

# MARIAN GOODMAN GALLERY

For immediate release

## **Amar Kanwar**

The Peacock's Graveyard

12 January – 20 February 2023

Opening reception: Friday, 12 January, 6-8 pm

Marian Goodman Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of Amar Kanwar's most recent work *The Peacock's Graveyard* (2023). Originally commissioned for Sharjah Biennial 15, the multi-channel installation weaves together images and sounds that meditate on the transience of existence.

Comprised of a set of projections onto seven screens, the lyrical images in *The Peacock's Graveyard* emerge and recede individually and then simultaneously, leading us on an abstract journey. Forming a visual haiku across distinct channels in the exhibition space, these images are overlaid with texts; stories written by Kanwar, that draw upon received narratives and oral histories, blending ancient and modern folklore traditions with personal experience.

Offering a unique vantage point through which to consider collective and individual truths, Kanwar here employs a variety of editing and staging methods which invite viewers to reflect on non-canonical wisdom. In this way, *The Peacock's Graveyard* departs from earlier documentary strategies within his work, articulating the need for a metaphysical re-organization of thought from which it is possible to glimpse another world. Kanwar's work has always operated with the premise that rationality and power cannot and do not exhaust the possibilities of life. Remaining critically engaged with the array of forces on individual lives, the work presents a suite of parables which more obliquely take up questions of responsibility and ethos, dignity and loss.

Of the work, the artist writes that it is "[...] not a lament or mourning, but perhaps a kind of gift, a collection of stories, some ancient, some new, something to keep by one's side every day, or take along if going someplace, or to help us reconfigure life, ideologies, politics, solidarities, social movements. These stories lay the groundwork for reflecting on our unbearable arrogance, delusions and deep desire for violence.'

Kanwar's poetic films and video installations have explored the political, social, economic and ecological conditions of our times, often focusing on the Indian subcontinent. His work traces the legacy of globalization and decolonization, land use and border rights, environmental concerns, human rights and free expression; and sexual violence. Interwoven throughout these inquiries are disparate narrative structures which ground his philosophical investigations. Through hybrid installations which incorporate images, literature, poetry and music, Kanwar creates meditative works that do not aim to represent trauma, so much as to find ways through them. How does a landscape comprise beauty and violence; how does poetry stand in for evidence; how do visions within darkness engender light and new pedagogies? Kanwar's work looks deeply into the causes and effects, and of how they are translated into everyday life and cultural forms.

Amar Kanwar was born in 1964 in New Delhi, India, where he currently lives and works.

Recent solo exhibitions of Kanwar's work have been held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2022); Ishara Art Foundation, Dubai, UAE and NYU Abu Dhabi Art Gallery, UAE (2020), Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid (2019), Tate Modern, London; Minneapolis Institute of Arts, USA and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York, USA (2018), Bildmuseet, Umea, Sweden and Frac Pays de la Loire,

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Carquefou, France (2017), Goethe Institut, Mumbai (2016) and at the Assam State Museum in collaboration with Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and North East Network, India (2015). Earlier solo exhibitions include the Art Institute of Chicago (2014), the Yorkshire Sculpture Park (2013), the Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland (2012), Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2008), Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (2007), National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, Oslo (2006), and the Renaissance Society, Chicago (2004).

Kanwar has participated in Documenta 11, 12, 13 and 14 in Kassel, Germany (2002, 2007, 2012, 2017) as well as in the Kochi-Muziris Biennial, India (2013, 2022). In 2023 Kanwar participated in Signals: How video transformed the World at the Museum of Modern Art, USA and at the Sharjah Biennial 15, United Arab Emirates.

Amar Kanwar has been the recipient of several awards including an Honorable Mention at the Sharjah Biennial 2023, the IHME Helsinki Commission (2022); Prince Claus Award (2017); Creative Time's Annenberg Prize for Art and Social Change (2014); an Honorary Doctorate in Fine Arts, Maine College of Art, USA (2006); the Edvard Munch Award for Contemporary Art, Norway (2005); the Golden Gate Award, San Francisco International Film Festival, USA (1999), as well as the Golden Conch, Mumbai International Film Festival, India (1998).

Please join us at the opening reception on Friday, 12 January from 6-8 pm.

For further information, please visit our website: [mariangoodman.com](http://mariangoodman.com), or contact Linda Pellegrini, Head of Communications and Events, at [linda@mariangoodman.com](mailto:linda@mariangoodman.com), or 212 977 7160.