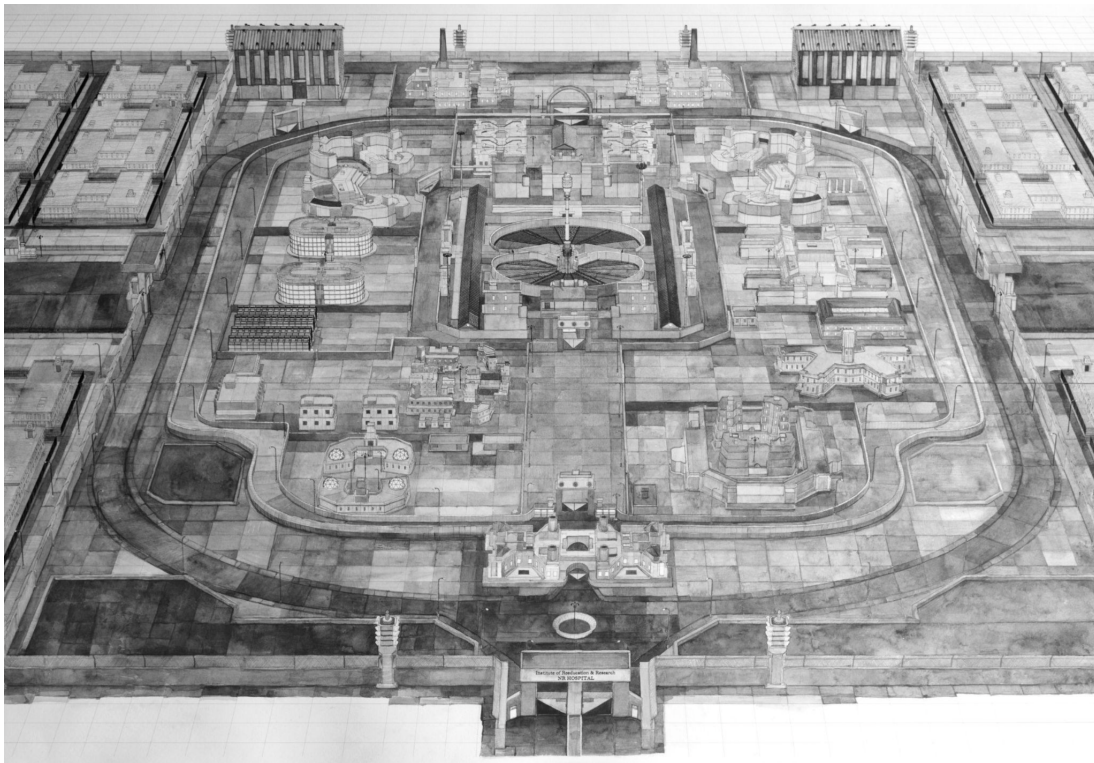


SWAGATA BHATTACHARYYA | SCENES FROM A DESPOT'S DREAM

September 15 - September 29, 2022

Aicon Contemporary is pleased to present the debut solo show for Kolkata based artist, Swagata Bhattacharyya (b. 1996).

Scenes from a Despot's Dream, assiduously presents us with the blueprints to a near dystopian future. Steady architectural drawings map out a parallel nation, one which is politically congruent with the direction of India's government, and highlights the dangerous interplay of urban systems and governing bodies. Using architecture as medium, Bhattacharyya references instances of authoritative regimes altering living spaces to gain colonial or authoritative power.



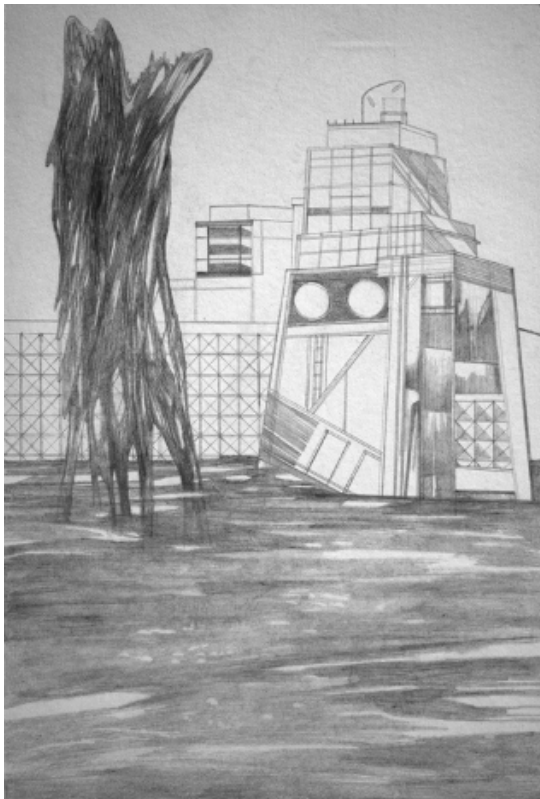
Swagata Bhattacharyya
Re edu (A), 2022
Graphite and print on paper
24h x 35w in

Through history, we see instances of violent architecture in fascist Italy and Germany, as well as numerous examples of Colonial architecture in countries colonized by the British. Bhattacharyya

uses these architectural elements to warn against nationalism and homogeneity in his home country, the following is an excerpt from the artist's statement:

“The works depicting diagrams and ground plans of structures range from that of the Capital Vista project, carbon capturing plants, re-education centers, prison structures etc. It sheds light on how an authoritarian regime wishes to build its national identity through various vanity projects, segregation of immigrants and minority groups, and management of environmental crises. All of these structures and their forms are derived from real world instances of projects undertaken in India or in other countries where an exaggerated image of strength embodied in built structures takes precedence over achieving any actual benefit from egalitarian designs. The works also seek to depict the phenomena of propaganda as some of the works are in the form of such advertisements that are often seen in reality, of majoritarian political parties boasting their efforts towards growth and development. Yet closer inspection into the images reveal horrific scenes of incompetence and failures these advertisements and hoardings attempt to hide. Overall the works

portray the process of radicalisation of the masses whereby people adopt a false and divisive dream as their own while closing off their senses to the violence of authoritarianism impacted on the polity and its environment.”

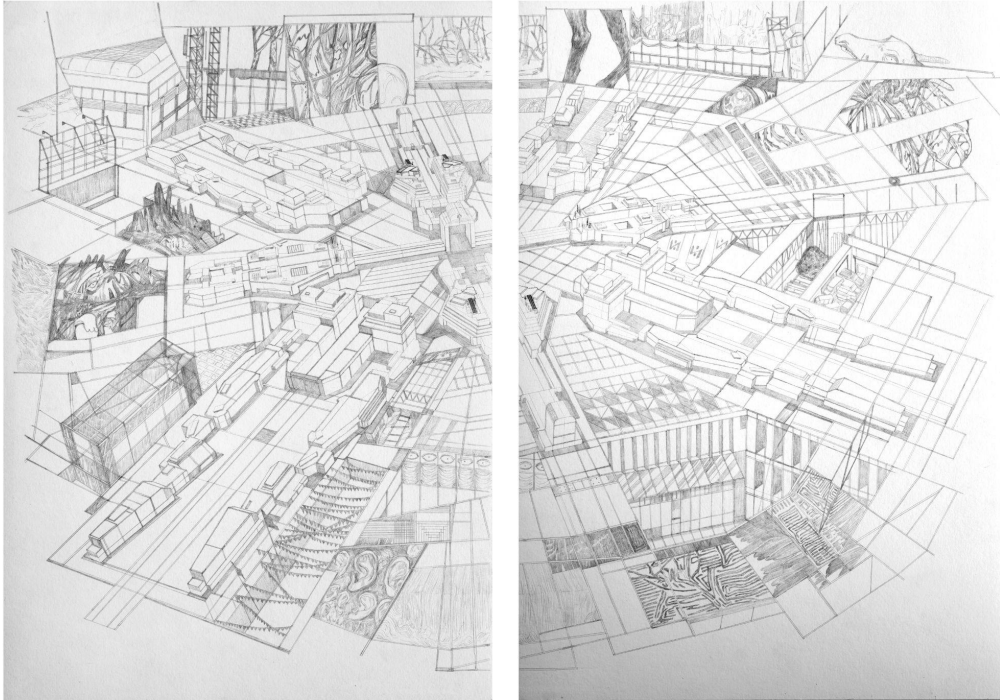


Swagata Bhattacharyya
Work No. 5J (Untitled), 2022
Graphite on paper
8.27h x 5.83w in

Swagata Bhattacharyya lives and works in Kolkata, India. He received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting from Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata (2018), and a Master of Visual Arts in Painting from Maharaja Sayajirao University, Vadodara (2020). He has previously received the Inlaks Fine

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Arts Award in 2020 and participated in a hybrid residency under Khoj International Artists' Association in 2021. His practice gives visibility to speculative narratives of existing power structures and the multifaceted ways it shapes our world. He works with drawing, photographs, and CGI to create simulated worlds and inquires how modes of power shape policies, and influence future environs via architecture and urban design, technology, and manufactured landscapes.



Swagata Bhattacharyya
Work No. 4 (Untitled), 2022
Graphite and print on paper
2 sheets - 11.69h x 8.27w in each

Please contact Aicon Contemporary (lana@aicongallery.com) with any questions.