

Karthik Pandian -- *Before the Sun*  
September 18<sup>th</sup> – November 6<sup>th</sup>

For his solo exhibition at Midway Contemporary Art, Karthik Pandian has produced a 16mm film installation that addresses the relationship between architecture and archaeology and the solar unconscious that has conditioned the emergence of both disciplines in the Midwest. Drawing on field research conducted in downtown Chicago and at the Cahokia Mounds, a complex of massive pre-Columbian Native American earthen structures that abut and indeed lie underneath East St. Louis, IL, Pandian has designed a four-sided stepped plaza of rammed earth that occupies Midway's main gallery space. Like Monk's Mound, Cahokia's largest edifice, the plaza is aligned with the path of the sun through the sky and faces the four cardinal directions. 16mm film projectors, housed in twin mirrorpane glass columns erupting from the surface of the plaza, project looped films of the sunrise and sunset as seen from the apex of Monk's Mound during the vernal equinox into the eastern and western corners of the gallery. The film loops themselves are supported (and, in turn, degraded) by a suspended grid of magenta twine, of the sort regularly employed in archaeological digs, suggesting that we are in an excavation not only of disappearing architecture, but also of the connective tissue that binds our modernity to buried peoples, histories and suns.

Karthik Pandian lives and works in Los Angeles. He has had solo exhibitions at Richard Telles Fine Art, Los Angeles and Galerie Meyer Kainer, Vienna (with Mathias Poledna) and has shown in numerous group exhibitions. His films have been showcased at Bidoun Video 2009 in Dubai, UAE, Anthology Film Archives in New York, and the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles. He holds an MFA from Art Center College of Design and a BA from Brown University.

### **Catalog**

A catalog, conceived by Pandian as a 12" record gatefold, will accompany the exhibition. It features new texts by poet Amy Gerstler, artist Barry MacGregor Johnston, philosopher Jason E. Smith, and anthropologist Michael Taussig as well as a vinyl record with contributions by Eric D. Clark, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Karthik Pandian.

