



Subodh Gupta, *The Family Nest*, 2012. Courtesy of Hauser & Wirth, Zurich/London/New York

*New Delhi*

## BAROMETER SUBODH GUPTA

*Nicola Trezzi explores new positions  
in the Indian art scene*

Occasionally an individual artist can function as a barometer for the current state of an art scene. In India, Subodh Gupta seems to be at the center of few noteworthy shifts. The first of these is embodied by “Everything is Inside,” Gupta’s mid-career survey that opened in January at the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi. The exhibition takes place

in two buildings: the ornate Jaipur House, originally the residence of the Maharaja of Jaipur in 1936; and the museum’s modern concrete and glass extension constructed in 2009. Curated by Prada Foundation artistic director Germano Celant, the project reveals how Gupta’s gallery representation, Hauser & Wirth, is expanding its influence not only in Los Angeles with Paul Schimmel, but also by directly organizing museum shows for its artists. The fact that Sutton PR, the firm working with Hauser & Wirth in London, is managing the communication for this project is not a coincidence.

Meanwhile other internal movements are afoot. For example, Peter Nagy is going to be less and less involved in his gallery Nature Morte, which he originally opened in New York’s East Village in the 1980s and then re-opened in New Delhi and successively expanded with a branch in Berlin.

Apparently Aparajita Jain, the new partner of Nature Morte — which represents Gupta and his wife, Bharti Kher, who is also with Hauser & Wirth — will be very active. And Galleryske, opened by Sunitha Kumar Emmart in 2003 and Kher’s gallery representation since 2004, has made two interesting moves: in October of 2013 Gupta had his first solo show at Galleryske’s space in Bangalore; and in November of the same year Emmart opened a second space in New Delhi.

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*Les Presses du Réel*

## FRAGILE FLOWERS

*Michele D’Aurizio reviews* RICHARD  
HAWKINS’s *first book of fiction*

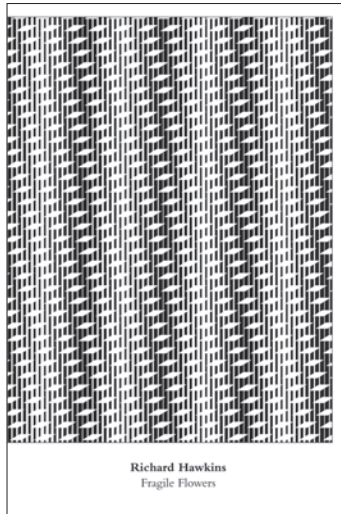
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While drifting into the narrative of “The Musical” — the first in the collection of short stories that make up *Fragile Flowers* — one can’t help but attempt to merge these fictional scenarios with the celebrated imagery of Richard Hawkins’s art. Yet apparently the stories hold no trace of the Greek and Roman statuary, the campy youngsters, the zombies, the brothels and so on, that since the early ’90s have populated his output. Indeed, a different framework bursts forth — a social and geographical landscape that diverges from the West Coast that eponymously catalyzed the artist’s aesthetic inquiries, and that belongs instead to the commonplace milieu of white-trash America: “little country blacktops, farm-to-market roads, unpaved back roads, gravel roads, dirt roads, cowpaths and trails that chop up these large parcels of fenced-in and weedy and in some places woody fields and pastures along the roads...”

But Hawkins is not that sort of prairie writer, and his concern with these scenarios has more in common with, let’s say, James Franco’s reclamation of William Faulkner. This is more than just a hunch; the notion is indeed strengthened as the stories proceed. The backbone of *Fragile Flowers* is a kind of mash-up of the artist’s worldview, a cycle recounting a dude’s adventures through Frog-town, an “adult-oriented kindergarten” where cruising rituals take place against cyberpunk backdrops, and frog-boys “serve all kinds of dire and disingenuous purposes.” They are “all in some way inhuman” amphibious crea-

tures who “you realize have an alkaloid poison in their little... ok ok, you knew that, ok.”

*Fragile Flowers* is itself a fleshpot, oftentimes a dungeon of the human mind (and body), where “sweet little phrases of desperation and disenfranchised heroics” are tattooed on the bodies of college-age guys “to make mawkish old customers weep and salivate at the tragic thought of such handsome youth in such dreadful peril: ‘born to lose,’ ‘death before dishonor,’ ‘only god can judge me’...”



## Düsseldorf

### OFF VENDOME

Michele D’Aurizio talks with MATT MORAVEC, founder of the space.

From 2010 to 2012 you ran West Street Gallery, in New York, in tandem with Alex Gartenfeld. What brought you to Europe and the founding of Off Vendome?

A friend of mine was studying with Christopher Williams at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf in 2011/12. I was in Brussels for an opening in March 2012 and came down to visit him. At that time I met Williams and a student in his class, who is also his assistant, Adam Harrison. Adam was running an excellent space in Düsseldorf called Volker Bradtke, and he invited me to co-organize a show there. I came back that summer for the install and opening, and found the people intelligent and inviting. By the end of the trip Adam had convinced me to stay and do a space.

Is Off Vendome’s program guided by a sort of “mission”?

A lot of the initial inspiration for the space came from *Konrad Fischer: Okey Dokey*, a book about Konrad Fischer, the dealer from Düsseldorf. Fischer did solo shows with different artists primarily from other places, inviting them to stay with him, often making the work in the space. I have an extra bed here for the artists to stay, and they generally make the work in the space. It makes sense on a number of levels, practical and otherwise. I also enjoy seeing the artists respond to the space. My hope is that working within the parameters that the physical space creates has helped the artists realize work they wouldn’t have had it been sent from their studios.

## Los Angeles

### PHILIPPE VERGNE

Patrick Steffen talks with the recently appointed director of MOCA

How will you shape the future of MOCA?

MOCA has to be the most contemporary institution in this country, bringing the audience to see the most innovate art in an interna-

tional context. This is my position, my dream; it has to be an institution of its time, which defines what it means to be contemporary.

What’s the role of the LA art scene in the international context?

From the first Marcel Duchamp exhibition, Yves Klein, to the role of Walter Hopps and the scene in the 1970s, LA has always had the particular position of an antidote to a more traditional scene. In this moment, many artists and galleries are moving to LA, but also many LA artists are showing their work elsewhere. I see LA as a scene that challenges the notion of an art world organized around only one center.

What will be your first important decision?

When you work in an institution, it is very important to understand the dynamic and the chemistry within your team, and it takes time to get to a point where the team works together. The choice of a chief curator will be extremely important for the future of this museum. I will build a team; I will invent a program that can bring MOCA to its next chapter. I will build the financial infrastructure to allow curators to work. The financial question is crucial, but the work that the Board has done recently demonstrates a great sense of civic patronage. The building blocks are here.

In March MOCA will host the traveling Mike Kelley retrospective.

Installation view, “Margaret Lee and Emily Sundblad,” Off Vendome, Düsseldorf, 2013

