

MARIAN GOODMAN GALLERY

AMAR KANWAR

March 8th 2008 – April 12th 2008

Opening : Saturday, March 8th, 2008 from 6 - 8 pm

Marian Goodman Gallery is delighted to present for the first time in its space in Paris an exhibition of the Indian artist Amar Kanwar. During the time of the exhibition from March, 8th to April, 12th 2008, three pieces will be shown: *The Lightning Testimonies* (2007), *The Bodhi Tree* (2005) and *Henningswaer* (2006).

Amar Kanwar's poetic documentary films and video works explore the political, social, economic and ecological conditions of the Indian subcontinent, often through stories and experiences. Much of his work traces the legacy of decolonisation and partition, with the splitting of families, sectarian violence and border conflicts forming recurrent motifs. Interwoven throughout are investigations of family relations, gender and sexuality, philosophical and religious questions, and the processes of globalisation. Through images, ritual objects, literature, poetry and song, Kanwar creates lyrical, meditative film essays that do not aim to represent trauma or political situations so much as to find ways through them; Kanwar's work looks deeply into the causes and effects, and of how they are translated into everyday life and cultural forms.

The Lightning Testimonies

8 Channel Video Installation
Synchronized, Colour and b/w, Sound,
32 minutes and 31 seconds, Loop

Amar Kanwar's new work *THE LIGHTNING TESTIMONIES* (2007) is a multi-channel video that reflects upon a history of conflict in the Indian subcontinent through experiences of sexual violence. In this exploration, multiple submerged narratives are revealed, sometimes in people, images and memories, and at other times in objects from nature and everyday life that stand as silent but surviving witnesses. In all the narratives, the body is central - as a site for honour, hatred and humiliation and also for dignity and protest.

The *Lightning Testimonies* creates an experience that emerges from a constellation of eight synchronized choreographed projections with sound tracks that lead to disparate narratives that then converge into a single projection. As the stories unfold, women from different times and regions come forward. The multiple projections speak to them directly, in an effort to understand how such violence is resisted, remembered and recorded by individuals and communities. Submerged narratives appear, disappear and are then reborn in another vocabulary at another time. Using a range of visual vocabularies, *The Lightning Testimonies* transports us beyond the realm of suffering into a space of quiet contemplation, where resilience creates the potential for transformation.

HENNINGSVAER, 2006

Single Channel Video Loop, 15 Minutes

Numbing were the turn of events, bewildering was the journey into exile, tragic was the smile of the bureaucracy, forced were the associations between hope and home, involuntary was the merger between past and present - thin was the line between paradise and prison.

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Henningsvaer was filmed mostly through glass, and is located on the famous cod fishing island of Henningsvaer in Norway in the Arctic Circle.

THE BODHI TREE, 2005

Single Channel Video Loop, 7 Minutes 4 seconds

Sitt Nyein Aye is a graduate of the prestigious State School of Fine Arts and a well-known artist in Burma. After the military crackdown on pro democracy demonstrations in August 1988, Sitt had to escape from Burma. He now lives in exile in New Delhi where he continues to practice as an artist.

The Bodhi Tree was filmed in his studio in New Delhi.

SELECTED AWARDS AND EXHIBITIONS

Amar Kanwar was born in 1964 in New Delhi (Inde), where he still lives and works. He has been awarded the following prizes: Edvard Munch Prize for Contemporary Art, (2005, Norway), and an Honorary Doctorate in Fine Arts, Maine College of Art, (2005, USA). His solo exhibitions include; Whitechapel Art Gallery, (London,2007), Apeeja Media Gallery, (New Delhi, 2007), India; Whitechapel Art Gallery, (London, 2007), The Museum of Contemporary Art / The Samtidskunst, Oslo, (Finland, 2005), Fotogalleriet, Oslo, (2005, Finland), Peter Blum Gallery, New York, (USA, 2004), The Renaissance Society, Chicago, (USA, 2004). He has participated in the following group shows : *Other than Yourself - An Investigation between Inner and Outer Space*, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna, (Austria, 2008); Documenta 12, Documenta, Kassel, (Germany, 2007) ; *Thermocline of Art-New Asian Waves*, ZKM Karlsruhe, Germany (2007); *Stop & Go*, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, (Italy, 2007); Biennale de Sydney 2006, (Australia, 2006) ; *Image War: Contesting Images Of Political Confl.* ISP Exhibition -Whitney Museum, New York, (USA, 2006) ; *Populism*, Frankfurt Kunstverein, Frankfurt, (Germany, 2005) ; Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (Netherlands, 2005) ; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo, (Finland, 2005) ; Contemporary Art Centre Vilnius (CAC), Vilnius, (Lithuania, 2005) ; *Experiments with Truth*, Fabric Workshop Museum, Philadelphia, (USA, 2005)