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## Artist Seher Shah on “Radiant Lines”, Her Latest Show at Nature Morte, Berlin

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Image Courtesy Seher Shah

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by Sehba Muhammad

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Graphite drawings, interventions on aerial images and a breakdown of socialist architecture and its front-runner, Le Corbusier, are some of artist [Seher Shah](#)'s concerns in “Radiant Lines”, her most recent show at [Nature Morte, Berlin](#). Whether the focus is on Islamic ornamentation or on Brutalist architecture, her technique and output are breathtakingly refined.

**ARTINFO** caught up with the Pakistan-born Brooklyn-based artist for a deeper understanding into her complex work.

**How did you first become interested in the architectural form and why did you decide to abandon it for visual arts?**

I don't feel like I have abandoned architecture.

I am interested in the formal and visceral ways that drawing space can unfold. And how various constructions can be represented through architecture, geometry and objects.

I am interested in the qualities of particular moments in architectural history, and I try to engage with those references through drawing, sculpture and photography.

There is obviously a distinction between an artist who is interested in architectural space and its representations and the practice of a working architect. But the distinction between my interests in architecture and the relationship to space has definite overlaps within both fields.

**Is there a particular reason you chose to incorporate Le Corbusier's socialist urban plans into your current exhibition?**

The current exhibition works try to explore these formal and visceral qualities of two idealized modernist projects in particular, Le Corbusier's Unite d'Habitation and the Capitol Complex. The role of the architect, the use of scale, and the contradictory principles inherent in these plans are a few of the reasons I was attracted to the two projects.

Aside from the aesthetics of the architecture itself, it is the ambiguous relationship between landscape and object that I am interested in within Brutalist architecture.

Both these projects were starting points for me to explore landscape through the basic reductive elements of architecture such as the grid, the column, the wall and the frame.

**Why do you prefer to work in monochromes?**

I like the simplicity of graphite on paper and the freedom of representation it allows.

The simplicity of the graphite material in the drawing space allows for many references, oppositional and parallel to inhabit the same surface. The use of color or monochromes just depends on the work at hand.

The recent work from "Radiant Lines" does engage with the specific colors related to a particular urban project in the Capitol Complex works.

**Why are you transitioning from the notions of spirituality and pop politics that you explored in your earlier works?**

The transition is building on the previous works. The use of drawing space and the notions of authority and hierarchy that exist in spaces and objects, whether on an urban or individual scale is something that I am interested in.

The use of the object in landscape and the ambiguous relationships inherent in structures, whether on a large urban planning scale or to an individual monument is the background for "Radiant Lines".

The idealized states of Utopian architecture through a variety of structural methods is also building on the earlier works that focused on more archival colonial images of the spectacle through architecture.

**In the works titled Mammoth you collaborated with Randhir Singh. What do the interventions signify and how does it transform the photographs?**

"The Mammoth: Aerial landscape proposal" series is a work between my partner Randhir Singh and myself. His aerial photographs, taken from a variety of locations in the States, are combined with black forms that partially block out the photograph and landscape.

The use of repetition and abstraction within the landscape, and the simultaneous gesture of erasure of both photographic image and landscape is something I was interested in exploring with his photographs.

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