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**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 25, 2014

ANDREW SMITH GALLERY ANNEX

Patrick Nagatani
***"Outer and Inner:
Contemplations on the Physical
and the Spiritual"***
The Race A Photo-Novel
The Buddhist Tape-esteries 200 - 2013
Recent Novellas

Opening and artist's reception at
Annex Gallery
203 W. San Francisco St., Santa Fe
(between the Plaza and the Eldorado Hotel)

Exhibition Dates: Friday, January 31 through March 14, 2014
Artist Reception: 4 to 6 p.m. Friday, January 31, 2014

Andrew Smith Gallery has (re-)opened a Gallery Annex in our historic storefront location at 203 W. San Francisco St., in downtown Santa Fe, with an exhibit by Patrick Nagatani titled "Outer and Inner: Contemplations on the Physical and the Spiritual." The location is familiar as it was our primary gallery location from 1994 to 2009. There will be an opening reception attended by Patrick Nagatani on Friday, January 31, 2014 from 5 to 8 p.m., including a reading from his new novel "*The Race*."

A SPECIAL NOTE FROM PATRICK NAGATANI

"This exhibition comes at a crazy time for me. In dealing with metastatic cancer stage 4 for the 5 months (radiation and now heavy duty chemotherapy) I have been dealing with the realization of impermanence and have been introspective of the spiritual and the physical aspect of my life as it is. I have tried to be in the moment and totally enjoy what life has to offer. I have chemo brain (good for writing and playing blackjack) and chemo emo (cry and cuss a lot and mostly happy). So Andrew Smith has graciously

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invited me to have the inaugural show of his recent gallery for contemporary work in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He has let me curate the show and I have chosen work that hopefully establishes a dialogue between the spiritual and the physical, the inner and outer, the mind and the body. I will be showing work from my Novellas series, 24 Buddhist tape-estries and images from my ongoing novel, *The Race* (developed with the help and expertise of Scott Rankin, Christopher Kaltenbach, and my visual technical collaborator and designer, Randi Ganulin.) Most of the work has never been exhibited in New Mexico. I hope to see you at this special and exciting exhibition. Namaste! December 2013."

Recently retired as a distinguished professor of photography at the University of New Mexico, Patrick Nagatani continues to produce entertaining and thought-provoking photographic works that deal with various facets of the human condition. Along with tableaux artists Thomas Demand, Gregory Crewdson and Sandy Skoglund, Nagatani pioneered the Contemporary Constructed Photographic Movement in the late 1970s. He has been highly influential in developing a vocabulary of ideas and presentation based on directing, producing and constructing photographs, sets, sculptures, magazine and newspaper articles, models, and paintings as the subjects of his tableaux.

Nagatani designs each photograph both with the creation of subject matter and by manipulating the scenes photographically by adjusting the camera's narrow depth of field with forced perspective, a filmmaking technique used to create optical illusions, such as making objects appear smaller or larger, or appear far away when set space is limited. Having built and then photographed his sets, Nagatani prints the images as Polaroid, Cibachrome or Ilfoflex photographs before destroying the sets.

With an innate sense of magical realism, Nagatani encompasses such diverse subjects as Buddhism, gender and ethnic injustice and paradoxes, the creation and history of nuclear modernity, Japanese-American heritage, history of photography, theories of media as the message, bodybuilding, color, light, healing, cancer, technology, magic, counting cards, family, favorite dogs and toys, falling out of the sky and flying into it. Each print is coded with multiple visual layers of clues and information, which lead to unrelated parallel strands of vision and emotion. The intensity of his subject matter is softened by the sheer beauty of the images and the humor he often brings to them.

THE RACE

A Novel

Nagatani's new novel *The Race* is the story of the discovery of Supermarine Spitfire aircraft buried in Burma at the end of World War II. The aircraft are brought to Tokyo and transformed with new technology into state-of-the-art floatplanes. Fifteen women pilots are selected to participate in a trans-Pacific race from Tokyo to San Francisco.

The exhibition features a portrait of each plane flying into solitude. Each image must then be de-coded within terms of the larger subjects of challenges, gender, ethnicity, society, individuality, joy, technology, environmental disorder, the color of the plane, the color of the sky, and the history and magic of these concepts.

The Prologue of the novel sets up the logistics and story behind Keiko Kobahashi and introduces the diverse international group of women pilots. The "Training" chapter examines some of the concerns and interests of the women, as well as the camaraderie and respect that's established between them. Each subsequent chapter is the pilot's story while flying in the race.

The novel, in essence, is not about the race but the stories that each pilot has and the issues that they are dealing with in their lives. Most important is the catharsis that occurs in dealing with these issues as they fly alone in the vastness of earth space and clouds. They are in control in this tight little cockpit and there is a lot of time to think.

The outer and the inner is the essence of the novel. Outer vast physical space simultaneously exists with the inner psychological thinking of the pilots. Each pilot comes to terms with what she is dealing with. Catharsis hopefully occurs as the will to live and embrace the moment and contribute to humanity is realized.

Nagatani is first and foremost a long time visual artist who has recently challenged himself with creative writing. Much of his past work has evolved around storytelling and narrative fiction as photographic "fact". He has dwelled in the land of fiction and magic with his images and now does so in this novel. Additionally, he is choreographing the creative writing of 12 other writers who are contributing to the novel. The images here will be at the beginning of each chapter of the pilots' stories. They are meant to illustrate the novel with a feeling of flying spirit and magical space.

The choice of work and *The Race* images in this exhibition are meant to examine and develop a dialogue between the physical and the spiritual; something that Nagatani has in a daily conversation with his cancer.

THE BUDDHIST TAPE-ESTRIES (2000-2010)

“All these artists turned to Buddhist imagery for intensely personal reasons, without regard for the whims of the art establishment, and developed distinctive styles for Buddhist subjects. They borrowed freely from Western art, philosophy and art materials in order to instill new life into traditional religious themes, and they completely absorb themselves into their work, which itself becomes a path of self-cultivation.” Patricia J. Graham ~ *Faith and Power in Japanese Buddhist Art 1600-2005*

Confessions of a Tapist (Tape-estries 1982 to present)

"The process is like driving from Albuquerque to Los Angeles non-stop. It's like being in shape and running ten miles. It's like chanting. It's like doing all the movements of Tai Chi the meditative way. It's about finding a zone of no thought. Time passes and only my aching fingers and shoulders indicate how long I have been continuously painting with the tape. I relish the focus on details and to be lost in the quiet and minute parts of the whole. Decisions are mostly made as a reaction to the materials, the image and the emotive feel. Time is a factor. It must take long sessions to get to the zone. After each session there is another zonal journey. Clarity often comes after a long session. More things are revealed to me after each session. Magic is a goal. My entire day is shaped by solitude and what I believe is constructed beauty. I want magic in my life and work. Beauty is important. I relish the fact that the tape is an inexpensive and somewhat castaway art material. The Zen of the material and process moves me to a spiritual happiness.

I have often desired the overlay of sensory experience in my work. These pieces require looking from afar and getting in very close, both vantage points offer differing visual experience. The pieces are wonderful to touch. I've been in the zone off and on for over thirty years with this work. Time has no fixed position, it has been positive energy for me. It has left me no room or desire for negative creative existence. Most things seem to now have a place in the cosmic meaning of things. Especially in coping with getting older, dealing with cancer and losing both of my parents recently.

The taping process is obsessive. It is done with precision and ardor. Masking tape is a simple material. I use every variety of masking tape that is commonly available. The subtle color of the tape creates my range of hues for my 'painting' palette. There are varying degrees of translucency and the amount of layers dictate a value shift. The tearing and cutting parodies a variety of 'brush strokes.' The original surface images are large Chromogenic Lightjet photographs from a variety of sources that are often collaged and manipulated in Photoshop. These are cold mounted with Coda (two sided

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archival adhesive) to museum board. The archival museum board is contact cemented to oak wood laminate and stretcher bars are wood glued for stability. Finally, the entire finish taped surface is multi-coated with Golden Acrylic Matte Medium of different strengths. Two final brush coatings of Golden Polymer Varnish with UVLS (Ultraviolet filters and stabilizers) are finally applied. Although masking tape is not considered an 'archival' medium, the matte medium both seals the piece from oxidation and soaks through the masking tape for added adhesion.

My 'tapist' career started in 1982 and the pieces made at that time have lasted through the years. I believe that the pieces have a life of their own and will change very slowly in time, much like mummies from ancient Egypt have lasted through the centuries but nevertheless have changed. The work might be seen as an evolving entity with the spirit of permanence and impermanence interwoven into the materials used in the artistic process."

Patrick Ryoichi Nagatani
August 2012

The astoundingly beautiful taped chromogenic prints of Asian deities and bodhisattvas on exhibit at Andrew Smith Gallery include the following works:

"Akasagarbha," 2009 [NO IMAGE]

One of the eight great bodhisattvas, Akasagarbha is associated with the element of space. His name translates as "boundless space treasury" or "void store," and his wisdom is said to be as boundless as space itself.

"Avalokitesvara," 2008

(49" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

Avalokitesvara embodies the compassion of all Buddhas. His name in Sanskrit means "Lord who looks down (at the world)." Portrayed in different cultures as either male or female, this enlightened being made a great vow to assist all sentient beings in times of difficulty, postponing his own Buddhahood until every being has achieved Nirvana.

Nagatani has emphasized the red colored hand of the figure by not taping this area. This mudra (hand gesture) represents the promise to grant the devotee's wishes.

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Avalokiteshvara 2011

(47" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

Radiating halos and seated on a great lotus, this multi-armed deity is symbolic of the ultimate compassionate nature of all the Buddhas.

"Chenrezig," 2010

(44" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

Chenrezig is the Tibetan Buddhist manifestation of Avalokitesvara, the earthly manifestation of the eternal Buddha. Nagatani did not tape the wish-fulfilling golden jewel between Chenrezig's palms, which stands out in strong contrast to the pastel colors elsewhere.

"Guanyin," 2009

(49" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

Usually portrayed as female, Guanyin is a bodhisattva associated with compassion and kindness who is venerated by East Asian Buddhists. Her name means "Observing the Sounds (or Cries) of the World." It is generally believed this Goddess of Mercy originated as the Sanskrit "Avalokitesvara." In Nagatani's image the circular lines of her halo and the blue lotus she holds are the strongest hues.

"Jizo," 2009

(49" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

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Jizo is a protector of women and travelers who specifically helps children who have died navigate the transition between life and death. In Japanese Zen monasteries there is a tradition of offering Jizo ceremonies to ease the grief of women who have lost children.

"Kichijouten," 2008

(49" X 29" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

Kichijoten is the wife of Vishnu in Hindu myths. In Japan she is viewed as a goddess of fertility, fortune, luck, beauty and merit. Nagatani portrays her as a formidable yet misty figure standing against a flesh-colored, web-like background.

"Ksitigarbha," 2009

(49" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

In this mosaic-like work, Nagatani created an vastly intricate texture with thin strips of tape. Ksitigarbha is a Buddhist monk who made a vow not to achieve Buddhahood until all hells are emptied. His staff forces open the gates of hell, thus he is a bodhisattva of beings in hell, as well as a guardian of children, including dead ones. His name translates as "Earth Treasury," "Earth Store," "Earth Matrix," or "Earth Womb."

"Kuan Shin Yin," 2008

(49" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

When Buddhism reached mainland China in the first century C.E., the bodhisattva Avalokitesvara was introduced into that culture. His androgynous appearance contributed to his morphing over time into Kuan Shin Yin, the goddess of compassion, fertility, healing and magic. Nagatani emphasized her hand gestures, free of tape, showing the thumb and index finger of the right hand joined, which represents teaching.

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"Kuan Yin," 2008

(47" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

Kuan Yin (also known as Kannon in Japan and Guanyin in China) is the Goddess of Mercy and Compassion. She is a bodhisattva, or a wise being destined to become a Buddha. In Nagatani's picture the seated figure shimmers in soft gold hues against a rippling blue-grey background.

"Mahasthamaprapta," 2009

(52" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

This bodhisattva's name means "arrival of the great strength." In Mahayana Buddhism he is one of the Eight Great Bodhisattvas. In China, however, he is portrayed as a woman. The iconic figure stands in the center of the picture in front of radiating halo-like circles.

"Manjushri," 2009

(61" X 41" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

Associated with transcendent wisdom, his name translates as "Gentle Glory." Manjusri is the oldest and most important bodhisattva in Mahayana literature whose "pure land" is said to be one of the two best in all of existence. The multi-armed god holds a flaming sword and rides a lotus boat floating on rolling waves.

"Miao-Shan," 2008

(45" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

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In China Miao-Shan represents the transformation into human form of Kuan-yin, the Compassionate One. According to the legend, this bodhisattva was born to a king and queen who were uncomfortable with her purity and goodness. Known as "the maiden with the heart of a Buddha," she was devout girl who had to painfully separate from her earthly family, thus symbolizing the struggle of a spiritual being overcoming the shackles of the material world. In Nagatani's light green and gold image she dances in the clouds.

"Miroku," 2008

(49" X 29" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

In Japan the "Maitreya Buddha" was prophesied by the Buddha before he entered nirvana. Miroku is a Buddhist monk who helps the spirit or soul of people (as well as demons) find rest and pass peacefully into the next world. Nagatani left his right hand untaped and strong colored. The extended fingers mean the devotee's wishes will be granted.

"Monju," 2009

(45" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

Wielding a formidable sword and holding a lotus blossom, this male bodhisattva is associated with transcendent wisdom. His sword cuts down ignorance and duality, while his lotus blossom represents the fruition of wisdom and the ability to tame the mind.

Bright orange bands at the base of the image contrast with subdued colors elsewhere in this work.

"Nyoirin Kannon," 2008

(49" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

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This is the Japanese name for the Indian Buddhist deity, Avalokiteshvara, a bodhisattva of compassion and one of the most popular Buddhist deities throughout Asia. In Japanese traditions, Nyoirin Kannon is one of the six "changed forms" associated with granting desires who is worshipped by people hoping to gain wealth or have their wishes granted. She wears a necklace of fifty human heads representing the emotions she has overcome.

"Padasambhava," 2010

(47" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

The name means "Lotus-Born," but he was also known as Guru Rinpoche (Precious Guru) because he is said to have transmitted Vajrayana Buddhism to Tibet, Bhutan and nearby countries in the 8th Century C.E. Nagatani created a lively craquelure effect in the background using multiple thin strips of tape.

"Shakyamuni," 2010

(47" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

Also known as Gautam Buddha and Siddhartha Gautama, Shakyamuni was born in the Shakya Republic in the Himalayan foothills. Buddhism was founded on his teachings of a Middle Way of existence between the over-indulgence of the senses and the severe asceticism of renunciation. In Nagatani's image the realistic face of Shakyamuni contrasts with his highly stylized body and background.

"Tsongkhapa," 2010

(47" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

Described as "a teacher without parallel," Tsongkhapa (1357-1419) was the foremost authority of Tibetan Buddhism of his time and the author of 18 volumes of collected Buddhist teachings. Tsongkhapa means "The Man from Onion Valley," but his ordained name was Lobsang Drakpa. Having studied Buddha's teachings from all the masters of

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Tibetan Buddhist traditions, he founded the Geluk ("virtuous ones") order based on the union of Sutra and Tantra, and a step by step method of achieving enlightenment.

"Ushnishavija," 2010

(49" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

Ushnishavijaya, or "Victorious Crown of Protrusion," is an emanation of the archetypal goddess, Prajnaparamita." She is the Prajna, or female aspect of enlightenment and representative of the void or *shunyata*. A well known goddess in Tibet, Nepal and Mongolia, she is the Buddha of long life. Nagatani's image shows her with three faces and eight hands seated on a floating lotus in choppy seas. Among other objects, she holds a vial of water used for cleansing one of disease.

"Vajrapani," 2010

(49" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

He is one of the earliest bodhisattvas of Mahayana Buddhism and one of three protective deities surrounding the Buddha. He is the "Holder of the Thunderbolt Scepter" symbolizing the power of compassion. He represents intense determination and success in the conquest of negativity.

"Vajrasattva," 2010

(49" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

A bodhisattva in the Mahayana Buddhist tradition associated with the purification of the mind practices. he is often associated with students under the guidance of a master.

"Vajravarahi," 2008

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(49" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

In this brilliant red and flesh-toned work, Nagatani depicts the female Buddhist deity, Vajravarahi, who represents triumph over ignorance. Dancing over the body of a human being she is crowned with five skulls representing her power to transform the five "poisons" of greed, hatred, delusion, jealousy and pride. The flaying knife in her hand symbolizes the separation from the power of materialism.

"The White Tara," 2008

(43" X 31" X 2", Light jet chromogenic print, masking tape, mixed media, archival enhancing medium)

A tantric meditation deity known as the "mother of liberation," The White Tara represents the virtues of success in work and achievements. She is also regarded as a bodhisattva of compassion and action who hears the cries of beings who are suffering. Her right hand is untaped and brightly colored, representing the promise to grant the devotee's wishes.

RECENT NOVELLAS

"Everything about me consists of a kind of layering." - Patrick Nagatani

Patrick Nagatani's *Novellas* are a diverse body of work made between 1992 and 2004 with each *Novella* being akin to a short story. For each work Nagatani arranged a myriad of 2-dimensional pictures and occasionally 3-dimensional objects into dense compositions that deal with themes that have preoccupied him throughout his artistic career; illusion, power, violence, sexual attraction, gender issues, illness, mythology, death, rites of passage, memory, Native American, Japanese American and immigrant issues, and the dream world.

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Nagatani used a variety of different media to create the *Novellas*, including waterless lithos, color photographs, Polaroid images, drawings and handcrafted collages. For subject matter he utilized scientific illustrations, pictograms, advertisements, fashion photos, news photos, postcards, snapshots and personal memorabilia. The fusion of photographic imagery and manipulated materials bear a resemblance to Robert Rauschenberg's transfer drawings from the 1960s, works that anticipated the art world's ongoing fascination with appropriation.

Nagatani's early *Novellas* were two-dimensional, but in a later sub-series called "Unbearable Weight" his assemblages included actual toys and objects inserted into the frames. An ongoing theme has been to poke fun at and raise concerns about how we as a western culture value the superficiality of physical appearances above all else.

"Untitled," 1997

(Polaroid 4x5 print transfers, Belgium photo linen and acrylic paint)

Headless, athletic human body parts appear cleanly sliced into a swirling mass of legs, torsos, chests and arms that float against a blood red background. These absurd piecemeal mannequins flex their bulging biceps, quads and pectoral muscles. A square grid in the center of the work contains 25 far less developed pinup girls from an earlier era and an open mouthed woman who seems to be shrieking "stop this madness!"

"Placebo [Unbearable Weight]," 2003

(Fuji Crystal Archive print and mixed media)

A collage of bodybuilders are mashed tightly together, the fragments of their over-developed flesh-colored musculature reflecting the light. The overall impression is of a gleaming mass of moist internal organs. Along the edge of the frame below the collage Nagatani inserted a line of (real) multicolored capsules interspersed with tiny figures who could be doctors or sales people.

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"Thrust [Unbearable Weight]," 2003

(Fuji Crystal Archive print and mixed media)

This writhing mass of body builder fragments are all male. Lining the frame of the image are a row of actual drills and drill bits whose phallic shapes, painted half black and half red, are unmistakable.

"Mystique [Unbearable Weight]," 2003

(Fuji Crystal Archive print and mixed media)

In this darkly humorous work Nagatani contrasts a close-up photo of a 1950s-era woman smiling coyly at the camera who holds a tape measure between her hands. She is surrounded by a jumble of muscular women's body parts. It is hard to determine which is the more freakish image -- the one-dimensional homebody or the rippling musculature of female body builders.

Gallery hours at 203 W. San Francisco St. location are 12-5 Mon. - Sat. For more information please call Andrew Smith Gallery at (505) 984-1234, Fax (505) 983-2428. Visit us online at www.andrewsmithgallery.com

Liz Kay