

Semblance of Order

Featuring Roohi Shafiq Ahmed, Michael Kempson, Ben Rak, Abdullah M. I. Syed, and Adeel-uz-Zafar
Curated by Abdullah M. I. Syed

December 11th, 2014 – January 24th, 2015

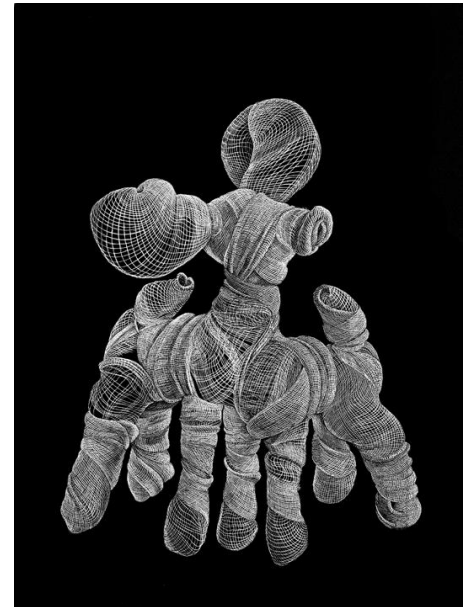
Press Preview & Opening Reception: Thursday, December 11th 6:00pm – 8:00pm

7:00pm – Curator & Artists' Talk with Abdullah M. I. Syed, Roohi S. Ahmed, Ben Rak, and Andrew Shea (Moderator)

35 Great Jones St., New York NY 10012

Aicon Gallery is proud to present *Semblance of Order*, a traveling exhibition promoting Australian and Pakistani art and artists across borders and platforms with cross-cultural collaboration at its core. The exhibition is the result of an international artists' residency program delivered in partnership between Parramatta Artists Studios¹ and Cicada Press, University of New South Wales Art and Design, Sydney, Australia.

Semblance of Order presents an array of etchings and silkscreen prints that demonstrate the artists' desire to extend beyond replication and explore the creative possibilities of their practices and the medium. The artworks mediate notions of cultural translation: subject/object, original/translation, center/margin, personal/communal, textual/visual, and artist/printer. Through mark making, erasure, repetition, layering, labor, doubling, and deconstruction, the artists push the conceptual and technical discourse of printmaking. The results are conceptually rich and technically challenging, underlined with humor and irony: a visual poetry of disorder and order.² Featuring the work of five artists, the exhibition has traveled from Parramatta Artists Studios, Sydney to Koel Gallery, Karachi, with its premier in the United States hosted by Aicon Gallery, New York.



Adeel-uz-Zafar, *Seven Legged Fawn (Drawing Appendages Series)*, 2013, Etching on Velin Arches paper, 15.75 x 12 in.

Born in Karachi, Pakistan (1966) **Roohi S. Ahmed** is a multi-disciplinary artist who lives and works in Karachi, Pakistan. Ahmed is an Associate Professor at the Indus Valley School of Arts and Architecture, Karachi, and lectured at the University of Karachi's Visual Studies Department and COFA UNSW. She has exhibited widely internationally. Ahmed was the recipient of the UNSW's International Postgraduate Research Scholarship in 2011.

Michael Kempson is currently Head of Printmaking and Director of Cicada Press, a research based custom printing workshop, at COFA UNSW, Sydney, Australia. As an artist Kempson has had a total of 27 solo exhibitions and numerous international group exhibitions, with representation in the National Gallery of Australia and many state, regional, university and corporate collections. Kempson also curated an Australian component representing COFA UNSW, the first international art school invited to the 11th Annual Printmaking Exhibition and Conference for Chinese Academies and Colleges at Guangzhou Academy of Fine Art (2012).

¹ Parramatta Artists Studios is an initiative of Parramatta City Council and is supported by the NSW Government through Arts NSW.

² Abdullah M. I. Syed, *Curator's Notes*



Ben Rak, *Arab Sheikh Bobble*, 2013,
Acrylic and silkscreen on BFK Rives
paper, 22 x 15 in.

Born in California, USA (1978) and raised in Israel, **Ben Rak** is an artist, educator and independent curator. He presently works and lives in Sydney, Australia, where he lectures at COFA UNSW. His artworks have been featured in four solo exhibitions and several local and international group exhibitions. Rak has won several awards including the National Tertiary Art Prize people's choice (2009), Blacktown City Art Prize for works on paper (2008), and the Newtown Community Art Prize for works on paper (2007). Ben Rak's works are in the collections of several national and international institutions.

An artist, freelance designer, and independent curator, **Abdullah M. I. Syed** was born in Karachi, Pakistan (1974). Presently he is completing a PhD in Fine Arts practice and lecturing at COFA UNSW. Syed has coordinated the Design Department at the Karachi University, Pakistan, and lectured at the University of Central Oklahoma. His artworks have been featured in six solo and several local and international group exhibitions. Syed has won awards including the Blacktown City Art Prize for works on paper (2010), the UNSW Postgraduate Research Scholarship (2009), the COFA Senior Artist from Asia Scholarship (2006), and the Individual Artist of Oklahoma Award for Installation (2003).

Adeel-uz-Zafar, born in 1975, Karachi, Pakistan, is an artist, illustrator and art educator. Zafar holds a BFA (with distinction) from the National College of Arts, Lahore (1998). His works have been featured in two solos and several international group exhibitions. He has participated in both national and international artist residencies including the Studio R. M. Residency, Lahore 2011, and most recently at Parramatta Artists Studios and Cicada Press (COFA UNSW) (2013). Adeel-uz-Zafar currently works and resides with his wife Nehdia and two daughters in Karachi.

Please contact Aicon Gallery (Andrew@Aicongallery.com) for more information.