

Promotesh Das Pulak

Betrayal of Innocence and Beauty

Aicon Gallery Exhibition April 22nd – May 21st, 2016

Press Preview & V.I.P. Reception: Thursday, April 22nd 6:00pm – 8:00pm

35 Great Jones St., New York NY 10012

Aicon Gallery New York is proud to present *Betrayal of Innocence and Beauty* the first U.S. solo exhibition of **Promotesh Pulak Das**. The show is comprised of two major series- his sculptural pieces composed of war equipment assembled by small flowers made of the shola plant usually used as a traditional craft material and his iconographic interpretations of the 1971 War of Liberation titled *Echoed Moments in Time*. With his works, the artist critically questions the current social and political state of his home country Bangladesh as well as global issues humanity is facing. Promotesh Das Pulak was born in 1980 in Bangladesh. He completed his MFA in 2004 from the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka and was trained as a painter. Nevertheless, the use of diverse material has played a pivotal role in his artistic practice. The juxtaposition between the organic natural elements and the combat equipment suggests a betrayal of innocence and beauty. The artist often incorporates other media such as painting, video, image manipulation, photography, and installation in his work. Promotesh Das Pulak represented his country at the **54th Venice Biennale** in the Bangladeshi Pavilion along with a select group of other artists and was nominated as an emerging artist in sculpture at the **Prudential Eye Awards** in 2016.



Promotesh Das Pulak, *Encapsulated*, 2014, Shola Flowers, resin and plastic, 9.5 x 7 x 4.5. in.



Promotesh Das Pulak, *Echoed Moments in Time*, 2011, Shola Flowers, resin and plastic, 9.5 x 7 x 4.5.

Self-portraits are a key feature of Pulak's oeuvre. In the series *Echoed Moments in Time* which was exhibited in the Bangladeshi Pavilion **54th Venice Biennale** the artist imposes his own face onto archival photographs from 1971, the year of Bangladesh's war of Liberation in which thousands lost their lives. With these images of freedom fighters, the artist honors their battle for the liberation of Bangladesh but also criticizes the inhuman acts committed during this gruesome war. This criticism continues into current times – with his works the artist alludes to the complex and interlocking cultural, political, economic and environmental issues currently facing the often paradoxical and rapidly changing society and state of Bangladesh in the new millennium. The nation's exploding population, the daily socioeconomic struggles of the lives of millions, the consequences of climate change, shifting cultural and gender

demographics and the future of industry and economic growth are just some of the vastly influential issues informing and challenging the visual and verbal language of Bangladesh's diverse and quickly growing contemporary art scene.

With both, his *Echoed Moments in Time* series as well as his sculptural representations of war masks, hand grenades and Kalashnikovs studded with white Shola paper flowers, he questions the status quo. Objection to bloodshed and the need to compel reformation are repeatedly manifested.

The artist currently lives and works in Dhaka.

Please contact Aicon Gallery (newyork@aicongallery.com) for more information.