



**Smithsonian Institution**

*Archives of American Art*

## **Zarina Hashmi Papers, Clippings and Press, 2000-2013**

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It is also important in the context of the show at the Vadehra Art Gallery that a sumptuously rich catalogue of the artist's works has been brought out, with the artist's own thoughts about New Zealand's very lonely landscape and his pictorial response to it. Ranjit Hoskote's long poem too has been associated with his works. It is rich complimentary reading. All told, the show and its accompaniment - the Ram Kumar catalogue - was a rich fare for anyone to relish and memorize.

R. S. Yadav

### Zarina at Gallery Espace

My personal feeling is that Zarina Hashmi's woodcuts, displayed at Gallery Espace, Community Centre, New Friends Colony, could be better understood through their Urdu captions rather than through their English titles. For it is the Urdu captions that give one the feel of the mood or the environment the artist is trying to convey through these images. Mitti Watan, Dahshat, Zubaan etc. are more apt for the respective works than Dust, Country, Despair and Language. The Indian audience can easily understand these images as they are familiar with the local seasons and environment and the feelings the various hours in each season invoke, even when the imagery is modern and to a large extent, linear.

Zarina's imagery is based on the 'minimal' use of line and is more like a sign or a signal which sets the mind ticking and thereafter it is the viewer who has to conjure up the relevant images, moods and feelings from his or her past experiences. For example, take two of her works that have a similarity of approach but for the contrasting backgrounds. Sannata has a coloured cream background format while a thick black line crosses it in the middle, indicating the mid-noon hour in May or June when things outdoors become still or immobile because of the immense heat and render the scene perfectly still. In Raat (night), the background is changed to black and the dividing line to cream colour. The upper and lower divisions are equal as before and lack of movement is signified by the all enveloping darkness in which any movement is really impossible. These two works thus tell us as to what could be achieved with just a thick horizontal line and the chosen background which is just flat.

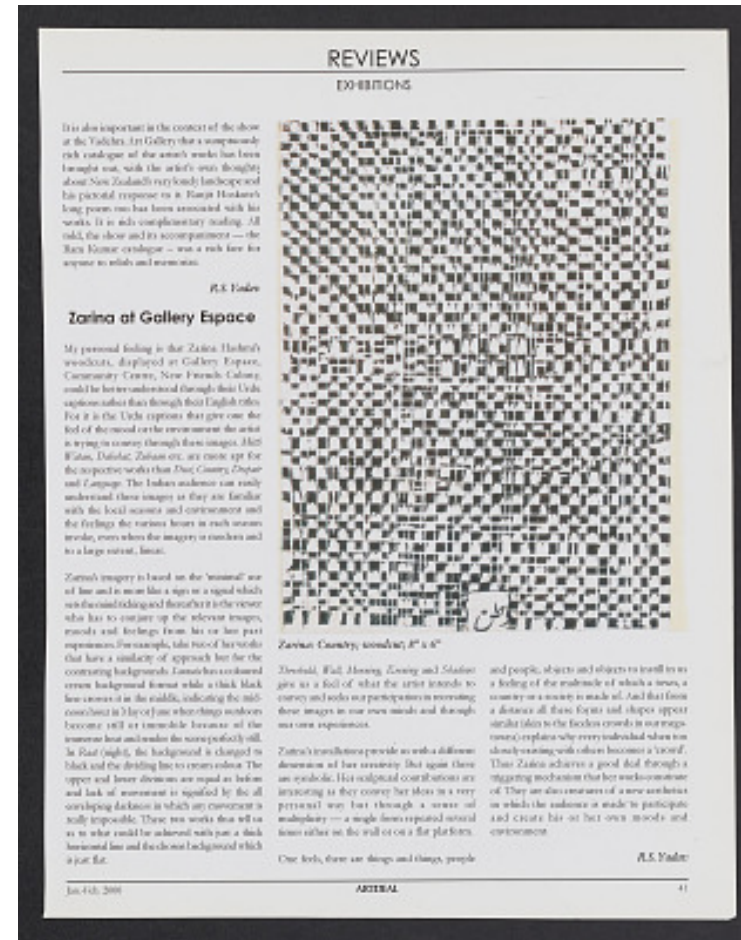
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Zarina: Country; woodcut; 8"x6"

Threshold, Wall, Morning, Evening and Shadows give us a feel of what the artist intends to convey and seeks our participation in recreating these images in our own minds and through our own experiences.

Zarina's installations provide us with a different dimension of her creativity. But again these are symbolic. Her sculptural contributions are interesting as they convey her ideas in a very personal way but through a sense of multiplicity - a single form repeated several times either on the wall or on a flat platform.

One feels, there are things and things, people and people, objects and objects to instill in us a feeling of the multitude of which a town, a



country or a society is made of. And that from a distance all these forms and shapes appear similar (akin to the faceless crowds in our mega-towns) explains why every individual when too closely existing with others becomes a 'crowd'. Thus Zarina achieves a good deal through a triggering mechanism that her works constitute of. They are also creatures of a new aesthetics in which the audience is made to participate and create his or her own moods and environment.

R. S. Yadav

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ARTDEAL  
41

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