



CONTACT

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*hi-res images available upon request

GENERAL INFORMATION

Providence College Galleries
—Hunt-Cavanagh Gallery
at Hunt-Cavanagh Hall
—Reilly Gallery at the
Smith Center for the Arts

63 Eaton Street
Providence, RI 02918

401.865.2400
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pcgalleries.providence.edu

Gallery Hours During Exhibitions
Wednesday – Saturday, 12 – 6pm
Or by appointment

*Images left to right: Nadia Haji Omar, Aa, 2017,
acrylic and dye on canvas, 24 x 20 inches; Work
in progress for On the Wall, 2018, dye on canvas.
Images courtesy the artist and Kristen Lorello, NYC.*

ON THE WALL: NADIA HAJI OMAR

April 26 – July 28, 2018
Reilly Gallery, Smith Center for the Arts

In Conversation: Nadia Haji Omar speaks with
Providence College Scholars in the Reilly Gallery:
6pm, Thursday, April 26th

Opening Reception:
6:30 - 8:00pm, Thursday, April 26th

Providence College Galleries (PC-G) is pleased to present *On the Wall: Nadia Haji Omar*, the fourth installment of its annual commission of muralistic artworks applied directly to the walls of PC-G's Reilly Gallery. As part of an interdisciplinary initiative at the College to explore the rich traditions of large-scale artworks and to develop new scholarship around the mural format, Nadia Haji Omar, a Sri Lankan multimedia artist living and working in Rhode Island, will transform the exhibition space with mirrored surfaces and her signature alpha-numeric abstraction.

Haji Omar has long used artwork to explore sociopolitical subjects such as cultural hybridity and the transformation of language, and to visually address philosophical and physiological challenges of the human condition. To do so, she frequently combines the practices of painting, drawing and fabric dyeing to compose forms and patterns with multiple historical references. For the On the Wall commission, she takes inspiration from the Sri Lanka's ancient rock fortress called Sigiriya, an architectural wonder where there was once a wall so highly polished the king could see himself whilst walking alongside it. Made of brick masonry and originally covered in gleaming white plaster, the purpose of this so-called "mirror wall" may have been to reflect the adjacent frescoes of sacred feminine figures. It has since lost its sheen, now partially covered with poetic verses and graffiti scribbled in various modern and ancient languages, some dating from as early as the 8th century. Integrating elements of Sigiriya's past and present visual state, Haji Omar has designed a mural project that collages into the gallery walls mirror fragments and sections of canvas covered in painterly washes and ornate compositions. The result is a composite of styles and an expansion of Haji Omar's research-based practice around convergent cultures, especially those spawned in the greater Middle East and South Asia and intersecting with Western societies. A solo exhibition that is at once immersive and intricate, *On the Wall: Nadia Haji Omar* simultaneously alludes to the uniquely complex cultural histories of Sigiriya as a built and natural environment replete with overlapping religious narratives, artistic styles, and the calligraphic traditions of the Sinhalese and Tamil languages, among others.

On the Wall: Nadia Haji Omar is organized by Jamilee Lacy, PC-G Director & Curator.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Nadia Haji Omar lives and works in Warren, Rhode Island. Her work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Kristen Lorello, NY, and Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka, and included in the following group exhibitions: *Plus One*, curated by Melanie Kress, Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, *[Old / New]* *Psychedelic Providence*, curated by Jamilee Lacy and sponsored by Providence College Galleries, Tiger Strikes Asteroid, Chicago, IL, and *You Don't Bring Me Flowers*, curated by Quang Bao, 68 Projects, Galerie Kornfeld, Berlin, Germany. Haji Omar received a Master of Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts in 2014 and a Bachelor Arts from Bard College in 2007.

ABOUT PC-G

Providence College Galleries (PC-G), with the support of the Department of Art & Art History at Providence College, presents exhibitions and public programs focusing on contemporary art, innovative artistic practice and interdisciplinary cultural activity. Operating within two gallery spaces and across Providence College's campus, PC-G supports the educational, service and community-oriented mission of the College with dynamic visual arts productions, including those that foster audience participation, cross-departmental collaboration at the College, and cultural exchange at local, national and international levels. PC-G ultimately strives to produce projects by artists and intellectuals who demonstrate how and why creative practitioners are vital forces in promoting diversity and shaping contemporary global culture.

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