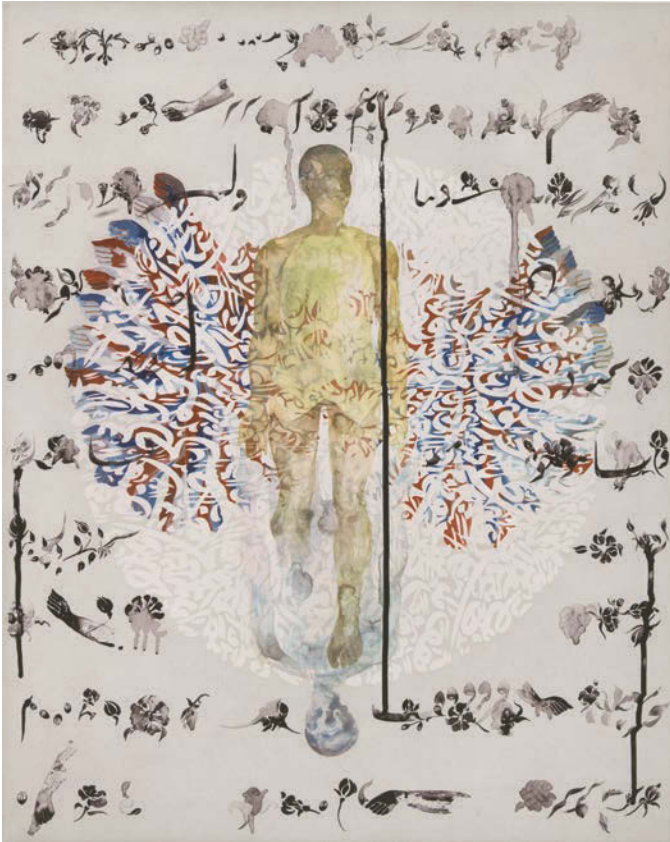


SHAHZIA SIKANDER

NEW ETCHINGS



Mirror Plane, 2012. Color direct gravure. 27-x-21¼-inch image on 36-x-29½-inch sheet.
Edition 35.



Orbit, 2012. Color direct gravure. 27-x-21¼-inch image on 36-x-29½-inch sheet.
Edition 35.

Shahzia Sikander was born in Pakistan in 1969. She studied the disciplined art of miniature painting there before coming to the United States to attend the Rhode Island School of Design, where she completed an MFA in 1995. She lives in New York. This is her second project with Crown Point Press. She is best known as a painter, but computer animation has become a part of her work, and she has built complex installations that include both paintings and film, the films derived from images she created in a computer. She has said that drawing is primary to all her work. To make these two prints, Sikander layered drawings she created on translucent Mylar with drawings she developed in her computer. There are six layers for *Mirror Plane* and eight for *Orbit*. Each layer is printed from a separate copper plate.

“For me,” Sikander has said, “identity is not a given but a fluid process that unfolds over time.” *Mirror Plane* shows a sexless figure merging with its shadow, surrounded by flowers, abstract writing, and hands. Hand gestures, called *mudras*, are used in healing and meditation in Eastern philosophies, but here the symbolism is deliberately unspecific. One of the figure’s hands is open in the universal gesture of charity, the other touches fingertips to one another to form a circle, a powerful symbol of wholeness and connectedness in all cultures.

In the print called *Orbit*, Sikander has said, “the human and the mechanical, the grotesque and the absurd, the violent and comical come together.” In her paintings she often uses what she describes as “the overweight man and its transforming image” as “a stand-in for power relations and hierarchies.” That man cavorts around the edges of the print, while a graceful central figure protected by prisms moves on wheels and is surrounded by horns and by dancing animals and birds. These prints, Sikander says, are “an exercise in improvisation and rediscovery.”

—Kathan Brown