



**BEYOND  
MEASURE:**  
DOMESTICATING DISTANCE







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DOMESTICATING DISTANCE

SURENDRA LAWOTI  
TAZEEN QAYYUM  
MEERA MARGARET SINGH  
ASMA SULTANA  
ABDULLAH M. I. SYED

CURATED BY AMBEREEN SIDDIQUI

THE ROBERT McLAUGHLIN GALLERY  
SAVAC (SOUTH ASIAN VISUAL ARTS CENTRE)

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## INTRODUCTION

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The seed for *Beyond Measure: Domesticating Distance* was planted a few years ago when I met Shashi Bhatia, Founding Chair of the Indo-Canadian Cultural Association of Durham. This group, established in 2006, partnered with the gallery for one of our monthly RMG Friday events and Bhatia was accompanied by a number of its university-aged members. She would later tell me that the South Asian diaspora was one of the fastest growing communities in Durham Region, comprising some 30% of its population and representing various South Asian countries.

We clearly needed to bring contemporary artistic voices to the RMG to reflect the region's quickly changing demographic.

Sharlene Bamboat, Artistic Director of Toronto-based SAVAC (South Asian Visual Arts Centre) generously met with me and suggested that we engage Ambereen Siddiqui to curate an exhibition at the RMG, and offered to have SAVAC partner with us on this project. With SAVAC's support, we have been able to organize the exhibition and this catalogue with the assistance of an Ontario Arts Council's Culturally Diverse Curatorial Project grant for which we are grateful.

Siddiqui has curated a moving exhibition about the diasporic experiences of five artists: Surendra Lawoti, Tazeen Qayyum, Meera Margaret Singh, Asma Sultana, and Abdullah M. I. Syed. Each individual's story is unique, yet Siddiqui, in her insightful essay and choice of works has woven these experiences together in such a way as to make a compelling whole. I would like to thank her, especially, for bringing this project to fruition.

The RMG is dedicated to sharing, exploring and engaging with our communities through the continuing story of modern and contemporary Canadian art. To reflect all of our visitors and their experiences in the projects that we present is vital to continuing that story.

Linda Jansma  
Senior Curator,  
The Robert McLaughlin Gallery

## FOREWORD

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**This exhibition is an invitation for arts** institutions to interrogate the composition of the Canadian contemporary art canon. Who is represented within it? What thematics are valued? What role can institutions play to change the canon to reflect the diversity of artists that exist within this country? *Beyond Measure: Domesticating Distance* challenges the default whiteness of contemporary art in Canada by showcasing the works of artists who incorporate approaches and concerns from a variety of artistic traditions. Rather than having exhibitions dedicated to discrete ethnic enclaves, the challenge is to absorb them into the Canadian arts ecology and to change the composition of it entirely.

The RMG has a significant collection of Canadian contemporary art, and by hosting exhibitions like this one, is helping to facilitate a broader dialogue that could potentially reshape the definition of what constitutes contemporary art in Canada. This exhibition highlights the diversity of the work that SAVAC members make and the types of themes that they address. Thematically unified, Ambereen Siddiqui's curation centres on the experiences of migration, loss, conflict and security, highlighting the numerous ways in which the artists must negotiate their identities. It is partnerships between organisations like SAVAC and the RMG that begin the process of mentoring curators of colour and developing the exhibition infrastructure to support their work.

Indu Vashist  
Executive Director,  
SAVAC (South Asian Visual Arts Centre)

## A REFLECTION

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As curatorial mentor to Ambereen Siddiqui, I have had the opportunity to delve deeper into my own personal experience of “domesticating distance.” With physical distance and distance of time away from two “homelands”, memories evaporate and cultural ties thin. Through observation of those who stayed, projections and constructions are made of what life might have been, balancing what has been lost for what has been gained. Erratic, unexpected yearnings for a sense of place and of life experiences from a time gone by give rise to curiosity of customs and community-belonging that simultaneously feel recognizable yet intangible.

For those born in their home country, there is an inherent sense of belonging. For those who move to another land, there exists a dichotomy of experience where, once removed from the homeland, there is a tendency to hold on to known traditions and customs while establishing a sense of place in a new land. This is more readily accomplished when the immediate community also aligns itself with the same roots. There is a collective experience with which one can identify and find comfort, guidance and support in the new land while reminiscing about the old. Establishing a sense of place and belonging when the known community is not easily accessed manifests loss, loneliness and a sense of the Self, abandoned, something only time and slow integration may help remedy.

Cultural plurality manifests yet another dichotomy where, while working hard to make a new home, allegiance with the homeland lingers. While understanding the reasons for having made the physical separation, a compulsion arises to always keep a watchful eye on the political and socio-cultural goings-on to which one would have been exposed. Successes of the homeland are celebrated from afar, reveling in the ability of a country to morph and grow in the face of inherited geographical, political and socio-economic challenges. *Should I have stayed to be part of the triumph? Who would I have been, what would I have become, and would the same person be standing here?* One also mourns from afar and experiences the agony of their original community’s losses and continued conflicts. There is a feeling of helplessness or guilt for having distanced away from these troubling circumstances, for having forgotten about the issues or fateful event for an hour, a day, a month or more while we go about our daily routine. *Should I have stayed to be part of the loss? Who would I have been, what would I have become, and would the same person be standing here?*

For the diasporic individual, while becoming a more integrated part of the larger community there is a slow erosion of the original cultural Self. With the welcoming of new peoples and new traditions there is also a sharing of common values and intentions for living the newly idealized

life. The erosion is of varying proportions dependant on the changing association with the diasporic cultural community. Some are very conscious of the loss that may occur, and hold fast to cultural norms, language and traditions. Others, intent on solidifying the bond with the new society and wanting seamless integration, welcome the cultural norms and language of their adopted community. The generations that follow experience a cultural plurality in which a new identity is formed from domesticating cultural distance. Cognitive sense is made from the absence of the founding social structure of the original community, from culture and tradition adapted, and from a need to find belonging within an integrated community.

In *Beyond Measure: Domesticating Distance* the artists; Tazeen Qayyum, Abdullah M. I. Syed, Asma Sultana, Meera Margaret Singh and Surendra Lawoti find the means to express a range of experience and emotion, from loneliness to connectivity, from acceptance to quandary of the newly evolved Self, and in so doing, communicate the domestication of distance to both the birth and adopted community. As the world becomes increasingly globalized and media reports on war dwarf the successes of the South Asian homeland, there is for each a personal every day challenge of overcoming cultural preconceptions, of finding understanding within oneself of these constructions, an unpremeditated response

to remind those around us that the actions of a few do not define the whole. Within this experience of complex socio-political influences, one continues to define, redefine and find expression for relationships with others, with homeland, and with oneself within the diasporic socio-cultural experience. Home and homeland, while continuously needing to be reconciled, become two very different entities—and with time and new generations, may one day become the same again.

Seema Hollenberg

While flying one loses sense of the distance covered. Large landmasses and endless oceans are circumvented. Representations on maps show formations and demarcations describing this distance bookended by immigration lines at airports. Still elusive beyond scaled portrayals, the imprecise tool of memory, recalibrating at each recall, begins measuring distance as the difference between there and here.

The diasporic experience lends itself to examining the fissures and dislocations caused by distance and its perception. Distance, in addition to being a gap, can be viewed as an opening, an opportunity for perspective. *Beyond Measure: Domesticating Distance* is an exploration by five contemporary artists of the voids and brims of having lived in more than one place. Tazeen Qayyum, Abdullah M. I. Syed, Asma Sultana, Meera Margaret Singh and Surendra Lawoti critically dissect cultural duality and the resulting hybrid identities. They share accounts that add to an overarching collective narrative that has come to describe this in-between space. Hovering between recollection, narration and reflection their works record acts of searching for the familiar in the foreign, of repurposing the past in the present and of locating oneself within displacement. Working with performance & installation, photography & sculpture, writing & sewing and moving image & text, their multidisci-

plinary practices echo the diversity of their layered experiences.

Emanating from the personal, each artist lends a deliberate autobiographical significance to their work. There is an emphasis on the self as each artist includes their own image; Qayyum uses a mirrored reflection of herself in a video, Syed creates his silhouette in a landscape, Sultana uses her hair to embroider fabric while Lawoti and Singh photograph themselves, their family and friends during their yearlong exchange of images. Their bodies, and the corresponding use of them, are racialized, gendered, and charged with the politics of negotiating identities in multiple spaces. Their bodies house the difference between there and here.



BEYOND MEASURE: DOMESTICATING DISTANCE

INTERCESSION:  
TAZEEN QAYYUM  
ABDULLAH M. I. SYED



- 1 A translation from an Urdu turn of phrase that describes the devaluing of human life.
- 2 Interview with Salwat Ali: "Diaspora art: It's all about the little things..." *DAWN* Newspaper Oct. 27, 2013.

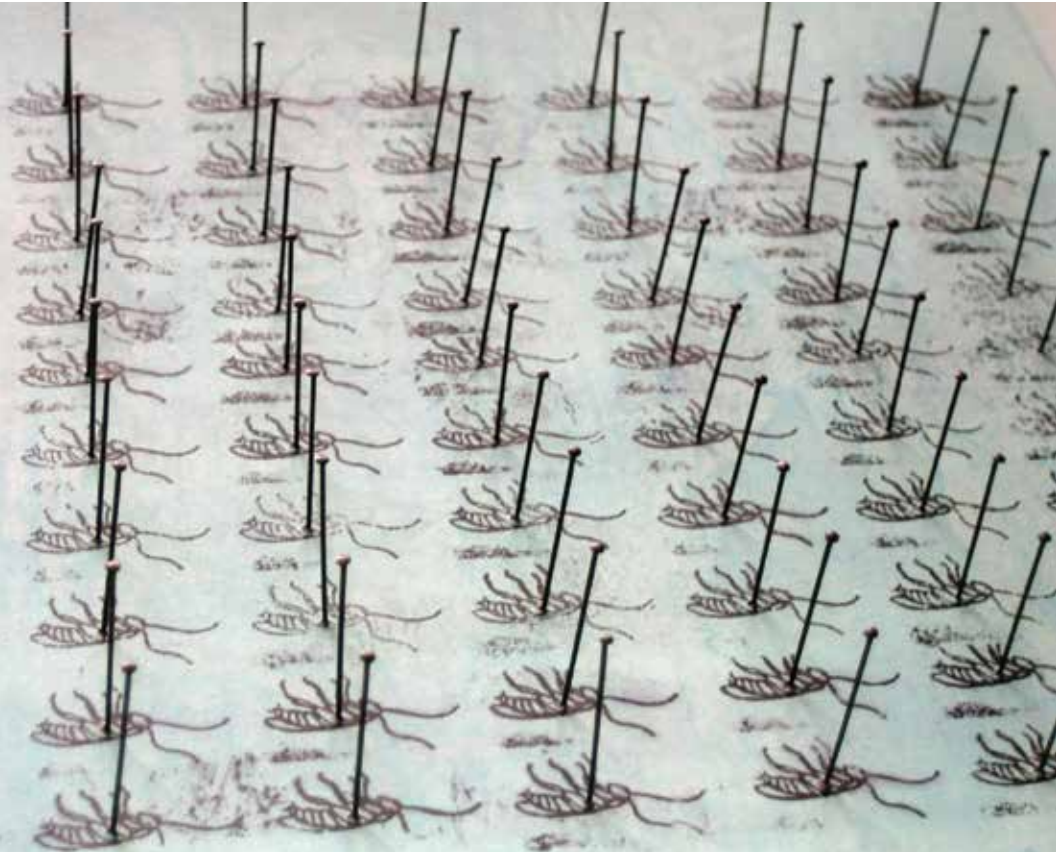
An intrusion of red, laser-cut acrylic cockroaches march into a perfect circle. Their bodies make intricate patterns, limbs and tentacles lining up to create something out of a kaleidoscope. Cockroaches first appeared in Qayyum's work a few months before her move to Canada in 2003. She was responding to a narrowing focus on her home country, Pakistan, as post-9/11 narratives began unfolding. For Qayyum, the cockroaches served as a metaphor for the many who were starting to die "like insects"<sup>1</sup> in the War on Terror. Having started out as minutely detailed paintings mimicking entomology displays<sup>2</sup>, the cockroaches have slowly morphed into collections of hundreds of acrylic cutouts within installations. Twelve years on, as the deaths continue, the intimacy and care for each is lost to the multitude, too many to account for. From being motion-less depictions that were pinned down for review, they have taken on a life of their own, animated by their numbers. Chosen for their ability to survive, they have done just that in Qayyum's work, no longer categorized, labeled and encased at a safe distance, they have risen from the dead and started encroaching. This iteration of *Infiltration* is Qayyum's largest to date. The addition of the outlines of the cockroaches stamped on the adjacent wall corresponds with the effects that this war has had, slowly seeping into lives that are watching it unfold, even when from a distance.

Feelings of vulnerability have a Pakistani diaspora on the defensive as a steady surge in surveillance, discrimination and intolerance are internalized. The increase in Islamophobia is countered by a helplessness and anger stemming from losing any sense of control in shaping the religious, cultural and national identities that are swiftly being lost to violence. It is perhaps the manifestation of this divide that led Qayyum to create the video piece, *Blur* that accompanies this installation. The video starts with her applying *kajal* to her eyes. She continues, at first thickening the perfect lines in and around her eyes. Slowly the black *kohl* starts smearing under her eyes and eventually down her face. An everyday ritual becomes increasingly tense and uncomfortable to watch and takes on a much starker meaning. This self-infliction speaks to underlying feelings of implication as we continue with our routines while the effects of being observers starts taking its toll. Like the patterns created with the bodies of cockroaches, repetition produces a jarring play between adornment and destruction. The reiterations serve as omens, one as beautifully blind vermin, the other as a compulsive witness.





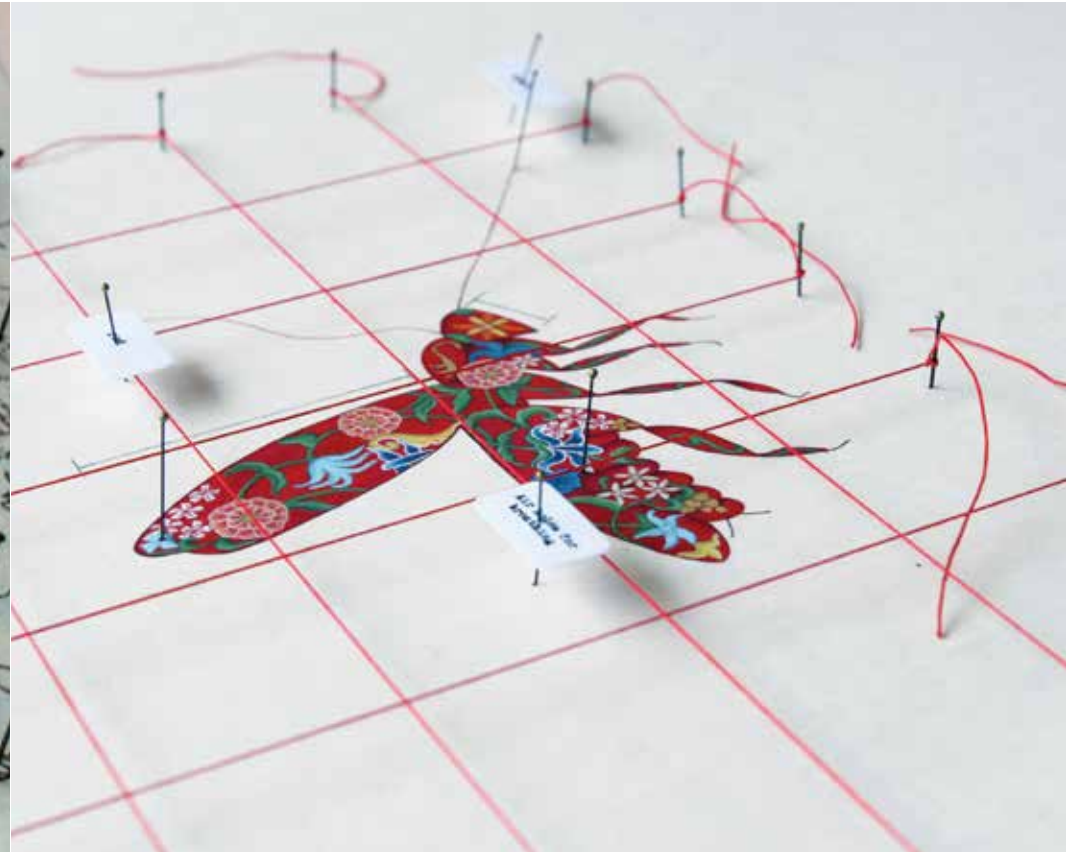
*Keep out of reach of Children III (detail)*  
2007



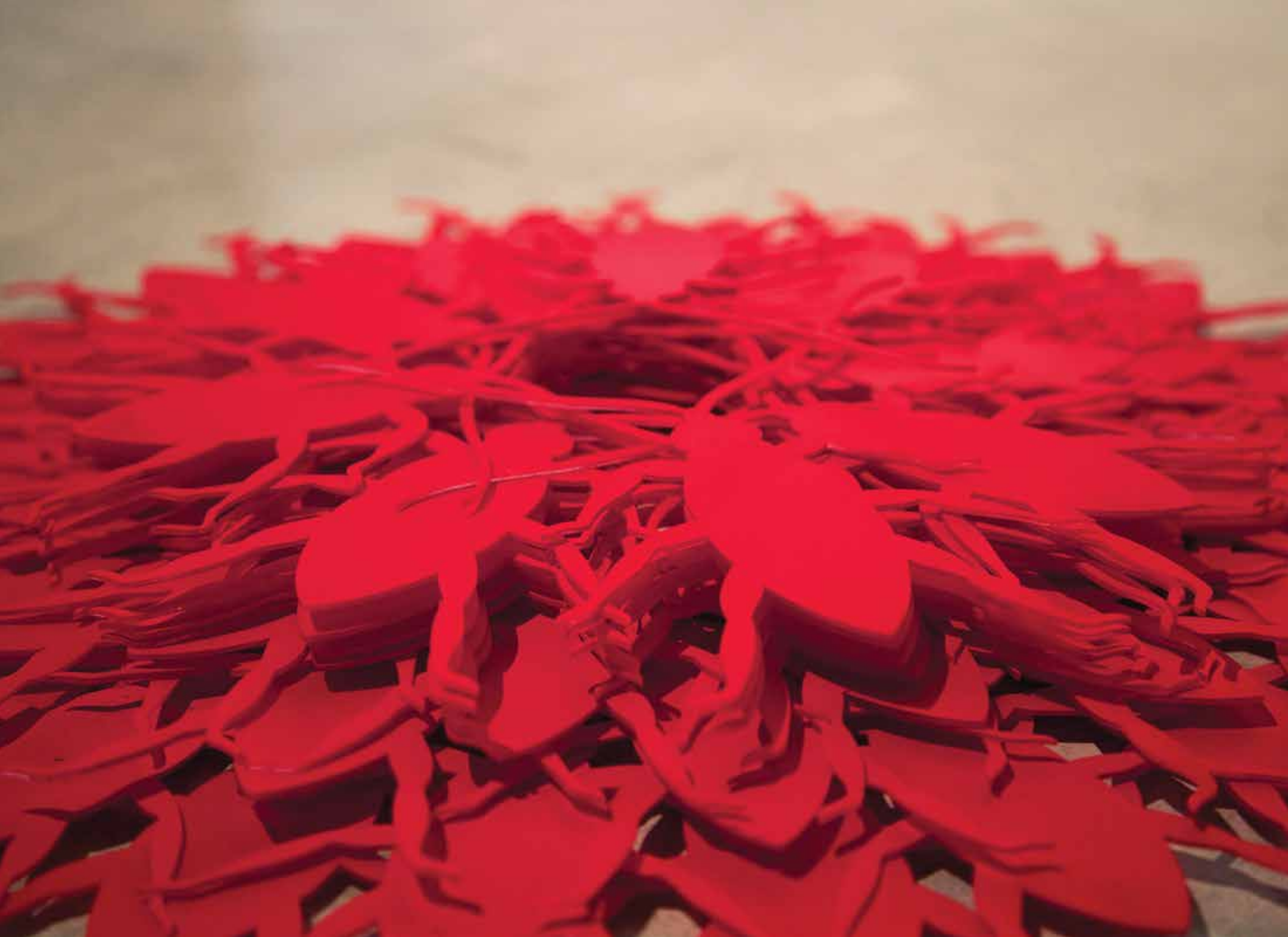
Right: *Test on a Small Area Before Use -III (detail)*  
2007

pp. 22-23: *Infiltration/Inflow (detail)*  
2015

pp. 24-25: *Blur (detail)*  
2015











A minimalist angular grid pattern is projected as the shadow of a circular rug, countering the intricate round made with acrylic cockroaches a few feet away. Box cutter knife blades attached together in the shape of drones hang overhead to cast this shadow. Viewers of the work are invited with a dare, to walk under the blades, to hold a filtered fear, to experience a simulated anxiety. *The Flying Rug of Drones* by Sydney based artist Abdullah M. I. Syed captures the fascination and fear of the East, referencing both the magical rug from Arabian Nights as well as the carpet bombings with drones that have become a hallmark of American intervention. Used by the hijackers in the attack on the twin towers, the box cutter blades bear significance as they are fashioned into representations of the retaliation. Originally from Karachi, Syed shares Qayyum's sense of witnessing Pakistan's mercurial bearings from afar. Their responses, like those of so many artists from the Pakistani diaspora, can't escape the ripples the politics of their homeland creates. In using the symbol of the flying rug, Syed references the myths and legends created around covering distances instantly, while acknowledging that the drone, in being operated remotely, has perhaps surpassed this fantasy.

Syed spent the years immediately following 9/11 in America, before settling in Australia and has experienced the rise in racial profiling in both spaces. *Soft Target*

is an ongoing series of performances in which he photographs himself standing on a make-shift target that he brings along with him while travelling. By turning the lens on himself, he gives us the markers of the target: young, male, South Asian, in front of iconic landmarks that identify each of the cities. The triptych here shows him in front of the New York skyline. The work can also be seen as an embracing of being singled out, a distancing from being viewed as part of a community. A backlash to being associated with religious extremists, where each person is responsible for only their own actions.







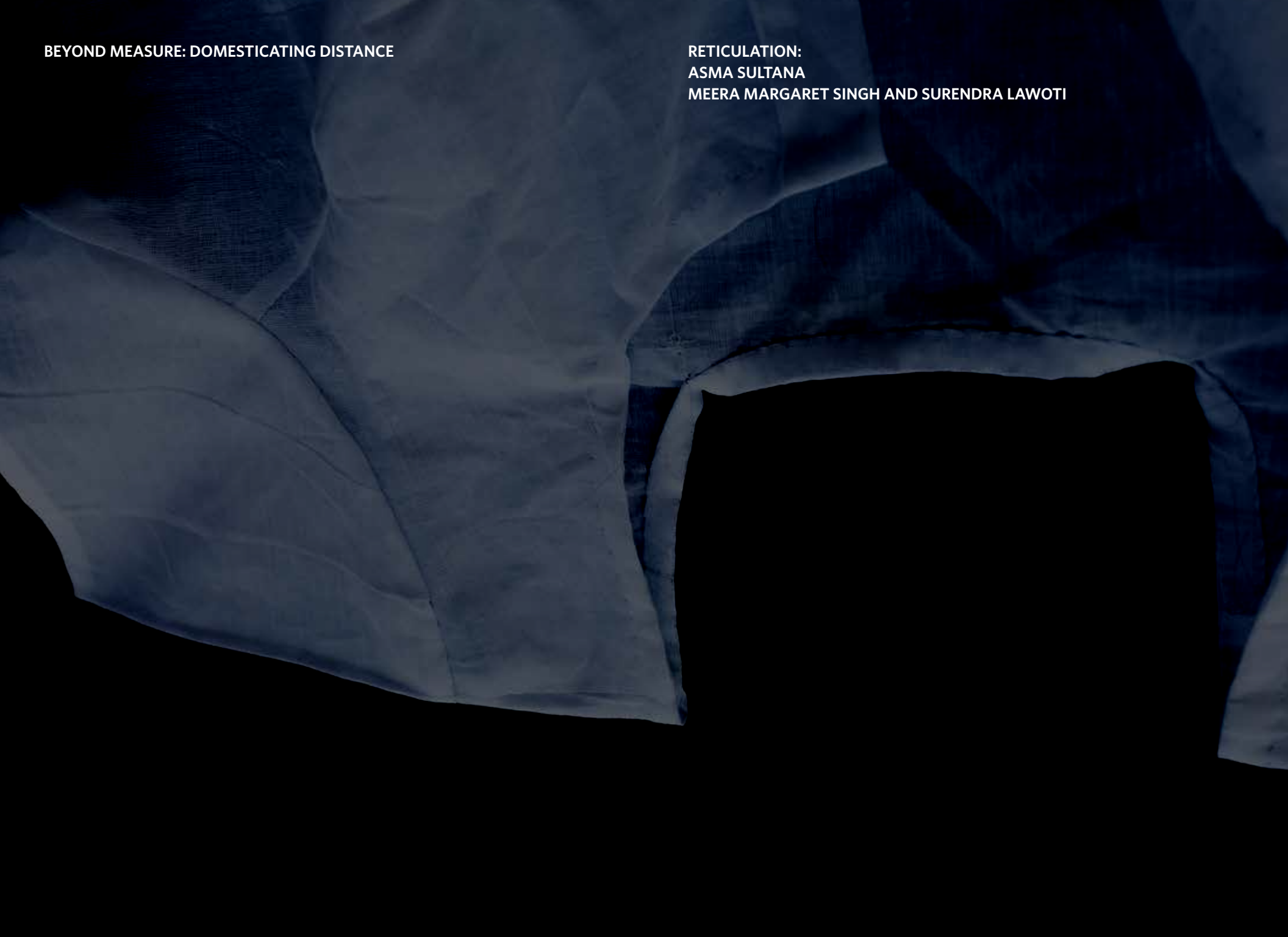






BEYOND MEASURE: DOMESTICATING DISTANCE

RETICULATION:  
ASMA SULTANA  
MEERA MARGARET SINGH AND SURENDRA LAWOTI



## ASMA SULTANA

*Today I have erased the number of my house  
And removed the stain of identity from my street's forehead  
And I have wiped off the directions on each road  
But if you really want to meet me  
Then knock at the doors of every country  
Every city, every street  
And wherever the glimpse of a free spirit exists  
That will be my home<sup>3</sup>*

Asma Sultana's installation, *Wherever The Glimpse of a Free Spirit Exists That Will Be My Home* draws inspiration from "Mera Patta" a Punjabi poem by the late Indian poet Amrita Pritam. A white petticoat and blouse are stitched with dark strands of Sultana's hair. White fabric, enough for a sari, is embroidered with patterns of waves creating a subtle textual relationship between figure and ground. Growing up in Bangladesh, Sultana's long hair was a distinctive part of her identity. After moving to England and then Canada, her hair thinned, becoming the physical manifestation of the loss she felt in leaving Dhaka and relocating to London, and then Toronto. She began collecting the fallen hair as a way to mitigate the loss, to accumulate it, to assess it. She used the hair to embroider a series of autobiographical artworks that signified things she felt she had lost. The act of embroidering proved cathartic, comforting in its familiarity, invoking memories of her childhood when she had been taught the art both at school and home. The stream

of consciousness sketches that she creates with her needle wander between tradition and trepidation, using patterns she has committed to memory and following what the new medium prompts. Sultana also views the use of a needle as therapeutic, as healing, in having the ability to bring distinct entities together<sup>4</sup>. In repurposing her hair, Sultana began viewing displacement as the possibility for renewal. She uses white as a reference to celebrations of the New Year in Bangladesh, for which women wear the colour as a symbol of beginning anew. The wave-like pattern depicts water, and its ability to find and make space for itself, morphing to adapt to its surroundings, while maintaining its own attributes.

- 3 Amrita Pritam, "Mera Patta," translation from Punjabi by Raza Rumi. (Dehli: Rajkamal Paperbacks, 1983).
- 4 Email conversation with Asma Sultana, April 1st, 2015.



Previous, left, and right: *Wherever the Glimpse of  
a Free Spirit Exists That Will Be My Home* (detail),  
2015

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Next Spread: *Wherever the Glimpse of a Free  
Spirit Exists That Will Be My Home* (detail),  
2015

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## MEERA MARGARET SINGH AND SURENDRA LAWOTI

5 Email conversation with Surendra Lawoti, April 26, 2015.

Top: Meera Margaret Singh # 25  
Bottom: Surendra Lawoti # 25

*Of Light and Longing* is the culmination of a year-long exchange between photographers Meera Margaret Singh and Surendra Lawoti. Starting in January 2014, the weekly, and at times bi-weekly, exchange was set up as a visual dialogue engaging the diasporic experience within each of their practices. The project coincided with significant events in both artists' lives. Lawoti married in Nepal in December 2013, with his wife joining him in Toronto in August 2014, while Singh had her first baby in January 2014. As both navigated their new roles, their conversation meandered to include these influences, sometimes as overt gestures portraying the new additions in their images, and at other times as subtle reflections of these changes in the capturing of a feeling or emotion through the characters, locations, and even light in their work.

As Lawoti waited for his wife to join him, his works exuded a loneliness, his images in the exchange included figures as singular entities. From August on, his work started focusing on relationships, not always romantic, but the images almost always had two or more people in the frame. He attributes this shift to a boredom he felt at the time in depicting only one person.<sup>5</sup> Singh's inclusion of her life events was more deliberate, she photographed her son, and her partner and her mother became ready subjects as she documented the changing relationships. The surroundings in her images are often significant in marking

these bonds, while Lawoti's portraits exude the quiet sadness of reflecting on another time and place.

Under the often-contemplative photographs is an effort to communicate, to create meaning from one another's experiences, to find resonance and convey a narrative. The conversation flows, only to break off, and then pick up again, evidence of the inbetween-ness of the diasporic experience, as well as the medium of photography used to record it. Situating oneself between multiple cultures, and using photography, a medium that is inherently believable, yet malleable, leaves ruptures and openings within the discourse. These spaces lend themselves to interpretation for the viewer to identify with or imagine narratives as they negotiate and navigate triggers for their own memories.

The back and forth of the exchange provides a recurring pattern of a call and response that gives structure to the work. This use of repetition to provide stability reverberates throughout the exhibition. Patterns are sewn again and again, kohl is applied over and over, and a multitude of cockroaches and drones are arrayed to create cohesive wholes. Fragmentations of space and emotions that are difficult to process are endowed with rhythm and regularity. This impulse to create order from the alienating and the chaotic; to cultivate familiarity through the habitual, is the desire to domesticate distance.























Previous spread: Meera Margaret Singh # 19c  
Left: Surendra Lawoti # 6  
Right: Meera Margaret Singh # 34

pp. 58-59: Surendra Lawoti # 26  
p. 60: Surendra Lawoti # 36  
p. 61: Surendra Lawoti # 18  
pp. 62-63: Meera Margaret Singh # 12















**Surendra Lawoti** moved to the US after completing high school in Kathmandu. He received his BA in Photography from Columbia College Chicago (1999) and his MFA in Photography from Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston (2005). Surendra's work stems from his interest in social issues, politics, image-making and activism. His work has been exhibited internationally including at Gallery 44 and Harbourfront Centre in Toronto; Les Territoires in Montreal; O'Hare International Airport and Glass Curtain Gallery in Chicago; Gallery Kayafas, Photographic Resource Center and Tufts University Gallery in Boston; Nepal Art Council in Kathmandu; the Goethe-Institut in New Delhi; Fries Museum in Leeuwarden, The Netherlands; ArtScience Museum in Singapore and Galeria Ateneo Porfirio Barba Jacob in Medellín, Colombia. He has received awards from Artadia (Chicago), Ontario Arts Council, Toronto Arts Council, City of Chicago and Somerville Arts Council. He now lives in Toronto, where he teaches Photography at the Ontario College of Art and Design University.

**Tazeen Qayyum** is a contemporary miniature painter who received her BFA in Visual Arts from the National College of Arts Lahore, Pakistan (1996). Her work has been shown internationally in both solo and group exhibitions, some of which include

*Holding Pattern* at the Toronto International Pearson Airport (2013), *The Veiled* at the Textile Museum of Canada (2011), *The Rising Tide* at the Mohatta Palace Museum, Pakistan (2010), and *Urban Myths & Modern Fables* at both the University of Sydney, Australia and at the Doris McCarthy Gallery at the University of Toronto Scarborough (2007). Qayyum's work was included in the *10th Asian Biennale* in Dhaka, Bangladesh (2002), the *2nd Painting Biennale* in Tehran, Iran (2002) and was nominated for the Jameel Prize (2013) and K.M. Hunter Award (2014). Qayyum was also awarded a UNESCO bursary (2000) to work and exhibit in Vienna. Qayyum works between Canada and Pakistan, and in addition to her practice, conducts workshops to introduce traditional miniature painting to artists and students.

**Meera Margaret Singh** is a visual artist based in Toronto. She holds a BA in Anthropology and a BFA in Photography from the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg as well as an MFA from Concordia University, Montréal, Québec. Singh has been the recipient of several residencies and awards, including Canada Council for the Arts production/creation grants (2013, 2011, 2009), Toronto Arts Council Visual Arts Grant (2010), Ontario Arts Council Mid-Career Grants (2011, 2013). She has been selected as a participant in an artist residency at the

Art Gallery of Ontario (2015); JACA in Belo Horizonte, Brazil; Banff Centre, Alberta; as the McCain Artist-in-Residence at OCAD University, Toronto and as the summer resident at the Centre for Innovation in Culture and the Arts in Canada in Kamloops, British Columbia. Her work has been included in numerous exhibitions and festivals throughout Canada and internationally. She is currently an instructor in the Photography department at OCAD University in Toronto.

**Asma Sultana** is a Bangladeshi born British visual Artist, currently living and working in Scarborough. She completed her undergraduate work in Drawing and Painting from Bangladesh, and has since trained in London and Toronto in Fine Art and Art History. Sultana has been invited to create solo exhibitions and has participated in many group exhibitions in Canada, England, India and Bangladesh, including *Dance with Me to the End of Love* at the Forest Brook Gallery in Ajax, and *Methodical Mergers* a SAVAC member show at Gallery 1313 in Toronto and group shows at Zainul Gallery and the National Museum in Dhaka. Sultana's works are autobiographical in nature, exploring the narrative of her identity through materials unique to her, including her hair to sew and her fingertips as print impressions. She has been the recipient of several awards including the

Edie Yolles Award and the Matthew David Stein Memorial Scholarship from the Toronto School of Art, as well as the 6th Berger Young Painter's Award from Zainul Gallery in Dhaka.

**Abdullah M. I. Syed** is a Pakistani-born contemporary artist, designer and curator working between Karachi, Sydney, and New York. His art practice weaves between the narratives of east and west, bringing together art historical references and concerns from each. Syed holds a PhD in Art, Design and Media and has an MFA from UNSW Art & Design, Australia (2009). He also holds a BA in Design and M.Ed. from the University of Central Oklahoma, USA (1999 and 2001 respectively). Syed has been featured in seven solo exhibitions and has exhibited in several international group exhibitions and art fairs, most notably at the 4A Center for Contemporary Asian Art in Sydney, Yifu Gallery in Shanghai, Pataka Museum in Porirua, and Mohatta Palace Museum in Karachi. His awards include the Blacktown Art Prize (2010), the UNSW Postgraduate Research Scholarship (2009), and the Individual Artist of Oklahoma Award for Installation (2003). Syed's works for this exhibition have been produced whilst in-residence at Parramatta Artists Studios, Sydney and he is represented by Aicon Gallery in New York.



## EXHIBITION WORKS LIST

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### Tazeen Qayyum

#### *Blur*

2015

Site specific installation, looped video  
and ink stamp on wall  
Installation dimensions variable

#### *Infiltration*

2015

Site specific installation  
Laser-cut acrylic and paint  
12.5 x 240 cm diam.

### Abdullah M. I. Syed

*Soft Target: New World Trade Centre from  
Greenpoint, Brooklyn, New York*

2014

UV Inkjet Print + DIASEC  
457.2 x 127 cm in three parts  
Edition of 3 + AP

#### *The Flying Rug of Drones*

2009 - 2015

Box-cutter knife blades and stainless steel  
Installation dimensions variable

### Asma Sultana

*Wherever the Glimpse of a Free Spirit Exists  
That Will Be My Home*

2015

White cloth and artist's hair  
Installation dimensions variable

### Meera Margaret Singh and Surendra Lawoti

#### *Of Light and Longing*

2014-2015

Projections of photographs, video and text  
Installation dimensions variable

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### Catalogue works by Tazeen Qayyum

*Test on a Small Area Before Use -III (detail)*  
2007

Opaque watercolor, entomology pins, labels  
and cotton thread on wasli (archival paper)  
50 x 40 x 5.5 cm

*Keep out of reach of Children III (detail)*  
2007

Opaque watercolor, photo transfer and  
entomology pins on wasli (archival paper)  
33 x 34 cm

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Many thanks to Linda Jansma for initiating this project, as well as for sharing her ever-thoughtful expertise at every stage of this exhibition. Along with her, I would like to thank the team at The Robert McLaughlin Gallery; in particular Sonya Jones, Elizabeth Sweeney, Leslie Menagh, Sam Mogelonsky and Jason Dankel, for organizing the symposium, promoting the exhibition and creating stunning installations of the work.

Thanks also to Sharlene Bamboat for her amazing ability to create collaborations and for always being generous with her time and attention. Thanks also to Indu Vashist and Aliya Pabani for all their support with this project and for their dedication to SAVAC's community.

I owe special thanks to Seema Hollenberg for insightful conversations, her ceaseless encouragement and for sharing her writing for this catalogue.

It has been one of the most enriching experiences to think and write about the works of Surendra Lawoti, Tazeen Qayyum, Meera Margaret Singh, Asma Sultana and Abdullah M. I. Syed. Their works had resonated well before the idea of this exhibition had taken form, and I feel extremely privileged that each of them agreed to take this journey with me.

I am very grateful for the support of the Culturally Diverse Curatorial Projects grant through the Ontario Arts Council,

which allowed me to balance both career and family at this critical juncture. In the same breathe, I would like to thank family members and friends who provided tireless support and many hours of babysitting.

Two friends this project would not have been possible without: many thanks to Atanas Bozdarov for the beautiful catalogue design; and Amna Ali for the exhibition design, as well as for always overcoming distance.

Ambereen Siddiqui  
Curator

With the support of the Ontario Arts

Council, Canada Council for the Arts, and the City of Oshawa, SAVAC and The Robert McLaughlin Gallery are pleased to present *Beyond Measure: Domesticating Distance*, curated by Ambereen Siddiqui. This program would not have been possible without the OAC's Culturally Diverse Curatorial Projects program, which aims to increase the ability of Ontario arts organizations to present projects by curators of colour in contexts determined by the participants.

We would like to acknowledge our colleagues Linda Jansma, Senior Curator, The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, and Sharlene Bamboat, SAVAC's Artistic Director for initiating and seeing this partnership to fruition. We would also like to thank Ambereen Siddiqui, her mentor Seema Hollenberg, designer Atanas Bozdarov, and all of the artists for the thought and hard work that they have put into *Beyond Measure: Domesticating Distance*.

Indu Vashist  
Executive Director,  
SAVAC (South Asian Visual Arts Centre)

Donna Raetsen-Kemp  
Chief Executive Officer,  
The Robert McLaughlin Gallery

## Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Beyond Measure: Domesticating Distance:

Surendra Lawoti

Tazeen Qayyum

Meera Margaret Singh

Asma Sultana

Abdullah M. I. Syed

Curated by Ambereen Siddiqui

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I. Siddiqui, Ambereen, 1982-, writer of added commentary, organizer.

II. Robert McLaughlin Gallery, issuing body, host institution.

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Cover image: Tazeen Qayyum, *Infiltration/Inflow* (detail), 2015

Photo credit: Faisal Anwar

## Beyond Measure: Domesticating Distance

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Faisal Anwar pp. 20-25

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