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### **Kanishka Raja: Against Integration**

Raja's paintings depict the high-tech, hallucinatory dystopia that is our world.

A quasi-abstract mural at the entrance to Kanishka Raja's exhibition combines the green stripes of a grassy playing field, architectural floor plans, and graphic outlines of television sets and a bookcase, introducing us to the artist's penchant for mashing up contemporary settings and representational modes. KR20, a 16-part polyptych, depicts a vast hall housing multiple computer servers. Wires spill out onto a floor patterned with branching lines, while a sunset glow emanates eerily from a huge window on the far wall. With its vivid palette and forced-perspectival geometries, this image of a depopulated, dystopian world recalls David Hockney, Al Held and the movie *Tron* all in one fell swoop.

KR20's subject matter and scheme reappear in other paintings, along with views of opulent shopping malls, swank interiors and a Third World cityscape ensnared in a frenetic linear net. On the flanking panels of the triptych KR11, spaces open up one onto another to create an illogical, fractured, Cubistic universe containing hanging bicycles, oil drums floating in a flooded environment and colorful laundry, hung out to dry. The central canvas features a gestural abstraction that seems to snake out darkly from a smoky explosion.

In Raja's cross-referential paintings, high-tech futurism, high-end luxury lifestyles and low-rent urban squalor meet in dreamlike juxtapositions. Though wildly hallucinatory, his scenes mirror the current state of the world with disheartening accuracy. **JOSEPH R. WOLIN**