

Cotter, Holland  
"Zarina Hashmi: The Ten Thousand Things"  
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LUHRING  
AUGUSTINE

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# The New York Times

## Zarina Hashmi

'The Ten Thousand Things'

Luhring Augustine  
531 West 24th Street, Chelsea  
Through July 31

Zarina Hashmi has been showing regularly in New York City for many years, at A.I.R. Gallery, June Kelly Gallery and most recently at Bose Bacia. But her debut solo at Luring Augustine is her most comprehensive appearance here, and it is characteristically austere and expressive.

Ms. Hashmi, who has often used the single name Zarina, was born in 1937 into a Muslim family in northern India. After marrying an Indian foreign service officer in 1958, she changed homes frequently, living in, among other places, Paris (where she studied printmaking with Stanley William Hayter), Bangkok and Tokyo, and settling in New York in the mid-1970s.

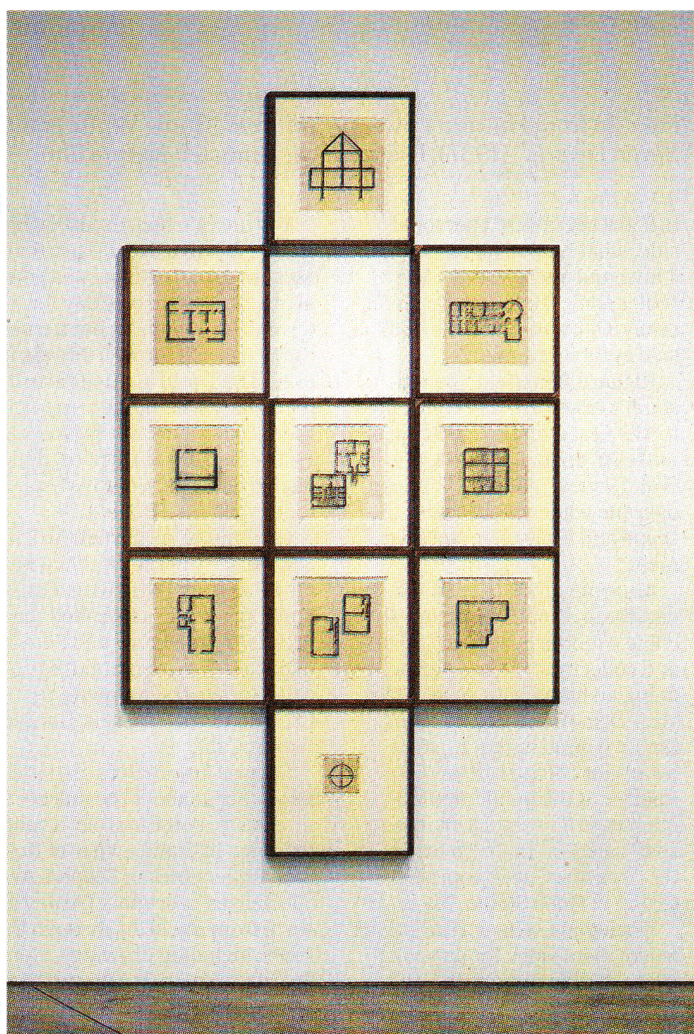
Her art belongs to an intensely personalized minimalist strain in South Asian art that has only fairly recently begun to be acknowl-

edged. The two earliest pieces in the show, dated 1979, are made from single sheets of paper perforated with pinpricks, creating an impression of delicacy and irritation. From five years later comes a row of 20 aluminum sculptures in the shape of miniature houses, neat but closed-up and mute.

As has been noted many times, Ms. Hashmi's recurrent subject is home as an idea and an ideal; about enclosure as both protective and entrapping. The print series "Homes I Made/A Life in Nine Lines" (1997) is basically an autobiography told in a language of floor plans. The portfolio of woodcuts called "Home Is a Foreign Place" (1999) is a vision, through abstract forms and single words printed in Urdu (threshold, door, sun, fragrance, time, and so on), of domesticity as an atmospheric condition, poetic but unstable.

Over time Ms. Hashmi has given her work a specific political content, though this is played down in the show. And she has infused it with her interest in Sufism, evident in touches of gold leaf to evoke a presence of light. The results look — or more to the point, feel — different from most other art in Chelsea, but make sense there, which suggests the possibility of interesting changes in the tone afoot in new New York art. As for Ms. Hashmi, she is exactly who she has been for 30 and more years. We are finally ready for her.

HOLLAND COTTER



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Zarina Hashmi's "Home I Made/A Life in Nine Lines" is part of her show "The Ten Thousand Things" at Luhring Augustine.