



**Rajiv Menon Contemporary Explores The Age of Influencers Through Fine Art In Group Exhibition *LIKE SHARE SUBSCRIBE***

Featuring Maria Qamar, Viraj Khanna, Komail Aijazuddin and more. The artists in the exhibition present new directions in pop and figurative art, responding to a cultural era defined by Instagram and TikTok



On view July 14 - 28, 2024  
Press preview: July 13 from 1PM - 3PM  
3110 West Sunset Boulevard

**Los Angeles, California** – Rajiv Menon Contemporary is pleased to present *LIKE SHARE SUBSCRIBE*, a group exhibition of emerging artists who speak to a cultural moment defined by social media, where influencers have outsized impact on our popular culture. The artists in the exhibition demonstrate new directions in figurative and pop art, using the world of online creators as inspiration and friction in their fine art practices. These artists intervene in a world where our phones define our sense of visuality, presenting alternative possibilities for navigating today's culture.

A new gallery that opened in November 2023, the gallery is one of the few in the U.S. dedicated to South Asian and diasporic art. Founded by Rajiv Menon, Ph.D., the gallery received a commendation from the city of Los Angeles for its contribution to the city's art scene and wider cultural landscape in May 2024.

*LIKE SHARE SUBSCRIBE* is presented in two sections. The first focuses on figurative painting practices that reimagine the depiction of people, finding new forms of human expression in an age of endless scrolling. This section features Ahsan Javaid, Ahsan Memon, Komail Aijazuddin, Shivy Galtere, and Tarini Sethi. These artists find new possibilities in a sea of selfies, using traditional forms of painting in distinctly contemporary modes.

The second section features artists engaging with unconventional materials to stress the importance of physicality in a climate of online ephemera. The section features Maria Qamar, Navinder Nangla, Preetika Rajgariah, and Viraj Khanna. Through mixed media, textile, and street art, these artists emphasize the vital role of material engagement in a world mediated by screens.

The artists navigate the world of influencers in distinct ways. Ahsan Memon's moody, atmospheric portraits bring emotionality and painterly ambiguity to a landscape dominated by personal branding and facetune. Viraj Khanna's intricately embroidered textiles employ the material language of the fashion industry, depicting the types of quotidian moments one might see on Instagram in vivid form. Navinder Nangla, a prominent graffiti artist whose tags can be seen from Los Angeles to London to Mumbai, reveals his canvas practice for the first time through a series of 27 unique tags. His cheeky misspellings of high street fashion brands poke fun at label-obsessed consumerism, and bridge the boundary between street culture and the gallery. Maria Qamar, a pop artist best known by her online handle HateCopy, lives in the slippery space between artist and influencer, a theme she explores in her own work. Conscientious of her own role as a cultural brand, Qamar presents a uniquely painted carrom board, harkening to the popular South Asian game and articulating a particular strain of diaspora consumerism through her art practice.

Says Rajiv Menon, the gallery's Director and Founder, "*LIKE SHARE SUBSCRIBE* is my attempt to grapple with an era where audiences are most visually engaged on Instagram and TikTok. This is especially true in South Asia and in diasporic communities, where social media and influencer content meet consumer demands that other visual mediums like film and television often cannot. While social media has been great for the visibility of South Asian people, it risks becoming the center of gravity in our visual culture. It prioritizes recognizable tropes and familiarity, and a healthy culture demands innovation and newness. The artists in this exhibition intervene in this climate, presenting a powerful counterweight to the aesthetics dominating our phones."

**Image:** Komail Aijazuddin, *He loved seeing them dress up*, 2024, oil on canvas, 11x14 in. Photo courtesy the artist.

**Media inquiries:**

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