

# BOSE PACIA

**July 2008 New York** – Bose Pacia presents *Neti-Neti* (or, *the comforts of cultural indeterminacy*), a group show curated by **Peter Nagy** July 8 – August 16, 2008. The gallery is located at 508 West 26<sup>th</sup> Street on the 11<sup>th</sup> Floor, in the Chelsea district of New York City. Gallery summer hours are Tuesday through Friday from 11 to 6 pm and by appointment. There will be an opening reception on Tuesday, July 8<sup>th</sup> from 6 to 8 pm. The public is invited.

Coming from the Advaita Vedanta branch of Hindu philosophy, Neti-Neti means "not this, not this" or "neither this, nor that." Artistic practice today seems to comfortably inhabit many interstitial grey areas in terms of content, forms, materials, techniques and cultural identities. Artists are attracted to subjects and ideas from all over the world, with scant regard to provenance or pedigree. Life is, ideally, multi-layered and confounding, full of cross-referencing as well as overlapping concerns. Cultural indeterminacy has become a preferred language and attitude, the most appropriate response for both the inhabitants of cyber-space and the polyphonic community of creative travelers.

The works assembled for the exhibition include painting, sculpture, photography and collage. If not actually hybridized from diverse materials, the works articulate through imagery and content a space that is in between tradition and contemporaneity, straddling cultures both Western and Eastern. Is this American art or Asian art? Critical thinking or multi-cultural confusion? Happily, we can ascertain that these works are "neither this, nor that." The works present the positive capabilities of visual and material forms to express that which language is inevitably inadequate to describe.

**Michael Bühler-Rose** (lives and works in Florida, Boston, and New York) shoots portraits of young people who study the traditions of one culture from the other side of the world.

**Sheba Chhachhi** (lives and works in New Delhi) has documented a group of women ascetics whose identity seems iconoclastic within the parameters of their own orthodoxy.

**Stephen Mueller** (lives and works in New York) makes meditative paintings that might also be musical notations or diagrams for dance.

**Aditya Pande** (lives and works in New Delhi) combines computer graphics with painting and collage to synthesize imagery that is purposefully contradictory.

**Arlene Shechet** (lives and works in New York) crafts ceramic sculptures that imply function while denying any fixed cultural patrimony.

**Bharat Sikka** (lives and works in New Delhi.) takes painterly photographs of landscapes that hover between development and degradation.

**Maurizio Vetrugno** (lives and works in Turin, Italy and Bali) addresses issues of fashion, travel and celebrity culture in his collage and embroidered works.

**Raqs Media Collective** (live and work in New Delhi): Monica Narula, Jeebesh Bagchi, Shuddhabrata Sengupta investigate surrendered time. *Entries from a Time Book* gathers a luminous dog guarding stolen moments of a worker's leisure, arrested time pieces, and signs marking the road to Harmony, Industry and Economy.

The exhibition has been curated by Peter Nagy, an American artist who has been based in New Delhi since 1992. He is the director of Gallery Nature Morte in New Delhi and the curator for Bose Pacia Kolkata, in the city of Calcutta. His writings have appeared in a wide variety of publications (including Artforum, Flash Art, Nest, and Time Out) while he acts as a curatorial advisor on Indian contemporary art to many international projects.

*Wikipedia explains Neti-Neti as: "An exercise with the purpose to negate conscious rationalizations and other distractions from meditation. It is also a sage view on the nature of the Divine, and especially on the attempts to capture and describe the essence of God. In the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, Yajnavalkya is questioned by his students to describe God. He states "The Divine is not this and it is not that" (neti, neti). Thus, the Divine is not real as we are real, nor is it unreal. The divine is not living in the sense humans live, nor is it dead. The Divine is not compassionate as we use the term, nor is it uncompassionate. And so on. We can never truly define God in words. All we can say, in effect, is that "It isn't this, but also, it isn't that either". In the end, the student must transcend words to understand the nature of the Divine. In this sense, neti-neti is not a denial. Rather, it is an assertion that whatever the Divine may be, when we attempt to capture it in human words, we must inevitably fall short, because we are limited in understanding, and words are limited in ability to express the transcendent."*