

BOSE PACIA

August 2000 New York - Bose Pacia Modern presents an exhibition of paintings by **Bharti Kher**, a rising star on the contemporary Indian art scene, entitled *The Private Softness of Skin*. The show will run from September 14 through October 18 at 508 W 26th Street, 11th Floor. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 12-6 p.m. and by appointment. An opening reception will be held Thursday, September 14th. The public is invited.

The exhibition includes a series of recent paintings of contemporary Indian interiors, a powerful installation depicting a woman's eye view of modern India's patriarchal society entitled *Hirsute*, and a small format series of canvases that palpates the pulse of Indian modern cinema entitled *Bollywood*.

A recurring theme in Kher's works deals with the pluralism in modern Indian society. The juxtaposition of ancient Indian customs with modern Western mores. Her interiors depict the perfect example of how the burgeoning India, while increasingly receptive to foreign influence, still remains reverent of its own culture in an overtly conspicuous fashion. Her living room consists of a television set, bar utensils and miniature Japanese kites, alongside a photo of an ancestor on the upper-most shelf. Her kitchen cupboard contains Pearl Pet jars that are used to store atta flour, garam masala and chana dal. The bedroom is adorned with posters of pop stars both "desi" and international. These paintings convey "typical" Indianness as could only be seen through the eyes of a daughter of the diaspora.

Peter Nagy, in his essay on Kher, "An Aesthetics of Import/Export: recent works by Bharti Kher" has unraveled the current of the Indian Diaspora, the trend towards migrating out of India and how Kher has chosen to do the opposite. "Ultimately the subjects of these paintings of interiors are the compromises of the middle class, a group most painfully aware of their limitations and their unrealistic aspirations", and "Kher is careful to leave a part of each of her pictures of interiors unfinished, only sketched in, to imply the incomplete program which is this construction of identity."

By infusing comical and satirical overtones into her series of Bollywood paintings and by creating monotonous repetition with hundreds of moustached men in *Hirsute*, Kher allows viewers to share her creative and often critical perspective in which we see a culture indoctrinated by the West, yet still able to withstand and establish its selfhood.

Bharti Kher was born and raised in England, returned to India after studying Fine Art and Painting in Newcastle. She now lives and works in New Delhi. Ms. Kher has exhibited in India and in Europe, and her work is part of several important public and private international collections. This is the artist's solo debut in North America.