

**FOR
IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

76 GRAND STREET NEW YORK NY 10013



**RAQIB SHAW
GARDEN OF EARTHLY DELIGHTS
SEPTEMBER 7 – OCTOBER 8
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Deitch Projects is pleased to announce the first New York solo show by London based Kashmiri artist Raqib Shaw. Taking its title from the eponymous Hieronymous Bosch painting, *Garden of Earthly Delights* will feature five new paintings and twenty drawings describing the erotic underwater realm of Raqib's imagination.

Oriental, psychedelic, surreal, pornographic, and decorative, these works feature efflorescent genitalia put to work by all manner of hybrid creature. In his outrageous private phantasmagoria we find surfaces nipped and crevassed, space enigmatic in a suffused underwater thicket, and time clenched in perpetual orgasm.

Raqib incorporates a veritable Natural History Museum catalogue of flora and fauna: fan coral, seaweed forests, anemones, limpets, sea turtles, anglerfish, coelacanths, writhing eels, skittering crustaceans, and turgid sea cucumbers lurk about. Echinodermata, nematoda, and chondrichthyes: phylum with names as resplendent as the animal's colorful execution.

But cohabiting below the surface we also playfully find terrestrial organisms: frilled lizards in threat display, phallus-headed underwater birds, dragonflies, bug-eyed tarsiers, and animal-headed man-beasts. These hybrids writhe and squirm in *sportif* sexual groupings across the effulgent surface.

The method is likewise aqueous: fences of Swiss stained glass paint corral puddles of pooling enamel that the artist swizzles around with porcupine quills. While taming notoriously difficult types of paint, industrial metallic and oil-based enamels, Raqib also encrusts his surfaces with glitter and jewels. And though he takes inspiration from decorative objects of the east—including lacquered Japanese screens, kimono textiles, antique carpets, Persian jewelry, etc—his dialogue with the history of painting takes his work well “beyond decorative”.

Strongly influenced by literature of the west, Raqib's characters, as in the best Romantic novel, take on a life of their own in Byronesque narratives of pleasure and pain. The artist describes the enjoyment he feels getting lost in the paintings, which he derives from books, submerged completely in the realm of the fantastic.

As Raqib writes: “In looking at my work I want people to believe in the possibility of transcendence, that base metal might be turned into gold, or, as Proust eloquently wrote, to reveal ‘the pearl that may give the lie to our carapace of paste and pewter.’”

After gaining his MA in Fine Art from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in 2002, Raqib's standout solo show at Victoria Miro generated a great deal of excitement. This is his first solo New York exhibition

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT JASMINE LEVETT AT
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