

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nicole Awai: *Almost Undone*

Dates: Saturday, September 17th, 2011 – Saturday, October 29th, 2011

Location: 167 East 73rd Street, New York, NY 10021

Hours: Wednesday – Saturday, Noon – 6pm, or by appointment

Admission: Free

Opening: Friday, September 16th, 2011, 6pm – 9pm (RSVP required)

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An artist finds her footing on liminal terrain

Nicole Awai unveils mixed-media installation at the Vilcek Foundation Gallery

New York, July 11, 2011 — Premiering September 17th at the Vilcek Foundation Gallery, in New York City, is *Almost Undone*, a new installation by mixed-media artist Nicole Awai. Featuring drawings from an earlier series by the Trinidadian native, entitled *Specimen from Local Ephemera*, the drawings in this new exhibition will serve as visual anchors for emergent pieces that seem to suspend, exude—even escape—their wall-bound origins, symbolizing the transition of Ms. Awai's work from one dimension into the next.

Local Ephemera, which began as a series of preparatory drawings for a sculpture Ms. Awai presented at the 2003 Biennial of Ceramic in Contemporary Art in Italy, was later developed by the artist into a stand-alone series of works. Occupying a liminal space, these drawings depict various artifacts, both contemporary and historical, to reveal a world constantly in flux—the world of in between and inside out. It's a dynamic plane of shifting perception, but one framed within a technical drawing format, thus lending it structure while weaving themes often found in Ms. Awai's other work—of duality, location, and cultural reprocessing.

In all her works, Ms. Awai draws upon multiple sources for inspiration—from popular media and design to the history of art and a curiosity about the human migratory experience. *Almost Undone* is no exception. In this new work, she incorporates materials as varied as cast and sprayed paper, resin, plastic, nail polish, clay—even a telephone pole. The results are bold, complex three-dimensional structures, which seem to pull, stretch, and tear from the wall, and the memory of their two-dimensional predecessors.

Of Ms. Awai's new installation, art historian Courtney J. Martin said, "Employing elements like nail varnish, and by crafting new surfaces, Nicole Awai's works on paper and sculpture offer a fantastical, yet studied, take on the traditional mediums. This new body of work shows off her instinctual understanding of form and color, adding a thought-provoking extension to her practice."

Ms. Awai earned her Master's Degree in Multimedia Art from the University of South Florida. She now lives and works in Brooklyn, New York, and currently serves as Critic at the Yale School of Art. Her work has been included in several seminal exhibitions, including the first Greater New York: New Art in New York Now, at P.S. 1/MoMA (2000), the 2008 Busan Biennale in Korea, Infinite Island: Contemporary Caribbean Art (2007), and Open House: Working in Brooklyn; the latter two held at the Brooklyn Museum. Ms. Awai was also a featured artist in the 2005 I.P.O. series at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

VILCEK FOUNDATION

The Vilcek Foundation was established in 2000 by Jan and Marica Vilcek, immigrants from the former Czechoslovakia. The mission of the Foundation, to honor the contributions of foreign-born scholars and artists living in the United States, was inspired by the couple's careers in biomedical science and art history, respectively, as well as their personal experiences and appreciation for the opportunities they received as newcomers to this country. The Foundation hosts events to promote the work of immigrants, and awards annual prizes to prominent immigrant biomedical scientists and artists who make outstanding contributions to American society.

To learn more about the Vilcek Foundation, visit www.vilcek.org.