

SURFACE, TIME, MEMORY, ILLUSION

Curated by Jamila Adeli

Galerie ISA is proud to present a Summer group show titled '*Surface, Time, Memory, Illusion*', Curated by Jamila Adeli. The show spotlights the work of a diverse roster of artists from India and across the world.

Known for their abstractions of form and a proclivity for minimalism, these artists represent a multiplicity in practice, dimensionality and theory. But running through their works are common threads—an exploration of materiality, the tension within liminal spaces, a spotlight on the cycle of nature and a challenge to engage and explore beyond just the surface.

These artists use material tension and heightened surface textures to bring into focus a play of light, palette and the whimsy of illusion.

Mekhala Bahl's (b.1980, New Delhi, India) mindscapes are a combination of surface etching, collages, mark-making and detailed layering. Using multiple mediums and a distinctive colour palette to signify emotional and psychological landscapes, the resulting works are highly variegated, textured and complex.

Vipeksha Gupta's (b.1989, New Delhi) deeply meditative practice draws on intense, lustrous pigments that are applied in stratified layers with each one subtly visible beneath the next. Gupta's structured folds have become an identifiable marker, depicting a linearity in her journey and a horizon filled with possibilities.

Gregor Hildebrandt (b, 1974, Bad Homburg, Germany) pushes the boundaries by utilizing analog materials (now considered archaic) to create a body of work that references music, cinema and underground subcultures. By exploring the materiality of vinyls, magnetic records and compact discs in paintings, sculptures and installations, he crafts compositions that are simultaneously nostalgic as well as futuristic.

Concepts of time, place and love are central to **Gabriel Mills'** (b. 1992, New Rochelle, New York) thesis. Classically trained, Mills roots his paintings in traditional academic principles bringing forward not only a unique form of expression but a portal to a deeper journey of introspection and quiet reflection.

The liminal space between presence and absence, between portraiture and still life, is where **Daniel Mohr's** (b. 1976, Bad Hersfeld, Germany) practice lies. A suspension of time, a dreamlike state and a play on light and space seep through his oil painted canvases.

The topography of natural forms, the tactility of textiles, the richness of casein and gesso and a play on materiality all channel **David Murphy's** (b.1983, Newcastle Upon Tyne) exploration of technological advancement and its relationship with the natural world.

Hiroe Saeki's (b. 1978, Osaka Japan) narrative-focused, delicate works also reference nature and its mysteries. Using dripping Japanese ink and the pencil, her monochromatic works represent the cycle of life, a renewed understanding of self, and her journey through an existential crisis.

Antonio Santin's (b.1978, Madrid, Spain) painting-sculpture hybrid has long been appreciated for their complex detailing, tactility and clever trompe o'leil effects. Using the carpet as a metaphor, Santin teases the viewer, challenging them to see underneath the layers and interpret all that's unseen and unsaid. It's in the transitional spaces—real and imaginary, implicit and explicit—that the magic happens; the results are often both highly unsettling and rewarding.

Imbued with an appearance of scientific rationality, **Conrad Shawcross'**(b.1977 in London, UK) sculptures explore subjects that lie on the borders of geometry and philosophy, physics and metaphysics. Inspired by various technologies, the artist's work may retain in appearance the authority of machinery – yet, it remains enigmatic, filled with paradox and wonder. By excavating the rhythmic cycle of nature and the complex connections between technology and the environment, these works highlight omniscient conversations and concerns.

While these artists are moulding classic disciplines and traditions in very individual ways, a shared commitment to provocation is what unites them. Through elements of mark-making, repetition and material tension, they open up a space for deep contemplation, a challenge to see beyond, and to view and interpret these works on an intensely personal level.

- *Priyanka R. Khanna*