

August 12, 2009

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Contact Information

Kristen Carter, Gallery Assistant

Phone: (312) 738-0400 Email: gallery@womanmade.org

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GALLERY

# Pritika Chowdhry's *Remembering the Crooked Line*

Exploring Cultural Forms of Memory

Opening Reception: Fri., Sept. 4, 6-9 p.m.

**CHICAGO** – Woman Made Gallery is proud to present Pritika Chowdhry in her solo exhibition, *Remembering the Crooked Line*, a multi-part installation functioning as an archive that references a series of cross-cultural motifs: from childhood memory, to the construction of identity, to the notion of physical, conceptual, collective and individual space. Chowdhry utilizes various metaphors to illustrate the ways in which history and memory have shaped our understanding of who we are and where we come from.

In this body of work Chowdhry uses childhood games, specifically, Ring-a-Ring-a-Roses and kite flying, to engage with these large histories from a personal and individual place. “I think of maps as the skin of the nation, and clothing as the skin of the absent body. In each of these objects, I graft maps on these garments, which have been made to look and feel like skin.” Chowdhry notes.



Cotton clothing has been dyed with tea and stiffened with wax to resemble distressed skin with map lines burnt on it. Border lines have been depicted as a burnt rips in the garments. Jewelry wire has been used to “repair” the fissure but the jewelry has been fashioned to look like barbed wire. Notions of purity and impurity form the basis of communal segregation, and are called into question in a set of kites fashioned with the skin of cow and pig gut, and dyed with turmeric.

In addition to kites and other games, Chowdhry is also including soundscapes in this project that further mine the charged tensions between the intimate and the national. One soundscape is composed of a mother and her two daughters alternately singing the Ring-a-Ring-a-Roses rhyme. The stark contrast between the joyful innocence of the young girls’ singing and the somber gravity of the grown woman’s voice is particularly poignant. The rhyme originated in Britain in the 16th century and spread to most of its colonies. In each place that the rhyme has migrated, it is sung with slight variations in lyrics.

Born and brought up in India, Chowdhry moved to the U.S. in 1999. Pritika worked as a computer engineer for several years and then returned to school to do an MFA in Ceramics and Sculpture from University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Pritika Chowdhry is the recipient of a Vilas International Travel Fellowship, an Edith and Sinaiko Frank Fellowship for a Woman in the Arts, a Wisconsin Arts Board grant, a City of Madison project grant, and a Dane County Commission grant.

Chowdhry's works are in the "Erasing Borders 2009" traveling exhibit organized by the Indo-American Arts Council, and will be shown at the Queens Museum, New York, the Aicon Gallery, Manhattan, the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey, the Dowd Fine Arts Gallery in SUNY-Cortland, and the Gallery at Penn College, Pennsylvania. In addition, Pritika is showing her works in solo and group exhibits at the DoVA Temporary at the University of Chicago, the Brodsky Center in Rutgers University, Woman Made Gallery, ARC Gallery, both in Chicago, and the Class of 1925 Gallery in Madison, Wisconsin.

**EXHIBITIONS AT THE GALLERY:**

Group Show: *Cultural Memory: Transdiasporic Art Practices*

Solo Show: Crisanta De Guzman's *We're Not in Kansas Anymore*

Artisan Gallery: *Materiality* curated by Margaret Denny

**Woman Made Gallery**

**685 N. Milwaukee Ave.**

**Chicago, IL. 60642**

**Website: [www.womanmade.org](http://www.womanmade.org)**

**Gallery Hours: Wed-Fri noon-7p.m./Sat-Sun noon-4p.m. / Admission: Free**

Woman Made Gallery is supported in part by grants from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; a CityArts Program II grant from the City of Chicago, Department of Cultural Affairs; the Arts Work Fund for Organizational Development, a donor advised fund of the Chicago Community Foundation; the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation; the Efroymsen Fund, a CICF Fund; a major anonymous donor; and the generosity of its members and contributors.

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