



Schandra Singh depicts chaotic universe at Chelsea gallery show

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The Thomas Erben Gallery in Chelsea will be presenting a series of works by Schandra Singh for an exhibition titled *God Don't Like Ugly*. For her first solo show at the gallery Singh unveils several oil paintings of some rather exaggerated and distorted portraits.

The inspiration behind the works in this show came from some photographs Singh took while on vacationing in several places, using the subjects in her photos as the basis for her paintings, and then also incorporating elements from several of her other sketches. As she does this, she removes the individual further away from its original context turning them into a projection of Singh's psyche, as seen through her eyes. As she studies and everyone else she encounters, they all become immersed in the same universe as they struggle with whether or not to go with the flow or fight the turbulent waters they face.

One image titled *Shiva* depicts a boy, dressed in ordinary clothes while surrounded by mysterious creatures. Shiva is standing in a puddle and has seven arms--three primary ones and a few coming out from the sides. In two of his main arms he's carrying a green bucket in either one. He raises another one of his arms to his heart, and holds his disproportionately large head to the sky with his eyes closed, while two smaller blue eyes above him appear wide open. There appear to be two other Gods or spirits on either side of his forehead with embellished heads and miniscule bodies.

Another painting titled *Jean* is quite a colorful and cheerful piece. It illustrates a man and a woman standing beside each other while carrying inflatable pool toys. The woman has a big smile on her face as she's holding an inflatable fish. She's wearing a multi-colored shirt and has four eyes—two of them are where they're supposed to be while one eye sits on top of her right eye, and the fourth eye, she's wearing as an earring. The man is also displaying a wide, toothy grin and almost looks like a clown with his multi-colored face as he holds an inflatable turtle. — *Alison Martin*

At The Thomas Erben Gallery, 526 W. 26th St., through Feb. 14. The gallery is open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. There will be an opening reception at the gallery Jan. 8th from 6—8 p.m.