

BOSE PACIA

March 2007 New York – Bose Pacia Gallery presents *Who's Keeping Score*, an exhibition of painting, photography and drawings on paper by Justin Ponmany. The gallery is located at 508 West 26th Street on the 11th Floor, in the Chelsea district of New York City. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 12 to 6 pm and by appointment. There will be an opening reception with the artist in attendance on Thursday, March 1st from 6 to 8 pm. The public is invited.

Justin Ponmany's works are largely inspired by the dynamism of Mumbai, a city whose landscape is constantly undergoing change. The idea of collapsing geographical borders underscores this exhibition where modern technology has erased all informational boundaries and where the survival of any individual or group depends on engaging in and guarding against surveillance; defined by the artist as the desire to seek information about the other – a foreign or alien society. It is within the context of mapping territories that this exhibition must be viewed as Ponmany presents an "unholy mix of religion, cricket, nation and population" with works ranging from a set of large scale individual portraits to graph paper drawings to two diptych paintings.

The photographic portraits featuring various denizens of Mumbai explore the idea of body as landscape where the human form is presented simultaneously as a portrait and map. The head is treated like a globe for its general spherical shape and is slit from the two ends of its axis to open up like a map. The portrait is stretched to the four corners of the plane with maximum pictorial data divested for perusal that simultaneously extradites contours and borderlines of identity. In a very similar manner Ponmany questions universal truths through graph paper drawings that employ the Swastika symbol and his paintings following the gullies and grounds of Mumbai where cricket is played. By creating disparate patterns fashioned by a combination of lines and dots Ponmany asserts that one must continually interrogate the logic of universalism which contends that certain symbols recur in diverse contexts across history. By with understanding the persistence of local truths against universal solvents and in doing challenges the mighty subjects of History, Progress and Abstraction.

Ponmany's art, firmly planted in the media and cinema industries of Mumbai, alludes to the paradox of the post-modern moment. In this era of confusion any individual experience is profoundly intimate and un-shareable but may also be revealed to the world at large thanks to enormous technological leaps and advances. It is the struggle between these two forces that not only propel Justin Ponmany but which also captivate his audience.

Born in Kerala, India in 1974 Justin Ponmany studied at The Sir J.J School of Art in Mumbai and obtained a BFA in painting. He has had several solo exhibitions in India, Europe and the United States. He has also participated in numerous group exhibitions and art fairs, including *Hungry God-Indian Contemporaries* (Arario Gallery, Beijing, 2006), *Private/Corporate IV-A Dialogue of The Collections of Anupam and Lekha Poddar, New Delhi and Daimler Chrysler, Stuttgart and Berlin* (2007), *FIAC Art Fair* (Nature Morte and Bose Pacia, Paris, 2006) and *The Armory Show* (Nature Morte, New York, 2007). The artist currently lives and works in Mumbai, India.