

Press Release

RAHA RAISSNIA

Aphelion

Drawings

May 13 – June 18, 2005

Reception: Friday, May 13, 6 – 8:30

Thomas Erben is pleased to present the second solo show of Raha Raissnia (b. 1968, Tehran) following her very well received exhibition of paintings only one year ago. The current exhibition focuses on the artists' uniquely beautiful drawings, examining their complex relationship with Raissnia's entire practice, which also includes painting and performed film.

Raissnia's new, large scale (approximately 40x50 in.), pencil drawings mesh organic with mechanical forms within a Byzantine architectural space that is chillingly cold in feeling and metallic in sound. Repeated straight or sinuous pencil marks combine to create richly diverse surfaces and linear networks that suggest muscular tissue, abstracted architecture, and sculptural features.

In all of her work, Raissnia begins with an automatist drawing. She then subverts its repetitive tendencies by using erasure as a suggestive tool to arrive at new and surprising forms. The final work exists as a result of its own history, resonating with the memory of each mark.

Her method is strongly connected with surrealist concepts, which attempt to dissolve the difference between conscious and subconscious, dream states and reality. Andre Breton in his novel *Communicating Vessels* described this state as "the constant exchange in thought that must exist between the exterior and interior worlds, an exchange that requires the continuous interpenetration of the activity of waking and that of sleeping."

Later this year, Raissnia will have a solo exhibition at Renos Xippas Gallery in Paris. In the Fall of 2004, after a residency at the Karl Hofer Gesellschaft in Berlin, Raissnia had a solo exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Isfahan, Iran. Her work was also included in last year's Art on Paper Exhibition at the Weatherspoon Art Gallery, NC, and she has had numerous exhibitions and film performances at Anthology Film Archives, New York. She received her BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1992 and her MFA from Pratt Institute in 2002. Her work recently became part of several prestigious private collections in the US and abroad.

Gallery hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10-6

For information and visuals, please visit us at

www.thomaserben.com or contact the gallery at (212) 645-8701