

Q&A: Brooklyn Artist Aakash Nihalani Talks Designing Mixtape Covers For Das Racist and His New Show, *Overlap*, Opening at Bose Pacia This Thursday

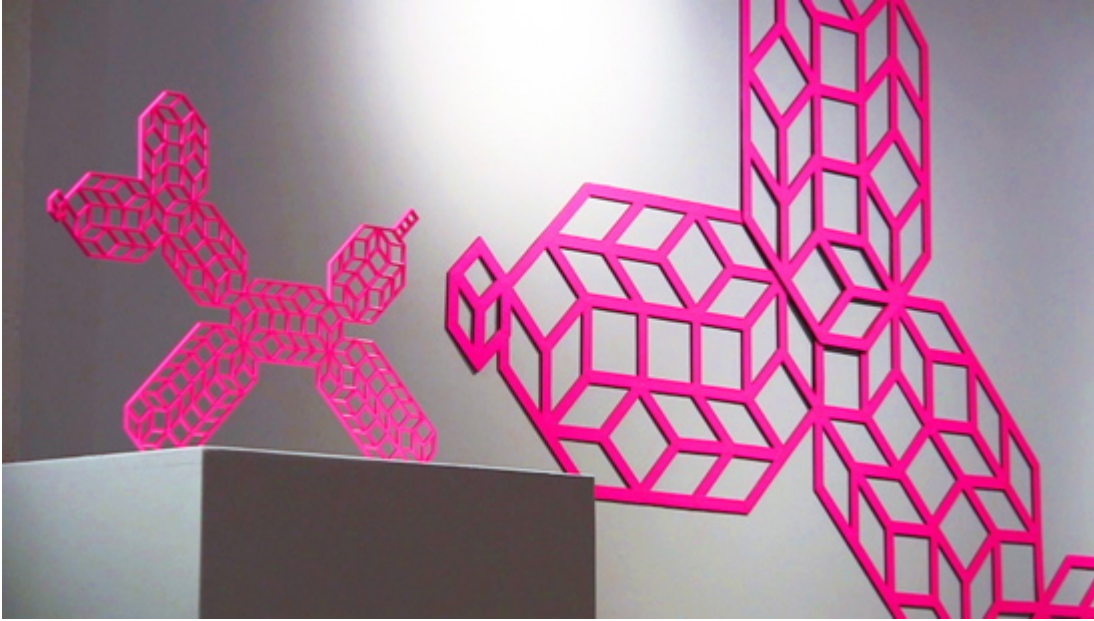
By Zach Baron

published: Mon., Nov. 1 2010 @ 12:40PM



All images courtesy Bose Pacia

The young, Queens-born tape artist [Aakash Nihalani](#) did the geometrically stoned cover for Das Racist's [Shut Up, Dude](#) mixtape. He's had his distinctive, oddly placed, brightly colored tape installations ripped off by everybody from other street artists to [Vampire Weekend](#). And he's got a new, Jeff Koons-pranking solo show up this Thursday at Dumbo gallery [Bose Pacia](#), entitled *Overlap*. Das Racist, of course, are playing the afterparty at 17 Frost. In advance of Nihalani's solo debut at the gallery, we chatted a bit about the upcoming show and his brushes with various local musicians, both friendly and otherwise.

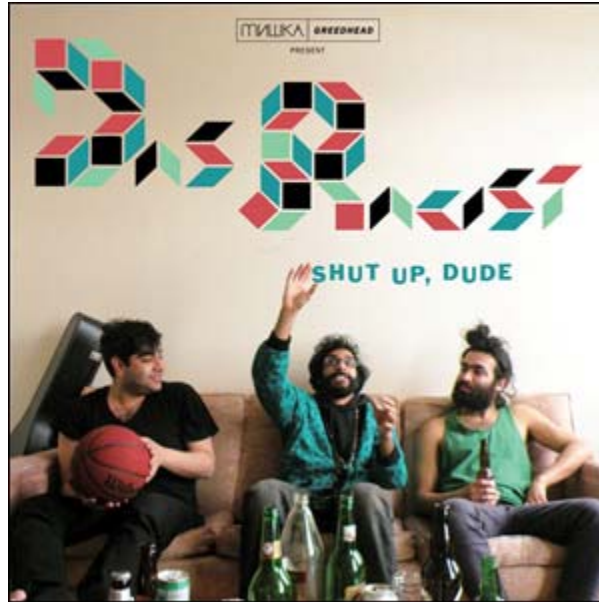


When last we spoke, I think, [it was about whether you'd done the art for Vampire Weekend's "Cousins" video.](#) You hadn't, but you *did* [point me to someone who said "Vampire Weekend totally ripped him off \(poorly\) without consent or compensation."](#) Did they ever reach out to make it right? Is that video still a sore spot?

Nah, they never reached out. I wouldn't be so bummed if they didn't do such a poor imitation. But I kinda can't blame the band as much as [the director who 'came up'](#) with the idea for the video.

Come to think of it, your aesthetic seems like it's particularly prone to other people borrowing it--is that a source of pain for you? Want to name any other names of people who've ripped you off while we're here?

Sometimes it gets weird to see my style copied, but I think it's a benefit to have my stuff be so relatable. I also think it pushes me to keep reinventing the work.



Tell me how you ended up doing the cover for the first Das Racist mixtape.

Don't remember the exacts, I think it was just a couple emails back and forth with Hima. I met up with the other dudes soon after, and then we decided to collab on the cover art. Came about naturally, mutual respect.

And what about using DR's Victor Vazquez in your "Charmer" video? How did that come about?

After the cover, we were been planning to collab on a music video, along with [Jordan Fish](#), but we just hadn't been able to schedule it in yet...I had the idea for that stop motion piece, and Vic fit the bill for the 'charmer' I pictured in my head. But that's really just a taste of what's to come for the video we may end up shooting...

Describe your new show at Bose Pacia in five words or less.

Bring friends. Beer for all.

AAKASH NIHALANI
OVERLAP

November 4 - December 18, 2010

BOSE PACIA
163 Plymouth Street Brooklyn, NY 11201



Opening Reception:
Thursday, November 4, 6-8pm @ Bose Pacia
After Party:
Thursday, November 4, 9-11pm @ 17 Frost
Williamsburg, Brooklyn

Featuring:

Das Racist

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