



FATAL LOVE

South Asian American Art Now

February 27 – June 5, 2005



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SOUTH ASIAN AMERICAN ART NOW

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QMA

QUEENS MUSEUM OF ART ■ NEW YORK CITY BUILDING ■ FLUSHING MEADOWS CORONA PARK ■ QUEENS, NY 11368
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her tender images of family, she has set out to "rehumanize Muslims" by exploring their complexities and showing "contradictions of religious observance within a Westernized contemporary life, and the differences in religious practice between the generations. The subjects are portrayed embracing certain Western values, yet holding on to their Islamic and Eastern traditions."

Born to a Pakistani father and Nepalese mother, **Safia Fatimi**'s physician parents are an unusual couple. Fatimi's images of her mother in a swimsuit, enjoying a cigarette and whiskey, and pampering herself shatter all sorts of isms, taboos and conventional stereotypes of older women across all races. They speak of an enjoyment of spirit, body and life not usually afforded to women, and are highly unusual representations of South Asian women in particular. A much sought after fashion and commercial photographer, Fatimi has recently switched her attention to documentary work and education.

Luminous and haunting, **Jaret Vadera** and **Pratima Naithani** go through different processes of manipulating base representational photographic images to arrive at a very similar aesthetic that removes most cultural signifiers

and places memory and abstraction at the forefront of their work. While Vadera paints over everyday banal imagery, with the aim of "revealing the truth by concealing and manipulating it," Naithani uses imagery from the 1940s and 1950s and is more concerned with bestowing spirituality within the frame and rendering new meanings to hackneyed Bollywood film stills, creating a mysterious distance by distorting and solarizing the images.

The contemporary romanticism of Vadera's and Naithani's work is linked to **Mala Iqbal**'s painterly investigations of the sublime. Amongst the many influences in her work, she cites pop and mall art, cartoons, traditional Western landscape painting and Indian miniatures. Iqbal represents the genre of landscape painting alone in *Fatal Love* and her paintings are most removed from their references to Indian miniatures. Like Vadera, Iqbal's work has more of a resonance aesthetically with contemporary Western dialogues in painting, but from a deeply emotional space. Outstanding in their treatment of surface, and holding a critical tension emerging from the employment of various painting techniques and references, her works invite a contemplative enjoyment by the viewer.

JARET VADERA *



Jaret Vadera's *Light*, a series of photographic prints covered in Plexiglas, and then covered over in paint and Mylar, subtly clouding and dispersing the image, creates visual experiences that comment on the fleeting nature of memory and perception. The artist's nebulous designs result in faint, transient internal snapshots, exemplifying the inability for one to fully capture the past. In a broader context, the work questions the authority of cultural memory or history, as well as how the mind erodes experience through the process of interpretation.

Jaret Vadera received his training in fine art from the Ontario College of Design and Cooper Union School of Art in New York. He has had numerous solo and group exhibitions in Toronto including Archive, Department of Canadian Heritage, Toronto; Erosion, Cultural Foundation of Corsica, France; Re:Construct, Ph Gallery, New York; and Interscapes, Gallery 401, Toronto. His published writings have appeared in *Surface & Symbol*, and he has received media coverage from radio stations and journals. Vadera has received awards such as Kathryn Minard Mixed Media Award and an Emerging Artist Grant from the Toronto Arts Council.