

# SEANKELLY



Harminder Judge

*Wherever I went, I went when I was sleeping*

Sean Kelly, New York

September 5 – October 18, 2025

Opening reception: Friday, September 5, 6-8pm

Sean Kelly is delighted to present *Wherever I went, I went when I was sleeping*, Harminder Judge's first exhibition with the gallery. New large plaster-and-pigment panels, works that exist at the intersection of painting, sculpture, and architecture, are presented alongside shaped pieces that hover off the wall like fragments excavated from deep time. For this exhibition, Judge has created a site-responsive floor installation spanning the entire front gallery. Constructed from the same materials as his paintings, the vast slab appears like a geological formation, disorienting in its scale and placement. Together, they create an immersive space where material, image, and architecture converge. There will be an opening reception on Friday, September 5, from 6-8pm. The artist will be present.

Harminder Judge has developed a distinctive practice that merges Indian neo-tantric painting with the legacies of Western abstraction and color field painting. Referring to his works as portals as much as objects, they are informed by ritual, spirituality, and deeply personal experiences. The exhibition's title is drawn from Susan Howe's 1975 poem *Chanting at the Crystal Sea* and reflects the way Judge's work inhabits an in-between state, hovering between material and immaterial, presence and absence, surface and portal. During a visit to Punjab in early adolescence for his grandfather's funeral, the ceremonial rites impressed upon him the profound transformation of body into ash, matter into spirit. This led to an ongoing meditation on the spaces between life and death, material and immaterial, conscious and subconscious, which resonate throughout his practice.

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Judge's process is ritualistic and alchemical. He begins his paintings by pouring wet plaster into large tray-like beds, working quickly as the exothermic reaction quickly sets the surface. Into this unpredictable ground, he layers pigments, without at that stage, being certain of the outcome. The asymmetrical diptychs in the exhibition are built on two parallel tables, with each gesture repeated to create mirrored panels, requiring instinctive movement and a simultaneous awareness of both surfaces. The necessity for speed and replication imbues the act of making with a performative quality, the artist's precise yet instinctive motions unfolding like a ritual. After curing, the works undergo many hours of strengthening and laborious layering before they can be revealed. Through extensive sanding, polishing, and oiling, their luminous compositions slowly emerge. Far from a painted illusion, these works operate as sculptures: their surface, structure, and support are one and the same, with pigment crystallized within the material itself. Balancing chance and control, their stratified surfaces recall geological formations while vibrating with radiant color, portals that invite us to look toward larger questions of subject and meaning.

Judge's floor installation transforms the act of entering the gallery into a physical and conceptual threshold. Visitors find themselves simultaneously standing upon and surrounded by the very substance of Judge's practice. Made of the same plaster and pigment that constitute the wall works, Judge collapses the distinctions between object and environment. The shaped wall works further intensify this effect, appearing like slabs of rock or portals pried open, deepening the viewer's sense of inhabiting the work rather than observing it. In *Wherever I went, I went while I was sleeping*, Judge creates an environment that is both contemplative and immersive, inviting audiences to inhabit a liminal space between painting and sculpture, material and metaphysical, through which to encounter something larger than the self.

Harminder Judge, born in 1982, lives and works in London. He graduated from the Royal Academy Schools, London in 2021. His work was recently the subject of a major solo exhibition *Harminder Judge: Bootstrap Paradox* at moCa Cleveland, OH, from January 24 – June 1, 2025. Judge is represented by The Sunday Painter, London, UK, and Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai, India.

For additional information on the exhibition please visit [skny.com](http://skny.com)

For inquiries, please email Thomas Kelly at [Thomas@seankellyla.com](mailto:Thomas@seankellyla.com)

For media inquiries, please email Adair Lentini at [Adair@skny.com](mailto:Adair@skny.com)

Image caption: Harminder Judge, *Untitled (the body & the pyre, a bootstrap paradox)*, 2025, plaster, polymer, pigment, scrim and oil, overall: 90 9/16 x 90 9/16 x 1 9/16 inches © Harminder Judge Courtesy: the artist and Sean Kelly, New York/Los Angeles