

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**Who:** Kevin Woodson

**What:** Peace Within Chaos: The Balance of Flowers

**When:** June 3 – July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016

**Opening Reception:** June 3<sup>rd</sup> 6-9pm

**2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays Watercolor Workshop:** June 11<sup>th</sup> 12-2pm

**Artist Talk:** Friday, July 8<sup>th</sup> 6-9pm

**2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays Watercolor Workshop:** Saturday, July 9<sup>th</sup> 12-2pm

**Where:** Joyce Gordon Gallery

406 14<sup>th</sup> Street Oakland, CA. 94612 (12<sup>th</sup> St. Bart)

[www.joycegordongallery.com](http://www.joycegordongallery.com)

For more information please contact:

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Joyce Gordon Gallery presents, “**Peace Within Chaos: The Balance of Flowers,**” a botanical tale of peace presented in sublime balance with nature and the universe by Oakland artist, Kevin Woodson.

Peace Within Chaos at Joyce Gordon Gallery represents a collection of work that steps outside the expectations and constraints flower fans, gardeners, and the art world has put on them. Artist, Kevin Woodson painted his “Peace Within Chaos” series in gardens, but the paintings go beyond the garden walls, illuminating the flowers’ lessons in balance. In this collection, his plein air botanical watercolors often painted in the Oakland Gardens are seen in the form of cultural memes such as Yin and Yang, power and repose, death and rebirth, and Peace within Chaos.

Kevin continually finds new ways to look at flowers, while retaining the colors, vibrancy, and beauty he is known for. Among flower painters, his work is unique because pencil, photography, and even cut flowers can present barriers for most artists and their viewers. Kevin creates his paintings directly in the gardens, working with only living, in-season blooms. His paintings often seen as healing, meditative, intensely personal, and culturally significant, have been consistently exhibited in the Bay Area, Asia, Mexico and the Americas for the last five years.

From a personal and meditative perspective, Kevin began to open up after meeting Matthew Matsuyama, a highly gifted floral designer who became his greatest teacher. Kevin followed Matsuyama's pattern of designs and how to talk with flowers and present them so people could connect with the flowers, and connect with themselves. Cultural significance can be seen in his Dahlias tale of immigration and world travel. He was invited to paint the original species Dahlias in Mexico that has globe trotted since Cortez' invasion. These species paintings show the other side of the coin – the culture and indigenous material that still thrives in its homeland.

Kevin further address Chaos from a community standpoint, having returned in 2014 from a series of exhibits in Asia to find life in America in a state of Chaos. Decades of deadly police activity in the Black community had reached a boiling point, and Oakland and the whole country echoed with cries for justice. He felt this was a moment when the full weight of history was coming down and how we responded would and transform and define us. It was clear to him that during times such as this, art and artists play critical roles reflecting the community's voice, confronting false power, dealing with displacement (an experience not foreign to nature or the botanicals) and pointing out new directions.

As an artist, Kevin has lived in the Bay Area since he moved here from the gardens of Illinois in 1991. His flowers follow in the footsteps of Bay Area greats, Gary Bukovnik and Sally Robertson, using art to give flowers a place in our contemporary cultural dialogue. Although his passion is the botanical world, he's pushed the frontiers of art in San Francisco, working with local bands, circus performers, performance art, and black light installations. In addition to community gardens, Kevin has artistically collaborated with San Francisco institutions like Project Open Hand, Cellspace, Folsom Street Fair, and the San Francisco Day of the Dead Ritual Procession.

**Joyce Gordon Gallery** is a commercial fine art gallery located in the downtown district of Oakland, California. It exhibits art that reflects the social and cultural diversity of the Bay Area and international artists. The aim of the gallery is to respect the creative pursuits of the individual and seeks to make such work accessible to a broad audience.