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BRIC Arts | Media | Bklyn Presents *ACCENTED* at BRIC Rotunda Gallery

Lori Ledis Emerging Curator Fellow Curates Exhibition About Accents in Contemporary Culture



January 20, 2010, Brooklyn, NY – BRIC Arts | Media | Bklyn is pleased to present *ACCENTED*, a group exhibition curated by **Murtaza Vali**, the winter 2010 recipient of the **Lori Ledis Curatorial Fellowship**, a program that fosters emerging curatorial talent in the field of contemporary art. *ACCENTED* is on view from January 20 through March 6, 2010.

ACCENTED brings together recent work that examines the different ways in which accents operate in our contemporary moment, featuring artists **Kamrooz Aram**, **Brendan Fernandes**, **Miguel Luciano**, **Yamini Nayar**, **Angel Nevarez** and **Valerie Tevere**.

For an immigrant, his or her (native) accent, the aural trace of a culture left behind, is a source of both pride and shame, of belonging and exclusion. In *Foe* (2008), **Brendan Fernandes** unpacks the idea that cultural authenticity might reside in one's accent; it shows Fernandes struggling to recite a passage from J.M. Coetzee's novel of the same name in the accents of his various cultural backgrounds—India, Kenya and Canada. **Angel Nevarez & Valerie Tevere's** *Touching From A Distance* (2008) shows a traditional Mariachi band performing their interpretation of

Joy Division's *Transmission* (1979) in the Plaza de la Liberación in Guadalajara, México, revealing that accents are not limited to language alone, but extend to music as well.

Accents appear in other, more visual cultural realms, notably in the imagination and articulation of spaces and selves through interior furnishing and fashion. The carefully constructed miniature interiors captured in **Yamini Nayar's** photographs are accented spaces, cobbled together like words or sentences from various material scraps. Perceptibly off-key, the familiar interior is rendered uncanny through Nayar's exacting use of accents—furniture, photographs, objects, wall and floor patterns—the way language is rendered unfamiliar to native speakers through a foreigner's accent. Riffing on the bling culture of urban youth, **Miguel Luciano's** platinum coated plantains celebrate this stereotypical yet iconic symbol of Caribbean culture and a staple of its cuisine, transforming a shameful residue of otherness into an unabashed celebration of difference, a precious fetish and proud fashion accessory. But such metamorphoses are always deceptive, the shiny surface masking the slow rot within.

Finally, **Kamrooz Aram's** meticulous drawings—loosely based on 19th-century ethnological photographs—use color and ornamentation to challenge their problematic sources. The classification of native types practiced by colonial administrators relied greatly on photography's early claims to scientific objectivity. While Aram's considerable draughtsmanship mimics photography's realism his various visual accents playfully unsettle its truth claims.

Despite the grand claims that globalization has expedited a gradual process of cultural homogeneity, the works in this exhibition suggest that accents endure as unassimilable markers of difference. They might fade slightly but they rarely disappear completely. They resist, remaining stubbornly present, forcing us to adapt ourselves to their alterity.

In conjunction with *ACCENTED*, BRIC will continue **Moving Wall | Pictures**, a curated film and video series, on **Wednesday, February 17 at 7 pm** with a screening of **JOHN & JANE** (dir. **Ashim Ahluwalia**), an experimental documentary portrait of six call center workers in Mumbai, India. The film will be followed by a dialogue between curator Murtaza Vali and **Sukhdev Sandhu**, chief film critic for the London Daily Telegraph, professor of literature at New York University and author of *Night Haunts: A Journey Through the London Night*.

Murtaza Vali is a Brooklyn- and Sharjah-based art critic and historian. A contributing editor at *ArtAsiaPacific*, he co-edited the 2007 and 2008 editions of its year-end *Almanac*. His writing has also appeared in *Art India*, *ArtReview* and *Bidoun* and he has recently written catalog essays on Reena Saini Kallat and Emily Jacir.

Semi-annually, BRIC dedicates the Project Room at BRIC Rotunda Gallery and full staff support to the **Lori Ledis Curatorial Fellowship**, which realizes the vision of an emerging curator selected through a competitive process. The fellowship program is supported by family, friends, and professional associates of Lori Ledis, a pioneering Brooklyn art dealer and music producer.

Directions

Located in Brooklyn Heights, BRIC Rotunda Gallery is a short walk from the 2,3; 4,5; M; or R trains at Court Street/Borough Hall; or the A, C trains at High Street.

Hours

The gallery is open to the public free of charge from Tuesday through Saturday, 12 – 6 pm.

Cost

Events at the gallery are free to the public.

BRIC Arts | Media | Bklyn is a multi-disciplinary arts and media non-profit dedicated to presenting contemporary art, performing arts, and community media programs that are reflective of Brooklyn's diverse communities, and to providing resources and platforms to support the creative process. All of our offerings are free or low cost, to enhance the public's access to and understanding of arts and media. Each year, upwards of a million people in Brooklyn and citywide are served through our programs.

BRIC's contemporary art initiatives aim is to increase the visibility and accessibility of contemporary art while bridging the gap between the art world and global culture in Brooklyn through exhibitions, public events, and an innovative arts education program at BRIC Rotunda Gallery and around the borough.

BRIC acknowledges public funds for its contemporary art programs from the Institute of Museum and Library Services; National Endowment for the Arts; New York State Council on the Arts; New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; New York State Senators Velmanette Montgomery and Daniel Squadron; New York State Assembly members Inez Barron, Hakeem Jeffries, Alec Brook-Krasny, and Joan Millman;

and New York City Council members Lewis Fidler, Vincent Gentile, Letitia James, Domenic M. Recchia, Jr., Diana Reyna, Kendall Stewart, Al Vann, and David Yassky. Additional support provided by The Lily Auchincloss Foundation; Robert Lehman Foundation; and TD Bank. The 2009–10 exhibition season is supported in part by Martha A. and Robert S. Rubin, in addition to numerous individuals.

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