

**Inside the Artist -  
Gowri Savor  
November 2014**



**Tell us about your journey in art / as an artist.**

I always wanted to be an artist right from the age of 4, and it was the only thing I wanted to do. I did get waylaid by graphic design for about 10 years. In 2000, I committed to being a full-time artist. My work is about our relationship with the natural world and drawing is a really big part of this. My own practice has had various incarnations; from textiles (batik and other fabric), to Rangoli and more environmentally conscious sculptural pieces. The environment has both inspired and developed my practice. In 2001, I became a teaching artist and eventually my teaching and practice became intimately linked. I started working with more natural materials such as willow in my sculptural endeavors around 2004. In 2007, I came to Vermont from England where I had grown up. Here in Vermont, I found so many new and different materials to inspire me. The climate is so different from England, where you can work outdoors year round. In Vermont, I was restricted indoors for many months of the year and I was lost without access to materials outdoors. I learned to collect materials (seeds, branches and other items from my environment) through the spring, summer and fall for future projects. I see drawing and sculpture as very closely connected. I started seriously drawing through the winter months, allowing myself to explore and harness my psyche and let it come through my work.

**What is the medium you most like to work with/in? What draws you to this medium? What do you like about your materials?**

I am happiest when I am working outdoors on sculpture. I find being immersed in nature and my environment very satisfying. I often use willow and other natural materials (seeds, branches, others) in my 3D sculpture.

Many of my practices (Rangoli, performance) are processes that are intertwined and similar; slow, considered, meditative and focused. I have also found that through painting, like creating sculpture, I am able to move backward and forward in a piece and find a fourth dimension.

Natural materials are my favorite and picking one specific medium is difficult. It is so much about my (the artist's) relationship with the materials and the instrument being used. In drawing, it is just you and the pen and it can become tedious. I have found exploring the depths of the equipment can help overcome these types of challenges.



Rangoli is an ancient ephemeral art form practiced throughout India. Designs are drawn onto the ground, usually in chalk or colored powder and embellished with sand, rice, candles or flower petals. Rangoli is an expression of the creative self, often viewed as a form of self-portraiture. Designs are composed of geometric and curvilinear patterns, usually derived from nature. After the Rangoli is complete, the image is simply allowed to blow away with the wind – serving as a metaphor for the impermanence of life.

**What most inspires your work - Has there been anything that has been life changing or that has influenced your practice?**

I am most inspired by the natural environment. My move to Vermont was life changing; giving me the feeling of working with our relationship with our environment and learning to listen and be respectful of what nature is telling us.

England and Vermont share the same latitude but are such very different eco-systems and have such dissimilar seasonal cycles. I began my work with seeds when I first moved to Vermont. I needed to discover new materials as the plants/trees I was familiar with in England did not grow here. Vermont pinecones used in sculpture did not stay closed. Rather, they opened and I had to find new ways of seeing and using them. I discovered they could be soaked and re-manipulated to obtain different effects. I have come to realize that the warmer our winters are, the more it will impact how we interact with our environment and

how we do the things we do.

I have been trying to encourage more community collaborations. We have three community arts parades scheduled for next year around Vermont. These events are inspired by the Waterbury River of Light Parade, a way for people to embrace the merits of school, community participation in the arts and collaboration. I think Vermont needs more communication between people and communities and I work to facilitate it any way it can happen.



**What blogs or books are you reading or would recommend?**

I am a BIG art blog fan. My Sunday morning indulgence is to read them. I love “Colossal” (art blog from around the world) and “Brain Pickings” (blog that focuses on writing).

For books, I like to read anything that is a little dark with a strong poetic feel. I just started reading “The Enchanted” (Rene Denfeld), which is about finding the beauty and poetry of life in the most unexpected places.

