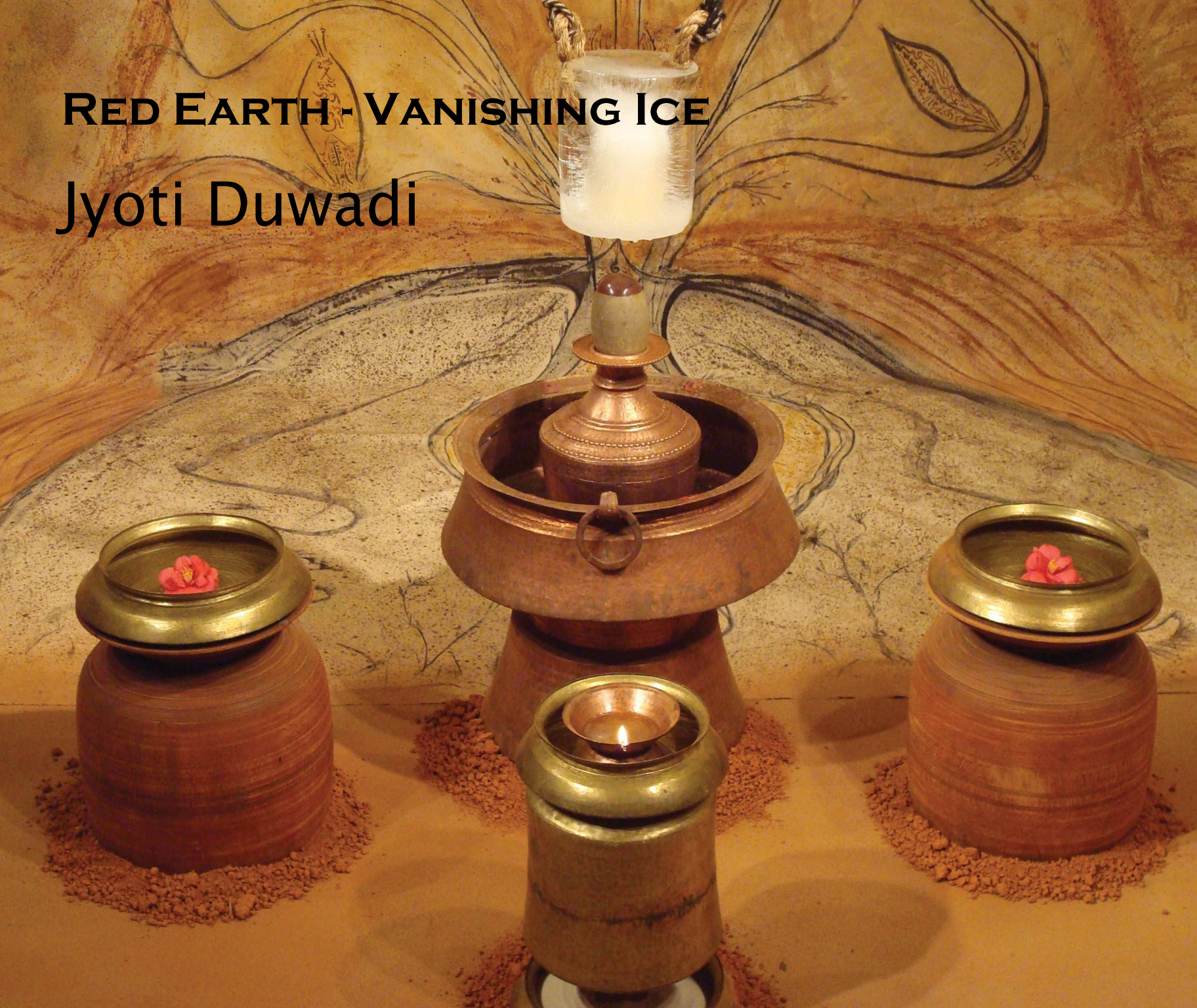


# RED EARTH - VANISHING ICE

## Jyoti Duwadi







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With generous support from Doug Taylor and the Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York.

Text, photography and design: Barbara C. Matilsky

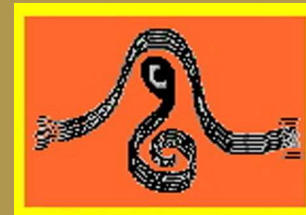
**Front cover:** *Red Earth - Vanishing Ice* (detail), studio installation, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 2008

**Back cover:** *Beehive* (detail), 2007, beeswax, earth, twine, cane and bamboo baskets  
41 x 19 x 18-inch diameter

**Page 1:** *Srishti* (detail), 2008, earth pigments, turmeric, pine tar, charcoal and Guggul on canvas, 15 x 12 feet

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**RED EARTH - VANISHING ICE**  
A site-specific installation for the  
Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York

In this work, Jyoti Duwadi weaves together elements of light, sound, scent, water, ice, metal, stone, wood, earth drawings, paintings, and sculptures made from beeswax and bamboo mats to create a space where nature and culture merge.

The artist transforms raw materials from the environment and functional objects used daily in Nepal into re-contextualized works of art to create a multi-layered, poetic space intended to stimulate a range of emotions and interpretations.

One of the main components of the installation was inspired by the gallery's criss-crossing sprinkler system. A block of ice, suspended from a water pipe, slowly melts on a rock from the Narmada River nestled within a sculptural assemblage of handmade copper cauldrons, brass vessels and wooden containers with flower pedals floating on water from Kathmandu and New York.

*Red Earth - Vanishing Ice*, studio installation  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 2008





Together with the flame of an oil lamp, Jyoti interprets contrasting states of matter - hot and cold, solid and liquid, light and shadow.

A fifteen-foot long, draping raw canvas forms a sensual, theatrical backdrop. The artist paints with the velvety black of Guggul, popular in Ayurvedic medicine, yellow turmeric powder, and deep earth pigments - reds, purples, blues and ochres - gathered, prepared and mixed with gum arabic. The convergence of different elements expresses the dynamic energy of creativity.

*Red Earth-Vanishing Ice* reflects an array of ideas: the association of water with purification and its scarcity as a natural resource. It abstractly references the flow of the Hudson River, one block from the gallery, as well as the glacial melt-down caused by global warming in the Himalayas and around the world.

Detail of the painting, *Srishti (Creation)*  
2008, charcoal, earth pigments, turmeric,  
pine tar and Guggul on raw canvas  
15 x 12 feet

Opposite: *Red Earth-Vanishing Ice* (detail),  
2008





*Sounds of Color*, a component of *Red Earth - Vanishing Ice*, created for the Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York, introduces elements of action and sound.

*Sounds of Color* (details), studio installation Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 2008  
Palm frond sculpture, sand, colored pigments, brass singing bowls, tall stem glasses, wood, rebar, cane basket, yak bell, red earth and beeswax  
7 x 9 x 9 feet







While living in Southern California, Jyoti was inspired by materials from the natural environment and created unique sculptures made from the queen and date palms. He used the long, tapering seed pods in assemblages and carved stems into interlocking parts that elegantly balance in space.

Left:  
*Brancusi*, 1994/2007  
Queen palm pod, wood, red and yellow silk  
thread, ink and bamboo basket  
84 x 24 x 24 inches

Right:  
Untitled, 1988  
Carved palm frond  
48 x 32 x 18 inches





## In the Studio

### Bamboo & Beeswax Sculptures

Melding his creativity with the fine craftsmanship of Nepali weavers, Jyoti transforms functional bamboo objects into fluid shapes and new contexts. While engaging in a dialog with materials, he also accentuates the beauty of the original object.

The artist began working with beeswax in response to the ecological crisis of disappearing honey bee colonies.

*Beehive*, 2007

Beeswax, red earth, twine, cane and bamboo baskets

41 x 19 x 18-inch diameter

Opposite: Studio Installation, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 2007

Beeswax and woven bamboo sculptures, earth drawings on handmade Nepali paper and earth paintings on bamboo weavings





Jyoti layers reed baskets, woven in Nepal for carrying materials, with thick coats of red earth and aromatic beeswax. Inverting their shapes and accentuating the differences between interior and exterior surfaces, Jyoti's new forms invite immersion into the sensory experiences of touch and smell while reflecting on Earth's delicate balance.

*AromaVessel, 2007*  
Beeswax, red earth, cane baskets and twine  
44 x 23 x 18-inch diameter





### ***Woven Bamboo Sculptures***

Jyoti shapes bamboo mats, used in Nepal for drying grains and other crops, into sculptures that reveal twisting planes in space and the dramatic shadows of unexpected openings. Sinuous lines and deep volumes invite us to explore each artwork's continuously changing profile.

Working with these flexible objects, Jyoti balances spontaneity with an understanding of the material's physical structure and limitations. He experiments with folding and rolling the mats in an origami-like manner. Curvature becomes paramount to the composition.

*Shell (two views)*, 2007, woven bamboo mat and twine, 40 x 36 x 25 inches







*Elizabeth, 2007*  
Woven bamboo mat, twine and lapsi seeds  
64 x 30 x 28 inches

Opposite page:  
*Stacks, 2007*  
woven bamboo mat and twine  
46 x 39 x 14 inches





Above: *Saddle*, 2007, woven bamboo mat and twine, 30 x 41 x 32 inches

Opposite: Serra's *Tent*, 2007, woven bamboo mat, twine and bamboo, 35 x 55 x 35 inches





*Wired*, 2007  
Telephone wire, found objects  
and bamboo weaving  
18-inch diameter



*Yantra*, 2002, 18-inch diameter



*Bindu*, 2007, 21-inch diameter



*Trikaal*, 2006, 18-inch diameter

## Painting & Assemblage

Circular bamboo weavings, made for sifting grains in Nepal, become the ground for painting with multi-hued earth pigments and attaching objects. In his paintings, Jyoti defines rhythmic fields of

calligraphy inspired by Native American imagery, Egyptian hieroglyphs and Tantric symbols. Through his improvisational style, the glowing colors of the landscape find a new context for rediscovery.



Above: *Albers*, 2007, earth pigments, Nepali paper and bamboo weaving, 18-inch diameter

Opposite: *Chakra*, 2007, earth pigments and bamboo weaving, 18-inch diameter









Above: *Meru*, 2008, beeswax, earth pigments, seeds, silk thread, cotton netting and bamboo weaving, 22-inch diameter

Opposite: *Pod*, 2006, earth pigments, wax and bamboo weaving, 17-inch diameter

## Earth Drawings

Drawing has always been an active arena for Jyoti's creativity, and over the years, he has experimented with a wide range of media. In his earth drawings, the artist combines pigments, gathered from the landscape, and turmeric powder to evoke a spontaneous form of visual poetry.

Using richly colored clays and pastel shades of slates, the artist works the earth with fingers and palm directly into handmade Nepali paper. Upon this layer, he applies additional earth colors, turmeric and ink with a brush to create calligraphic fields that rhythmically animate the composition. By taking cues from plant fragments embedded in the natural fibers of the paper, Jyoti has developed a personal, improvisational approach to drawing.



*Puja*, 2007, earth, turmeric, ink on handmade Nepali paper, 20 x 30 inches



*Surya*, 2006, earth on handmade Nepali paper, 20 x 30 inches



*Aditi*, 2007, earth, turmeric, ink on handmade Nepali paper, 20 x 30 inches



*Stupa*, 2007  
Earth pigments on handmade Nepali paper  
20 x 30 inches



*Kali*, 2007  
Earth pigments, turmeric and ink on handmade Nepali  
paper, 20 x 30 inches



*Sutra*, 2000  
Earth pigments on handmade Nepali paper  
20 x 30 inches





*Earth Passage*, 2006  
Earth pigments on handmade Nepali paper  
20 x 30 inches



*Durga*, 2007  
Earth pigments, turmeric, ink on handmade Nepali paper  
20 x 30 inches



*Devi*, 2007  
Earth pigments, turmeric, ink on handmade Nepali paper  
20 x 30 inches



Jyoti often renders his earth drawings into digital prints, exploring the connections between nature and technology. He contrasts two different approaches to making art - one rooted in an elemental, creative process and the other based on new media tools.

Above: *Earth Om*, 2006, earth pigments on handmade Nepali paper, 20 x 30 inches

Opposite: *Digital Om*, 2006, digital print on canvas 40 x 60 inches





*Tantra*, 2001/2008, earth pigments, turmeric, ink on handmade Nepali paper  
69 x 69 inches    Opposite: *Digital Tantra*, 2001, dimension variable





Studio, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, February 2008

Working with a wide range of materials and moving freely from one media to another - drawing, sculpture, painting, video, installation and digital art - Jyoti Duwadi has created a diverse body of art that embraces both continuity and innovation. His work reflects an intimate relationship to nature and the cultures of both North America and Nepal.

Fluidity characterizes the artist's style and process, which combines chance, meditation and problem solving. A work of art organically evolves as Jyoti senses and conveys the essence of a material: wood, bamboo, clay, wax, earth, pine tar, turmeric, along with found and functional objects, assume new identities.

The artist's compositions appear abstract, but frequently figural or landscape forms lyrically emerge. At once elegant and sensual, the works embody both dynamism and balance. Jyoti integrates negative and positive spaces, elements of light and shadow, symbols of male and female energy into designs that reflect the artist's personal understanding of traditional Buddhist and Hindu culture. Open to multiple interpretations, his works of art can be appreciated for their beauty and affirmation of life.





Lighting oil lamps during *Value: Measuring the Cost of Violence*, November 2001, public art installation, Kathmandu

Born into a family of poets and writers, Jyoti was exposed to art and literature while growing up in Darjeeling, Varanasi, and Kathmandu. He came to the United States in 1971 and received a PhD in Government from Claremont Graduate University in Southern California. During this period, Jyoti began making and exhibiting multi-media work that synthesized his South Asian experiences with western modern and contemporary art.

The artist has since traveled extensively, incorporating ideas, images and materials that contribute to a vibrant and diverse body of work. Jyoti currently divides time between his studio in Chapel Hill, North Carolina and Kathmandu, Nepal, where he pioneered public art installations that address political and environmental issues.

In *Value: Measuring the Cost of Violence*, Jyoti compared how much rice could be purchased with the same amount of money needed to buy a military rifle. He visualized this in Basantapur, an historic temple square in the heart of the city, where the artist built a pyramid of rice and inserted a replica rifle at its apex. In the mound, the artist also staked the names of the known victims of Nepal's recent civil war. A large, digital banner, which became the invitation to the installation, encouraged the public to commemorate the dead by lighting oil lamps and incense. *Value* was a temporary art memorial to peace, an attempt to initiate a process of healing.





