

Press Release | 37th Interim Exhibition

Aisha Abid Hussain: Two Not Together

27 August—25 September, Everyday 12—6pm

Preview Tuesday 26 August 6—9pm



Aisha Abid Hussain, Two, Not Together Series I, 2014. Archival print on Hahnemuhle photograph.

Hanmi Gallery is proud to present "Two Not Together," a series of work by Pakistani artist Aisha Abid Hussain. In this collection, Hussain builds on themes of gender, class and status and explores a repertoire of culture-specific symbols.

One may view Aisha Abid Hussain's recent work as a cabinet with many drawers, to be slid open, one by one, exposing the carefully assembled private chronicles. The coming together of two individuals in holy or unholy bonds of marriage is a rapidly altering episode in human relationships. "Two Not Together" interrogates our assumptions, our clichés and our romance with the institution of marriage. She contrives a staged moment, replete with the finery and the trimmings of attire and dreams. The farcical underpinnings of the charade do not escape scrutiny. Her delight in baroque role-playing only emphasises the patent ridiculousness of each person's expectations. Yet there is a tinge of sadness here. The inevitability of decay, both physical and emotional is at the core of Hussain's image-making.

The relief prints in the same series constitute another aperture in this cabinet of domestic bliss. Utopia has imploded unto itself, leaving only traces of the fantasy and the relationship it nurtured. These lace-like vestiges from another time are almost poetic in their deterioration, stubbornly clinging to life in a last ditch show of strength.

The 'Love is a wasted vigil' series are culled from a trove of crisscrossing visual memoirs. The tactile gentleness of the prints is absent. This drawer of the cabinet is steeped in carnage, conflict and desolation. Against such a backdrop, the passivity of the matrimonial couple proclaims the strength of humankind and its ability to delude itself.

Each layer, each strata, discloses the complexity of men and women, their inter woven power play, their betrayals, unmasking's and tenacity. It is apparent that Aisha Abid Hussain is loathe to be partisan. Eventually, tenderness casts its delicate shadow over her determined cross-examination and ardent inquiry.

Salima Hashmi

Aisha Abid Hussain received her BFA degree from the National College of Arts, Lahore, Pakistan in 2008 (Passed with Honours) and received her MFA from Goldsmiths College, University of London, England in 2012 (Passed with Merit & Distinction in studio practice). Hussain works within a diverse practice, utilising a variety of mediums from miniature painting to photography and film. Her work has been exhibited widely in group and solo shows internationally. Her Group shows include: Open | Pump House Gallery, London, England 2013 | Bloomberg New Contemporaries | Spike Island, Bristol | Institute of Contemporary Art London, England 2013 | Her Stories | Taubman Museum, Virginia | Queens Museum, Brooklyn, New York, USA 2012-2013 | Drive In | PAMI (Peckham Artist Moving Image) Festival, London, England 2012 | Through other Eyes, Contemporary Art from South Asia | Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry, England 2009 | Parallel Lines | Bradford Museums Galleries & Heritage, England 2008 | The Human Dichotomy | Aicon Gallery, Palo Alto, USA 2008 | Connect | Anant Art Gallery, New Delhi, India 2008. Her Solo Shows are: Spaces Within | Gandhara Art Space, Karachi, Pakistan 2010 | Miniature Contemporaines du Pakistan | Alexis Renard Gallery, Paris, France 2009 | Preview | Rohtas Gallery, Lahore, Pakistan 2009.

She is currently working as an assistant professor for a masters programme at the National College of Arts in Lahore and for the Art, Design and Education programme at Beconhouse National University, Lahore, Pakistan.

Notes to Editors

About Hanmi Gallery located in London Fitzrovia with operations in Seoul, Hanmi Gallery is dedicated to creating a nexus between Eastern and Western artistic practices and exhibiting modern and contemporary art to an international audience. With specialist knowledge in Korean and East Asian Contemporary Art, the gallery is a uniquely positioned platform for the interchange and dialogue that is constantly evolving in the global arena of contemporary art.

Working with both emerging and established artists and curators, Hanmi Gallery has a particular commitment to new media and interdisciplinary works, showcasing a stirring range of contemporary art from an international selection of artists. Due to undergo major renovation on the gallery's London premises, the gallery has been running a successful programme of Interim Exhibitions, responding to its raw, stripped-back state with often site-specific installation works. The inaugural opening and exhibition is scheduled to take place upon completion of the building works in 2015. For further information, please contact: info@hanmigallery.co.uk