

Implicit Grid

by

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Master in Fine Arts

In

Painting

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Lastly, I wish to acknowledge that this work was completed on the traditional land of Amiskwacîwâskahikan, Treaty 6 territory, and Métis Nation of Alberta Region 4. As an immigrant, I have dedicated myself to learning about the history of this land since my arrival. I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to live, study, work, and gather on this ancestral homeland, honouring the diverse Indigenous nations, including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/ Sauteaux/ Anishinaabe, Inuit, and numerous others.

A condensation of lines,
depreciation of palette,
origin of lifeless form—
elevating boundaries into the void of endlessness.

Anxiety sets in as the rhythm kicks in. Through our daily endeavours, we strive to alleviate the relentless grip of anxiety that resurfaces with each transition from one task to the next. Over time, life continues to unfold. But what are the tasks that you take up in between that help you gently relieve the pressure? As for me, I immerse myself in taking a walk to embark on a journey of observation and discovery. Through this sensory exploration, I unveil the myriad drawings hidden within the very fabric of my surroundings. Sometimes, it is the patterns on the drain with unintended marks or the mesmerizing dance of light and shadows gracefully unfolding within the constructed landscapes of our urban environments.

My artistic practice is deeply influenced by the sensibilities of the mid-20th century minimalism movement, where importance was given to organizing principles and rendering a space with a minimum incident or compositional manoeuvring¹. Key artists who significantly inform my practice include Agnes Martin and Nasreen Mohammadi. I find myself deeply inspired by the subdued palette of Martin and the endlessness that resides within the lines of Nasreen. As I navigate my path, I draw upon the essence of these inspirations, allowing their profound impact to shape and inform my work.

Paul Klee, in his notebook, emphasizes that "The process of genesis and growth that give rise to forms in the world we inhabit are more important than the form itself"². Within this same context, the process of creating art surpasses the significance of the final result. For me, the artistic process entails a profound engagement with the canvas or paper as a tactile medium. A dynamic dialogue unfolds during this process, gradually revealing layers of meaning. The process of creating art is a meditative practice. This journey nurtures one's mental well-being, providing unexpected insights and stability while challenging the body's physical endurance and enhancing dexterity. In essence, it represents an intricate exchange of energies. When the act of drawing endeavour culminates, the energy invested by the body manifests itself on the drawn surface.

¹ Colpitt, Frances. "Minimal art: the critical perspective." Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1990), 1

² Levine, Frederick S. "Paul Klee Notebooks, Vol. 2: The Nature of Nature ed. by Jürg Spiller." (1973), 269.

The engagement with the process of making art for me began as an act of repetition. The repetitive drawing of lines served as a means to instill discipline, perform daily riyaz (a ritual), and facilitate a conducive mental environment for generating thoughts and ideas. In this context, repetition resembles a mantra. In J.E. Borman's words, "A mantram is understood (and attested) to tap deeper into one's consciousness. The longer and more often you repeat it, the stronger and more effective it becomes"³. As the lines and dashes are reiterated, the field of vision gains in intensity, resulting in a deeper connection with oneself.

Employing repetition as a technique, the encounter with a field of patterns consistently stirs a sense of excitement and an immediate urge to document and transfer the perception to paper. The objective is to reproduce the image that my eyes perceive on paper. The inherent subtlety of the object and its everyday existence serve as a profound source of inspiration. The first wall in the exhibition showcases a series of artworks that follow this method of observational drawing.

This process of engaging in daily activities to have meaning within my art practice has significantly impacted my experience in Edmonton. The novel environment has introduced fresh tactile sensations and visual allusions. During this time, I was also inspired by the young Indian artist Chetna Verma. She has described her artistic journey as akin to maintaining a daily journal. "I try to manifest the daily monotony of getting from one point to another through my drawings. It is a personal journey: perhaps the point represents me moving as I reflect on the city's architecture, mentally deconstructing it into horizontals and verticals"⁴. Discovering her approach resonated with me. While residing in a new city, I appreciate my daily commute. Each day offers fresh avenues of exploration and a wellspring of inspiration.

Another important artist for me has been Zarina Hashmi⁵. Her etchings on Japanese paper have a compelling quality. The meticulous mark-making and the nuanced emotion conveyed by black ink on unbleached paper resonate deeply. It exudes a sense of familiarity with each line thoughtfully executed. Her ink works are exceptionally evocative yet delicately nuanced in conveying emotions.

³ Bormann, J.E., Kane, J.J. & Oman, D. Mantram Repetition: a Portable Practice for Being Mindful. *Mindfulness* 11, 2031–2033 (2020).

⁴ Verma, Chetnaa. <http://Chetnaa.Art/about/>, 2009

⁵ Hasmi, Zarina. <https://www.zarina.work/>, 2019

The time passed by,
A common link occurred.
Grids it spelled.
There was no way to escape it.
Succumbed, this territory, everywhere was grids.

Warp and weft intertwine, forging a connection that withstands the test of time. These are the grids we wear, and amidst them, architectural grids which proliferate in abundance. The topographical grids represent a formidable system. However, it remains factual that nature resists such confines. The grid creates its own world of relationships that don't adhere to the inherent order of the natural world. Rosalind Krauss, in the context of this, writes, "Insofar as its order is that of pure relationship, the grid is a way of abrogating the claims of natural objects to have an order particular to themselves; the relationships in the aesthetic field are shown by the grid to be in a world apart, and to be in respect with natural objects, to be both prior and final"⁶. This spatial aspect of the grid was a key characteristic of modern art, setting it apart from earlier artistic traditions.

The architectural scape around is vastly composed of grids. Certain spaces immerse you with their spectrum of design, pattern and feel. Charles W. Moor quotes, "To at least some very extent, every place can be remembered partly because it is unique, but partly because it has affected our bodies and generated enough associations to hold it in our personal worlds⁷." The emotions stirred by such places endure, offering an experience where, as Juhani Pallasmaa would put it, 'the eye touches'⁸.

In an endeavour to transcend mere observation and delve into the intricate realm of grids, exploring their sensibilities and aesthetic perspectives, I embarked on the journey of creating a series of grids showcased in the corner space of the gallery. This creative process demanded mathematical precision, manual dexterity and continual introspective dialogue. The objective was to juxtapose grids with varying degrees of intensity and subtlety.

⁶ Krauss, Rosalind. "Grids." *October* 9 (1979), 50 - 52

⁷ Bloomer, Kent C., Charles Willard Moore, Robert J. Yudell, and Buzz Yudell. *Body, memory, and architecture*. Yale University Press, 1977.

⁸ Pallasmaa, Juhani. *The eyes of the skin: Architecture and the senses*. John Wiley & Sons, 2012

There are also inherent elements of self-expression that manifest within an artist's work. Were these angles solely confined to the constructed landscape, or was there more to discover? With a dedication of fifteen years to classical Kathak dance, the profound connection gradually became apparent. This insight emerged upon encountering John Cage's notations, where music was expressed through a visual language. Discovering how musicians utilized a visual structure or a sonic gesture⁹ to compose music was intriguing. Within Cage's notations, time was represented horizontally and pitch vertically¹⁰. Additionally, he employed marks and parallel dots to symbolize vocal lines¹¹.

The second insight emerged through exploring Sandip Mallick's paper on "The Geometric Analysis of Footwork and Movement Used in Kathak¹²" which provided significant clarity. Kathak, an Indian classical dance form, places significant emphasis on footwork, body postures, and spins. The precision of angles within the body is crucial, encompassing diagonal, horizontal, vertical, perpendicular, spectral, and radial concepts in the realm of Kathak's body movements. Learning Kathak is akin to embodying a structured system within oneself—a system that, in an abstract sense, resembles a grid.

Throughout my artistic journey, I grappled with finding the deeper significance of my work, only to realize that it was intricately connected to my own self. The interpretation of one's work evolves with time. Yet again, this analogy I draw between Kathak and drawing is but one perspective.

⁹ Joan La Barbara on Visualizing sound says ' When I hear a sonic gesture in my mind, I see a corresponding shape that informs its energy, dynamic, and pitch trajectory.' Sauer, Theresa. (2009). *Notations 21*. London: Mark Batty Publishers, 124

¹⁰ Sauer Theresa, "John Cage - Aria" in *Notations 21* , New York : Mark Batty Publishers 2009, 44

¹¹ Sauer Theresa, "John Cage - Aria" in *Notations 21* , New York : Mark Batty Publishers 2009, 44

¹² Mallick, Sandip. "The Geometric Analysis of Footwork and Movement Used in Kathak." *Centre for Cultural and Resource Training*, (2017).

<https://indianculture.gov.in/research-papers/geometric-analysis-chronological-order-basic-movements-and-footwork-used-kathak>.

Documentation of the show



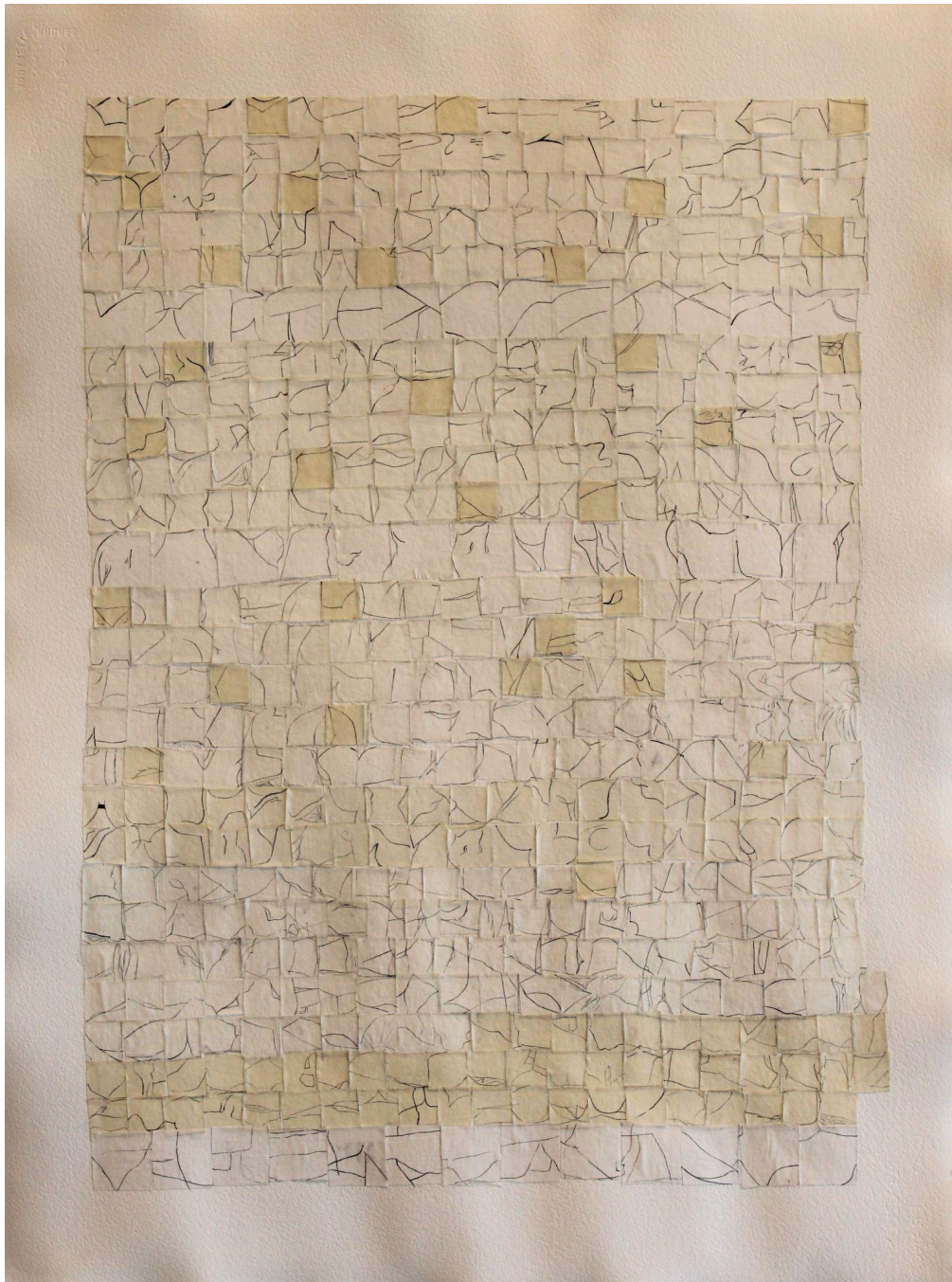
Patel_001

At the tour

2022

Ink and graphite on Washi paper

36 x 36 inches



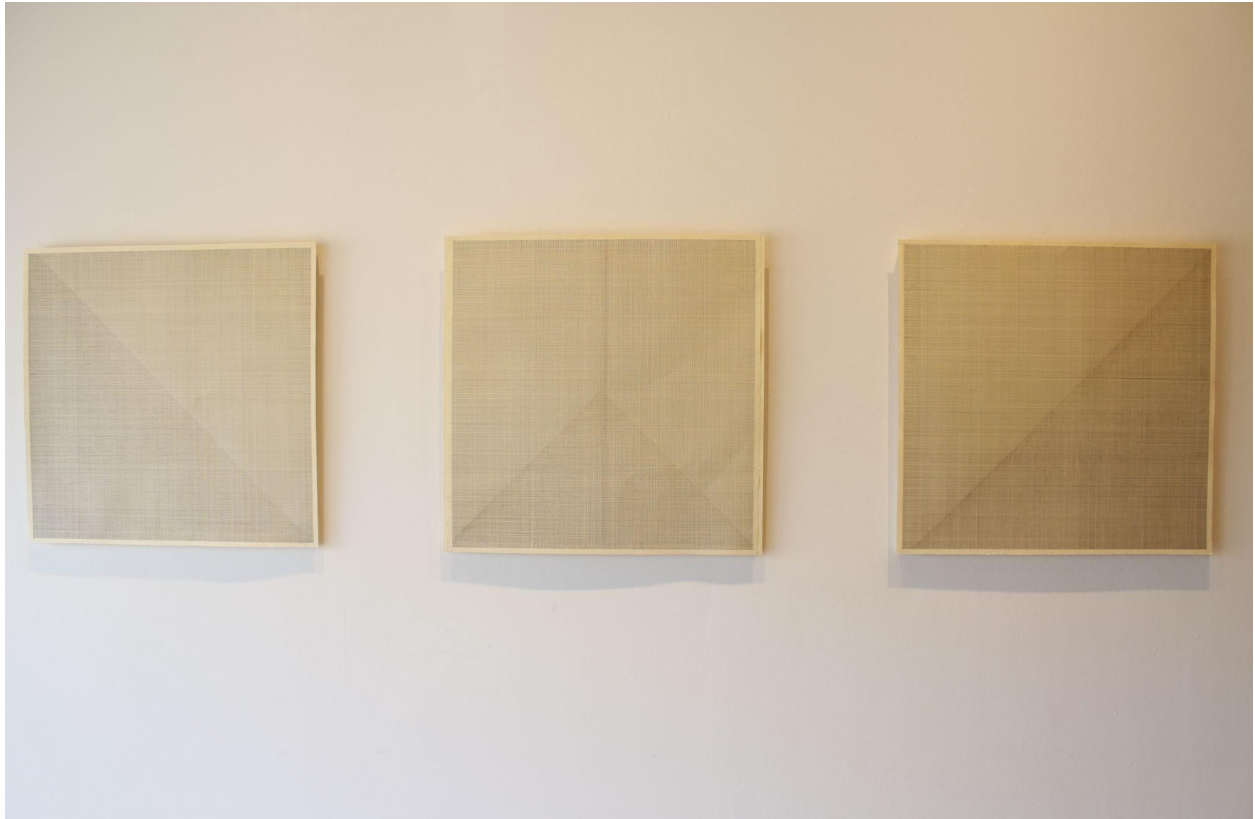
Patel_002

Crevices Within

2021

Ink, graphite and masking tape on paper

30 x 22.5 inches



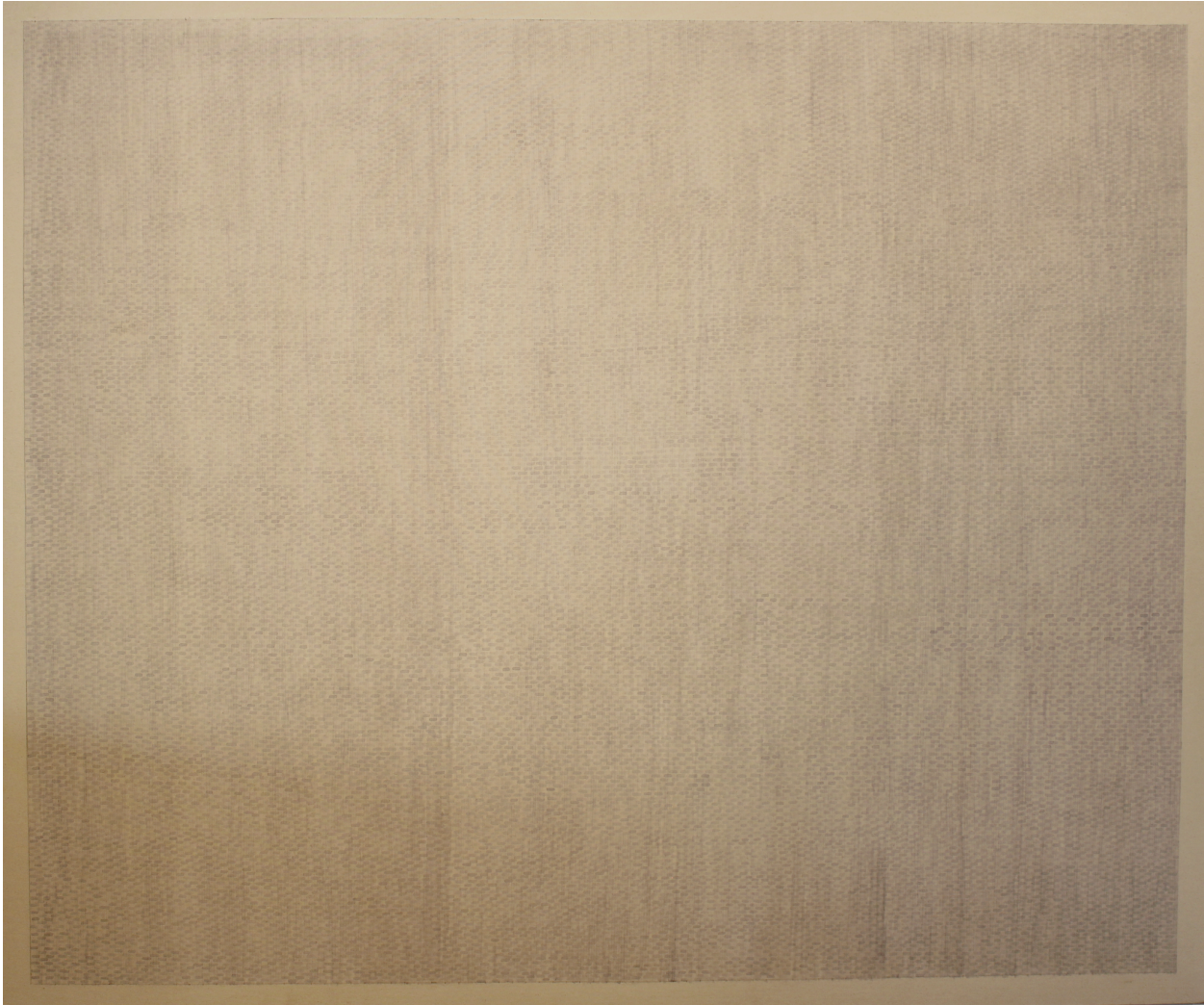
Patel_003

Arch - 1, The spin, Arch - 2 (Respectively)

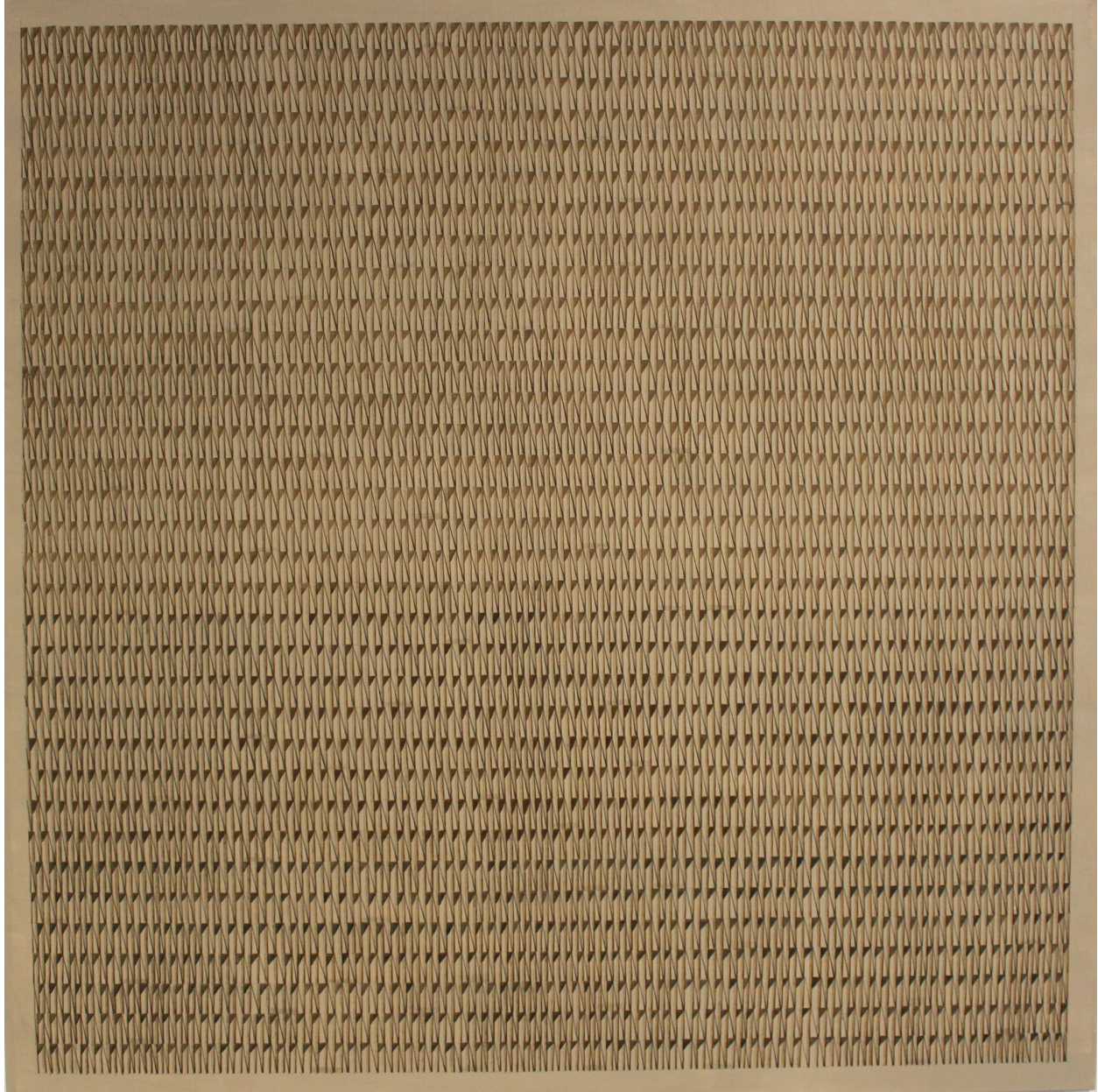
2023

Ink and graphite on paper

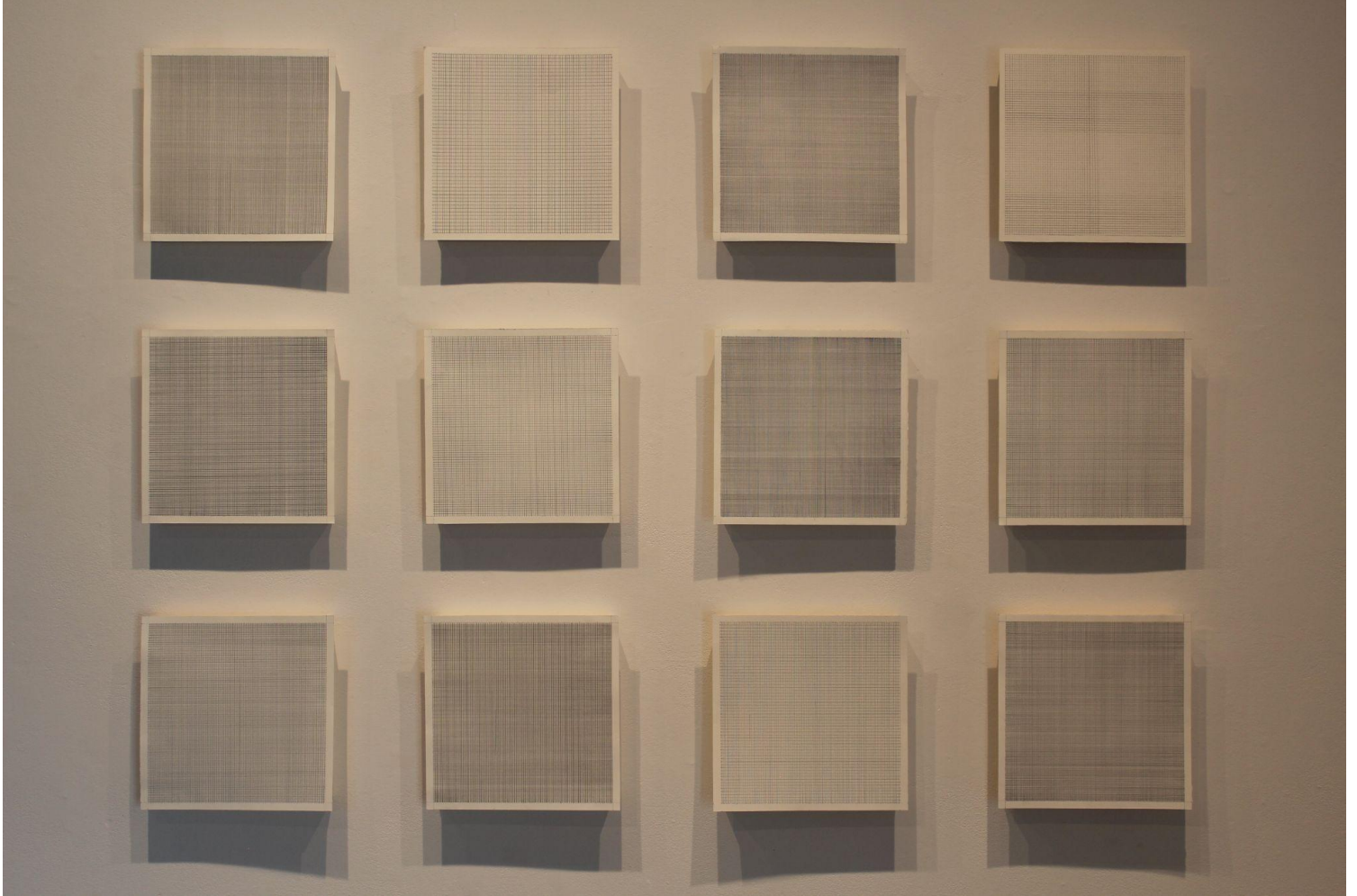
30 x 30 inches each



Patel_004 **Gloom** 2023 Acrylic and Graphite on Canvas Fabric 72 x 60 inches



Patel_005 **The plane** 2023 Acrylic, graphite and pastels on linen fabric 72 x 72 inches



Patel_006
Sounds like Grids (series of 12 works)
2023
Graphite on paper
12 x 12 inches each



Patel_007 Installation shot



Patel_008 Installation shot



Patel_009 Installation shot



Patel_010 Installation shot



Patel_011 Installation shot



Patel_012 Installation shot

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