

HAUSER & WIRTH

Press Release

Diana Thater Life is a Time-Based Medium

Hauser & Wirth London, North Gallery

26 March – 16 May 2015

Opening: Wednesday 25 March 2015, 6 – 8 pm

Hauser & Wirth is pleased to present a new video installation by Diana Thater. The work comprises footage from the Hindu pilgrimage site, the Galtaji Temple, near Jaipur in India. Thater projects images of the 18th-century pavilions and pillars onto the walls and floor of the gallery to create an immersive environment depicting the many monkeys that inhabit the temple in their architectural habitat. The installation will be included in Thater's mid-



career retrospective, opening at LACMA, Los Angeles in Autumn 2015. This year, Thater will also present exhibitions at the Aspen Art Museum, Aspen CO and at San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose CA as part of their Beta Space series.

Thater's experiential video installations investigate the space between documentation and abstraction, sculpture and architecture, by presenting a mediated reality. In this new work, Thater choreographs an architectural reconstruction of the Galtaji Temple. Built by Diwan Rao Kriparam in the 18th Century, in pink sandstone, amidst low hills, the temple is structured to look more like a palace or 'haveli' than a traditional place of worship. The buildings are positioned around a natural fresh water spring and seven holy 'kunds' – or water tanks – and waterfalls that create two tiered pools. Within the gallery, projections of the lower pool onto the floor foreground the architectural structure and evoke a tranquil setting. Appearing blurred and faded as they are diffused from the wall, the pools of water occupy a liminal state between reality and imagination.

Thater works with the existing architecture of the gallery, dividing the space into two halves and employing projections to suggest the physical structure of the temple's domed ceilings, carved pillars and painted walls. In the second space, Thater recreates an area of the temple that is inaccessible to humans, using close-up video footage to bring the viewer into greater proximity with the monkeys. As in previous works, Thater herself features in the footage in order to make manifest an encounter between humans and animals.

The ancient Galtaji Temple is still an important pilgrimage site. Thater examines the reverence with which humans approach the location, in direct contrast to the informal, rampant activity of

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the monkeys. Thater explores both the tame and wild aspects of the monkeys' lives and the co-existence of animals and humans. The work is inspired by the Hindu god Hanuman, who often takes the form of a monkey and is worshipped as a symbol of physical strength, perseverance and devotion. Through Hanuman, Thater layers historical, natural and religious references to explore the potentially spiritual relationship between humans and animals.

Thater is one of the most significant contemporary artists working in new media. Drawing on issues of conservation, natural and manmade ecosystems, and socially-engineered environments, she explores tensions between mankind and the animal kingdom. Her formal interest straddles both the spatial and temporal aspects of video. She presents non-linear footage that explores animal behaviour with what she describes as a 'neo-narrative' approach. The exhibition's title, 'Life is a Time-Based Medium', draws attention to the parallels between reality and the construction of reality that Thater's videos present.

About the Artist

Diana Thater was born in 1962 in San Francisco CA. She studied at New York University and Art Center College of Design, Pasadena CA, and lives and works in Los Angeles CA. Thater's work has featured in numerous significant international exhibitions. Solo shows at major institutions include: 'Diana Thater: Delphine', Église Saint-Philibert Church, Dijon, France (2014); 'Peonies', Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus OH (2011); 'Diana Thater: Chernobyl', Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia (2011); 'Diana Thater: Between Science and Magic', Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica CA (2010); 'gorillagorillagorilla', Kunsthaus Graz, Austria (2009); 'Keep the Faith. A Survey Exhibition', Museum für Gegenwartskunst Siegen, Siegen, Germany and Kunsthalle Bremen, Bremen, Germany (2004); 'Knots + Surfaces', DIA Center for the Arts, New York NY (2001); 'Projects 64: Diana Thater: The best animals are the flat animals', Museum of Modern Art, New York NY (1998); 'Diana Thater. Orchids in the Land of Technology' at Walker Art Center, Minneapolis MN (1997), and 'China', The Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago, Chicago IL (1995).

Thater has been the recipient of a number of awards. In 2014, she was awarded a California Community Foundation Fellowship for Visual Artists. She received the Award for Artistic Innovation from the Center for Cultural Innovation, Los Angeles CA in 2011 and a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship in 2005.

Current & Forthcoming Exhibitions:

Subodh Gupta
'Seven Billion Light Years'
10 February – 25 April 2015
Hauser & Wirth New York, 18th Street

Fabio Mauri
'I was not new'
5 March – 2 May 2015
Hauser & Wirth New York, 69th Street

Zhang Enli
'Four Seasons'
8 March – 21 June 2015
Hauser & Wirth Somerset

Susan Philipsz
'As Many As Will'
21 March – 21 June 2015
Hauser & Wirth Somerset

Architecture Season
21 March – 21 June 2015
Hauser & Wirth Somerset

'LAND MARKS: Structures for
a Poetic Universe'
21 March – 21 June 2015
Hauser & Wirth Somerset

Isa Genzken
'Geldbilder'
26 March – 16 May 2015
Hauser & Wirth London

Dieter Roth, Björn Roth, Oddur Roth
'Roth Bar & Studio'
28 March – 29 May 2015
Hauser & Wirth Zürich

André Thomkins
'Works 1946 – 1985'
28 March – 30 May 2015
Hauser & Wirth Zürich

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