

Fact • Fission

Featuring Eric Ayotte, Sarnath Banerjee, Ruby Chishti, Jace Clayton (*aka* DJ Rupture), James Cullinane, Gisela Insuaste, Mala Iqbal, John Jurayj, Abir Karmakar, Pooneh Maghazehe, Nitin Mukul, Seher Naveed, Yamini Nayar & Kanishka Raja

Curated by Nitin Mukul

December 6, 2012 – January 19, 2013

Press Preview & Reception: Thursday, December 6, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

AICON GALLERY | New York
35 Great Jones St., New York NY 10012

Aicon Gallery is proud to present **Fact • Fission**, a group exhibition curated by **Nitin Mukul** featuring fourteen contemporary artists, working in various media to challenge preconceived ideological divisions and break down the prevailing regional aesthetics in global contemporary art.

Daily unrest in the name of democracy seems endemic to some nations, whereas in others, complacency breeds blissful collapse. Volatile shifts in the balance of power appear inevitable, with over-consumption taking a tangible toll. The media's reductive narratives and sweeping generalizations over large swathes of the globe are no longer plausible as **Fact**. New patterns emanate, emerging at a pace more rapid than ever in regard to technology, nature, policy and social upheaval. Cultural practitioners yearn to reflect this multiplicity of voices. Enter **Fission**. *Fusion*, a term often used to describe the melding of different cultures, seems overused and worn out. A mainstream marketing gimmick, somewhat analogous to assimilation or multiculturalism, *fusion* advocates tolerance of the 'Other', albeit according to its own convenience and within the bounds of what it deems tasteful. What's more interesting is *fission* – when things split apart, reorganize and regenerate, smudging and splintering neatly kept categories and conventional wisdom in the process. The results are not necessarily hybrids, but new inauthentic, hyper-local and interdisciplinary manifestations resulting from willful or imposed dislocation. The work in this exhibition will center on the concept of fission, while encompassing a wide range of formal concerns.



Yamini Nayar, *Memorious*, 2011, Image fragments collaged onto C-print, 48 x 60 in.

Yamini Nayar's imagined interiors explore architecture and memory via the representation of constructed (and deconstructed) space. Drawing from the visual allegories of architecture, with the model and final photograph weaving together existing narratives with elements of fragmented idealism, Nayar's collaged photographs become jarring snapshots of ephemeral architectural memories as experienced by our subjective subconscious. **Pooneh Maghazehe** interrogates the functional and obstructed uses of worn domestic furniture by methodically peeling and stripping textiles, to reveal the underlying structural vulnerability from within. The recontextualized pieces investigate the collective identity, social psychology, and symbolic gestures and emblems that define belief structures by exposing the interdependence of materials inherent in these prefabricated former objects of comfort. **James Cullinane** explores the diagrammatic possibilities and didactic imagery of patterns in process, navigating the tension between pictorial and physical space. His paintings act as architectural dictionaries and charts to navigate the labyrinthine paths forged in his layered dystopia of geometric forms, optic patterns and vibrant color. In **Kanishka Raja's** panoramic realms, the energetic fusion of private and public domains of distinct global settings, interlocked by pulsating patterns derived from textile design and ornamentation, form a complex visual field spanning several panels. **Nitin Mukul** depicts details of events as various types of social rituals/commentary, deconstructing and imbuing them with palpable energy and ambiguity. The opening reception will feature a screening of the new video *Haal* by **Nitin Mukul**, with a live score by **Jace Clayton** (DJ Rupture) and software designer **Bill Bowen**, utilizing their recently developed *SUFI PLUG-INS*, an interdisciplinary project dedicated to exploring non-western and poetic notions of sound, creating a space where software design, music tools, encoded spirituality, digital art and indigenous knowledge systems overlap.

Please contact Amy <Amy@Aicongallery.com> for more information.

YAMINI NAYAR



Yamini Nayar, *Memorious*, 2011, Image fragments collaged on c-prints, 48 x 60 in.

Yamini Nayar's imagined interiors explore architecture and memory via the representation of constructed (and deconstructed) space. Drawing from the visual allegories of architecture, with the model and final photograph weaving together existing narratives with elements of fragmented idealism, Nayar's collaged photographs become jarring snapshots of ephemeral architectural memories as experienced by our subjective subconscious.

ERIC AYOTTE



Eric Ayotte, *Universal*, 2011, Oil paint, spray paint and resin on panels, 72 x 115 in.

Eric Ayotte's work combines photorealist painting with mathematically based design software to create what the artist considers to be "analytical abstractions," a term describing the way in which his works function in space. As we approach, the paintings become about surface and abstraction, while from a distance, the visual experience becomes about synthesizing images from this abstraction. Ayotte uses an invented invented form of "process painting" to inform and change the source imagery over time (both in terms of observational time and in an art historical context), thereby questioning and abstracting concepts of beauty and appreciation.

"Reflexivity is the cornerstone of the work I produce. With each painting I attempt to question the process of creation, its role in and as a reflection of history and whether these issues can or should be easily read. The element of photorealism in my paintings is tied to an interest in visual technologies' ability to document moments of unrest on both a grand and personal scale. The fractal distortion of painting in transparent layers based off of mathematical projections plays with ideas of scientific systems of organization being inserted on to moments of breakdown in a standing system. My goal is to force assumptions to be left aside; a recognition of the complexities of involvement, reaction and relationship to history."

-Ayotte on his invented form of "Process Painting"

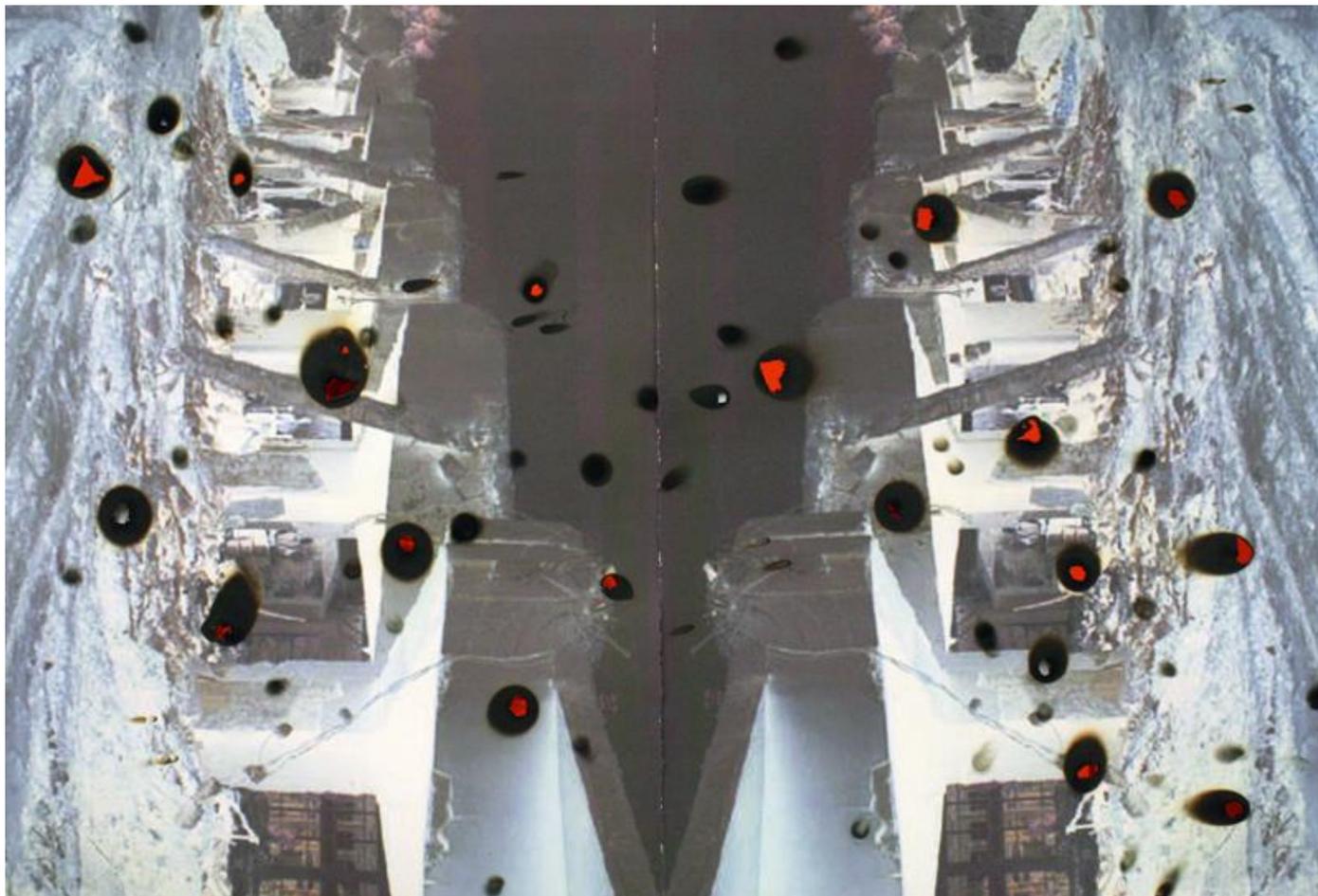
RUBY CHISHTI



Ruby Chishti, *Untitled (Hanging Sculpture)*, 2012, Fabric, polyester and paint, 41 x 44 x 13 in.

Ruby Chishti is interested in gender relationships and politics, among other themes of identity, love and loss. She works primarily in fabric and other delicate, ephemeral materials like twigs and straw, which reference the transitory nature of the human experience. Tending towards doll-like sculptures, her work serves as a continuation of the tradition of Pakistani doll making into the practice of contemporary sculpture.

JOHN JURAYJ



John Jurayj, *Untitled (Marine Barracks 1983 with Orange Mirror)*, 2012, Archival digital print on watercolor paper with burn holes and orange mirrored Plexiglas, 51 x 75.5 in.

John Jurayj's art focuses on events originating in Lebanon, where ongoing war and international conflict have affected the country and its people. His recent works are rendered in a subdued palette, further compounded by the nature of the material he uses—silkscreen ink mixed with gunpowder. Jurayj's medium provides the unique ability to actualize instability, corruption and volatility. His inclusion of mirrors is an allusion to the reflective stainless steel commonly found in psychiatric and penal institutions, often used for safety purposes and for psychological "mirroring" (a critical phase in a child development, which if absent can produce a ruptured view of oneself). In the case of painting, he says: "The mirror dissolves the privileged and separate space in which viewer stands; participation and implication is not a choice."

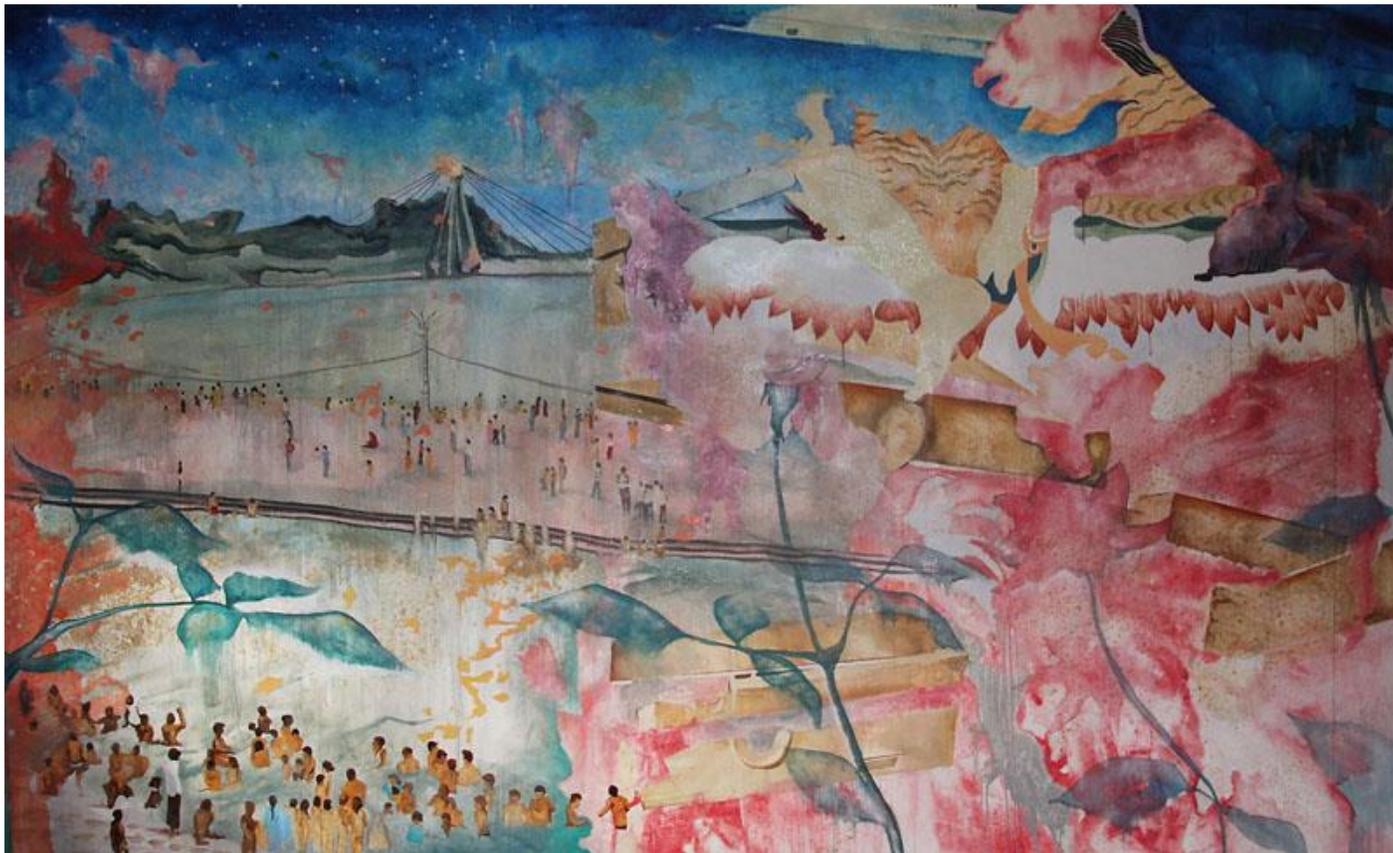
JAMES CULLINANE



James Cullinane, *Ozymandias*, 2012, Paint, paper, map pins and yellow jacket's nest on panel, 46 x 46 in.

James Cullinane explores the diagrammatic possibilities and didactic imagery of patterns in process, navigating the tension between pictorial and physical space. His paintings act as architectural dictionaries and charts to navigate the labyrinthine paths forged in his layered dystopia of geometric forms, optic patterns and vibrant color.

NITIN MUKUL



Nitin Mukul, *Celestial Annihilation*, 2012, Acrylic, oil and tea stains on canvas, 84 x 132 in.

Nitin Mukul's paintings combine process oriented mark making with representational elements, staging an evocative interplay between the two. A densely layered picture surface results, where the figurative and the abstract converge. His practice has always been rooted in collage, and the resulting compositions have a tension that walks a fine line between balance & collapse – mirroring the fragile state of our world today. Mukul recasts and recombines ritual imagery, architectural remnants, and popular icons to give clues to a narrative which is often autobiographical. He utilizes a combination of traditional and unconventional materials, including black tea stain, which becomes conceptually charged through its relationship to the works underlying thematic content, namely the intersection of the social, the biological and the manmade as they relate to a rapidly evolving global culture.

POONEH MAGHAZEHE



Pooneh Maghazehe, *Eleni's Jesus Juice Bowl*, 2012, Segment of Eleni's Greek sectional and gold leaf, 48 x 36 x 56 in.

Pooneh Maghazehe interrogates the functional and obstructed uses of worn domestic furniture by methodically peeling and stripping textiles, to reveal the underlying structural vulnerability from within. The recontextualized pieces investigate the collective identity, social psychology, and symbolic gestures and emblems that define belief structures by exposing the interdependence of materials inherent in these prefabricated former objects of comfort.

ABIR KARMAKAR



Abir Karmakar, *Scent IV*, 2011, Oil on canvas, 48 x 72 in.

Abir Karmakar questions the notions and formalities of gender, sexuality, intimacy and the complex relationships a person can have, not just with others, but with oneself. He articulates, “I have never been interested in binaries – male/female, private/public, right/wrong, real/fiction, but the area that connects, blurs or overlaps them.”

SARNATH BABNERJEE



Sarnath Banerjee, *Soul 3*, 2012, Ink on paper, 11 x 8 in.

Sarnath Banerjee's work is characteristically anecdotal and autobiographical, bringing dark and biting humour to bear on everyday Indian experiences. As one of few Indian artists working primarily in the medium of the graphic novel, he is able to expose the nuances and inherent cultural anachronisms of the rapidly changing landscape of Indian politics and society as they hurtle into the 21st Century.

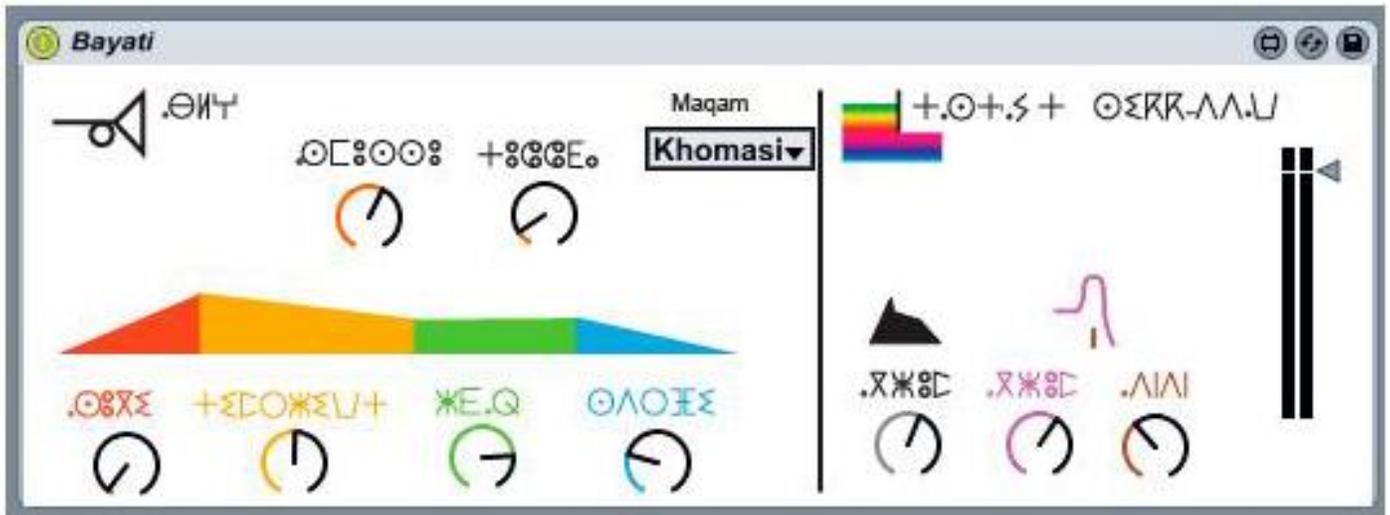
MALA IQBAL



Mala Iqbal, *Make a Break*, 2012, Acrylic on canvas, 42 x 60 in.

Mala Iqbal's work takes us to a place that is difficult to pin down. This is perhaps due in part to her landscapes avoiding convenient dichotomies such as urban and rural. Using a collective cultural memory of landscape, culled from sources as varied as Sunday morning cartoons and Hudson River School paintings, as its basis, Iqbal adopts a hybrid vernacular, combining seamless airbrushed skies and backgrounds with gestural splatters and flows of paint that are at once familiar yet fantastic, referencing the surrounding environment as well as art historical moments.

JACE CLAYTON



Jace Clayton, *Bayati*, 2012, Digital c-print, 24 x 45 in,

Jace Clayton's (aka DJ RUPTURE) practice has evolved out of his work as a DJ, built around core concerns for how sound, technology used in low-income communities and public space interact, with an emphasis on Latin America, Africa, and the Arab world. Clayton is currently developing Sufi Plug Ins, a free suite of audio software tools based on non-western/poetic conceptions of sound and alternative interfaces. In April 2013 he will debut *The Julius Eastman Memorial Dinner*, a performance piece that restages three Eastman compositions using pianos and boomboxes, accompanied by a new libretto about the job search for a Julius Eastman impersonator in New York City.

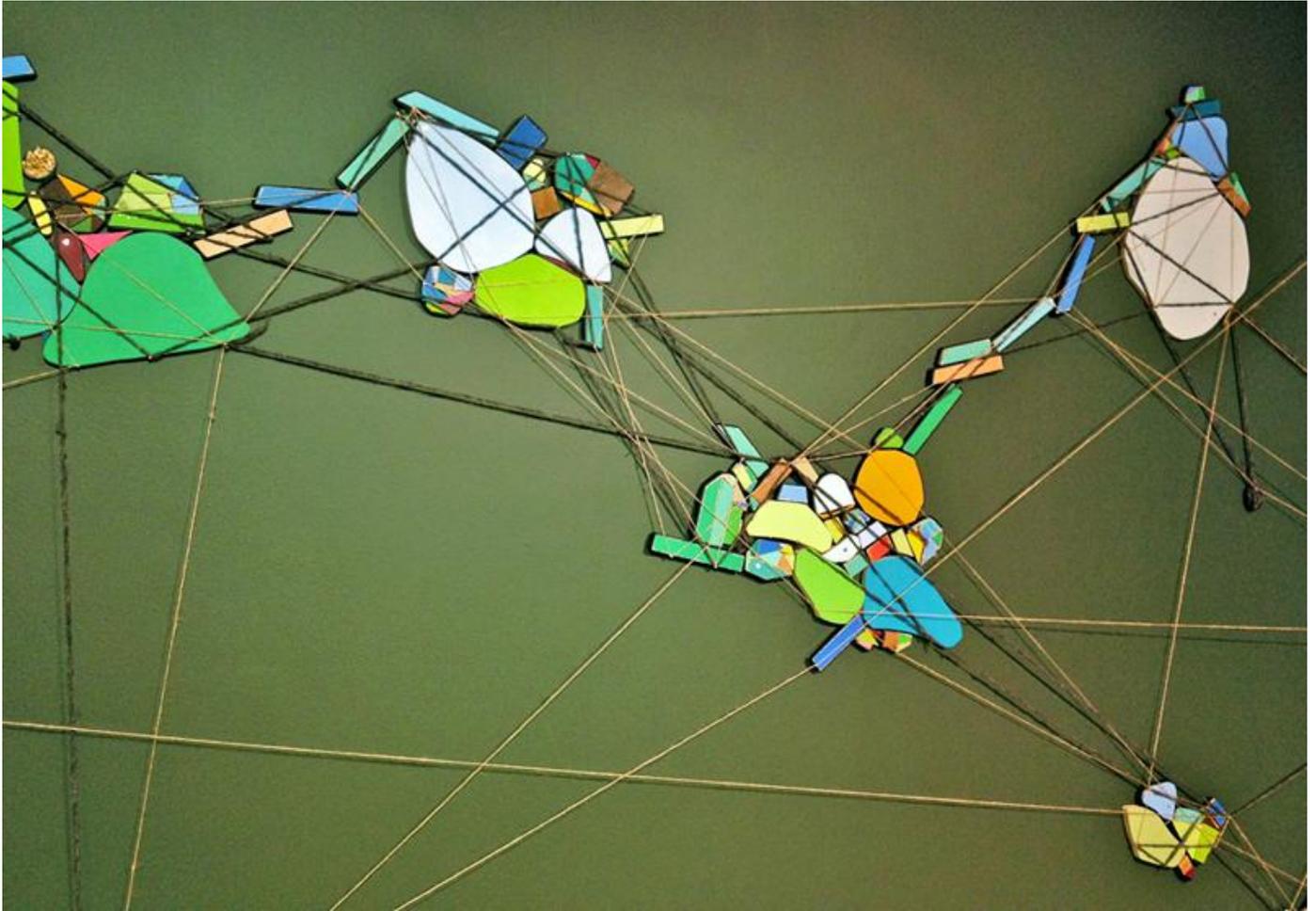
KANISHKA RAJA



Kanishka Raja, *Switzerland for Movie Stars No. 1*, 2011-12, Oil on 3 panels, 24 x 95.5 in

In **Kanishka Raja's** panoramic realms, the energetic fusion of private and public domains of distinct global settings, interlocked by pulsating patterns derived from textile design and ornamentation, form a complex visual field spanning several panels.

GISELA INSUASTE



Gisela Insuaste, *Vacuums en Camino por el Cielo y la Tierra*, 2012, Acrylic and mixed media on wood, Dimensions variable

Gisela Insuaste's works are site specific, and serve as a means for exploring our individual and shared spaces and identity, in their emotionally and politically charged nature. She articulates, "my interest in urban spaces is rooted in my desire to understand the interconnectedness of people, places, and things, and thus create spaces that reflect our fragile and dynamic relationship between the built and natural environment." Typically employing boards of plywood adorned with colorful paint, she creates dynamic and architectural forms, sculptural in their contour and suggestive movement, her quirky topographies are meant to resonate with personal narratives of the urban spaces they occupy.

SEHER NAVEED



Seher Naveed, *...And Those Houses, They Will Never Live Again 3*, 2012, Paper-cuts on Plexiglas, 15 x 18 in.

Seher Naveed was effected gravely by the construction of the Mangla Dam, in her hometown, and the subsequent displacement of the families and villages has informed her concentration on memory in her artwork. Working in layers of cut paper, her intricately assembled interior views are comprised of both observed and idealized remnants of domestic architectures, vying with one another to present a cohesive narrative of the past while confronted with the chaotic imperfections of memory.