

VISUAL PERFORMANCE

new media works curated by Wu Hung and Julie Walsh

walsh
GALLERY

APRIL 30 — JULY 10, 2004

opening reception April 30, 7–9pm



1.



2.



3.

Nalini Malani
Song Dong
Ranbir Kaleka
Zhou Xiaohu
Wang Gongxin
Jongbum Choi

1. Nalini Malani, stills from "Unity in Diversity", 7 minute loop, video on plasma screen, 2003
2. Song Dong, "Slapping", video projection with sound, 1997.
3. Ranbir Kaleka, stills from "Man with Cockerel", double channel video installation, 30 second loop, 2001.

WALSH GALLERY

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T — SA 10:30–5:30 www.walshgallery.com

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Chicago, Illinois; Wu Hung and Julie Walsh bring "Visual Performance" to Chicago

Opening at Walsh Gallery is a show of new media called "Visual Performance" curated by Wu Hung and director Julie Walsh. The show features artists Nalini Malani, Song Dong, Ranbir Kaleka, Zhou Xiaohu, Wang Gongxin, and Jongbum Choi. The opening reception is on Friday, April 30th from 7-9pm at Walsh Gallery. Many of the artists will be present.

Wu Hung, Director of the Center for the Art of East Asia and Consulting Curator of the Smart Museum of Art (University of Chicago), has curated groundbreaking exhibitions of contemporary art in the United States and abroad. He was the chief curator of the First Guangzhou Triennial (2002) and is currently co-curating the upcoming show "Between Past and Future: New Photography and Video from China", which will open on June 11th in New York at the International Center of Photography and the Asia Society. It will then open in Chicago (at the MCA and Smart Museum) on October 2nd, before traveling to other museums around the world. **Julie Walsh** brings ten years of experience in exhibiting contemporary Asian art to this curatorial platform.

Digital technology provides new possibilities for reinvesting manufactured images with seemingly autonomous power. Historically, such a pursuit has stimulated the creation of important artistic styles and concepts, including verisimilitude, illusionism, and the living icon. This new technology also allows contemporary artists to reflect upon and respond to earlier art forms, transforming paintings and sculptures into animated images with enhanced visual immediacy.

Nalini Malani will be showing a video piece called "Unity in Diversity", based on a painting by Raja Ravi Varma that was exhibited in Chicago in 1893 at the World Congress of Religions. During this viewing a famous philosopher, Swami Vivekananda, addressed "the danger of orthodoxy in religion." For Ms. Malani, this was to become a present day warning of the acceleration of Muslim violence condoned by the Hindu Nationalist Party. The video is a modern day fairy-tale where eleven Indian women perform in harmony, and are juxtaposed with an account of the 2002 genocide in Gujerat. Ms. Malani's works have been seen at the 2003 Istanbul Biennial, the Tate Modern (London), the Fukuoaka Asian Art Museum (Japan), and numerous other museums around the world. Ms. Malani's work has also been included in the Johannesburg, Havana, and Kwangju Biennials.

In **Song Dong's** video projection "Slapping", a giant hand comes down and slaps the ground; the artist's body becomes implicit. This "visual performance" is accompanied by a loud smacking sound, reminding the audience that in Buddhist practice, jarring sounds are used to awaken the meditator into a state of full awareness of the present. Song Dong's work has been exhibited at museums both nationally and around the world, such as: The David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art (Chicago), P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center (New York), the Museum of Modern Art (Finland), and both at the House of World Cultures and the Hamburger Bahnhof Museum of Contemporary Art in Berlin. Song Dong has also exhibited in many biennials and triennials on contemporary Chinese art, such as the first and subsequent Kwanju biennials, the 4th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (Australia), and the Guangzhou Triennial in 2002.

Ranbir Kaleka will be exhibiting a video projected onto both sides of a seemingly sheer screen. Entitled "Man with Cockerel," it shows a man stuck in a heavenly digital loop, as he appears and grabs a cockerel, only to have it escape. Finally, the man vanishes too. The viewer assumes a voyeuristic gaze, as if caught observing an act of creation and dissolution by a divine power. Mr.

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