

Energy Plan

By Sarah Douglas

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Aicon Gallery, London

Niru Ratnam of London's Aicon Gallery

Niru Ratnam, a cofounder of the prominent London contemporary-art gallery **Store**, has become director of that city's branch of **Aicon Gallery**, which is devoted to contemporary Indian work. The 36-year-old native of Birmingham, England, decided to take the new post, in which he started in November, to capitalize on his background as an art historian. "I wanted something that brought the two halves of my career together," says Ratnam, who had been a lecturer in non-Western art at London's Open University and a regular Aicon visitor. "The conversation developed organically" with **Prajit** and **Projjal Dutta**, the brothers who own the gallery.

Once an online-only concern, Aicon opened its first space, in New York, in 2002, added a branch in Palo Alto, California, two years later, then the London outlet in March 2008 and a second New York location last fall. The Duttas also run two private-equity funds that are invested in contemporary Indian works.

Ratnam, who has written about contemporary art for such publications as the *Face*, *I.D.* and the *London Observer*, wants to bring the "energy and vitality" of other emerging art movements to the Indian scene and make the pieces more accessible. "Collectors get intimidated and feel they have to learn a lot of history," he says, "but they don't know where to start." He aims to make Aicon's London branch the starting point.

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