



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Johanna Taylor
33 Clinton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201
718.875.4047 x11, jtaylor@bricartsmedia.org
high resolution images available upon request

BRIC Arts | Media | Bklyn Presents A Wild Gander at BRIC Rotunda Gallery

Exhibition of Artists from the South Asian Women's Creative Collective

Opening Reception: Wednesday, March 24, 7-9 pm
A Wild Gander on view in the Main Gallery: March 25 – May 1, 2010
Look Left: Readings from SAWCC: Wednesday, April 14, 7 pm



Mala Iqbal. *In Sight of Cocorino*, 2007. Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 90 in. Courtesy of the artist.

Brooklyn, NY—BRIC Arts | Media | Bklyn is pleased to present ***A Wild Gander: Artists from the South Asian Women's Creative Collective***, a group exhibition curated by **Baseera Khan**, BRIC's Assistant Curator for Contemporary Art. The South Asian Women's Creative Collective (SAWCC) is a New York-based nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement, visibility, and development of emerging and established South Asian women artists. The exhibition will be on view **March 25 - May 1, 2010** with an **opening reception on March 24** from 7-9 pm.

A Wild Gander features **Chitra Ganesh, Mala Iqbal, Jesal Kapadia, Yamini Nayar, and Divya Mehra**, five New York-based artists. The title of the exhibition is drawn from Joseph Campbell's collection of essays, *The Flight of the Wild Gander*, which references the Sanskrit concept of the *paramahansa*, an enlightened spiritual teacher who transcends the mundane, just as geese (*hansa*) are able to transcend the earth through flight. This sage also feels at home both on water and on land, analogous to a person who adeptly negotiates disparate geopolitical cultural codes. The artists taking part in *A Wild Gander* do so, reflecting the complex issues that frame South Asian identity, whether based in gender, media representations, or politics.

These artists transcend and look beyond conventional understandings of contemporary South Asian identity. They reclaim representations of their heritage, reference pop culture and art history, and reveal the influences between East and West in a dizzying fashion. Skillfully interweaving medium and material, these artists produce diverse bodies of work that conceptualize the presence of liminal spaces between identity and formal study of artistic practice.

In debates over the politics of representation, organizations like SAWCC invite artists to own their identities, a process that can be misinterpreted in mainstream art canons as an echo chamber. The repercussions of this misinterpretation are twofold: they suggest that South Asian artists are perceived as speaking only to each other, and that South Asian artists are measured only by their degrees of difference from hegemonic narratives in contemporary art. This duality can be a struggle for many contemporary South Asian artists as they face a constant eviction of both identity and art-historical contexts. Indeed, if not for organizations like SAWCC recognizing the need for personal identity as a valuable platform for art-making, these artists possibly never would have the chance to crack the Western art canon.

documentary does
not shed light on
the valiant efforts

Jesal Kapadia's works reflect the role of a contemporary *flâneuse*, or the feminine wanderer in public space. Searching the labyrinthine archives of the Internet, she playfully re-uses images that evoke an uncanny formal alliance to some key 20th century artworks, questioning the notion of avant-garde in the context of the global South. In her video *Telegraph*, she critiques documentary film practices by re-inscribing a letter found online, as a form of protest as well as a call to action.



Chitra Ganesh asks us to see beauty and horror simultaneously with a series of lenticular photographs, images printed on a special screen that make them appear to change or move when viewed at different angles. Known for her large-scale installations and works on paper, with these works Ganesh comments on stereotypical notions of feminine beauty projected by Bollywood heroines.



Mala Iqbal paints wild and vast landscapes whose meanings differ for each viewer. Her fantastical imagery draws from natural history illustration and science fiction, and concepts of the wilderness and civilization. With their sinuous meldings of the familiar and the strange, Iqbal's haunting images are as much about the physical environment as they are about profound emotions and psychological states.



Yamini Nayar will create a new large-scale photograph that demands suspension of disbelief. In her recent large-format digital photographs, Nayar has pictured constructed, imagined environments that she devises from assemblages of found objects and archival photographs. With these images, she explores the illusory power of photography and the evocative power that resides in the space between the imaginary and the real.



Divya Mehra inserts herself into fragments of appropriated videos that she collages together using humor as armor to disrupt conventions within identity politics. Mehra's often-embarrassing testimonies disarm the viewer as she stands in as the object of mockery. Applying wit to engage in slippery diasporic conversations, Mehra vacillates between one-liners, often taking form in text-based works made of neon and vinyl lettering, as well as YouTube-ready video works.

In conjunction with *A Wild Gander*, on **Wednesday, April 14 at 7 pm**, BRIC will present ***Look Left: Readings from the South Asian Women's Creative Collective***, curated by SAWCC board member and writer **Anjali Goyal**. Writers from SAWCC will read works that explore what it means to them to "look left," whether it be traveling opposite of expectation or casting a glance out at the periphery, taking a new and risky look at contemporary South Asian identity.

Baseera Khan is Assistant Curator and Gallery Manager at BRIC Arts | Media | Bklyn as well as a practicing artist represented by San Francisco and New York-based Hosfelt Gallery.

BRIC Rotunda Gallery
The Contemporary Art Space of BRIC Arts | Media | Bklyn

Directions Located in Brooklyn Heights, BRIC Rotunda Gallery is a short walk from the 2,3; 4,5; M; or R trains at Court Street/Borough Hall; or the A, C trains at High Street.

Hours The gallery is open to the public free of charge from Tuesday through Saturday, 12 – 6 pm.

Cost Events at the gallery are free to the public.



BRIC Arts | Media | Bklyn is a multi-disciplinary arts and media non-profit dedicated to presenting contemporary art, performing arts, and community media programs that are reflective of Brooklyn's diverse communities, and to providing resources and platforms to support the creative process. All of our offerings are free or low cost, to enhance the public's access to and understanding of arts and media. Each year, upwards of a million people in Brooklyn and citywide are served through our programs. BRIC's contemporary art initiatives aim is to increase the visibility and accessibility of contemporary art while bridging the gap between the art world and global culture in

Brooklyn through exhibitions, public events, and an innovative arts education program at BRIC Rotunda Gallery and around the borough.

BRIC acknowledges public funds for its contemporary art programs from the Institute of Museum and Library Services; National Endowment for the Arts; New York State Council on the Arts; New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; New York State Senators Velmanette Montgomery and Daniel Squadron; New York State Assembly members Inez Barron, Hakeem Jeffries, Alec Brook-Krasny, and Joan Millman; and New York City Council members Lewis Fidler, Vincent Gentile, Letitia James, Domenic M. Recchia, Jr., Diana Reyna, Kendall Stewart, Al Vann, and David Yassky. Additional support provided by The Lily Auchincloss Foundation; Robert Lehman Foundation; and TD Bank. The 2009–10 exhibition season is supported in part by Martha A. and Robert S. Rubin, in addition to numerous individuals.



For more info visit bricartsmedia.org/contemporary-art

####