

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## SUNDARAM TAGORE GALLERY IS PLEASED TO PRESENT NATHAN SLATE JOSEPH

*October 26-December 18, 2001*

Sundaram Tagore Gallery is proud to present a large-scale exhibition of the work of Nathan Slate Joseph. Born in 1943, Joseph has been an integral part of the New York School of Art for 30 years. Joseph trained at the Pratt Institute and the Art Students League in New York, and was nominated to the Guggenheim Fellowship with the endorsement of John Chamberlain in '79.

Joseph developed the unique methodology used to produce the paintings seen in this show in the 1970s, when, like Frank Stella, Carl Andre and Chamberlain, he began working with found objects. Like those artists, he developed an affinity for industrial urban materials and simplified forms. Joseph, however, wanted to carve out an aesthetic identity that went beyond the overt visual effect of real objects. In the 60s and 70s, he was powerfully aware of the alarming pace of the degradation and exploitation of nature and began engaging nature to create his art. This was an important breakthrough. He then coalesced an earlier interest in the Russian Constructivist aesthetic with his urban aesthetic and concern for nature.

Joseph applies pure pigments on sheets of zinc-galvanized steel and then exposes them to the elements on the roof of his Hudson Street Studio. He aids the oxidation process through various methods and adds raw pigments to the rusted metal surfaces. With these sheets, Joseph produces compositions of rich surface textures and colors, works that are both wall sculptures and painted reliefs. The strong emphasis on the construction of the compositions as well as the coloration of the sheets blurs the boundary between painting and sculpture.

The vivid colors and soft textures of the pigment contrast with cold materiality of the steel; the effects of the nurturing and life-giving elements of nature contrast with the grittiness of industrial sheet metal. All combine into a powerful Abstract Expressionist language. The artist Larry Rivers has said, "There's a kind of weight and primitive attractiveness to the work. It's attention-getting. He's got something going and I really think it's good."

Nathan Slate Joseph's work is included in many important museums and private collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York; Albright Knox Gallery, Buffalo; Butler Institute of Art, New York; Mitchell Art Museum, Illinois; Johnson and Johnson Collection, Illinois; the Larry Rivers collection; the John Chamberlain collection; the Joni Mitchell and Kevin Kline Collection.

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