

## Waseem Ahmed (Pakistan, 1976)

### *Phase Transitions*

9 November 2018 - 9 February 2019

Opening on Thursday November 8, 2018, from 6 pm, Vernissage Art-en-Vieille Ville, Geneva



Waseem Ahmed, *Untitled*, 2018  
Color pigments and gold leaf on wasli paper  
151 x 103.5 cm

Seemingly dissociated subjects, such as sarcophages or female nudes made with acrylic on canvas, converge in the artist's reflection on the ambivalent and sometimes monstrous aspects of human nature. The ornamentation of tombs as well as the women's hair are transformed into a wasteland of transition between the reality of humans, their condition, their nature and their instincts, on one side, and their will to control, transfigure, sublimate, or even glorify, on the other side.

Born in 1976 in Hyderabad Sindh, Waseem Ahmed grew up in a family who had migrated from India after the Partition in 1947 to settle in the newly independent state of Pakistan. Today, the artist is a key player on the scene of contemporary miniature painting and is part of a group of South Asian artists that use tradition as a means towards innovation.

Ahmed's works reveal their complexity through their multiple reading levels and, beyond their esthetic, tackle social and political issues faced by the Islamic world.

Playing with metaphor and analogy, Waseem Ahmed's repertoire is made up of elements that stimulate semantic reading. Combining traditional miniature techniques, such as gouache and gold and silver leaf on wasli paper, with experimental techniques, the artist creates works of great formal and iconographic richness.

Five years after *Pious Fear*, the artist's first solo exhibition in Switzerland, Gowen Contemporary gallery presents today his new exhibition entitled *Phase Transitions*.



Waseem Ahmed, *Untitled* 2018  
Acrylic on canvas  
92 x 153 cm

Waseem Ahmed was born in 1976, lives and works in Lahore. He attended the National College of Arts in Lahore. Gowen Contemporary, who is the only representative gallery of the artist in Europe since 2010, held exhibitions by Ahmed in 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018. Ahmed's work is in the permanent collection of the Asian Art Museum Berlin; The British Museum London; The Virginia Whiles Collection, UK; The Anupam Podar Collection, India; The Salima Hashmi, Pakistan; Naazish Ataullah Collection, Pakistan; Sajida Vandal Collection, Pakistan and The D. Daskalopoulos Collection, Switzerland, among others. Ahmed was the first artist in residency at the Asian Art Museum Berlin participating in the Humboldt Lab project in 2014-2015. The latter included a solo show by Ahmed curated by Martina Stoye at the end of his residency. Ahmed was a finalist for the Sovereign Asian Art Prize in 2012 and 2013 and he was nominated for the Jameel Prize in 2011 and 2012. His work was recently included in the Katmandu Triennale (2017) and was exhibited at the Jason McCoy Gallery, New York (2017).