



**PRESS RELEASE**

**RINA BANERJEE**

**Forever Foreign**

9 April – 15 May 2010

Images (left to right):

*KiKiKi and wild she is juggling black flakes is nobody's toil, not pretty, not sin but famine she do beaten back with her hair of pins, 2009*  
Ink, acrylic on watercolour paper  
28.6 x 38.1 cm  
2009

*Bird be gone, bird behave... her watery friends below sat and prayed that he who leaps to continents far away will never return to see the same place again, 2009*  
Ink, acrylic on watercolour paper  
30.5 x 41.9 cm

*Neither bitter greens nor flying fish could forecast so many wishes on imperialism's spit as only she wished... in full maternal form could she lift sky open for a bit of profit -thrusting a canon of authoritative texts, laws, lies, traditions and convictio, 2009*  
Ink, acrylic on watercolour paper  
28.6 x 38.1 cm

In April 2010 Haunch of Venison London will present *Forever Foreign* – the first UK solo show of Bengali-American artist Rina Banerjee, introducing the New York-based artist's complex, seductive, corporeal oeuvre

Banerjee's drawings, sculptures and assemblage depict mythical, visionary worlds, reflecting the artist's Western and Indian backgrounds with intense colours and hybrid flora and fauna. The fantastical floating world Banerjee creates is reminiscent of Indian miniature paintings, and comes from an interest in Victorian culture; the thirst for exploration and knowledge, lust for the travel and curiosity in the 'other'. The work explores specific colonial moments that reinvent place and identity as complex, diasporic experiences. The work's aesthetic and cultural beginnings underline how our perceptions of place, home, foreign, domestic and the exotic are 'stained' by the specific cultural properties of the objects that fill them.

Banerjee's sculptures are typified by her sensual and suggestive use of a wide variety of found objects, both artificial and natural, and her deployment of complex and unusual spatial configurations. Her sculptures often hang, or are cantilevered out from the walls, seemingly weightless, incorporating stitching, weaving, scattering and binding, entangling boundaries between object-making, sculpture and craft. Architecture is a repeated concern, and *Forever Foreign* will include the work, *Take me, take me, take me.... to the Palace of Love*, a large-scale fabric work depicting a levitating and diaphanous pink Taj Mahal.

Certain motifs recur throughout her work, chiefly the umbrella which constitutes an important reference to her native Kolkata and in shape reminds us of natural forms such as trees and mushrooms, plus in use it demarcates private space and the outside world. Banerjee's vision is one in which objects and images slip between the cultural and man-made, the natural and organic. Other recurring motifs include shells, eggs, and skulls, and boldly coloured fans. The works often have wild and poetic titles such as *Tortoise and ivory, cinnabar, a single lustrous pearl all of it sprayed money as if it were new gold*, which hint at the opulent materiality of her visual language.

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**EDITORS' NOTES**

Rina Banerjee

Rina Banerjee was born in 1963, Kolkata, India. Graduating from Yale University, School of Art in 1995, Banerjee lives and works in New York City. She has exhibited internationally and has shown in such prominent group exhibitions as *Pretty Is As Pretty Does*, Site Santa Fe Museum Contemporary (2009), *Dyed Roots, the New Emergence of Culture*, Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto (2008), *Tsumari – Echigo's 3rd Triennial*, Japan (2006), *The Greater New York Show*, PS1 MoMA (2005), *Yankee Remix*, Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (2003), and the Whitney Biennial (2000) at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Haunch of Venison

Founded in 2002 by Harry Blain and Graham Southern, contemporary art gallery Haunch of Venison works with some of the most important and exciting artists working today, presenting a broad and critically acclaimed programme of exhibitions at international gallery spaces in London, Berlin and New York. In March 2009, Haunch of Venison moved their London programme to the 21,500ft gallery spaces at 6 Burlington Gardens.