

*Asia Now 2024*  
Waseem Ahmed

17th – 20th October 2024  
Monnaie de Paris, 11 quai de Conti, 75006 Paris

For the 10th anniversary edition of Asia NOW, GOWEN is thrilled to present a solo show by **Waseem Ahmed** (b. 1976, Hyderabad).

One of Pakistan's foremost contemporary miniature artists, **Waseem Ahmed** was raised in an immigrant Muhajir family who, due to their Muslim ethnicity migrated from India after Partition in 1947 to settle in the newly independent state of Pakistan.

Waseem's body of work garners deep, personal histories, as well as addressing complex social, political, and cultural contentions. The artist relates the past, revisiting generational heritage while bringing contemporary topics to the fore. One of several leading South Asian artists belonging to the neo-miniature movement who use tradition as a means towards innovation, Waseem Ahmed devises genuine, experimental approaches, transcending conventional miniature techniques, such as gouache and gold and silver leaf on wasli paper. Coloured, dry pigment and other alternative materials are incorporated to create finely rendered small- and large-scale works. In the custom of the genre, tea-stained paper gives subtle layers of colour, often applied as spattered patterns.

Courtesy of the Artist and GOWEN, Geneva ©the Artist



Waseem Ahmed  
*In the named of faith (series), 2022*  
Dry pigment colour, silver leaf, tea stain  
on Archival handmade Wasli paper  
52.7 x 33.2 cm

The artist's rich vocabulary commonly borrows from mythology, theology or Eastern and Western history and the history of art, seeking to bridge the practice of art and the turbulence of the world. Iconographic imagery, often set against botanical backgrounds constructs multiple layers of meaning, extending beyond the constraints of geography, nationality, and identity. Waseem's complex visuals, frequently decorated with foliage or calligraphic forms conceptually challenge limits that embody a political, religious, and cultural distance while reflecting on unity and common legacy.

On view will be a selection of the artist's paintings, notably from his ongoing *Invisible border* series (2016 - 2024) which outwardly address area boundaries and refer specifically to the plight of refugees, as well as some of his most recent works, all offering an insight into his unique, artistic exploration.

With originality, and through a singular visual practice, Waseem Ahmed elaborates a centuries-old art form to express the gravity of human predicament and experience.

Waseem Ahmed has been exclusively represented in Europe by GOWEN since 2010.

Courtesy of the Artist and GOWEN, Geneva ©the Artist



Waseem Ahmed  
*Untitled, 2023*  
Dry pigment colour, silver leaf, tea stain  
on Archival handmade Wasli paper  
75 x 56 cm

Courtesy of the Artist and GOWEN, Geneva ©the Artist



Waseem Ahmed  
*Untitled, 2023*  
Dry pigment colour, Silver leaf, tea stain,  
on Archival handmade Wasli paper  
70.5 x 55.7 cm

## Biography

**Waseem Ahmed** was born in Hyderabad, Pakistan in 1976 and attended the National College of Arts Lahore in Pakistan. He received 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 (2019). Recent exhibitions include *Cognitive Bias*, Chawkandi Art Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan (2024). GOWEN, who is the sole representative gallery of the artist in Europe since 2010, has held exhibitions by Ahmed in 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018-2019, 2020 and 2023/24. Ahmed's work is included 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 has been appointed as Nominator for the Sovereign Asian Art Prize. This year, Ahmed was a participating artist in the South Asian Heritage Month at the British Museum, London. He lives and works in Lahore.