PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

FLASH! contemporary art series presents Allan deSouza
California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock
March 22-May 24, 2014


Ark of Martyrs is deSouza’s rewriting of Joseph Conrad’s 1899 novel Heart of Darkness. Whereas Conrad’s original text is framed as the narration of Charles Marlow, a British sailor who transports ivory along the Congo River during the height of European imperialism, Ark of Martyrs is set at a contemporary wedding celebration. DeSouza’s rewriting mirrors Conrad’s syntax, and employs rhyme and alliteration: “The water shone pacifically” becomes “The daughter yawned terrifically.” The text making up Ark of Martyrs scrolls over the screen while a narrator (Stephen Wattrus) reads the corresponding passages from Heart of Darkness. According to deSouza, Conrad contrasts the present day “civility” of the River Thames, from where the story is told, with the timeless “savagery” of the Congo River, where Marlow’s story is set.

Allan deSouza is a multi-media artist based in San Francisco. His body of work consists of photography, installation, performance, and text-based works. In his practice, deSouza reworks historical evidence using strategies such as fabrication, obliteration, and rendering. His work has been the subject of the recent solo exhibitions Close Quarters and Far Pavilions, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco (2011); and His Masters’ Tools, Fowler Museum, Los Angeles (2010). His work has also been included in numerous group exhibitions including Earth Matters, National Museum of African Art, Washington, D.C. (2013); Dreamlands, Georges Pompidou Center, Paris (2010); and Lens on Life: From Bamako to San Francisco, Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco (2007). DeSouza earned his BA in Fine Art from the Bath Academy of Art, England in 1983, and his MFA in Photography at the University of California, Los Angeles in 1997. He currently holds the position of Associate Professor in the Department of Art Practice at University of California, Berkeley.
allandesouza.com

FLASH! contemporary art series features new photography-based work by artists in all stages of their careers. The projects, about four per year, are presented in a small gallery on the third floor of the California Museum of Photography at UCR ARTSblock. The series is organized by Joanna Szupinska-Myers, CMP Curator of Exhibitions. Each exhibition is accompanied by an original essay, available to visitors in the form of a gallery guide. Flash: Allan deSouza is the fourth exhibition in the series.
UCR ARTSblock is located at 3824 & 3834 Main St, Riverside, CA 92501, and encompasses three venues: the California Museum of Photography, Culver Center of the Arts, and Sweeney Art Gallery. ARTSBlock is open Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5 pm. Admission is $3, and includes entry to all three venues. Galleries are open late 6-9pm and admission is free during First Thursday ArtWalks, which take place on the first Thursday of every month. Film screenings are held on Fridays and Saturdays in the Culver Theater. The Culver Center opens 30 minutes prior to film screenings.

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