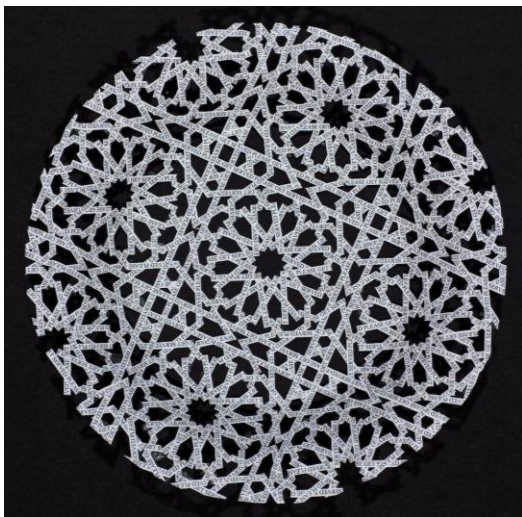




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Media Contact:
Chelsea Mason, Marketing Director
626.449.2742 x22
c.mason@pacificasiamuseum.org

Pacific Asia Museum Acquires Contemporary Pakistani Work



October 24, 2012—Pacific Asia Museum is pleased to announce the acquisition of *Untitled (Paper Plate)* by Pakistani artist Hamra Abbas with funds generously provided by Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Shehrbano "Sherry" Rehman. Instrumental in the acquisition were Pacific Asia Museum's Pakistan Arts Council and the arts organization Green Cardamom which represents Abbas.

This piece represents the first contemporary work in Pacific Asia Museum's permanent collection by a female Pakistani artist. Previously, several works by the artist were

included in Pacific Asia Museum's 2010 exhibition *Beyond the Page: The Miniature as Attitude in Contemporary Art from Pakistan*.

"Pacific Asia Museum has a demonstrated track record of showing contemporary art from all regions of Asia, including Pakistan, and the acquisition of this piece shows our continued dedication to contemporary art in South Asia," said Pacific Asia Museum Curator Bridget Bray. The museum is currently planning a renovation of their South Asian Gallery, which will include the juxtaposition of both contemporary works such as this and earlier works to demonstrate the continuing impact of tradition on today's conceptual practice.

This work is part of Abbas's 2008 series *Paper Plates*, wherein thin paper strips printed with the phrase "PLEASE GET SERVED" are arranged in circular geometrical patterns that reference traditional Islamic architecture and iconography. The arrangement is then hot-pressed into paper plates that retain the pattern, resulting in a recognizable everyday object that is nonetheless unusable. Abbas often references traditional or everyday motifs in her work to examine conflicts within society through a wide range of media, and often uses English in conjunction with Islamic text or design, as seen here.

"The ambassador's gift recognizes the increasingly important role of Pakistani artists in the contemporary art scene around the world," said Shaila Andrabi, president of Pacific Asia Museum's Pakistan Arts Council.

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Hamra Abbas was born in Kuwait in 1976, and received a BFA and MA in Visual Arts from the National College of Arts, Lahore. Today she lives and works in both Boston and Islamabad. She was awarded the Abraaj Capital Art Prize in 2011 and a Jury prize at the Sharjah Biennial 9 in 2009. Her work also has been shown in exhibitions all over the world and in several Biennials including the 2007 Istanbul Biennial and the 2006 Biennale of Sydney. Abbas' work is also held in the permanent collection of The British Museum.

Ambassador Rehman, whose generosity made this acquisition possible, was appointed as Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States in November of 2011. She has a long-standing interest in the arts, and studied art history as an undergraduate.

"We are extremely grateful for Ambassador Rehman's support," said Pacific Asia Museum Executive Director Charles Mason. "In today's increasingly globalized world, it is important to us to foster intercultural understanding across a broad range of Asian cultures, and acquiring this contemporary Pakistani work speaks directly to that mission."

Top image: Hamra Abbas, Untitled (Paper Plate), 2008, paper sculpture in Perspex case, 7.87 x 7.87 x 1.57 inches, Pacific Asia Museum collection, Museum purchase with funds provided by Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States Shehrbano Sherry Rehman, 2012.4.1 © Hamra Abbas.

About Pacific Asia Museum

Pacific Asia Museum is among the few institutions in the United States dedicated exclusively to the arts and culture of Asia and the Pacific Islands. The museum's mission is to further intercultural understanding through the arts of Asia and the Pacific Islands. Since 1971, Pacific Asia Museum has served a broad audience of students, families, adults, and scholars through its education and outreach programs.

Pacific Asia Museum is located at 46 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, California 91101. The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is \$9 general, \$7 students/seniors, and free for museum members and children under 12. Admission is free every 4th Friday of the month.

For more information visit www.pacificasiamuseum.org or call (626) 449-2742.

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