

**PRESS RELEASE | 22 August 2024**

Exhibition Opening

**VHC**  
VIDA HEYDARI  
CONTEMPORARY

**A Moment In Infinity**

Group Exhibition

22 August 2024 – 21 September 2024

**Opening: Thursday, 22 August 2024, 5:30 – 7:30 PM**



Navid Afzalnia

Kitchen Talk

2023

Hahnemühle Photo Glossy Paper

15 x 22.5 cm (6 x 9 in)

VHC is pleased to announce the opening of our latest exhibition, **A Moment in Infinity**, which brings together works by eleven contemporary artists – **Abhishek Dasgupta, Ashfika Rahman, Devashish Sharma, Joe Paul Cyriac, Maryam Firuzi, M. Pravat, Navid Afzalnia, Pallavi Gaur, Samim Alam Beg, Waleed Zafar and Yashna Kaul**

“A Moment in Infinity” builds upon the pliability of truth as captured by photography as an engagement with an artistic medium that presents outcomes towards an effect which is at once ruptured and unified.

The exhibition will preview on **Thursday, 22 August 2024, from 5:30 to 7:30 PM** at **VHC | Vida Heydari Contemporary**. It will run through 21 September 2024.

## **ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

### **ABHISHEK DASGUPTA**

Abhishek Dasgupta, a self-taught photographer, was born in 1981 in Kolkata, India. He earned a degree in Business Management from Sheshadripuram College, Bangalore University in 2004. Raised in an environment that cherished music, art, and culture, Abhishek developed a profound inclination towards philosophy, spirituality, mysticism, and metaphysics. This rich cultural backdrop has enabled him to contemplate and question form, space, and emptiness. Abhishek's work is driven by a fascination with uncovering traces of the psyche in flux and a desire to transcend mortal boundaries through mediation between people and the cosmos.

Most recently, his works have been exhibited at HIS, Olympia in London, UK; the 'Fresh Produce' exhibition at the India Art Fair 2022 in New Delhi; and the Venice International Art Fair in Venice, Italy. In addition, he has participated in several other group shows across India, including 'Sweet Smell of the Coast' at the 2016 Kochi-Muziris Biennale, among many others.

Abhishek Dasgupta lives and works in Mumbai, India.

### **ASHFIKA RAHMAN**

Ashfika Rahman was born in 1988 in Bangladesh. She completed her Diploma in Photography from South Asia Media Academy, Bangladesh, in 2016 and another professional Diploma in Photography from University of Applied Sciences and Art, Hochschule Hannover, Germany in 2017. She draws profound inspiration from her mother's work as a social worker, which has significantly shaped her creative journey. Currently, she is devoted to creating an alternative archive that brings to light the stories of marginalized communities in her homeland. This archive is a unique blend of mythological, spiritual, and folk narratives, reimagined to address contemporary social issues. While photography is at the core of her practice, she expands her work into diverse media such as text, drawing, prints, textiles, sound, video, and installations. Through these varied forms, she conducts in-depth research, meticulously documenting the struggles, violence, displacement, cultural colonization, and suppression experienced by these communities.

Her work has been showcased in numerous galleries and festivals worldwide. She has held solo exhibitions at Gallery Vitrine in Switzerland and Drik Gallery in Bangladesh. Her group exhibitions include prestigious venues such as Palais de Tokyo in France, Dhaka Art Summit in Bangladesh, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA) in India, Alserkal Avenue in the UAE, Objective Center for Film and Photography in Singapore, LES Gallery in the USA, Foundry in the UAE, Demarkten in Belgium, among many others.

Ashfika's work has garnered significant recognition, including being named a Finalist for the Future Generation Art Prize (2023-2024), the Samdani Art Award (2023), and The Sovereign Asian Art Prize (2022). In 2021, she received the Format Festival Open Call Award, and in 2020, she was a Finalist for the Samdani Art Award, nominated for the Leica Oskar Barnack Award, and participated in the New York Times Portfolio Review. In 2019, PHmuseum recognized her

as one of the "12 Women Photographers to Watch." She has also been selected for prestigious programs such as the 2018 Joop Swart Master Class by World Press Photo and was a Finalist for both the IPA Award and the Samdani Art Award that same year.

Ashfika Rahman lives and works between Dhaka, Bangladesh and Netherlands.

### **DEVASHISH SHARMA**

Devashish Sharma, born in 1990 in Gwalior, India and completed his Bachelors of Fine Arts from Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Baroda, in 2013. He later pursued Master's degree from Shiv Nadar University, Noida, in 2016. His socially engaged practice stems from a deep interest in creating spaces for dialogue and exploring the politics of learning, questioning, and imagining. His practice focuses on asking questions, sometimes answering them, and often pondering the infinite.

He has participated in various group exhibitions across India, with recent shows including "Common Ground" at VHC in Pune, "Road Number Zero" at Max Müller Bhawan in Delhi, and "Critical Constellations" at IGNCA in New Delhi, among others. Over the past few years, he has been involved in several residencies and has received numerous grants. His projects have been supported by the Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art (FICA) in New Delhi and the Goethe-Institut in New Delhi. He has also been associated with prestigious programs like What Could/Should Curating Do in Belgrade, Canary Project Space in Pune and most recently, the Saari Residence, Mynämäki, Finland.

Devashish Sharma lives and practices in Pune, India.

### **JOE PAUL CYRIAC**

Joe Paul Cyriac, born in 1991 in Trivandrum, India and completed his Bachelors in Economics from St. Xavier's College, Mumbai in 2012. He later pursued Advanced Programme in Photography from Pathshala South Asian Media Institute, Dhaka, Bangladesh in 2017 and Documentary Photography from University of Applied Sciences and Art Hannover, Germany in 2018. Cyriac's work critically examines the intersections of digital technology, surveillance, and the manipulation of spatial realities. With a background in exploring the effects of networked images on contemporary life, Cyriac's practice often engages with the ways in which digital environments alter our perceptions of the physical world.

Most recently, his works have been exhibited at India International Centre, New Delhi; 'Daydream' exhibition at Bikaner House, New Delhi in 2021; and 'Construction Deconstruction' at India Photo Festival in Hyderabad in 2018. In addition, he was awarded the DDA scholarship in Germany in 2018 and IFA 25x25 grant in 2020.

Joe Paul Cyriac lives and works in Trivandrum, India.

## **M. PRAVAT**

M. Pravat was born in 1972 in Kolkata, India. He completed his Bachelor's degree in painting in 2002 and his Master's in 2004, both granted by the Faculty of Fine Arts at M.S. University, Baroda. M. Pravat's art practice examines architectural forms and materials through a fractured lens, using photography, paintings and installations. He believes that our lives are unquestionably shaped by the built environments we inhabit. Along with images and materials, architecture plays a pivotal role in the formation of our sensibilities, and in shaping our experiences and understanding of space and form. His practice is deeply embedded in the manifestations and imaginations of architectural spaces, where he attempts to shed the representational familiarity associated with our built environments, and in doing so, finds himself appropriating, redistributing, and reconfiguring the relationship between images and materials.

Over the years, his works have been presented in solo and group exhibitions, biennales and art fairs in Colombo, Delhi, Dubai, Mumbai, New York, Seoul and Zurich. He is a member of the Layout collective along with artists Navid Tschopp, Susanta Mondal, and architect S. Boka. Their projects have been exhibited in the Kochi- Muziris Biennale, 2012, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, 2013, INSERT, 2014, the Colombo Biennale, 2014, and in non-institutional sites in Delhi and Zurich. He was a recipient of the Pro Helvetia artist residency in Switzerland.

M. Pravat lives and works in New Delhi, India.

## **MARYAM FIRUZI**

Maryam Firuzi was born in 1986 in Shiraz, Iran and works in photography and cinema. She is a graduate in Bachelors of Art from the Art University of Tehran in Cinema, and Master of Arts in Film Studies. Born during a turbulent period in contemporary Iran, Firuzi views art as her primary means of self-expression, enabling her to explore and articulate her most profound emotions. Her work often addresses cultural crises, gender issues, and identity, all through a self-reflective lens. She perceives Iran as a crossroads between Western civilization and Eastern heritage, a position that has historically sparked complex dialogues on gender, identity, and culture. For Firuzi, art serves as a critical entry point into these multifaceted discussions.

Firuzi has twice been awarded the Peace Medal of the Global Peace Photo Award (2018 & 2022). Her works have been featured in numerous photo festivals and exhibitions, including the La Gacilly Photo Festival in France and Austria, the 9th Daegu Photo Biennial in South Korea, the "Open Your Eyes" Photo Festival in Zurich, the Art & Folk Craft Museum in the United States. She was also the laureate of the 6th edition of the IWPA Award in 2022.

Maryam Firuzi lives and works in Tehran, Iran.

## **NAVID AFZALNIA**

Navid Afzalnia, born in 1997 in Iran. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Photography from the University of Art, Tehran, in 2021 and is currently pursuing a Master of Fine Art at the University of the Arts Helsinki, Finland. He is a photographer whose work delves deeply into themes of personal and collective memory, domestic spaces, and socio-political issues.

Afzalnia's recent exhibitions include participation in a group show at Soore University of Art in 2023 and the Oripeu Project in Nantes, France, the same year. He was also featured in the 2018 exhibition "In City" at the University of Tehran.

Navid Afzalnia is currently continuing his higher studies in Finland.

## **PALLAVI GAUR**

Pallavi Gaur was born in 1985 in Aligarh, India. She graduated with a degree in Philosophy from Delhi University in 2006 and subsequently pursued a career in television cinematography. In 2014, Pallavi earned her Master's degree in Image and Electronics from Goldsmiths College, London. Pallavi's work reflects an intimate journey inward, driven by a quest to uncover profound truths. Her mixed media photography reveals deeper layers of truth, intricately interwoven with emotions and rhythm. Her works delve into the emotional dimensions of human life, capturing its complexities and celebrating the indomitable human spirit.

Pallavi Gaur lives and works in New Delhi, India.

## **SAMIM ALAM BEG**

Md Samim Alam Beg, born in 1998 in Murshidabad, West Bengal, India. He pursued his academic studies at Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata, earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2020 and a Master of Fine Arts in 2022, both in Sculpture. Samim's artistic practice is characterized by a profound exploration of the interplay between cultural and natural landscapes. Driven by an insatiable curiosity, he experiments with objects and forms derived from nature, aiming to establish a thoughtful dialogue between architectural practices and visual art. His work seamlessly integrates the functional design of architecture with the intricacy of nature's creations, using materials such as ceramics and metal to create sculptural transpositions of natural forms into delicate filigree. Photography also plays an integral role in his practice, adding another layer to his exploration of nature's beauty and complexity.

In 2023, Samim's work was featured in the Space 118 Fundraiser Show in Mumbai. He was also awarded the MFA Gold Medal, the Nirod Baran Memorial Prize, and the Bhunath Mukherjee Memorial Prize by Rabindra Bharati University. In 2022, he received the Students Annual Exhibition Gold Medal and the Salma Naqvi Award from Art Family. In 2021, he

participated in exhibitions like Abir First Take in Ahmedabad and the Kochi Students' Biennale and received the Kala Sakshi Memorial Trust Art Scholarship.

Currently, Samim is an artist in residency at Hampi Art Labs, Karnataka. He lives and works in Kochi, Kerala.

## **WALEED ZAFAR**

Waleed Zafar was born in Lahore, Pakistani in 1995. He completed his BFA in Visual Arts from Beaconhouse National University, Lahore, in 2017. He then pursued an MA in Art and Design from BNU in 2022. Waleed's artistic practice spans across photography, mixed-media, and curation. By delving into historical archives, art, and ethnographic documents, his work explores themes ranging from early migrations to the colonial era. This research is profoundly personal, providing insights into his own identity within the broader South Asian context. Influenced by a familial background shaped by colonial politics, Waleed seeks to understand his place within the complex tapestry of South Asian identity, which in turn informs his artistic work.

Zafar has exhibited his work locally and internationally at art fairs and group shows, including: "A River in an Ocean", a collateral of the Lahore Biennale 01, Lahore; "Surface 01" at Artbuzz Studios, Delhi; "Pakistan at 100" at the World Bank Office, Islamabad; Full Circle Gallery, Karachi, in 2019; Islamabad Art Fair 2019, Islamabad; and India Art Fair, 2020-2024. He was also part of the Visiting Artist Fellowship (Spring 2024) at the Mittal Institute, Harvard University, and the New Narratives in Photography residency, a project by the British Council, Grain Project, and Tasweer Ghar. Currently Waleed Zafar is a lecturer at MDSVAD BNU.

Waleed Zafar lives and works in Lahore, Pakistan.

## **YASHNA KAUL**

Yashna Kaul was born in 1995 in New Delhi. She completed BFA in Photography and Imaging from Tisch School of the Art, New York University in 2018. Through her practice, Kaul reflects on the nature of memory itself—how it is preserved, how it is altered, and how it is sometimes lost. Her work challenges to consider the ways in which photography can both reveal and obscure, offering a nuanced meditation on the role of images in the construction of our personal and collective identities.

Her work has been exhibited both in India and internationally. Her most recent exhibitions include 'Kyotographie' in Kyoto, Japan, in 2024; the Serendipity Arts Festival in Goa in 2023; the Photo Vogue Festival in Milan, Italy, in 2023; and the India Art Fair in 2023, among others. She was awarded the 2024 Japan Photo Award and received an honorable mention for the 2023 PhMuseum Women Photographers Grant New Generation Prize.

Yashna Kaul currently lives and works in between Mumbai and New Delhi, India.

## **ABOUT VHC | VIDA HEYDARI CONTEMPORARY**

VHC | Vida Heydari Contemporary is an international art gallery in Pune specialising in contemporary art and representing established and emerging artists with diverse backgrounds, across a variety of mediums and genres.

Founded in 2020 with an emphasis on authenticity, quality and innovation, VHC aims to contribute to the cultural fabric of the city. The gallery is committed to fostering the careers of its artists and sharing their work with a global audience, providing a platform for under-represented artists, presenting pioneering museum-quality exhibitions, positive collaborations, price transparency and offering a very hands-on and tailored high-quality experience.

In less than three years from its inception, VHC has mounted significant exhibitions featuring local and international artists. It has also participated in some of the most prestigious art fairs, such as Art Basel Hong Kong, India Art Fair and India Design ID.

In addition to the gallery program, VHC hosts talks, performances, workshops and educational programs to create engaging and enriching artistic experiences that capture the essence of life.

VHC - Marvel Alaine, Lane 8, Koregaon Park, Pune, India.

Web: <https://www.vhc.art/>

IG: <https://www.instagram.com/vhc.art/>

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/vhc.art/>

**For interview requests and additional information please contact.**

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**Press Kit:**

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/11h574x4eNqmYJJY4yJscTqPX3Z614lf?usp=sharing>

**Interviews can be arranged with the artists and the gallery director Vida Heydari.**