

Saad Qureshi

When The Moon Split

Aicon Gallery Exhibition September 21st - November 4th, 2017

Press Preview & V.I.P Reception: Thursday, September 21st, 2017

35 Great Jones St, New York NY 10012



Saad Qureshi, *Sacred Garden I*, 2017

Wood ash, black sand, charcoal and ink on Gaboon plywood, 63 x 83 in.

We are delighted to present *When The Moon Split*, Saad Qureshi's third solo exhibition with Aicon Gallery.

The exhibition is comprised of three entirely new bodies of work conceived specially for the New York gallery, and centered around the Quranic story of a miracle performed by the founder of Islam, the Prophet Mohammed. When called on by the inhabitants of Mecca to show them a sign of his faith, he caused the moon to split in two halves, sowing wonder and horror among all who witnessed the event.

Qureshi has long been fascinated by the drama and mystery of this fable, how it

harnesses the power of the moon in the service of belief, but also by the sheer visual spectacle it presents. From the very earliest civilizations, human beings have stood on the earth and looked upward at the night sky, to see the moon lit up by the sun. They have weaved the planet into their mythologies and archetypes, investing it with symbolism, and looking to it for meaning. These earliest legends are often told to us in stories and religious texts in childhood. They take intimate root in our imagination and follow us through life.

For Aicon Gallery, Qureshi has realized a sculpture of the moon in two parts, bringing its distant spectacle down to earth and suspending it in the middle of the gallery space. It orchestrates a juxtaposition between the heavenly body and the human body, firing the imagination and reawakening the age-old sense of wonder we associate with the planets and the infinity of space. While evoking this original story, it furnishes us with the purely secular frissons more commonly associated with science fiction and Hollywood films.



Saad Qureshi, *Sacred Garden II*, 2017

Wood ash, black sand, imitation silver leaf, charcoal and ink on Gaboon plywood, 63 x 83 in.

When the Moon Split re-enacts the nightly confrontation with this heavenly body: beguiling, awesome, yet momentarily tangible, and playful. Surrounding it in the main gallery, six monumental drawings on wood beckon visitors deeper into the planetary atmospherics, presenting a series of imagined landscapes.

Gleaning their geological features from the vast, barren, mountainous magnificence of recollected landscapes, they are mapped against a lunar surface of craters and reflected light. The drawings explore the artist's fascination with the magical quality of moonlight, the way that it burnishes the certainties of daytime with a fleeting, poetic magnetism. In his new works on paper, Qureshi has developed his recent experiments using the soldering iron as a drawing tool. Starting with handmade heavy-duty watercolor paper and layering it with successive washes of iron oxide pigment, the artist painstakingly burns onto the blackened surface, pinprick by pinprick. At first hard to distinguish, and echoing the experience of night vision, the eyes adjusting to the conditions of darkness, the image comes gradually into focus: an impression of the surface of the moon, pitted with craters, sculpted by millennia of crashing meteors.

Please contact Aicon Gallery (harry@aicongallery.com) for more information.

35 Great Jones St, New York NY 10012 +1.212.726.6092 newyork@aicongallery.com



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Saad Qureshi, *Night That Witnessed*, 2017, Wood ash, black sand, charcoal, and ink on Gaboon plywood, 90 x 144 in.



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Saad Qureshi, *Sacred Garden I*, 2017, Wood ash, black sand, charcoal, and ink on Gaboon plywood, 63 x 83 in.



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Saad Qureshi, *Sacred Garden II*, 2017, Wood ash, black sand, charcoal, and ink on Gaboon plywood, 63 x 83 in.

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Saad Qureshi, *Sacred Garden III*, 2017, Wood ash, black sand, charcoal, and ink on Gaboon plywood, 63 x 83in.

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Saad Qureshi, *Shadow of the Night*, 2017, Wood ash, black sand, charcoal, and ink on Gaboon plywood, 73 x 95.5 in.



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Saad Qureshi, *Path to Light*, 2017, Wood ash, black sand, charcoal, and ink on Gaboon plywood, 73 x 95.5 in.

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Saad Qureshi, Absence of Light I, 2017, Paint, burnt paper, 22 x 22.5 in.

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Saad Qureshi, Absence of Light II, 2017, Paint, burnt paper, 22 x 22.5 in.

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Saad Qureshi, Absence of Light III, 2017, Paint, burnt paper, 22 x 22.5 in.

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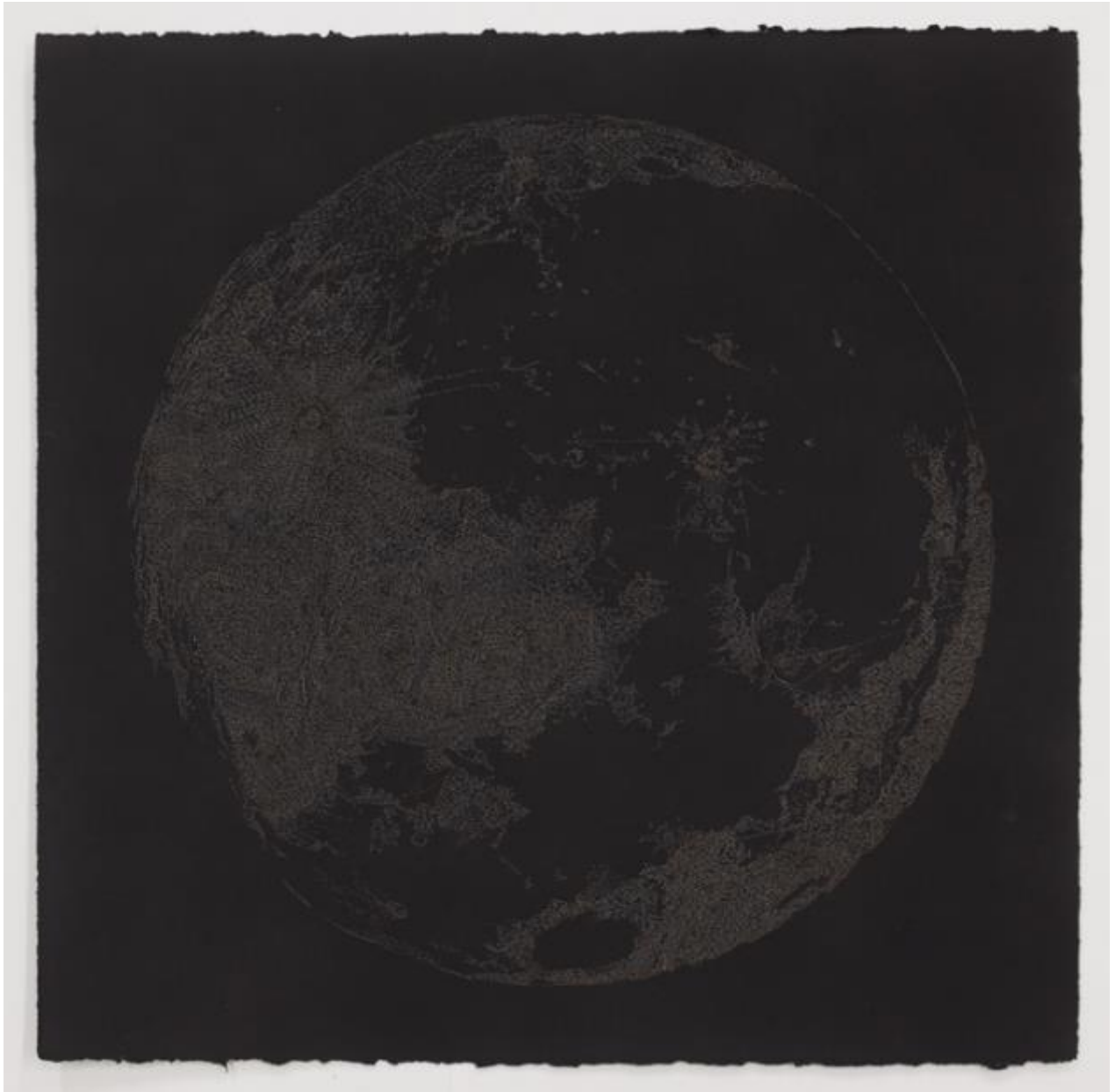
Saad Qureshi, Absence of Light IV, 2017, Paint, burnt paper, 22 x 22.5 in.

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Saad Qureshi, Absence of Light V, 2017, Paint, burnt paper, 22 x 22.5 in.

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Saad Qureshi, Absence of Light VI, 2017, Paint, burnt paper, 22 x 22.5 in.



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Saad Qureshi, Absence of Light VII, 2017, Paint, burnt paper, 22 x 30 in.

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Saad Qureshi, Absence of Light VIII, 2017, Paint, burnt paper, 22 x 30 in.

SAAD QURESHI

Born in 1986.

Lives and works in London.

Education

2010 The Slade School of Fine Art, UCL. MFA, Painting

Solo Exhibition

2017 *time / memory / landscape*, Gazelli Art House, London
 2014 *Congregation*, Gazelli Art House, London
 2013 *In the Remains*, Aicon Gallery, New York
 2012 *Other Crescents, other moons*, Gazelli Art House, London

Group Exhibitions

2017 *Tread Softly*, Yorkshire Sculpture Park
 2016 *Delicate Bond of Steel*, Aicon Gallery Mumbai Exhibition, Chatterjee & Lal, Mumbai
 Go Figure, Aicon Gallery, New York
 2014 *Threads*, Museum voor Moderne, Arnhem
 Légère Inquiétude, White Project Gallery, Paris
 2013 *Tectonic*, Moving Museum, Dubai
 Ruins, ArtEco Gallery, London
 2012 Celeste Prize Show, Centrale Montemartini,
 Bursary Show, Royal British Society of Sculptors, London
 Breeder, Patrick Heide Contemporary Art, London
 20/12 London Art Now, National Trust Lodge Park, Gloucestershire
 Viennafair 2012, Gazelli Art House, London
 Creative Cities Collection London in 2012, Barbican Exhibition Hall.
 This is London, Shizaru Mayfair
 HK12 Hong Kong, Patrick Heide Contemporary Art
 the open west, Gloucester Cathedral
 2011 *Landscape and Memory*, Patrick Heide Contemporary Art, Amsterdam
 Down to Earth, Gazelli Art House London
 2010 *Gift*, 10 Vyner Street, London.
 Disappearing in Yesterday, Aicon Gallery, London.
 Between, Patrick Heide Contemporary Art, London
 Deceit, Hackney Wicked Festival, London
 Red Mansion Foundation Art Prize Show. London
 2009 *Wound*, Aicon Gallery, London
 Don't Raise The Bridge, Lower The River!, Saatchi Gallery, London
 Systems and Patterns, Westbourne Studios, London
 2008 *Obsessions*, Modern Art Oxford
 2007 *thirst**, Beldam Gallery, Brunel University, Uxbridge
 Spark, Fireplace Gallery, Oxford
 University Degree Show, Oxford Brookes

2006 Summer Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London

Awards

2014 Arts Council England, Research Award
2012 Celeste Prize, Rome. Sculpture Shortlist
Royal British Society of Sculptors Bursary Award
2011 Lecturis Award, Amsterdam. Shortlist
2009 The Red Mansion Foundation Prize
2008 Arts and Humanities Research Council. Postgraduate Award
2004 Oxford Brookes University Scholarship
Spellman Walker Art Prize

Residency

2009 BBC 2, School of Saatchi, London
The International Art Zone, Beijing

Collections

Dipti Mathur Collection, California
The Farjam Foundation Collection
Creative Cities Collection, Beijing
Boston Consulting Group
Almarkhiya Gallery, Qatar
Various Private Collections