


AS ARTISTS, THEY ASK QUESTIONS THAT
COUNTER POPULAR SOCIAL BELIEFS
ABOUT CULTURE AND IDENTITY.

COLLECTIVELY, THEIR WORK REVEALS
THE SPIRIT OF INQUIRY THAT DEFINES
THE NEW GENERATION OF SOUTH
ASIAN ARTISTS LIVING ABROAD.

HERE ARE 10 SOUTH ASIAN DIASPORA
ARTISTS TO WATCH FOR.....



By Sharmistha Ray

[SRESTHA RIT PREMNATH]



[*Duty Free*
[diptych], 2008]

Srestha Rit Premnath, born in Bangalore in 1979, now lives in the United States. Although he had little exposure to contemporary art in his early days, he was raised in an environment where critical thinking was encouraged. During his middle school years his mother was finishing her PhD in Animal Behaviour and often had colleagues at home discussing their research. After schooling in Bangalore Premnath moved to Cleveland to attend the Cleveland Institute of Art. There, and afterwards at Bard College, he

absorbed as much as he could about contemporary art. Premnath's work is engaged with forms of interrogation and representation. Using strategies of negation, erasure and fracture, his work explores the space between history and our memories of it. Installations, writings and a topical magazine, *Shifter*, have emerged from this practice. Most recently, Premnath curated an exhibition *On Certainty* at Bose Pacia gallery in New York with artists from India and abroad like Abhishek Hazra and Kiran Sub-

baiah, revealing yet another of his many creative facets. Reflecting on the word 'diaspora', Premnath writes: "Often in the rhetoric that surrounds the metaphor of diaspora, history is seen as dislocated and nostalgic. However, I find that history is more an accretion, or accumulation of events, and as I have lived in different parts of the world I have become a part of them. We must extend the metaphor and imagine a plant that has roots in many places – some real and some imaginary."



[JARET VADERA]



Jaret Vadera's work is engaged with cognitive feedback loops and the process by which information is filtered, mutated and manipulated. Working with video installation, Vadera creates a sensory situation that attempts to bridge the gap between a high art experience and common daily occurrences. Vadera, who is half-Punjabi and half-Filipino, is a nomad between New York and Toronto, where he was born. His parents met and married in Toronto. Of his early years, he says: "My family moved around the city every few years. And with family spread out across the globe that were regularly traveling back and forth across national borders, I never really felt defined by just one place or by one worldview." Keeping that in mind, Vadera works across media, primarily in the spaces where painting, photography, video installation, and new media intersect. Vadera is a recent graduate of the prestigious Yale University School of Art in New Haven. *Carol* is a series of digital prints from Skype conversations with friends and family at the moment when a glitch occurs. Through this work, Vadera explores the distortion of perception in cross-cultural communication in an age of video conferencing. In another work 'I tell the truth, even when I tell a lie', a video installation is found footage of the US marines in Afghanistan which has been cut, fragmented, filtered, slowed down and reversed in different ways during the video in an exploration of systems of violence, power and invisibility.

[*I tell the truth even when I lie*,
video installation shot, 2009]