

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2009

JILL MUSNICKI
new works on paper

18th & 19th century Indian and French
natural history drawings



Jill Musnicki, *Potato Bug*, 2009



Calcutta School, c.1820, *Study of an Octopus*

From April 17 through May 18, 2009, The Drawing Room in East Hampton is pleased to present Jill Musnicki's most recent exploration of the insect specimens that continue to engage her creative process. In this new series of gouaches, Musnicki expands her palette and brings fresh, calligraphic brushwork to idiosyncratic forms silhouetted on the white field of each page. These animated studies of individual cicadas, wasps, potato bugs and other insects move between unrecognizable abstractions and more specific representations to reveal the mysterious appeal of their miniature structures.

Trained at the Philadelphia College of Art where she received her BFA in 1989, Musnicki, who was raised in Bridgehampton, returned to the East End of Long Island in the early 1990s after extensive travels in Eastern Europe, Turkey, Pakistan and India. A resident of Sag Harbor, her work has been exhibited in New York, New England and Europe, as well locally at Guild Hall Museum, Glenn Horowitz Bookseller and other Hamptons galleries.

A concurrent exhibition of 18th & 19th century Indian and French drawings brings together meticulously rendered studies of insects, eggs, fish and other and sea life created before the invention of photography took over the task of documenting the natural world. Highlights include early 19th century, life-size studies of a tropical fish and an octopus by Indian artists trained in the Mughal court tradition of miniature painting who were commissioned by British trading company officials during the colonial period. A related drawing from France depicts a group of iridescent wasps by Jean-Gabriele Prêtre (1775 - c. 1830), who served as the official painter of the Museum of Natural History and was hired as a naturalist on the Napoleonic expeditions to record newly collected species in Egypt. Whether made for scientific study or to record personal or public natural history collections, these refined drawings have both historic interest and fresh appeal to the contemporary eye.

Gallery hours: Monday, Friday & Saturday 11-5; Sunday 11-4

For further information or reproductions, please contact Susan Papa at 631.324.5016 or info@drawingroom-gallery.com.