The Ogden Museum, New Orleans; and The National Museum of Peru in Lima. For more than thirty years, Sharon has combined two and three-dimensional media often with fusions of papier-mâché and found objects. Her career has taken her through investigations of pre-Columbian cultures in Peru, examinations of her Catholic faith, and inspirations from the spiritual forests of the beautiful Pacific Northwest United States.

The works in this exhibition are from "The Verde Series" which reflect the confluence or coming together of Nature, Spirituality and formal religion. Among the forest greens and tangled woods one might glimpse parts of cathedral windows or other Gothic architectural features. These represent Kopriva's base, a more formal, Catholic religious foundation that through her life has been strengthened by the Natural world.

"I feel God's existence both inside and outside of Church. I appreciate both. But my best conversations with God have taken place while hiking in the woods, and "The Verde" paintings are an extension of these walks" says Kopriva.

Susan Plum was born in Houston, Texas. She spent her early and formative years in Mexico City, Mexico, where she began to study art, embracing surrealism and Magic Realism. Magic Realism became the vehicle for her to explore and transcend cultural and spiritual boundaries. In this context, Susan envisioned a world that was inclusive,

culturally diverse, and aesthetically vital, and she created a visual language that encompassed the mythic, imaginal world and the real. Her art is deeply informed by nature, by its diversity and intelligence. Light has also been a strong interest for her. Susan began working with glass in the late 1980s in Seattle, and more recently with photography. Photographing her glasswork as a means of capturing moving light, or kinetic light, began when she moved to Houston in 2009.

In this series of paintings and drawings, *Naturaleza Tejida/Woven Nature*, Susan addresses the elements and ancient creation stories that tell us we are made of stardust--that we come from the cosmos and return to the cosmos. This act of inhalation and exhalation, or, warp and weft, is a universal experience and nature's "natural" weaving. Her paintings allude to simultaneous states of existence between the cosmos and the earth inspired by the modern-day physics which informs us of a multidimensional universe and the Mayan cosmology that universe is made up of lines of light. For Susan the filaments of light create a web of intelligence, which acts as a vehicle for consciousness. The drawings are inspired by the sacred indigenous Huichol symbol of the Eye of God or *Ojo de Dios*. Susan sees the geometry of the Eye of God representing the soul of a human or other life forms. A line is drawn from the center of one "soul" to the center of another "soul," ultimately creating a connected universe.

As Plum states, "We live in a tremendous time of expansion and discovery while at the same time much violence, hunger, and extremism on all fronts, however, this extreme polarization hopefully points to an end in sight and that there is a glimmer of hope for re-connectedness and compassion to grow and flower for both humanity and the treatment of our beautiful planet."

Susan works a sculpture, a painter, a mixed media, installation and performance artist. Her artwork is in the permanent collections of the Corning Museum of Glass, New York, Hunter Art Museum, Chattanooga, Tennessee, University Art Museum, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, World Bank, Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C., Mobile Museum of Art, Mobile, Alabama, the American Embassy in Belize, and the Museum of Arts and Design, New York and the Tacoma Museum of Art, Tacoma, Washington. Her work has exhibited at museums throughout most continents, world-wide.

Amita Bhatt received her BFA from the Maharaja Sayajirao University, Vadodara, India and her MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, USA. From her earliest days, Bhatt explored Hindu and Buddhist Tantric philosophy to answer existential questions as she addresses the classic themes of conflict, ideology, spirituality and transcendence.

While remaining deeply intrigued by Tantric philosophy, (which professes salvation through extreme experiences), Bhatt also explored other religions and ideologies including ancient Egyptian and Greek mythology. Her research led her to investigate ideas of destruction and creation, the continual cycles of life and death, karma and karmic cycles, the interconnectedness between all elements of nature, chaos theory etc.

Armed with humor, paradox, symbolism and mythology, Bhatt creates complex worlds that implode and explode as she encourages her audience to reflect on the endless cycles of conception and annihilation, highlighting the impermanence of all things, animate and inanimate. Her protagonists negotiate abundant, primordial and potent spaces. They oscillate precariously between the ambivalent edges of insatiable desire and aversion; knowledge and catastrophe; monumentality and sacrifice, passion and destruction. They experience and exist within suspense filled public/private spaces and are armed with the indefatigable resilience of the human spirit. Her lines continue to remain simple.

A favorite quote of Amita's reinforces her vision, "Everything in the universe is cyclical and must run its course. The dynamics of the universe are dialectical, apparently in a conflict, but occurring within a larger context." (*Margot Anand on Tantra*.)

Amita Bhatt's works have been exhibited at prestigious venues such as the Blue Star Contemporary Art Museum (USA, 2013), Museo Pedro de Osma (Peru, 2011), The Walters Art Museum (USA, 2009), Die Monchskirche Museum (Germany, 2010), and The Station Museum of Contemporary Art (USA, 2004). She has also been the recipient of the several prestigious grants. Her works are included in the private collections of Marilyn Oshman, Sharon and Gus Kopriva, John and Berthe Ford, Nancy Kienholz, Geetan and Tarun Tejpal, and The Ogden Museum of Southern Art among others.

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 paintings, sculpture, works on paper, video, photography, performance and conceptual future media installations. The gallery aspires to provide a forum through connecting Texas, national and international artists to create awareness and make help make positive change.