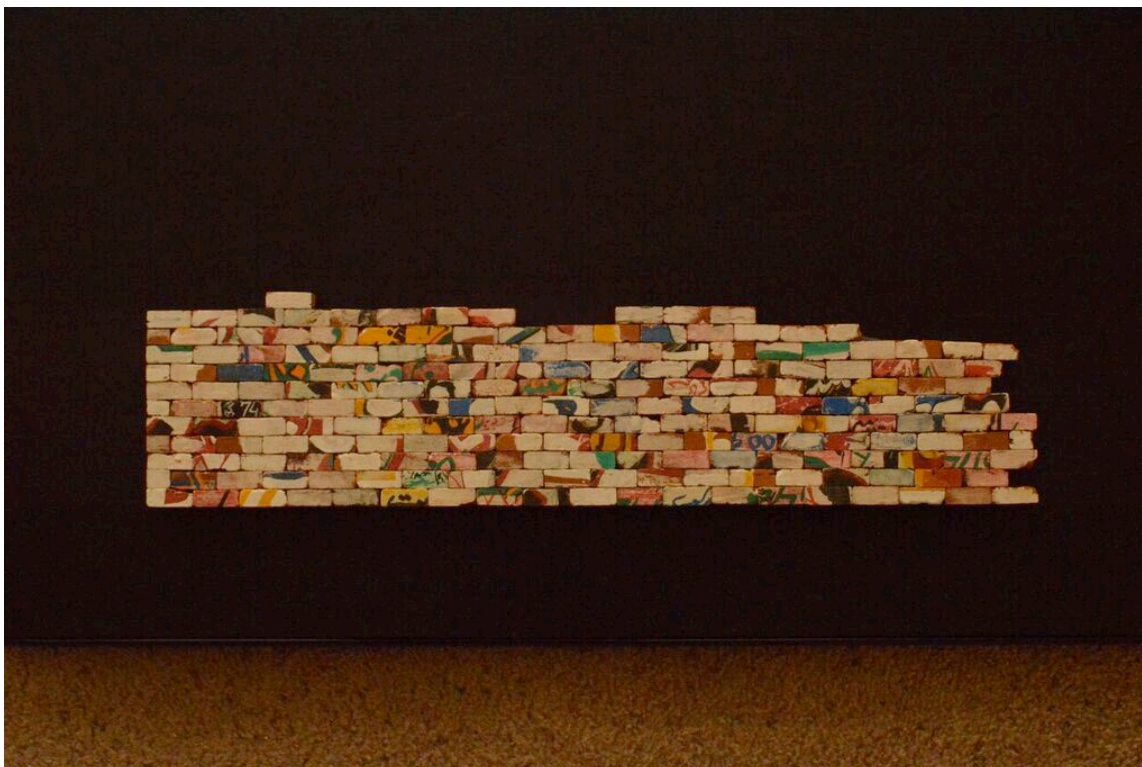


Noor Ali Chagani

House of Bricks

January 14 – February 13, 2016



Small wall, 2015, Terra cotta bricks, 5.5 x 22 x .5 in

Opening Reception:
Thursday, January 14, 6 — 8 pm

568 West 25th Street
New York, NY 10012

"The greatest dream of one's life... All the struggles, efforts ... are to accomplish this wish of building one's own house" ... Noor Ali Chagani

New York, NY—Leila Heller Gallery is pleased to announce, *House of Bricks*, the first solo exhibition of Lahore-based artist Noor Ali Chagani, on view from January 14—February 13, 2016. The show will feature over fifteen new works of sculpture, painting and installation dealing with issues of home and belonging. An illustrated catalogue with an essay by Justine Ludwig, Senior Curator at Dallas Contemporary, will accompany the show.

A graduate of the Lahore National College of Arts' renowned for its Miniature Painting program, Chagani uses his traditional training to inform his contemporary practice. He

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combines both the high art of exquisite miniature traditions passed down from the royal Mughal and Persian courts, with the low art of ceramics and techniques of brickmaking craftsmen, equally centuries old. An ode to his training, Chagani constructs his own miniature terra cotta bricks by using old-fashioned kilns and firing methods. He then applies tiny brush strokes to fluidly depict combined and reappropriated imagery seen in the streets of his hometown. Most recently, he has also begun incorporating weaving of bricks into his production, further expanding on the formal possibilities of his techniques.

"The brick is a unit that is used repetitively; it is a unit of strength, power and support. It talks about land ownership and possession."

In this first solo exhibition of his career, Chagani expands upon the initial reasons he has used bricks throughout his career. Bricks are the basic unit with which homes in Pakistan were, and in many cases still are, built. Drawing on his personal experiences, Chagani's sculptures explore questions of identity and represent his longing for stability in a sound house: "The brick is a unit that is used repetitively; it is a unit of strength, power and support. It talks about land ownership and possession. It shows a constant struggle between retaining one's identity and yet blending with the masses. It also communicates the need to be a part of a strong organization."

Just as each brick is a small segment adding up to a whole, each artwork in House of Bricks consists of various elements which make up a physical edifice such as a home.

Chagani creates various foundational structures such as a roof, floors, walls, stairs and pillars in addition to objects found in homes such as a mirror, a console, and books. He explains, "We spend our lives developing our own house. It's partly the greatest dream of one's life. All the struggles, efforts, and savings are to accomplish this wish of building one's own house."

Chagani expands his range of practice by creating a cohesive and conceptually balanced new body of work allowing him to fully explore what it takes to build a home.

About the artist:

Noor Ali Chagani received his BS Degree in Computer Science in Karachi and then later BFA in Miniature Painting from National College of Arts, Lahore and has since exhibited in group exhibitions in Pakistan, India, the UAE, the UK, the Netherlands, Bahrain and the United States. His first exhibition in U.S. was at USC's Pacific Asia Museum in California. Chagani was shortlisted for the Victoria and Albert Museum's prestigious Jameel Art Prize in 2011. He was awarded guest residencies at the Rijks Academy, Netherlands in 2012 and the Riwaq Art Space, Bahrain in 2013. Chagani's artwork has been featured in numerous publications such as Los Angeles Times, Asia Pacific Arts, L'Opitimum n°23, Global Citizen 13 magazine, Nafas Art Magazine and several Pakistani daily local newspapers.

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