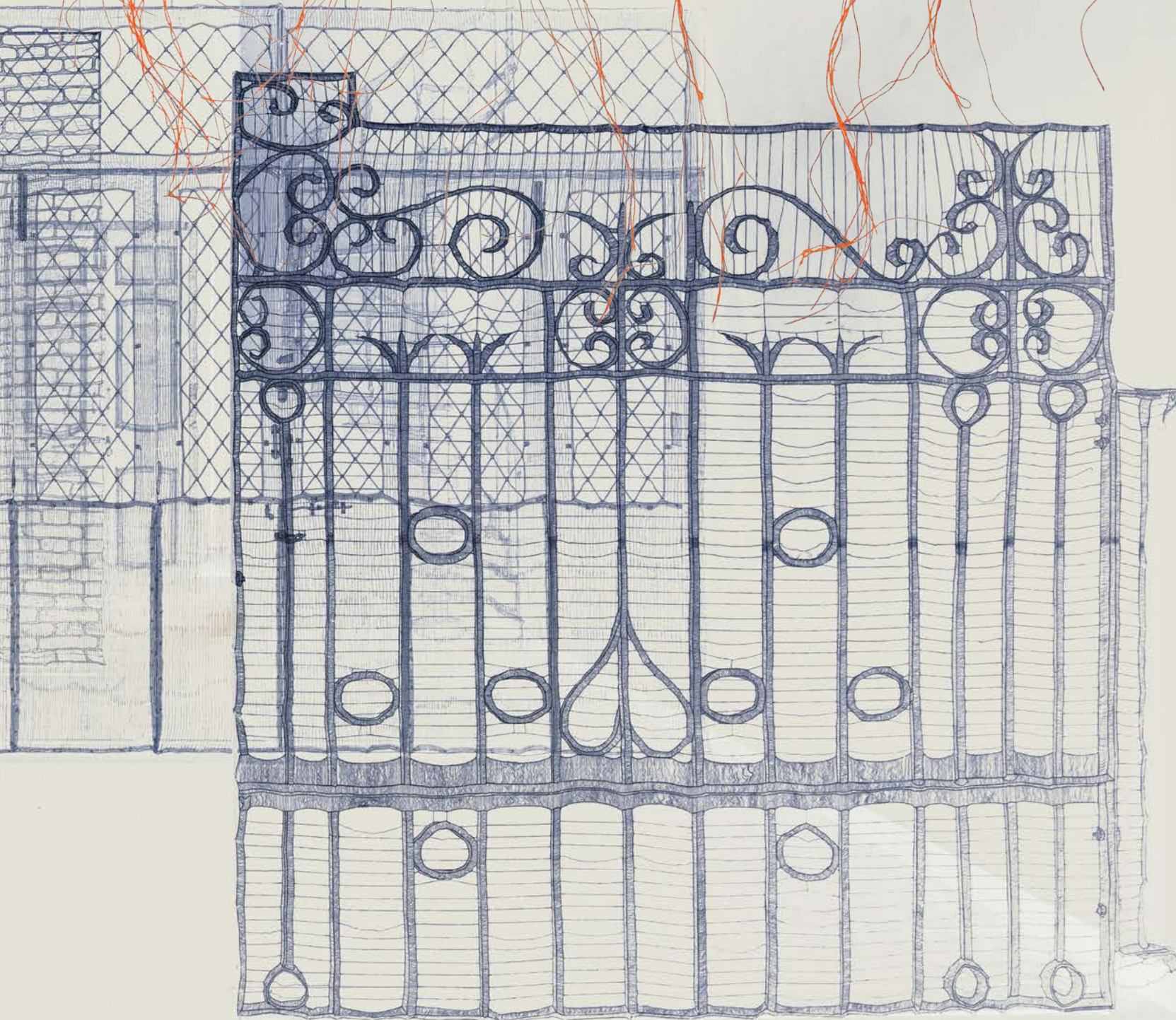


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# ARTS ILLUSTRATED







## Team

### Sales Offices

#### Chennai

127 T.T.K. Road, Alwarpet,  
Chennai 600018  
phone +91 82203 08777  
phone +91 44 4216 5100  
sales@artsillustrated.in

#### Coimbatore

Jenney's Residency  
Opp CIT Avinashi Road,  
Coimbatore Aerodrome Post,  
Coimbatore 641014  
phone +91 82203 08777  
sales@artsillustrated.in

#### Abu Dhabi

Flat No. 701, 7th Floor,  
H.E.Shaikh Tahnoon Bin Moh'd  
Al Nahyan Building, (Arab Bank  
Building), Al Nasr Street,  
Abu Dhabi, U.A.E.  
phone +97 15631 89405  
sales@artsillustrated.in

#### Singapore

No. 1, Kim Seng Promenade,  
12-01 Great World City (East  
Tower), Singapore 237994  
sales@artsillustrated.in

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#### Publisher & Chairman

Vincent Adaikalraj

#### Editor

Praveena Shivram

#### Consulting Editor

Rahul Kumar

#### Subeditor

Vani Sriranganayaki Vanamamalai

#### Copy Editor

Sethulakshmy S Nayar

#### Graphic Designer

Chenchudar Chellakannu

#### Administrative Officer

Ramakrishnan

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Jayanthi Shegar

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Atreyee Bhattacharjee

#### Graphic Designer, Art Houz Gallery

Santhosh Kumar

#### Sales Head, South

Felix Raju

#### Contributors

Abha Iyengar

Arti Sandhu

Dr. Ashrafi S. Bhagat

Meera Rajagopalan

Poonam Ganglani

Rehana Munir

Seema Massot

Shantanu Prakash

Siddhartha Das

Supriya Sehgal

Suzanne McNeill

Tvishaa Shah

#### Published by

LA 5 Global Publications  
#127, T.T.K. Road, Alwarpet,  
Chennai 600018, India  
phone +91 44 4216 5100  
info@artsillustrated.in  
editorial@artsillustrated.in  
sales@artsillustrated.in

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### Publisher's note

Our sixth anniversary issue is here! And I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our artists, writers, photographers, advertisers and well-wishers in supporting our journey the past six years, and I hope we will have their continued support and best wishes in the coming years as well.

This issue, we decided to go with the theme of 'Tapestry', where we look at the many different things that come together, in an unhurried manner, to make something that inspires and engages. We look at artist(e)s who stitch together disparate media to tell a story, even if it is of a single experience, thought or impression. And to then see what happens to the nature of dialogue itself when it finds itself in a wide, uncategorised expanse; and to the nature of how we define a community within, and through, the language of the arts.

Vincent Adaikalraj



Editor's note

When I first started writing professionally, in my early 20s, my two favourite words were 'ubiquitous' and 'tapestry'. Any excuse I would get to use those words in a sentence, I would, and then feel terribly accomplished about it all. *Love is that ubiquitous emotion in this tapestry of life – you get the drift, no?*

So to say I was excited that the theme for our sixth anniversary issue was 'tapestry' would be an understatement. I was ecstatic – can you imagine the number of times I could use the word and it would all be considered legit and not an overkill? But like all things that are AI-theme-related, where the magazine effortlessly morphs into a being of its own every issue, tapestry too took on an avatar of its own, blue skin intact, that I had to let go of my obsession with the word and truly see it for what it is – I See You and all that.

And what I did see were stories and thoughts in so many different shades and textures that it was incredible how every little nuance would add up to create something bigger, like building blocks in a child's hand, only to be destroyed, so the process could begin again. This issue, it wasn't so much the ephemeral qualities of the stories that left an impact, but the comfort of permanence of that ephemerality, the fact that even when unravelling, the threads remain intact. Like the timeline we created, and the act of looking back that allowed us to trace every single decision, however small, in making the magazine what it is today.

This issue was also a reaffirmation for me, of what the magazine and the arts mean to the world today and why in this tapestry, which we are all a part of, every ubiquitous stitch matters (I am sorry, it's a disease). But, bad sentences apart, this magazine and what we try to bring to our readers every issue with every theme is an overriding sense of hope and beauty, of tolerance and acceptance, of inclusivity and openness, and of joy unhindered by the politics of hatred.



Praveena Shivram  
praveena@artsillustrated.in



Altered image of installation view: 33 Link Road, Thread, Room dimensions: 19' x 15.6' x 13.4', 2019.  
Photograph from the solo exhibition at Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai.

I think of embroidery as a way of making an image which literally ties itself to its ground (usually fabric) and, therefore, feels more permanent and fixed than many other forms of mark-making – for example, one can't easily erase it, like a drawing; with thread, an undoing is required. Ironically, in this body of 'groundless thread drawings' that I am currently working on, this 'securing' of image to the ground is challenged, as the fabric itself is removed after the embroidery occurs, leaving behind what appears to be a thread skeleton – an apparition which levitates without the support that was used to create it. This process, for me, echoes the nature of memory – which seems to present an extracted story, a shimmering mirage removed from the substance of our present experience in current space and time.

For the cover of this issue, I chose an installation titled 33 Link Road. Originally made in white thread (here the colour is altered to indigo blue), viewers walked through this labyrinth of membranes featuring life-size, embroidered

architectural fragments from 33 Link Road – my grandparents' home built in Delhi soon after the Partition, when they migrated from Pakistan to India. A site of gathering, story-telling, embroidering and knitting in the sun, family weddings and sleepovers, a room at the back where my mother was born and a room in the front where my grandfather died – this home, a container of potent memories, now lies unoccupied. Hard architectural form transforms into soft, tactile skins of thread and the language of memory finds resonance in these veil-like, white surfaces; flattened as if preserved within the pages of a book.

My work has often explored the dissolution of substantial seeming form; form turning flat and ethereal through memory, form breaking apart in illusions I have created, form deteriorating in the re-creations of peeling walls, and, here, the Arts Illustrated logo dissolving into the thread with which I embroidered it to celebrate the issue on tapestry.



Sumakshi Singh



# Pieta by Cesare Lucchini

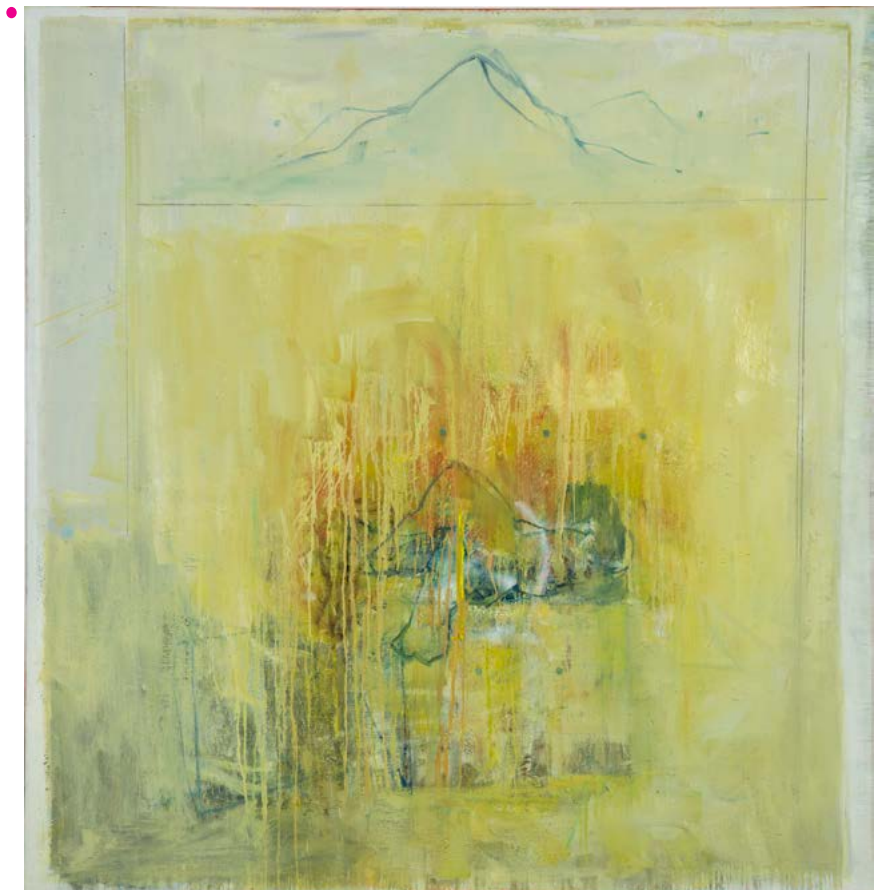
APRIL 12 TO JUNE 1, 2019, LONDON

Reviewed by *Rahul Kumar*

Rosenfeld Porcini is located in a quiet by-lane just off the busy Oxford Street in Central London. The gallery presented its third solo show of paintings by the Swiss-Italian artist, Cesare Lucchini. Spread over two floors, the exhibits comprised 14 oil-on-canvas works made between 2013 and 2019. Lucchini's figurative abstract-expressionist paintings command a presence. This is probably owing to not only its large-scale format but also his bold and aggressive renditioning. On a closer investigation through the soothing Mediterranean palette, the underlying layers emerge, and eventually subtle forms. Most often these include human figures. 'The starting point for me, to make a painting, normally begins from my reflections on one of the dramatic events which take place daily in our contemporary world. Certain realities provoke in me a very strong emotional response, even anger. And as a consequence, they become a reason to begin painting,' he said once, in an interview for a catalogue of a museum show in 1992.

This exhibition brought together clusters of work that connect in four broad themes. The first body of work is inspired by the state of immigrants into continental Europe. He lives in Lampedusa, which happens to be the first port of call for immigrants from African countries. Dark tones used in the figures, which are always silhouetted, faceless and lack any sophistication, refer to the cruelty of man's behaviour to his fellow human beings. The next set of paintings primarily brings forth the human figure surrounded by barbed wire. Lucchini uses this as the metaphor for pain. The figures are stooped, as though with the weight of life. A recurrent motif from nature, such as a mountain, or a tree, shares the frame. These become the place of peace for mankind. Somewhere they can endeavour to reach, but cannot ever attain it. Occasionally, he employs an animal figure to convey the emotion of ultimate compassion. The third collection depicts large figures, lying on the ground with other figures laying contoured over it in a cub-like form, creating an improvised altar. The inspiration is not religious; rather the little disfigured assemblage of forms is used as a metaphor for subjects of silent observers.

A temperamental artist, Lucchini is governed by his emotions. 'On one occasion, when I called him about a work from his previous show, he said he had destroyed it because he felt it required something more. Cesare often changes his works, even after they have been exhibited,' said Ian Rosenfeld, director of the gallery. Lucchini's art is not about instant gratification. It requires focus and introspection that will almost always lead to a new discovery every time one engages with them.



Cesare Lucchini, *Ascensione*, 124 cm x 150 cm, 2019.

Cesare Lucchini, *La barca è vuota*, 261 cm x 232 cm, 2017.

Cesare Lucchini, *Ascensione*, 200 cm x 189 cm, 2018.

Cesare Lucchini, *Ascensione*, 162 cm x 108 cm, 2019.

All Images Courtesy of the Artist and Rosenfeld Porcini, London.







