

# The Polyvalent Imagination

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THE unique qualities that accrue themselves to the art of RINA BANERJEE are manifold. Which is to say that they are manifold in revealing the essential qualities of her material artistic practices, yet similarly manifold by revealing an extraordinary breadth or polyvalence in what they evoke as rich subject matter. With Banerjee to imagine is not merely to posit or conjecture as some might suggest, it is "to build" in a particular relational sense. This is the case regardless of whether what is "imagined" is ever fully realised by the artist. Banerjee's imagination is far reaching and decidedly accumulative, namely in that she creates pictorial worlds out of many layers of personal and shared human emotions and associations. The plurality of Banerjee's diverse contents may in some measure be understood by the fact that she was born in Calcutta, but has lived most of her life in the United States. A dislocation that can only be bridged by memory and the imagination.

Since accumulation and/or the bringing together both of ideas and materials are central to Banerjee's practice, it is hardly surprising that the outcome is deeply associative and affective of her personal life and visual development. The superimposition of several visual languages of origin and expression give her work a sense of creative inwardness or internality. Which is to say that a new set of visual co-ordinates emerge, co-ordinates that cut away earlier issues imposed by collage, bricolage, or the didactic "accumulations" of the twentieth century.