



Painted

Featuring words and work by Jonathan Feldschuh, Gupi Ranganathan, Mika Futz, and Sarina Mitchel

[READ "PAINTED" WITH SUBSCRIPTION](#)

Gupi Ranganathan



"Liminal Meanderings: Goldilocks and the Butterfly (01)" (2021). 60" X 96". Ggraphite, tape, oils, acrylic paint, acrylic inks and acrylic markers, and collaged drawings, woodblock prints and silkscreen prints on rice paper, vellum and Arches Reeves paper. Image courtesy of the artist.

My body is the source of all my memory. It remembers what I am, where I come from, where I am now, and where I am going. It carries encoded packets of information at the cellular and sub-microscopic level that continuously track its evolution from a unicellular microorganism to its current stage as a human being. It constantly processes these memories to generate new information that will be encoded as knowledge and passed on to the next generation.

"Liminal Meanderings: Goldilocks and the Butterfly" explores the process of physical and spiritual change and growth through movement in a betwixt and between space and time where the paths of moving marks intersect in a landscape made of cellular and sub-cellular structures that changes and evolves through the four seasons, where grids are created and broken up. I use the mathematical concept of meanders of orders relating to particular units of time: 2, 3, 4, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31, 52, 60 and 61.

The Goldilocks principle using the concept of something being 'just right' is applied to a wide range of disciplines, including developmental psychology, biology, medicine, astronomy, and engineering. In chaos theory, the Butterfly effect is the sensitive dependence on initial conditions in which a small change in one state of a deterministic nonlinear system can result in large differences in a later state.

What happens in a liminal garden where we continuously move between foreboding and hope, between Goldilocks and the butterfly? Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 epidemic, our physical movements have been curtailed. My interactions have changed; social distancing has become the norm. To adjust to this new reality, I automatically started drawing maps drawn from my memory of tracks, trajectories and orbits (from my travels from childhood, from the movements of cellular bodies, and astronomical objects to space travel trajectories) using mathematical meanders on old woodblock prints and silkscreen prints that resemble cell structures and cell cultures. My new experiences and interactions, along with my exposure to the images, events, and experiences from different places around the world on a daily basis enable me to continuously reconfigure my memories and maps. The imperative for us to return to a world with free movement and social interactions has especially highlighted the necessity for scientists and researchers to be just right in an uncertain and unpredictable world where the continuous intersections as both human beings and the Coronavirus move to result in mutations that create new and different strains. Inspired by the experimental biomedical research done by scientists in the Covid era when we are constantly reminded that we are a part of nature facing an increasing number of questions about what it means to be human, I sampled and collaged pieces torn and cut from these prints and extended them through drawings to create larger maps. As I combined text and layered the maps, the artworks continuously changed to reflect the changes I have seen and experienced over the last year.

Scientific research involves stepping into the unknown without fixed or definite answers. We have reached a point in biomedical research where we can choose what it means to be human. The questions we ask, the interactions we have, the choices we make, and the pathways we choose answer the biological and sociological question: “Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?” The abstract nature of the questions, the experimentation and continuous effort involved in research mirrors the process of creating art, and, becomes a metaphor for the experience of life. By mapping cell structures and patterns as they transform and evolve, I explore how changes at the microcosmic level lead us to visually and spiritually reflect on the macrocosm.



"Liminal Meanderings: Goldilocks and the Butterfly (02)" (2021). 60" X 50". Ggraphite, tape, oils, acrylic paint, acrylic inks and acrylic markers, and collaged drawings, woodblock prints and silkscreen prints on rice paper, vellum and Arches Reeves paper. Image courtesy of the artist.

Born and raised in India, [Guhapriya \(Gupi\) Ranganathan](#) earned degrees in engineering and management before moving to the United States in 1995. Her artistic work maps to memories in order to make sense of experiences.

Ranganathan was Artist-in-Residence at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard from 2009-2011. She has exhibited and shared her work focusing on the intersection of art and science in galleries and forums in the U.S., China, and India. Her work is represented in public and private collections. In 2017, she collaborated with the Stanley Center for Psychiatric Research to design an installation for their tenth anniversary, and in 2018 she was commissioned to install a site-specific work, *Cultured Interactions: Evolving Landscape*. Ranganathan studied at Simmons College and received her MFA in painting and printmaking from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design in 2008. She currently works and lives in Wayland, Massachusetts.