

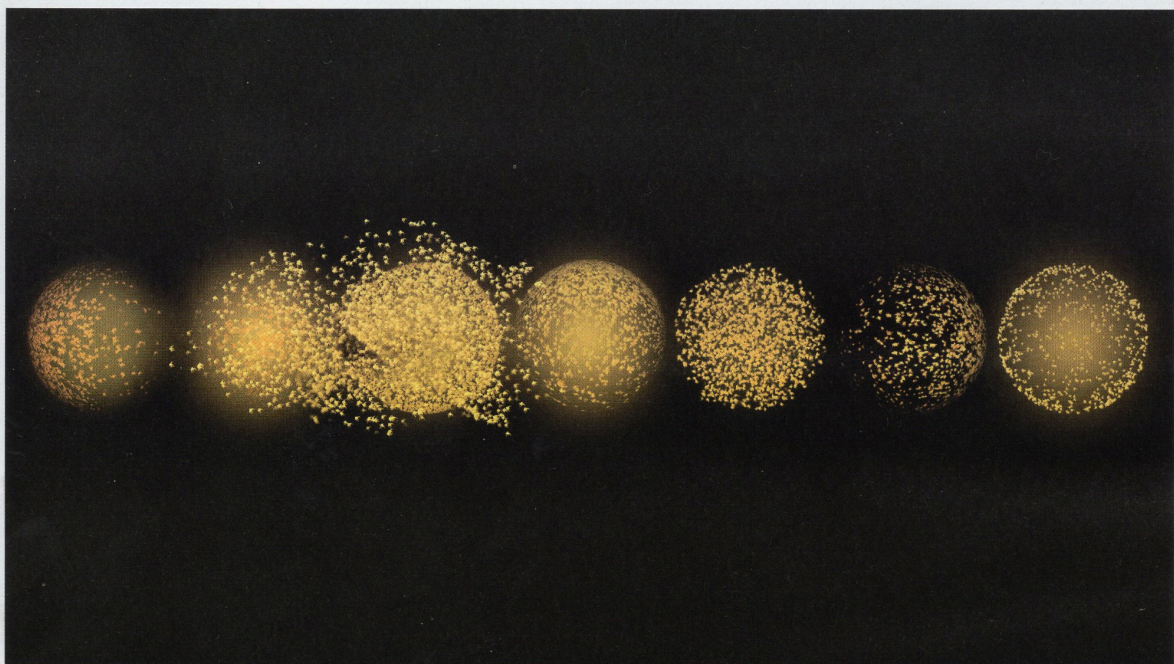
Art | Basel Miami Beach

DECEMBER 2017



FROM INTIMATE TO IMMERSIVE

UBS makes the most of its Art Basel lounge with works from miniaturist Shahzia Sikander. By Phoebe Hoban



As it does each year in its lounge at the Convention Center, UBS, the global Lead Partner of Art Basel, is exhibiting work by an artist represented in the company's extensive collection. This December's choice is Shahzia Sikander, the Pakistani-American creator of contemporary Indo-Persian miniatures, who uses traditional motifs in a wide range of media. UBS is showcasing that multimedia aspect by including a variety of work—mosaics, drawings, prints, a wall covering patterned with her images, and an animated video.

"We have artists from about 75 countries in our collection," says Mary Rozell, global head of the

UBS Art Collection, who is curating the exhibition. "Shahzia's work has non-Western roots, and she is a female artist—something we're also focusing on. I find it very appealing that she has taken the tradition of Persian miniatures and reinterpreted it." Adds Sikander, "Drawing is my thinking tool, which I extend to different mediums and collaborations. The mosaics in this exhibit are based on a group of drawings that were set in tile by the master mosaic-maker Constantino Buccolieri in Rome."

The pieces on display include *Demarcation*, a mosaic silhouette of a female figure, and *The Singing Spheres*, a series of works on paper derived from

a large-scale video. But the showstopper is the stunning three-minute video *Singing Suns*. Seven golden spheres—each made up of tiny iterations of Sikander's trademark ideogram, the silhouette of a female head crowned with a bun—are seen against a stark black background. To a score by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Du Yun, each sphere decomposes into beelike swarms of head-shaped particles. "I use trenchant motifs," the artist explains. "The female head with the bun is derived from the female worshippers of Krishna, and by disentangling it from its history and gender associations, I can find new meanings and narratives for the detached icon." •

Shahzia Sikander, *Singing Suns*, 2016, at the UBS Lounge in the Collectors Lounge of Art Basel in Miami Beach.