

मुड पान दी ईच्छा An Intangible Claim, 2020

Found footage film

Duration: 4 min 30 secs

*Naani's Slippers*, 2025

Stainless steel investment casting, lost wax process.

Technical assistance Sunil Kumar Kumawat and Spago India.

Dedicated to the artist's late *naani* (maternal grandmother), मुड पान दी ईच्छा (An Intangible Claim) questions the right to claim and own land, bringing together the histories of Partition and reclamation through the memory of a body displaced across time and borders.

At the age of thirteen, the artist's *naani* was forced to leave her ancestral home in Mian Channu, Pakistan, during the 1947 Partition of India and Pakistan. In her seventies, an accidental fall and subsequent hip replacement surgery impaired her ability to walk, leaving one leg shorter than the other. The two moments of forced movement and immobility become intertwined in this body of work, tracing displacement across geographical borders and within the body itself. The stainless-steel slippers are cast in the same material as the metal that became part of the artist's *naani's* body, and modelled on a pair she wore for years.

*An Intangible Claim* is a found-footage film exploring a terrain that only lingers in remembrance. It draws two moments in time - the voiceover of the Partition and the visuals of the present-day ecological crisis of Land Reclamation. Her memories of *Nalkewali gali* (the lane with a water tap), where water was freely available once, is set against the poisoned wells she encountered during her journey across the border - a three-hour distance that took her family three days to traverse.

Her memories are contrasted with the yearning embodied by the surging sea, which claims the land that was once its own. A deluge of recollections is metaphorically woven together with the impending flood. Google map footage shows a topographical view of Karachi's reclaimed coastline the ever-changing contours, while the voiceover questions the meaning of reclamation - a snatched city returned to its former true owner.

The work also draws from *Samandar Ki Chori* by poet Asif Aslam Farrukhi, a story in which a city awakens to discover that the sea has been stolen. The sea's return resonates with *naani's* yearning for a home she could never reclaim. Seventy-five years after leaving it, the artist found her ancestral home and enabled her grandmother to see it virtually. Yet, the encounter was fleeting: the home had transformed into a cotton factory, and the place that once belonged to her family is now someone else's home.