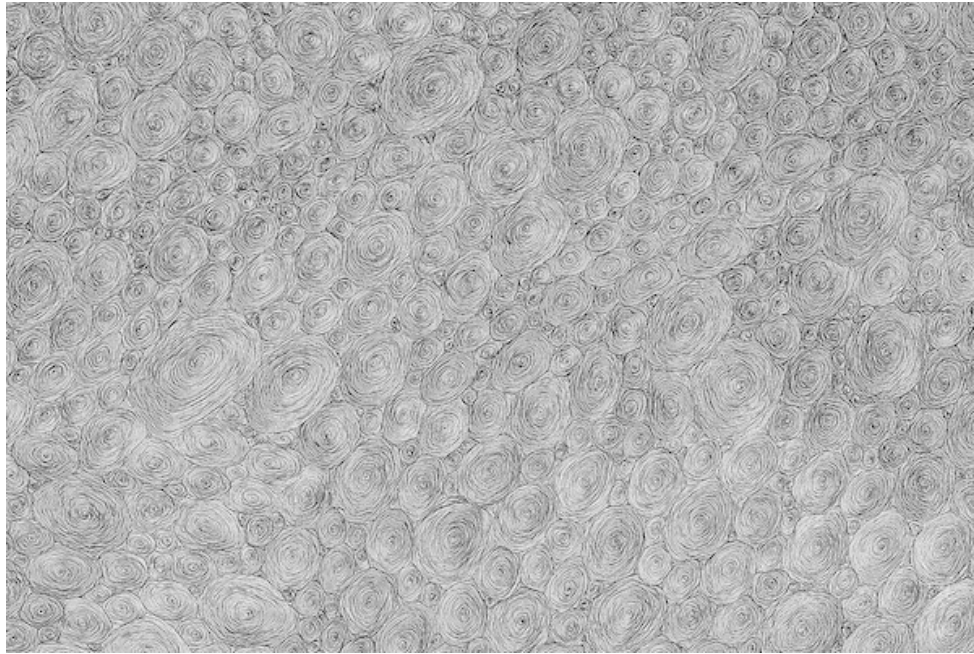


Thomas Erben Gallery

Press Release



Detail from *Drawing 43*, 2009. Felt-tip pen on paper, 41.5 x 60 inches.

Nadia Khawaja

Drawings – Videos – Photographs

June 9 – July 22, 2011

Opening Reception: Thursday, June 9, 6-8:30 pm

Thomas Erben Gallery is pleased to present the first US solo exhibition of Lahore-based Nadia Khawaja (b. 1977, Lahore), whose work was first seen in the gallery as part of *New Art from Pakistan*, Jan-Feb, 2010. Contrary to the miniature based, politically slanted figuration usually associated with contemporary Pakistani art, Khawaja has developed a personal, abstract vocabulary in drawing, while finding physical world equivalents to her concepts in photography and video. Displayed side by side, the different works attest to the artist's interest in relationships between control and surrender, rationality and spirituality, and presence and timelessness.

Khawaja executes her black felt-tip pen drawings on often large-scale (up to 8' x 5') sheets of paper. Part daily routine, part meditation, her work appears to sublimate interior as well as exterior conditions, growing increments of small details into sometimes full-blown fields, sometimes unifying structures. Drawn by hand with a high degree of precision, her lines take on angular, organic or loopy vectors, shaping into swirls, grids or geometry. It is important for Khawaja to enter into a certain rhythm, leaving behind rationality, and to create a space rather than an image, a vision more than an idea, a human capacity rather than a human story.

over...

Thomas Erben Gallery
526 West 26th Street, 4th floor
New York, NY 10001
212-645-8701
info@thomaserben.com
www.thomaserben.com

Khawaja's videos are equally sensitive, transmuting external forces and sounds into "mark-making." In *Light Sleep*, street and car noises punctuate and draw upon the rhythm of breathing and gentle tree-filtered light on the artist's face. Similarly, *Flesh It Out* employs the mounting vibrations and sound of an auto rickshaw to hauntingly blur Khawaja's steady stare at the camera. Unlike the drawings, in which Khawaja seems to exist wholly in her own body, the videos show her engaging with elemental forces.

In many ways, Khawaja's work resembles the account of a life or of many lives, summarizing the whole while detailing everyday stutters.

Nadia Khawaja received her BFA in 2001 from the National College of Arts, Lahore, studying abroad in 2000 at the Ecole d'Art, Aix-en-Provence, France. She had a solo exhibition with Grey Noise, Lahore, which traveled to The JamJar, Dubai, 2009. Reviews appeared in *Time Out Dubai*, *Asian Art News*, and Pakistan's *Daily News*, to name a few. Most recently, her work was included in *No More Bad Girls?* Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna, curated by Claudia Marion Stemberger and Kathrin Becker.

This exhibition is in collaboration with Grey Noise, Lahore.

Gallery hours: Tue - Sat, 10-6.

For further information and visuals, please visit www.thomaserben.com or contact the gallery at 212-645.8701.

Thomas Erben Gallery
526 West 26th Street, 4th floor
New York, NY 10001
212-645-8701
info@thomaserben.com
www.thomaserben.com