

Jagdeep Raina,
*Memories Gave Birth
to Hope, Part Two*
28 April—30 May, 2021
6 Minerva Street, London

Presented in collaboration with
Cooper Cole, Toronto

MANDELA'S SERMON

Blessed are the dehumanized
for they have nothing to lose
but their patience

False gods killed the poet in me. Now
I dig graves
with artistic precision

— a poem by Keorapetse Kgositsile,
selected by Sam Vernon

Soft Opening,

Cooper Cole and Soft Opening are pleased to present *Memories Gave Birth to Hope, Part Two* a solo exhibition of the work of Jagdeep Raina. This exhibition is a continuation of Raina's installation at Piccadilly Circus Underground Station which took place from 3 December, 2020—24 January, 2021.

This exhibition features a series of drawings and textile works by Raina that explore the birth of Bhangra music. Bhangra was created by working class South Asian Migrant labourers who worked in the industrial factories of Britain—specifically Birmingham and the outskirts of London—and was popularized in Canada, the United States, and back to the Global South. Developed in the late 1970s and remaining popular until the early 1990s, Bhangra remixed traditional Punjabi folk with hip hop and reggae, and was, to many, a break from the rigid holds of tradition.

Many of the lyrics were politically inflected, calling for anti-colonial, anti-racist, queer and feminist futures, and Bhangra club culture created spaces where external markers such as race, sexuality, and gender could be exceeded. Raina conducted his research in both formal and personal archives, referencing documentaries, photographs, oral history interviews, album covers, and other ephemera. His resulting works collapse visual references to album covers, portraiture, Punjab phulkari embroidery, and poetry to reflect on the tangled dialogue between imperialism and self-expression that continues to resonate today.

List of Works,
gallery, left to right...

You reappear again, 2015
Mixed media on paper
50 × 60 inches
(127 × 152.4 cm)

*Desi Punjabi Songs
for Lovers*, 2015
Mixed media on paper
60 × 44 inches
(152.4 × 111.8 cm)

Teamwork, 2015
Mixed media on paper
60 × 44 inches
(152.4 × 111.8 cm)

Arora archive, 2015
Mixed media on paper
22 × 30 inches
(55.9 × 76.2 cm)

Club Kali, 2020
Embroidery thread,
phulkari border
on muslin
34 × 12 inches
(86.4 × 30.5 cm)

Jagdeep Raina (b. 1991, Guelph, Ontario, Canada) has an interdisciplinary practice that spans drawing, textiles, writing, and, more recently, video animation, film and ceramics. In his work, Raina engages with personal and public archives to examine histories of transnational migration by considering them in the context of fluctuating infrastructures of power. Raina's practice works to conceptually disrupt this fixity and recover heterogeneity.

In doing so, the artist reactivates the archive to reveal hierarchies of power that play out across class, gender, caste, race and geography.

Raina was one of the recipients of the 2020 Sobey Art Award. He received his BFA from Western University in 2013, his MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2016, and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2017. He has exhibited internationally at Midway Contemporary, Minneapolis (2019); Art Gallery of Guelph, Guelph (2019); Cooper Cole, Toronto (2019); Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton (2018); Rubin Museum of Art, New York (2018); RISD Museum of Art, Providence (2017); Humber Galleries, Toronto (2017); Provincetown Art Association and Museum, Provincetown (2017); Camden Arts Centre, London (2016); and Modern Fuel Artist Run Centre, Kingston (2016). Raina lives and works in Guelph, Ontario, Canada.