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Cover: Raqib Shaw, detail of *The Garden of Earthly Delights III*, 2003 (full image is below). Mixed media on board, three panels, each 304.8 × 152.4 cm. Photograph by Stephen White. Courtesy of White Cube.

Born in Calcutta in 1974 and raised largely in Kashmir, Raqib Shaw moved to London in 1998. In his paintings Shaw manipulates pools of enamel and metallic industrial paints with a porcupine quill. He outlines the motifs in embossed gold, using a technique similar to cloisonné found in early Asian pottery. Shaw's other sources of inspiration include *uchikake* (Japanese wedding kimonos), *byōbu* (Japanese folding screens), the prints of Katsushika Hokusai, Kashmiri shawls, medieval heraldry, and Persian miniatures, carpets, and jewelry.

About *The Garden of Earthly Delights III*, P. C. Smith writes, "Shaw takes miniature painting's jewel-like color and precise, detailed line and applies them to a Shangri-La of polymorphous perversity at an awesome, 15-foot-tall scale." The work "details a coral reef of improbable couplings, so hallucinogenically vivid as to make contemplation difficult. During the [exhibition] preview, a harried mother was trying to distract her . . . child with an impromptu game of find-the-lobster—which was interesting, since the painting's lobster is engaging in visually inventive coitus with a human female. Even the phallus spewing sperm doesn't seem objectionable in Shaw's cloisonné Nature (one finds similar things in prayer rooms in Buddhist monasteries in Spiti)" ("Looking for Islam"; *Artnet*; *Artnet Worldwide*, 15 Mar. 2006; Web; 22 Dec. 2008).

