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Chicago, IL, September 17, 2021 – **ANDREW RAFACZ** is pleased to announce *Open Your Mouth and Taste the Spores*, a solo exhibition of new paintings from Soumya Netrabile in Gallery One & Two. The exhibition opens Friday, September 17 and continues through Saturday, October 30, 2021. This is the artist's first exhibition with the gallery.

Soumya Netrabile's paintings are documents of her deep and evolving relationship to the natural world. Over the last few years, the artist, who has had a significant connection to nature since childhood, has set out to consciously understand her attachment to and reciprocal relationship with it. She takes daily walks in the forest near her home, and has travelled extensively to experience natural places, both near and far.

These collected experiences have become the catalyst for a sharper gathering of memories and releasing of ideas, further shaping her paintings. Netrabile has endeavored to reactivate the energy and vibration of these spaces directly with her practice. Beginning often with personal recollections, the remainder of the narrative is developed through chance and imagination, a kind of discovery within the act of painting itself that mimics her quotidian perambulations on the trail.

Her compositions are built up from layers of paint that are directly related to the layers of her own memory, retrieved and shaped by the painting process. They evoke something decidedly greater than mere decoration or documentation of nature. Her paintings have a being-like energy and are as much about us in the world as the world itself. They are visual records of what Heidegger calls the *Dasein*.

Soumya Netrabile's vibrant, charged paintings are part of the long history of landscape painting, but they also embody a very contemporary relationship to their subject and firmly exist in our time. She composes and places her human and animal figures alike with sovereignty and an equality of existence. They are often enveloped in their environs, hidden by the formal marks of her paint. For the artist, the ubiquitous landscape remains the primary figure, the preeminent protagonist. There is an ever present notion that Mother Nature is not our possession, but we hers. Netrabile's paintings capture the irreducible hum (to borrow the title of one of the exhibition's paintings) of the world, and for her, we should be fundamentally grateful to be in it.

SOUMYA NETRABILE (American, born 1966 in Bangalore, India) lives and works in Chicago, IL. Netrabile received a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a BSEE in engineering from Rutgers University. She has had recent solo exhibitions at Pt.2 Gallery (Oakland, CA) and Terra Incognito (Oak Park, IL). Recent group exhibitions include Anat Ebgi, Los Angeles, CA; Trinta Gallery (Santiago de Compostela, ESP); PRACTISE (Oak Park, IL); and KARMA, New York, NY. Her work is included in both public and private collections. This is her first exhibition with the gallery.