



Untitled, 2018. Ink on paper, 30 x 48 in.

Aditi Singh

so much the less complete

September 14 - October 27, 2018

Opening reception: Friday, September 14, 6-8:30pm

Artist talk: Saturday, September 15, 3pm

"I love repetition. Repetitions turn time into a place, turn the days into a space. Repetitions form the foreground, middle-ground, and background of the picture plane. And inside this plane, the lattice work of routine stills. It's as if time is suspended, since every gesture and movement echoes the preceding one, and, in this way, holds time within itself.

The routine of drawing a line, day in and day out, somehow makes the avalanche of days and months manageable, for if one repeats the same thing and holds steady this place in time, then it feels like time flows only on the outside."

-Aditi Singh

Continued...

Thomas Erben Gallery is pleased to present *so much the less complete*, an exhibition of new and recent works on paper by Mumbai-based artist Aditi Singh. This is Singh's second solo exhibition with the gallery.

A meditative and meticulously skilled artist, Singh works with tenuous mediums: ink, graphite, and charcoal. Using cumulative and repetitive processes, Singh builds transparency and light through density, achieving an abstraction that evokes the material and the ethereal—a recitative practice in which her applications on paper suggest an inner space of concentration and material expression.

For the works collected in *so much the less complete*, Singh painted, layered, and built ink in exacting, aqueous geographies. While evocative of natural processes—suggesting pools, ridges, and channels—these images and forms are actually drawn, built, and controlled through several applications of ink. The frequency of Singh's line, repeated brushstroke after brushstroke, takes on a painterly velocity that extends over the course of a work. Though the artist keeps a time-log for each piece, documenting the layers to realize the intensity of color, the flow of ink is very much about opening up possibilities rather than controlling them.

In contrast to East Asian Ink painting, which has developed from writing and representation, freeing itself only recently from this tradition by emphasizing materiality and exploring non-representation, Singh's practice has always been abstract. Using cumulative and repetitive processes, Singh achieves an abstraction that is not just visual in the Western sense, but carries the affect of Eastern disciplines that inform her: philosophical texts, Vedic hymns, and yoga practice. It is this interdependence between these influences and her material expression which marks Singh's work as unique, even in the wider context of contemporary ink painting.

Minimal yet not minimalist, these new pieces articulate a charged realm: their crystalline, organic forms insinuating a struggle between balance, stasis, and continuity, where meaning is not a singular, fixed entity. Ultimately, Singh's works unearth a kaleidoscope of vulnerabilities, uncertainties, and contradictions—as mirrored in the title of one of her pieces, *the fragility of what we call civilization*—and, in doing so, perhaps impart a sense of peace over this inexorable process. Cumulative, methodical, and patient, Singh does not so much build onto paper as into it, laying down an obverse domain of line, color, space, and contemplation.

Born 1976 in Assam, India, **Aditi Singh's** works have been exhibited extensively in solo and group exhibitions. This gallery showed Singh's solo exhibition, *All that is left behind*, in 2016, and most recently presented her in a collaboration with German artist Olaf Holzapfel at Art Cologne 2018. Other exhibitions include: DECK, Singapore; Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai, India; SOMA Drawing Center, Seoul, South Korea; National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan; Gallery Barry Keldoulis, Sydney, Australia; and Arthur Ross Gallery, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA. Singh's works are held in several private and public collections, including the Bob Davoli Collection and the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art. She studied painting at the New York Studio School, subsequently earning an M.F.A. at the University of Pennsylvania in 2001. Singh currently lives and works in Mumbai.

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