



Jagannath Panda, *Trajectories of love and hate*
Acrylic, fabric and glue on canvas
76 x 90 in (193 x 228 cm)
2012

MEDIA ALERT:

Jagannath Panda, *Cults of Serendipity*

May 3 – June 30, 2012

Gallery Reception: Thursday, May 3, 5:00 – 8:00

Frey Norris Contemporary & Modern

161 Jessie Street (at New Montgomery), San Francisco, CA 94105

- American debut exhibition of New Delhi based artist coincides with appearance of his painting and sculpture at the Asian Art Museum's *Phantoms of Asia* exhibition, running May 18 – September 2, 2012.
- 6 new paintings, 2 sculptures and 4 works on paper.

- **Sculptures and paintings revolve around clashes of ancient culture and manic modern development, with grids like office building facades and a recurring serpent swallowing its tail, like the Ouroboros or “world serpent” of myth.**
- **Artists work recently included in exhibitions in Berlin, Delhi, Tokyo, Torino and Rome.**
- **May 5th at 3:00pm, panel discussion at Frey Norris with artist Tomokazu Matsuyama and Jagannath Panda; gallerist Peter Nagy; adjunct professor at CCA, Cristin McKnight Sethi and moderator Raman Frey.**

SAN FRANCISCO, CA.

A pair of figures from antiquity seem modestly bound in love-making among floating foliage in the upper right corner of one of Jagannath Panda’s newest mixed media paintings; the rest of the canvas appears to be a remembrance and excavation of this pair of lovers, depicted as in a Kama Sutra illustration, but also a broad play on scale, toying with archeology and construction sites. In the modernity of the backhoes, there is a personal and cultural exploration of human history, both recorded and earlier. It is a bittersweet vision for the frenetic development of the quintessential Indian metropolis.

Cults of Serendipity is the American debut exhibition for New Delhi based artist Jagannath Panda. The Frey Norris presentation is timed to coincide with his appearance as part of the Asian Art Museum’s *Phantoms of Asia: Contemporary Awakens the Past*, the first show at the Asian to activate all floors and galleries of the museum with contemporary artwork (contact pr@asianart.org or 415.481.3711 for more information). His art focuses on serendipitous moments, juxtaposed locations and in some ways reflects his own observations of Gurgaon, a quickly developing suburb of New Delhi where the ancient is often overrun by new housing developments, warehouses and air-conditioned shopping malls. Here the ecosystem has little chance to keep pace, much less the networks for electricity and plumbing. As Peter Nagy, the artist’s New Delhi gallerist summarizes, “Panda’s mix of the mythological and the realistic points to the disoriented nature of Indian identity today, as it hopes to synthesize the traditional and the contemporary, the indigenous and the international, the imaginary and the actual.”

Panda’s work for *Cults of Serendipity* includes mixed media sculpture, works on paper and “paintings” incorporating great varieties of pastiche and patterned textiles, more a kind of layered collage, evocative of new cities built on ghost cities, whole civilizations layered on top of previous ones. Brocade fabrics imitate the skins of animals, feathers or foliage. Panda’s imagery plays with scale in deceptive ways; the edges of a massive patterned heart sink a root into a pot, as though a fertile plant and simultaneously a sitter in a portrait, the patterning of its ventricles like so many options at a bazaar. The Ouroboros or world serpent appears in both two and three dimensions, swallowing its tail and coiling around sharp geometries that blend perspective on architectures seen from below, above and in profile. Ubiquitous pigeons seem similarly confused by these plays on orientation and flutter around unsure where to perch.

Jagannath Panda was born in Bhubaneswar in 1970 and received his BFA in sculpture from the BK College of Arts & Crafts, Bhubaneswar in 1991 and his MFA in sculpture from the MS University, Baroda in 1994. Subsequent studies took him to the Fukuoka University of Japan and the Royal College of Art in London, where he received an MA degree in sculpture in 2002. His art recently appeared at Nature Morte in New Delhi and Berlin, Chemould Prescott Road in Mumbai, and Alexia Goethe Gallery in London. Group exhibitions include *Indian Highway IV* at the Lyons Museum of Contemporary Art, France, *Indian Highway V* at the MAXXI Museum in Rome, *Transformation* at the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, *Chalo! India* at the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo, *Where in the World* at the Devi Art Foundation in Gurgaon, and *Midnight’s*

Children at Studio la Citta in Verona, Italy, among many others. His art can be found in the collections of the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi; the Asian Art Museum, Fukuoka, Japan; and the Devi Foundation, New Delhi.

A 20 page catalogue is available with essay by Cristin McKnight Sethi, adjunct professor at the California College of the Arts. For additional information and images please contact the gallery (415) 346-7812 or email melissa@freynorris.com.