

BARNICKE GALLERY LOOKS SOUTH

Hart House exhibit
South-South: Interruption and Encounters
highlights post-colonial art

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South-South: Interruption and Encounters, an exhibition highlighting perspectives on post-colonial African and Indian experiences, premiered in Hart House's Justina M. Barnicke Gallery on April 2. Curated by Tejpal Ajji and Jon Soske, the exhibit features works by Brendan Fernandez, Jemalie Hassan, Hew Locke, Louise Liliefeldt, Omar Badsha, Allan de Souza, Marlon Griffith, and renowned dancehall artist and musician Apache Indian.

The exhibit is part of an ongoing series presented by New College at the University of Toronto, aiming to promote public discussion and dialogue between various South Asian, Caribbean, and African cultures. Each artist confronts the notion of a global "South," its convergence with "Northern" imperialism, and the impact it has had in forming new communities, ideas, and traditions.

The featured artists comprise a wide range of global backgrounds: England, East and West India, Jamaica, Trinidad, and South Africa, each focusing on ideas and issues of community and the meaning of belonging to an ethnic diaspora. As the works make the connection between identity and history, the exhibit questions colonial and post-colonial racism. Artists deal with the challenges of slavery with new perspectives of 20th-century Apartheid and the complexities of recent or longstanding migrant communities.

Omar Badshaw, a South African In-

dian whose work deals with his country's struggle with Apartheid, focuses his photography on issues of identity and politics in the anti-Apartheid movement. Badshaw's photographs portray 1980s segregated spaces, in hopes of creating a new way of looking at black South Africans—not as second class citizens, but as "makers of their own history."

South-South intertwines photography, sculpture, mixed media, and video pop culture to express the variety of challenges faced by diasporas both African and South Asian. The use of these different mediums highlights the variety of groups involved and the way they identify with one another. Mixed media, like Hew Locke's photographs of European monuments covered in faux jewelry, shows how differences in experience shape the understanding of loyalty to a specific culture. In doing so, the collection demonstrates an overarching connection between different cultures. The works featured portray how ideas of national identity have been transformed by a wider understanding of different communities in major urban areas.

South-South also incorporates pop culture into the diversity of the exhibit's theme. English dancehall musician Apache Indian's music video piece combines the rhythms of caribbean reggae with American R&B. The exhibit program explains that he explores "the 'double life' lived by many young British immigrants who feel caught between

cultural loyalty, their family's sometimes unyielding dictates, and their own complex relationship to different aspects of British culture."

With the new mediums and innovative measures used by these artists, questions of the past address present-day issues in communities linked together by the way in which they were formed.

South-South runs until May 19 at the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery at Hart House.



Hew Locke's "Edward VII" is featured in the *South-South* exhibit. King Edward VII of England was keenly interested in foreign and military affairs, therefore he was an inspiration for Locke's post-colonial art.

