

CENTRAL FINE

Diego Singh

*Don't get me wrong*ⁱ

May 12 – July 15, 2018

Opening: Saturday, May 12; 4-10 PM

I had a dream where I was about to drown, and the scene was filled with anthems, light, pop songs, repressed texts, signs, crooked hats, rigid smiles, sketchy dots, cats wearing boots, etc. People fell from the sky into the ocean while phosphorescent animals gathered around, ready to eat them.

A *w* appears at the beginning of wall or water. After emerging from immersion, language can be spoken 'normally', building a *nnno*, a *yyyes*, paintings, universities, books, songs, and walks. Today we see that language needs to speak and read itself constantly. As language re-reads its failings, protests against language emerge.

Without this act of language looking at itself, we see more of the same: slogans showing up and syntheses appearing everywhere, which turn into cartoons/simplifications that aim to erase subjectivity, shaping the monstrous.

Right now we are in the midst of *the time of the cartoon*, the moment of the monstrous, and censorship. What's next? The time of invention, that which is uncertain, nerve wracking and very clear. As all fails, one can invent how to short-circuit prescriptions and move on. Can one speak underwater?

(.....)

When speaking underwater—I've attempted that—eyes are clouded by bubbles, emotion and control. All becomes 'abstracted'. At that moment one wonders: is abstraction a semblance? Language? Reality? One gasps and sound becomes a *uuuhhwwhwwgglllughhw*, and perhaps that's the way one talks every day?

(crickets)

This is Diego Singh's first solo exhibition in Miami since 2015, when he presented *Business Meeting With Dry Ear* a solo, and yet, dual presentation with Georgia Sagri at CENTRAL FINE.

This exhibition addresses the image of abstraction and how the shapeless and decentralized appears as a threatening face. Singh's paintings are planes where his reality/signs are repressed and regrouped politically, poetically and psychologically.

Born in Argentina during the last years of the military dictatorship that censored and killed 30,000 people, making them 'disappear' (these victims are called *los desaparecidos*, the disappeared ones), Singh's work addresses the notion of abstraction, politics, control, authority repression, what returns, obliquely watching and talking.

His work considers abstraction, its image and its implications, as something that emerges from experience and that is charged with the political (as noted by Andrea Elias' text in "Because I like Beginnings" included in *Table for One*, a monograph on Singh's work published in 2011ⁱⁱ). Military hats, neon signs, repressed words, skewed texts, have appeared as codes in his body of work, pointing to the authority, monstrosity, and power of language.

The exhibition brings together the "Perfect Paintings," a group of works where representations of abstracted glowing lines/neon signs showed up in 2010, along with the "Line Paintings" started in 2004, which emphasize *slowing down* while re-presenting, with oil paint, ball-point look-a-like images. *Don't Get Me Wrong* will also include the "Keeping Score Paintings," a series that evolved from his 2012 *Captcha* series. The "keeping scores paintings" present music scores (which belong to anthems, religious, protest, and pop songs) veiled, filtered, overlapped and warped until their meaning is challenged, addressing painting's as a repressed, living, and destabilizing medium.

Don't Get Me Wrong presents a series of works that analyze painting as a language, while observing language. The notion of *lalangue*ⁱⁱⁱ, formulated by Jacques Lacan, is central here: *lalangue* is a pre-verbal stage of language that is universal and personal, and as maternal waters or tongues go, *lalangue*/painting could both nourish or drown us.

Diego Singh was born in Salta, Argentina. He has exhibited his work at the de la Cruz Collection, Miami; MOCA San Diego; PAMM, Miami; the Fondazione Malvina Menegas, Castelbasso, Italy; Braverman gallery, Tel-Aviv; Mendes Wood DM, Sao Paulo; the Palazzo Fruscione, Salerno, Italy; Tomio Koyama gallery, Tokyo; Fredric Snitzer Gallery, Miami; Various Small Fires, Los Angeles; Galleria Macca, Sardegna, Italy; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, among others.

Singh founded CENTRAL FINE in 2012, an artist-run-space in Miami Beach following the notion of the *empty mask*, the ideal role of the analyst, where people can upload content.

ⁱ don't get me wrong, " is a song composed by Chrissie Hynde and released by the pop-rock group the pretenders. It was the first single taken from the group's 1986 album, *get close*.

ⁱⁱ Elias, Andrea, "Because I Like Beginnings," published in table for one, a monograph on Diego Singh's work, by Tomio Koyama gallery, Mendes Wood, Old Hand Office, 2011.

ⁱⁱⁱ *lalangue*: a term coined by jacques lacan, which is defined as speech prior to grammatical or lexicographical organization. *Lalangue* is speech in its disjunction from the structure of language. Outside of grammar, housing in its holes, rumors and murmurs, it is the very site where desire is directed. The term is approached here as situated outside the father, coexisting with the oceanic feeling, making it a personal and yet, commonly shared experience. That said, *lalangue* is unique to each subject.

Lyrics:

Don't get me wrong
if i'm looking kind of dazzled i see neon lights
whenever you walk by
Don't get me wrong
if you say hello and i take a ride upon a sea where the mystic moon is playing havoc with the tide
Don't get me wrong
if i'm acting so distracted
i'm thinking about the fireworks that go off when you smile
Don't get me wrong
if i split like light refracted i'm only off to wander across a moonlit mile
Once in a while, two people meet
seemingly for no reason, they just pass on the street suddenly, thunder showers everywhere
who can explain the thunder and rain?
But there's something in the air
Don't get me wrong
if i come and go like fashion i might be great tomorrow but hopeless yesterday
Don't get me wrong
if i fall in the mode of fashion it might be unbelievable
but let's not say so long
it might just be fantastic don't get me wrong