



ARCHAEOLOGIES OF TOMORROW — ||

A SOLO SHOW BY
SOHAIL ZUBERI

SEP 24 - OCT 5, 2022

 **GALLERY**
KOEL

In loving memory of Daisy 2009 - 2020



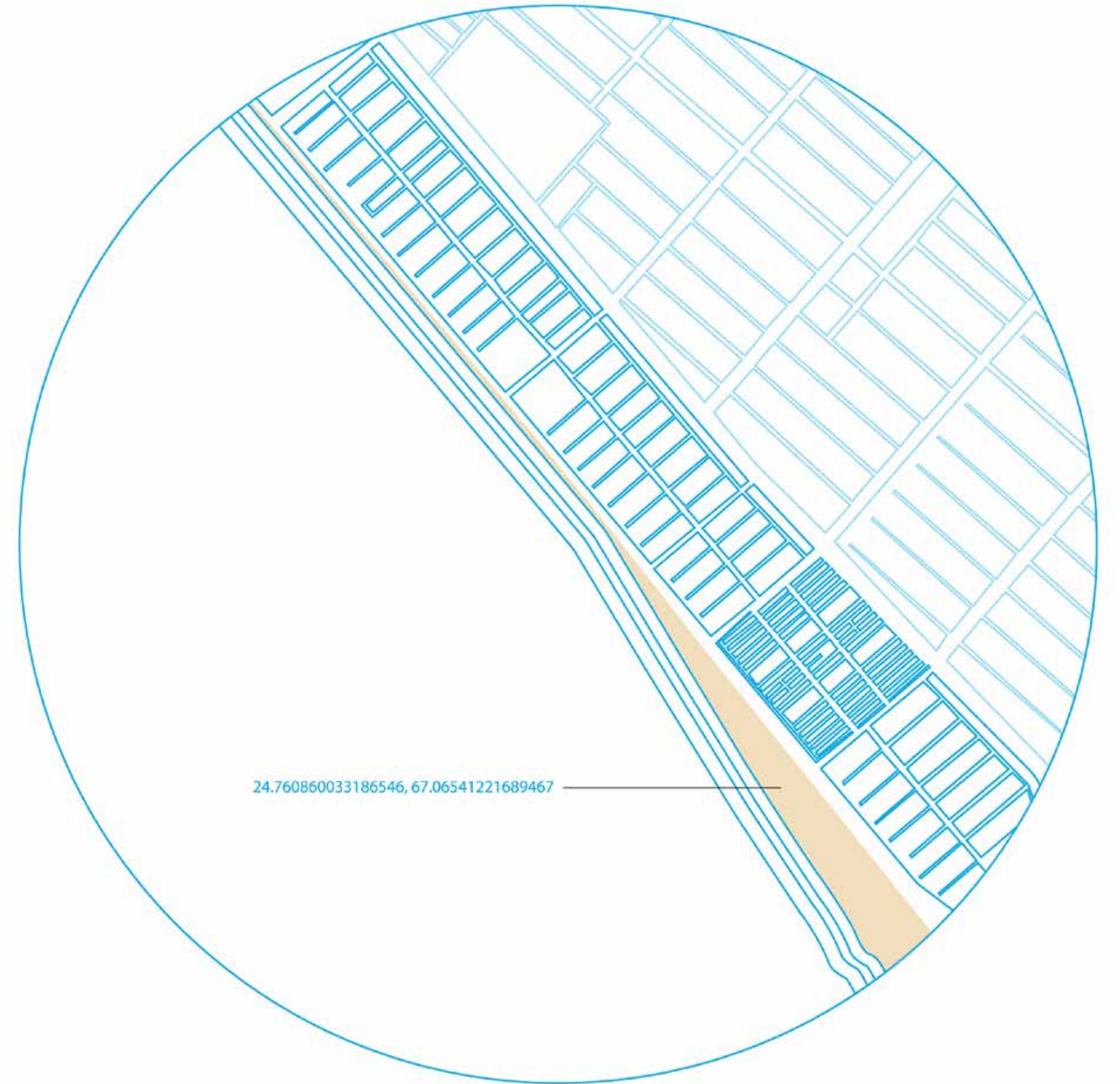


We do not belong to those who have ideas only among books, when stimulated by books. It is our habit to think outdoors - walking, leaping, climbing, dancing, preferably on lonely mountains or near the sea where even the trails become thoughtful.

- Friedrich Nietzsche

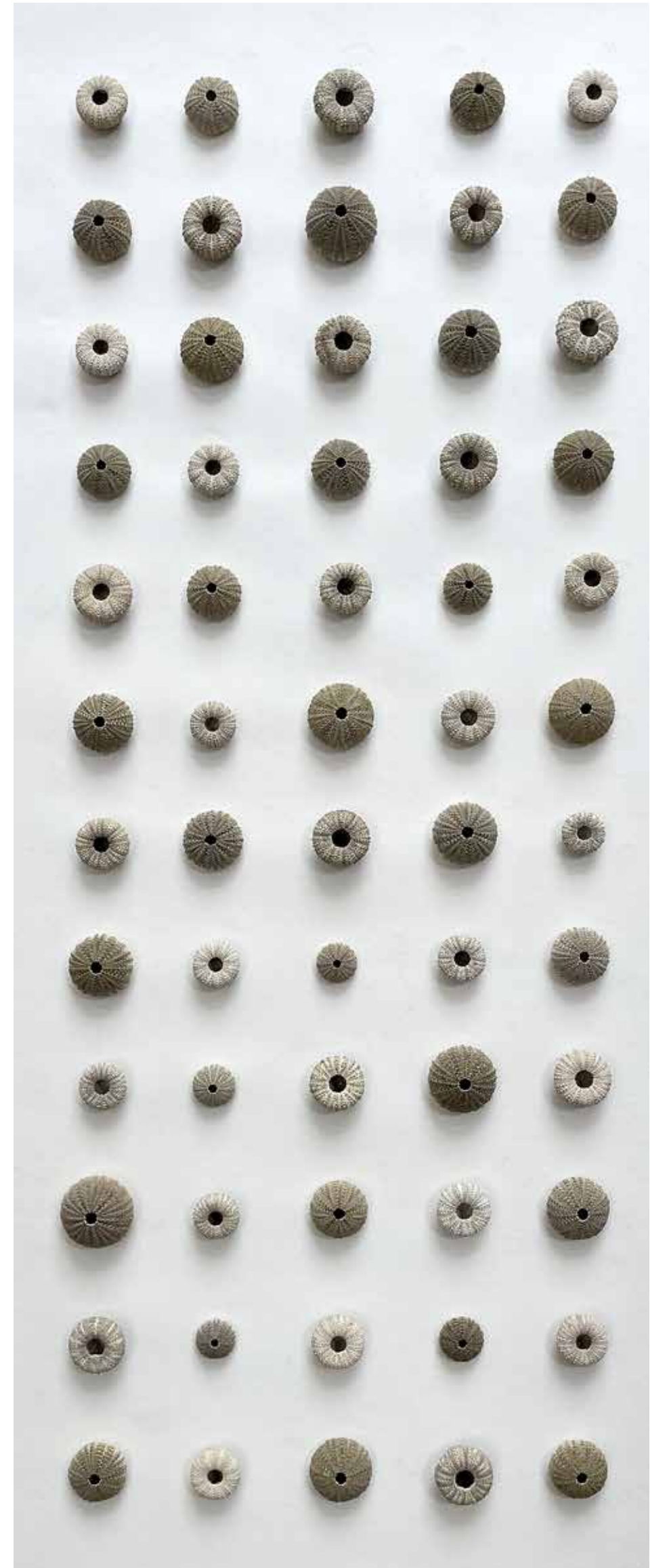
My twelve-year (and on-going) engagement with an approximately two-kilometre stretch of beach in Karachi continues with *Archaeologies of Tomorrow - II*. Sahil beach, located in the midst of new urban developments, serves as a lens through which I explore the peculiarities of this city. Working with found objects, photo and video documentation of chance encounters, I have created an archive-based body of work which comments on the site's ever-changing physical, cultural, and social landscape.

Location





Sea Urchins



Aristotle's Lantern
2022
Sea Urchins, found 2010-2022
13 x 30 inches

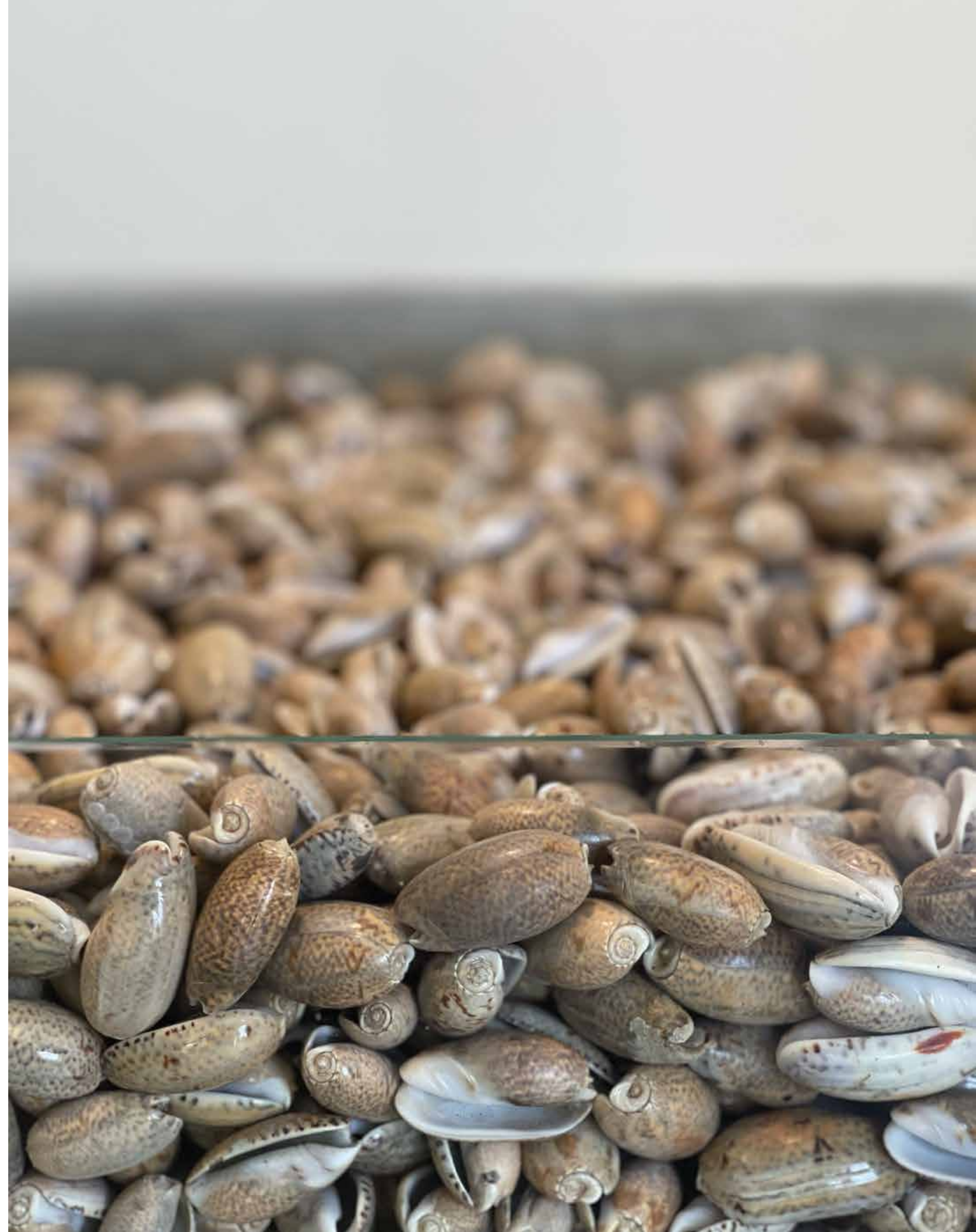
Cowrie Shells



The prized cowrie shell is most abundant in the Indian Ocean. It was collected primarily in the Maldives islands, Srilanka and along the Malabar coast of India. Historically, they were used as currency in several parts of the world, particularly in the trade networks of Africa, South Asia, and East Asia. Cowrie shells are still used extensively in many cultures today for decorative and ceremonial purposes. Some cultures believe that cowrie shells have the energy of an ocean goddess, bringing prosperity and good health, and consider them to be a sign of femininity and fertility. These shells are also used in jewellery and as embellishments on clothing. The cowries wash up in sizeable quantities on Sahil beach during the monsoon season, but continue to arrive in small numbers throughout the year.



Treasure Chest
2022
Cowries found 2010-2022, glass box
20 x 20 inches



Mangrove Seedlings



The brackish waters of Gizri Creek used to have many clusters of thick mangrove forests till the early 1990s when the reclamation, and eventual development replaced the once thriving ecosystem.

By following the routes their ancestors took, hundreds of thousands of *Avicennia Marina* seeds (image 1) now wash up on the shores of Sahil beach during the monsoon season instead of landing on the coast along the creek. The appearance of rarer, spike shaped seeds of *Rhizophora Mucronata* (image 2) has also increased over the years. The wave-dissipating stones put along the creek to reenforce the seawall and other coastal structures, have left no clear space for mangroves to grow. With no place to perch themselves anymore, their life ends abruptly.



We still refuse to mourn their death

2022

1: Avicennia Marina

25 x 34 inches

2: Rhizophora

15.75 x 19.25 inches

Photograph printed on Montval with archival ink



Let's Catch Some Fish



Karachi, a city of more than 20 million inhabitants, generates an estimated 12,000 tonnes of solid waste per day. Less than 50% of that waste is formally collected, with the rest ending up on streets, open spaces and natural drains.

A large percentage of this waste eventually makes its way into the sea. The surge in solid waste generation can partly be blamed on rising consumerism as most of the products come packaged in plastic. According to the United Nations, at least 800 species worldwide are affected by marine debris, and as much as 80 percent of that litter is plastic. It is estimated that up to 13 million metric tons of plastic end up in the ocean each year—the equivalent of a rubbish or garbage truck load's worth every minute.



Let's Catch Some Fish

2022

Manual photo transfer on found fishing reels

Various sizes

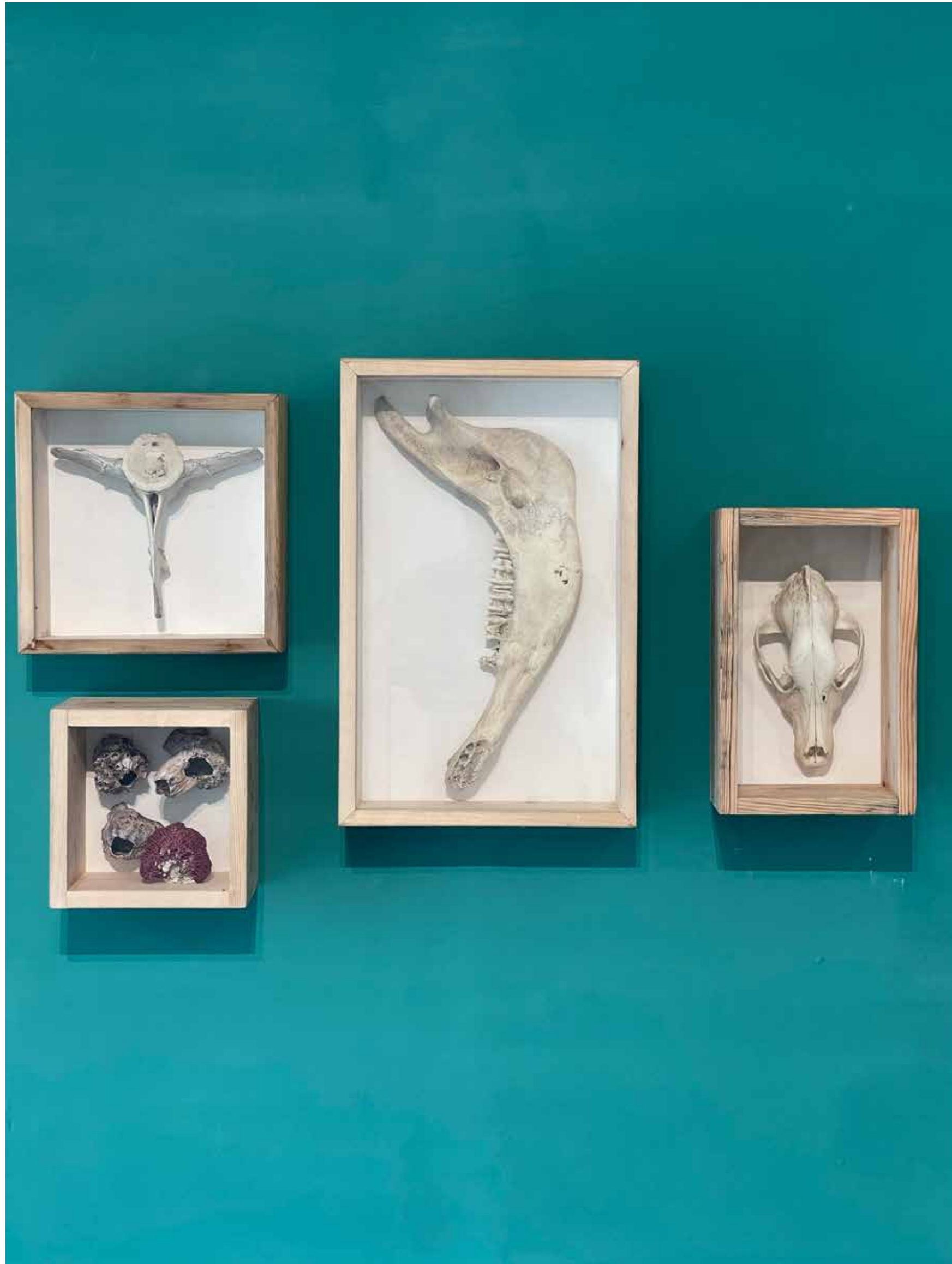




Look! what the tide brought in
99 names of Allah
2022
Found object, mirror, frame made from salvaged wood

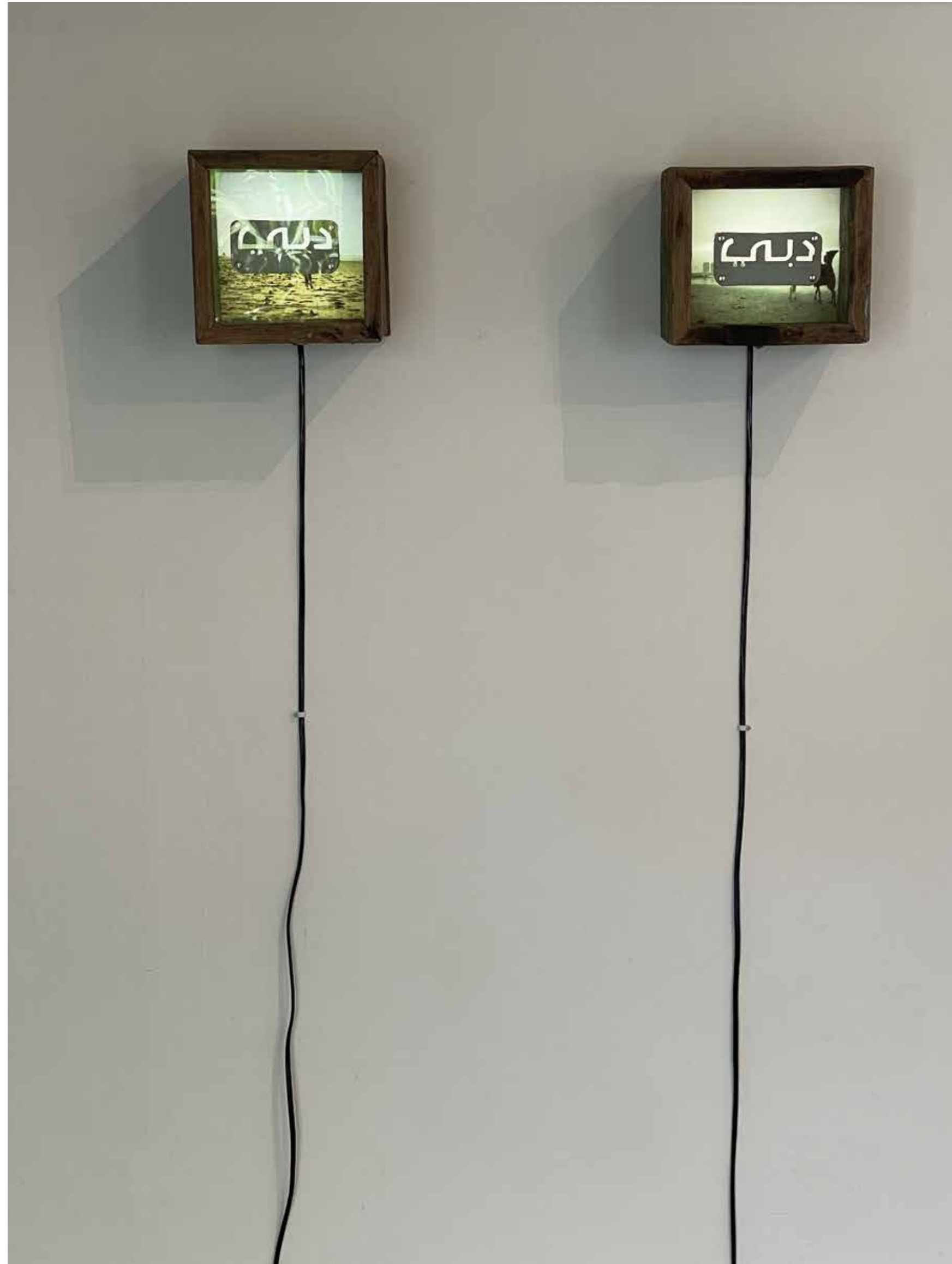


Look! what the tide brought in
Seashells
2022
Found seashells, image printed on Montval,
frame made from salvaged wood









Dubai > Karachi 1

2021

Backlit image, found stencils, LED lights,
box made from salvaged wood
8 x 8 x 8 inches

Dubai > Karachi 2

2021

Backlit image, found stencils, LED lights,
box made from salvaged wood
8 x 8 x 7 inches



Seascapes





Seascapes 3-12

2022

Found wood, plywood, frames made from salvaged wood

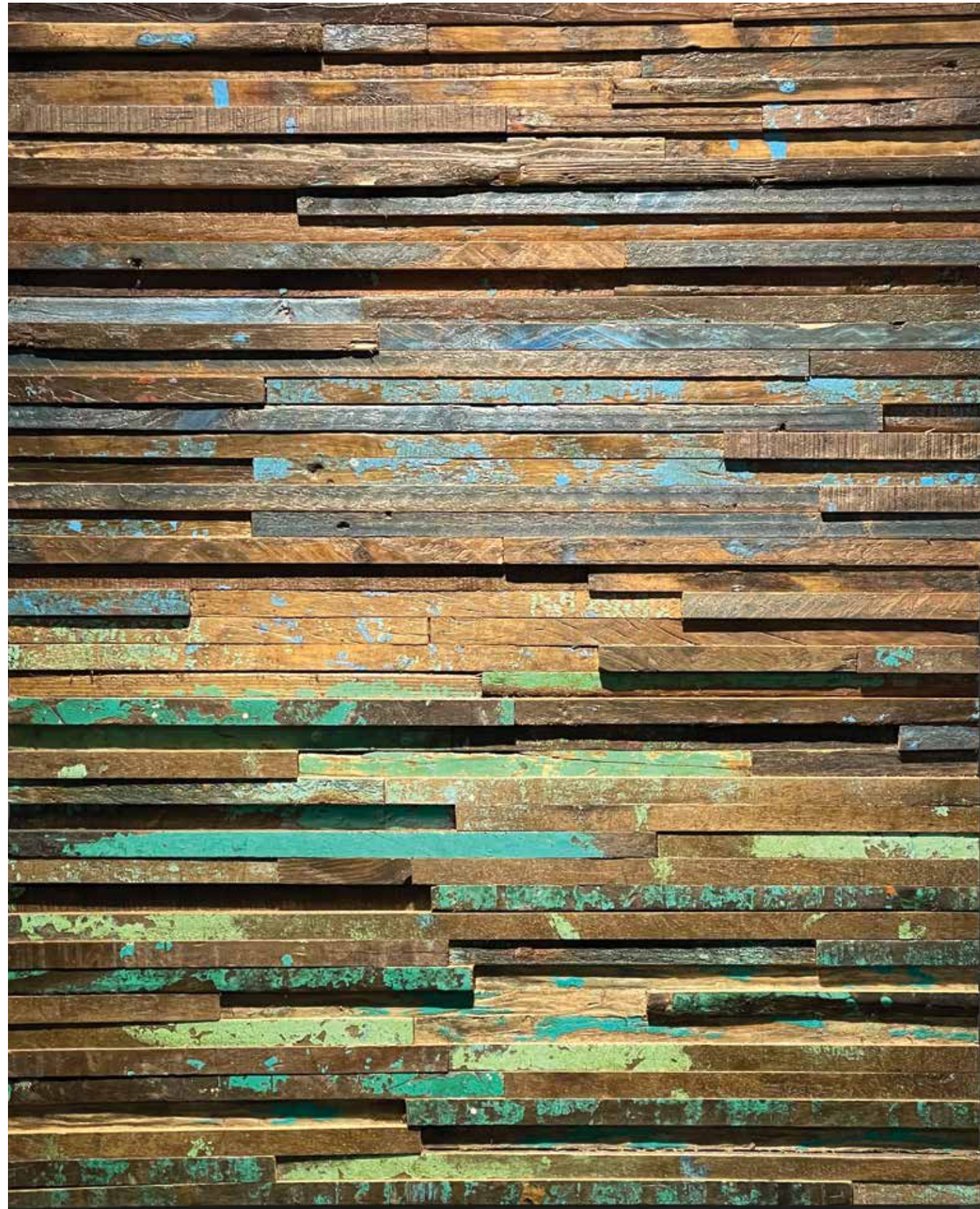
3-7: 12 x 12 inches approximately

8-10: Triptych: 18 x 24 inches approximately

11: 24 x 30 inches

12: 24 x 48 inches







Paintbrushes

2022

Found paintbrushes (2010-2022), frames made from salvaged wood

12.5 x 6.25 inches each

Benches



Bench II
2022
Found wood, epoxy resin, lacquer
60 x 10.5 x 20.5 inches



Bench I
2022
Found wood, lacquer
44.5 x 9.5 x 20 inches



Bench III (detail)
2022
Found wood, lacquer
51 x 13.5 x 21.5 inches

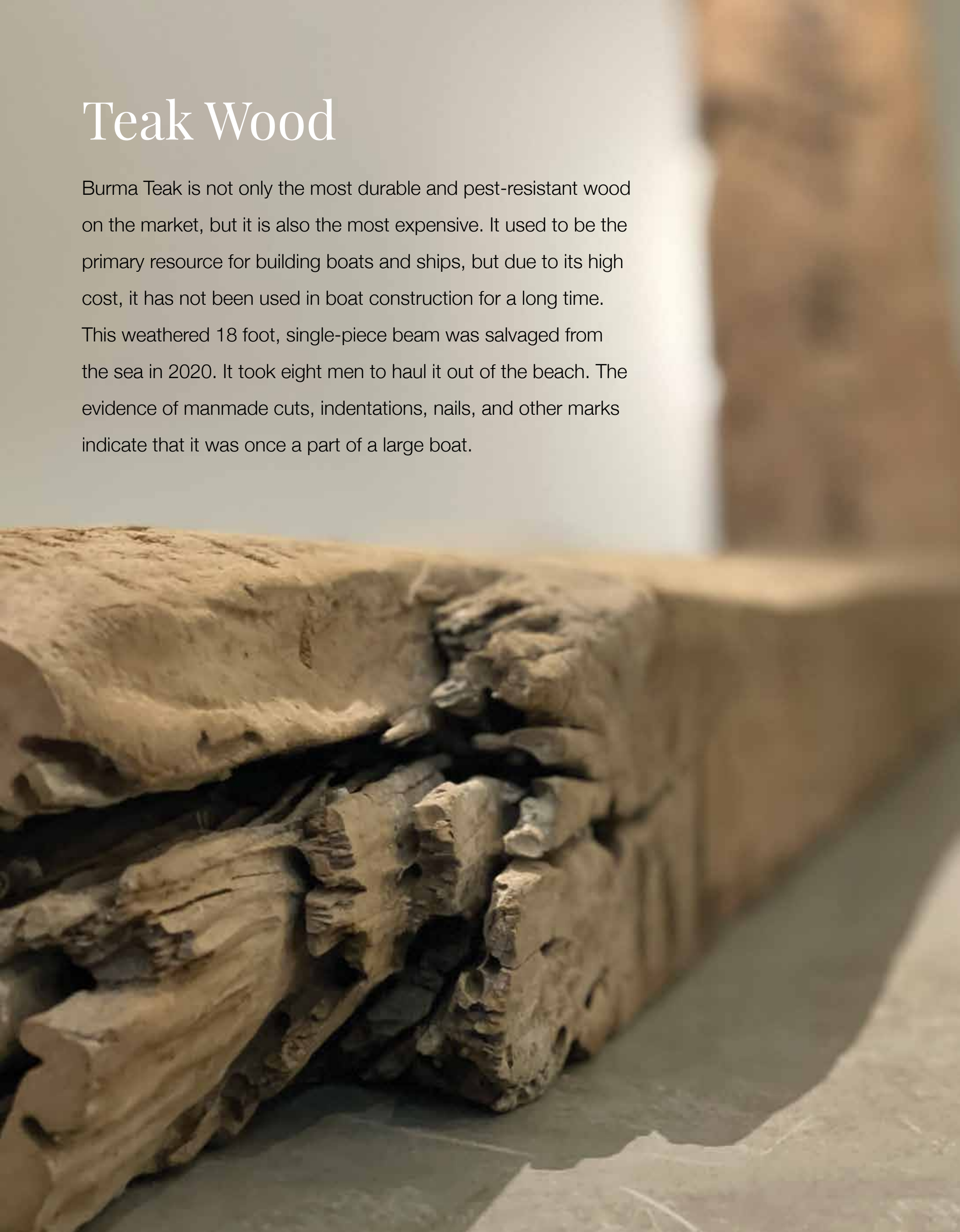


Bench IV
2022
Found wood, lacquer
54.5 x 16 x 19.5 inches

Teak Wood

Burma Teak is not only the most durable and pest-resistant wood on the market, but it is also the most expensive. It used to be the primary resource for building boats and ships, but due to its high cost, it has not been used in boat construction for a long time.

This weathered 18 foot, single-piece beam was salvaged from the sea in 2020. It took eight men to haul it out of the beach. The evidence of manmade cuts, indentations, nails, and other marks indicate that it was once a part of a large boat.



Traces
Found 2020
Beams of Teak Wood
Original size: 18 feet x 12 inches x 8 inches,
now cut in half

Sinkers



One of the most common archaeological finds at sites along or near coastal sites/ water sources, the sinker stone is known by a variety of different names: netweight, net sinker, anchor stone, fishing weight, plummet, poids à pêche. In Sindh, fishermen refer to this as a bhari (meaning heavy, or weighted). Loosely used to describe a (chiefly circular) grooved, notched or perforated stone weight, used in the weighing down of fishing nets and lines, the form of the sinker stone has remained largely constant, from ancient times to the present day.



Bhari II
2022
Sinkers, found 2009-2022,
metal rod, chain
Length: 19 feet 4 inches
(189 x 9 x 4.5 inches, chain 48 inches)





At the Helm

2022

Found pieces.

Chair (found in pieces, restored), steering wheel, rudder

Dimensions variable

Hori/Hora boats



Boats have played an important role in the cultural and commercial life of Sindh for thousand of years. The representation of boats on the seals found in Moenjodaro is an attestation of this fact. The geography of Sindh is physically distinct from any other region of Pakistan since it has three water fronts — the mighty Indus River, numerous lakes, and a coastline including hundreds of square miles of saline back waters of creeks. Sea boats of all type are built on the Karachi coastline, mainly at Ibrahim Hyderi which along with Keamari are also the main ports of call for these boats. The pieces on display in the room are largely from fishing boats locally known as Hori/Hora.



Kharaad

Found 2010-2022

Wood turned on lathe is used mainly as a decorative element on boats being built in Karachi. A variety of designs are made to be used as balustrades, bannisters, posts and railings etc.





Kitchen

Found 2010-2022

It is essential to have a fully functional kitchen on board for fishing vessels venturing deep into the sea. The utensils used are practical and functional and speak of simplicity and economy of space.







Nature's Call

2022

Tug along toilet found in pieces (restored), found rope,
video loop on LCD screen

22 x 33 x 4.5 inches



Fishermen of Gizri Village

The centuries-old fishing village of Gizri is now surrounded by affluent neighbourhoods and commercial establishments. In the past, these fishermen had easy access from Gizri hill to the creek where they docked their boats amongst the thick mangrove forests. Up-scale developments like hotels, marinas, clubs, and restaurants blocked their entry and unceremoniously put an end to their livelihood, culture, and way of living. This ongoing development also destroyed the mangroves and with it a thriving ecosystem. The fishermen of Gizri no longer venture into the deep sea. The only access they have now is the small stretch of Sahil beach where they cast nets from the shore.

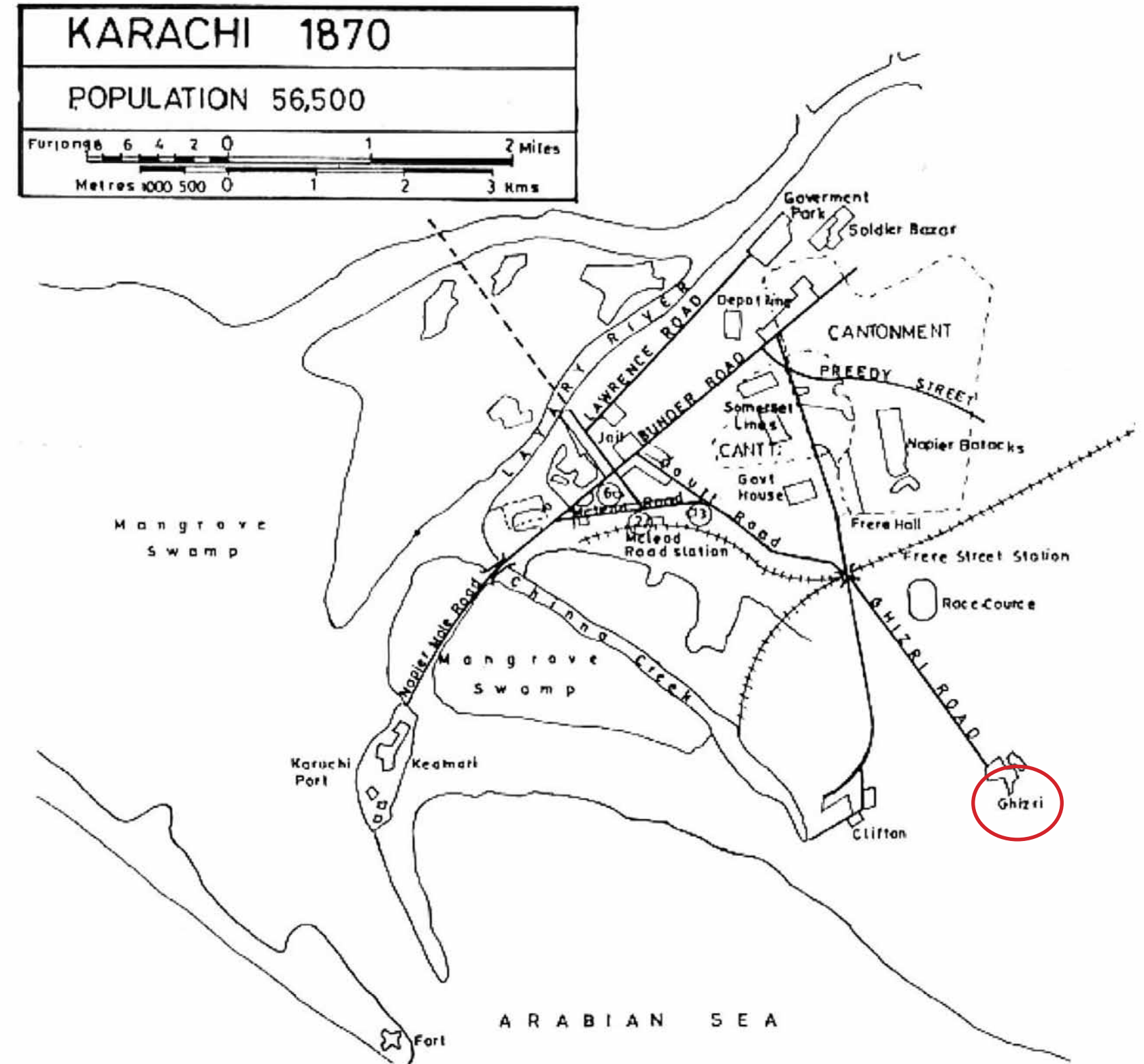




DIY fishing accessories

Found 2010-2022

Fishermen from Gizri casting nets at Sahil beach use a variety of improvised tools made with found, recycled material.



Fishermen of Gizri village
2022
Video on loop
7.03 mins | Edition of 3
Video Stills



Artist's Biography

Sohail Zuberi

Born in 1970 in Karachi (Pakistan)
Lives and works in Karachi (Pakistan)

Sohail Zuberi b. 1970, is a multidisciplinary artist based in Karachi, Pakistan. He graduated from Karachi School of Art in 1992 with major in graphic design. His practice is a commentary on Karachi's urban developments, dichotomies and disparities. Zuberi's on-going research on the changing ecologies of a small stretch of beach in Karachi, manifested in a solo show – Archaeologies of Tomorrow – in 2018. He was commissioned to produce work for Karachi Biennale 2017 and 2019. Zuberi has been associated with academia for over two decades. He served as the head of the Communication Design department at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, and has taught design, fine art and photography at the University of Karachi and the Textile Institute of Pakistan. He also guest lectured at the Eindhoven Design Academy, The Netherlands. Zuberi is also a former trustee of Vasl Artists' Collective, served on the board of Pakistan Chowk Cultural Centre, and was a core team member of Numaish-Karachi. He has attended numerous residencies, workshops and conferences in South Asia, Europe and North America. Zuberi was a part of Ajam Media Collective's residency at the second iteration of Lahore Biennale 2020, and was the curator for the International Public Art Festival (IPAF 2020), Karachi. He also works as a design consultant with Tali, a contemporary craft design brand, and teaches as adjunct faculty at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture.



Selected Exhibitions

Solo Exhibition, Archaeologies of Tomorrow – II, Koel Gallery, Karachi, September 2022

Group Show, RSVP Curated by Zara Sajid and Scheherzade Junejo, Full Circle Gallery, Karachi 2022

Group Show, Landscape of Memory, with artists from Pakistan and Scotland, curated by Sana Bilgrami & Maliha Piracha, Koel Gallery, Karachi, November 2020 <http://koelgallery.com/exhibitions/landscape-of-memory/>

Group Show, Pretty Art For Pretty People, curated by Emaan Mahmud, Sanat Gallery, Karachi, November 2020

Group Show, Beyond the waters, curated by Amra Ali, Koel Gallery, Karachi, October 2019

Site Specific Project, Archaeologies of Tomorrow: Histories and archaeologist of the town on a cliff, Karachi Biennale 2019

Group Project, Mangroves of Karachi, Karachi Biennale 2019

Group Project, Naqsh e Sheher, Karachi Biennale, 2019

Group Show, T2F Creative Karachi Festival, Karachi, Alliance Française de Karachi, August 2019

Group Show: Rehai, VM Art Gallery, Karachi, September 2019

Solo Exhibition, Archaeologies of Tomorrow, Koel Gallery, Karachi, May 2018

Travelling Exhibition Jaanch Partaal: Interactive posters for safe charity, Various locations, Karachi May 2018

Karachi Ka Manzar Nama'- a series of exhibitions for the Azme-Naujawan Project at six Azme-Naujawan Community Centres, organised by Vasl Artists Association. February - April 2018

Site Specific Installation, Karachi Biennale 2017

Group Exhibition, We ate the birds, curated by Seher Naveed, Koel Gallery Karachi 2017

Participating Artist, I Am Karachi Reclaiming the Walls of Karachi, 2015

Group Exhibition, Aghaz-e-Safar by Pursukoon Karachi, Frere Hall Karachi, 2015

Public Art Project: Posters in Urdu and English commemorating the 2nd Anniversary of The Baldia Garment Factory Fire, 2014

Group Exhibition, Karachi Literature Festival, 2014

Awaaz: Artists response to the Baldia Factory Fire, Arts Council, Karachi, Pakistan, 2013

Faculty Show, IVS Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan 2010

Solo Exhibition of Photographs, Mosaic South Asia Festival, Toronto Canada, 2007

Solo Exhibition of EU Asia-Urbs Orangi Nalla photographs, Department of Architecture and Urban Planning, NED University, 2009

Faculty Show, IVS Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan, 2009

Faculty Show, IVS Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan, 2008

Faculty Show, IVS Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan, 2007

Group Exhibition. State of Being so Divided, with artists from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, curated by Vasl Art Collective, VM Art Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan



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