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THREE CONSUMMATE ARTISTS EXHIBIT AT BIG ARTS ON SANIBEL ISLAND

SANIBEL, Florida – January 31, 2024 –

Works by three fine artists – Beth Schroeder, Al Chailosky and Shah Hadjebi – using diverse mediums of expression will fill BIG ARTS two galleries.

Beth Schroeder, exhibiting in BIG ARTS Mezzanine Gallery, began her artistic journey in Chicago, Illinois, and has made Naples Florida, her home for the past 20 years. She is an ordained Zen Buddhist in the tradition of internationally revered spiritual leader Thich Nhat Hanh, and her work reflects the contemplative, meditative experience. The exhibit is entitled *Gatha Poem Painting*. Gatha means a verse recited in rhythm with the breath as part of mindfulness practice, either in daily life or as part of meditation.

Schroeder’s various sizes of beautiful silk watercolor “scrolls” are created by applying dye on silk – a typically Eastern arts discipline. The work requires a meditative level of focus and presence “in the moment,” as every single stroke of dye is permanent the minute it is applied. She developed this process through her own spiritual journey in the Buddhist tradition of honoring what arises in the moment, as well as her work in art therapy. She is also showing her paintings on canvas and a large, stunning papier mâché installation piece.

The BIG ARTS Dunham Family Gallery exhibit, *Common Ground, An Urban Experience*, features well-known regional artists Shah Hadjebi and Al Chailosky. Hadjebi is a gifted watercolorist who pays close attention to detail and infuses magical colors into every one of his pieces. His renderings range from the aviary sublime to the flash of chrome on a 1957 Chevy. He brings us closer to nature with joy and love.

Al Chailosky creates fascinating, small-scale, three-dimensional pieces that are exact replicas of iconic American architecture. Hadjebi and Chailosky work in their respective

mediums with inspiration drawn from the same urban scenes – from a gritty, manic corner in Chinatown in New York City to the glorious Floridian architecture of Miami Beach.

Common Ground, An Urban Experience in the Dunham Family Gallery continues through March 10. *Gatha Poem Painting* in the second-floor Mezzanine Gallery runs through April 21.

All exhibits at BIG ARTS are free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.bigarts.org or call 239-395-0900.

BIG ARTS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in its fifth decade of providing an array of quality entertainment, arts and education programs that enrich and nurture the lives of Sanibel and Captiva residents and visitors through professionally led arts and enrichment classes for all ages, a renowned lecture series, great films, and dynamic visual and performing arts presentations of the highest caliber.

The 2023-2024 BIG ARTS Fine Arts Series is sponsored by Jim and Gaye Pigott.

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