

BOSE PACIA

August 9, 1999, New York - Bose Pacia Modern gallery presents an exhibition of paintings by **Arpana Caur**. The show will run from September 14 through October 16, 1999. The gallery is located at 580 Broadway, 2nd floor, in SoHo. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 12-6 p.m. and by appointment. A reception with the artist will be held on Tuesday, September 14 from 6-8 p.m.

Arpana Caur is virtually a self-taught artist. Guided by her training and inspired by her surroundings, she responds directly and intimately to contemporary India by forming visual dualities between the ancient and the modern. Caur creates an ongoing dialogue between folk and modernism in today's India. Her work recalls the vibrant colors of Basohli paintings, the emotion or "rasa" of the Pahari painters, superimposed on Madhubani folk images and symbols which are often used as backgrounds. She weds contemporary representations of machines, cars, and industry, with folk and ancient symbolism portraying the innocent versus the oppressive. Rites of Time is a collection of works that investigates the replacement of technology as our new gods and deities. Her paintings bespeak the loss of devotion and spirituality that pervades our society.

As discussed by art critic, Bharati Chaturvedi, Arpana Caur articulates both a very personal as well as a global vision of women determining their own lives. Her Indian context, where women bear the brunt of social, environmental and economic pressures, gives her an activist's mantle. Caur often works and reworks a particular theme or composition. The gentle and lyrical act of sewing is a recurring motif in several of the paintings on exhibit. In one of her most poignant paintings, "Letters to the Past", one sees a decidedly urban woman moving beyond household chores, communicating to a sympathetic reader. Here, instead of sewing she is typing, but the inherent flowing movement is kept intact. The woman is based on Arpana's childhood images of her mother, a well-known writer, absorbed in work. The backdrop comprises ruins from Delhi's magnificent Red Fort, which symbolizes the city Arpana has grown up in and whose gentle decay is mirrored in the crumbling fort walls. In the paintings from this period, which also includes "The Embroiderer", the artist uses an even black tone and a centrally placed window device to reiterate the paramount position of the woman.

The collection on view is a comprehensive array of heart stopping images, which encapsulate and interrogate her ideas of womanhood and modernity. Born in 1954 in New Delhi, Caur has been exhibiting since 1974, both in India and internationally, participating in biennales in Algiers and Baghdad. In addition to her numerous exhibitions, she has also organized women's art festivals in India. In 1995, the Hiroshima Museum, Japan commissioned Caur, to execute a painting, Tears for Hiroshima, for the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Holocaust. Caur's works are held in numerous prominent public and private collections throughout the world. This exhibition marks the artist's first solo exhibition in the United States.