

PHOTO, MEDIA AND DIGITAL ART

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Runa Islam *Scale (1/16 Inch = 1 Foot)*

Beginning February 3rd, Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art hosts the canadian premiere of Runa Islam's *Scale (1/16 Inch = 1 Foot)*, a two-screen installation inaugurated at the 2003 Istanbul Biennale and presented at several international art venues. Prefix is honoured to offer the rare opportunity to view this installation in Toronto and to be the first exhibitor of the artist's work in Canada. The exhibition is curated by architecture historian Kenneth Hayes and presented in association with the South Asian Visual Arts Collective (SAVAC).

Scale (1/16 Inch = 1 Foot) is staged atop the elevated panoramic pavilion of architect Owen Luder's iconic multi-level garage of 1969. This cumbersome monument of the Brutalist style stands as the primary landmark of the English town of Gateshead. Though the architectural genesis of the building is said to relate to an ongoing rivalry for urban title with the nearby town of Newcastle, the structure was first popularized through its original cinematic appearance in the 1971 crime drama *Get Carter*.

In this new look at the site, Runa Islam surveys the garage with an exacting precision, measuring the promise of the architectural model against the concrete behemoth built. The comparison between the blueprint and the actual site proves a useful measure of the discrepancy between urban planning zeal and the visible decay of the real physical environment (the building has recently been slated for demolition). At play in the installation is the artist's sustained interest in the convergence of cinematic myth and documentary form, a fascination which is given free reign in what she terms "a wish fulfillment daydream" for what the site could have been.

In Islam's dream for the building, she revives the thriller motif, casting two former extras from the original English cult film as diners caught in the elastic moment of an ever-opening restaurant. The ethereal floating lounge perched above the garage forms the perfect setting for the artist's unorthodox pairing of action drama with an atmosphere of sustained paralysis. In the artist's own words, the installation "muses on the idea of projecting from the model to the real, to the imaginary and around again."

A reception will be held on Thursday, February 3 from 7 to 10 PM at 401 Richmond Street West, Suite 124, Toronto, Ontario. Admission is free. The exhibition continues until March 12.

Presentation partner



www.savac.net

Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art is a non-profit organization based in Toronto. Prefix's mandate is to promote the appreciation and understanding of contemporary photographic, media and digital arts through exhibitions, publications and related activities.

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