

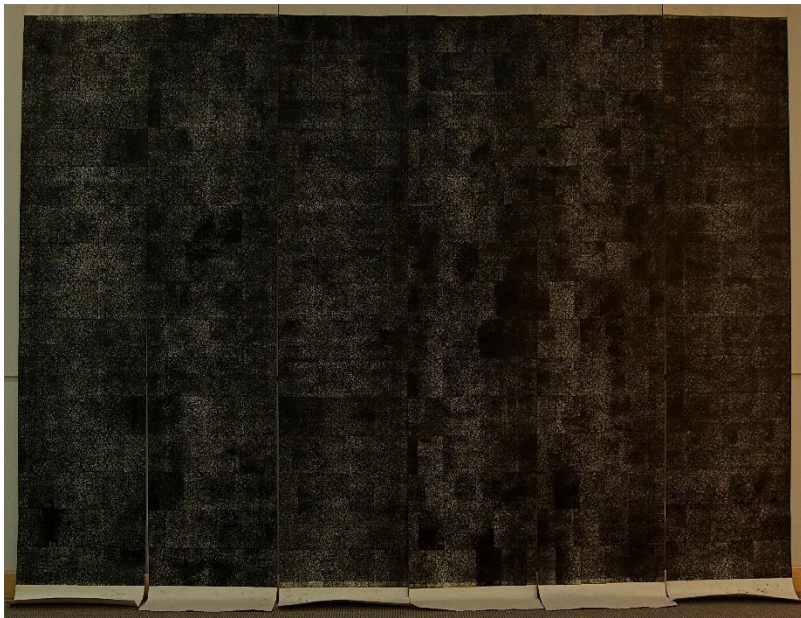
## Youdhisthir Maharjan

### *Tender is the Night*

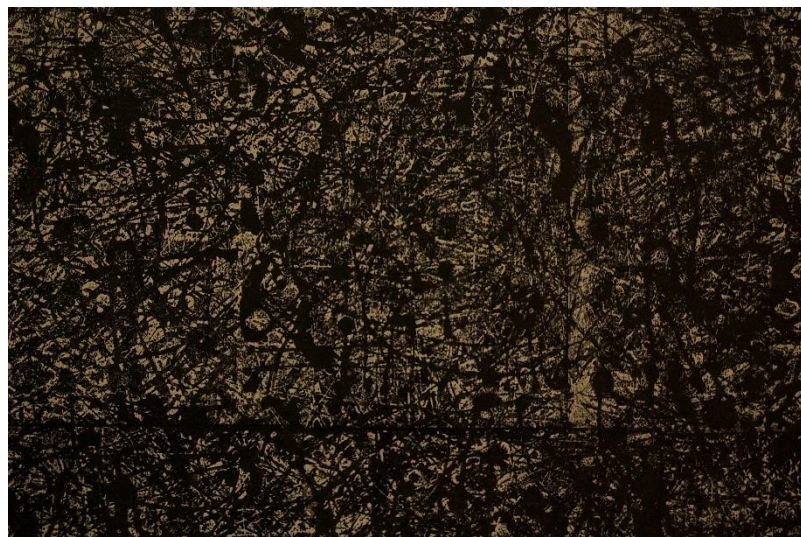
Aicon Exhibition: November 5, 2021 – December 11, 2021

Press Preview & V.I.P Reception: Friday, November 5, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

35 Great Jones St, New York NY 10012



Youdhisthir Maharjan, *Anantari Paryatna III: of Infinite Space*, 2011-2012,  
Etching on Paper, 150 x 180 in.  
(created using a 4 x 4 in. plate with 7640 passes through the printing press)



(detail)

Aicon is delighted to present *Tender is the Night*, the New York debut solo of Youdhisthir Maharjan. The exhibition is a mid-career retrospective of the artist, presenting works that span from 2011 to 2019, with a particular focus on the last five years.

Based between Boston and Kathmandu, Youdhisthir Maharjan (b. 1984), works with found materials and reclaimed text, engaging in laboriously repetitive and autopoietic processes - whether that be twisting newspaper into rope, methodically erasing all but certain words from a book, obscuring a text with intricate patterns, or cutting and re-aligning passages to form abstract shapes. His is an inquiry at the intersection of identity and anonymity, individual and collective, familiar and alien that is invested in exploring the materiality of text.

The present exhibition brings together a cross-section of the artist's oeuvre, that evidence Maharjan's proclivity for materiality, process, ritual and absurdity. A suite of works on paper - ostensibly the leitmotif of the artist's practice - are constructed from book pages and other printed material. Sometimes singular, sometimes glued together to form a sheet and at other times collaged using strips or woven into rope-like sculptures, the artist treats the book as readymade material, where the author's name, text, story, and information are all irrelevant. The result is a sculptural object that is given new life and is freed from the signifying purpose of words. Maharjan insists he doesn't know the visual outcome of a page when he begins his process: "After a visit to numerous thrift stores, and sifting through a number of books, I pick them according to their title. That inspires the pattern, design, illustration, and the aesthetics. Then some pages speak to me, and some don't."



Youdhisthir Maharjan, *Repeated Birth*, 2011, autopoietic print on paper, 5.5 x 5.5 in. each

The other works in the exhibition focus on Maharjan's work as a conceptual printmaker. Repetition as process takes center-stage in works like *Anantari Paryatna III: of Infinite Space* (2011-2012), a visual illustration of the painstaking endless process, that the work's title describes. Consisting of six monumental scrolls each printed using the same 4 x 4-inch printing plate, the work transcends its careful premeditation to yield a seemingly spontaneous Pollock-esque abstraction. What remains is a composition of textures and patterns that turn the surface into a dynamic entity. These scrolls, with their unique visual codex, are intuitively decipherable and bafflingly elusive in equal parts.

This autopoietic process is mirrored in works like *Repeated Birth*, an ongoing series of prints that the artist seeks to continue in perpetuity. An unbroken glass sheet of 4 x 4 inches is passed through the printing press. It's weight and pressure break the glass into pieces, which are taped together, exposing the lines between them. The taped piece is inked and printed on paper, capturing the self-made pattern in graphic black and white, which accentuates the line that separates the pieces. The scars on the once pristine surface are celebrated and cherished. The entire process is repeated with a new glass, as if in search for the perfect break—perfect imperfection.

Maharjan recognizes language as power taken for granted, we use it whether we like it or not and we have forgotten it's importance. He invites his audience to give language a new meaning, a new life to something we have been familiarized for centuries. More than the final result, he finds the process extremely satisfying, meditating his way back to the reencounter with the new perspective on words. What is a book without words? What is art without meaning? The artist believes truth exists in the mundane, in the repurposing of action, in the repetition of nothingness, forever.

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Originally from Kathmandu, Nepal, Youdhisthir Maharjan began his journey in the arts with a B.A. in Creative Writing & Art History from New England College, New Hampshire. Thereafter, in 2012, he pursued an M.F.A. at the University of Idaho. He has since exhibited extensively in India, Nepal, the United States and the UK. His work has been a prominent part of institutional exhibitions such as the two-artist show, *The Power of Intention*, at the Rubin Museum, New York (2019), the Kathmandu Triennale (2017), the Boston International Fine Art Show, Boston Center for the Arts (2015) and most recently in the solo show, *Youdhisthir Maharjan: Toils of Delight* at the Frank Museum of Art, Otterbein University, Ohio.

Maharjan has also participated in several group shows including *Himalayan Contemporary*, Desai/Matta Gallery, San Francisco (2017); *Deep Cuts: Contemporary Paper Cutting* at Currier Museum of Art, Manchester, New Hampshire (2017); *In Letter and Spirit* at TARQ, Mumbai (2016); *Reading Room*, Saffron Art, New York (2016); *Reading Room: Leaves, Threads, and Traces*, Winchester Gallery, UK (2016) and *Emerging Talent*, Seraphin Gallery, Philadelphia (2016).

Please contact Aicon Art ([erica@aicongallery.com](mailto:erica@aicongallery.com)) for more information.