

Satpreet Kahlon

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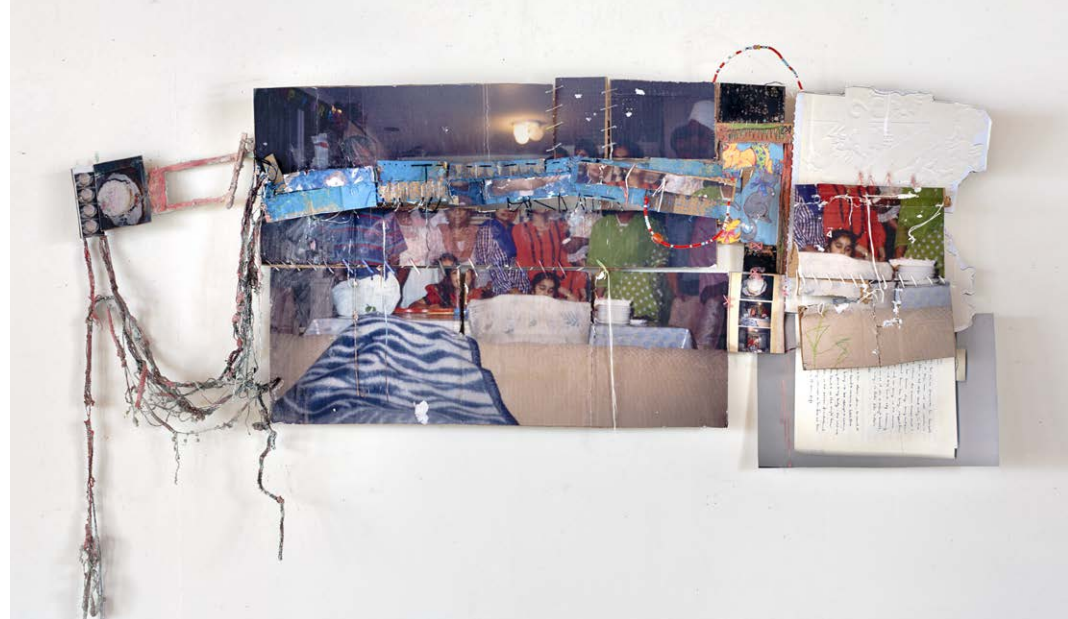
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My most recent work is a body of sculptural works using Dutch Golden Age still lives as a starting point, along with recent academic analysis reframing them as portraits of colonial souvenirs and the beginning of widespread ecological destruction. The work pairs photo transfers of the paintings on scrap wooden frames with sculptures recreating the paintings using contemporary waste materials that can be directly tied to the history of Imperialist conquest and our contemporary climate crisis.

I make my substrate out of used cardboard that I cut and stitch together and then gesso, on a wooden frame that I make from scrap wood collected from various waste sites related to global trade routes.

juxtaposition of two unlikely formal inclinations, detail, reclaimed materials, image transfer, 2023



from all of us, reclaimed materials, image transfer, 60 x 55 x 7 in, 2023

Faced with this material, where it comes from and where it's going, I can't help but think about cultural legacy. What we inherit and what we leave behind. The routes that these materials take to get to the hands of consumers, the route they will take on their freight ships back to Asia, and how these routes mimic the routes created by European Imperialists hundreds of years ago.

Legacy and history. Spools of thread still unraveling. A long, looming shadow. Where do these threads lead, and how are we implicated as artists working in an industry that continues this legacy of object commodification? By creating work from waste materials that I break apart and destroy after they are shown, I hope to stand in a lineage of anti-commodity and anti-monumentalist artists who came before me - prioritizing my love for environment and my politics above my own desire to be in an artistic canon or archive.

I had an amazing time at Montello. In the two weeks that I stayed in the desert, I went on countless walks, woke up and went to bed with the sun, encountered packs of coyotes, a herd of wild elk, and received nightly visits from two barn owls - and made two new works and made great headway on a book of poetry.

But above all, staying at Montello allowed me to reset my nervous system. As someone who suffers from c-ptsd, unexpected noises and experiences with strangers can be difficult to manage, and the August that I went to Montello was a particularly challenging time for me in my healing journey. To be able to come to such a remote, but well-designed and -allocated place, and experience a kind of peace, solitude and silence that I have never experienced before was amazing.

In my years of applying to Montello, I knew in my body that I really wanted to go there. It was only through the experience that I realized I needed it. I feel grateful and so lucky to have had the opportunity to meet and commune with the land, plants, and animals at Montello.