

NOVEMBER

FAMILY FUN

For the Love of Oud

Saturday 2 November, 2.30pm FREE

Explore this wonderful stringed instrument in our family session. Children and parents will be introduced to the rhythms and modes of Arabic music through its sounds, and are invited to create small stringed instruments using recycled material.

SCREENING + TALK

Inas Halabi: We Have Always Known the Wind's Direction

Thursday 7 November, 7pm FREE

Through a combination of conversation, interview and expressive location footage, Inas Halabi's artist film probes the possible burial of nuclear waste in the South of the West Bank. Followed by a conversation with the artist.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Revoking Kashmir's Special Status

Thursday 14 November, 7pm FREE
Earlier this summer, the Modi government repealed Article 370, stripping Kashmir of its autonomous status. This timely and important panel discussion will examine the regions history, contemporary tumultuous situation, and uncertain future.

Curator: Rachael Jarvis
Assistant curator: Angelina Radakovic
Art technicians: Kamila Janska, Adam McAlavey and Scott Miles
3D Designer: Line Lund
Wall drawings: Ghafra Tajmohammad and Ioanna Mavromichali
Leaflet design: Hyperkit

This exhibition has been supported by



COCKAYNE



mondriaan fund

AFTERNOON TEA

Srinagar Salon: Kashmiri Afternoon Tea

Saturday 23 November, 3-6pm £17.50

Celebrate the rich tea culture of Kashmir with an afternoon tea hosted by Kashmiri Tea House. Pairing traditional blends with a variety of savoury and sweet snacks, experience a taste of the Kashmiri home at teatime.

IN RESPONSE

Haramacy Soundbath

Thursday 28 November, 7pm FREE

Can sound have healing properties? Using specialised, portable electronics and tonal frequencies, My Panda Shall Fly and Zahed Sultan will take audiences on a multi-sensory journey to experience the power of sound synthesis.

DECEMBER

TALK

Rachel Dedman: Labour of Love

Thursday 5 December, 7pm FREE

Labour of Love is an exhibition exploring Palestinian embroidery through the lenses of gender, labour, symbol, capital and class. Curator Rachel Dedman discusses the exhibition, role of embroidery as self-expression and the implications of its commodification.

FAMILY FUN

Yalla Let's Celebrate!

Saturday 7 December, 2.30pm FREE

This session is a combined experience of festive singing, storytelling, creative play and making. Conducted both in Arabic and English, families will enjoy a welcoming creative afternoon session.

The Mosaic Rooms present a unique programme of free contemporary art exhibitions, talks, films, and other special events. We are a non-profit gallery and cultural space in West London dedicated to supporting and promoting contemporary culture from and about the Arab world and beyond.

Bookshop

A wide range of fiction and non-fiction books, limited edition artwork, gifts and DVDs. In-store and on our website at mosaicrooms.org/shop

Venue Hire

Our gallery spaces are available for event hire: mosaicrooms.org/venue-hire

All sales support The Mosaic Rooms and our programme.

Visit Us

The Mosaic Rooms
226 Cromwell Road
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mosaicrooms.org
020 7370 9990

Open 11am-6pm
Tuesday-Saturday
Entry FREE

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#PraneetSoi



AN A.M. QATTAN
FOUNDATION PROJECT

Praneet Soi

Anamorphosis: Notes from Palestine, Winter in the Kashmir Valley

27/09/19—7/12/19

ENTRY FREE



the
mosaic
rooms

Contemporary Culture from the Arab World and beyond

Anamorphosis:

Notes from Palestine,
Winter in the Kashmir Valley

In June 2019, artist Praneet Soi travelled across the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel. Beginning in Haifa, he drove up to the occupied Golan Heights and from there made his way down to Bethlehem, Battir, Hebron, Jericho, Nablus, Jenin, Salfit, and Ramallah before driving back up to Haifa, Akka and finally to Tel Aviv, to fly back to Europe.

Soi's aim was to experience the country through certain facets of its landscape and to visit, en-route, farms, workshops and factories, to understand productivity and entrepreneurship for people in Palestine. This subject has been a focus for Soi in his previous body of work, *Notes on Labour*. His route touched historical sites such as the Roman city of Sebastia, near Jenin, and the remains of Ottoman train tracks which transported goods and people in a different era, signs of earlier colonisations. Soi was looking for alternative representations of a land under occupation. His encounters and conversations were recorded and annotated and later, in his Amsterdam studio, developed into the works that are now on display here, commissioned by The Mosaic Rooms.

At the beginning of August, whilst Soi was working towards this exhibition, the Indian state of Kashmir had its autonomous relationship with India revoked. It was split into two parts along religious lines (Muslim and Buddhist) and its state-hood was terminated. Kashmir has long identified itself with the Palestinian struggle. 1947 marked Indian independence from British rule, and the beginning of Kashmir's quest for autonomy. In that same year, the UN voted to end the British Mandate in Palestine, leading to an event called Nakba, or 'The Catastrophe' by Palestinians, and the founding of the State of Israel in 1948. For Soi, it became imperative to include his ongoing work with craftsmen in Kashmir in this exhibition.

The Ramallah based composer Dirar Kalash was commissioned to compose a sound-piece that connects the works which resulted from the journey through Palestine, to the installation containing works relating to Kashmir.

Soi has been engaging with the term anamorphosis as a metaphor for the distortions that are caused by a disturbed political climate. Anamorphosis is the distortion of an image in such a way that the viewer can only see it from one viewpoint. This kind of distortion has been used since medieval times to hide images. A famous example of this technique is used by Hans Holbein to depict a skull in his painting *The Ambassadors* (1533). In this exhibition Soi experiments with this technique in drawings of landscapes made as he went across the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel.

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Room 1

Yalla Yasmeen! (2019) is a video work based upon Soi's time in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel. The video uses an essay style. Text that is conversational is collaged over still and moving images and drawings. Different registers are stitched together so that a polyphonic narrative can unfold, allowing multiple viewpoints. The film's sequence is structured into chapters, where encounters that left an impression on Soi are unfolded and opened to reflection. For example, the hesitation evident in Yasmeen, a young girl, who sees men diving from high upon the embankment in Akka down into the Mediterranean and wants to follow them. In a visit to

the farmlands of Deir Ballot Soi finds himself in the midst of a community of women farmers who speak perfect Spanish, having returned from exile in Venezuela to maintain ancestral lands. A stop in Bettir during the festival of Eid finds him looking down upon an Israeli railway that follows the armistice line that separated Israel from Jordan until 1967.

Whilst understanding the experience of the sublime in this landscape comes from a sense of its complex history, Soi's interest lies in personal encounters which in their everyday prosaicness shed light on life in a land that is occupied and where freedom is limited.



Cover and this page Stills from *Yalla Yasmeen!* Video, approx 20 minutes loop, 2019

Right *Bettir* (detail), acrylic and pencil on linen, 50 x 50cm, 2019

Far right *Piggyback*, acrylic on papier-mâché, 25.5 x 25.5cm, 2017;
Kingfisher, acrylic on papier-mâché, 25.5 x 25.5cm, 2017

Room 2

In this room drawings, tracings and collages are pinned to a large modular structure. This is a selection of works, some of which Soi used to produce the experimental form of the video *Yalla Yasmeen!*. The specially designed structure, with points of visibility and sections that are blocked off, partitions which are interconnected yet separate, hints at Soi's experiences during his time in Palestine.

Portraiture became an important subject of these drawings — Soi pays tribute to the people he met and their stories that were collated and then condensed into the video. Soi has also

extended his use of anamorphosis, a technique which he has used in previous work, in images he has made of the landscape. Its resultant distortions point to the fact that any representation of the landscape in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel is necessarily a political gesture.

Silverpoint, a medieval drawing technique, is used to etch out some of the images. Silverpoint oxidizes over time, adding a temporal quality to the artwork. Soi's use of silverpoint connects his drawing to photography, which he uses frequently as a tool within his work.



Room 3 (downstairs)

Soi has been visiting Srinagar since 2009 and engaging with artisans there, in part to gain an understanding of this troubled border region. Kashmir is India's northernmost state and since 1947 (the year the subcontinent rid itself of British rule) it has been the site of a separatist movement. The works shown here are the most recent of Soi's immersions within the atelier of the master craftsman Fayaz Jan with whom he has been developing objects that explore the region's Sufi history. The tiles are made of papier-mâché, a medieval import from Iran, with motifs painted on by hand. In medieval times, Sufi saints travelled from Central Asia and Iran to Kashmir spreading Islam. They preached the importance of craft traditions that would keep people employed and healthily occupied.

In this body of work Soi utilises his archive of images, mainly taken from the media. These images are used as

outlines which the craftsmen have filled in by hand with traditional Kashmiri motifs that have been used for centuries. The landscape of Srinagar is conjured in the work *Nigeen Lake* (2019), named after the lake that borders the city. Local flora and fauna emerge from the patterns appropriated from the local Islamic architecture which Soi has been observing over the years.

The walls which surround this installation are painted black and contain drawings and texts traced by hand in chalk that add context to the installation. These include notes Soi made whilst working with the craftsmen, records of conversations about the art of making, as well as sections of legal texts such as the United Nations' resolution number forty-seven, made in 1948, which called for a plebiscite in the region that would allow the residents to choose their future with Pakistan or India. This is no longer a choice open to them today.



Artist biography

Praneet Soi was born 1971, Kolkata, West Bengal, India. Following studies in India and the USA, Soi moved to the Netherlands in 2002, and divides his time between Amsterdam and Kolkata. His work is internationally recognised for his explorations of socio-political nuances and media representations. His practice incorporates traditional methods of miniature painting and sculpture, as well as time-based media such as video and sound. Recent solo exhibitions include *Third Factory-From Kashmir to Lisbon via Caldas*, at Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon in 2018; *Notes on Labour* at Dr Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Mumbai in 2017 and *Srinagar* at the Van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven in 2016. Recent group exhibitions include *Blackout* as a part of IFFR 2019 at Kunsthal Rotterdam; the touring exhibition *A Beast, a God and a Line* at the Dhaka Art Summit in Bangladesh, Para Site, Hong Kong and Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw in 2018; and *Universes in Universes*, part of the 6th Asian Biennale, Taichung, Taiwan in 2017.

Events

SEPTEMBER

EMERGE FESTIVAL

Umama Hamido — On Akka's Shore
Saturday 28 September, 7pm £15

Artist Umama Hamido performs this live art piece which combines film, text, sound and rap. *On Akka's Shore* is a fictional memoir of Umama and her friend Tareq Al Jazzar, inspired by hallucinations, dreams and out-of-body experiences.

OCTOBER

ARTIST'S TALK

Praneet Soi

Thursday 3 October, 7pm FREE

Artist Praneet Soi speaks with curator Reem Fadda about his new and existing bodies of work in our current exhibition, alongside his wider practice.

FAMILY FUN

Kan Ya Makan

Saturday 5 October, 2.30pm FREE

Come along for interactive stories of wisdom and wiles from Arab folklore. Here you will meet talking animals, brave young girls, misbehaving princes and join in animated songs. Followed by an arts and crafts activity.

TALK

Munir Fasheh — Hidden Treasures
Wednesday 16 October, 7pm FREE

Learning theorist Munir Fasheh presents a special interactive session which proposes that in order to understand our contemporary world we need to look not only at what is presented, invented and produced, but also on what has been made invisible, belittled or termed useless.

TALK

Adania Shibli: I'm Not to Speak
my Language

Thursday 24 October, 7pm FREE

Author Adania Shibli examines silence as a creative force, tool of oppression and deletion, as well as a space of refuge or means for resistance. The talk will weave between personal experiences and reflections, and those of Edward Said and Aime Cesaire.

LECTURE PERFORMANCE

Bisan Abu-Eisheh

Wednesday 30 October, 7pm FREE

Artist Bisan Abu-Eisheh presents a lecture performance informed by his artistic practice and academic research. This event will reflect on issues such as national identity, mobility, migration and socio-political injustice, particularly in the Palestinian context.