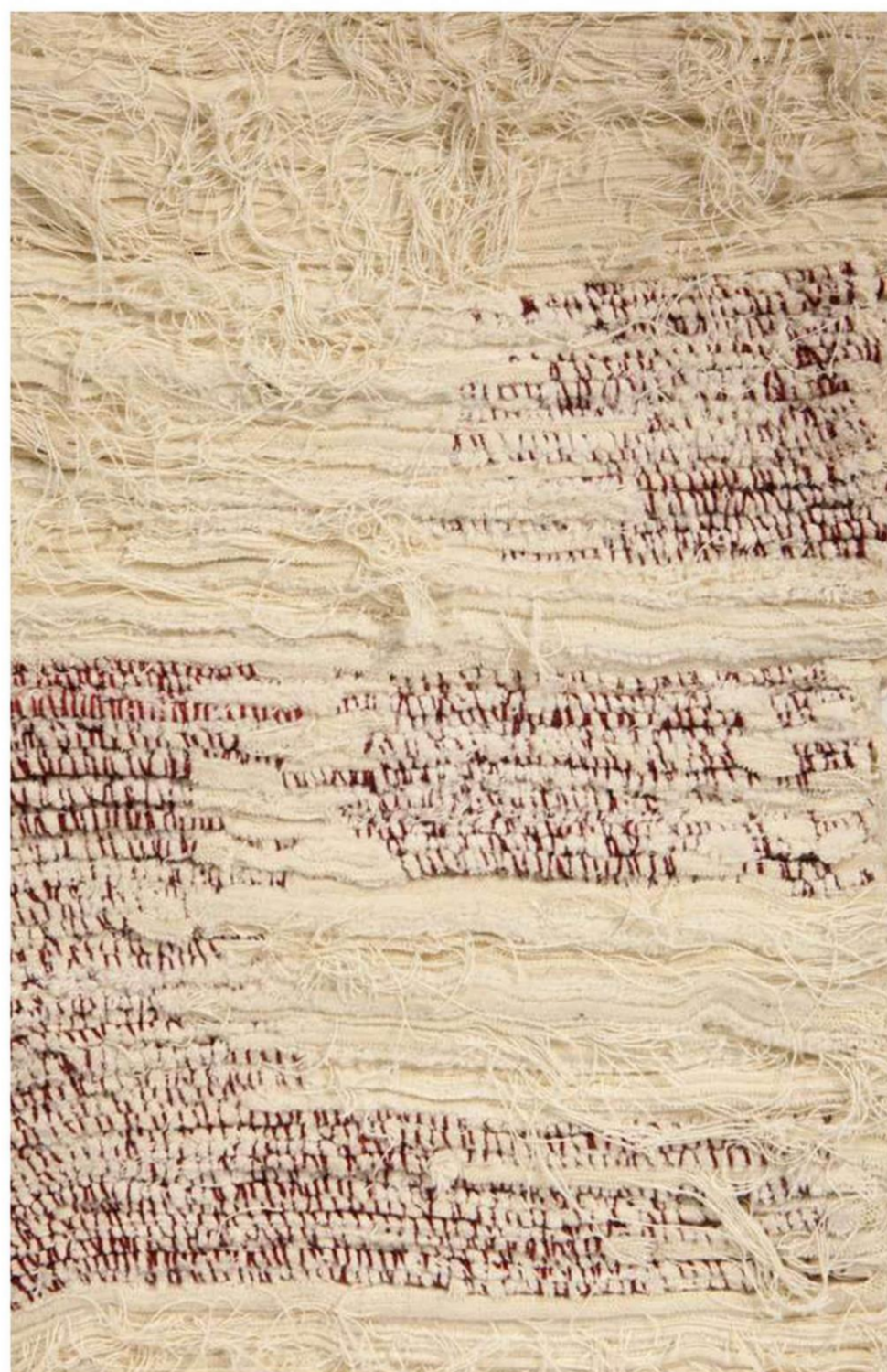


DEBASISH
MUKHERJEE



Portrait 1&2 (2019)

Size- 28 X 19.5 X 5 Inches

Medium - Fabric,thread & wood

These two portraits are from my solo, River Song. In this work, I have tried to capture the portrait of displaced places. The layered memories of time carry many untold stories and emotions, the hidden blood clots at times appear like undeciphered scripts.



Lost River (2014)

Size- 98 X 43 Inches

Medium - Fabric & thread

'Lost River' is an aerial landscape of a place where I spent my early childhood. The mapping of memory is a tool that I often use in my practice. The water body, which was an integral part of my early days, does not exist anymore. Human encroachment has killed one more part of my memories.



Ancestors: a portrait (2019)

Size- 79 X 60 X 19 Inches

Medium - Digital transfer on fabric, wood & metal

My grandmother was a young widow; I always saw her wearing white mulmul and other such saris made of fine Indian fabrics. Being the youngest in the family, whenever I got a chance to walk into her room, I remember seeing piles of well-folded white saris in her almirah. That memory stayed with me and I ended up creating this work in which I used about 900 meters of muslin.



River Song (2019)

Size- 3.25 X 40 Feet

Medium - Thread, wood & metal wire

Each time I go through our family albums, I notice how we invariably focus only on people; we neither document the spaces around them nor any person in their own element. We see these soulless cliched images posing consciously, which does not appeal to me. While dealing with the subject of portraiture, I wanted to challenge it's typical academic boundaries. The work 'River Song' is an abstract portrait of my mother. This is how I saw her - like an ever-flowing river of unconditional love and compassion.



Portrait of my Father: a lost landscape (2019)

Size-84 X 52 X 18 Inches

Medium - Paper, wood & industrial texture

A beehive of thread spools set in industrial texture, extending irrepressibly from a vintage cabinet, fills the empty spaces which surround it. An abstract mapping of the land I lost in the process of moving to different cities along with my father, a journey of loss and longing I wanted to memorialize in this particular work.



Benares (2016)

Size- 103 X 52 X 18 Inches

Medium- Wood, rice paper, acrylic color & tea stain

The city of Benares, in the northern part of India, had been a second home to me, since childhood. I remember visiting Benares during every summer holiday, throughout the mid-70s and 80s. Almost every day, I would cycle to the Dashashvamedha Ghat for sketching practice. Once the dusk settled over the Ganga, the place looked magical; I would sit and watch the reflection of lights creating abstract patterns on the face of Ganga for hours together. This work is my homage to the city, which gave me a very different perspective on life.

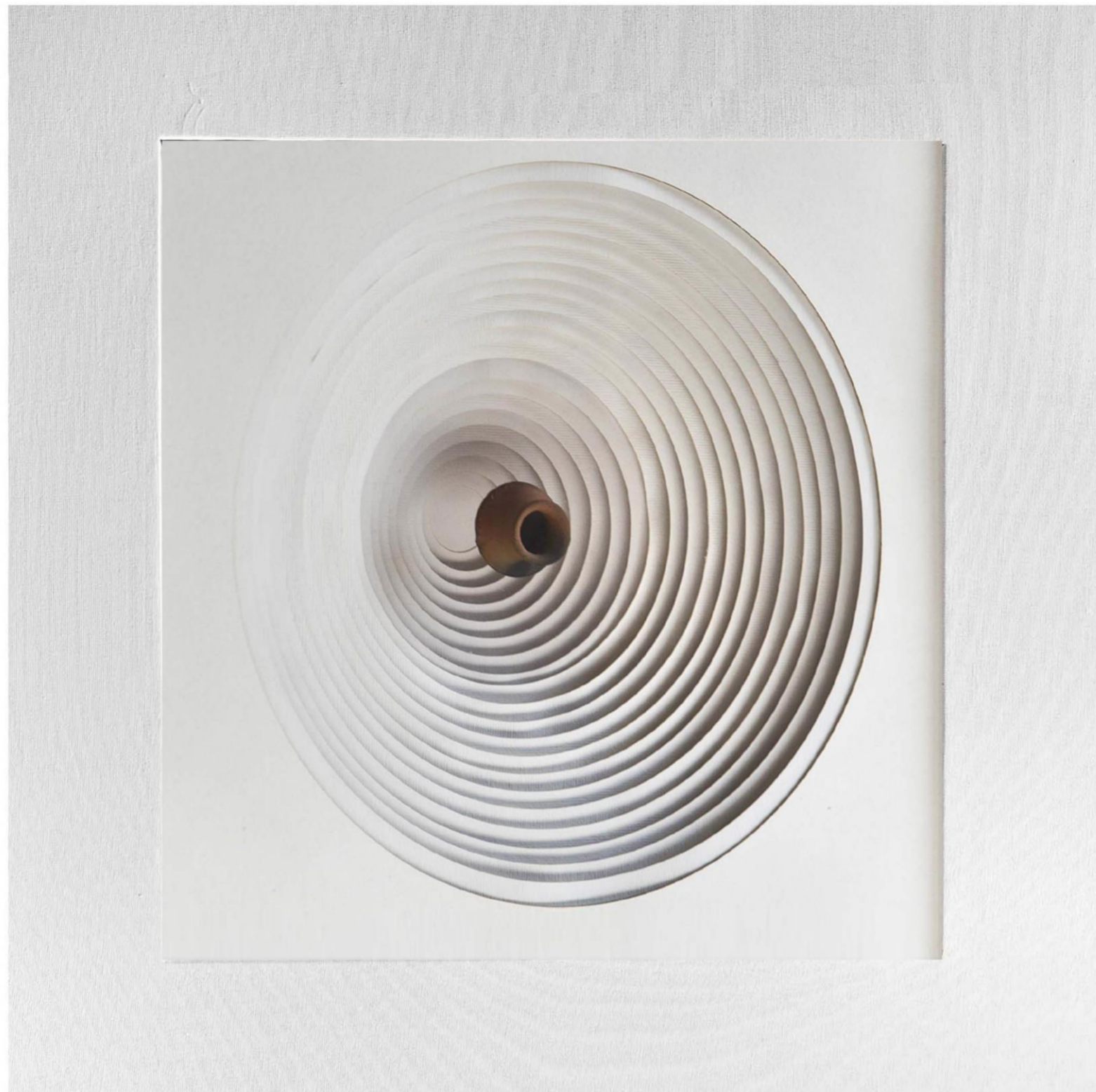


Untitled (2013)

Size- 40 X 40 X 4 Inches

Medium- Wood, paper, acrylic color & terracotta

This work was inspired by the ancient urban civilizations and their rich socio-cultural elements and the way their remains exist amidst today's modern spaces. The works are my effort to unravel the complex layers of co-existence, and focus on the many aspects of our past, much of which still remains undeciphered and unexplained. A common element, which ran through the entire body of work, was 'Aerial perspectives'. A bird's eye view of land enabled me to study topographies that exhibit organic patterns, layers and textures created by Nature, the passage of time, as well as the territorial markings by Man.

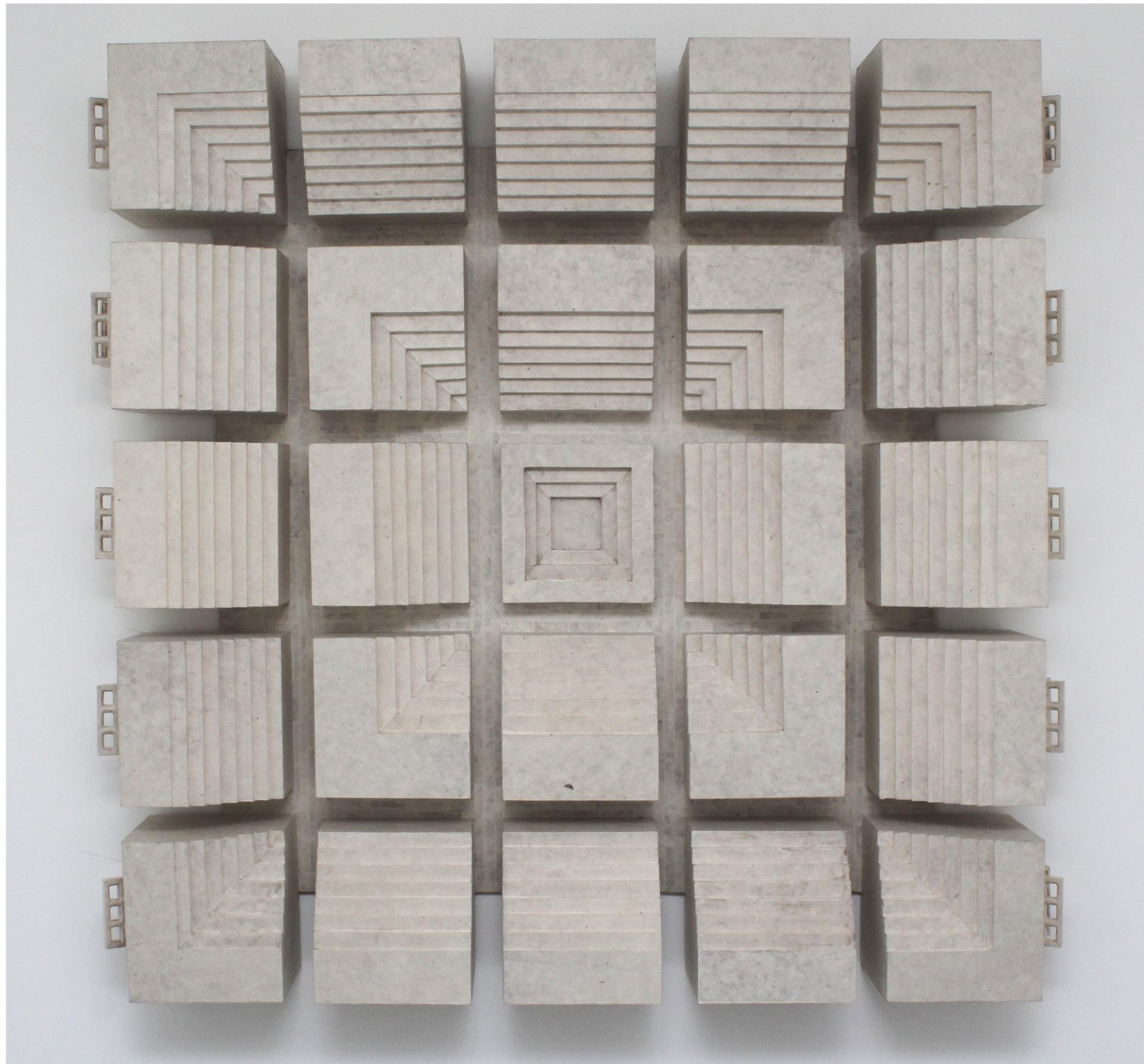


Untitled (2013)

Size- 40 X 40 X 4 Inches

Medium- Wood, paper, acrylic color & terracotta

This work was inspired by the ancient urban civilizations and their rich socio-cultural elements and the way their remains exist amidst today's modern spaces. The works are my effort to unravel the complex layers of co-existence, and focus on the many aspects of our past, much of which still remains undeciphered and unexplained. A common element, which ran through the entire body of work, was 'Aerial perspectives'. A bird's eye view of land enabled me to study topographies that exhibit organic patterns, layers and textures created by Nature, the passage of time, as well as the territorial markings by Man.



Untitled (2013)

Size- 62 X 62 X 09 Inches

Medium- Wood, rice paper & mirror

This work was inspired by the ancient urban civilizations and their rich socio-cultural elements and the way their remains exist amidst today's modern spaces. The works are my effort to unravel the complex layers of co-existence, and focus on the many aspects of our past, much of which still remains undeciphered and unexplained. A common element, which ran through the entire body of work, was 'Aerial perspectives'. A bird's eye view of land enabled me to study topographies that exhibit organic patterns, layers and textures created by Nature, the passage of time, as well as the territorial markings by Man.



Twenty-two Moons (2019)

Size- 10 Inches diameter each moon

Medium- Fabric, wood, metal, industrial texture & glass beads

Having worked with fabric for almost a quarter of a century, I was tempted to create something that emphasized its materiality/tactility. This work is composed of 22 embroidery hoop frames, in each of which the cloth has been stiffened and painted, sometimes embellished with shoals of small beads. The crinkles and crimps of the cloth evoke a lunar surface, or a sky streaked with coal smoke. Taken together, these moons represent the number of years that I spent in my hometown of Chapra, Bihar.

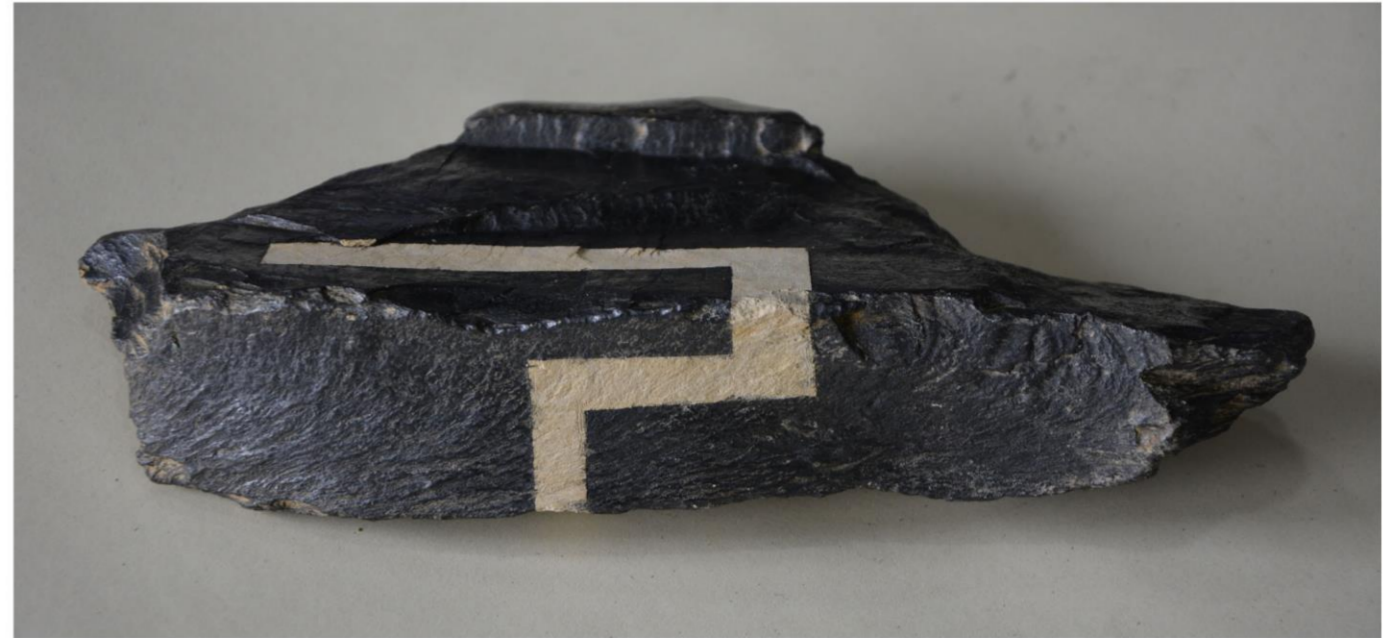


Landscape of memory: an ever-changing portrait (2021)

Size- Variable

Medium- Archival photographs, wood, textile, metal, paper, thread and found objects.

The Indian Partition of 1947 was the largest displacement in human history, marked by immense trauma and loss. I have always been drawn to this human impact of Partition; in my own art practice, I look at displacement in a larger and contemporary context, and my enquiry oscillates between our personal memories and a deeper sense of loss. We are always displaced from our past, with return never a possibility, we cling on to our memories – both material and intangible, visual and sonic – held randomly together in an uneven, half-lit landscape in our minds. This work is a portrait of one such vast landscape of memory

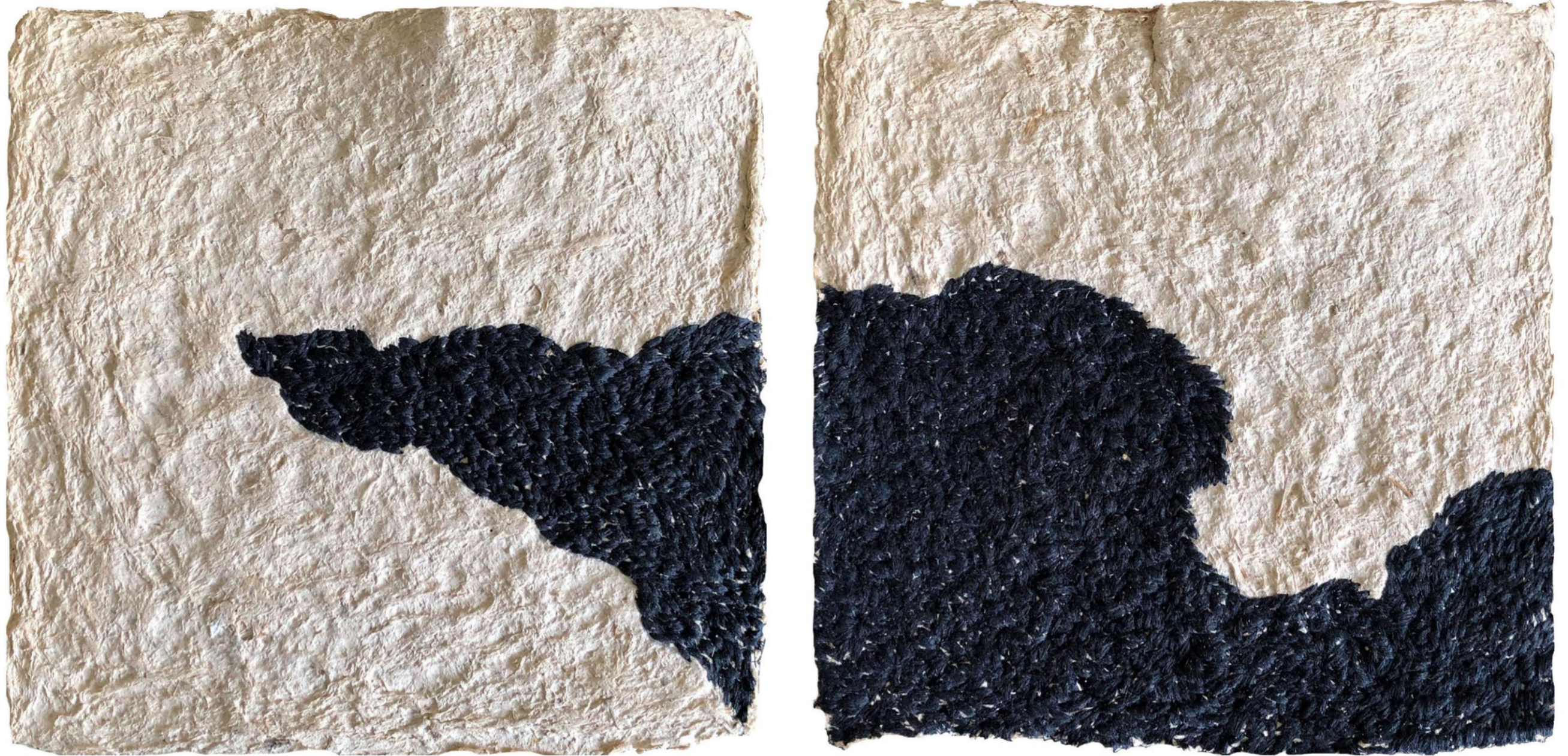


Burnt Spaces: a dark memory of Partition (2020)

Size- Variable

Medium- Graphite on soft stone.

Cyril John Radcliffe, who was called upon to Partition India, was not a trained town planner but a barrister. With one stroke of his pen, he made millions of people homeless. What unfolded was one of the worst communal violence ever and the largest displacement in human history. The people of India and Pakistan paid a very heavy price for their freedom: about fifteen million were uprooted, approximately seventy-five thousand women were raped and killed, and millions died while crossing the border. These burnt spaces carry a testimony of those scars, never to be healed.



Burnt Spaces: a dark memory of Partition (2020)

Size- 6 X 6 Inches each

Medium- Hand stiches on handmade paper .

Cyril John Radcliffe, who was called upon to Partition India, was not a trained town planner but a barrister. With one stroke of his pen, he made millions of people homeless. What unfolded was one of the worst communal violence ever and the largest displacement in human history. The people of India and Pakistan paid a very heavy price for their freedom: about fifteen million were uprooted, approximately seventy-five thousand women were raped and killed, and millions died while crossing the border. These burnt spaces carry a testimony of those scars, never to be healed.



Quest: remains of a loss (2013)

Size- 6 X 6 X 1.5 Inches

Medium- News print paper, industrial texture, earth color and terracotta miniature pots

It has been my effort to unravel the complex layers of co existence, and focus on the many aspects of our past, much of which still remains undeciphered and unexplained. My quest is to capture all these elements that seem to be lost in the urban spaces we inhabit.



Traces of a dream (2006)

Size- 60 X 30 Inches

Medium- Mix media

I long for that space which isn't there anymore in its physical form. I walk miles together in the darkest of hours, just to get a glimpse of it. I did see it once, fleetingly...but then I couldn't read the texts and wound marks it carried. I could only see the blood stains. They were deep and dark, they stayed with me and kept questioning me.

Biography

Born in Chapra, historically an important town in Bihar, Debasish Mukherjee grew up amidst open spaces and railway colonies, mixing freely with people from a range of social backgrounds. He graduated from the Banaras Hindu University with a specialization in Painting. Rooted in India, Mukherjee manifests his keen observations of India's built environment, social fabric and events from his day-to-day life into his art practice. Mukherjee's work tends to interrogate the way an object or memory is preserved, celebrated or neglected.

He has also conducted extensive research with weavers and artisans across India, especially within Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha and Gujarat. He is a published poet and an avid photographer. Debasish lives and works in New Delhi.