

ZARINA

1937 - 2020



(above) *Cities I called home*, serie Portfolio of 5 prints : Aligarh, Bangkok, Delhi, Paris, New York, 2010, Woodblocks engraved in black on handmade Nepalese paper mounted on cream Arches paper, 66 x 50,8 cm (chaque) © All rights reserved

(on the left) *Untitled*, 2016, Collage of 22 carat gold leaf and BFK light paper printed with black ink mounted on Somerset Antique paper, 62,2 x 55,8 cm, framed : 68,5 x 62 cm © All rights reserved

Born in 1937 in Aligarh, India, Zarina Hashmi, who preferred to use her first name only, received a BS in mathematics from Aligarh Muslim University (1958) before studying printmaking, a passion awakened by her encounters with local papermakers during a visit to Rajasthan in the late 1960s. Zarina went on to study intaglio with Stanley William Hayter at Atelier 17, Paris (1964-67), and studied woodblock printing at Toshi Yoshida Studio, Tokyo.

Primarily working in intaglio, woodblock, lithography, and silkscreen, Zarina always made her life the subject of her art. She was one of those rare women artists of her generation to have forged a real identity with her etchings and sculptures on the subject of partition, exile and the longing for home. Her works, made mostly out of paper, engraved, woven, pierced and sculpted, are like musical scores on continuous memory, initiated in her cultivated background, where her father taught history, and literature and poetry played an important role in developing her mind. Her love of books and reading continued throughout her life, to such an extent that she defined paper as a second skin, one that could breathe, age, be stained, hurt, or moulded; as did her attachment to words, which preceded images, and to her mother-tongue, Urdu, which she integrated endlessly in her work. Her studies of mathematics and her fascination for the pure geometry of Mughal architecture, with its perfect symmetry and balance, were determining factors in the development of her art, which took the form of an initiatory and mystical journey.



Solo exhibition *Life lines*, 2016, Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris, Marais
© Hervé Abbadié, Courtesy Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris-Lisbon



Folded House, 2016
Collage of 22-carat gold leaf and BFK light paper printed with black ink mounted on Arches paper, 22,8 x 22,8 cm, framed : 34,01 x 34,01 cm
© Jean-Louis Losi, Courtesy Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris-Lisbon



Folded House, 2016
Collage of 22-carat gold leaf and BFK light paper printed with black ink mounted on Arches paper, 22,8 x 22,8 cm, framed : 34,01 x 34,01 cm
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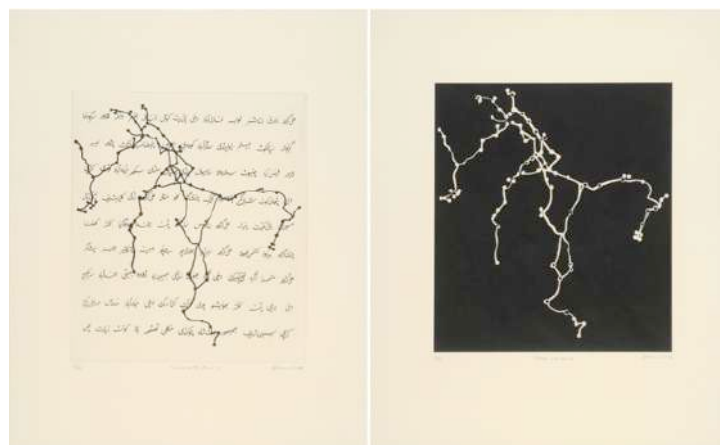
Solo exhibition *Life lines*, 2016, Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris, Marais
 © Hervé Abbadie, Courtesy Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris-Lisbon

Evoking ancient writing tablets, her sculptures in paper pulp let us glimpse the imprints of their time, immersing us in the fractal universe of nature and evoking the majestic universe of Islamic palaces and monuments, as well as the rich textures and colors of stone that Zarina expressed through innumerable varieties and mixtures of terra cotta, ivory, Sienna pink, charcoal, graphite, and ochre pigments. Like a memorial scroll, Zarina's work is the expression of a personal atlas, of vast and multiple paths across continents and civilizations. An early interest in architecture and mathematics is reflected in her use of geometry and her emphasis on structural purity. While her work tends towards minimalism, its starkness is tempered by its texture and materiality. Her art poignantly chronicled her life and recurring themes include home, displacement, borders, journey and memory.

An emblematic figure in South Asia, Zarina's work has been exhibited by the most important institutions and supported by the Jeanne Bucher Jaeger Gallery since 2008 through solo and group exhibitions and loans to major international museums. She was one of the four artists representing the Indian Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennale in 2011. In 2012-2013, the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, then the Guggenheim in New York and the Art Institute of Chicago presented her retrospective *Zarina: Paper Like Skin*. Her work has joined the collections of the Hammer Museum, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the MET and MoMA in New York, the Menil Collection in Houston, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Tate Modern in London, the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the LaM in Villeneuve d'Ascq... In 2016, the gallery presented the exhibition *Life Lines*, her last before she passed away in 2020. Her work remains a sensitive, intimate and transcendent testimony of her life. She said of memory that "it is the only possession we have that remains through time." Her last works depict the cosmos in gold leaf with a feeling of serenity, as if her final journey were taking her to a universal home.



Solo exhibition *Zarina: Paper Like Skin*, 2013, Guggenheim, New York © David M. Herald, Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation



Travels with Rani, 2008
 Engraving, 61 x 50,8 cm, framed : 65,51 x 110 cm
 © Jean-Louis Losi, Courtesy Jeanne Bucher Jaeger, Paris-Lisbon