



PARTING THE CLOUDS

Ayesha Shariff | Shanzay Subzwari

OPENS

Tuesday, January 12, 2021

2 — 7 pm



KOEL GALLERY

CONTINUES TILL JANUARY 27, 2021

The White Pepper People Chapter 2

This show is the second chapter in a series of exhibits that reflects on a world undergoing self-transformation after the Covid-19 outbreak. Shariff's first show, titled *The White Pepper People*, took place in Gavle, Sweden, October 2020.

Both black & white peppercorns come from the same plant but are processed differently, with the white pepper being the fairer, pricier & spicier of the two. The 'white pepper people' is a term I came up with for the privileged citizens of Karachi, myself included. Additionally, my use of pointillism & spray paint on paper creates a 'peppery' effect.

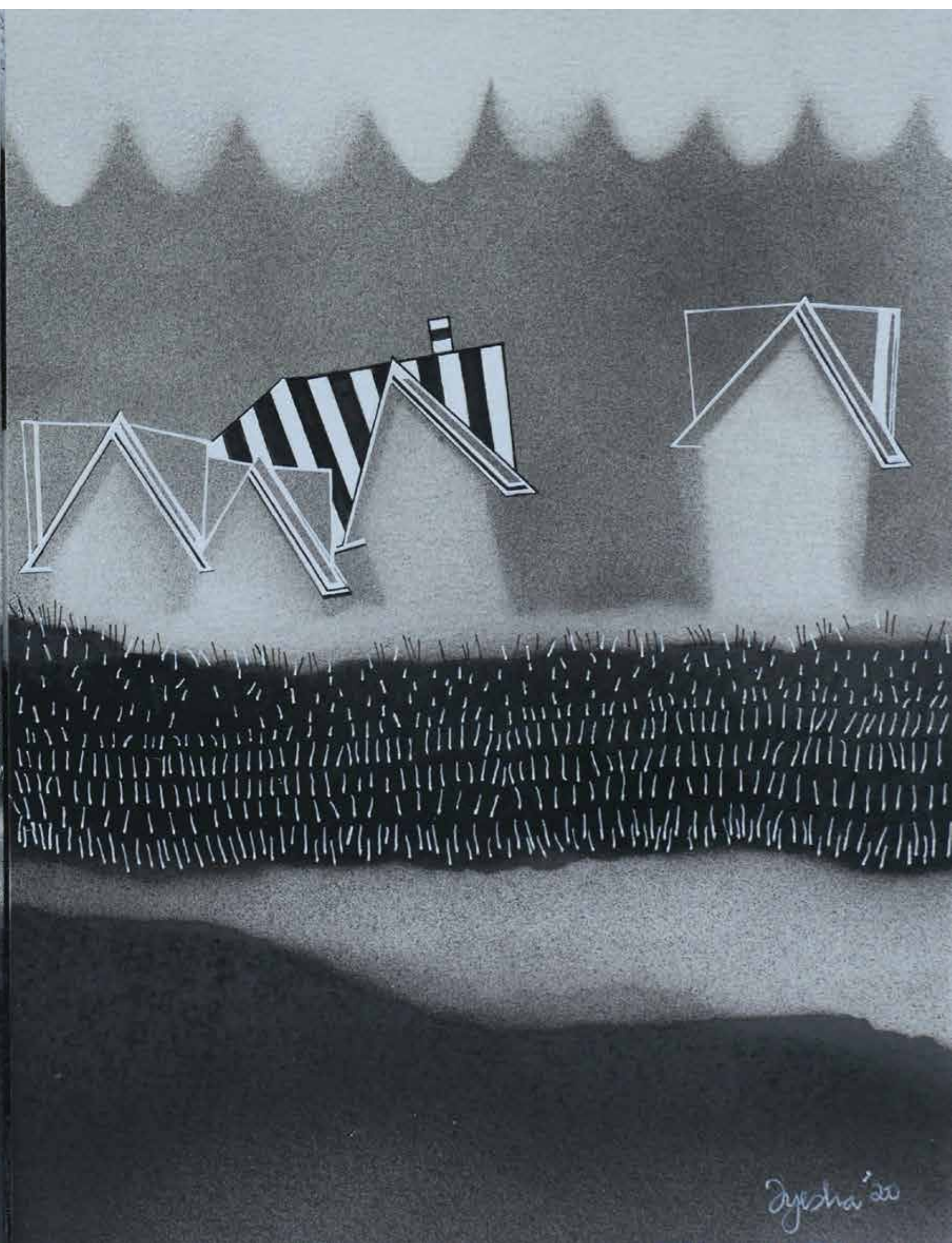
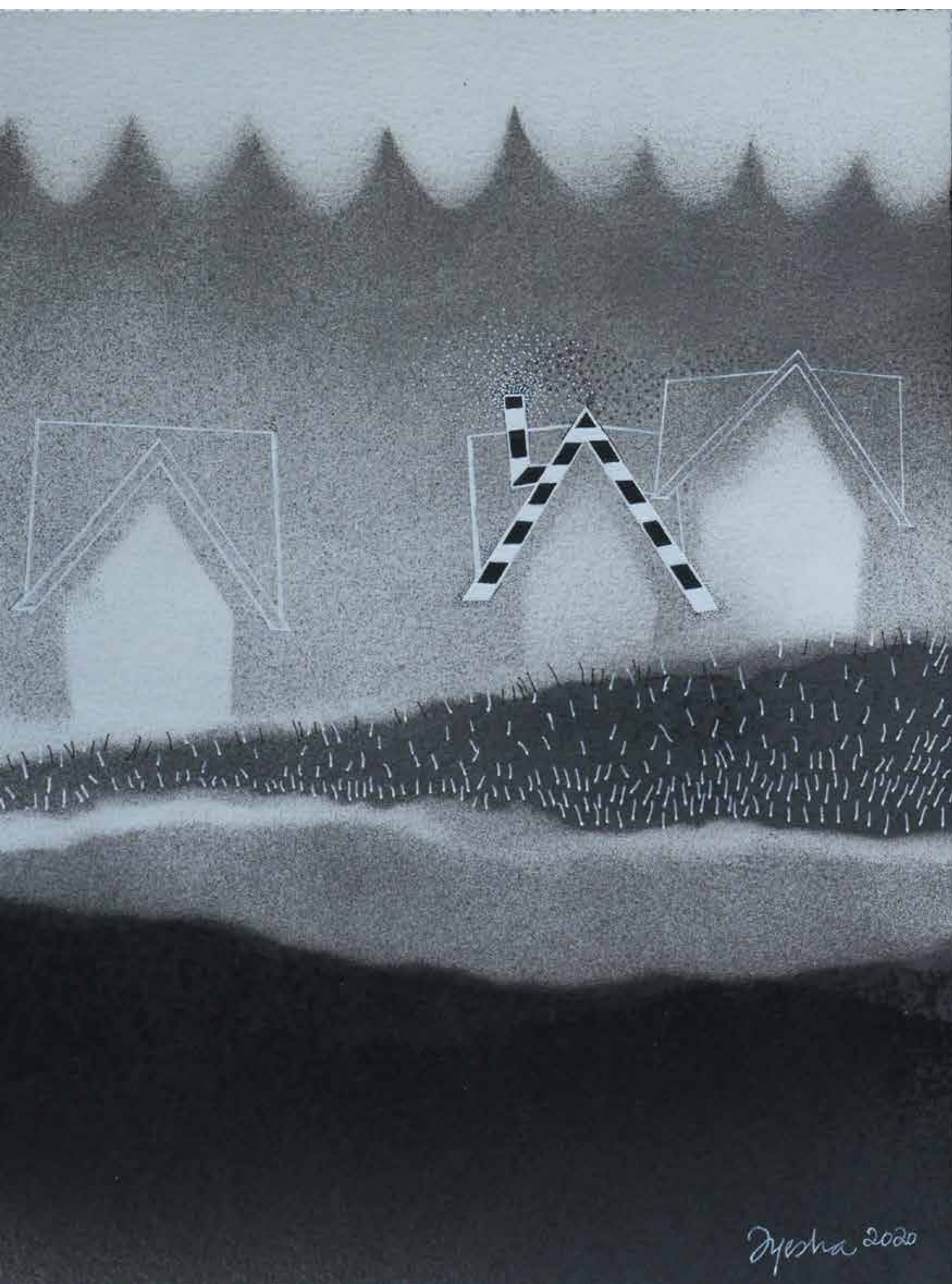
The relentless, record-breaking rains in August 2020 transformed the Karachi cityscape overnight as roads turned into canals & boats replaced cars. The combined effect of the pandemic & the monsoons brought my city to its knees. Thus far, Karachi's white pepper neighborhoods had been cribbing about the isolation under lockdown, from the comfort of their cushy homes. We were now stranded without power for days on end, with floating furniture in ankle-deep water flooding our laminated floors & Persian carpets - a struggle all too familiar to the less fortunate.

If you like, I can take you for a walk around the city of drifting cottages & sinking condos. Under the molten moonlight & textured smoke, are the quarantined quarters of fused lightbulbs & entangled electric wires.

The air may be uncertain & unsettling but a pinch of humour lightens the mood. My recent experience of working with children has translated into an interest in book illustration and a childlike wonder that imbues this body of work. These paintings could be read as pages from a book, and the titles as chapters.



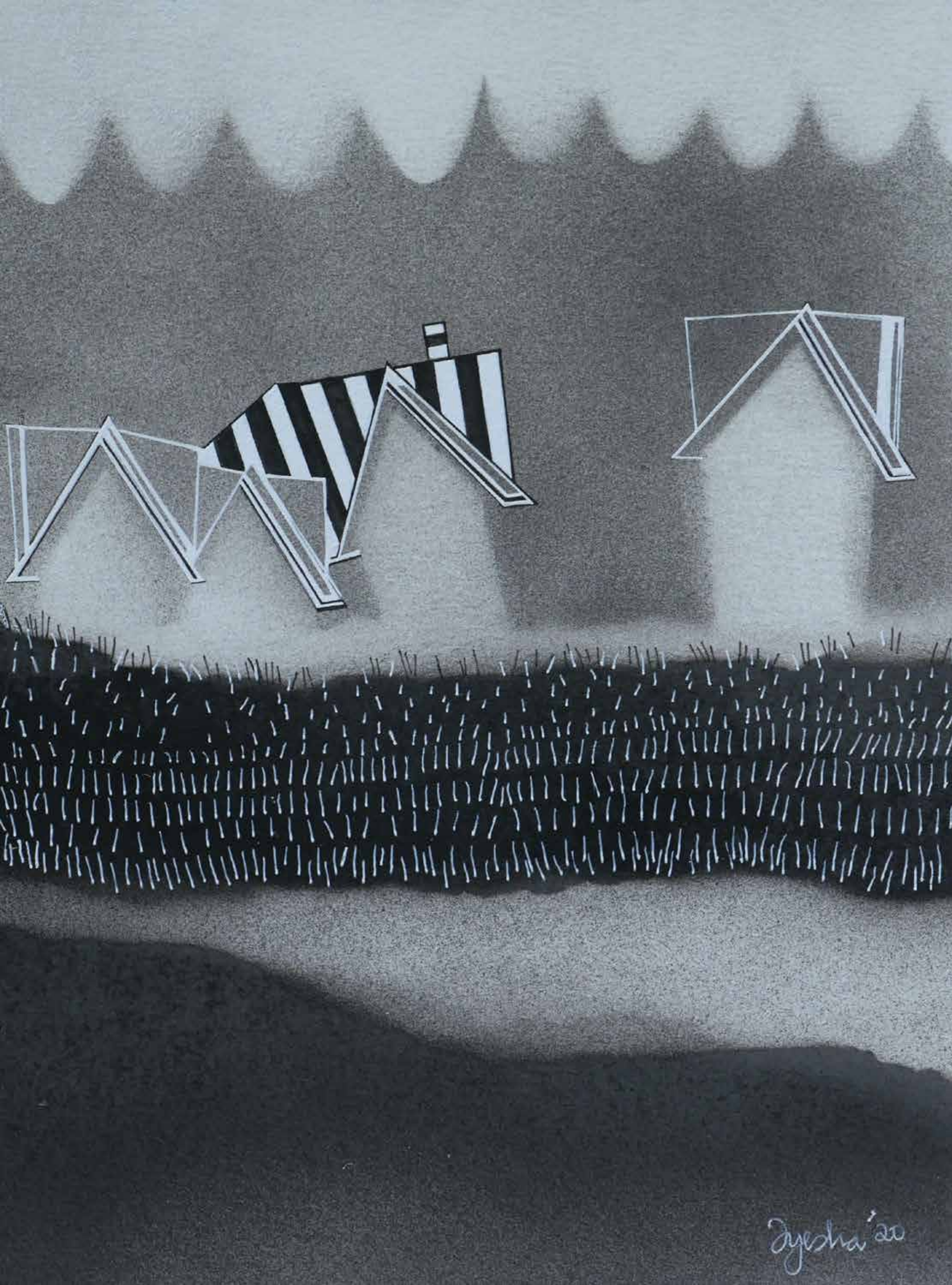
*Quarantine Armchair with
Legs of Gold*
Acrylic & Charcoal on Plywood
48 x 32 inches, 2020





Dysha 2020

The Floating Circus Chapter 1
Pen & Spray Paint on
Paper 300 gm
11.7 x 8.3 inches, 2020



The Floating Circus Chapter 2
Pen & Spray Paint on
Paper 300 gm
11.7 x 8.3 inches, 2020



Song of the Swinging Lamps
Ink, Salt & Pen on Paper 640 gm
11.7 x 10.3 inches, 2020



*August Monsoon in the
Charcoal City*
Ink, Salt & Spray Paint on
Coldpressed Paper 300 gm
16.5 x 11.7 inches, 2020

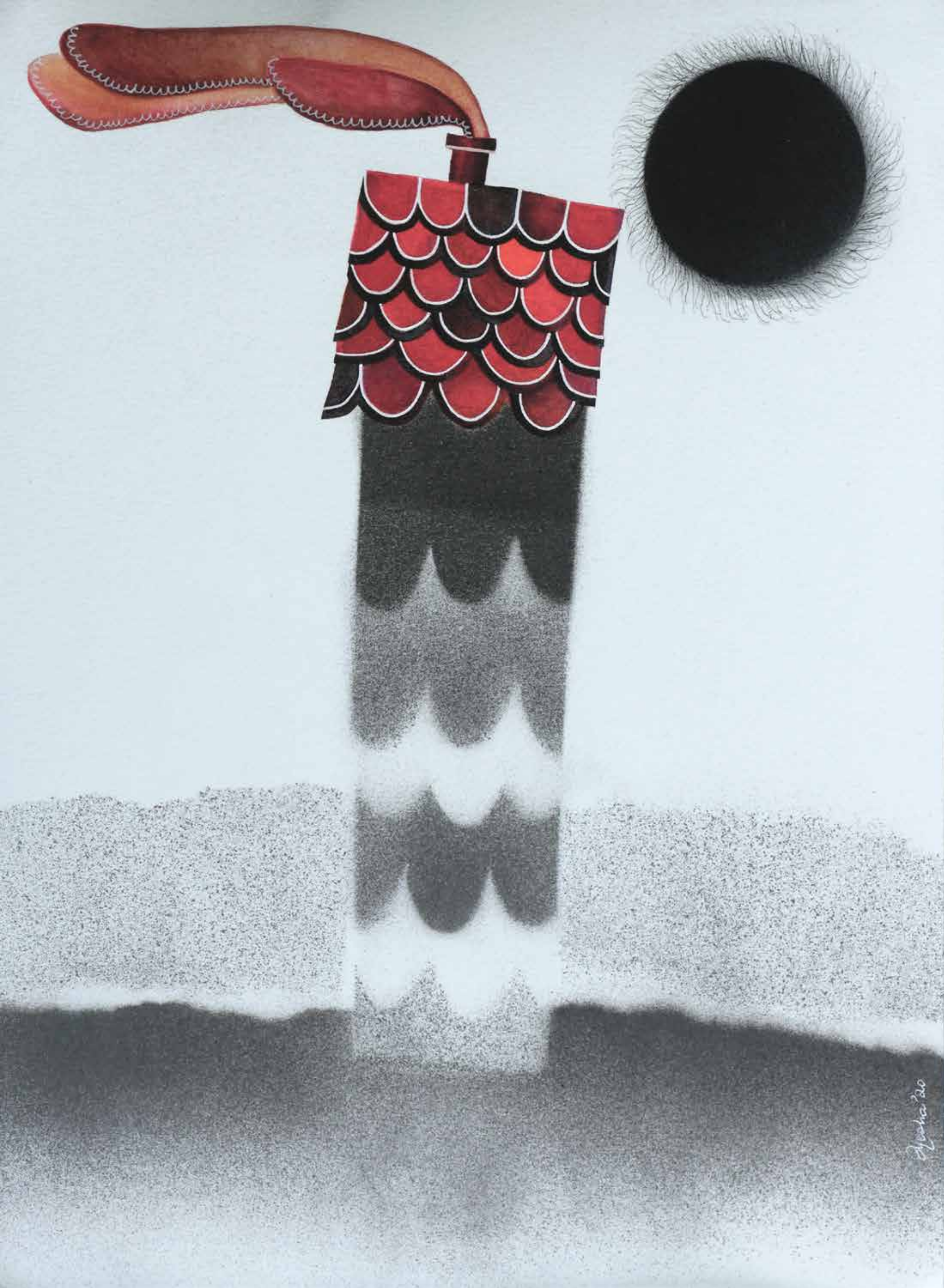


*The Enchanted Raincloud
& The Pepper Plankton*
Pen & Ink on Paper 300 gm
9 x 7 inches, 2020



Escape to the Misty Mountains
Ink, Salt & Spray Paint on
Paper 300 gm
16.5 x 11.7 inches, 2020

escape to



Love in the Time of Corona
Ink, Pen & Spray Paint on
Paper 300 gm
16.5 x 11.7 Inches, 2020



*Copper Cottage on the
Crumbling Cliff*
Ink, Salt & Acrylic on
Paper 300 gm
15.7 x 11.7 inches, 2020



6 Days Without Power
Chapter 1, 2, 3 (Triptych)
Pen, Ink & Spray Paint
on Paper 300 gm
11.2 x 8.2 inches each, 2020



*Mayhem in the White Pepper
Neighbourhood*
Ink & Spray Paint on Paper 640 gm
10 x 8 inches, 2020



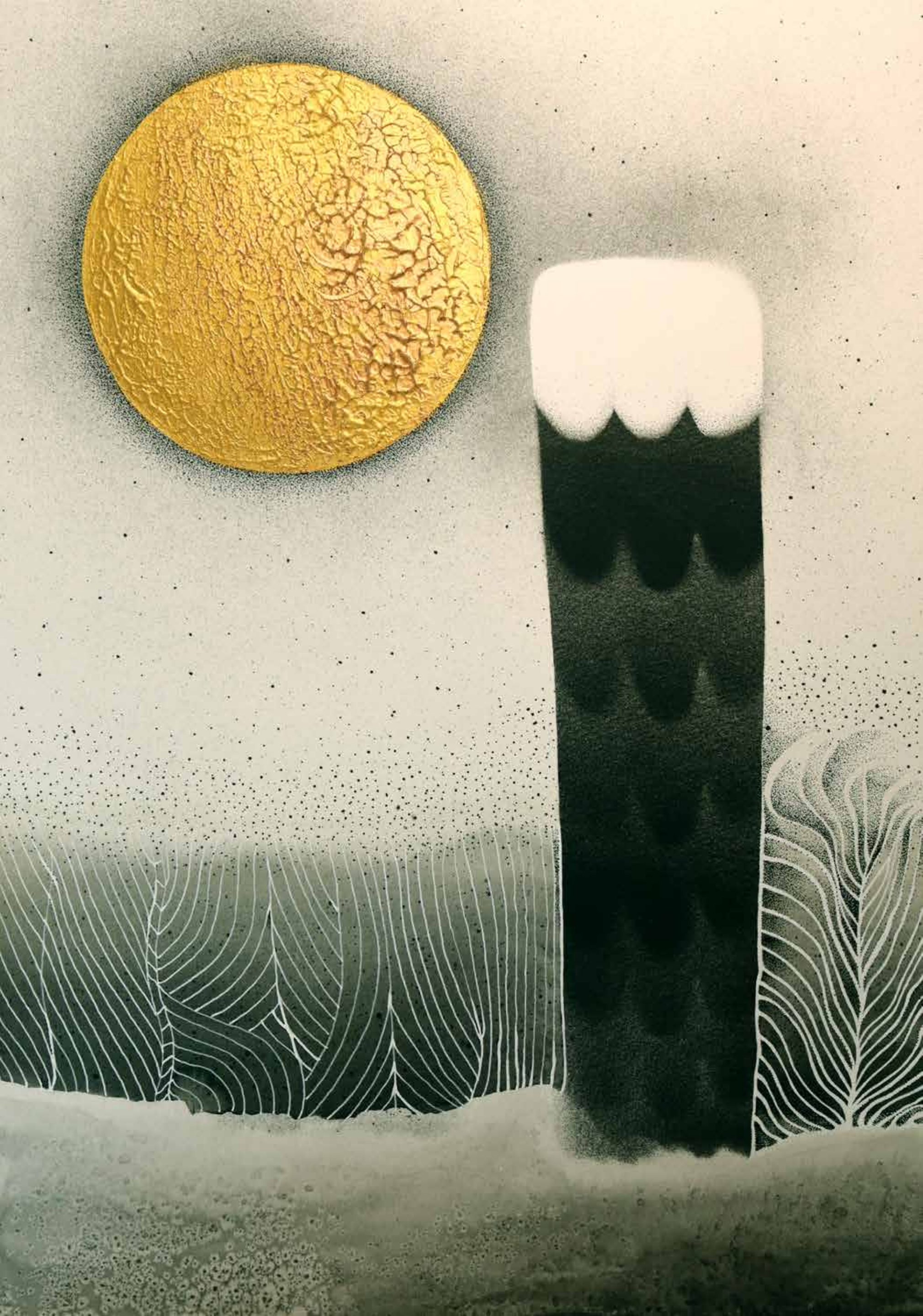
Pandemonium in the Condominium
Pen, Ink & Spray Paint on
Paper 300 gm
10 x 8 Inches, 2020



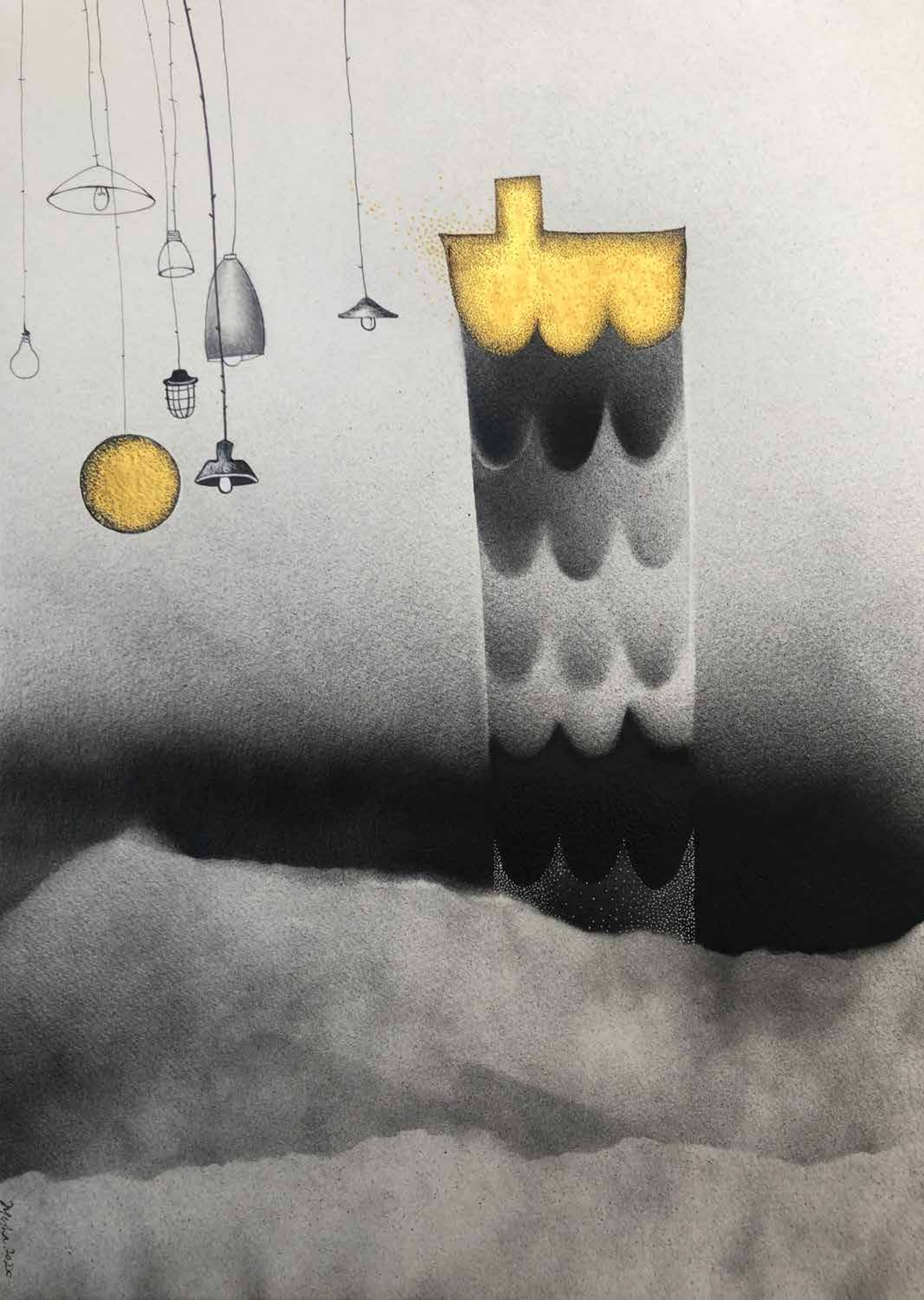
Carpet in my Courtyard
Acrylic & Spray Paint on
Paper 640 gm
7.2 x 7.2 inches, 2020



The Clandestine Chandelier
Acrylic, Ink & Spray Paint
on Paper 640 gm
14.5 x 11.2 inches, 2020

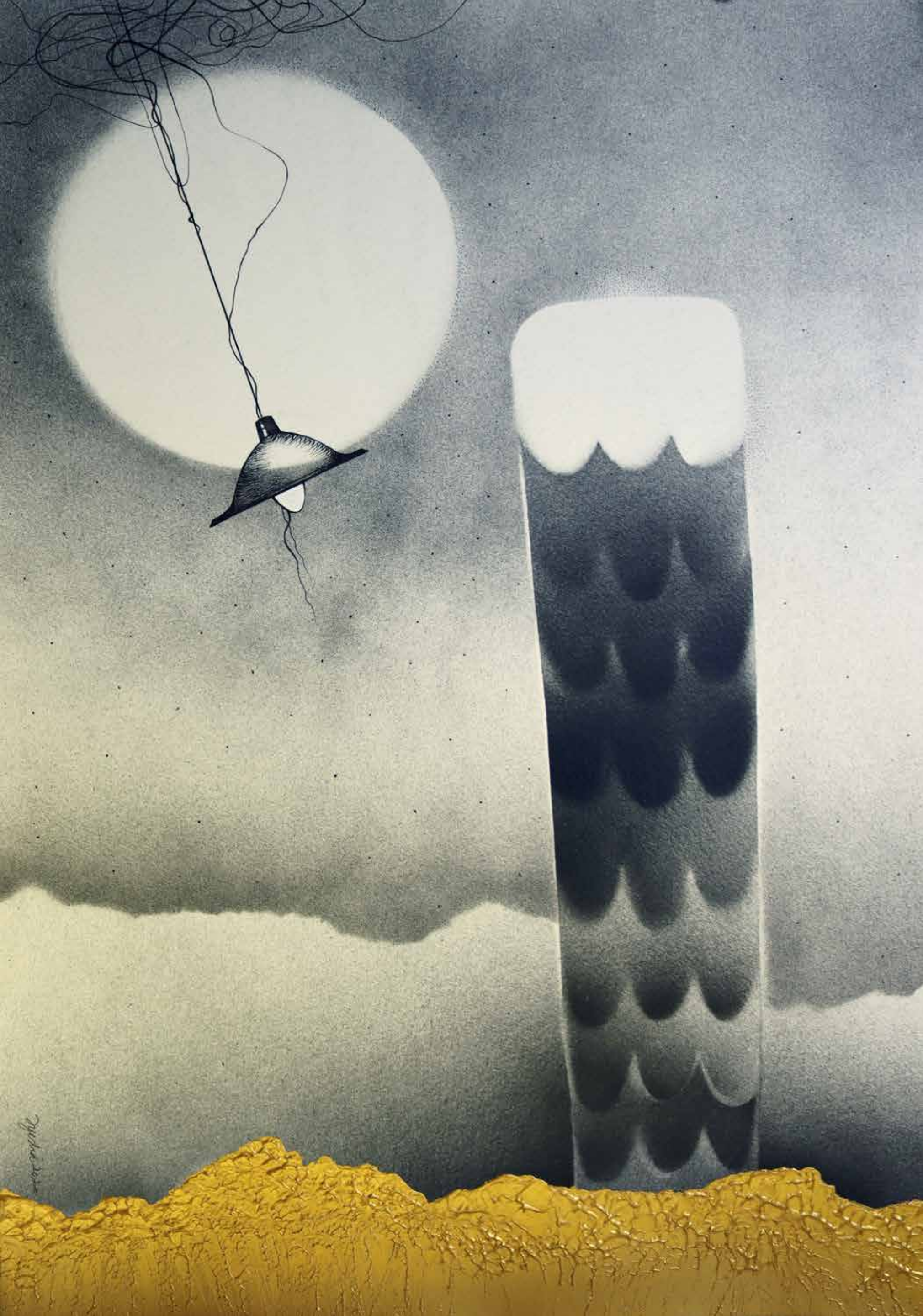


Moondust in Mosquito City
Ink & Spray Paint on Coldpressed
paper 300 gm
16.5 x 11.7 inches, 2020



Lockdown in the Scalloped Tower
Acrylic & Spray Paint on
Paper 300 gm
16.5 x 11.7 Inches, 2020

Maria 2020



*Apartments by the Metallic
Seashore*
Acrylic & Spray Paint on
Paper 300 gm
16.5 x 11.7 inches, 2020



Covid in the Cabana Chapter 1
Acrylic & Spray Paint on
Paper 300 gm
11.2 x 8.2 inches, 2020

2020



Covid in the Cabana Chapter 2
Acrylic & Spray Paint on
Paper 300 gm
11.2 x 8.2 inches, 2020



Covid in the Cabana Chapter 3
Acrylic & Spray Paint on
Paper 300 gm
11.2 x 8.2 inches, 2020

Yvesha '20



Isle of Isolation
Acrylic & Ink on Paper 300 gm
15.7 x 11.7 inches, 2020



*Banana Leaves in the
Quarantine Quarters*
Acrylic & Graphite on Plywood
32 x 48 inches, 2020



*Copper Smoke from the
CandyTowers*
Spray and acrylic on paper
16.5 x 11.7 inches, 2020

Biography

Ayesha Shariff is a Karachi-based, Pakistani visual artist and art teacher.

Her work relies on a language of personal symbolism, merging surrealism with realism. For example, an electric wire represents a running sentence or a pair of socks stands in for married couples. Humour is key to this mix and employed cleverly to comment on serious conversations.

Shariff plucks everyday objects out of context and suspends them in unfamiliar settings. She uses oil and acrylic a variety of surfaces, and tempera for miniaturistic detail and translucent effects.

After graduation with Distinction from The National College of Arts, Lahore, in 2000, Shariff had her first solo, *Conversations (to be contd.)*, in 2003. This was followed by an Art Residency awarded by the VASL Artists' Association & a scholarship in London by the British Council Charles Wallace Fellowship Trust. Shariff has exhibited both locally & internationally, while continuing her teaching practice in Pakistan & Connecticut, USA. She also took up writing art reviews for *DAWN*, Pakistan's most prestigious English daily. She has served as juror & speaker at various art institutes & her work has been showcased by universities like Yale & Columbia, USA, including a solo, *Tempered Stillness*, and a Master's Tea, at Yale University, Connecticut, USA.

2013 saw a dramatic shift in both style & imagery, with her show, *A Time. A Place. A Prayer*. Shariff's interest in public art surfaced through her vibrant mural designs for Walls of Peace, by IAMKARACHI, a project for the rejuvenation of public walls in Karachi. This was followed by *Lines in the Sand*, an Imago Mundi Project by the Benetton Foundation, Italy.

After a rewarding career of teaching at the country's leading colleges & universities, Shariff singlehandedly launched her dream project, *The Canvas Courtyard*, an on-site & online art studio for both children & adults. Shariff recently held her third solo, *The White Pepper People*, in Gavle, Sweden, in 2020. The second chapter in this painting series is a two-person show at KOEL Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan, in 2021.



Shanzay Subzwari

My work stems from the human condition.

By weaving together stories in the varied mediums of Mughal miniature painting, papercutting and video installation, I explore the complicated and ever-changing relationships between nations, and of human beings with themselves and the world around them. Most recently, as part of my MFA programme, I delved into the art of paper-cutting and multimedia to create a *cinemagraph* video piece made from various paper-cut pieces.

My new series and first art exhibition post-MFA at Koel Gallery also takes forward my practice of painting on archival prints of currency notes, but with the transformation of colour palette and imagery. These pieces, as well as the papercuts and video, are born from my experience in our strange, new dystopian world, where we live in a constant state of flux, uncertainty, fear and mourning. Currency, too, does not hold value in the way it did before. Nevertheless, chancing upon a piece of inspirational literature during these strange times brought into my work elements from Spirituality, as it reminded me that it is time for us to look inward, and to hold onto hope, rather than to fear.



A Ruby Encased in Granite, gouache on archival print, 2.5 x 4 inches, 2020



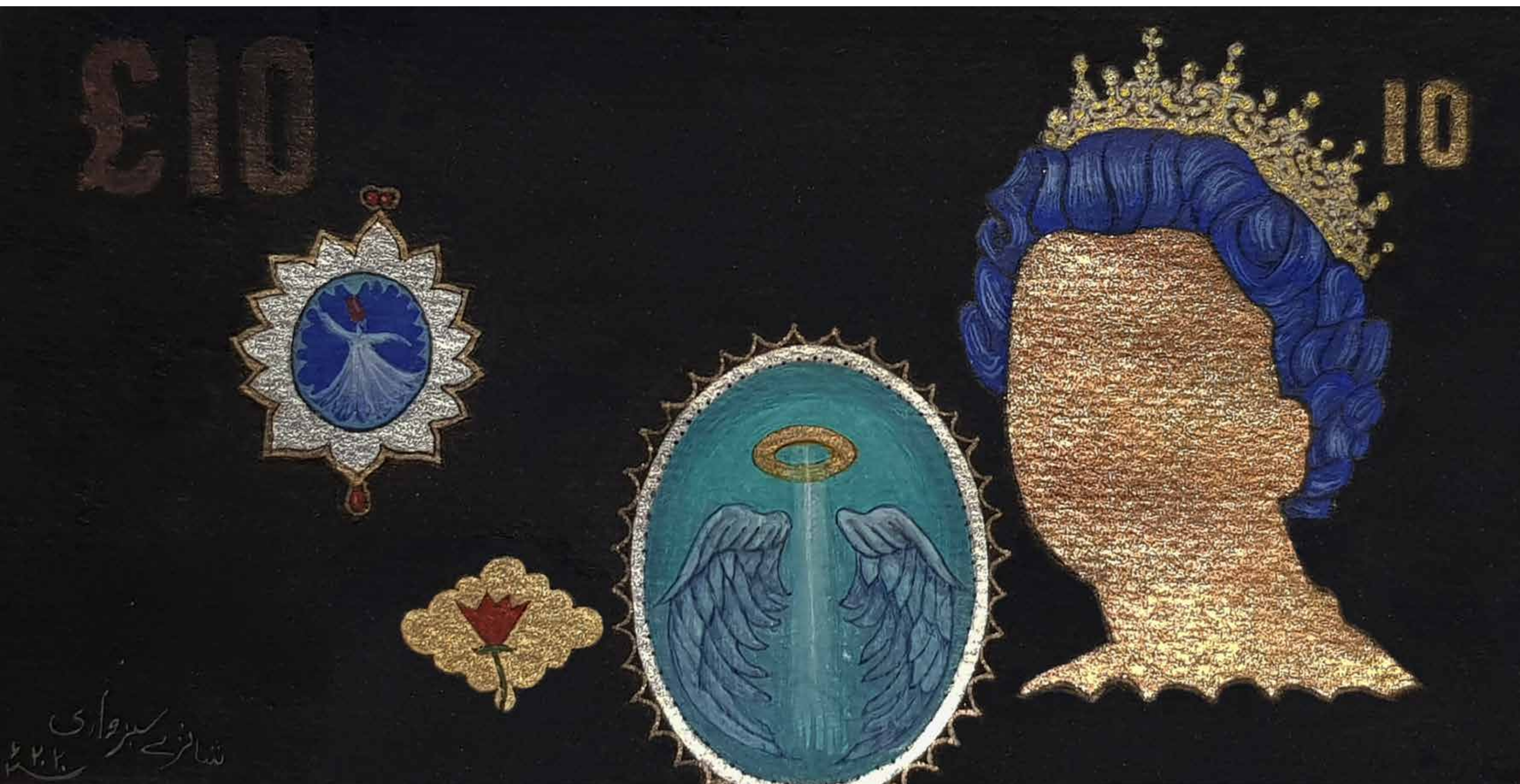
Scattering Stars Like Dust, gouache on archival print, 2.5 x 4 inches, 2020



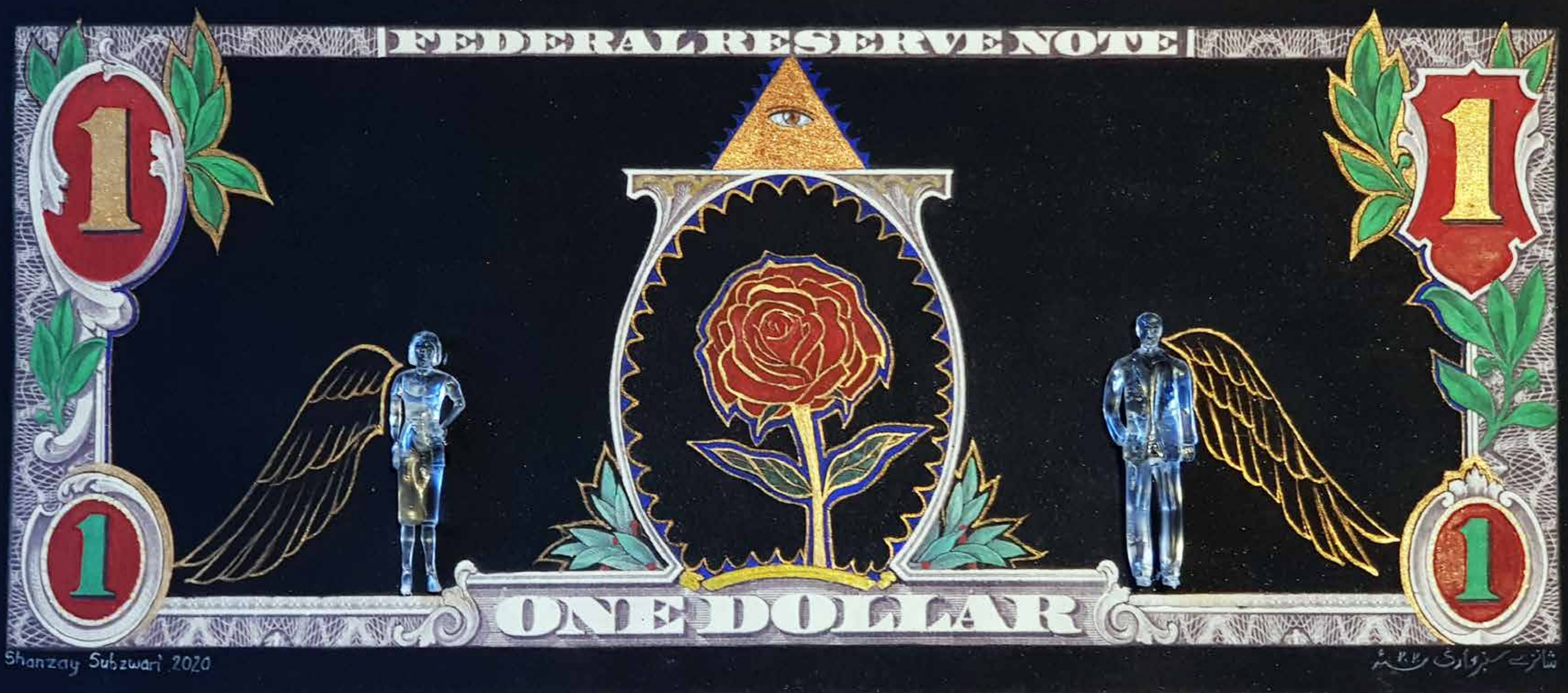
Darkness Is Your Candle I, gouache on archival print, 2.8 x 5 inches, 2020



Darkness Is Your Candle II, gouache on archival print, 2.8 x 5 inches, 2020



Darkness Is Your Candle III, gouache on archival print, 2.8 x 5 inches, 2020



A Time to Love and a Time to Die, gouache and mixed media on archival print, 3.9 x 9 inches, 2020



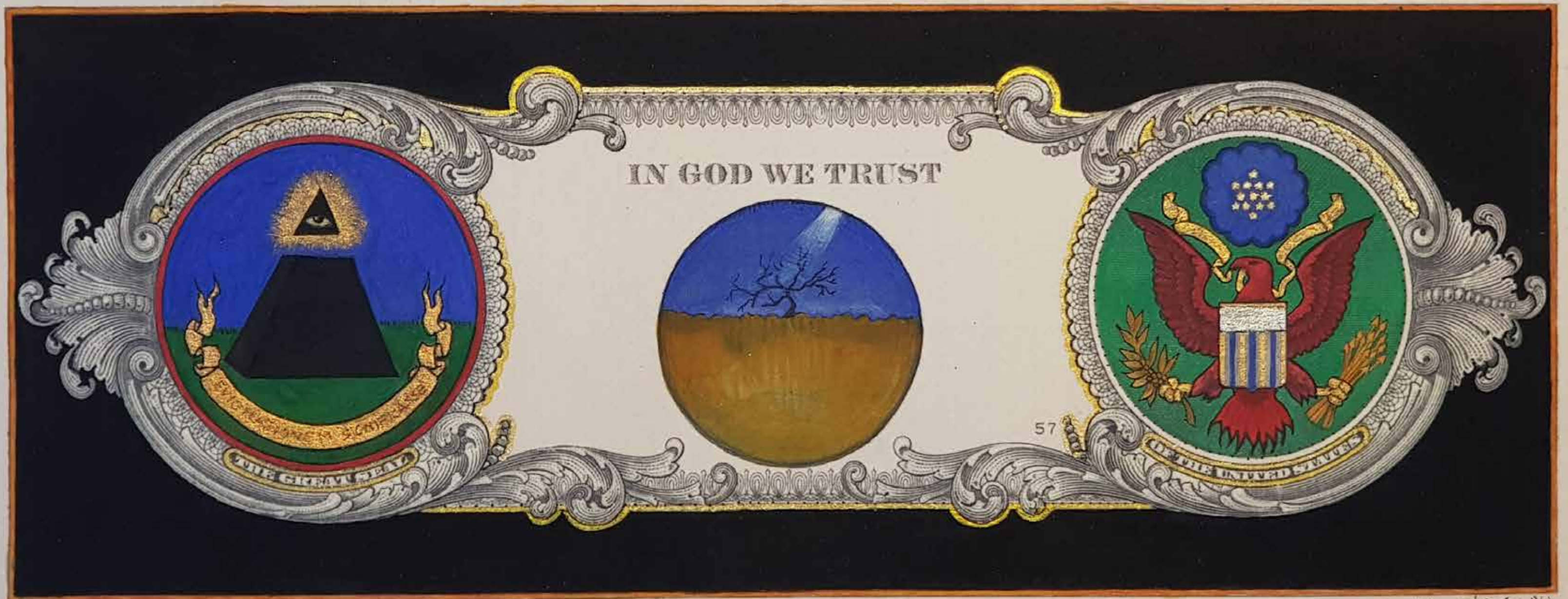
Carve A Friend Out of Stone, gouache on archival print, 3.9 x 9 inches, 2020



میرا اثر ہے شہزادہ سبزواری

Shanzay Subzwari 2020

Mirror to The Power, gouache and mixed media on archival print, 3.9 x 9 inches, 2020



Shanzay Subzwari 2020

شانزے سبزواری ۲۰۲۰ء

Shadow Over the Moon, gouache on archival print, 3.9 x 9 inches, 2020



Your Flower Garden (Triptych), gouache on archival print, 9 x 22 inches, (2.5 x 5 inches each), 2020



Your Flower Garden Detail



Your Flower Garden Detail



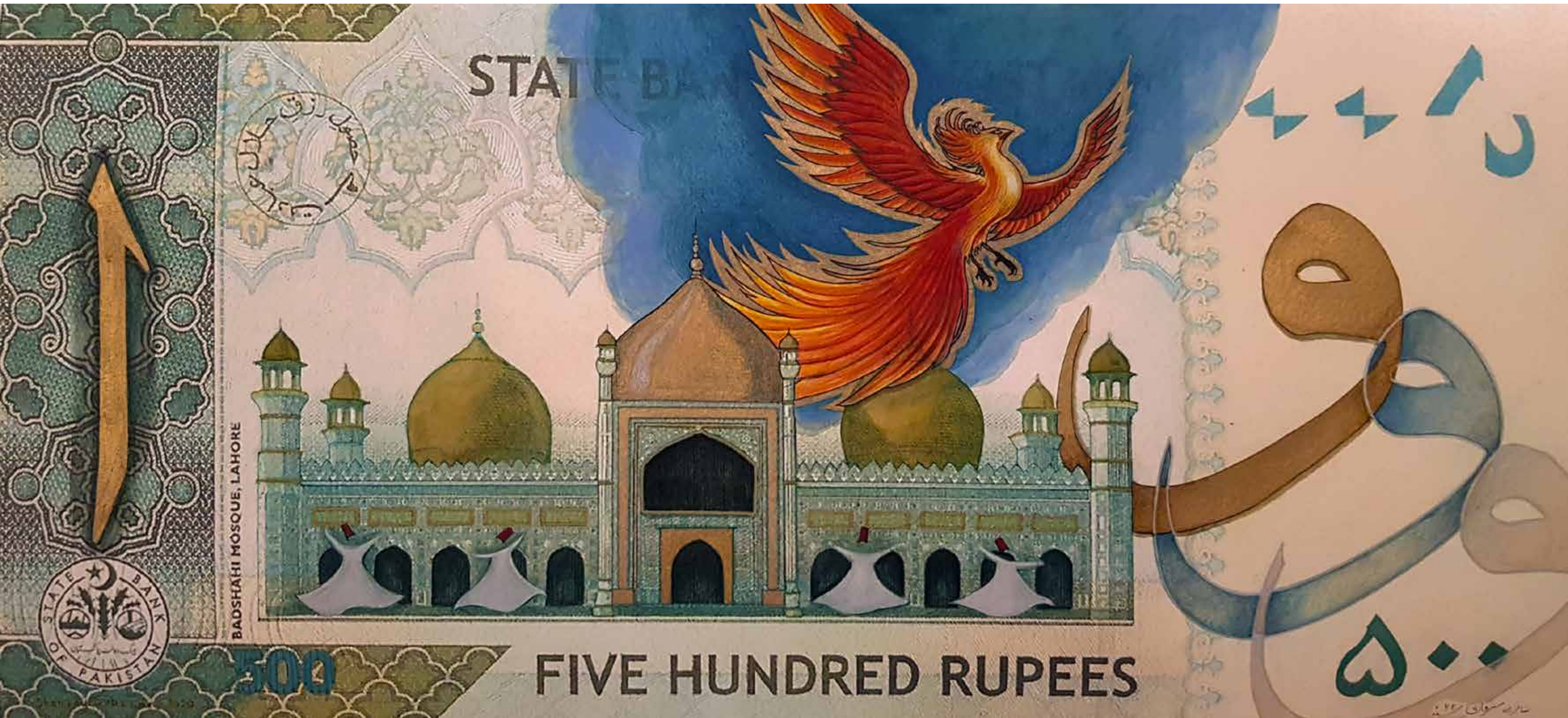
Your Flower Garden Detail



Laugh in Full-Blown Beauty, gouache on archival print, 11.5 x 18 inches, 2020



We Are Only Pieces, gouache on archival print, 11.5 x 18 inches, 2020



Spinning Out of Nothingness , gouache on archival print, 8 x 18 inches, 2020



Ego Is a Ghost Terrified of Dying , gouache on archival paper, 22 x 30 inches, 2020

My Dinner Is Still in the Woods,
gouache on archival print,
30 x 22 inches, 2020

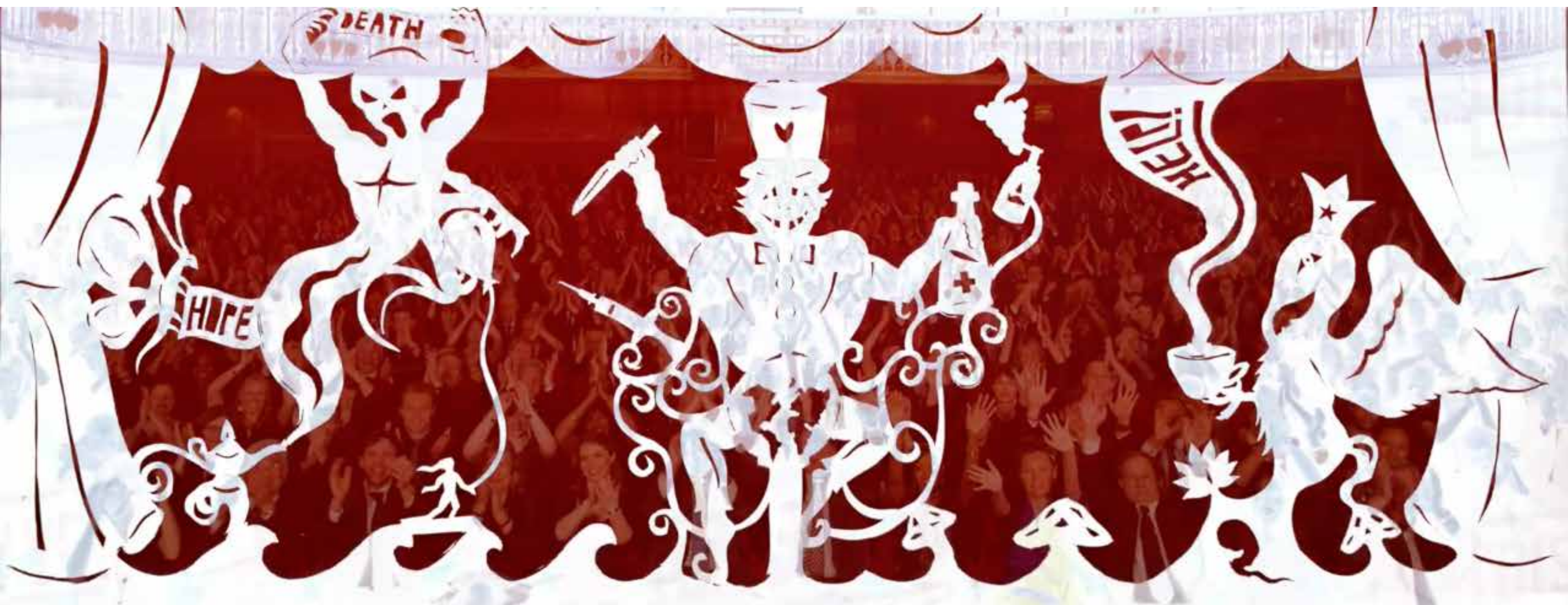




Circus Freaks, papercut on mountboard, 9 x 22 inches. 2020



Stay Alive, papercut on mountboard, 9 x 33 inches. 2020



The Kingdom of Glitter (Still), Papercut cinemagraph video piece/ Installation, Dimensions variable, Duration: 6m 38 sec, Edition 2 of 4



The Kingdom of Glitter (Still), Papercut cinemagraph video piece/ Installation, Dimensions variable, Duration: 6m 38 sec, Edition 2 of 4



The Kingdom of Glitter (Still), Papercut cinemagraph video piece/ Installation, Dimensions variable, Duration: 6m 38 sec, Edition 2 of 4

Biography

Shanzay Subzwari recently completed a Masters of Fine Art with Distinction from the School of Art, Architecture and Design, London Metropolitan University, U.K. on the British Chevening Scholarship (2019/2020), Shanzay Subzwari's work combines elements from Mughal miniature paintings, currency notes, popular culture and kitsch. She completed a Bachelors of Fine Art from the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi in 2014 and graduated with a Distinction in her dissertation and the Sher Asfandyar Award for Academic Excellence in Fine Art.

Shanzay has been exhibiting internationally and within Pakistan since her student days. Internationally, she has shown in London, U.K. (2020, 2019, 2016), Venice, Italy (2019, as part of Imago Mundi at The Venice Biennale), Fribourg, Switzerland (2016), and Istanbul, Turkey (2011), and her work has been represented by GraFFik Gallery, London, UK. She was invited as a fully-funded 'Watch and Talk' participant at the Festival Belluard Bollwerk International, Fribourg, Switzerland in 2016, the SAARI artist residency in Mynamaki, Finland in 2018, and was part of the Dean's Seminar on Art and Value in Madrid, Spain (2020).

Her work is a part of the Hundal Collection at the South Asian Institute, Chicago, USA, among other notable collections. Since 2014, she has been writing art reviews, articles and catalogue essays for numerous publications, and has a private teaching venture called The Art Lounge.





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