Brian Merriam

IN EVERY FLOWER THE FACE OF GOD

CATALOG OF WORKS

IN EVERY FLOWER THE FACE OF GOD

MARCH 12 - APRIL 25 2026
HANSELL GALLERY
AT THE
PHILSOPHICAL
RESEARCH
SOCIETY

a note from the artist

All of these works began as photographs. It was a goal of mine when undertaking their creation to find ways for photography to transcend the 2-dimensional plane to which it is traditionally bound, for an image to become an object, and for it's symbolic content to be brought forth, not just in the minds eye - but into tangible physical reality. Some of these works are subtractive - form revealed through removal of that which is not - while others are additive, with new geometries, geographies, and symbolic relations created as sections of the piece rise atop others. Together the works form a network of interrelated proto-symbols, reflecting aspects of one another as they cross the cosmic bridge from a depthless plane into the third dimension.

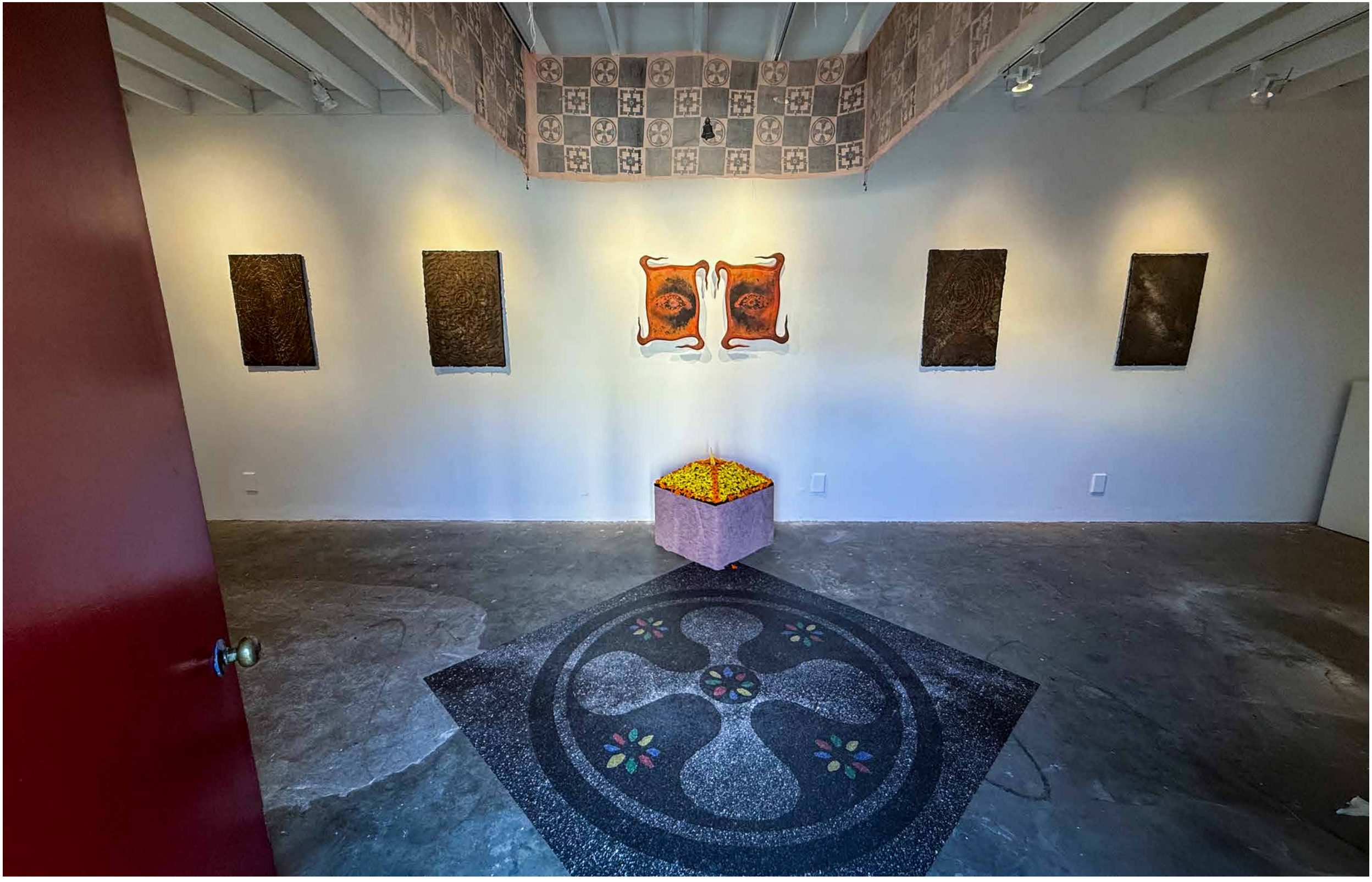
Inhered within all sacred objects is a seed of the eternal, a transcendent embryo that blossoms into embodied symbol. As these metaphysical kernels take on three-dimensionality, via structure and image, they become subject to the truths and paradoxes of temporal existence. Symbol as such is carried via geometry, element, planet, deity. Shape alone may convey the sacred, as can a dynamic relationship, unfixed and definable only as a system. Although esoteric in nature, these symbols are not ambiguous in their intensity or familiarity: we recognize them as emissaries from deeper orders of reality and as satellites of our own soul. The sacred object thus belongs to both time and timelessness, bound to the laws of the universe within which it is contained, as well as to the principles that govern the numinous realm wherefrom it was seeded. In this way, symbol is a material substance all its own, just as materiality itself is symbolic.

In his solo exhibition, In Every Flower the Face of God, artist Brian Merriam generates his own semiotics, building sets of resonances and relationships that organize into symbol via image and objecthood. Through explorations in mixed media, with photography at the core, Merriam creates pieces that feel like venerated artifacts from alternate timelines. Number and correspondence cohere into a language of magnitude and mystery. Opposing forces create integrative binaries: gold and silver, sun and moon, harmony and disorder. Pairs, triplets and tetrads expand the play between scales of physicality. Spider webs converse with the structure of the milky way, spiraled geoglyphs with cymatics conjured in mercury. Patterns formed in ethereal mediums challenge the solidity of stones marked with impressed handprints, reminiscent of those left by bodhisattvas.

In this collection, Merriam not only uses number and relationship to build his symbolic lexicon, but also time, texture, color and light. Earthen hued paper, collected from the artist's travels in Nepal, is stacked upon itself, creating geological strata of texture and depth. Cloudlike wood compositions, cut from dynamic hand-drawn shapes, are saturated with saffron, worked and reworked in a dance of wear and abrasion. The presence of gold blurs the line between halo and shadow. Images, created and destabilized, are honored by concentrated light and negative space. Physical terrains are birthed from processes of reduction and accretion, as the photograph is liberated from its convention as a two-dimensional entity. Shapes and content are hollowed and layered, creating typographies and wormholes, tying the third-dimension to the fourth. The end result is a constellation of charged holy relics, pulled from the walls of monasteries found in other dimensions.

Some of the images used throughout the exhibition have been featured in the artist's previous work, including his 2024 book The Absolute Recedes. These images will certainly evolve further as he continues to construct his own visual mythos. Merriam's work exists at the juncture between time and eternity, in deep relation with the foundational structures of reality. The symbolic becomes concretized as sacred object in much the same way that holy syllables, when organized, become a mantra. At the heart of this collection is an Upanishadic understanding that within every individual instance of boundaried reality, there exists both the pull towards three-dimensional embodiment and the seed of total transcendence.

L.D. Deutsch

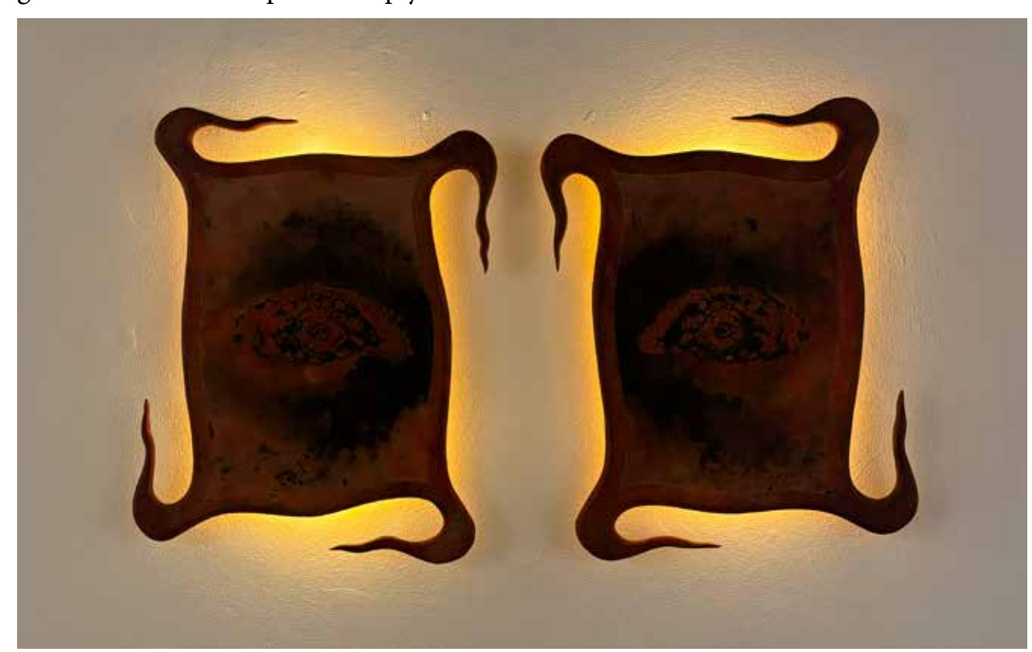


I

RITUAL OBJECT

In Every Flower 48x20 2025

sindoor, vibhuti, charcoal, pigment,
gold leaf on hand shaped birch ply



Gankyil 2025 20x20

sindoor, vibhuti, charcoal, pigment,
gold leaf on hand shaped birch ply

II

FUTURE RELIC

A Sea of Silk 2025 20x30
Lokta Paper and glue

Silver Seed 2025 20x30
Lokta Paper and glue

Sarpil Suna 2025 20x30
Lokta Paper and glue

A Web of Milk 2025 20x30
Lokta Paper and glue

Void, Form, Union Triptych 2025 30x12 total 8.5x12 each
Lokta Paper and glue

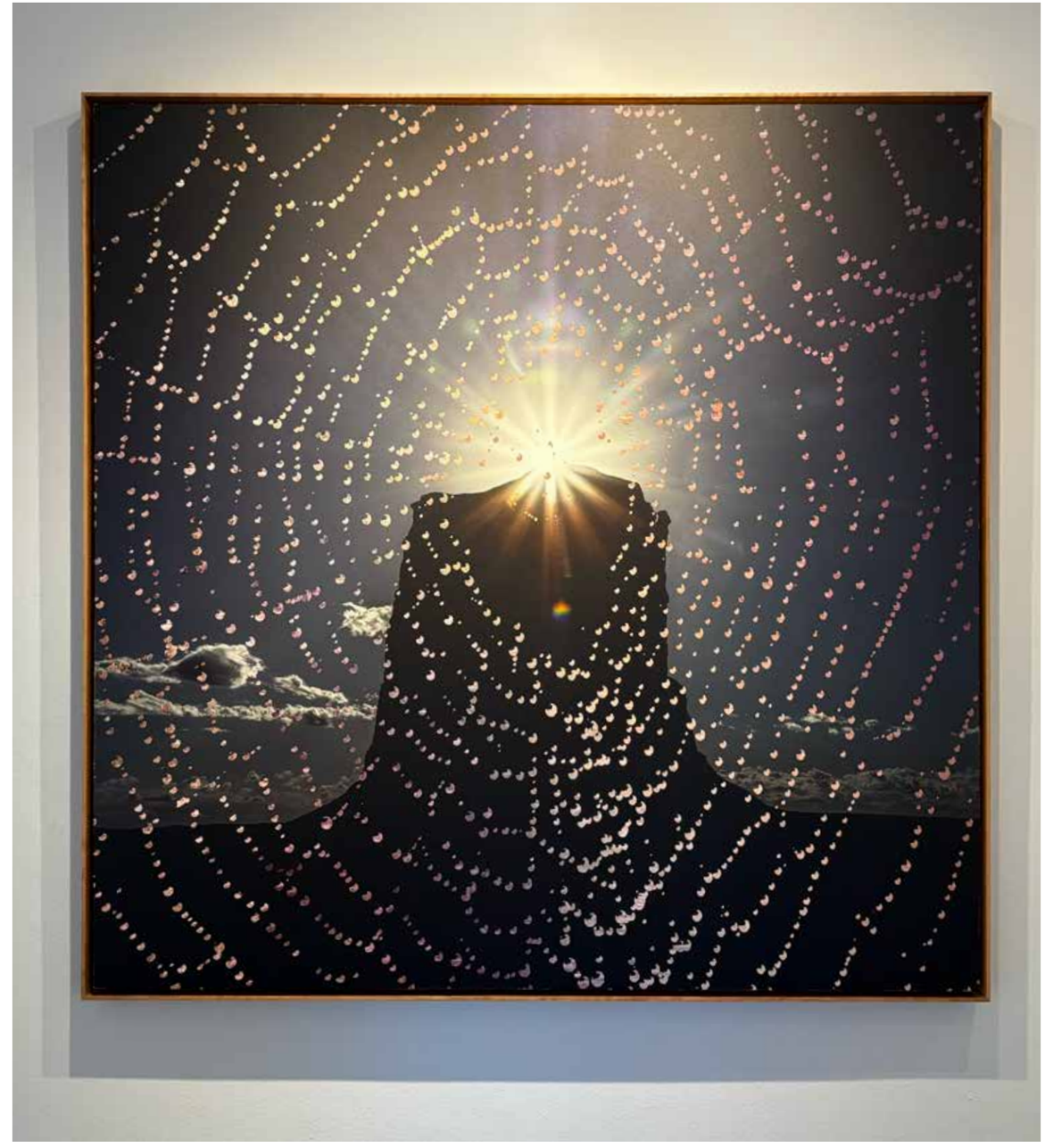
Three Shrines of Fire 2025 20x30
Lokta Paper and glue

Two Hands of Light 2025 20x30
Lokta Paper and glue

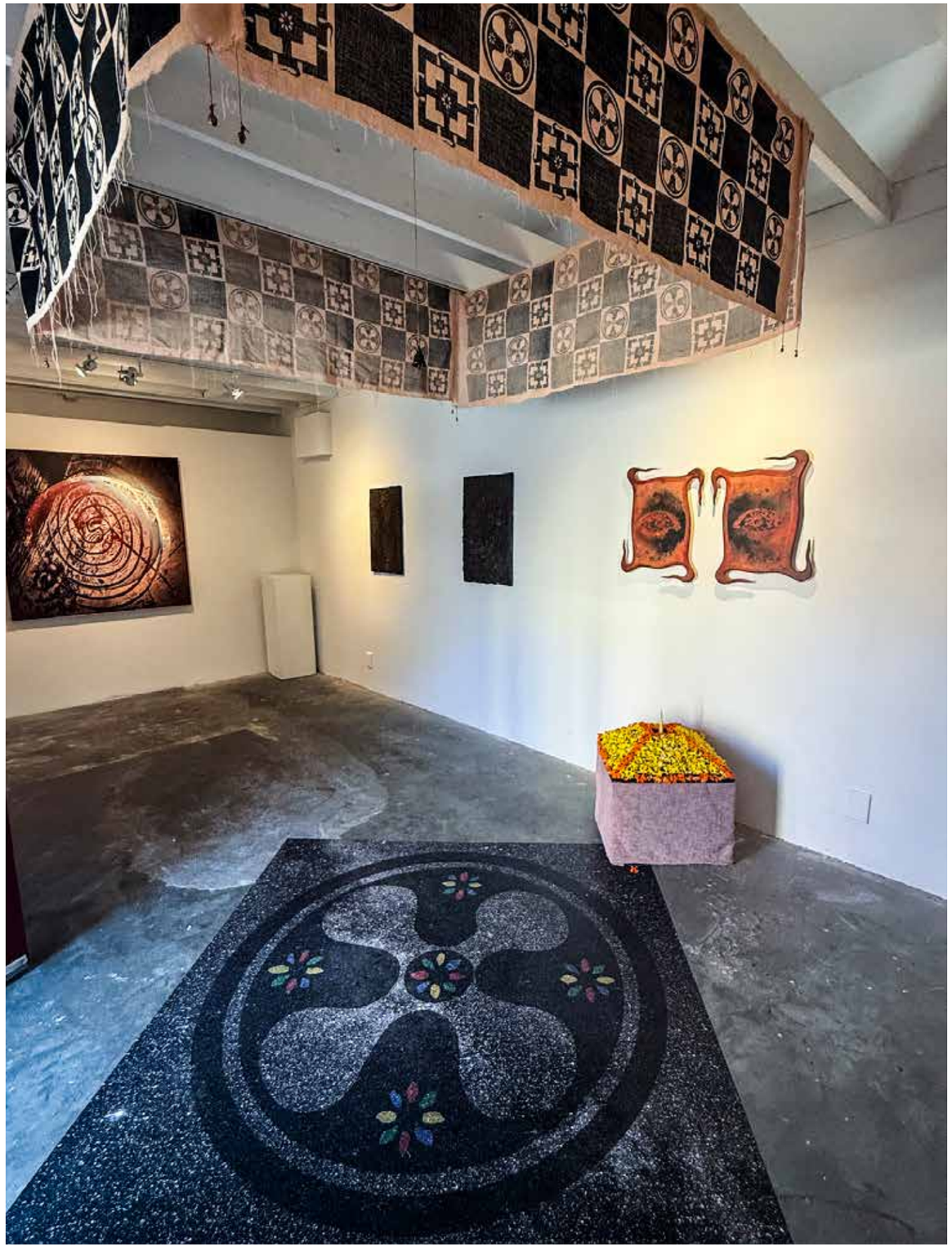
III

TETRAD OF TRINITY

Space Altar 2026 55.5x55.5
UV Print on Cradled Panel, Gold Leaf



Earth Throne 2026 55.5x55.5
UV Print on Cradled Panel, Gold Leaf

Jalu Ri 2026 43.5x43.5
UV Print on Cradled Panel, Gold Leaf

Jyotirupa 2026 43.5x43.5
UV Print on Cradled Panel, Gold Leaf