



SELF-EXTENDED

curated by IRFAN GUL DAHRI



ABID ASLAM & AFFAN BAGHPATI

THURSDAY, 28 OCTOBER, 2021

5 — 8 PM

Continues till 10 November, 2021



KOEL

GALLERY

In certain places during ancient times, people had their possessions buried alongside them. Slaves and wives often accompanied men of substance to the afterlife. The popular guess is that this was done so that they were comfortable and well-provided for in the next life. I feel it may have been due to the need to remain whole persons when they got to wherever they were headed to, and to not be missing parts of themselves.

What is a person without the things they project their selves into? What would you be without the set of objects that make up your lifestyle: Your books? Your paintings? Your favorite mug or your preferred chair in the TV room? And looking at it from the other side, is Manu not identical for us with the book of his laws, or Monet with the body of his work?

We extend ourselves into things, and we expend part of our substance into them, because things pick up significations and personalities. My grandfather's watch or my mother's wedding dress carry some sense of their persons about them. While pointing to a painting in your house, I ask 'what is that?', you reply 'that is Irfan Gul', and this is a meaningful exchange that surprises no one and all can understand.

Sometimes objects carry significances and selves beyond the singular. An object passed from person to person and place to place carries significations of all those people and places. Tropes and styles take on the weight of history: blood and gold and what I felt when I saw them as a boy, for instance.

The two artists in this exhibition play with existing images and objects that have a life of their own and carry the weight of other selves from the past. They extend this life through the mediation of their individual expression, adding meanings and connotations of the present to the cultural-historical mix that is already there. When this work is then taken over by the viewer or by future owners, these images or objects take on other associations and new affiliations through possession by other selves.

Just as the object cannot be considered as something discrete, the self of the artist exists as a continuum. In the same way that the images are not in stasis, the self that possesses and apprehends them is also dynamic. Both are extended as a chain connecting human life through time.

Irfan Gul Dahri
October 2021

About the Curator

Irfan Gul Dahri is an accomplished Pakistani visual artist, an independent curator and educator. He has exhibited his artworks nationally and internationally at various venues and curated many notable shows persistently. Irfan has been teaching art and design at the National College of Arts, Lahore since 2006. He lives and works in Lahore.

ABID ASLAM

In present era where artists are utilizing various methods in their own style to create an alternate perception in context to their art practices, I feel the term and idea of 'miniature' is an intimate process of giving fine details to an image while keeping in mind the sense of beauty and visual pleasure.

The art practice and technique of engraving that I used in creating an artwork carries rich amount of the delicacy, time, effort and minute details. But more importantly how artist make it probable to convert an idea into an image and then how that created image reflects another visual. The imagery that I chose in current series of work actually depicts the recalling of old tales in more contemporary way by giving a viewer another aspect of possibilities and visual charm of an artwork.

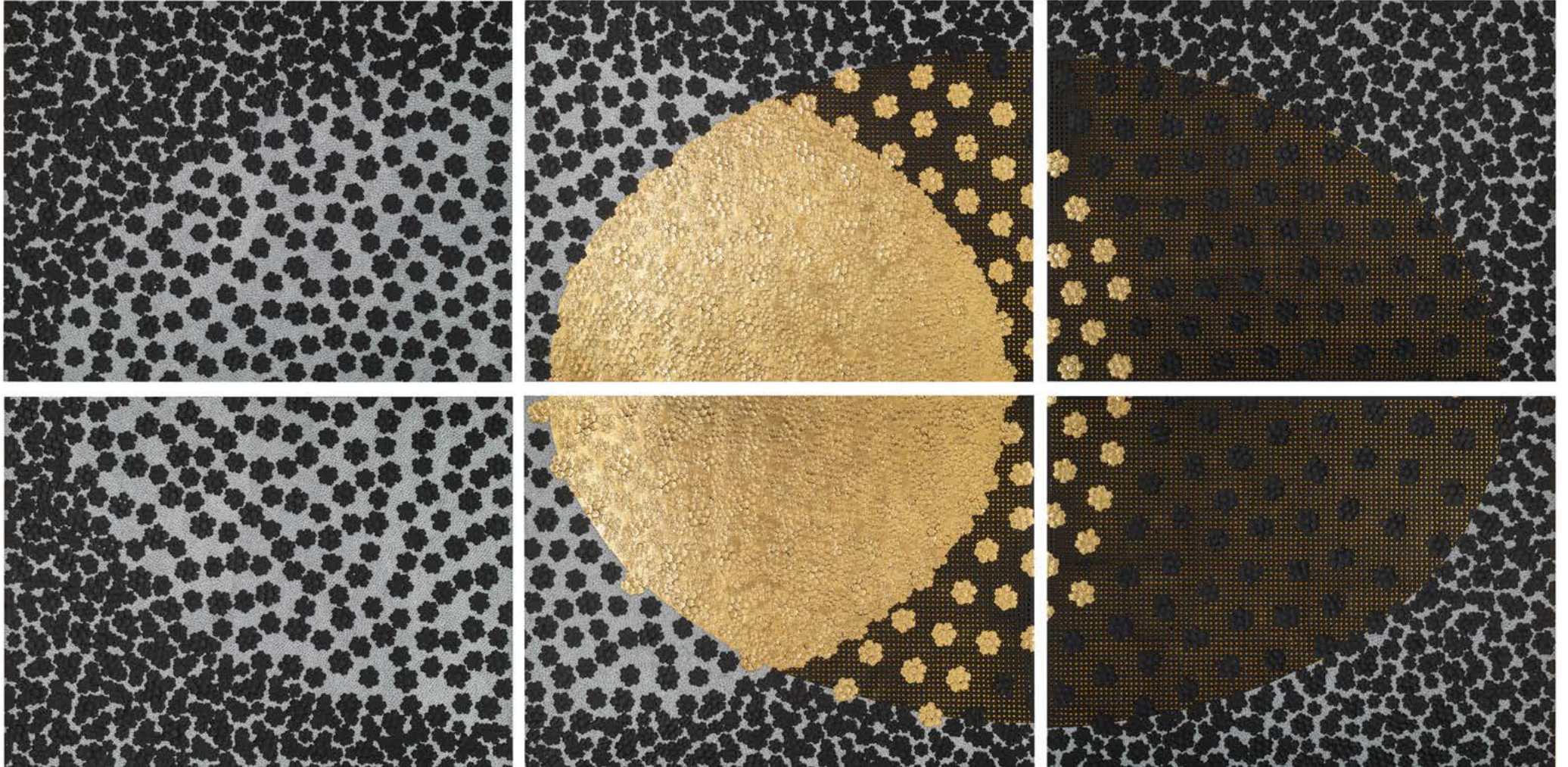


ABID ASLAM

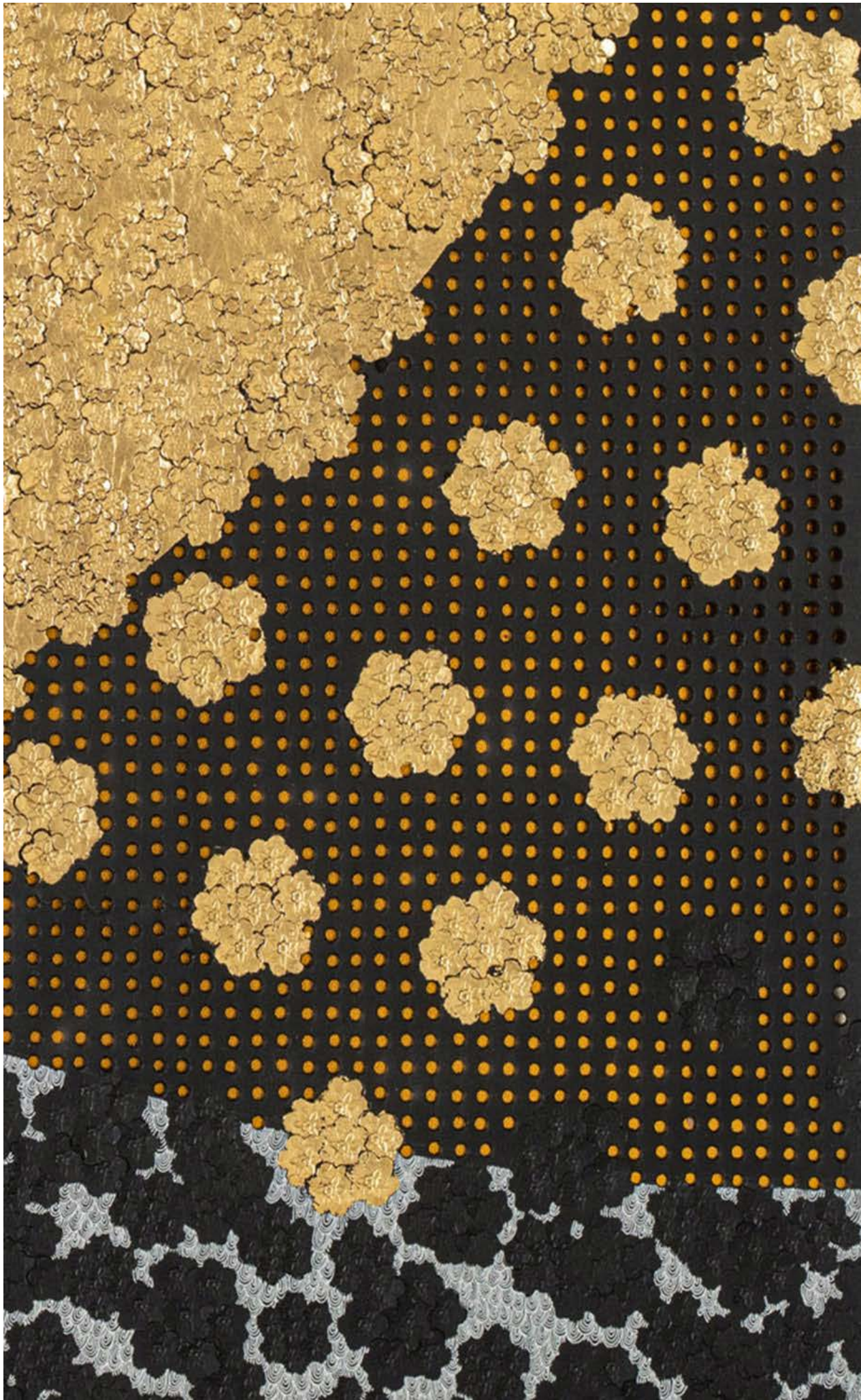
Born in 1986 in Lahore, Pakistan, Abid Aslam studied at the Hunerkada College of Visual and Performing Arts, Lahore. He focused his attention towards miniature painting and photography which led to purification of his own visual and conceptual terminology. Aslam also served as a lecturer in Hunerkada College till 2014. His passion for art convinced him to pursue a master's program in Visual Arts from National College of Arts, Lahore in 2017 with an aim to develop a strong and independent point of view and a mature grasp of critical debate on contemporary art.

Aslam has made his first solo show titled as "Coding Labels" in 2013 at Canvas Gallery, Karachi and set his way towards success in an art world. He proved himself best through various group shows like Incubator, Milestone, Open field, Summer Scape, Variations along the Grid, Silsila, We live Pakistan, Witness to History, Human Within Us, Solitude, Resurgence, Scripted Serenity, Grey Matters and many more. He got Special Award from Artist's Association of Punjab, Lahore in 2016 and Arjumand Painting Award in 2015, Islamabad. Aslam has also made his work worth watching by participating in India Art Fair 2017 under Anant Art Gallery, Delhi, India. He has done a remarkable solo show in 2018 titled as "Sitaron se aage" at Sanat Initiative, Karachi Pakistan. Aslam participated in first Karachi Biennale Trust artist residency 2019 in collaboration with OPP (Orangi Pilot Project), Karachi Pakistan.

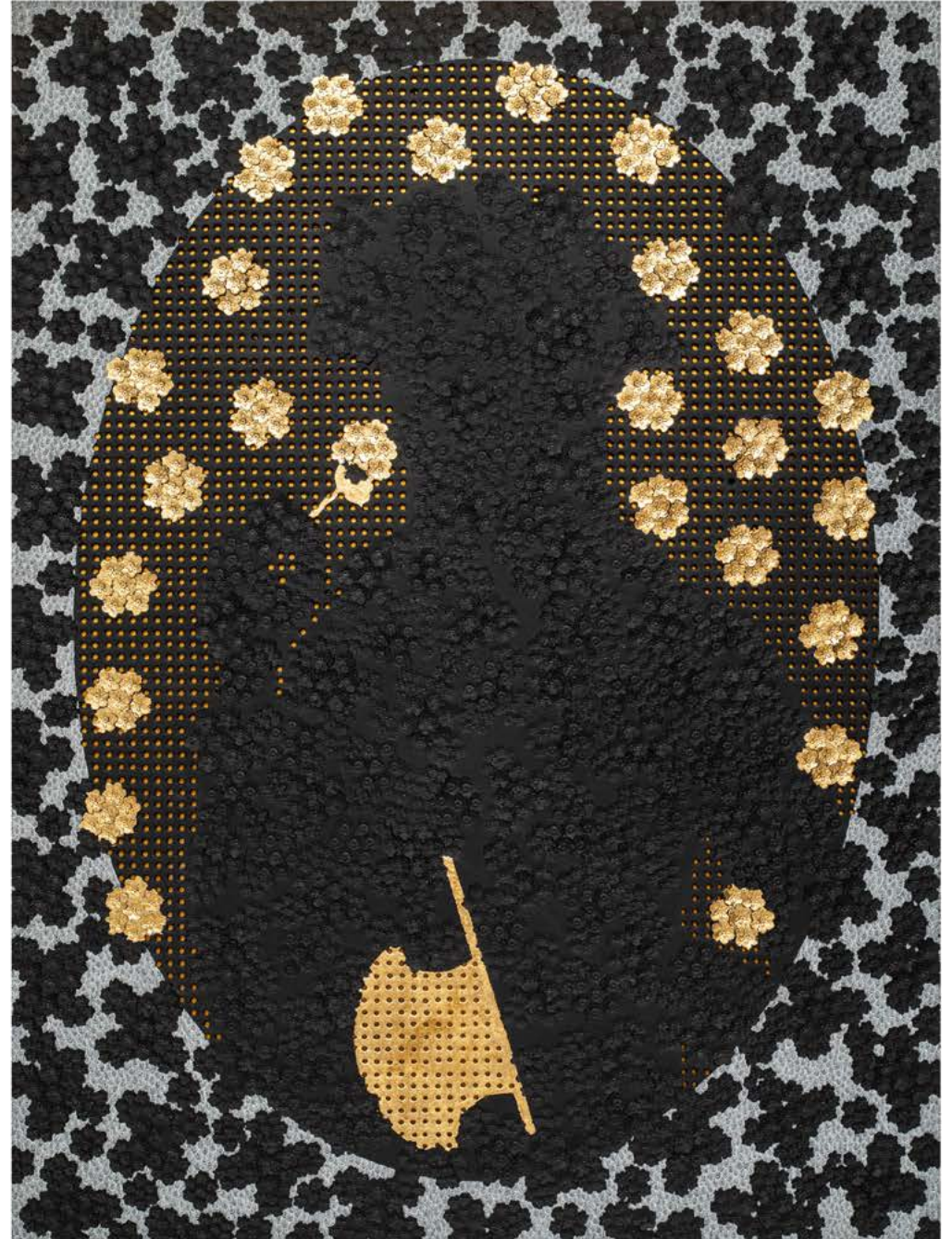
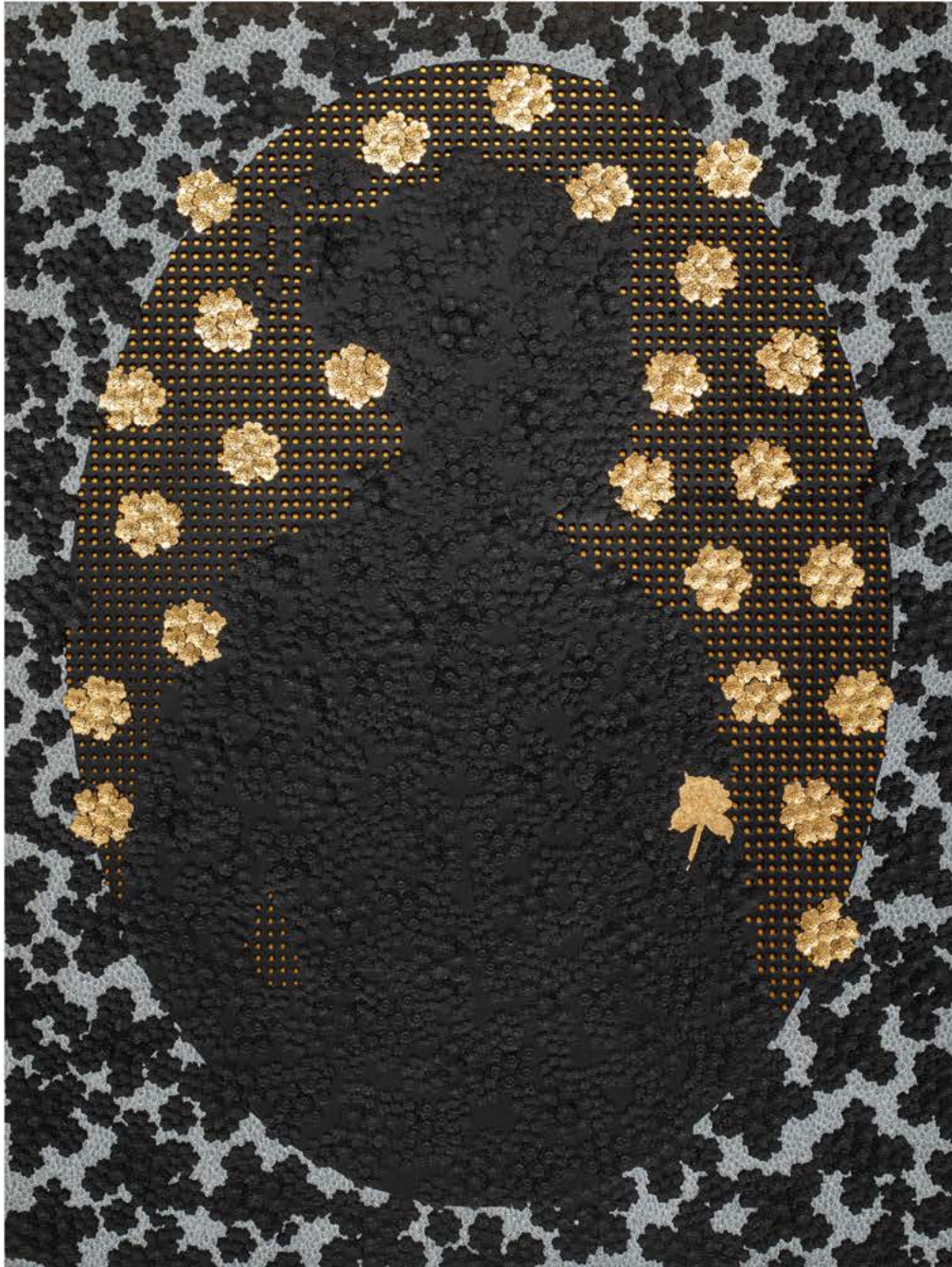
Later, he also curated a group show titled as "Once upon a time" at Ejaz Art Gallery, Lahore. Aslam has been part of both national and international art exhibitions. "Of Land and Skies" was Aslam's another stunning solo show held at O Art Space, Lahore, Pakistan in 2019. Whereas, his previous solo show "The Last Rain" was exhibited at Sanat Initiative Art Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan in 2020 and recent three person group show "Peculiar Speculations" was held at O Art Space, Lahore, Pakistan. Aslam currently works and lives in Lahore.



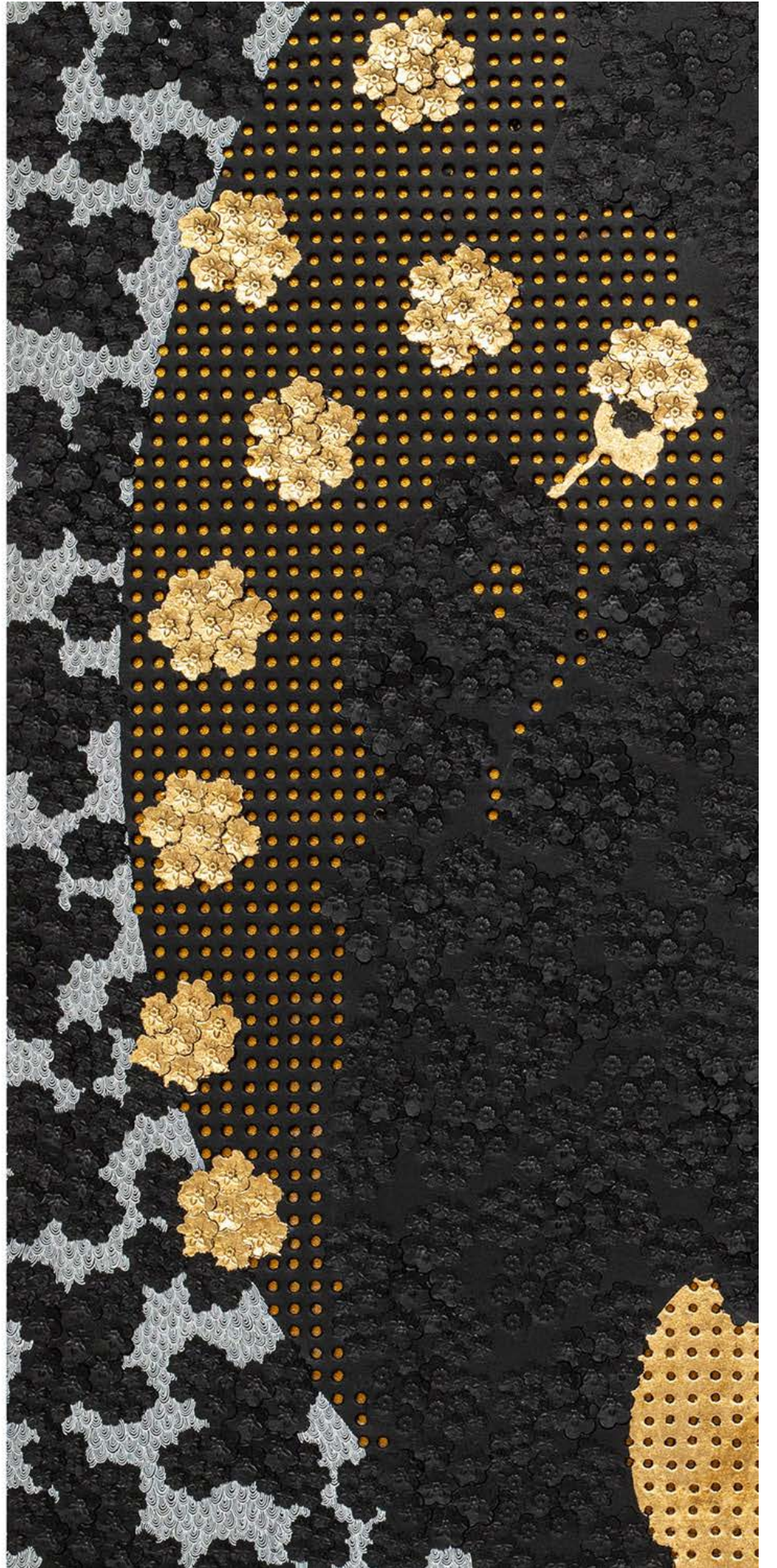
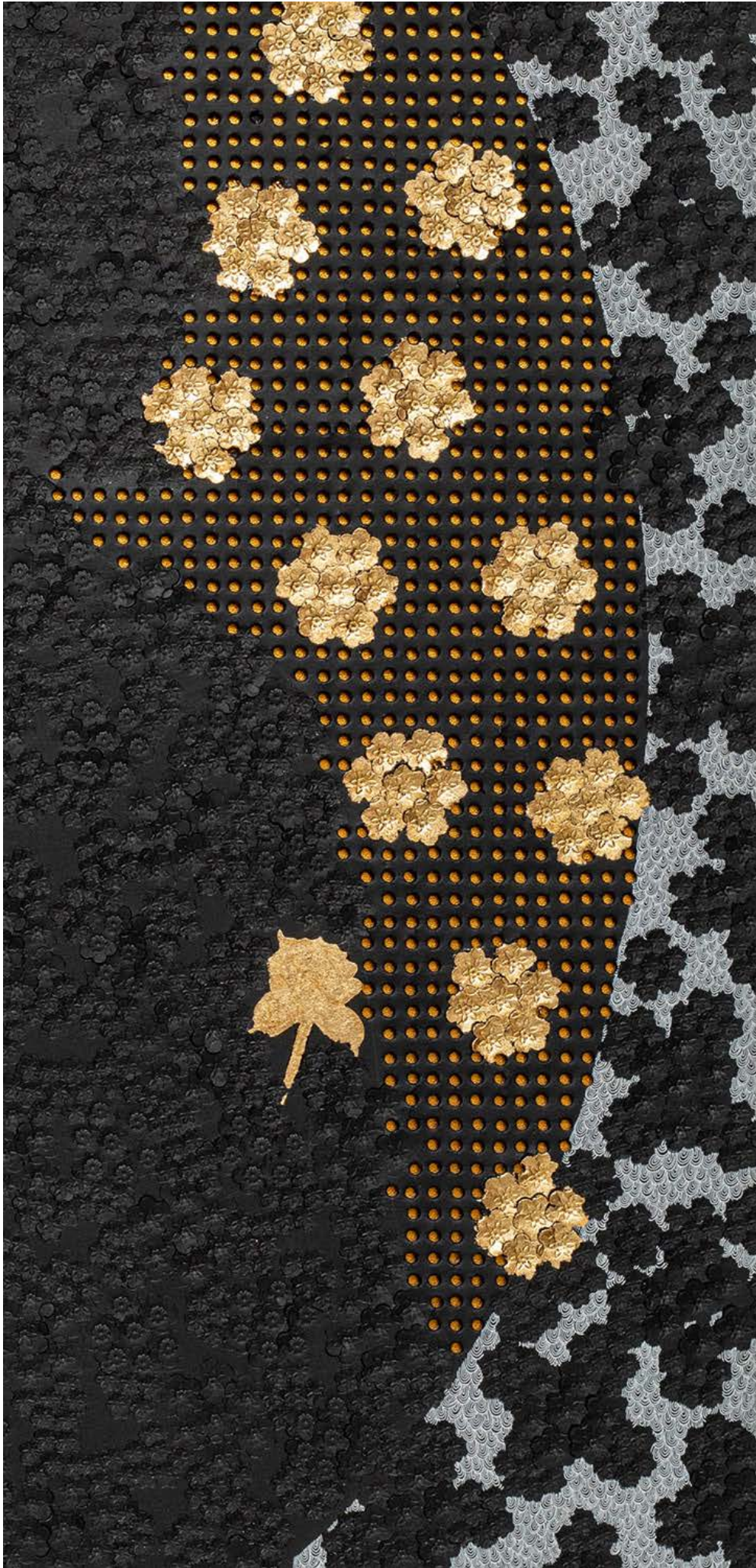
Emergence | 2021 | 60 x 120 inches (30 x 40 inches each) Hexptych | Punching, gel pen and gold leaf on wasli



Detail (*Emergence*)



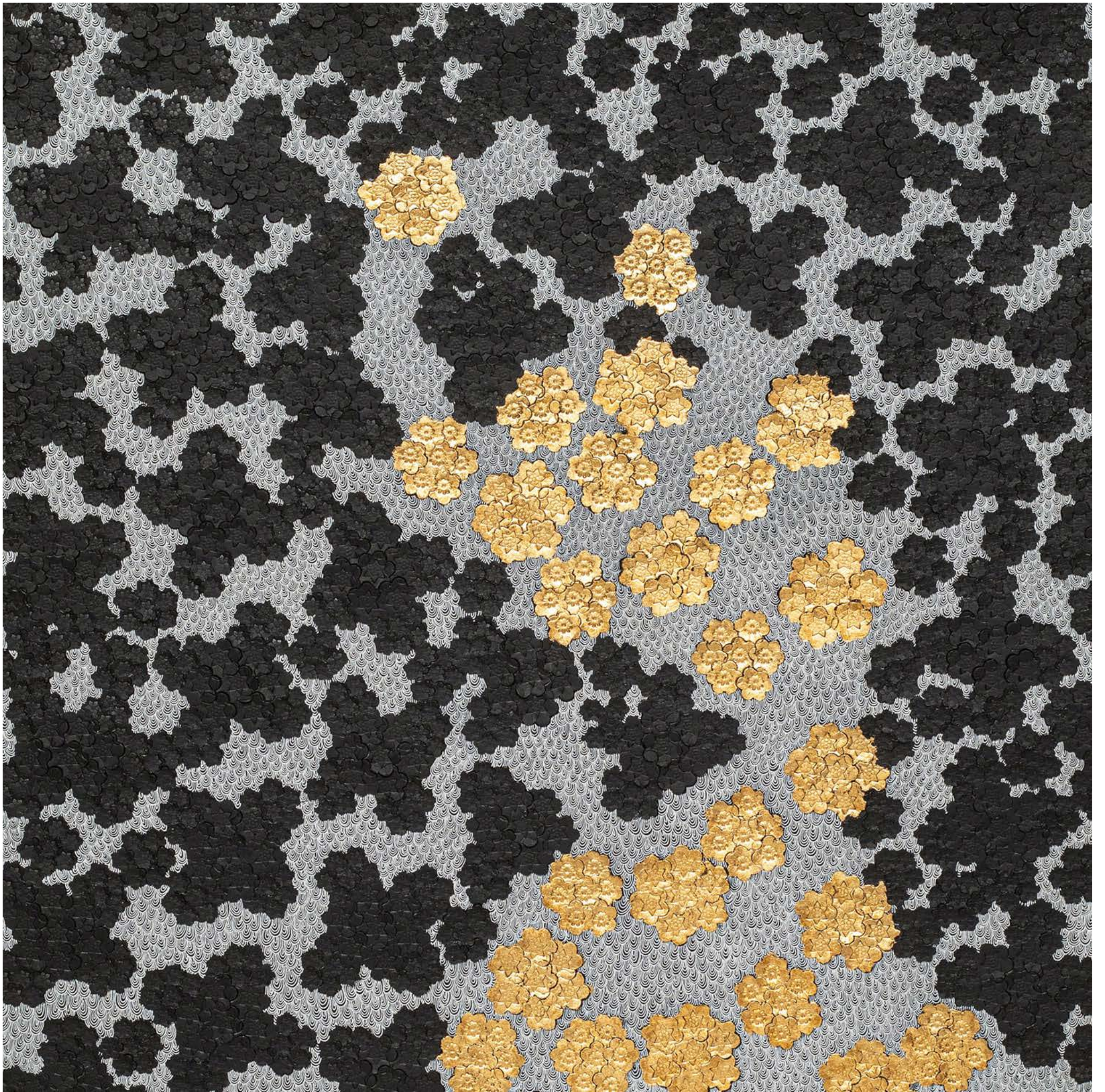
Love birds | 2021 | 40 x 60 inches (30 x 40 inches each) Diptych | Punching, gel pen and gold leaf on wasli



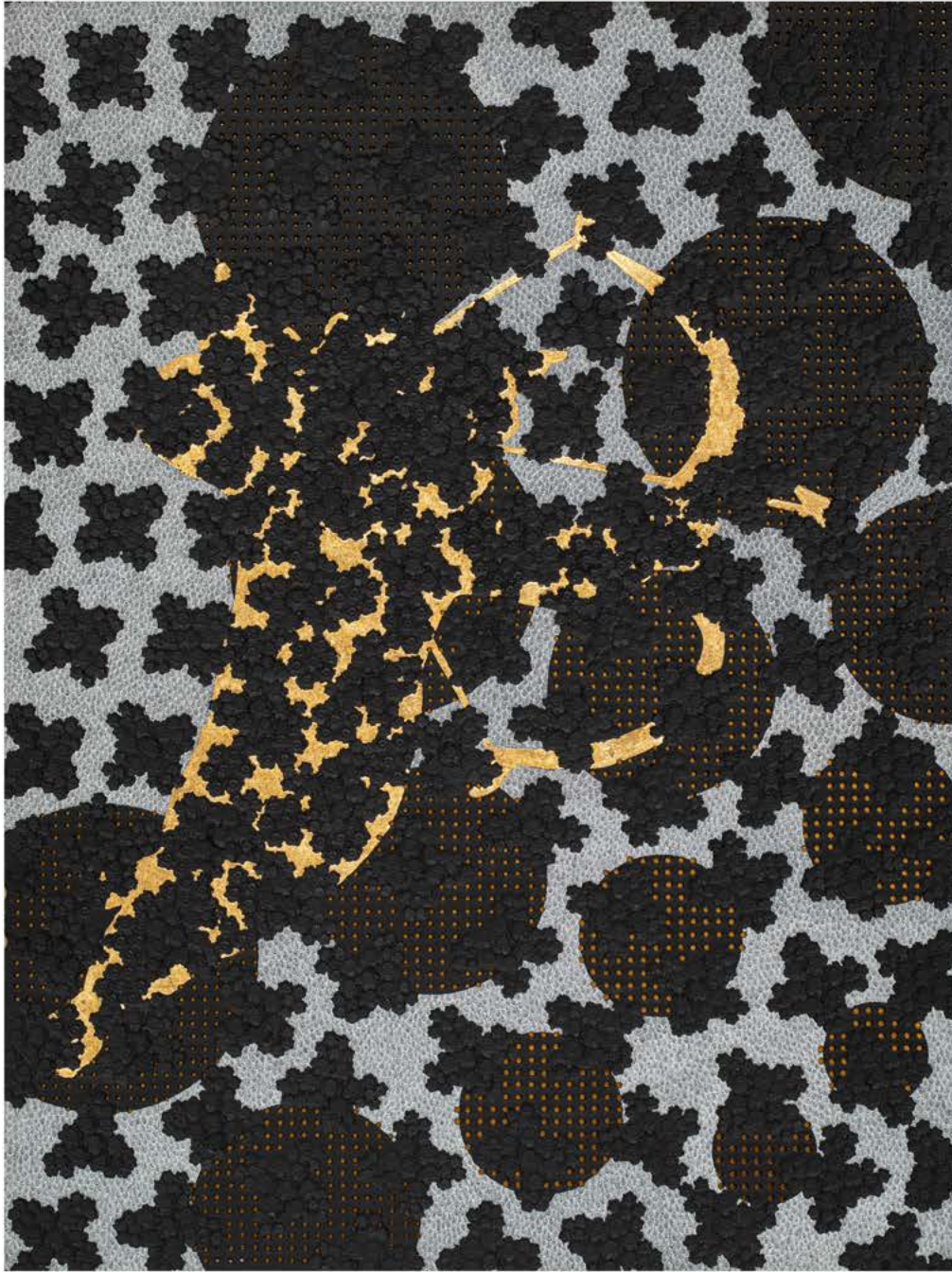
Detail (*Love Birds*)



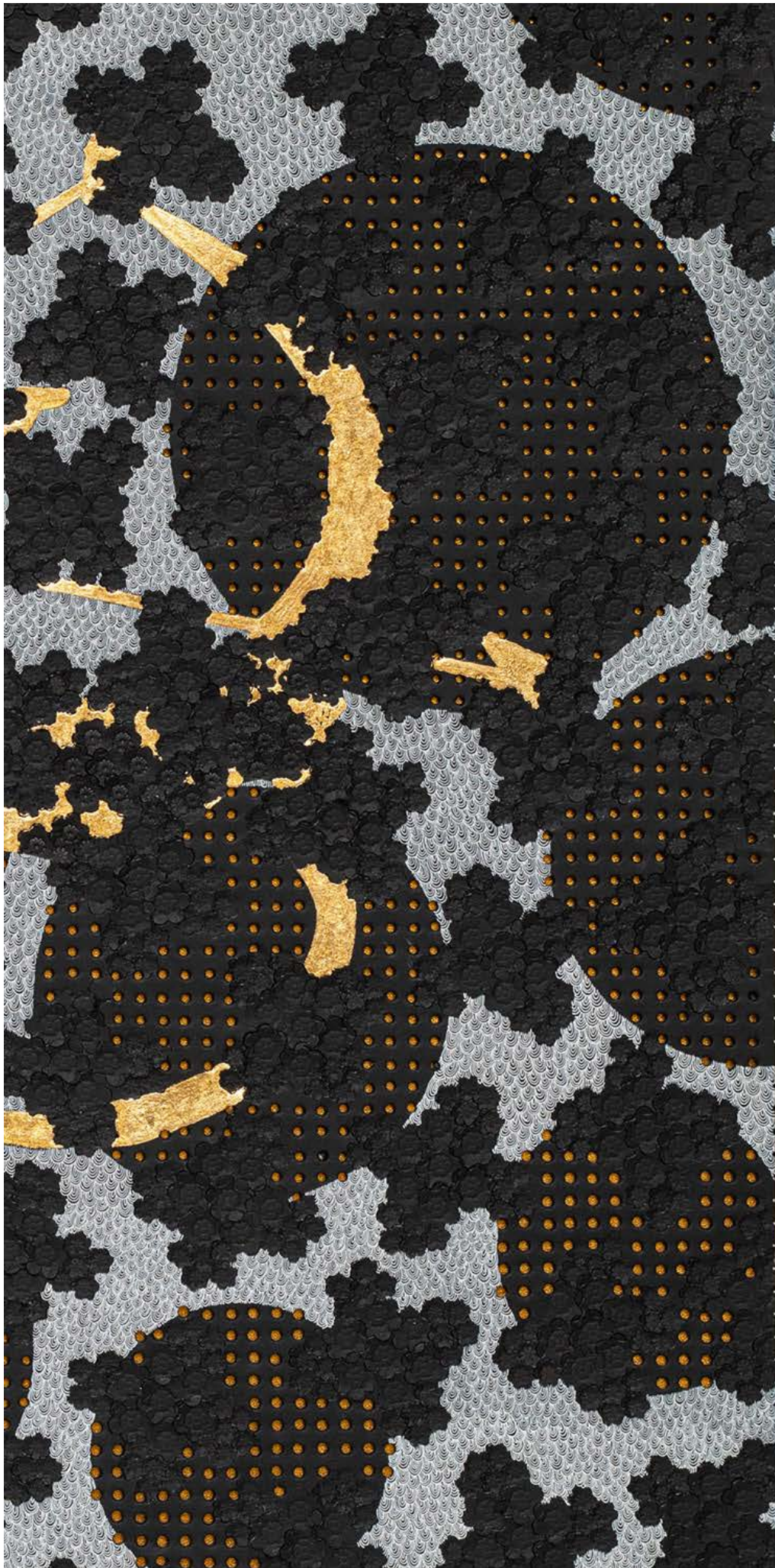
On the beat II | 2021 | 35 x 69 inches (35 x 23 inches each) Triptych | Punching on golden and silver reflective paper, gel pen and gold leaf on wasli



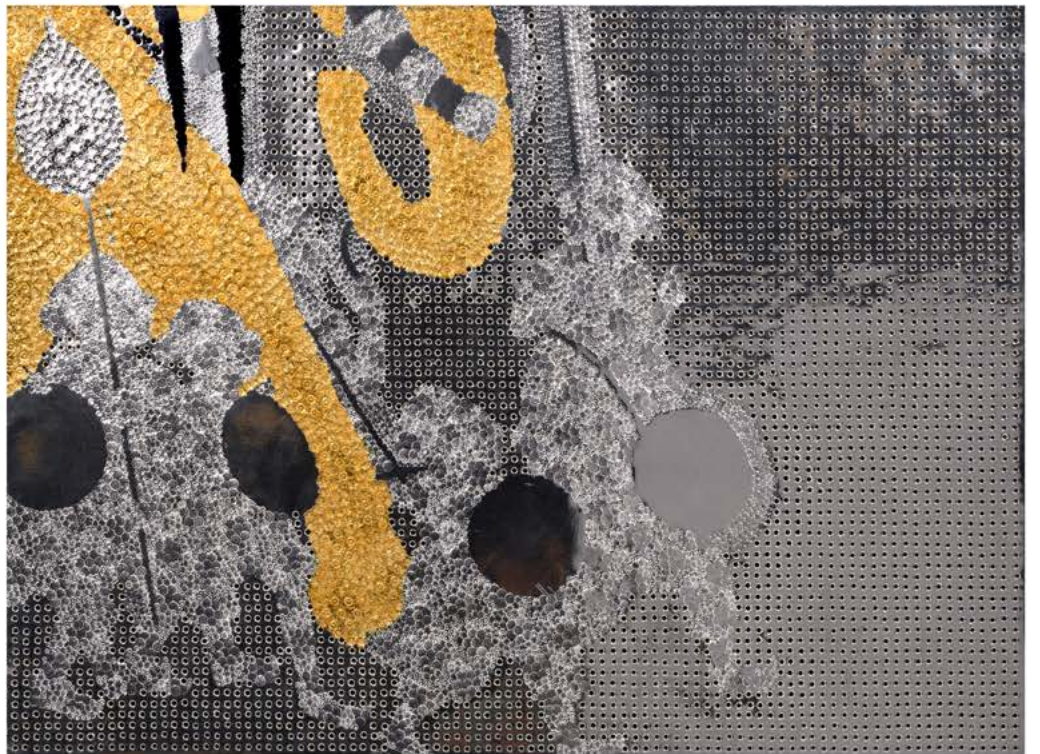
Detail (*On the beat II*)



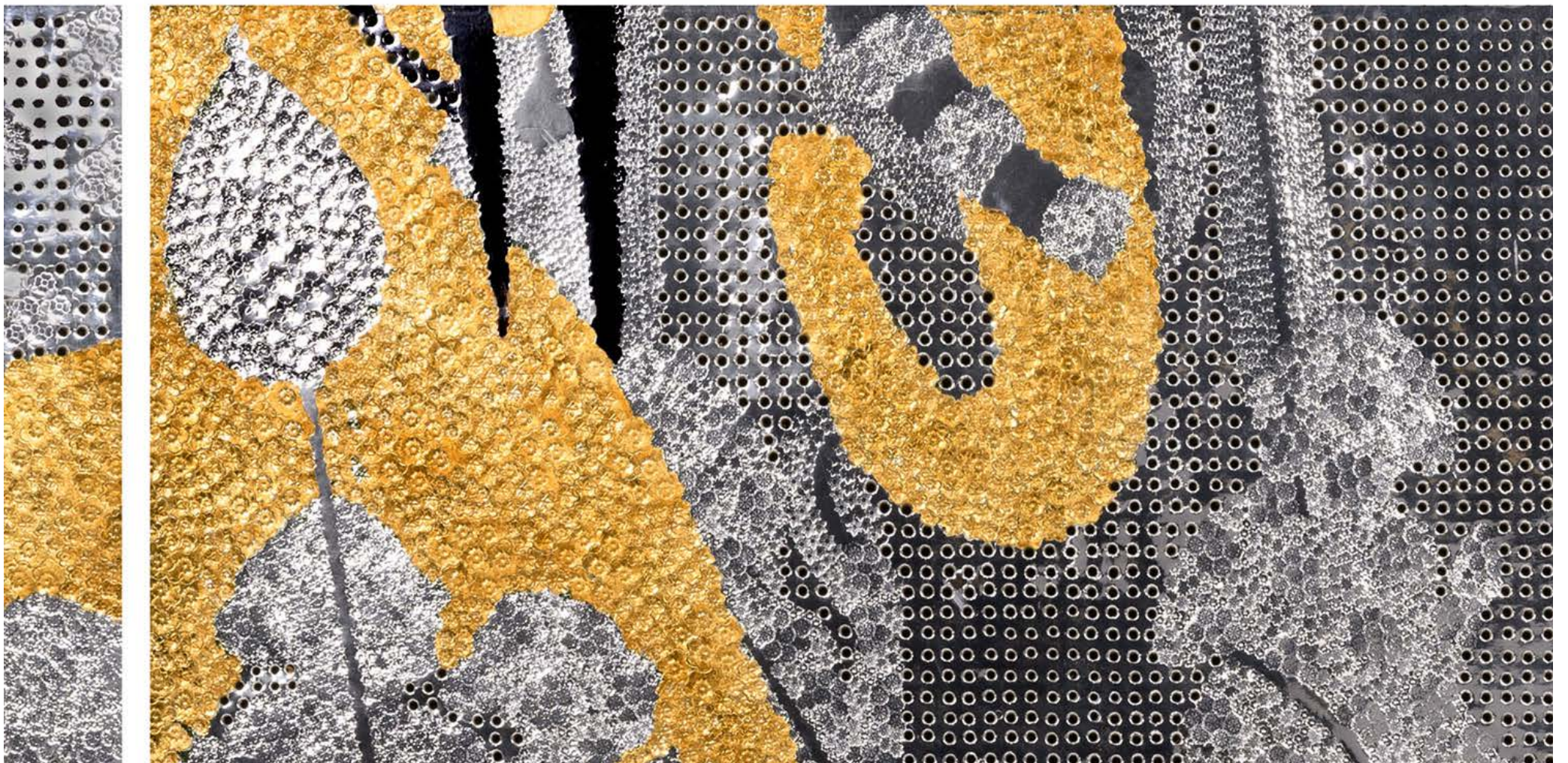
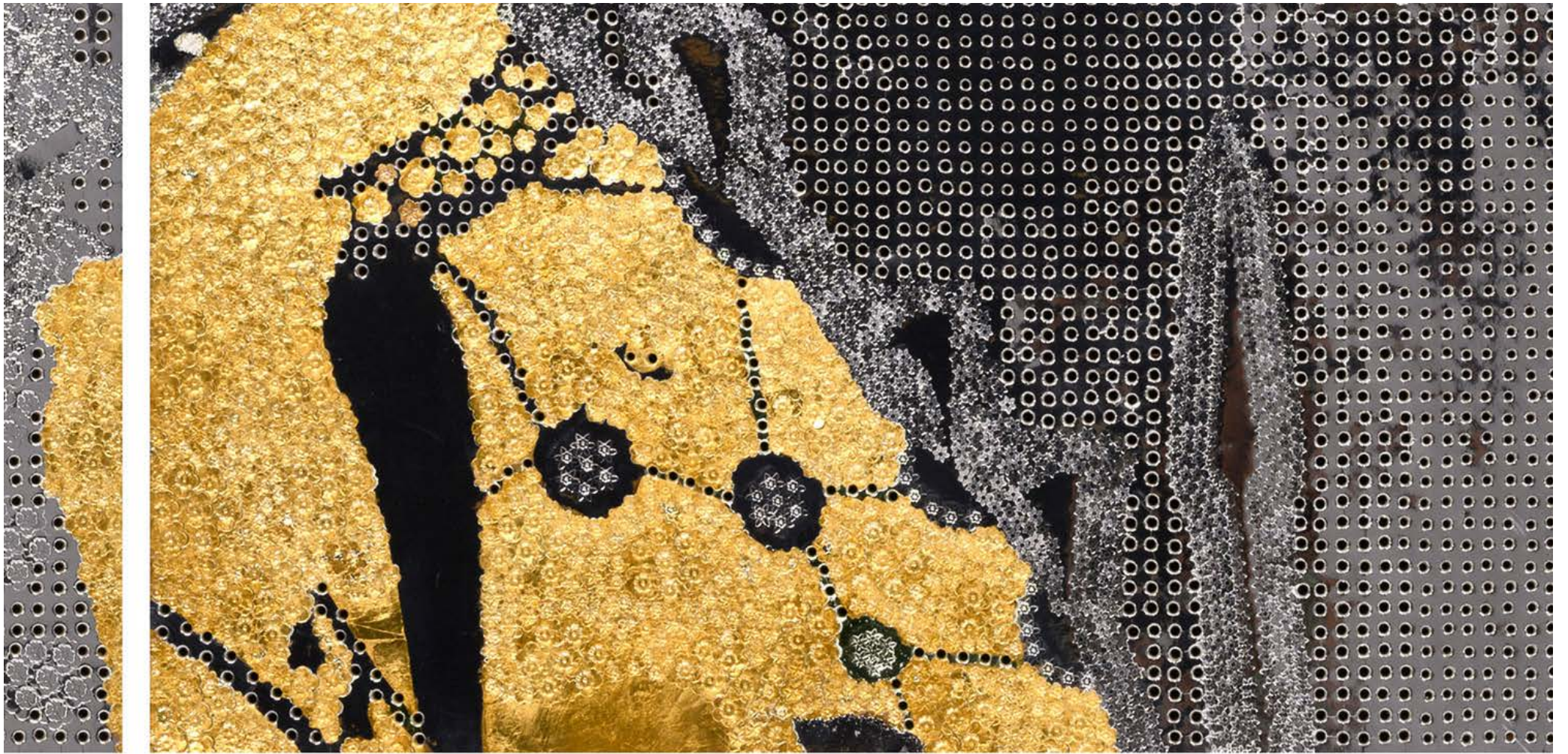
Playing into bubbles | 2021 | 40 x 60 inches (40 x 30 inches each) Diptych | Punching, gel pen and gold leaf on wasli



Detail (*Playing into bubbles*)



On hunt II | 2021 | 56 x 76 inches (28 x 38 inches each) Quadriptych | Punching on silver reflective paper and gold leaf



Detail (*On hunt II*)

AFFAN BAGHPATI

My work begins with collecting discarded or vintage objects which I gather from local markets of various cities of Pakistan. I travel and search for discarded household items, once functional but now these objects are often found idly at the metal retailers or flea markets. These domestic objects have lost their presence, function, and respective practices which represented old regional design and material culture. Later, the collected items become axial projection of my studio inspiration.

I deconstruct forms, redesign motives and create new hybrid objects with notional functionality. These hybrid objects inform one not just with history of design culture from South Asia but also engage the viewer with their aesthetic sensibilities that are no more practiced in this age. Through this work I aim to Probe deeper into the biography of objects to investigate how things were made, bought, used, consumed, given away, collected, sold and bought again. It determines the value we give to these objects. Ways in which things move around the world, by what means they are made to cross national boundaries - from factories to stores, from living room to a flea market of another country - are some global relations which reveals the interconnection of people across borders. Objects designed and produced in China, America and England are shipped after discarding to South Asian countries which reveal uneven development in the global economy, and thus, a single doll may link us all by crossing national borders



AFFAN BAGHPATI

Affan Baghpati is based out of Karachi, Pakistan. Visual Art and Art Education are his trajectories of practices. He completed his undergraduate studies in Fine Arts at Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi in 2015; and graduate program in Art and Design Studies from Mariam Dawood School of Visual Art and Design, Beaconhouse National University, Lahore in 2018.

Baghpati's work begins with collecting discarded objects which were once functional but are now often found idly at various avenues. These domestic objects have lost their presence, function, and respective maneuvers which represented old regional design and material culture. Later, the collected items become an axial projection of his studio inspiration. He deconstructs forms, redesigns motives, and creates new hybrid objects with notional functionality. These hybrid objects inform one not just with the history of design culture from South Asia but also engage the viewer with their aesthetic sensibilities that are no more practiced in this age. Furthermore, Baghpati explores the interconnection of people across borders by studying how things move around different cultures.

Baghpati has showcased his works at AAN Gandhara, Canvas gallery, Koel Gallery, and Sanat Initiative in Karachi; Rohtas 2 Gallery, Taseer Art gallery, Faqeer Khana Museum, and The Colony in Lahore; Satrang Gallery, and 12.0 Contemporary in Islamabad; Museo Diocesano Carlo Maria Martini in partnership with Sotheby's in Milan; Aicon Gallery (Aicon Contemporary) in New York; Twelve Gates Arts in Philadelphia; and 1x1 Art Gallery in Dubai. His works were also a part of the Sindh Art Festival 2014 in Karachi, Karachi Biennale 2017 (KB17) and Karachi Biennale 2019 (KB19); Lahore Biennale 2018 (LB01) and Lahore Biennale 2020 (LB02); Beirut Art fair 2019; and India Art Fair 2020. Baghpati received a 100% merit Scholarship Award from UNESCO Madanjeet Singh Institute for South Asia Regional Cooperation (UMISARC) during 2016-2018. He is also the recipient of the first cycle of the 'Artist Residency in Museum' in Karachi, hosted by the State Bank of Pakistan, Museum and Art Gallery in 2020. (Art Design Architecture) ADA Awards awarded him in the category of Sculpture in 2021. He is currently a lecturer at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture in Karachi.



One is for two | 2020 | 4.7 x 6.7 x 2 inches | Assemblage, found object, brass, polymer resin



Side view (*One is for two*)



Once upon a land | 2020 | 6.7 x 4.3 x 4 inches | Assemblage, casting, brass, polymer resin, glass



Detail (*Once upon a land*)



Far away | 2020 | 5 x 3 x 2.3 inches | Assemblage, casting, brass, polymer resin



Detail (*Far away*)



Baby's shark | 2020 | 2 x 7 x 4.7 inches | Assemblage, found objects, brass alloy, polymer



Top view (*Baby's shark*)



Slip and fly | 2020 | 13.3 x 8.8 x 2.7 inches | Assemblage, found objects, brass alloy, copper, polymer



Detail (*Slip and fly*)



Two to be | 2020 | 2.7 x 6 x 3 inches | Assemblage, found objects, brass alloy, polymer



Top view (*Two to be*)



On the platter | 2020 | 4.5 x 4.5 x 0.4 inches | Hand sawed, copper plate, (box frame)



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