

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ERIN CLULEY GALLERY

Preetika Rajgariah: *Possibilities of a Garden*

November 15 – December 20, 2025

Opening Reception: Saturday, November 15, 5 – 7pm



Preetika Rajgariah, *One who knows how to enjoy life does not need riches*, 2025, yoga mats, sari, and paint, 68 x 120 in.

Erin Cluley Gallery is pleased to announce *Possibilities of a Garden*, an exhibition of new paintings on yoga mats by Houston-based artist Preetika Rajgariah. Referencing elements of art history, Indian textiles, and floral symbolism, the artist's new series of paintings expands the boundaries of contemporary self-portraiture. Rajgariah's maximalist visual vocabulary subverts sociocultural themes of masculinity/femininity, immigrant identity, and queer embodiment. The artist's use of PVC yoga mats and saris, a traditional Southeast Asian garment, pays homage to her personal practice of yoga and the transformational power of garments. *Possibilities of a Garden* imbues Rajgariah's mixed-media yoga mat paintings with cultural investigation and sensitive depictions of the artist herself.

Rajgariah's new body of work began with the acquisition of a floral track suit imitating the style of prominent Italian luxury fashion house, Gucci. Inspired by the garments use of motifs from Asian flora and fauna, the works in *Possibilities of a Garden* examine cultural appropriation in European art. Framed by richly pigmented natural environments, Rajgariah's figures exude a bodily wellness found only in acceptance of transition and physical motion. In contrast to the West's spiritual sanitation of Southeast Asian practices,

her practice pays homage to the complexity of brown bodies in contemporary art and culture.

At the center of the artist's new exhibition is the monumental work *One who knows how to enjoy life does not need riches* (2025), a mixed-media painting spanning five pastel yoga mats. Referencing the reclining figure genre in 18th and 19th-century European painting, this work bends historical modes of representation in a contemporary style. In it Rajgariah lounges on an antique French settee dressed in a highly patterned track suit. Translucent doubles of the artist similarly lie in the work's background, complicating the relaxed authority of the main subject. As opposed to Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres' *Grande Odalisque* (1814), and other infamous examples of European Orientalism, her painting takes serious psychological interest in non-white figures.

In Rajgariah's newest presentation of work, her subjects are enveloped by imaginary gardens. In this way they advocate for a return to nature and appreciation of its aesthetic potential. Across various perspectives of the artist's body—stretching, lounging, etc.—and surreal landscapes Rajgariah's new work captures the "othered" figure in art and the possibility of expansive futures.

Possibilities of a Garden will be the artist's first solo presentation with Erin Cluley Gallery. It will be exhibited concurrently with Riley Holloway's *Oasis*.

Preetika Rajgariah (b. 1985) was born in New Delhi, India, and raised in Houston, TX. She received her BFA from Trinity University in 2008 and her MFA from University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign in 2018. Rajgariah is known for her multidisciplinary practice where she uses culturally specific materials to examine the nuanced intersections of cultural/queer identity, belonging/otherness, and consumption/erasure.

The artist's work has been exhibited internationally at prominent institutions including the Louisiana Tech University School of Design, Ruston, LA; Bill Arning Exhibitions, Hudson Valley, NY; Unit London, UK; Art League Houston, TX; Women & Their Work, Austin, TX; Lightbox Gallery, Champaign, IL; the Center for Visual Art at MSU, Denver, CO; Artspeak Gallery, Vancouver, CA; Rajiv Menon Contemporary, Los Angeles, CA; and Blue Star Contemporary, San Antonio, TX.

Her work has been featured in print and digital publications including The Denver Post, Oxford American, Hyperallergic, The Brooklyn Rail, Artforum, Houstonia Magazine, Arts and Culture Texas, and New American Paintings

Preetika Rajgariah currently lives and works in Houston, TX.

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Erin Cluley Gallery is a contemporary art gallery representing emerging, mid-career, and established artists from Dallas and the United States. The gallery presents a provocative program of artists working in both traditional and alternative forms including painting, sculpture, new media, photography, sculptural installation and public intervention.

In 2014, Erin Cluley Gallery ignited a creative movement in West Dallas acting as a hub for visual arts and community engagement. After nearly five years on Fabrication Street, the gallery has moved its operation to Riverbend – a development in Dallas' Design District celebrating the intersection between culture and commerce.

From April 2021 to November 2024, Cluley opened and operated Cluley Projects – a satellite location in West Dallas acting as an incubator space focusing on regional artists and providing a platform for discovery and mentorship.

For all press inquiries contact

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