

# GLADSTONE GALLERY

Rajesh Punj, "Allora & Calzadilla," *flashartonline.com*, April 2012.

## **ALLORA & CALZADILLA**

*Rajesh Punj*

**Flash Art March – April 2012**

### **LISSON – LONDON**

The collaborative duo Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla have built a reputation on their ability to address cultural and political issues with creative virtuosity. The three short films exhibited at Lisson predate 2011, and this immediately raises questions: Why show these works now? And how often have they already been shown individually?

Although we live in an age when artists are expected to show new work whenever they are given an exhibition window, this show proves to be an exception.



Allora and Calzadilla , Half Mast / Full Mast, 2010.  
High Definition two-channel video, colour, silent, 21:11 min.  
Courtesy the artist and Lisson.

# GLADSTONE GALLERY

Rajesh Punj, "Allora & Calzadilla," *flashartonline.com*, April 2012.

"Vieques Videos" includes *Returning a Sound* (2004), which upon initial viewing appears clumsy, even foolish, due to the absurdity of a young boy riding his moped with a gleaming trumpet attached to the exhaust pipe. Following this "activist" across the small island provides a lackluster yet hypnotic effect; the sound of the bike's engine and the spluttering off-pitch sound of the trumpet are constantly at battle. Vieques, or "little girl island," off the coast of Puerto Rico, is a politically charged landscape that acts as a remote setting for all of these scripted sequences. In *Returning a Sound*, the relationship between location and choice of instrument is not insignificant. The work *Under Discussion* (2005) depicts another "activist" taking an upturned table, fitted with engine and rudder, out across the restricted waters to a former military base that has since been designated as a federal wildlife refuge. *Half Mast/Full Mast* (2010) is the final "island" work: jutting flag poles delineating political and social landmarks are here readdressed in the form of agile young men hoisting themselves up horizontally as human flags. These off-kilter island studies are all fully engaging, even if their topicality is perhaps questionable.