

Mapmakers II

The Evolution of Contemporary Indian Art

Featuring Anju Dodiya, Atul Dodiya, Rameshwar Broota, Baiju Parthan, Bose Krishnamachari, Chittrovanu Mazumdar, Hema Upadhyay, Jagannath Panda, Jitish Kallat, Shibu Natesan, T.V. Santhosh, Subodh Gupta, Jayashree Chakravarty, Anandajit Ray, Indrapramit Roy.

January 24th – March 2nd, 2013

Press Preview & Opening Reception: Thursday, January 24th, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

35 Great Jones St., New York NY 10012



Subodh Gupta, *One Cow*, 2003, Oil on canvas, 66 x 90 in.

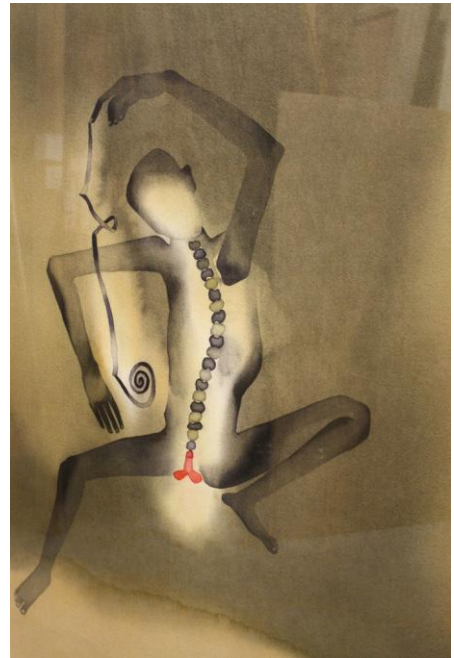
Aicon Gallery New York is pleased to present the group exhibition *Mapmakers II: The Evolution of Contemporary Indian Art*, featuring iconic works by **Anju Dodiya, Atul Dodiya, Rameshwar Broota, Hema Upadhyay, T.V. Santhosh, Subodh Gupta** and more. As a group, these artists represent the vanguard of Contemporary Indian Art that burst onto the international scene in the mid-2000s, turning the heads of museums, critics and collectors. This exhibition showcases the important large-scale canvases through which these artists, among others, redefined Indian Contemporary and set the compass points for a new generation to follow.

As an appropriation artist, **Subodh Gupta** produces sculptures and paintings that reflect the economic transformation of his homeland as they relate to Gupta's life and memories of his childhood through images of Tiffin Boxes, tahli pans, bicycles and milk pails. Gupta says, "All these things were part of the way I grew up, they are used in the rituals and ceremonies that were part of my childhood." By transforming icons of everyday life in India into artworks that are globally understood, Gupta represents of generation of young Indian artists whose commentary tells of a country on the move, fueled by economic growth, heightened materialism and rapidly shifting social dynamics. His work re-contextualizes the ubiquitous icons of a culture, dissolving their familiar meanings and stripping them of their function, recalling a conceptual practice ranging back from Marcel Duchamp through to Damien Hirst. Gupta has said "Art language is the same all over the world, which allows me to be anywhere."

Drawing inspiration from a variety of sources – ranging from cinema, news, media, art history and popular culture – **T.V. Santhosh** explores present-day crises through his art. Adapting images from digital and printed media, the artist creates eerily realistic canvases, charged by opinions on the general socio-political climate of India. Santhosh's distinctive style makes his paintings recognizable without being predictable, via three key elements: Photorealism, chromatic scale, and gradual variation. An undertone of profound disillusionment is rendered in his paintings, his realistic figures cast in iridescently blurred light, framed in hallucinatory shadows. The enigmatic aesthetic denotes a social commentary of protest, while the artist remains disengaged from the social events depicted. He veils, floods and distorts the subjects with this strange yet familiar light – opting for a cold, machine-made glow rather than the warmth of sunlight. This stark filter conveys a macabre intensity, where reality and fantasy mix in his fluid surface bathed in an ominous luminosity.

Through his paintings and assemblages, **Atul Dodiya** engages with both contemporary politics and art history in a way that entwines global and public memory as well as local and personal experience. His work is infused with a strong sense of the history of Western art and the myths, folklore and popular culture of India. Often, these two worlds collide in his work in amusing and instructive ways, with a pluralist and fragmentative mood dominating his compositions. Dodiya draws heavily on historical influences that he both questions and internalizes through his work.

The self is at the center of **Anju Dodiya's** works. Though not solipsistic, the majority of her works give the viewer access to private moments, lifted from "the private discourse that goes on within oneself when one is alone." Dodiya initially resisted the lure of self-portraiture. Her early works were extremely abstract, and following her first show ("a fictional autobiography"), she tried to refocus her gaze on railway stations, roadside scenes, and so forth. Yet ultimately she found her original impulse of a painterly introspection was the strongest, and rechanneled her vision into describing situations from her life. Her expressions can be interpreted as being autobiographical, but her works go beyond that, and reflect the conflicts of womanhood. In Dodiya's work there is always one female figure represented in a male or dominant posture – giving her conflicts another dimension. The sensitivity of her paintings is not shadowed by any socio-political-isms, and is achieved by her skilled control over her medium.



Atul Dodiya, *Fakir with Long Nail* - 1 2002,
Watercolor on paper, 29.5 x 21.5 in.

As a child, **Rameshwar Broota** was anguished by the dire poverty and misery surrounding him. As such, his early paintings reflect society's rampant ills during this time, often functioning as satirical commentaries on widespread injustice, political corruption and moral issues surrounding class divisions. Though not a very prolific artist, Broota developed a highly unique style, painting mostly monochromatic canvases sparsely populated by geometric markings with surfaces then scraped with a thin blade to create light and forms. His paintings feature monumental humans with all of them wounded, hardened or somehow dehumanized.

Mumbai based **Hema Upadhyay** works in a variety of media to explore the histories and stories personal to her. Her work deals in narratives of migration and resettlement, loss and longing for those left behind, and excavates the physical and emotional backlog produced from living in a major urban metropolis. Deeply honest and playfully sarcastic, Upadhyay's work depicts multiple perspectives, aerial views of intricately rendered city maps or textile surfaces layered with small photographic self-portraits. Miniaturizing images of herself in various positions, she inserts them into her allegorical landscapes allowing them to interact with the decorative and fictive environments she creates. Upadhyay creates highly textured surfaces and spaces blemished with scraps and stains, calling out the contradictions and incongruities situated at the intersection of tradition and contemporary life. Upadhyay often works collaboratively with artists and non-artists close to her, highlighting the importance of process, dialogue, and conversation to her practice.

Please contact Aicon Gallery (Amy@Aicongallery.com) for more information.