

PETER BLUM CHELSEA

For Immediate Release:

Huma Bhabha
Drawings

November 17th, 2010 to January 15th, 2011



Peter Blum is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new over-painted and collaged photographs by Huma Bhabha opening on Wednesday, November 17th at Peter Blum Chelsea, 526 West 29th Street, New York. This will be her first solo exhibition at Peter Blum. The exhibition will be held in conjunction with an exhibition of sculpture by Huma Bhabha at Salon 94 Bowery in New York.

A monograph of Huma Bhabha's work published by Peter Blum and Salon 94 will be released on the occasion of the exhibition. The 140 page monograph includes 91 full color reproductions with a text by Thomas McEvelley and an interview with Huma Bhabha by Julie Mehretu. This will be the first complete monograph of her work.

Bhabha continues the tradition of using photographs as the basis of drawings begun in the early 20th century, but through a prism of post 2001: A Space Odyssey special effects. Using photos of seemingly empty landscapes that the artist has taken primarily in Karachi, Pakistan and also in Carrara, Italy, Bhabha creates a stage or location for the application of paint, ink and collaged elements. The main players in these narrative drenched pictures are a crew of character actors inspired by the history of expressionistic portraiture ranging from Kirchner to Basquiat. Sometime the effects are achieved through the simple act of turning a horizon on its side or creating an upside down smile in the form of a contrail. Other times the drawings are multi-layered with the original photo functioning like an armature with various forms of information applied to it. The marble mountains of Carrara are transformed into the skull of a giant mask-like head, which is decorated with collage and rough expressionistic mark making. Bhabha takes advantage of the photographs' materiality (which is also enhanced by their large scale) by using the borders, out of focus areas, dents, the imperfections become opportunities.

The work is full of ghostly monuments, which seem to bear witness to human construction and activity, but with no comment. The atmospheres created through erasures, smudges and accidents recalls the drawings of Victor Hugo as do the gothic and romantic elements, but with Bhabha's work the world depicted is ultimately not a world of the past or some nostalgia for the ancient but a world very much of the present where living ruins are being born with every click of the camera.

Born in 1962 in Karachi, Pakistan, Huma Bhabha currently lives and works in Poughkeepsie, New York. Most recently, she was included in the 2010 Whitney Biennial and participated in an exhibition of sculpture at City Hall Park in New York curated by the Public Art Fund. In 2008 she participated in the 7th Gwangju Biennale in Gwangju, Korea and received the Aldrich Contemporary Museum Emerging Artist Award. Her numerous group exhibitions include *Greater New York 2005* at P.S.1 and *USA Today: New American Art from the Saatchi Gallery* at the Royal Academy of Arts, London. She has also participated in exhibitions at The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York, The Aldrich Museum in Ridgefield Connecticut, The Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, Arena Mexico Arte Contemporaneo in Guadalajara, Mexico, Columbia University, New York and Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York.

For additional information and photographic material please contact **Laura Pinello** at chelsea@peterblumgallery.com.
Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday 10-6