

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

"An Exhibition of 16 Southeast Asian Artists Challenges Eastern Stereotypes." *ARTSY*. (November, 17, 2014).

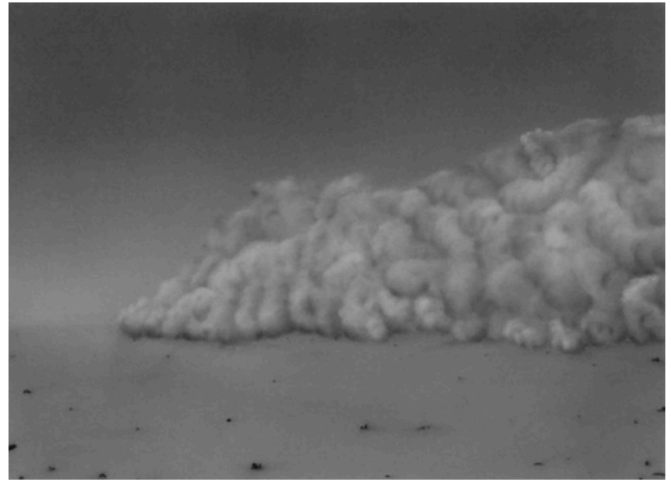


FEATURED BY ARTSY

An Exhibition of 16 Southeast Asian Artists Challenges Eastern Stereotypes

Any element of a given culture—cuisine, music, fashion—is susceptible to stereotype and generalization, and the visual arts are no exception. Indian art, for example, is often associated with over-the-top ornamentation, riotous color, and a busy ‘more is more’ aesthetic. Which is what makes “ETHEREAL,” a new group show on view at the Chelsea location of Leila Heller Gallery, so refreshing.

Curated by Dr. Amin Jaffer, International Director of Asian Art at Christie’s, “ETHEREAL” is an exploration of modern works by 16 Southeast Asian artists. From sculpture to photography to video, each of the works somehow embodies or communicates spirituality. As the show’s name suggests, these works aren’t wildly decorative or boldly rainbow-hued, but ephemeral, spare, graceful, and inspired by the natural world. Take Ali Kazim’s haunting “The Storm Series”—monochromatic pigments on tracing film, each capturing a moment of stillness just before a physical transformation occurs in nature—like in *Untitled 02 (The Storm Series)* (2014). Shilpa Gupta’s “Untitled (Holy Waters)” photo series depicts the otherworldly beauty, and the quiet and transitory quality of water, while Sonia Khurana’s *Surreal Pond I (Epiphany)* (2013-2014), a silent HD video installation, captures a serene, almost heavenly afternoon glow in a forested park. Ayesha Sultana’s geometric graphite works are stark, highly textural, and mildly disorienting, like her *Untitled* (2014), in which it’s not clear whether you’re looking at a patterned surface from a distance or an extreme close-up.



Ali Kazim
Untitled 02 (The Storm Series), 2014
Leila Heller Gallery
SOLD – £2,500 - 5,000

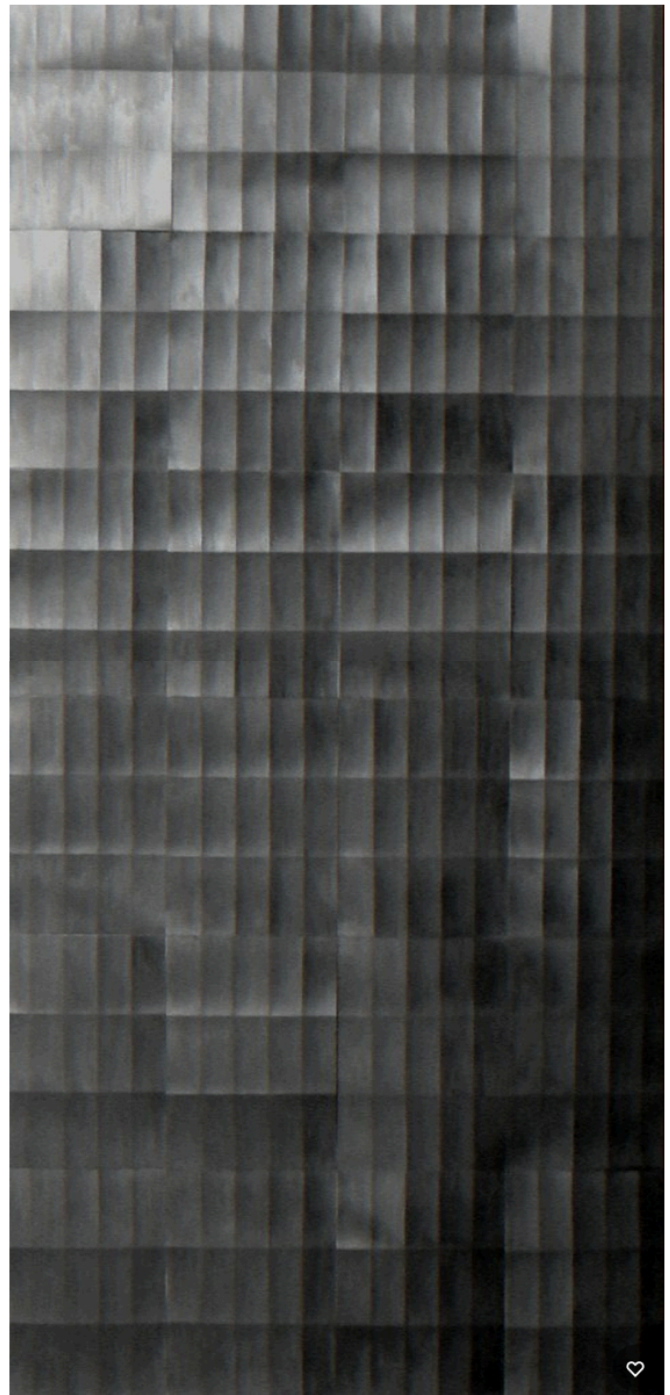


Sonia Khurana
Surreal Pond I (Epiphany), 2013-2014
Leila Heller Gallery
\$30,000 - 40,000

Shown together, the works form a boundary-pushing collection that challenges commonly held notions of Indian art and how it intersects with Western tradition. Jaffer, with a foot in both worlds, is the ideal curator: before joining Christie's, he spent more than a decade at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, where he wrote about the cultural encounters between Asia and Europe in conjunction with related exhibitions. Now a frequent lecturer and contributor to art journals and newspapers in Europe, India, and the United States, Jaffer is a well-respected figure whose worldly perspective shapes the message of "ETHEREAL."

—Bridget Gleeson

"ETHEREAL: Curated by Dr. Amin Jaffer" is on view at Leila Heller Gallery, New York, Oct. 23–Dec. 13, 2014.



Ayesha Sultana
Untitled, 2014
Leila Heller Gallery
SOLD – \$2,500 - 5,000