

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Project Art Divvy and Rossi & Rossi present:

YOU SELFISH DREAMER

**Rabeya Jalil | Heraa Khan | Saba Khan | Veera Rustomji |
Mohsin Shafi**

23-26 November 2017

Private View: 23 November 12-8 p.m.

By appointment only, please RSVP

Rossi & Rossi
21 Georgian House
10 Bury Street
London SW1Y 6AA
+44 20 7629 6888

Project Art Divvy and Rossi & Rossi are delighted to present *You Selfish Dreamer*, an exhibition of artworks by **Rabeya Jalil, Heraa Khan, Saba Khan, Veera Rustomji, and Mohsin Shafi.**

You Selfish Dreamer is the first of a series of collaborative exhibitions held by Project Art Divvy and Rossi & Rossi. This partnership is geared towards extending support and building interest in a new generation of cutting edge artists from Pakistan.

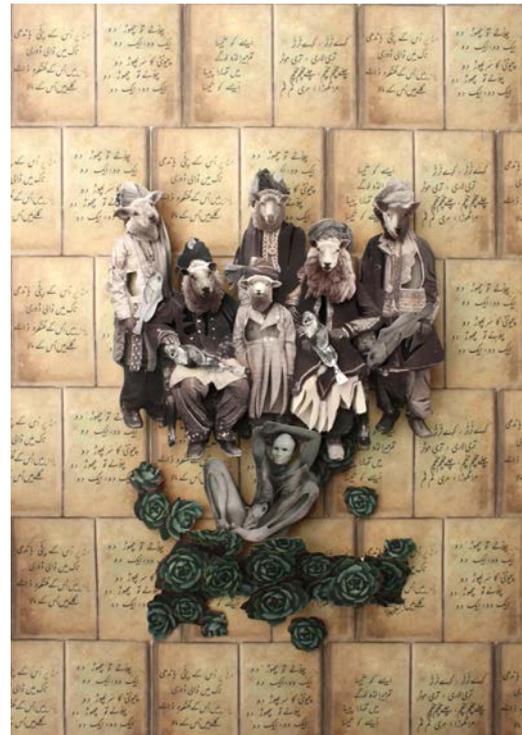
The title of the exhibition is a phrase from *The Glass Menagerie*, the 1945 play by Tennessee Williams, which explores the fragile reality of shattered illusions, unfulfilled dreams and relentless memories. Like the characters in Williams' play, each painting has the multilayered quality of a woven tapestry, both in terms of the artist's technique and the layers of meaning hidden within the works. The pieces have been embedded in the artist's reality and embellished with fiction, socio-political critique, and the hazy aura of memory. The resulting collages, installations and paintings are thought provoking, they inspire self-introspection and societal analysis.

Rabeya Jalil's vivid gestural paintings appear to have been executed with the wild colourful abandon of child-like innocence. These pieces have been influenced by her experiences as an adult, and the different roles an individual is required to adopt, while navigating through a plethora of social scenarios and customs. Inspired by his personal life, experiences and memories, **Mohsin Shafi** creates intricate, sometimes playful, but always powerful worlds from layers of images and printed materials within his brightly coloured frames, which are reminiscent of Joseph Cornell's *Shadow Boxes*.

Saba Khan's art is often vibrant, satirical and yet deeply perceptive, boldly highlighting social discrepancies and glaring divides. This series of works in *You Selfish Dreamer* is particularly timely. Khan has been partly propelled by her grand-aunt's traumatic memories of a girl's powerless vulnerability during the turbulence of 1947's partition between India and Pakistan. She presents embroidery on printed fabrics, highlighting some of the difficult challenges continued to be faced by women in contemporary society.

In her art practice, **Veera Rustomji** analyses the customs of the close-knit, often insular, Parsi community. For this series of works, Rustomji references the game of Mahjong, which is enthusiastically played by her grandmother and her friends. **Heraa Khan** addresses the seemingly superficial preoccupations of those desperately trying to retain a level of normalcy in their fragile lives. She paints glamorously stylish matrons excessively pampering themselves with indulgent luxuries in vibrant tones punctuated by gold.

The artworks in *You Selfish Dreamer* reflect the artists' personal lives, experiences and daily interactions maneuvering through familiar social situations, as they challenge the norms of a society in transition. Each piece presents a story to the viewer.



Mohsin Shafi, *Being the Black Sheep of the Family* (detail), 2017, Inkjet prints, photo transfers, opaque colours, varnish and synthetic frame, 79 x 59 x 8 cm (31 x 23 3/4 x 3 1/4 in)

Rabeya Jalil (b. 1984) is an art educator and visual artist based in Lahore. She received a Bachelors in Fine Arts from National College of Arts (NCA), Lahore in 2005 and a Masters in Art and Art Education from Columbia University, New York in 2013 on a Fulbright scholarship. Her art education practice involves working with school art teachers, children with special needs, and individuals from low-income families and culturally diverse populations. Jalil is an Assistant Professor at the Beaconhouse National University, School of Visual Arts and Design (BNU-SVAD) in Lahore and the Program Head of the MA Art Education Program at BNU-SVAD.

Heraa Khan (b. 1989) is a contemporary visual artist and art instructor from Lahore, Pakistan. Khan completed her Bachelors in Fine arts at National College of Arts (NCA) in 2012. Specializing in the traditional techniques of Mughal and Persian miniature painting, Khan uses natural pigments, Kalam and Wasli in her work. She has conducted classes on miniature painting in New York and Texas, USA and at the International Summer Academy of Salzburg, Austria.

Saba Khan (b. 1982) completed her Bachelors in Fine Arts from National College of Arts in 2005 and her Masters in Fine Arts from Boston University in 2010, on the Fulbright Scholarship. Khan lives in Lahore and is a Professor at her alma-mater, the National College of Arts. In addition to a series of prestigious solo and group exhibition within Pakistan and internationally, she has been running the Murree Museum Artists' Residency, an artist-led initiative to support artists/writers, which she founded in 2014. Khan's work is pumped with humour and satire; it looks at the class divides and political and social conditions, through layers of local aesthetics. Glitter, paint and crystals are used as tropes to comment on the emerging affluent-class.

Veera Rustomji (b. 1992) is a visual artist and writer based in Karachi, Pakistan. She graduated in 2015 from the Department of Fine Art of the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture. Her practice is driven by her interest in the parallel dialogues of migration and heritage. With an interest in archiving and documenting information around the Parsi community of Karachi, her practice has developed from utilizing personal family documents and photographs to creating her own documentation of the engulfing city of Karachi. Much of her research draws parallels with the city of Karachi and its rapid urbanization. which inevitably eradicates past connections and narratives that are embedded in tangible and intangible forms within the fabric of the landscape and environment.

Mohsin Shafi (b. 1982) is an interdisciplinary artist who lives and works in Lahore, Pakistan. He received his Bachelors in Visual Communication in 2008 and his Masters in Visual Arts in 2011 from the National College of Arts, Lahore, where he continues to teach. Shafi has showcased his work at prominent galleries in Pakistan as well as in international exhibitions. He is an active member of the *Awami Art Collective*, which is a unique group of artists and activists intervening the public space in Pakistan for the cause of peaceful co-existence and celebration of diversity.

Art Divvy was established as a platform to present and showcase contemporary art from Pakistan, both within the country and internationally, with a particular spotlight on emerging artists. Through its two arms, **Project Art Divvy** and **Foundation Art Divvy**, it is a venture that highlights the unique stories of the extraordinary artists with whom we have worked and continue to build relationships. We are committed to supporting art projects and focussing on arts education in order to foster a greater appreciation of the arts and artisans of Pakistan.

Rossi & Rossi was established in 1986 in London by Anna Maria Rossi, who was later joined by her son, Fabio. Operating from Hong Kong and London, the gallery today is amongst the leading representatives of contemporary artists from the Asia-Pacific region. From remote areas of Kazakhstan and Cambodia to the urban epicentres of Hong Kong and Singapore, Rossi & Rossi's artists produce work as diverse as their countries of origin. Yet they remain engaged in the exploration of the visual language of art that comments upon our world and the artist, the individual and wider society.

Rossi & Rossi's clients include distinguished private collectors and major museums worldwide, amongst them the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York ; M+, Hong Kong; the Art Institute of Chicago; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Rubin Museum of Art, New York; the Cleveland Museum of Art; the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; the Tokyo National Museum; the Louvre Abu Dhabi; the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; the Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane. Rossi & Rossi is a member of SLAD (the Society of London Art Dealers), Asian Art in London (AAL), the Hong Kong Art Gallery Association (HKAGA) and the South Island Cultural District (SICD). Rossi & Rossi participates in pre-eminent regional and international art fairs, including Art Basel Hong Kong and TEFAF Maastricht.