

# Shahzia Sikander: Parallax

September 10 - December 6, 2015



Shahzia Sikander, *Walled States*, 2012; ink and gouache on paper; image courtesy of the artist.

**MEDFORD, MA - The Tufts University Art Gallery at the Shirley and Alex Aidekman Arts Center** proudly presents the U.S. museum debut of **Shahzia Sikander: Parallax**, from September 10 through December 6, 2015. A keynote presentation with the artist will take place on October 15 at 6:00 pm in Alumnae Lounge at The Aidekman Arts Center.

Internationally-recognized artist Shahzia Sikander (b. 1969, Pakistan) presents her first immersive animation **Parallax**, with music and sound by composer Du Yun, conceived in the United Arab Emirates and first appearing at the Sharjah Biennale in 2013. Related paintings, drawings, and photographs are also included in the Tufts exhibition.

Inspired by the U.A.E.'s unique geography and culture at the Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf, Sikander's 15-minute animation is constructed from hundreds of drawings and paintings, in which abstract, representational, and textual forms coexist and jostle for domination. Themes of dissonance and disruption echo the power tensions that have characterized the region's modern history as a British protectorate and the U.A.E.'s establishment as a nation state in 1971.

Mesmerizing flows of imagery build in operatic intensity. Sikander's visual vocabulary includes recurring motifs such as Gopi hair, "Christmas trees" (oil pumping mechanisms), "singing spheres," and forearms with clenched fists. These motifs are combined to cultivate new associations within the animation's digital space. Undulating color fields create pitch and fervor, as human voices recite poetry in Arabic, creating tension and rhythm that oscillates with environmental sounds.

A book published by the Tufts University Art Gallery, with an artist's interview by Amy Schlegel, a conversation between Sikander and composer Du Yun, and essays by Ayesha Jalal and Sara Raza, is forthcoming in the spring of 2016.

Shahzia Sikander, *The Cypress Despite its Freedom*, 2013; color photograph; image courtesy of the artist.



# ALSO ON VIEW...

## Last Folio

September 10 – December 6, 2015

Koppelman Gallery

Serendipity led the Canadian-Slovakian photographer Yuri Dojc a decade ago to an abandoned Jewish school in eastern Slovakia, where time has stood still since the day in 1942 when all those attending it were deported to concentration camps, primarily Auschwitz. Its other contents remain untouched—books and notebooks with corrections on desks and shelves, reports, birth certificates, accounting ledgers, even sugar still in the kitchen cupboards—witnesses to a once thriving culture.



Photo by Yuri Dojc

Together with British media producer Katya Krausova and a documentary film team, Dojc traveled across Slovakia and found dozens of similar Jewish schools, synagogues, cemeteries, and concentration camp survivors. A 9-minute documentary film by Krausova charting Dojc's personal journey is incorporated into an immersive environment of images surrounding viewers. Dojc's color photographs treat the abandoned, disintegrating books, schools, synagogues, and cemeteries like the survivors they are—each one photographed like a portrait, preserved in its decrepit, poignant beauty. Twenty-eight black-and-white photographic portraits of Slovakian Holocaust survivors—all in their eighties—confront visitors at the entrance to the exhibition.

*Last Folio* (exhibition, film, and book) charts a personal journey in cultural memory and reflects on the universal losses of the Holocaust. The artists will be in residence October 5 to 9, 2015 at the Center for the Humanities at Tufts. A film screening, panel discussion and reception, and a Shabbat dinner with storytelling are scheduled for that week. Visit [artgallery.tufts.edu](http://artgallery.tufts.edu) for more information.



Sophia Ainslie, *In Person—574-4*, 2014

## In Person—574: Sophia Ainslie

September 10 - December 6, 2015  
Remis Sculpture Court

This exhibition explores the creation and installation of a monumental site-specific art commission for the new Collaborative Learning and Innovation Complex at 574 Boston Avenue on Tufts' main Medford campus by Boston-based artist and Tufts alum Sophia Ainslie (MFA 2001). Ainslie's seven-panel mural, titled **In Person—574**, is her largest work to date and the first to use digital printing methods; it spans over 6,000 square feet and four stories of the building's central stairwell. The Gallery exhibition

includes five of the seven original paintings created as the basis for the site-specific commission, as well as materials related to Ainslie's creative process, and a slideshow documenting the mural's creation and installation.

Ainslie's imagery focuses on the visual continuum between interior and exterior, the microscopic and macroscopic, and diagnostic imaging technologies and the surrounding landscape. Ainslie's work combines X-rays, territorial mappings, and sketches of places she has experienced first-hand to compose a "collage-like space." Beginning with drawing, then extending into painting, Ainslie's practice melds observation and imagination, and results, as she says, "in a relationship of connections and disconnections between inside and outside, mark-making against flat color, absence and presence."

The art installation is made possible by an endowed fund to purchase art by Tufts graduates established by Dr. Joan M. Henricks, J69, and her husband Alan Henricks. Ainslie will lead a 'CreateDate' workshop on October 1.