

## **Artist Statement**

"...In many of the drawings and paintings, the images themselves have become only focal points in a process that has less to do with the subject than with the creative experience.

As it happens, the geography of Tibet and the Himalayas, in general, and the subject matter, specifically, are very conducive to having creative or spiritual experiences. This can happen while working in the studio but, unlike the studio, the direct experience of these lands awakens one's senses usually dulled by comfort and convenience.

In the Himalaya and on the Tibetan Plateau one is confronted, in a profound way, with the enigmatic nature of being alive. This experience lies somewhere between one's incessant preoccupation with the extreme physical discomforts of survival and the local belief systems that promote the idea that all things are, by their nature, empty. The effect is a physiological experience that makes it difficult to deny one's interrelationship, not just with the environment but with that "emptiness" as well. And as an artist, this experience is important in the process of creation; after all, emptiness is the womb from which form becomes manifest and through which the aesthetic experience becomes aware of itself..." *P. Sugden*

*From the artist's book, Visions from the Fields of Merit: Drawings of Tibet and the Himalayas*