



NATURE'S DUALITY:
Works by Karl & Indira Johnson
February 24 – April 8, 2012 | College of Lake County

Nature's Duality: Works by Karl and Indira Johnson

Living and being together in India, Sweden and the US for over 40 years has had a profound influence on the work of husband and wife artists Indira and Karl Johnson. They met at the School of the Art Institute in the late sixties and as their work evolved over the next four decades, their individual thoughts and ideas have migrated back and forth appearing in different forms in each other's art.

Indira grew up in Mumbai, heavily influenced by her artist father and social activist mother. After completing her undergraduate education in Mumbai, she received a fellowship to study at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago where she received her MFA and met Karl.

Indira is a sculptor who for the last two decades has been incorporating objects discarded by society in with her sculptural work. She creates new objects that explore the constant process of transformation and change in the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Her fascination for these abandoned objects has grown over the years leading her to question the issues of permanence and decay, strength and vulnerability. Her work continues to deal with the same issues that have preoccupied her for the last decade – the growth towards a spiritual existence as an individual and as part of the human continuum.

Karl grew up in a world of forestry and art in the small town of Libertyville before car dealerships and subdivisions became part of the landscape. During his time at Chicago Academy of Fine Arts he studied cartooning and that influence can still be seen in his work today. Subsequently he received his BFA at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago where he felt the influence of his instructor Ray Yoshida and close friend Roger Brown. He travelled to India to marry Indira, start a family and continue his education in Mumbai. Their early years were nomadic, first moving to Sweden when Karl received a grant to study at the University of Lund and three years later to Colorado when he transferred to the University of Denver. Upon returning to Evanston, he joined his family business, a leading arboricultural enterprise where he served as Vice President. All through the ensuing years Karl has continued to paint and sketch, inspired by the nature that surrounded him and his numerous clients. In 2008, he made the decision to once again devote all his time to the arts.

Over the years Karl has developed several distinct techniques using multiple layers of paint to achieve his vision. Inspired by nature, his paintings incorporate the rhythm and beauty, chaos and inconsistencies of the dynamic systems found in nature and the sciences. Maze-like patterns are interspersed with abstract forms to conjure the minutia and magnitude of the human condition. Embracing the surreal qualities of the East and West, Karl combines them with a metaphorical blending of humanity and nature in a world of contradictions.

In 1969, Karl and Indira showed together for the first time at the American Cultural Center in Mumbai, India. Forty years later one can see how the fusion of form and ideas, philosophy and vision appear and disappear in each other's work as they continue their individual creative journeys.



Indira Johnson, *Energy Reboot #1*



Indira Johnson, *Energy Transmitters*



Indira Johnson, *Satyagraha (Holding fast to truth)*



Indira Johnson, *Energy Reboot #2*



Indira Johnson, *In Search of Sakti*



Indira Johnson, *Human Technology; Rebirth II*



Karl Johnson, *Jazz Player*



Karl Johnson, *Whiteout on 94*



Karl Johnson, *Sound Waves*



Karl Johnson, *Nature's Way*



Karl Johnson, *The Scream According to Karl*



Karl Johnson, *The Stare*

INDIRA FREITAS JOHNSON

EDUCATION

- 1970-72 Folk Universitet, Lund, Sweden
1965-67 Masters of Fine Art, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
1960-64 Sir J.J. Institute of Applied Art, Bombay, India
1960-64 Bachelor of Arts, University of Bombay, Bombay, India

PUBLIC ART PROJECT

- 2012 Ten Thousand Ripples, Ten Chicago Area Communities

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2012 Karmic Energy Rebooted, Krasl Art Center, St. Joseph, Mi
2010 Convergence: The Art of Karl and Indira Johnson, Noyes Cultural Center, Evanston, IL
2009 Opposition and Unity, Parkland College Gallery, Champaign, IL
2008 Satyagraha; Holding fast to Truth, Chicago Public Library, Chicago, IL
2007 Lifetime Offer, Dimensions Variable, Chicago Cultural Center, Chicago IL
Indira Freitas Johnson, New Work, Walsh Gallery, Chicago, IL
2003 Enough; Indira Freitas Johnson and Voices from around the World,
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, IL
2001 FREENOTFREE, Rhode Island School of Design Museum, Providence, RI
2000 Process of Karma, Indianapolis Art Center Indianapolis IN

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS:

- 2011-2014 Infinite Mirror, Images of American Identity, International Arts & Artists,
A national touring exhibition
2011 Outside America, Woman Made Gallery, Chicago, IL
2010 Monumental, Walsh Gallery, Chicago, IL
2009 Erasing Borders, Indo American Arts Center, New York, NY
2007 Upon An Ether Sea, Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art

SELECTED GRANTS/AWARDS

- 2011 Honoree, Woman Made Gallery, Chicago, IL
2007 Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs' Public Art Program
Illinois Arts Council Special Project Grant
1993 Arts International Travelling Fellowship

SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Asian American Art Centre, New York, NY • Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art • Mobile Museum of Art,
Mobile, AL • State of Illinois Building, Chicago, IL • Loyola University Museum of Art • College of DuPage,
Glen Ellyn, IL • High Museum of Art., Atlanta, GA • Air India Corporation, Bombay, India

KARL JOHNSON

EDUCATION

- 1964 Bachelor of Fine Arts, Chicago Academy of Fine Art
- 1968 Bachelor of Fine Arts, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
- 1970 Sir J.J. Institute of Applied Art, Bombay, India
- 1972 Art and Psychology, University of Lund, Lund Sweden
- 1974 Art Restoration, Graduate work, University of Denver

SELECTED GRANTS/AWARDS

- 1972 Thorn Gray Fellowship, American Scandinavian Foundation

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

- 2012 Nature's Duality; Works by Karl and Indira Johnson, College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL
- 2011 Intertwined, Korean Cultural Center, Wheeling, IL
- 2011 Convergence; The Art of Karl and Indira Johnson, Noyes Cultural Center, Evanston, IL
- 2009 Studio Show, Evanston IL
- Group Show, Aurora Art Center, Aurora, IL
- 1975 New Dimensions, Cherry Creek Gallery, Denver, CO
- 1974 Gallery Artists, Cherry Creek Gallery, Denver, CO
- 1973 Glas Molare, Solo show, Micro Gallery, Lund Sweden
- 1972 Group Show, Micro Gallery, Lund, Sweden
- 1969 Karl and Indira Johnson, American Cultural Center, Bombay, India
- 1968 Student Show, School of the Art Institute of Chicago

RELATED EXPERIENCE

- 1975-2008 Vice President, Nels Johnson Tree Experts
- 1997-1999 Board Member, Evanston, Art Center
- 1967-1968 Art Instructor, Head Start and Push Up
- 1969-1970 Biology and Art Teacher, Cathedral School, Mumbai, India

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

Indira Johnson

Energy Reboot #1, 2010, Ceramic, found objects
Energy Reboot #2, 2010, Ceramic, found objects
Human Technology; Rebirth, 2009, Cast iron, mixed media
Energy Transmitters, 2012, Ceramic, mixed media
In Search of Sakti, 2009, Poultry wire, bedsprings, sandalwood garlands
Human Technology; Rebirth II, 2009, Terra Cotta, cast iron, found objects
Satyagraha (Holding fast to truth), 2011, Ceramic, oxides
Point of Decision, 2010, Ceramic, oxides
Karmic Dance, 2008, Wood, ceramic, acrylic paint
Human Technology; Becoming, 2005, Iron, ceramic
Human Technology; Rising, 2010 Ceramic, mixed media
Water Diviner, 2011, Cement, glass, found objects, paint
Human Nature, 2012, Found objects, ceramic, paint
Human Technology; Seeking I, 2006, Found objects, ceramic, paint
Human Technology; Seeking II, 2006, Found objects, ceramic, paint
Lifetime Offer, 2012, Paper-mache, acrylic paint

Karl Johnson

Jazz Player, 2010, Watercolor and ink
Whiteout on 94, 2010, Oil and acrylic
Sound Waves, 2010 Watercolor and ink
Nature's Way, 2011, Watercolor and ink 2011
The Scream According to Karl, 2011, Oil and enamel
The Stare, 1992 Watercolor
Which Way to Chaos?, 2006, Acrylic and ink 2006
Harvest Dance, 2008, Watercolor & ink
Childhood, 2011, Oil & enamel
Migration, 2011, Oil & enamel
Winter Moon in Buchanan, 2011, Watercolor & enamel
A Day on the Slopes, 2010, Oil & acrylic
Elephant Walk, 2009, Oil & enamel on glass
Last Laugh, 2011, Watercolor
Lilies and Fireflies, 2012, Oil & enamel
Summer Recreation, 2009, Watercolor & ink
Fragments of My Imagination, 2006, Gouache & watercolor



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Robert T. Wright

Community Gallery of Art

February 24 – April 8, 2012

Gallery Hours:

Monday-Thursday 8 a.m.-10 p.m.

Friday/Saturday 9 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

Sun 1- 5 p.m.

Hours vary during college breaks

Information: (847) 543-2240

E-mail: sjones@clcollinois.edu

<http://gallery.clcollinois.edu/>

College of Lake County

19351 West Washington St., Grayslake, IL

The Robert T. Wright Community Gallery of Art
is a project of the College of Lake County Foundation.

Right front cover, Indira Johnson, *Human Technology; Rebirth*

