

CONTEMPORARY ISTANBUL ART FAIR

WASEEM AHMED

September 12-15, 2019

Opening September 11, by invitation only

Istanbul Congress Center | Istanbul Convention and Exhibition Center, Istanbul - **Booth B104**



Waseem Ahmed, *Untitled*, 2019,
pigment color, gold leaf, tea stain on handmade archival
wasli paper, 179 x 100 cm

Waseem Ahmed is a key player in the contemporary miniature painting scene. Combining traditional miniature techniques, such as gouache and gold and silver leaf on wasli paper, with genuine experimental techniques, Ahmed creates finely rendered small and large scale works that address various social, political and cultural issues. Crossing cultural borders, his rich vocabulary borrows elements from Asian and European art history and mythology. His eclectic repertoire of images composed by animal shapes, bearded men, blood splattered surfaces, burkas, letters from the Arabic-Farsi-Urdu alphabet, often suggesting religious rhetoric, guns, rosaries, suicide-jackets or forms derived from prominent ancient sculptures, creates multiple layers of meaning that are often in contrast with the esthetic appeal of his paintings. Ahmed's thought-provoking works depict the turbulent time, characterized by conflict and violence, faced today by both Eastern and Western societies.

For Contemporary Istanbul we are thrilled to present a dozen new paintings on wasli paper as well as a group of ceramic sculptures that the artist has realised in Istanbul during his residency *Artist and Institution in Residency Program*. For the execution of the latter, Ahmed, who has worked with the ceramic medium for the first time, could benefit from the help of the skillful workers of the Istanbul highly reputed ceramic factory Gorbon Tiles.

Waseem Ahmed (b. 1976) was born in Hyderabad, Pakistan. Ahmed grew up in a Muhajir (immigrant) family who, because they were Muslim, had migrated from India after Partition in 1947 to settle in the newly independent state of Pakistan. He attended the National College of Arts Lahore in Pakistan, receiving his Bachelors in Fine Arts with Honors from the Department of Miniature Painting in 2000. He has exhibited extensively in Pakistan as well as internationally, including a solo

exhibition at the Asian Art Museum, Berlin (2014/2015), the Katmandu Triennale (2017) and the Karachi Biennale (upcoming, 2019). Gowen Contemporary, who is the only representative gallery of the artist in Europe since 2010, held exhibitions by Ahmed in 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018-2019. Ahmed's work is in the permanent collections of the Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Berlin; The British Museum, London; the Virginia Whiles Collection, UK; the Anupam Poddar Collection, India; the D. Daskalopoulos Collection, Switzerland; the Jerome and Ellen Stern Collection, USA, among others. He was the first artist-in-residence at the Asian Art Museum in Berlin, participating in the Humboldt Lab project (2014-2015). The latter included a retrospective curated by Martina Stoye. He was nominated for the Sovereign Asian Art Prize (2012-2013, 2013-2014 and 2017) and the Jameel Prize (2011-2012). Since 2017 he is appointed as Nominator for the Sovereign Asian Art Prize. Ahmed lives and works in Lahore.