

Thomas Erben Gallery

back, forth and round about

Vijai Patchineelam, Sreshta Rit Premnath & Jaret Vadera

Rafil Kroll-Zaidi **project space**

February 19 – March 21, 2009

Opening: Thursday, February 19, 6-8:30 pm

Thomas Erben is excited to present a group of three artists who play with the poetics of relation, activating the spaces in between text, photography, painting, video, film and experience. Parallels, conundrums and paradoxes are the modus operandi used to illuminate the layered processes of making sense. Texts and still or moving images are partially erased, but then reappear in multiples, accretions or other media and slip back and forth between potential readings.



Vijai Patchineelam's (b. 1983, Rio de Janeiro) photographs and books trap objects, processes and the producer in a perpetual state of transit. Idea and result are conflated into a present continuous, which is both the impetus behind and the product of the work. *Arthur*, a large-scale photograph depicting the artist's friend, turned away, bent forward beside a similarly figured painting, further confuses these relations: the subject's body starts to resemble the body of the painting and vice versa creating an oscillating and mutual transformation.

2007 BA, Industrial Design, School of Fine Arts at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. 2008 "Frame Series" Bombay Art Gallery, Mumbai; "Zoation Painting" National Museum of Arts, La Paz, Bolivia; "1st Collective" Bienal EBA/UFRJ, Rio de Janeiro; Resident Artist, Blanton Museum of Arts, Austin, TX; 2007 IV International Biennial of Bolivia, La Paz, where he was awarded the Premio Unión Latina.



Blue Book, Moon Rock by Sreshta Rit Premnath (b. 1979, Bangalore) consists of four parts: a photograph, a chalkboard, a screenprint and the light directed from a reeling

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projector onto silver-sprayed acetate. The repeated image of a moon rock is recontextualized by these shifting media. Man's romantic emotional attachment drew him to the moon only to bring home physical evidence completely devoid of the original impulse. Premnath is exactly interested in this gap where the parts point in the same direction but hardly reconcile. Juxtaposed with one image of the rock, Wittgenstein's quote from his Blue Book, "We ought to talk further on about the meaning of 'forgetting the meaning of a word'" – a promise made in the past to discuss the meaning of forgetting in the future – further enriches Premnath's elliptical approach.

2008 Whitney Museum of Art Independent Study Program; 2006 MFA, Bard College; 2003 BFA, The Cleveland Institute of Art; 2002 Fellow, Yale-Norfolk Painting Residency, Yale University CT; 2008 "Mornings in Mexico" book project, Guangzhou Biennial, China; "Black Box" (solo) Gallery SKE, Bangalore; "Unnamable Name" Københavns Hovedbibliotek, Copenhagen; 2007 "Spectral Evidence" Rotunda Gallery, New York; 2006 "Yamini Nayar and Sreshta Premnath," Bose Pacia Gallery, New York.



Jaret Vadera (b. 1976, Toronto) presents a fragmented, mixed media "decollage" of an image from a tiger hunt. Simultaneously layering and ripping through multiple levels of paint and paper, the artist adorned and destroyed the symbol of the dead tiger, reflecting the tension between the exotic and the real, fact and fiction. Similarly, Vadera's video mutates found footage - omitting, fragmenting and filtering data - revealing the space of transformation between reality, mediation and the cognitive system.

2009 MFA Painting Candidate, Yale School of Art. 2008 "Exploding the Lotus" Art & Culture Center of Hollywood, FL; 2006 "Everything All at Once" Queens International, Queens Museum of Art, New York; 2005 "Night Shift" White Box, New York; 2005 "Fatal Love – South Asian American Art Now" Queens Museum of Art.



In the **project space**, Rafil Kroll-Zaidi (b. 1980, New Delhi) exhibits a selection of photographs of Bollywood film sets. The actors and extras, relaxed and out of character between shots, and the laborers, suddenly highly visible, contrast with the hyper-artificiality of the sets, allowing the images to explore the construction of the industry's vernacular. The artist also cites his longstanding interest in approaching light as a central narrative feature. In essence, the light source becomes like a character, whose primacy and subtle strangeness fundamentally change the emotional tone of the still image, transforming familiar and even clichéd stories into ambiguous, unknowable ones.

2003 BA, Princeton University. 2008 "Click: Contemporary Photography in India" Vadehra Gallery, New Delhi and Grosvenor Gallery, London; 2006 "Hot Shot, Spring" Jen Bekman Gallery, New York; his photographs were included in "India Now" Editions Textuel, Paris, 2007, and Thames & Hudson, London, 2008.

Gallery hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 10-6

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