



# Ms. Suzan Pitt

JUL 11, 1943 - JUN 16, 2019



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## **Ms. Suzan Pitt**

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**S**uch was her creative genius that when Suzan Pitt Kraning died on June 16, 2019, The New York Times used the word phantasmagorical to describe her animated films. Pancreatic cancer took Suzan at age 75, But the wildly daring art she created will capture our imagination for as long as our eyes can see.

Suzan was born on July 11, 1943, in Kansas City, Mo., the daughter of John and Belva (Baughman) Pitt. Her father owned a tire distributorship and her mother was a milliner and homemaker. Despite her wonderfully traditional upbringing, her childhood in Kansas City hinted at the creative genius that was to blossom. She started drawing and painting at an early age. In Suzan's hands, her dolls could fly. With her sister (and lifelong, dearest friend) Melinda, they spent months on barren ground behind the family garage, trying to build a tunnel to China, their zest for freedom inspiring this whimsical effort.

Suzan studied painting at Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., graduating in 1965 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. Armed with a diploma and vision, she threw herself into a bold art form: Short, experimental, animated films, in which each frame is hand-painted and drawn. Twelve images were required for each second of film. On her website ([www.suzanpitt.com](http://www.suzanpitt.com)), she explained that animation allowed her to dramatize the stories depicted in each one of her paintings. She wanted the films to mirror our daydreams. In The New York Times piece celebrating Suzan's life, renowned animator John Canemaker said her films expressed her "undiluted, unadulterated, uncensored dreams."

Such dreams!

In her best-known film, "Asparagus," a faceless woman enters a theater, opens a suitcase and out pops a lamp, chair, balloons and insect. It took four years to make and was finished in 1979. It became something of a cult classic on the midnight movie circuit. In "Joy Street," a mouse comes alive and saves a woman living in a dark apartment by carrying her down a staircase and into a lush park. "Joy Street" was inspired by the peace she found during a difficult, personal time in the



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rain forests of Mexico and Guatemala. She was there on a Fulbright Scholarship, drawn to exploring remote areas by horseback and kayak. Her work has been featured in the Museum of Modern Art in New York, other museums and film festivals worldwide, and even in operas, for which she created animated film images and designed the sets and costumes. She taught animation at Harvard University; experimental animation at California Institute of the Arts; created several murals, including one depicting the endangered species of Wisconsin for the U.S. Post Office in Fountain City, Wis.; and earned several fellowship, grants and awards during her career. A Renaissance woman, Suzan also dabbled in the fashion industry, creating editions of hand-painted coats. Her work, and spirit of adventure, took her to homes in Europe, Mexico, New York and Los Angeles. She spent her final years in Taos.

You can admire her creativity for yourself. Amazon has listed her films on DVD.

Suzan is survived by a son, Blue Kraning and his wife, Laura, of Buffalo, N.Y.; two siblings – John Raymond Pitt Jr. of Espanola, N.M., and Melinda Carlton and her husband, Sebastian, of Myrtle Beach, S.C. She is also survived by Billy Pitt, Sue Wright Sturdivant, Tom Sturdivant, Robby Sturdivant, Buddy Pitt, John Sturdivant Jr., David Sturdivant (Dianne), Stephanie Sturdivant, Angeleah Sturdivant, Rob Pitt (Melissa), Daniel Sturdivant (Kayla), Kristen Sturdivant, John Sturdivant III, Elijah Sturdivant, and Liam D’Amico – all of Tennessee.

A visitation will be held at Spring Hill Funeral Home in Nashville, Tennessee on Saturday, June 29 from 2-3pm, with a celebration of life service beginning at 3pm.

The family is deeply grateful for the love and care shown by her doctors, nurses and Hospice, and by her dear Taos friends and neighbors.

Suzan loved her brother, John, the youngest of the three children in the family, a wonderful playmate when they were young, and a mainstay throughout his sister’s life. She loved gardening, and talked about it for hours on the phone with her sister. When cancer began sapping her energy, her sister would turn the conversation to plants and Suzan would perk right up. She loved the strength and beauty of horses, and the freedom they represented. She loved to laugh and be silly. In a world too often black and white and cold, she brought a sense of outlandish color that spoke to the majesty of nature and the mystery of the universe.

Dreams indeed.



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Spring Hill Funeral Home is taking care of the family. Online condolences can be shared at [www.springhillfh.com](http://www.springhillfh.com).




# Events


**Ms. Suzan Pitt**

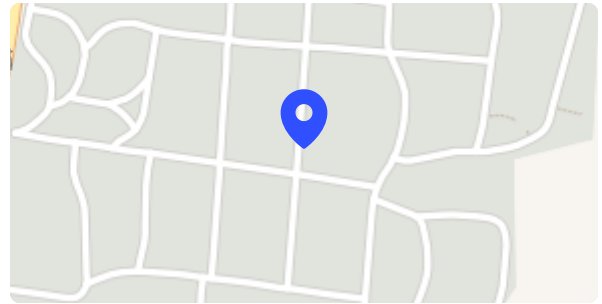
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## Visitation


 **Saturday**, June 29, 2019

 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM CT


 **Spring Hill Funeral Home**  
5110 Gallatin Pike S, Nashville TN 37216

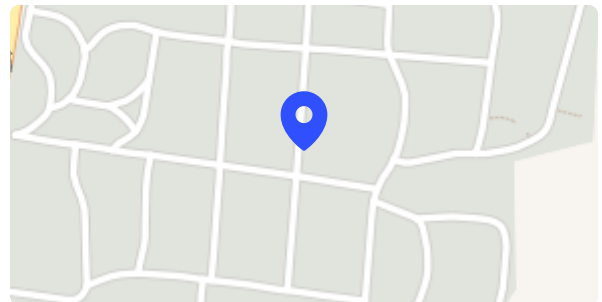


## Celebration of Life Memorial Service

 **Saturday**, June 29, 2019

 3:00 PM - 3:45 PM CT

 **Spring Hill Funeral Home**  
5110 Gallatin Pike S, Nashville TN 37216





## Tribute Wall

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KR

**Kristi Russell** posted:

Although we didn't get to see Suzan that often, she was always so kind and sweet. She painted me a beautiful picture after seeing her at the family reunion. Blue, we are so sorry for your loss, be thankful for the beautiful memories. With our deepest sympathy, Patsy Pitt Duncan, Suzan's half-sister and Kristi Duncan Russell, Patsy's daughter

June 27 at 11:39 AM

DD

**Donald And Dennis** sent a Sentiments of Serenity Spray to the Pitt family.



June 27 at 6:50 AM

AF

**A Collector Friend** sent a Gracious Lavender Basket to the Pitt family.



June 27 at 6:46 AM

YC

**Your Friends And Students At Calarts** sent a Beautiful Dreams to the Pitt family.



June 27 at 6:46 AM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Suzan by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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