

T A L

P U R

Grosvenor  
Gallery

# NEW PAINTINGS BY MOHAMMAD ALI TALPUR

20-23 MARCH 2019

**Grosvenor  
Gallery**

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Mohammad Ali Talpur (b.1976) was born in the Sindh region of Pakistan before moving to Lahore where he studied at the prestigious National College of Arts (NCA). Throughout his career his focus has been calligraphy, abstraction and minimalism.

The lines in Talpur's work offer a multitude of experiences to the viewer. Taken at face value they possess an optical quality reminiscent of Riley and Vasarely, but possess none of the colourful nature of these artist's works, instead Talpur restricts himself to a palette of black and white, a reference to the printed page of a book. The combination of line and colour discombobulates the eye, causing the viewer to see flashes of colour and movement within the monochrome canvases.

*"You could say that I have developed a kind of colour phobia. For example, red has a history and so does green, and putting these colours on a surface would lead to a plethora of meanings. But a plain, black mark on white surface is more essential and closer to the primary idea. There is nothing extraneous about it. It is what remains after the extra concerns have been filtered."*

Talpur has produced numerous bodies of work throughout his career, including; *'Leekha'*, *'Machine Drawings'* and *'Alif'*, all markedly different and showing the progression of theory and aesthetic in his work.

*"I start a painting with a single line and then keep on adding to it, as the lines increase they naturally curve and take on their own direction, on the way making errors, but moving on. I contain my experiences in the complexity of this line. The starting point being darker and the end much lighter, it is about time, distance and living"* (Talpur on the practice invoked for the *Leekha* series)

In his *'Machine Drawings'* there is a dramatic departure from the depiction of words and letters, the canvases painstakingly drawn and rendered, to give an effect that suggests the images have been created by machinery rather than by the artists' hand.

opposite top  
*Leekha*  
2007

opposite bottom  
*Machine Drawing*  
2012

“When you put a single line on a blank surface, it may not have an expression but when you repeat it, it imbues a new kind of energy to the surface. Take the traditional arts of ceramics and textiles. Or better still, classical music. Be it Kishori Amonkar or Ustad Amir Khan, the repetition in their music with slight variation or improvisation adds a new character to their art. Mystical poetry is another parallel that presents itself as an open-ended statement, appealing to the layman and the intellectual alike. To translate and transform those nuances into a visual language was a challenge. To reinterpret colours into black and white was also painstaking.”

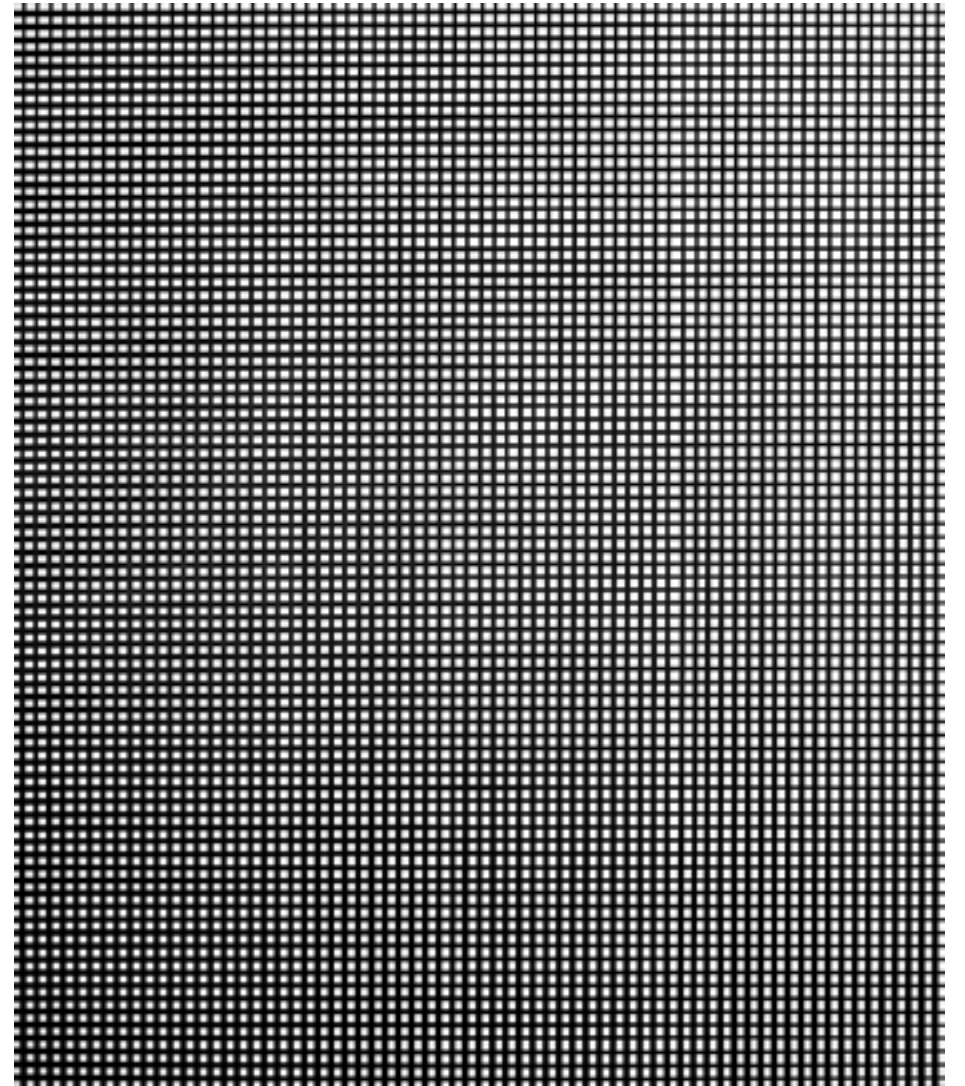
‘Alif’, meaning ‘to compose’ in Arabic; is the initial letter in the Arabic, Farsi and Urdu alphabets; and is also the first letter in the name Allah. The use of this spiritually significant textual symbol to underpin this body of work is, to Talpur, “the ultimate expression of life”. ‘Alif’ marks a turning point for his practice, which has long focused on an exploration of the line and a desire to make “art without content.”

Talpur’s arresting canvases have their roots firmly in calligraphic heritage, whilst simultaneously presenting a starkly contemporary aesthetic. Talpur is an exciting artist, whose preoccupation with calligraphy over many years tells a fascinating story.

WORK



Alif, 2013



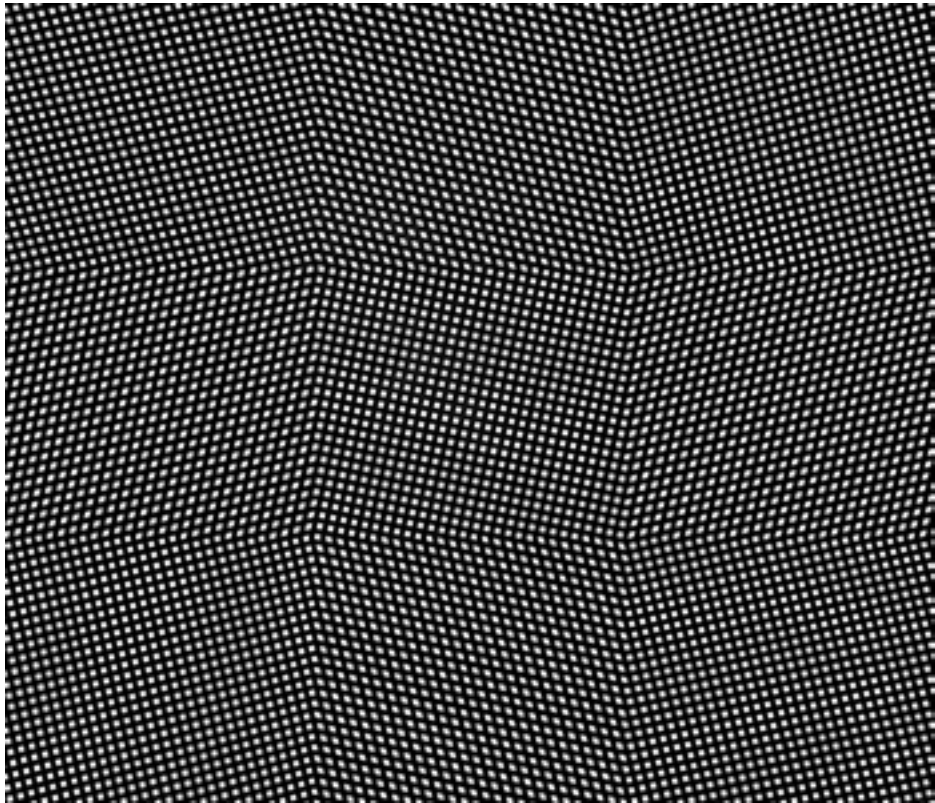
[1]

*Untitled*, 2018/19

Acrylic on canvas

213.4 x 182.9 cm

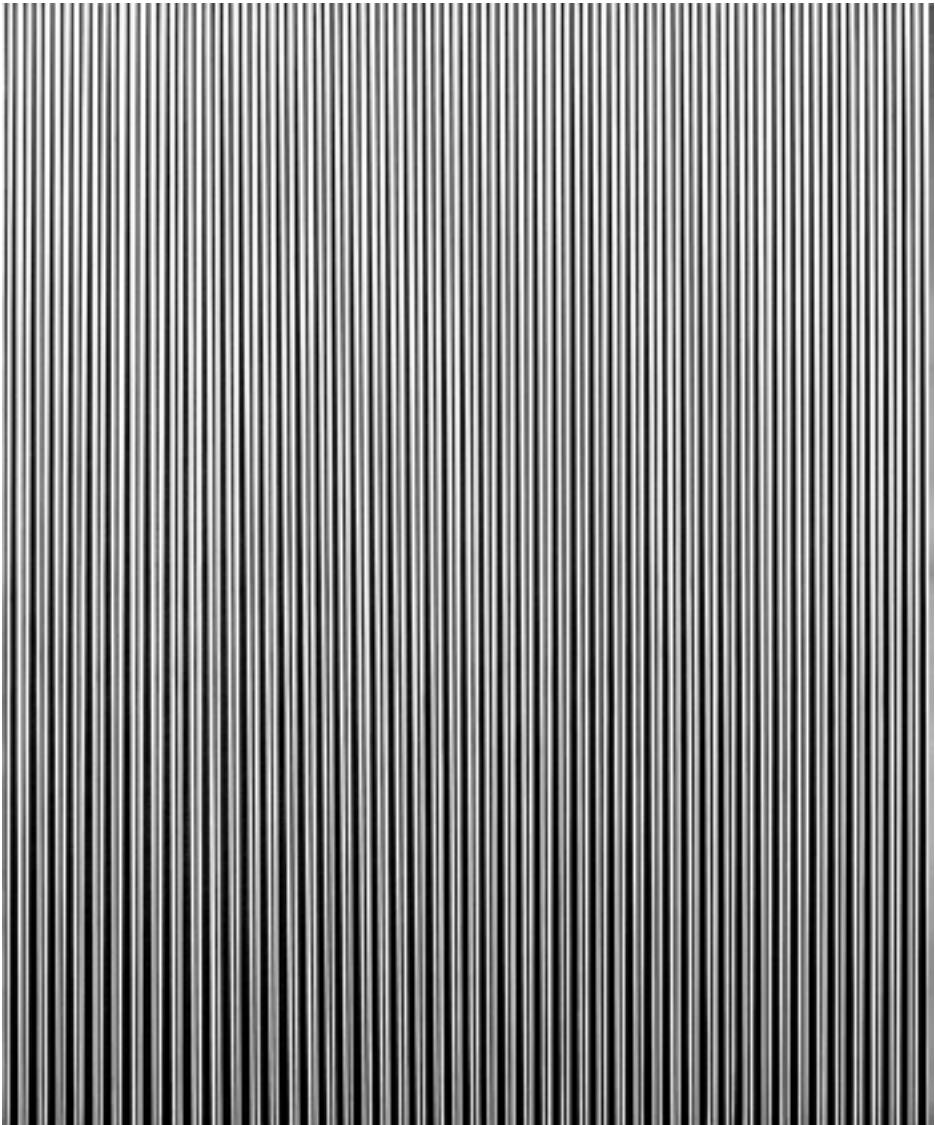
84 x 72 in



[2]

*Untitled*  
2019

Acrylic on canvas  
182.9 x 213.4 cm  
72 x 84 in

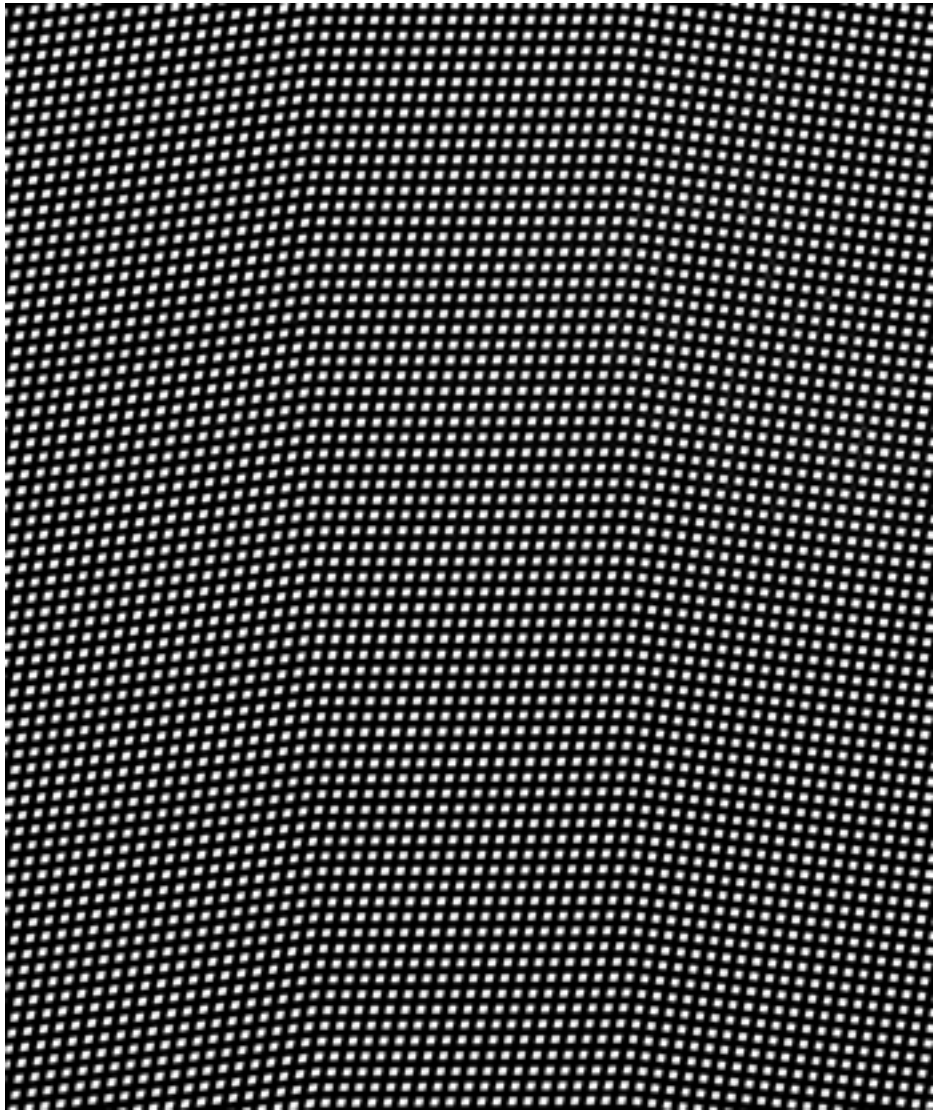


[3]

*Untitled,*  
2018/19

Acrylic on canvas  
91.4 x 76.2 cm  
36 x 30 in

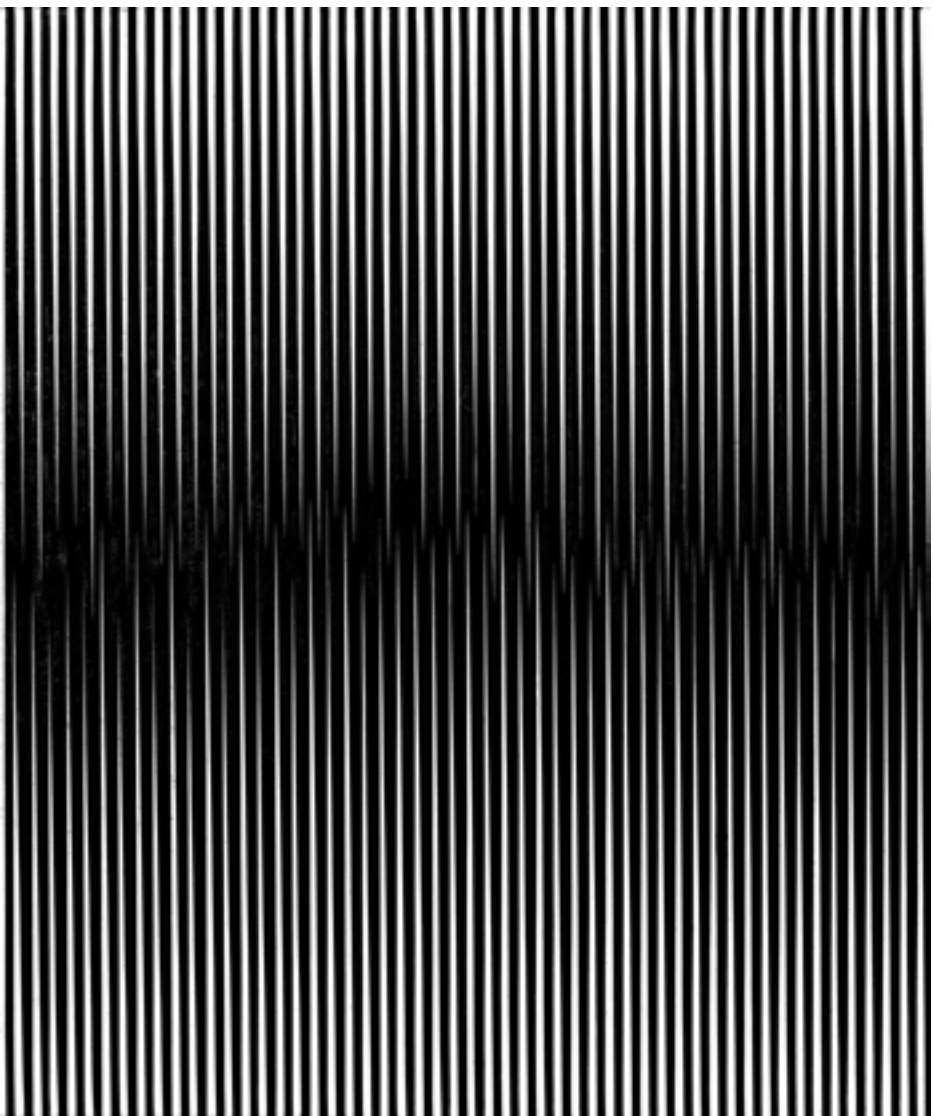




[4]

*Untitled*  
2018/19

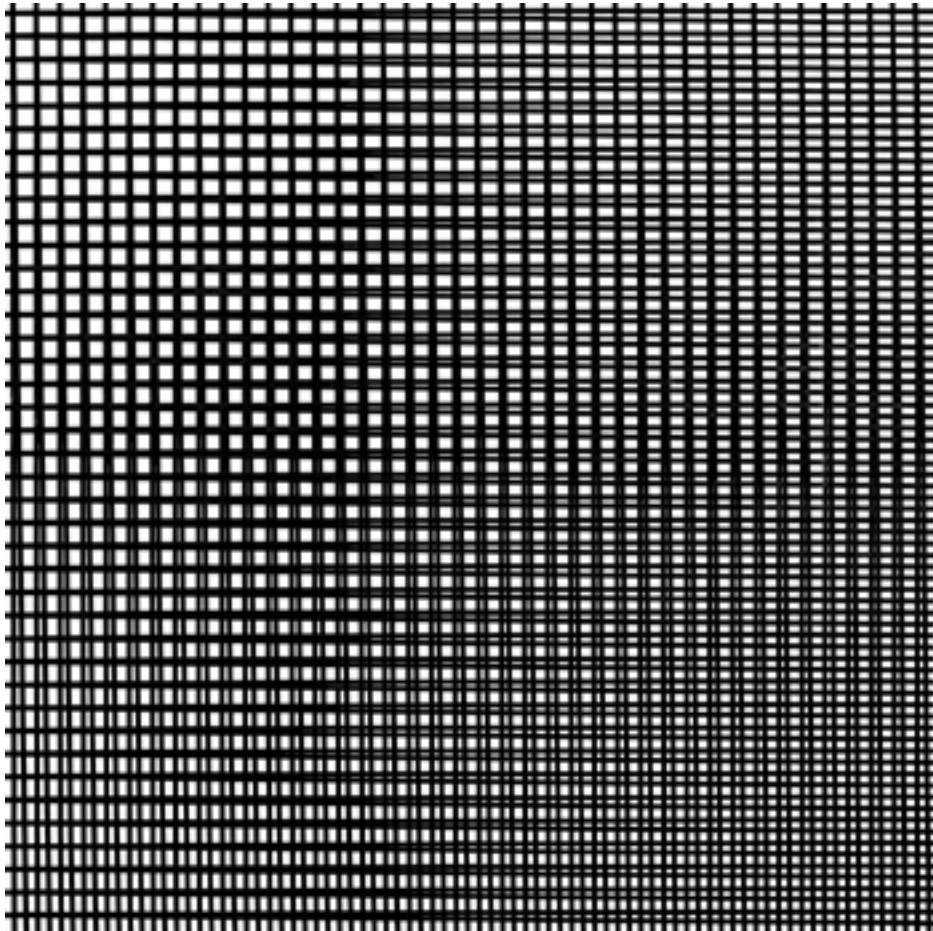
Acrylic on canvas  
91.4 x 76.2 cm  
36 x 30 in



[5]

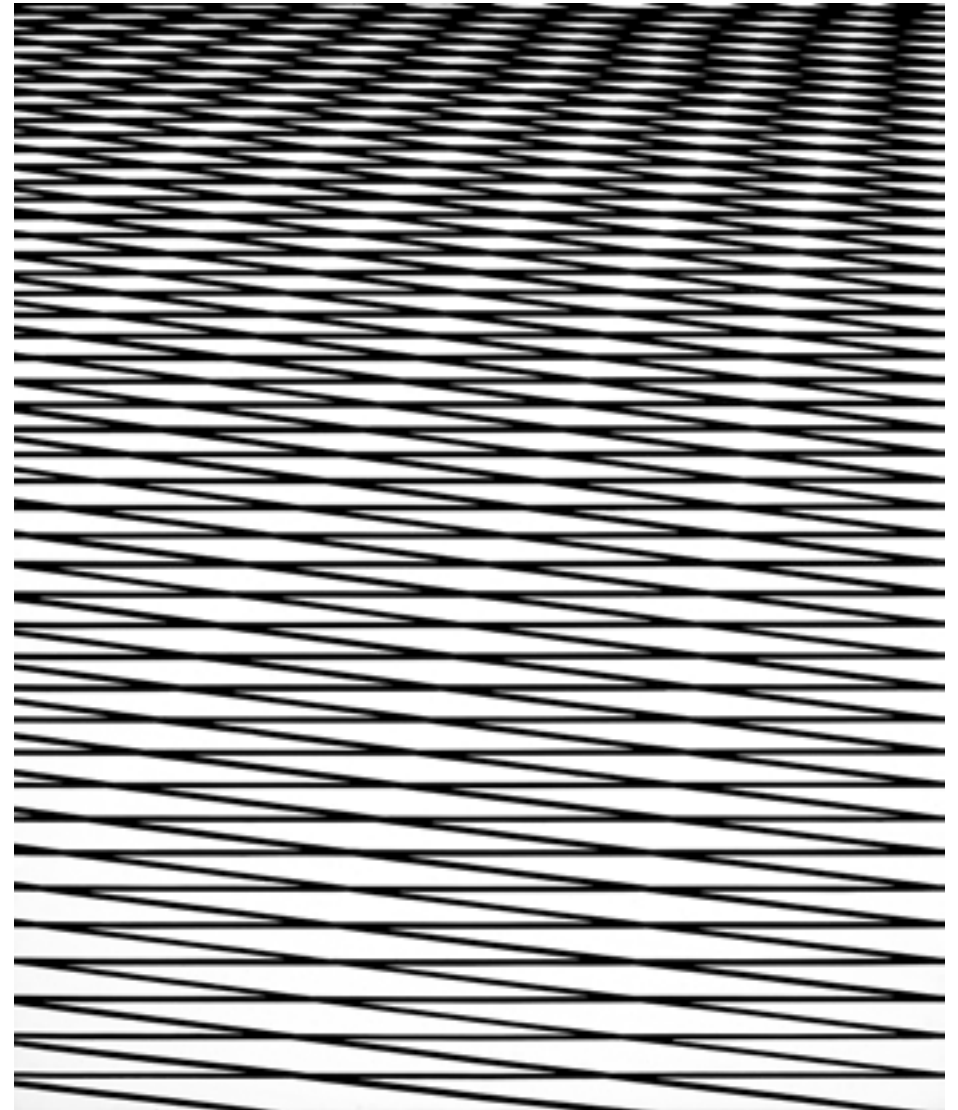
*Untitled*  
2018

Acrylic on canvas  
63.5 x 53.3 cm  
25 x 21 in



[6]  
*Untitled*  
 2019

Acrylic on canvas  
 120.6 x 120.6 cm  
 47 ½ x 47 ½ in



[7]  
*Untitled*  
 2019

Acrylic on canvas  
 91.4 x 76.2 cm  
 36 x 30 in



# MOHAMMAD ALI TALPUR



b.1976, Hyderabad

## EDUCATION

2000–01 MFA, MA (Hons) Visual Art, National College of Arts Lahore.  
1994–98 BFA National College of Arts Lahore. (Pass with Distinction)

## AWARDS

M.D TASEER Scholarship at National College of Arts Lahore.

## SOLO SHOWS

2018 Sight Specific, Austin Desmond, London  
2016 Till the Last Look, Canvas Gallery, Karachi  
2015 Lahore Art Gallery, Lahore  
2014 Latitude 28, New Delhi  
2013 Alif, Canvas Gallery, Karachi  
2012 Alif, Green Cardamom, London  
2009 Rohtas Gallery Lahore  
2008 Art & Public Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland  
XVA Gallery, Dubai  
2007 Finsbury Park, England  
Light Gallery, Green Cardamom, London  
Canvas Gallery, Karachi  
2006 Zahoor -Ul- Akhlaque Gallery, Lahore

## GROUP SHOWS

2013 Extra I Ordinary, Group show curated by Rashid Rana  
Latitude 28, India  
2011 Devi Art Foundation, India  
2010 Sea Saw, Two Person Show, Canvas Gallery, Karachi  
2008 Dubai Art Fair, Pakistan Pavilion  
Hong Kong Art Fair, Hong Kong  
Dubai Art Fair, Green Cardamom, Dubai  
Orients Sans Frontieres, Espace, France  
'Lets draw a line', Chawkandi Gallery, Karachi  
Going Places, Canvas Gallery Karachi  
2007 Shanghai Art Fair, China  
2006 Three person show, Canvas Gallery, Karachi  
2001 MFA show, National College of Arts Lahore  
2000 Scope-7, Zahoor-Ul- Akhlaque Gallery, Lahore  
Three Person Show, Canvas Gallery, Karachi  
1998 Graduate show at NCA, Lahore

**PUBLIC COLLECTIONS**

The British Museum, London

Queensland Art Gallery & Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane

The Devi Art Foundation, Gurugram

*Talpur currently teaches at the National College  
of Arts in Lahore, Pakistan where he also lives.*