

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

# ART OF THE TIMES

The Magazine of the arts in SOUTH FLORIDA ♦ NEW YORK ♦ LOS ANGELES | [www.artofthetimes.com](http://www.artofthetimes.com)

## LEILA HELLER GALLERY presents ETHEREAL, Oct 23-Dec 13, 2014

ART, ART SHOWS, FEATURED

Leila Heller Gallery is pleased to present 'ETHEREAL', a group show curated by Dr. Amin Jaffer at the gallery's Chelsea location from October 23 through December 13, 2014. 'ETHEREAL' offers a new take on the history of South Asian art bringing together the transitory, insightful, and spiritual sensibility of works by 16 leading contemporary artists from the region.

The visual arts of the Indian Subcontinent are typically associated with abundant ornament, rich encrustation and riotous color. However, the region has also given rise to a tradition of quiet restraint, evident both in spiritual practice and in forms of representation, whose cultural manifestations are spare, fragile, and even tentative. Whether sculpture, photography or experimental video, each artwork in this exhibition is marked by an ethereal quality that challenges our senses and questions our perceptions.

Video and photographic works take nature as a subject, capturing the gracefulness and ethereality found from within our natural surroundings. Such harmony converges in **Shilpa Gupta's** photographs of water considered holy in different faiths. Arranged in a quadrant formation *Untitled (Holy Waters)*, (2012) is a contemplative reflection of the spiritual qualities of water. **Sonia Khurana's** video *Surreal Pond I (Epiphany)* (2013) presents an idyllic landscape that fades into a mystical experience as a pond slowly evaporates into nothingness. Khurana's art practice explores the poetics of inner experience and the polemics of being in the world. **All Kazim** captures that moment in natural landscapes just before a physical transformation occurs – a serene moment of haunting stillness. In *Taker XII* (2014) **Prem Sahib** explores both formalism and autobiographical themes through a minimal palette of grey, black and white. His glossy slate grey resin 'sweat' panels replicate the steamed up windows of a bathhouse with the traces of hands smears stretched across.

Working on a larger scale, some artists in the show demonstrate that the essence of ephemerality can be explored through working with 'heavier' mediums. **Rashid Rana** compiles mosaics of miniature photographs, creating paradoxical juxtapositions of contrasting realities. Rana's *News-Archive Video-Still of Dead Birds Flying* (2006), explores the notion of freedom and the illusion of being free. The large work appears to be an



Submit

image of a bird in flight; on close inspection, one sees the image is constructed from a series of small photographs of caged birds.

**Noor Ali Chagani** explores the ways that walls in society – that work to both maintain the sanctity of home – can also divide and obscure. Chagani's surreal sculptures are made of small handmade bricks transformed into tactile textiles and carpets that appear to be suspended in the breeze.

**Artists in the exhibition:**

Rana Begum / Faiza Butt / Noor Ali Chagani / Dilip Chobisa / Shilpa Gupta

Irfan Hasan / Ali Kazim / Sonia Khurana / Prabhavathi Meppayil

Manish Nai / Rashid Rana / Raqs Media Collective / Prem Sahib / Ayesha Sultana

Mohammad Ali Talpur / Thukral & Tagra / Saira Wasim

Leila Heller Gallery

568 West 25th Street

New York, NY 10001