



Raat Ki Rani

Giclee' Print on Innova
Photrag 310 gsm, and Mixed
Media on Plywood
244 (h) x 111 x 4 cm
2022



Raat Ki Rani (Back Detail)

Giclee' Print on Innova Photorag 310

gsm, and Mixed Media on Plywood

244 (h) x 111 x 4 cm

2022

Photo Credit: Don Moore



Red Carpet

Abraded Inkjet Printed on Hewlett Packard
Standard Smooth Wallpaper 175gsm

326 h x 680 cm

2022

Photo Credit: Don Moore



Red Carpet
Detail
Photo Credit:
Don Moore



Gandhi Garden (Exhibition View)

Double Channel Video

16.45 mins

2022

Photo Credit: Don Moore

<https://vimeo.com/734034991>



Gandhi Garden (Video Still)

Double Channel Video

16. 45 mins

2022

<https://vimeo.com/734034991>

The Karachi Star

Cement Mosaic Tiles

306.5 x 306.5 cm x 1.6 cm

2022

Photo Credit: Don Moore







The Karachi Star (Detail)

Cement Mosaic Tiles
306.5 x 306.5 cm x 1.6 cm
2022
Photo Credit: Don Moore



Your Tongue in My Mouth

Three Channel video (Exhibition View)

9:06 mins

2022

<https://vimeo.com/734030692>

(R) Photo Credit: Dom Moore



Your Tongue in My Mouth (Video Stills)

Three Channel video

9:06 mins

2022

<https://vimeo.com/734030692>



Rumour

Carved Marble and
Mixed Media

8 x 4 x 4 cm (h)

2022

Photo Credit: Don
Moore



Rumour

Carved Marble and Mixed Media

8 x 4 x 4 cm (h)

2022

Photo Credit: Don Moore

Albert
Inkjet on Innova
Photorag
30 cm x 40 cm
2022



George
Inkjet on Innova
Photorag
30 cm x 40 cm
2022



Albert/ George

Exhibition Postcards

Digital Print on Silk

Stock 300gsm

10.5 x 14.8 cm

2022

Photo: Don Moore



YOUR TONGUE IN MY MOUTH HUMA MULJI

Immediately after independence in August 1947, the government of Pakistan began the long process that would, over the next few decades, modify street names, discard memorials, reshape cultural markers, revise school textbooks, weekends, architecture, law and language. To heal the deep wounds of partition, and in a hurry to distance itself from anything unIslamic, centuries of syncretic cultural and religious rituals were slowly stripped away, eroded and transformed in collective memory.

In 1962, Ayub Khan's military government dismantled 'Malika Victoria', dispersing the many components of the memorial to the Imperial Queen, which eventually found their way across the city. The marble and bronze monument was originally commissioned to the sculptor Sir Hamo Thornycroft, and inaugurated in 1906, by George the V at Frere Hall, Karachi.

Growing up in Karachi, Mulji navigated her way between the disembodied heads and limbs of discarded statues, in the back corridors of Mohatta Palace, then the abandoned home of Fatima Jinnah. In an article in *The Herald* magazine from 1994, she came across a vivid description of a pedestal outside the Karachi Municipal Corporation Headquarters. Like any city bench, it was found variously occupied by loungers, eating or waiting; cats devouring leftover food and crows and kites swooping down, after the last morsels. No one knew or cared that this was the plinth where once stood an imposing marble statue of the former Empress of India.

This year, the artist journeyed back to Karachi to find this plinth. In the process, stumbling upon other fragments of the memorial. The body of resulting work presented here centres on collective memory, time, place and belonging; complicating accepted historical linearity, placing two worlds in parallel entanglement, taking the viewer to glimpse geographies other than their own and to re-read illegible stories.

The film work *Gandhi Garden* depicts a pair of bronze lions that once flanked the Queen's statue and now sit in Karachi Zoo whereby a restless present plays out around them.

Red Carpet is a re-staging of the inauguration of the Victoria Memorial at Frere Hall. The image taken from the Archive of Sculptors' Papers at the Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, serves as a backdrop to the exhibition, abraded to leave the ceremonial red carpet as the lasting legacy.

The Karachi Star (titled after a Victorian mosaic pattern called The Star of Karachi) reveals the void left by the footprint of the lost plinth of the Queen Victoria Statue, and *Rumour* tells the tale of the Queen's nose, lost during the rushed relocation.

The marble statue continues to live in the back of the Mohatta Palace Museum, covered in dust, partly concealed as though swallowed by the city's abundant *Bougainvillea spectabilis* (locally known as bogam-bail) and *Cestrum Nocturnum* (Raat ki Rani), with a prohibition on photography. In the exhibition, the photographic work *Raat ki Rani* (Queen of the Night) is propped casually, emitting a dull scent of this fragrant night blooming plant, bringing distant geographies home.

The film *Your Tongue in My Mouth* is a portrait of Bilal Sahab, a roadside notary, who types gift deeds, personal wills and letters to the editors of English newspapers on behalf of Karachi's citizens. Sharing the title of the exhibition, the film alludes to the complex relationship between language and interpretation, that which is lost and that which is evoked. The title of the exhibition is itself both erotic and intrusive, with desire and repulsion simultaneously at play. It suggests violence and discomfort alluding to Pakistan's complicated relationship with its past; and how that history plays out in the present.

Mulji brings together this fragmented architecture, obscured by a collective forgetting and a narrative where the city is the only protagonist.

SOUTH WEST SHOWCASE

Huma Mulji is one of two artists selected for The South West Showcase 2022. SWS is a recurring open call platform (est. 2013), showcasing artists from across the South West region.

The showcase aims to support artists working and living in the South West through a year-long programme of mentoring and support with an exhibition outcome; presenting a long-term commitment to profiling and supporting the practises of artists in this region.

With thanks to UWE for their generous support with the production of *The Karachi Star* and *Red Carpet*, and Mosaic Factory, for their valuable collaboration and help with producing *The Karachi Star*.



BIOGRAPHY

Mulji's work centres on observing the everyday within urban geographies, particularly across South Asia. She is interested in telling the story of a nebulous combination of the dysfunctional, the heroic, the sorrowful and the resilient. Mulji works across media, with a focus on sculpture, installation and photography.

Huma Mulji is based in Bristol with a studio at Spike Island. Alongside her practice she teaches BA (Hons) Fine Art, at UWE Bristol, and previously at Arts University Plymouth. She is represented by Project88, Mumbai

www.humamulji.com

MIRROR

ARTS UNIVERSITY PLYMOUTH

MIRROR
Arts University Plymouth
Tavistock Place
Plymouth
PL4 8AT

Mon-Fri: 9am–5pm
Sat: 9am–2pm
Opening times are subject to change

For more information please visit:
mirrorplymouth.com
[@mirror_plymouth](https://twitter.com/mirror_plymouth)

MIRROR is a public gallery, events programme and online resource supported within Arts University Plymouth. MIRROR commissions new work and produces exhibitions, events, residencies, research and student-led projects with a specific focus on enriching the careers of artists based within the South West region.

Our free public gallery is open to everyone to visit and we look forward to welcoming you to our space.

Information Panel Mirror Gallery July 2022



Other texts:

<https://mirrorplymouth.com/writing-research/christina-kutter-in-conversation-with-huma-mulji-your-tongue-in-my-mouth>