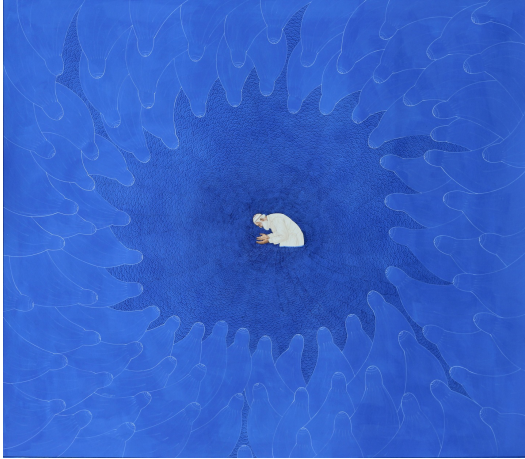


GOWEN CONTEMPORARY

GENEVA, Switzerland

Angels and Demons. A Selection of Works by Waseem Ahmed and Rashid Rana
21 April - 4 May 2016

Waseem Ahmed (Pakistan, 1976)



Above left: W.Ahmed, *Untitled*, 2013, pigment color on vasli paper, 106,7 x 121,9 cm. Above right: W.Ahmed, *Untitled*, 2015, pigment color on vasli paper, 182,3 x 104,1 cm

Ahmed was born in Hyderabad, in the southern part of Pakistan. His family migrated from India to Pakistan during partition in 1947. His considerable talent led him North, to the prestigious National College of Arts in Lahore, where he suffered the severity of elitist and archaic teaching methods. Today however, the artist is a key player on the scene of contemporary miniature painting. Ahmed joins thus a number of South Asian artists that use tradition as a means towards innovation. *"I The very tradition of miniature painting, particularly the Mughal style which is promoted as Pakistan's cultural heritage, has become the inspiration for some of the most radical contemporary art work in Pakistan today"*. (Virginia Whiles). Ahmed's inspiration mostly comes from classical and traditional eastern and western art as well as from common people around him with whom he interacts daily. As he writes: *"I observe how these people change with changing (social, religious and political) times. I also try to create an understanding between thinking of intellectuals and common people I come across in my everyday life. Presently, my work is more focused on the current social and political issues faced by the Islamic world and to which I am an eye witness on daily basis."*

Waseem Ahmed lives and works in Lahore. He studied at the National College of Arts in Lahore. Since 1993 Ahmed has been extensively exhibited in museums and galleries in Pakistan, Australia, Greece, France, India, Japan, Nepal, Switzerland, Turkey, UK. Gowen Contemporary, who is the only representative gallery of the artist in Europe, held exhibitions by Ahmed in 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015. Ahmed's works can be found in important private and public collections, such as the Asian Art Museum Berlin; the British Museum London; the Virginia Whiles Collections, UK; the Anupam Podar Collections, India; the Salima Hashmi, Pakistan. Ahmed was the first artist in residency at the Asian Art Museum Berlin participating in the Humboldt Lab project in 2014-2015. The project included a solo show by Ahmed curated by Martina Stoye at the end of his residency.

Rashid RANA (Pakistan, 1968)



Above: Rashid Rana, *Dis-location – 3*, 2007-2008, C-print Diasec, mounted, 241.3 x 317.5 cm

Widely considered to be the leading Pakistani artist of his generation, Rana lives and works in his native Lahore, the historical centre of education in Pakistan. In his photography, sculpture and digital printmaking, Rana transposes imagery from one time and place to another, through manipulation, repetition and rearrangement. By moving into digital media and photography the traditional painting techniques taught at school, Rana cleverly relates to the history of art of his country. Rana's works reveal their complexity through their multiple reading levels. As he writes: *"In this age of uncertainty, we have lost the privilege of having one world view. Now every image, idea and truth (may it be ancient or modern) encompasses its opposite within itself. Thus, we live in a state of duality. This internal conflict translates into my work, on a formal level, as well as having geographical, historical and political connotations."*

Rashid Rana trained as a painter at the National College of Arts in Lahore and at the Massachusetts College of Fine Arts in Boston. He is the founding faculty member and head of the Fine Art department at Beaconhouse National University in Lahore. Recent solo exhibitions include a major mid-career retrospective of 70 works, entitled Labyrinth of Reflections at Mohatta Palace Museum, Karachi (2013), as well as surveys at Cornerhouse, Manchester (2011) and Musée Guimet, Paris (2010). Participation in major group exhibitions includes the Venice Biennale (2015); Kiev Biennial (2012); Fotomuseum Winterthur, Whitechapel Gallery and Saatchi Gallery, London (2010); the Asia Society, New York (2009), the fifth Asia Pacific Triennale, Queensland Gallery of Art, Brisbane (2006) and the Singapore Biennial (2006). He is mainly represented by Lisson Gallery.