

C34

N

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, JANUARY 2, 2009

Art in Review

Farida Batool, Adeela Suleman and Tazeen Qayyum

Aicon Gallery
35 Great Jones Street, near
Bowery, No. 11
Through Jan. 11

Indian contemporary art is hotter than ever, but globalization is also giving a lift to artists from neighboring Pakistan. Three, all women, are now showing in a gallery off the Bowery.

Most eye catching are Adeela Suleman's sculptures, in which stainless-steel hardware of the sort that might be found in nearby kitchen supply shops is convincingly and ingeniously transformed. In the exquisite "Green Peacock Helmet," an upturned funnel with a painted-on fan of feathers becomes a headpiece fit for a Mongolian warrior; in "Remains" kitchen tongs bolted to a spine of drain covers suggest a micro-organism or exoskeletal creature.

Insects also figure in small paintings by Tazeen Qayyum, who renders cockroaches and other household pests with extraordinary delicacy. (Like the well-known contemporary artist Shahzia Sikander, Ms. Qayyum studied miniature painting at the National College of Arts in Lahore.) The pins and small labels attached to several works mimic the conventions of entomology, but they also exude a minimalist vibe.

In Farida Batool's photographs, lenticular prints (the image changes with the viewing angle) become a metaphor for complex political realities. In "Nai Reesan Shehr Lahore Diyan (There Is No Match of the City Lahore)" a girl skips rope in front of burned-out buildings — the aftermath of arsons committed by religious extremists. And in "Line of Control" the torsos of a naked man and woman press together to form a border as controversial as the one that runs through Kashmir.

KAREN ROSENBERG



FARIDA BATOOL/AICON GALLERY

"Nai Reesan Shehr Lahore Diyan (There Is No Match of the City Lahore)" by the Pakistani artist Farida Batool, at Aicon Gallery.