

CHRISTINE PARK GALLERY

Cara Nahaul: *Crossing the Tropic*

11 September – 10 October 2015

Private View & Reception

Thursday 10 September 2015, 6-9 pm

For immediate release

Christine Park Gallery is delighted to present an exhibition of new paintings by London-based artist Cara Nahaul, her first solo exhibition in London.

Born in London, Nahaul's paintings define and negotiate her cultural history and present location, seeking to challenge existing narratives and stereotypes on ideas about the tropical and exotic, terms used loosely in fetishised depictions of foreign lands. Presented in *Crossing the Tropic* is an on-going series of paintings, which use the island as a metaphor and motif. The island is imbued with significant personal meaning to the artist, pointing to her parental heritage, Malaysia and Mauritius, and place of birth and current location of her artistic practice, the UK. The optimistic palette of her travels to these places in contrast with the more subdued hues of her British birthplace is evident within the work. Connotations of these colour combinations are communicated across the paintings traversing various psychological states. Each painting is a continuation of another, proposing an experience that is not only the visual but one that can also invoke taste or climate.

In this series of paintings, the bright hued compositions recall the landscapes of 90s platform video games, a two-dimensional world alluding to an infinite unconscious and imaginary realm. The simplistic geological forms and natural phenomena inhabit expansive coloured skies and sedimentations, harking back to the artist's childhood. The paintings viewed together induce a sense of passing through a place that is unfamiliar and dreamlike, mapping psychological spaces suggestive of a displaced self that is in flux.

Each painting begins as a black and white line drawing in Nahaul's sketchbook. The drawings are repeated and mutated until a clear picture crystallises. Family photographs and holiday postcards are used to trigger memories, but any reference to physical source materials are eschewed in the actual paintings. Instead, wholly abstract bands of colour are first painted on the canvas, intuitively chosen in the moment of painting to determine its mood and atmosphere. The works shift between landscape and abstraction, creating a blueprint of an imaginary place with indirect references to particular events, time or geographic

location. Hence, the paintings construct a condition of these landscapes, connoting a formal construction as well as a state of emotion. In withholding the specifics, the paintings resist a clear narrative or mapping, instead inviting the viewer to travel to unknown destinations with the artist.

About the artist

Born in London in 1987, Cara Nahaul received her MFA in Fine Arts at Parsons The New School For Design in 2014 and was the recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship. She won the Heart of England prize at the National Open Art Competition (2009) and was selected for the John Moores Painting Prize at the Walker Art Gallery for the Liverpool Biennial (2010). Nahaul was chosen for the inaugural Jerwood Painting Fellowships (2011), which culminated in an exhibition at the Jerwood Space, London and toured across the UK.

She recently completed a yearlong studio residency at the Florence Trust, London (2015). Nahaul lives and works in London.

About us

Christine Park Gallery exhibits works by established and emerging international contemporary artists. Located in the heart of London's Fitzrovia, the Gallery is dedicated to the discovery of new, locally emerging talents, whilst also exhibiting works from internationally acclaimed artists. The extensive programme of solo shows, conceptually curated group exhibitions and special installations of new art projects are intended to expand the boundaries of the current contemporary art scene. Aiming to build a fresh and dynamic platform for contemporary art, the Gallery encourages cross-cultural exchange with the audience, in addition to being a commercial space that artists can use as a canvas to realise their projects and present their new works to the public.

For further information and press inquiries, please contact Christine Park at christine@christinepark.net.