

OPENING: JANUARY 16TH, 2-8PM



Untitled, 2019, 80h x 3w x 3d in. (203.20h x 7.62w x 7.62d cm)

RICHARD TAITTINGER GALLERY is pleased to present *FORM AND VOID*, the first New York solo exhibition of works by Mumbai based artist Manish Nai (b. 1980) in collaboration with KAVI GUPTA GALLERY, Chicago.

FORM AND VOID surveys over 5 years of diverse facets of Nai's transdisciplinary practice. This exhibition seeks to explore the formal and conceptual balance between absence and presence. Nai's minimalist aesthetic position finds harmony between form and void, gravity and levity, the highly personal and the truly universal.

His materials are distinctly Indian, both past and present, but the forms they take have the abstract logic of geometry. Jute and indigo relate back to the history of India's occupation by the British Empire, cash crops cultivated at the expense of farmers who desperately needed to be producing food to combat famine.

The clothes speak to cultural moments, a grandmother's patterned shawl so reminiscent of one generation in India, a child's t-shirt so clearly speaking to another, bundled together like laundry of multiple generations living together under a common roof.

Stacks of books layered like sedimentary rock form a timeline of cultural production. Mosquito nets ubiquitous throughout the tropics, are found in homes around the world, both for safety and for comfort.

Even the act of compression, used in his making, relates to the notion of social, historical, and economic pressures. Despite all these distinct cultural narratives embedded in the work, there is an aspirational, transcendent universality to the work's disciplined minimalism.

MANISH NAI *FORM AND VOID* JANUARY 16 - FEBRUARY 28, 2021

Perfect geometry inspires the boundaries of each work's formation. Point, line, plane, and form interplay their abstract logic with the limitless potential of the organic materials that form them.

The artist's gestures' totalities extend beyond the objects to include specific absences around them, negative space implicitly tethered to the positive object. A jute ring highlights an empty space, the total volume described by the piece consisting more of empty space than of the jute itself.

Leaning pillars of compressed fabric cast shadows on the gap they create, delicately balanced as an interstitial between floor and wall. Mosquito nets catch pale stains of paint that mostly passes through them, visually elusive and physically transient.

Every object is riddled with gaps and fissures, and the nature of their installation in space always necessitates some negotiation with the emptiness around it. This emptiness is not just a coincidence, nor a consequence of scale, but an apparatus inborn to the work itself, absence loaded with possibility, void where form can come to have purpose. Composer Claude Debussy famously observed that music is not just the notes, but the silence between them; Nai's work serves as reminder that sculpture too is not just its own substance, but the shadow it casts, and the space it takes ownership of outside its physical boundaries.

FORM AND VOID will be on view at RICHARD TAITTINGER GALLERY, 154 Ludlow Street, from January 16th through February 28th. Works will be available online at richardtaittinger.com/

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#ManishNai #formandvoid #RichardTaittingerGallery



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GALLERY

Kavi Gupta



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Manish Nai was born in 1980 in Gujarat. He has held solo exhibitions at Kavi Gupta Gallery in Chicago, Galerie Mirchandani + Steinruecke in Mumbai, Galerie Karsten Greve in Paris, St. Moritz and Cologne, and Galerie Gebr. Lehmann in Berlin. In 2017, the Fondation Fernet Branca presented a comprehensive exhibition of the artist's paintings, murals, sculptures and photographs in St. Louis, France. The exhibition traveled to the Het Noordbrabants Museum in The Netherlands in 2018.

Nai has participated in the Kochi-Muziris Biennale (2014) and the Shanghai Biennale (2012). He has recently completed a 60' long sculpture as a permanent installation in Mumbai's Bandra-Kurla Complex. His works have recently shown at The Sculpture Park at Madhavendra Palace, Rajasthan, India (2017-18), Kasturbhai Lalbhai Museum in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India (2019), and at the Smart Museum of Art in Chicago as part of their permanent collection. Nai's work is held in numerous private and public collections throughout Asia, Europe, and North America. The artist lives and works in Mumbai.

ABOUT RICHARD TAITTINGER GALLERY

RICHARD TAITTINGER GALLERY was founded in 2014 by Richard Frerejean Taittinger at 154 Ludlow Street, a 6,000 square foot space on 3 floors designed by studioMDA. A pioneer of New York City's Lower East Side art scene, today RTG is surrounded by cultural institutions including the New Museum, the International Center for Photography, and the Brant Foundation. RTG represents a diverse roster of leading international artists at various stages of their careers covering every medium and photography. Working closely with museum curators, RTG has successfully placed works by its artists in over 24 prestigious museum collections. RTG advocates for price transparency and democratization of the art world showing artists from outside the traditional art world system together with established talents. In 2019 RTG launched a print program produced in New York City, offering affordable works starting at \$500 to complement its catalog imprint.

RICHARD TAITTINGER GALLERY supports artists attuned to ethical values, human rights, diversity, feminism, and environmental issues.

ABOUT KAVI GUPTA GALLERY

Kavi Gupta is a leading contemporary art gallery based in Chicago, where two permanent gallery locations host more than a dozen museum-quality exhibitions each year. Kavi Gupta's diverse, international program emphasizes contemporary artists from marginalized communities with complex, multifaceted practices. Working alongside these artists to develop new projects, original scholarship, and historic archives, Kavi Gupta's program is renowned for its strong academic focus and pioneering vision.

Kavi Gupta is proud to be a three-time recipient of the prestigious International Association of Art Critics (AICA-USA) Award for Best Show in a Commercial Space Nationally, most recently for Mickalene Thomas in 2014. Since its inception, the gallery program has been supplemented by site-specific installations, public works, academic panels, and curated projects at art fairs.

In 2016, Kavi Gupta launched Kavi Gupta Editions, an imprint producing monographs, artist books, original artist prints, and artist objects. In 2021, Kavi Gupta will open a new satellite space in New Buffalo, Michigan, which will host exclusive exhibitions, special projects, and an outdoor sculpture program.



Kavi Gupta