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Press release
February 9, 2022

JITISH KALLAT
Echo Verse
March 19 – May 7, 2022



Integer Study (drawing from life), detail, 2022, wallpaper

Jitish Kallat returns to Paris with *Echo Verse*, an ambitious exhibition conceived as a complex system of signs and conjectures linking artistic, historical and scientific references. Widely known for his conceptual and poetic language, Jitish Kallat has altered the tenor of the Beaubourg gallery with a new body of work exploring the passage of time and the notions of transience, evolution or entropy.

Jitish Kallat plays with scale and distance to offer an assembly of sensory and speculative propositions that weaves unexpected links between everyday reality and the cosmos. The exhibition opens with *Elicitation # 1 (Terranum Nuncius)*, a photographic diptych of images drawn from the Golden Record archive dispatched by NASA on the Voyager space missions in 1977. These images - children playing with a miniature globe, a woman tasting an ice cream, a man eating a sandwich - were conceived as a summary of human life as addressed to an extraterrestrial intelligence. These inaugural images of consuming and surveying the planet can be read as an oblique invitation to reflect on the exhibition.

Extending his intimate notebook into an immersive mural-like format, *Integer Study (drawing from life)* is a repertoire of shapes and numbers that spans the entire gallery. Since the beginning of 2021, the artist has been exploring the planetary present through a daily count of the world population. One encounters 365 drawings, each displaying the algorithmically estimated births and deaths that have occurred up until a specific time each day. With intricate graphite and aquarelle pencil markings and gesso stains, Kallat's painterly abstraction contrasts with precise data, forming a triangulation of life by mapping birth, death and time. Echoes of existential questions morph into ecological ones, from reflections on climate and extinction to evolution and decay.

Address: 30 Rue Beaubourg 75003 Paris. Opening hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 10.00 am to 7.00 pm.
Press contact: camille.desprez@templon.com tel.: +33 (0) 1 42 72 14 82, @galerietemplon

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At the center of the exhibition is a new suite of four double sided, multi-scopic photo works *Epicycles* (2020-21) that have their genesis in the early months of the pandemic. *Epicycles* interweave familiar markers of change - a fallen stem, a crack in the wall, or an abstraction beneath a chair - with images drawn from the iconic touring exhibition *Family of Man*, organized at MoMA (New York) by photographer Edward Steichen in 1955. Hundreds of images were sourced for this exhibition from photographers working around the world, seeking a “declaration of global solidarity” in the decade after World War II. Coalescing these intimate images from his studio with a glimpse of humanity from a distant time and place, Kallat yields a composite portrait of time and transience, ephemerality and expiry. These meticulously produced lenticular images create an illusion of depth and cause images to alternately appear and disappear as one moves in their presence.

Yet another elicitation punctuates as well as annotates the exhibition. *Elicitation #2 (Cassiopeia A)* is a three-dimensional visualization of a dead star’s remains from a stellar explosion that occurred 11,000 light years away. While the star, the youngest known supernova remnant in our Milky Way Galaxy blew up 11,000 years ago, its light reached Earth in the late 1600s. The model is produced from NASA’s open-source files modelled from Spitzer Space Telescope’s data and can be described as a conceptual prompt within the exhibition rather than as a sculptural artwork. The *Elicitations* become reflective pauses to think of the complex interlacing of the immediate and the cosmic, the past and present, a recurrent motif in much of Jitish Kallat’s practice.

BIO

Jitish Kallat was born in 1974 in Mumbai, the city where he continues to live and work. He has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions, including Norrtälje Konsthall, Sweden (2021); Frist Art Museum, Nashville (2020); Philadelphia Museum of Art (2016-17); Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (2015); San Jose Museum of Art (2013); Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne (2012); the Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Mumbai (2011); the Art Institute of Chicago (2010-11); and Haunch of Venison, London (2010). In 2017, the National Gallery of Modern Art (New Delhi) presented a mid-career survey of his work titled *Here After Here 1992-2017*, curated by Catherine David.

He has exhibited widely at museums and institutions including Tate Modern (London), Martin-Gropius-Bau (Berlin), Gallery of Modern Art (Brisbane), Kunstmuseum (Bern), Serpentine Galleries (London), Mori Art Museum (Tokyo), BOZAR: Centre For Fine Arts (Brussels), Pirelli Hangar Bicocca (Milan), Busan Museum of Art, among others. Kallat’s work has been part of the Venice Biennale, Havana Biennale, Gwangju Biennale, Asia Pacific Triennale, Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale, Asian Art Biennale, Curitiba Biennale, Guangzhou Triennale and the Kiev Biennale, amongst others. Kallat has curated the inaugural curatorial project *I draw, therefore I think* for the South South Platform in 2021 and he was the curator and artistic director of Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2014.

Kallat’s work is in public and private collections worldwide, including the Centre Pompidou, Paris; Art Institute of Chicago; Guggenheim, Abu Dhabi; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; M+ Collection, Hong Kong; National Museum of Asian Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC; National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Vanhaerents Art Collection, Brussels; and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Kallat has a solo exhibition *Orders of Magnitude* at Ishara Art Foundation (UAE) from 12th February to 1st July 2022. This will be followed by the solo exhibition *Covering Letter* and a

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parallel exhibition *Tangled*

Hierarchy curated by him at John Hansard Gallery (Southampton) due to open on 2nd June 2022.

Echo Verse is the artist's fifth exhibition with Templon.