

Michael Benevento is pleased to present *Reaching For The Beginning*, a solo exhibition by British artist, Tariq Alvi. For his third installment with the gallery Alvi reorients graphic space with his visually complex collage work and his poetically minimalist sculptures.

Alvi presents us with a new body of work that is both labor intensive and elegant in its observations on design, economy and masculinity. *Almost* (2017) Alvi's fourteen-foot wall sculpture complicates the associations we make with everyday construction materials. Here, Alvi puts forth a twofold aesthetic. The masculinity of repetitious minimalist design is contrasted in this sculpture by the soft pastel whitewashing of its vertical scaffolding materials. The pipes spaced at varying widths echo a mirror Alvi observed in a bar in Maastricht, a city where he once resided and a design that he returns to often in his work.

*And Rose*, (2017) three X shaped mirrored cubes adorned by cut poles made of copper and galvanized steel sit just below knee height. Here, Alvi exhibits another visual play on our associative facility. The letter X has been a fascination of the artist's for several years now. These works strip down the design motifs of the English language to reveal something else. The letter X can connote abstraction, buried treasure, a kiss, moonshine, or adult entertainment. However, Alvi does not stop with poetic associations. Instead, he investigates the design of language itself as it relates to the vernaculars of capital and consumerism.

Alvi's signature cut-and-paste collages exemplify this intersection of linguistic design and the affects of capitalism. Digitally scanned and printed poster size these collages layer adverts of luxury items with dollar candy wrappers and discount supermarket flyers. The diagonal line work reintroduces us to Alvi's fascination with the dynamism of written language. His minimized aesthetic creates a general sensation of rain, markings or slashings. The artist draws on the works of Rousseau's *Tiger in a Tropical Storm*, (1891) as well as drawings by Eric Ravilious to unsettle the associations ingrained in us by commercial graphics to reveal their visual poetry and stark politic.

Tariq Alvi has shown internationally, including solo exhibitions at Badischer Kunstverein (Germany), Chisenhale (London), 2nd floor projects (San Francisco), Cabinet (London), CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, (San Francisco), and Whitechapel Gallery (London). He lives and works in London.

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