

# LATITUDE 28

**Bhavna Kakar**

Presents

## **PAREIDOLIA: SONGS OF (DIS)BELIEF**

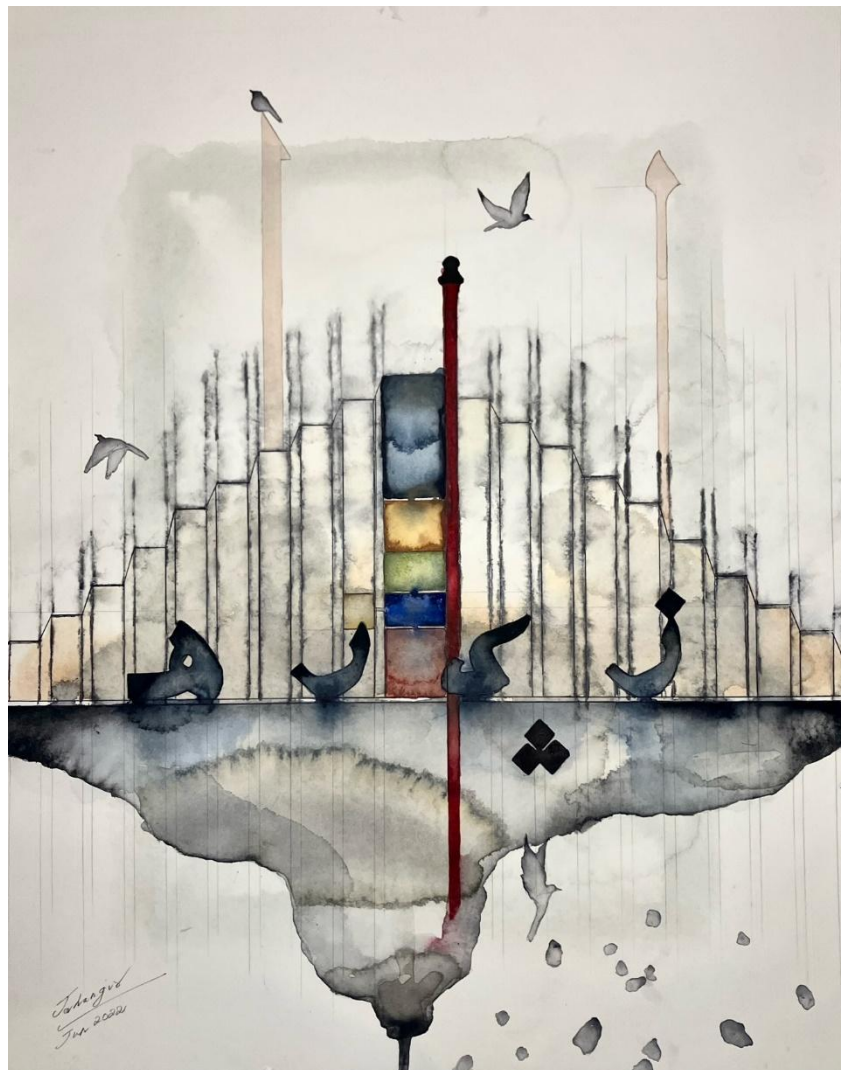
Recent Watercolours by Jahangir Asgar Jani

**Venue:** LATITUDE 28

F-208, First Floor, Lado Sarai, New Delhi – 110030

**Exhibition Dates:** 24<sup>th</sup> August – 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2022

**Timings:** Monday to Saturday, 11 am – 7 pm



Jahangir Asgar Jani, *VERSE 8*, Watercolour on paper, 26 x 20 inches, 2022

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### Conceptual Premise:

“The order that our mind imagines, is like a net, or like a ladder, built to attain something. But afterward you must throw the ladder away, because you discover that, even if it was useful, it was meaningless.” - **Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose***

Perhaps the search for meaning lies in the past, in the depths of memory, or in the folds of time. That is, if one believes in meaning at all. ‘Pareidolia: songs of (dis)belief’ asks you, the viewer, to shed preconceived notions as you navigate Jahangir Asgar Jani’s watercolours. Is it an urban landscape, or monumental calligraphy? When do alphabets become words? How and where do we find meaning? Scribbles and markings on the page become writing, and start to make sense.

Jahangir Asgar Jani invites you to dwell in the spaces between chaotic (in)cohesion and instinctive understanding in his new show ‘Pareidolia: songs of (dis)belief’ at LATITUDE 28.

### - Aparna Andhare

*“Jahangir Jani acts as a mimar of syllables, an architect working in the ruins of calligraphy, to re-shape the primal coherence of language through approximations, conjectures, calligrams and mosaics. In his 2014 series of nine watercolours, ‘Ta’aveel (Postcard Series)’, he works with episodic, fragmentary elements of Arabic calligraphy, as well as with floating, half-disguised symbols such as the minar or minaret, panja or hand-print and ka’aba or holy cube, which he extracts from the deep archive of Shi’a religious experience. These works suggest the liminality, the threshold condition that he occupies as a secularized artist who, nevertheless, derives psychic and cultural energy from his family and community traditions. His threshold is the location between what he calls the ‘architecture of belief’ on one side and the grammar of universalizing abstraction on the other. This location is rendered more complex by the private, almost secret meanings that Jani encrypts into these works: the body threatened by varied scourges of the epoch such as the HIV syndrome, sectarian strife and the possibility of nuclear meltdown. Jani’s morphed forms propose an alphabet of thingness and uncertainty, wound and healing, belief and doubt, which invites us to decipher it.”*

### - Nancy Adajania

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## **Jahangir Asgar Jani** (b.1955, Mumbai, India)

Jahangir did his Bachelors of Commerce from Mumbai University in 1977. He is a self-taught artist whose work is primarily concerned with the vexations of being labelled into a group, identity, or affiliation. Jahangir's life has been a journey from riches to rags, from escapism to self-discovery and awareness, from being unsuccessful to having job security, from a growing restlessness to an encountering of the world, and finally to revelation through art, poetry and film.

The artist's visual vocabulary makes misalignments and disorientations of religion and sexuality, explicit. Jani summons visible markers of identity to evoke various past and present struggles and triumphs, not for any universalizing proclamations but so that he may speak on his own behalf. In a sense, the artist deconstructs private obsessions and codes of communication, that have been developed consciously or subconsciously due to associations with identity. Thus by using his work as a process of internal inquiry, his works and artistic styles have transgressed the stereotypical and reached beyond the realms of conditioning and notions. Jahangir's oeuvre shows fluidity, a refusal to be defined and fearlessness that stems from the artist's innocence and investigations.

Jahangir's work has been critically written about, by respected authors and cultural theorists in India. He has had 17 solo shows since 1990 and participated in several group exhibitions in India as well as abroad. His short films have been exhibited in festivals in India, USA, UK, Canada, Korea and several countries in Europe. His short film *Urmi* was awarded Best Indian Narrative Short in 2013 at the KashishMIQ Film Festival in Mumbai. He received the prestigious Max Planck-TISS fellowship in 2012 for a film under the URBAN ASPIRATIONS IN GLOBAL CITIES collaboration. Mapin India has brought out a monograph, *Alternate Lyricism*, on him. His works are published and written about in several books on contemporary Indian art like the *KHOJ BOOK 2010*, and *Twentieth Century Indian Sculpture and Articulating Resistance, Art and Activism*. He was a visiting Lecturer at Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris in 2003, and has been invited to National and International seminars, residencies and camps.

He has been conferred the Diversity Leadership Award by the World HRD Congress, USA in 2016 for his work in the field of gender and sexuality diversity through his art practice.

### **Artist Statement:**

#### **Rhythm and Echoes of Childhood**

*"A persistent memory shapes our futures. Attempting to arrive at some clarity, by reiterating the one memory with multiples of what seems like the same work, persistence has created its own rhythm and cadence. Each element echoes an altered sound, tantalizingly close to establishing meaning and yet defying definition." - Jahangir Asgar Jani*

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## About LATITUDE 28

Since its inception in 2010, LATITUDE 28 has been promoting creative dialogue and presenting dynamic exhibitions that focus on contemporary art from South Asia. Founded by art historian Bhavna Kakar, LATITUDE 28 has become synonymous with cutting edge art from the region, seeking fresh perspectives and innovative thinking in its attempt to stimulate interest in new waves of art making and provides a horizontal environment where artists are encouraged to contextualize and experiment with medium and material, positioning them within historical and contemporary frameworks that critically respond to the canon. When making programmatic decisions, LATITUDE 28 seeks to promote diversity through building a community and culture that is inclusive of all groups and individuals. Keeping with its wider role as an institution dedicated to the arts, LATITUDE 28 has paved the way for active collaborations between artists from Iran, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and India through its curated shows and outreach events. The gallery, thus, continues to work towards making art accessible and inclusive to larger audiences and our patrons, with exhibitions strategically located at the nexus where artists, their work, art institutions, collectors and many different publics intersect.

For more information, please contact **LATITUDE 28** at:

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## SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLES

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### RELEVANT TAGS:

#PareidoliaSongsofDisbelief #Latitude28 #ContemporaryArt #ContemporaryArtists #IndianArt  
#MonumentalCalligraphy #TakeonArt #ArtsExhibition #SoloShow #Watercolours