



Ranu Mukherjee, *Ecstatic Picture: Spilled Milk*, Still from single channel video animation, dimensions variable, 2011

I am interested in the depiction of indeterminate substances, which can be found in these 19th century images of Indian deities. Bringing together elements of cinematic language with the tactics of collage and animation, I try to depict tactile events that manifest accumulations of bodily geo-physical matter.

Ranu Mukherjee

MEDIA ALERT:

As our bodies as well as our outlook change in a dangerous world now subject to rising seas, hurricanes, and pestilence, heat detaches the senses from the complacent view of the body as a fortress with peepholes and antennae sensing the externalities, and instead encourages us to take a world-centered and not a self-centered approach to viewing, such that the self becomes part of that which is seen, not a sovereign transcendent.

Michael Taussig, *What Color is the Sacred*

Ranu Mukherjee

Absorption into the Nomadic and Luminous

June 4 – July 30, 2011

Gallery Reception: Saturday, June 4, 4:00 to 7:00 pm

**Frey Norris Contemporary & Modern,
161 Jessie St. (at New Montgomery)
San Francisco, CA 94105**

- **San Francisco based artist's debut American solo exhibition, after ten years as a member of the London-based collective artist "Orphan Drift."**

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- Mukherjee’s work blurs the orderly distinctions between painting, video and collage. Exhibition features three new animations and a selection of ink paintings on carefully selected colored papers.
- Mukherjee explores “nomadology,” referencing the history of Hindu calendar art, art history, cultural migration and India’s ancient legacy of traditions as these cross-pollinate with post-modernity and globalization.
- Artist simultaneously participating in Bay Area Now 6 at The Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, a springboard exhibition for future local talents, only one block from Frey Norris.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA. *Absorption into the Nomadic and Luminous*, Ranu Mukherjee’s debut exhibition at Frey Norris, unites two investigative bodies of work; an exploration of the figure of the nomad as it manifests itself in both material and philosophical realms, and a meandering journey through an imagined personal history of relations at the intersections between Indian and European/U.S. culture.

The center of the show is a suite of short hybrid films that combine animation and photographic material into captivating depictions of tactile events. Exploring representations of ephemeral matter in lithographs from 19th century India, they flesh out the artists interest in the relationship between screen based pictorial space and painting. Beginning with pictures embodying the moment in which the Indian deities began to be represented in a western style pictorial landscape, she removes the deities and begins to ask questions about how the sacred is dealt with in a secular context and how the epic enters into the everyday. They plot a course through a received understanding, via personal stories, of transitions India has undergone in becoming a democratic secular nation, and then, after attempting post-colonial economic autonomy, joining the global marketplace. Appearing as glimpses of a larger, uncontainable kind of narrative, they are evocations of accumulated human habit becoming incorporated into the unknown.

Accompanying the films, in an antechamber, a group of ink paintings on paper are presented as a network of images, ideas and social relationships guiding Mukherjee’s current work. Honoring the impulse to jot things down as reminders and intentional cues for a future moment, the artist uses painting as a form of note taking. Mostly painted from printed matter, she allows the edges of things to be irregular and for the image to sit on the paper off-center, referring to a thing and its itinerant representation simultaneously. The image becomes artifact.

Absorption into the Nomadic and Luminous is underpinned by the sense that the fragment has become a basic unit of perceptual and visual measurement – a thing with agency, a thing in itself. It can also be seen as a set of reflections on the state of post-everything (-apocalyptic, -colonial, -modern, -studio, -industrial, -punk, -racial, - structural, -feminist) translated as an advanced state of conditions, as well as a lack of ability to adequately describe a path from present to future. For Mukherjee this leaves narratives about the future in an interesting place and corresponds with specific, hybrid, visibly crafted aesthetics which attempt to call the viewer into participating in a new “nomadic ethics.”

For additional information and images please contact the gallery (415) 346-7812 or email melissa@freynorris.com