Thomas Erben Gallery

Exhibition Document
Art Mumbai, 2026
Booth #C65

Nicola Durvasula, Yamini Nayar,
Dona Nelson, Olivia Reavey,
Stefan Sagmeister, and Aditi Singh

Wednesday, November 11 - Sunday, November 15, 2026.



Nicola Durvasula (b. 1960, Jersey, British Isles) is an artist based in Kent, England, whose practice spans drawing, sculpture, and visual scores. She studied at the École des Beaux-Arts du Havre, France, and earned an M.A. in Fine Art from the Kent Institute of Art and Design. Her work has been exhibited internationally, with solo exhibitions in London, Mumbai, New York, Marseille, and New Delhi, including at **Thomas Erben Gallery**, **Nature Morte**, and **Sakshi Gallery**. Notable group exhibitions include *Watercolour* (2011) at **Tate Britain**, London, and *The Sahmat Collective* (2013) at the **Smart Museum of Art**, Chicago. She has also taught in the UK and India, where she has lived for an extensive period of time.



Yamini Nayar (b. 1975, Detroit, Michigan) is an artist based in Brooklyn, New York, whose practice spans photography, sculpture, and architecture. She received her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 1999 and her MFA from the School of Visual Arts, New York, in 2005. Her work has been exhibited internationally, with solo exhibitions at **Thomas Erben Gallery**, New York; **Jhaveri Contemporary**, Mumbai; and **Gallery Wendi Norris**, San Francisco. Notable group exhibitions include the **Sharjah Biennial** (2011), **Queensland Art Gallery** (2012), **Museum für Moderne Kunst**, Frankfurt (2015), and **Kiran Nadar Museum of Art**, New Delhi (2015). Her work is held in major public collections, including the **Guggenheim Museum**, **Art Institute of Chicago**, and **Cincinnati Art Museum**.



Dona Nelson (b. 1947, Grand Island, Nebraska) is an American painter based in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, known for her experimental approach to abstraction and unconventional painting techniques. She received her BFA from Ohio State University in 1968 and attended the Whitney Independent Study Program in New York. Her work has been exhibited extensively, with solo exhibitions at the **Tang Teaching Museum**, **Weatherspoon Art Museum**, **Thomas Erben Gallery**, and **Michael Benevento Gallery**. Notable exhibitions include the 2014 **Whitney Biennial** and 52 Artists: A Feminist Milestone (2022) at the **Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum**. Her work is held in major collections, including the **Metropolitan Museum of Art**, **Guggenheim Museum**, **Whitney Museum of American Art**, and **Centre Pompidou**. She is the recipient of a **Guggenheim Fellowship** (1994) and an **Anonymous Was A Woman Award** (2015); she is **Professor Emerita** at **Tyler School of Art and Architecture**.



Olivia Reavey (b. 1998, Boston, Massachusetts) is an American photographer working primarily with analog photography and darkroom printing. She received her BFA in Photography from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2020 and her MFA from Yale University in 2026, followed by a summer at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. Her work has been exhibited at **Thomas Erben Gallery**, New York; **Yancey Richardson**, New York; **Helena Anrather**, New York; and *The Rose*, curated by Justine Kurland, at the **Lumber Room**, Portland, and **Center for Photography Woodstock**, Kingston. In 2026, she presented a solo exhibition at **AIPAD**, followed by her her solo gallery show, *Distension* both at Thomas Erben. Her photography has appeared in **The New York Times**, **Vogue**, **MATTE Magazine**, and on the cover of **Bias Cut Magazine**'s, *The Body Issue*, with forthcoming presentations at **Paris Photo** and **Fernberger Gallery**, Los Angeles.



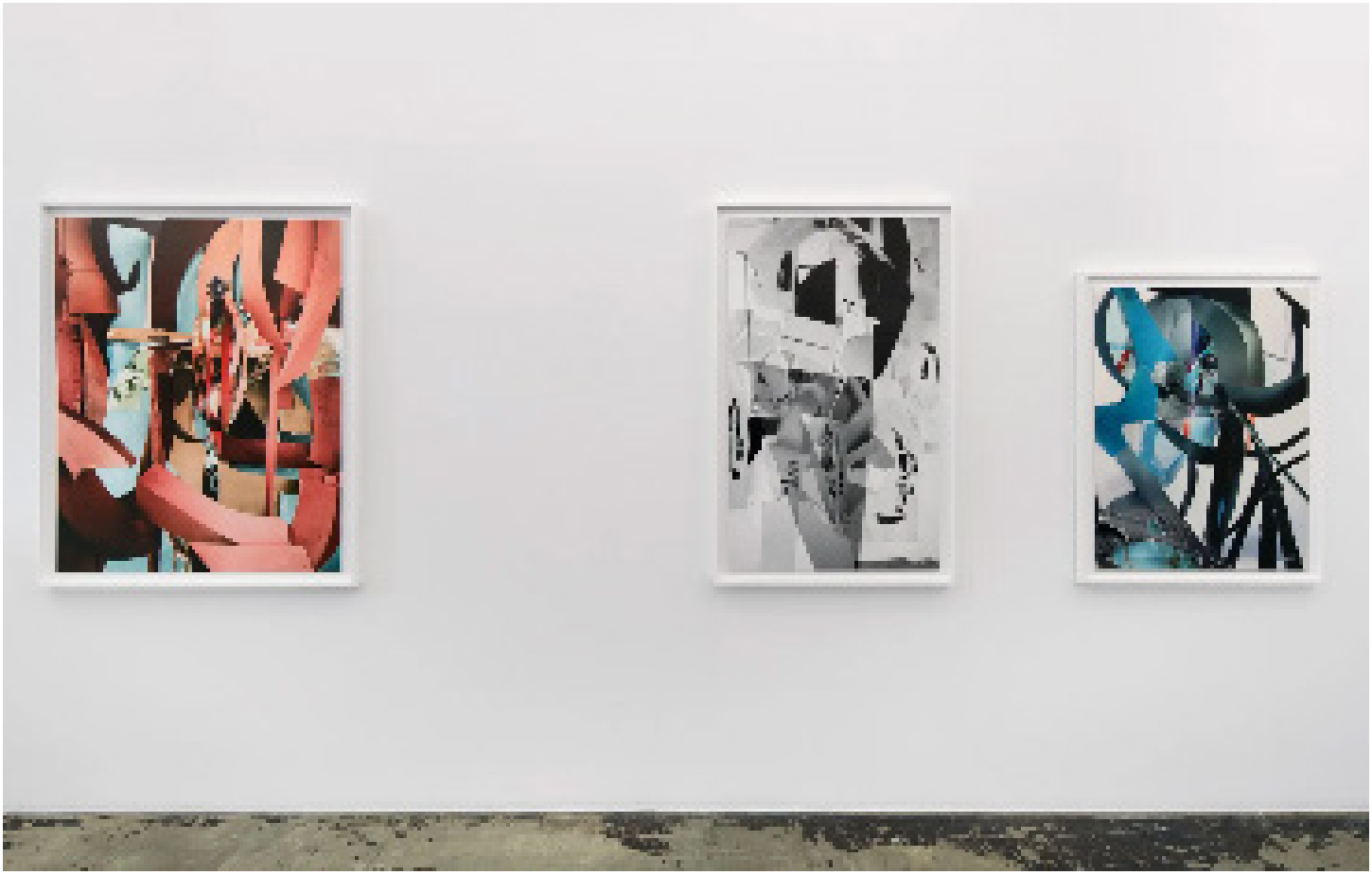
Stefan Sagmeister (b. 1962, Bregenz, Austria) is a New York-based artist and graphic designer whose practice spans painting, typography, installation, and design. He graduated from the University of Applied Arts in Vienna in 1986 and received his MFA from Pratt Institute, New York, as a Fulbright Scholar in 1988. In 1993, he founded **Sagmeister Inc.**, producing acclaimed designs for musicians including the **Rolling Stones**, **Lou Reed**, and **David Byrne**. His work has been exhibited internationally, including at the **Jewish Museum**, New York; **MAK**, Vienna; **Museum of Contemporary Art and Design**, Lisbon; and **Thomas Erben Gallery**, New York. His work is held in major collections, including the **Museum of Modern Art**, New York; **San Francisco Museum of Modern Art**; and **Art Institute of Chicago**. He is the recipient of two **Grammy Awards**, the **National Design Award** (2006), and the **AIGA Medal** (2013).



Aditi Singh (b. 1976, Guwahati, India) is an artist based in Mumbai, whose practice centers on drawing and painting, particularly ink, graphite, and charcoal on paper. She studied at the New York Studio School and received her MFA from the University of Pennsylvania in 2001. Her work has been exhibited internationally, with solo exhibitions at **Thomas Erben Gallery**, New York, and **Chemould Prescott Road**, Mumbai. Notable group exhibitions include; *Emotional Drawing* (2008–2009) at the **National Museum of Modern Art**, Tokyo and Kyoto, and *transfiguration, -mutation, -formation* (2025) at **Thomas Erben Gallery**. Her work is held in public and private collections, including the **Kiran Nadar Museum of Art**, New Delhi, and the **University of Pennsylvania**, Philadelphia. She is also the recipient of a **Ford Fellowship**.



Yamini Nayar
Only the Dance, 2024
Archival pigment print
40 × 30 in.
Edition of 5 plus II AP
INR 8 lahks



Installation view, Yamini Nayar: *Ouroboros*, Thomas Erben Gallery, 2024.



Yamini Nayar
Being There, 2005-06
C-print
20 × 24 in.
Edition of 5 plus II AP
INR 4.5 lahks



Yamini Nayar
Luck is the Residue of Design, 2007
C-print
20 × 24 in.
Edition of 5 plus II AP
INR 4.5 lahks



Dona Nelson
Crosstown Lights, 2025
Acrylic paint and mediums on canvas
54 ½ × 60 ½ in.
INR 40 lahks



Installation view, Dona Nelson: *The Indiviudalism of Dona Nelson,* Canada Gallery, 2026.



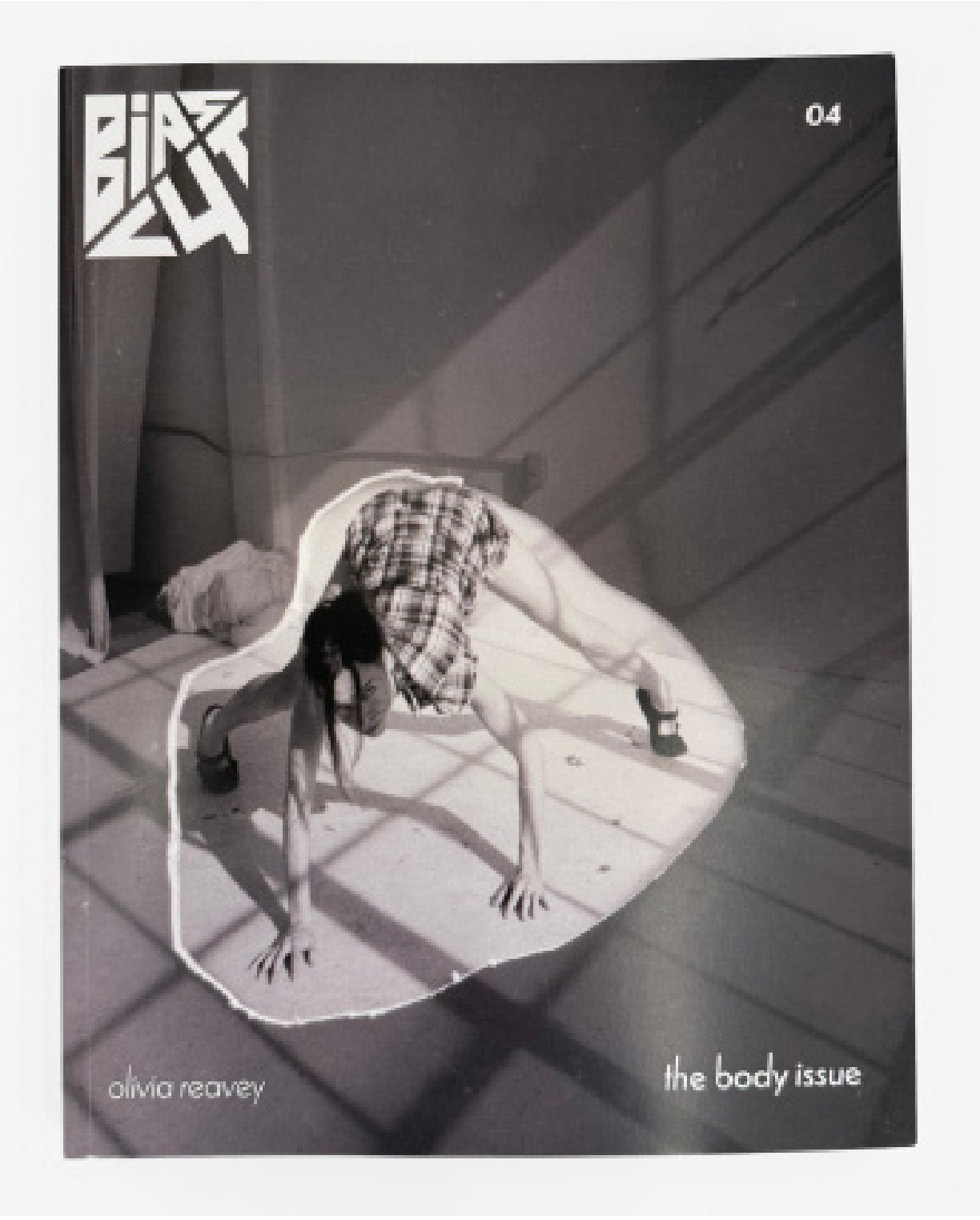
Aditi Singh
Untitled, 2018
Ink on paper
30 × 81 in.
INR 12 lahks



Installation view, Aditi Singh: *so much the less complete*, Thomas Erben Gallery, 2018.



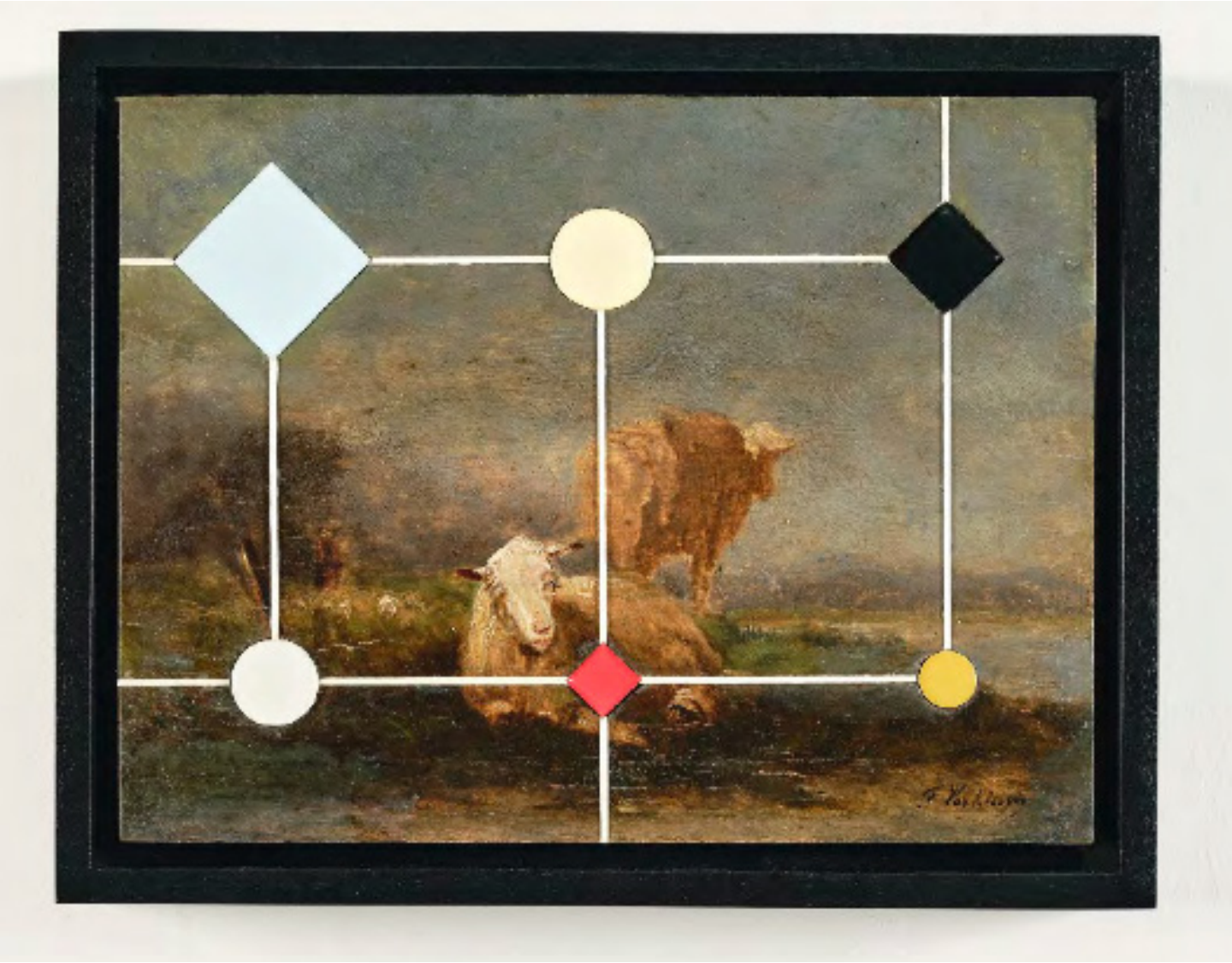
Olivia Reavey
Untitled, 2026
Silver gelatin print
19 x 24 in.
Edition 2 of 5 plus I AP
INR 3 lakhs



Olivia Reavey, Bias Cut Magazine, "The Body Issue," Fall 2026.



Stefan Sagmeister
Johanna, 2023
Global child mortality rate between 1800 and 2020
Red shape, 1800: 43%
Light blue shape, 2020: 3.9%
24 3/4 x 29 1/2 in.
INR 17.5 lahks



Stefan Sagmeister
Two sheep II, 2023
Freshwater withdrawals of various protein sources, meat and plant based sources, per 100 grams of protein
Nuts 2531 liter
Pork 1110 liter
Lamb 901 liter
Beef 728 liter
Chicken 381 liter
Potato 348 liter
9.6 x 7.4 in.
Historic painting: unknown painter, 19th century, oil on panel
Source: Hannah Richie, Not the end of the world
INR 9 lahks



Stefan Sagmeister
Francois, 2023
Percentage of immigrants without legal status among all immigrants in various countries:
White squares Germany 4%
Light blue squares Netherlands 2%
Green squares Spain 6%
Purple squares UK 7%
Black squares USA 22%
Orange squares France 3%
Yellow squares Canada 3%
18.9 x 12.6 in.
Historic Drawing: 1896, William Thomas, Nichols Boyce, 1857 - 1911, Fishing Boats off the Coast, watercolor, signed
Source: Kierans & Vargas-Silva and UN DESA (2020), via OurWorldinData.org
INR 12 lahks



Stefan Sagmeister
Heroes and Losers, 2023
Deaths in Wars (1950 - 2020), Number of Battle related deaths per 100,000 people
1950 25 death/100,000 people
1975 5 death/100,000 people
2000 3 death/100,000 people
2020 2 death/100,000 people
28 x 22 in.
Historic oil on canvas, with contemporary inserts, lacquered wood
Sources: OWID based on PRIO and UCDP, OurWorldInData.org/war-and-peace
INR 17.5 lahks





Installation view, Stefan Sagmeister: *Beautiful Numbers*, Thomas Erben Gallery, 2021.



Nicola Durvasula
Discussing Politics, 2004
Watercolor, gouache and pencil on paper
11 ½ × 8 ¼ in.
INR 3 lahks



Nicola Durvasula
Untitled, 2004/5
Watercolor and pencil on paper
11 ½ × 8 ¼ in.
INR 3 lahks



Nicola Durvasula
Seduction of a Determined Line, 2004/5
Watercolor and pencil on paper
11 ½ × 8 ¼ in.
INR 3 lahks



Nicola Durvasula
Untitled, 2004/5
Watercolor and pencil on paper
11 ½ × 8 ¼ in.
INR 3 lahks



Nicola Durvasula
Aakash Kusum (Tree), 2004/5
Watercolor and pencil on paper
11 ½ × 8 ¼ in.
INR 3 lahks



Nicola Durvasula
Seduction of a Determined Line II, 2004/5
Watercolor and pencil on paper
11 ½ × 8 ¼ in.
INR 2.5 lahks



Nicola Durvasula
No Search, 2004/5
Watercolor and pencil on paper
11 ½ × 8 ¼ in.
INR 3 lahks



Installation view, *Nicola Durvasula,*
Thomas Erben Gallery, 2007.





Chitra Ganesh. *Blank Stands.* Acrylic, Xerox ink, sand on paper. 48" x 60". 2005.

Women on Top

Karin Miller-Lewis finds idealised notions about femininity, form, and sexuality being challenged at a group show in New York.

A VIDEO SEX FANTASY BY TEJAL SHAH AND EXCLAMATORY comic book-inspired works by Chitra Ganesh might seem too brash to be effectively exhibited alongside the evanescent drawings of Nicola Durvasula. But, in fact, this small group's show of big ideas, exhibited at the Thomas Erben Gallery, New York (January 26 — February 18), seemed to hang well together. The artists' common interest in female sexual identity made a compelling departure point for their various meanings and messages. One of them put the funny business back in sex, another brought out its complexities, and the third plumbed its mysteries.

Tejal Shah's *Chingari Chumma* (Stinging Kiss, 2000) both parodied and celebrated Bollywood potboilers. Reversing the genre's stereotypes, the 8½-minute, low-res video featured a doe-eyed man as the helpless heroine. The inevitable damsel-abductor was a peach-fuzzed, butch woman. The hero seemed to be impotent; one could see Amitabh, racing in clips appropriated from some film, never quite making it in time to the scene of the crime.

The artist's website states that her work aims "to displace the subject position of the viewer", but this earnest theoretical rationale proves as irrelevant as the would-be hero, last seen spinning in his tracks. *Chingari Chumma* derives less from righteous score-settling than from its high-spirited Campy transformation of a convention. The viewer couldn't help but feel both repulsed and tickled watching the heroine grow ever more enraptured while blowing the bosomed bandit's black, plastic prosthesis to the accompaniment of outdated music. Merrily waving away the divide between the offensive, the stimulating and the appealing, Shah framed the viewer toward acknowledging that the tortured sexual order was a consequence of habit, was curable and expendable.

Like Shah, Chitra Ganesh embraced and subverted popular culture in order to enlarge its traditional scope and themes. Her Cyclonic doors from Indian comic books that narrate the great Hindu epics, but her frames featured powerful and paradoxical female figures, often erased or excluded from mainstream representations. Rising out of a pink cloud, the lonely and multi-armed female in *Untitled* (2004) reminded one of the spiritual objects/deities/gurus who carry knives and skulls as well as garlands of rare fruits. Reminiscent Ganesh's superpowers did not deliver the calamitous fates that enabled transcendence. They were the inscribed the subjects of unsettling, overwhelming dramas. Contradictory worlds spoken to and by them jostled to their struggle with self-division. They also fluctuated between self-stimulation and self-mutilation. In the painting, *Blank Stands* (2005), a pigtailed girl, bleeding at the neck, stared wide-eyed at the razor blade in her own grip.

Ganesh's clashing phrases didn't always achieve the surrealist spin they aimed at achieving, and her larger imagery seemed affect on an indifferently chosen ground. Nevertheless, the works on view passionately conveyed her difficulties with bicultural identity, the pain of marginalisation as a society that forbids homosexuality, and the ecstatic freedom gained by casting oneself loose from the false bonds of denial. Remarkably her pictures did not idealise liberation. They reckoned with the deep wounds inspired with self-knowledge.



Nicola Durvasula. *Static Lines and Where They Take You.* Watercolour, pencil on paper. 11.5" x 8.75". 2005.



Tejal Shah. *Still from Chingari Chumma.* Single-channel projection. 8'20 minutes with sound. 2000.

Sexuality and identity were no less urgent issues for being elusive in Nicola Durvasula's recent drawings. Reminiscent of Francesco Clemente at his best in the 1980s, each work seemed to ask What holds me here? Durvasula embodied this search for structure and connection in her faithfulness to the minimal materials of paper, watercolour and pencil. Partially drawn, evanescent figures made multiple, simultaneous references to Indian and European traditions, high art and fashion sketches. One wispy drawing, *Static Lines and Where They Take You* (2004-05), had a female form, emerging from the blank page with heavy eyelids, parted lips, and a hand hidden behind a horizontal line at crotch level, deliberately reminding us of the imminence of limitless scrutiny.

The simplicity and isolation of her figures encouraged the viewer to marvel at how a line, a dot, a colouring might stand for something besides itself. Representation for Durvasula has been an investigative, analytic, and expressive act. Although her methods occasionally elicit observations and her imagery lacks impact, the series on display proved that the artist knows how to use restraint to amplify an image's subtlety or add resonance to a visual joke.

That such different projects could reflect upon each other so vividly also owed something to the organizer's intelligent selections. Among the surprises of this show was the discovery that South Asian contemporary art and its growing New York audience may have found an enthusiastic and scientific promoter in Thomas Erben.

Art News Magazine of India, Volume XI
Nicola Durvasula, Review, p. 90, 2006.