

Media Release
June 1st, 1993

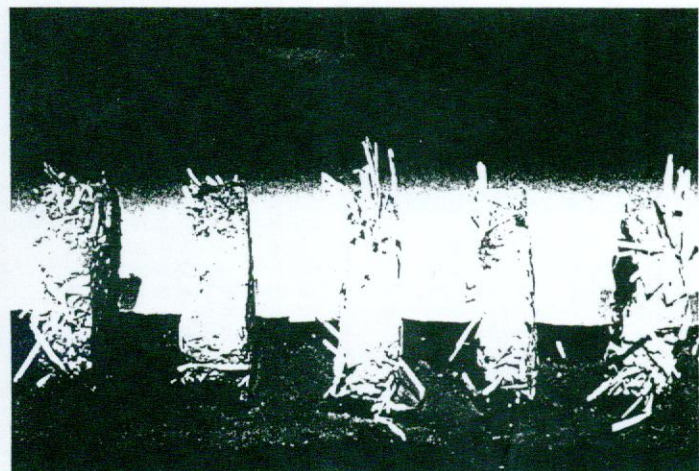
Sarindar Dhaliwal

Heart, Home & Hearth

JUNE 9TH TO JULY 3RD, 1993

The Or Gallery begins its summer programming with an installation by Kingston based artist Sarindar Dhaliwal. Sarindar recently spent two months in Vancouver at the Kakali paper studio on Granville Island making a series of pieces using wood pulp, pigments and straw. The conceptualization for this work was inspired by structures found in India that are made by stacking round disks of dried cow dung which are then used as fuel for cooking and heat. The series of pieces produced for this installation were constructed in a relatively short period of time and thus mark a point of departure in the artist's traditional working method. Although the materiality of these works still references an intensely laborious and somewhat obsessive process many decisions as to form and colour and size were made spontaneously which according to Sarindar was a very refreshing way in which to work.

Within the context of the many discussions around identity politics Sarindar Dhaliwal's exhibition will present another opportunity for further considerations of questions around the idea of 'home'. Where is home? What does it mean to have a home or not to have a home? How can we recognize home if we've never been there? How do we claim a space called home - homeland?



Heart, Home & Hearth will be Sarindar Dhaliwal's first solo exhibition in Vancouver. The exhibition will be accompanied by a brochure with a short essay by Shani Mootoo.

Sarindar Dhaliwal

Heart, Home & Hearth

Or Gallery
June 9th to July 3rd, 1993

The other day I saw a poster on the wall of a restaurant: flaming orange sunset, a motorcycle blurred by speed, a dusty desert road, and large white letters above that shouted SARINDAR. I took a second look, of course, and saw that what it really said was SUNRIDER.

How and what I see has everything to do with what I already know. But the eyes and memory of border backpackers constantly negotiate the “treacherous angularity of slipways”. (*Borrowed from Ian Rashid*)

I walked several blocks along Hastings street before entering the Or Gallery to see Heart, Home and Hearth, with my Indo-woman friend—long black wavy hair, and skin the sugary colour of lightly cooked gulab jamun. Out there on Hastings, she wore a blue sweater and faded grey jeans. The moment we entered the Or, this woman at my side, transformed in my eyes by the familiarity of the shapes, substance, space and colours, suddenly burst into a veritable dancing Saraswati, swirling dirvishly in an orange and gold sari amongst the artwork. A second delighted but baffled scrutiny from me and she was back flat in blue sweater and faded grey jeans, hands folded behind her back, studying the works. Immense desire on my part to enter this particular work in a manner familiar to my fantastic memory.

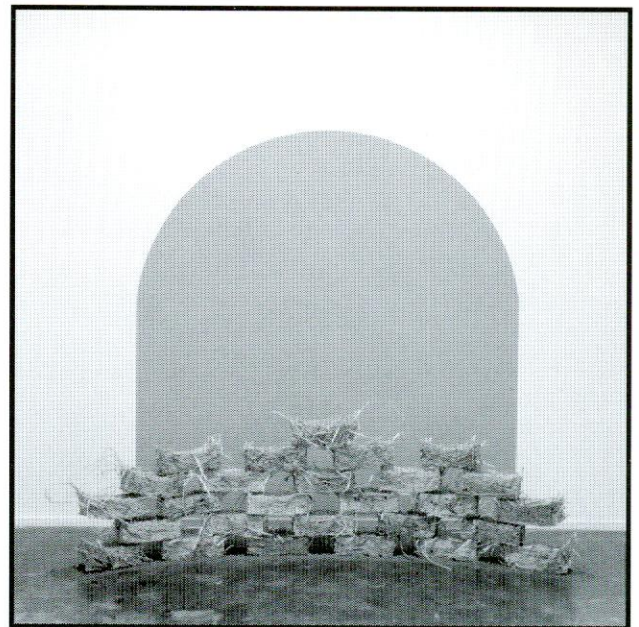
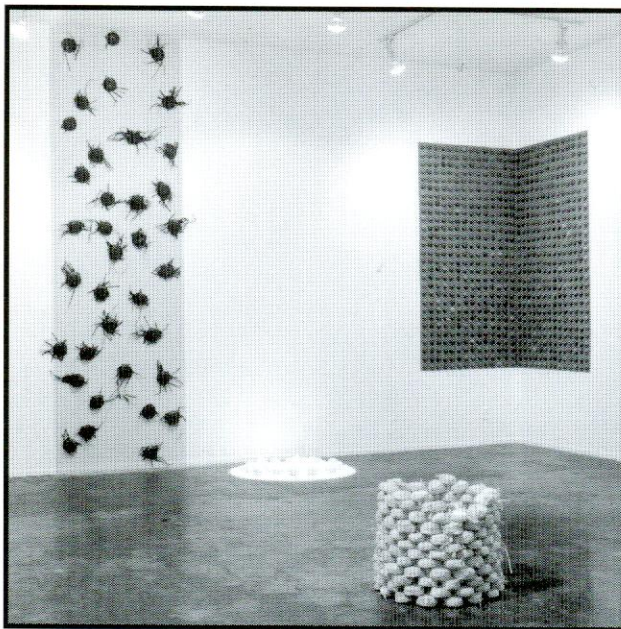
I know you're not supposed to eat the artwork. But I also know that Indians don't invite you to their house, put food out and not offer it to you. So I tasted the “Sugary” bed of crystals beneath the balls of rasamali, only to have my suddenly-awakened meethai-yearning tastebuds shocked that they were in fact rock-salt crystals.

Bitten once, I cautiously dipped my hand into the greeny yellow curry-coloured powder base (yellow ochre, Robin Laurence calls it) on which sat a row of straw and wood pulp balls of decreasing size, hoping, almost begging for the taste, heat and smell of curry and tumeric, the sweltering sun, and swaying coconut trees. A thick and oily unrelenting powder stained my fingers, smeared my clothing, smelled like buttery dirt. I didn't dare taste it—clay talc from the Paint Pots, Banff, Alberta.

Reflecting me, flirting with my memory, with my yearnings. Desire teases. Only to have my heart broken (strengthened?) by illusion.

Reminds me so much of the flirting of straight, or married women.

SARINDAR. Not SUNRIDER.



(re)presentation identity deconstruction
 conflation, journey home,
 cultural textualists whose storiography?
Herstoriography.
 Postmodern-poststructuralist
 location sexuality?
 Exclusivity inclusivity privileged complicity.
 Other homogeneous disjuncture contextualising.
 Subaltern.
 Empirical imperial orientalist
 "interrogate" autonomies.
 Discourse?
 Site subvert (mis)representation memory difference,
 subcultures (re)define dominant subjectivity.
 Universalism essentialist,
 perspectival locations monoculture.
 Agency.
 Territory border materiality *ground*
 non-western traditional.

Sarindar Dhaliwal's work often references the experiences and places she encounters while travelling, in particular those travels which have taken her back to her native South Asia. Many of her installation's make use of traditional materials and processes which lend an autobiographical reading to the work.

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Shani Mootoo is a visual artist, video maker, and writer. She recently completed a book of short stories entitled *Out on Main Street* (published by Pressgang, 1993)



Or Gallery

314 West Hastings Street, P.O. Box 1329 Station "A", Vancouver, B.C., CANADA V6C 2T2

Gallery hours: Tuesday to Saturday 12 to 5 PM (604) 683-7395

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the City of Vancouver, the Canada Council, the Province of B.C. through the Ministry of Tourism and Ministry responsible for Culture