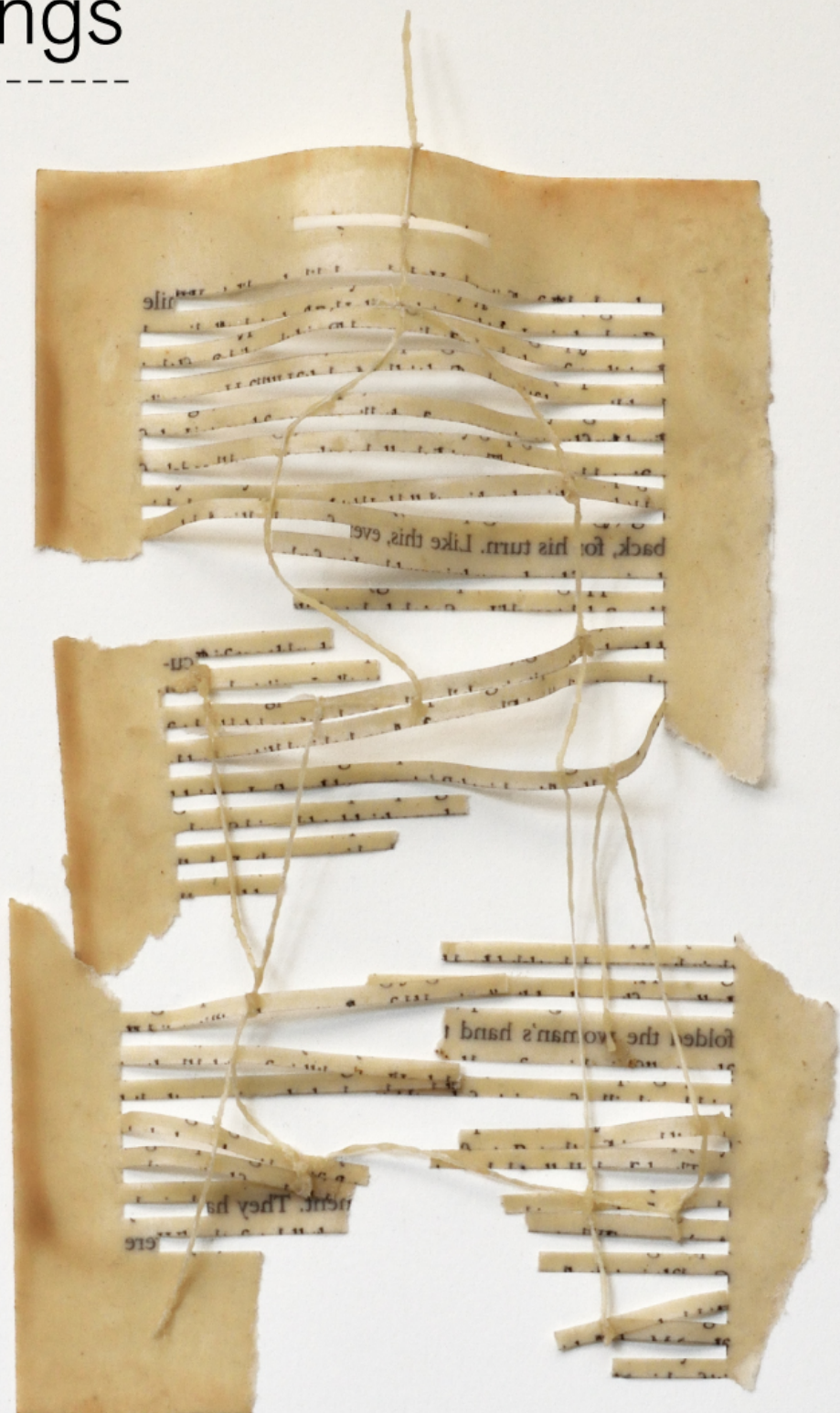


Symptomatic (mis)Readings

Mansha
Chhatwal



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16/02/2022

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The pillars of Mansha Chhatwal's practice are rooted in the desire for widespread communicability. Through the unlikely process of redaction she pares back excess to highlight the essence of her concern – can she, as an artist, be fearless and speak for those who are silenced and that which is wrong?

While arguing for free speech, in 1644 John Milton wrote "Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties" and "Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye." He made a compelling argument placing literary and artistic culture at the heart of humanity, higher even than mortality. In 1835 Alexis Tocqueville called censorship an 'absurdity' in a democracy and John Stuart Mills in 1859 called for a protection of minority views.

Chhatwal's practice is built around books that have been censored over time. If an author (and in today's conditions we can extend that definition to include artists, journalists, activists, NGOs and minorities) is brave enough to write and write again in the face of institutional threat then in what ways can we support them? By undertaking the rather forceful acts of blurring, masking, cutting, removing and remoulding iconic books, Chhatwal is moving beyond highlighting the outrage of censorship towards a need to establish channels of meaningful dialogue. She does this in several ways; first, by using beeswax as a metaphor for public candle marches of peaceful solidarity, as the simile of candles and books burning and finally in the resemblance of wax with dehydrated human flesh. The latter becomes pertinent in light of Milton's idea of culture as life-sustaining nourishment. Her second tool is collage to have the final images be symbolic of the present day environment of bigotry and fear-mongering.

The multiple labour-intensive works in Chhatwal's first solo exhibition are her homage to the fortitude of cultural practitioners and the immeasurable loss that accompanies control of independent creative thought.

Deeksha Nath



Mansha Chhatwal

Abu Nuwas, 2022

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Black Marker, Thread

45 cm x 30 cm

₹ 55,000.00



Mansha Chhatwal

Abu Nuwas II, 2022

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Thread

45 cm x 30 cm

₹ 55,000.00



Mansha Chhatwal

Chief, The Honourable Minister, 2021

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Pigment, Thread

45 cm x 30 cm

₹ 55,000.00



Mansha Chhatwal

Chief, The Honourable Minister II, 2021

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Thread, Ink

45 cm x 30 cm

₹ 55,000.00



Mansha Chhatwal

Earth of Mankind, 2021

Book Pages, Beeswax, Resin, Pigment, Thread

45 cm x 30 cm

₹ 55,000.00



Mansha Chhatwal

God resigns at the summit meeting, 2022

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Thread

45 cm x 30 cm

₹ 55,000.00



Mansha Chhatwal

Liquidation I, 2022

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Thread

45 cm x 30 cm

₹ 55,000.00



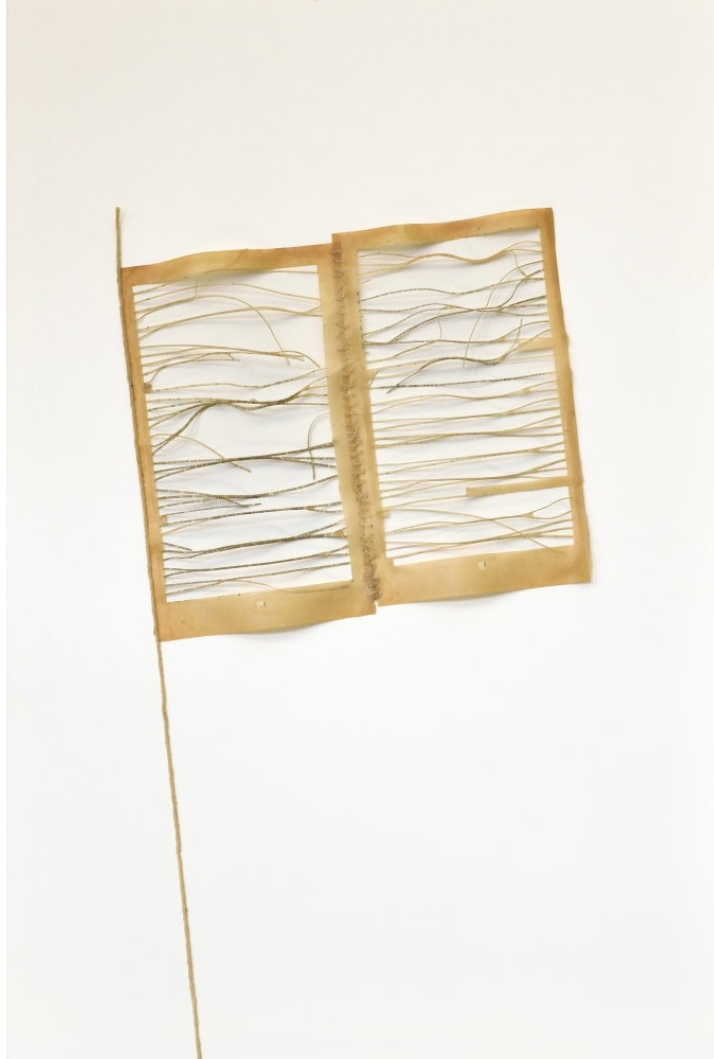
Mansha Chhatwal

Liquidation II, 2021

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Thread

45 cm x 30 cm

₹ 55,000.00



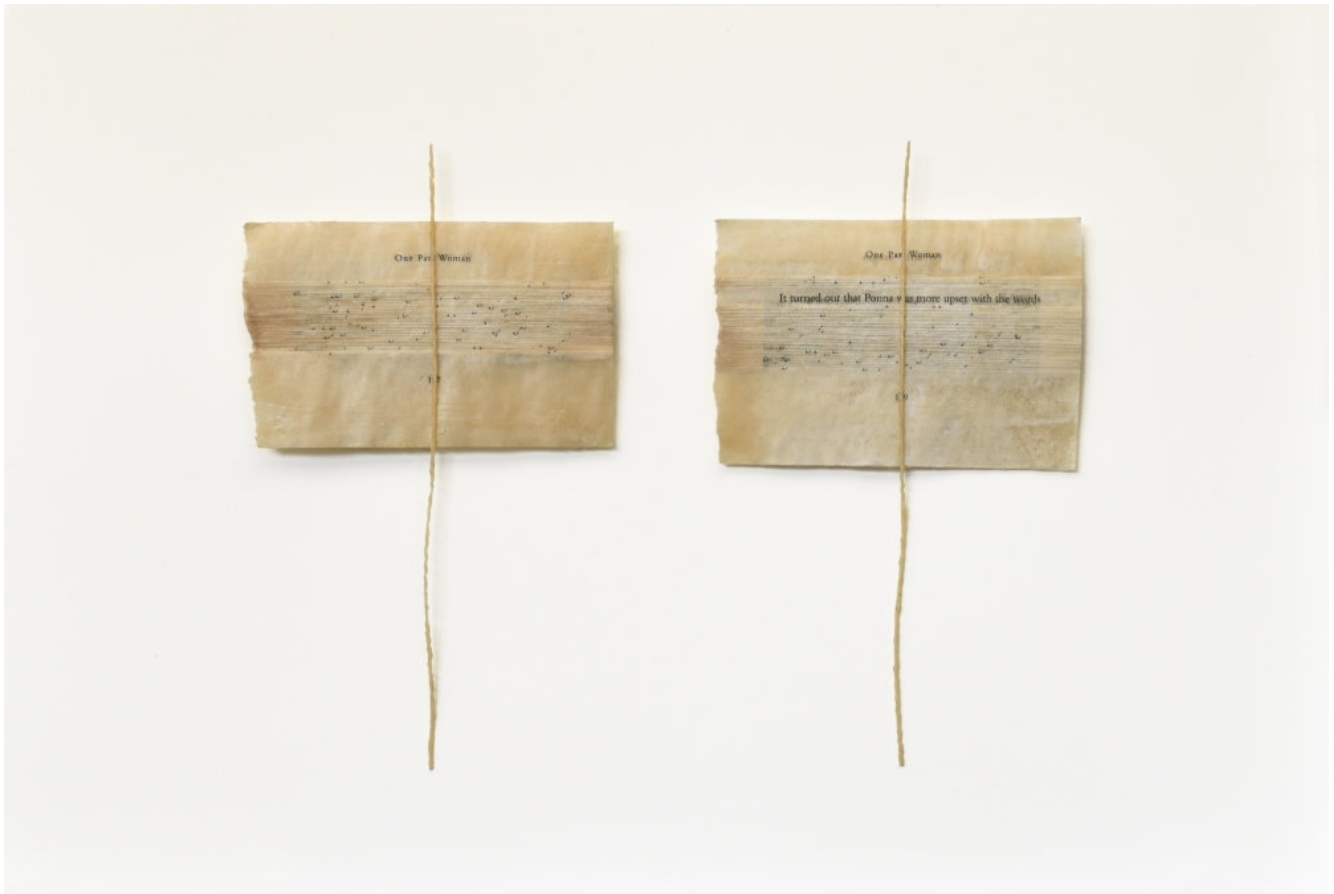
Mansha Chhatwal

Moor's last sigh, 2021

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Thread

55 cm x 37.5 cm

₹ 90,000.00



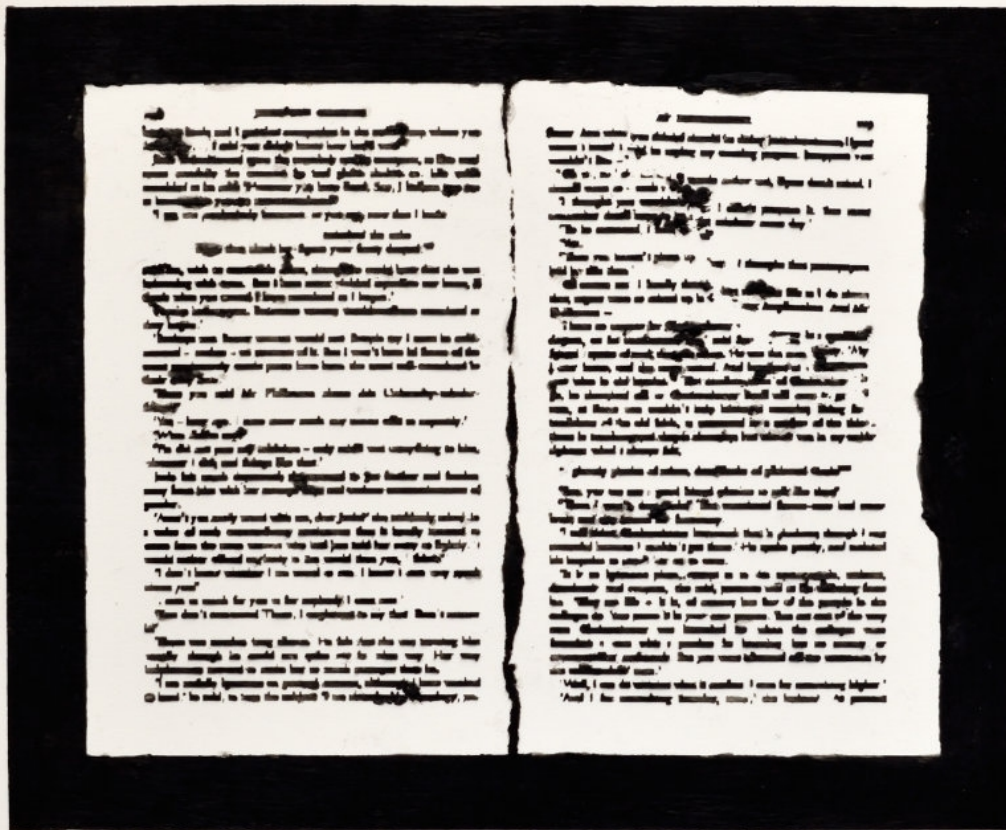
Mansha Chhatwal

One part woman, 2021

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Pigment,

30 cm x 45 cm

₹ 55,000.00



Mansha Chhatwal

Jude the Obscure, 2021

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Pigment

30 cm x 37.5 cm

₹ 65,000.00



Mansha Chhatwal

Jude the Obscure II, 2021

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Nails

69 cm x 47.5 cm

₹ 130,000.00



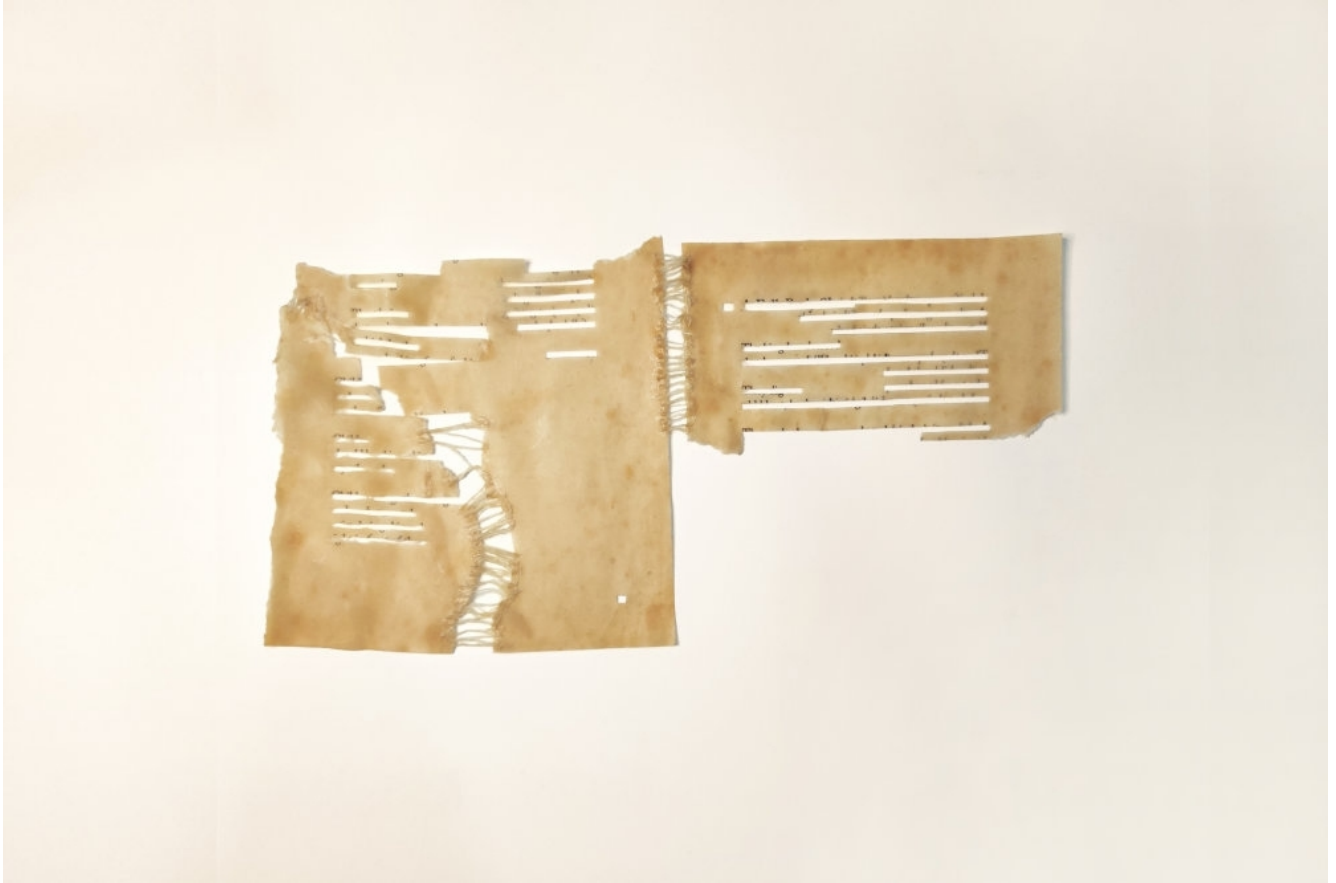
Mansha Chhatwal

Lajja I, 2021

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Thread

28 cm x 49 cm

₹ 90,000.00



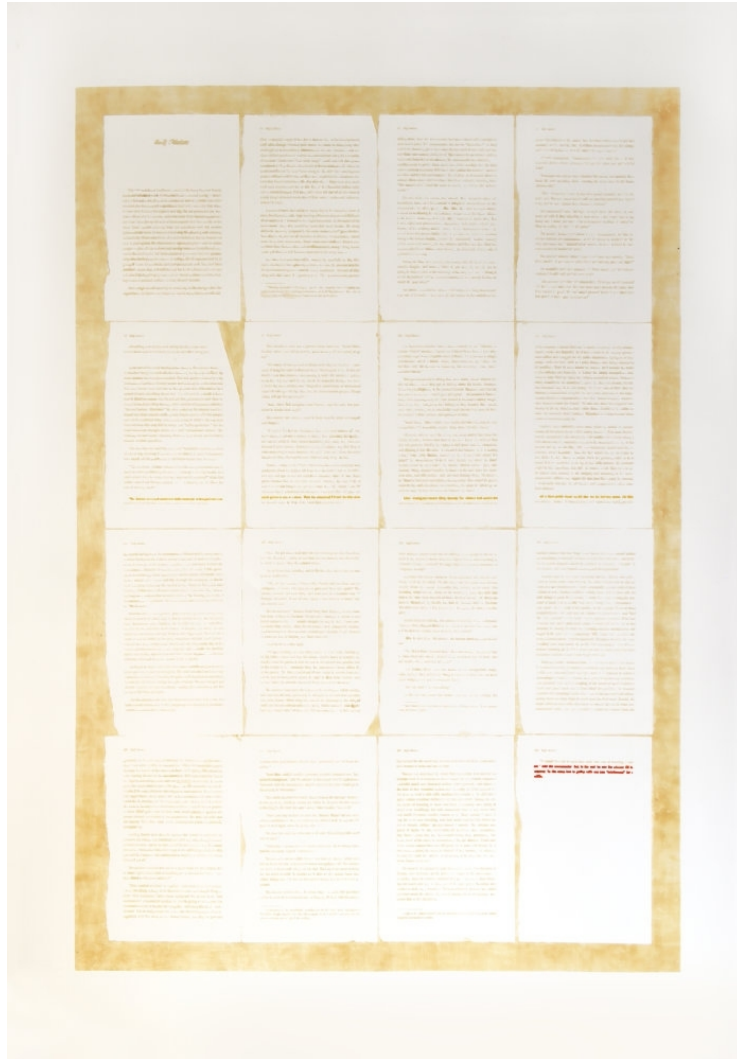
Mansha Chhatwal

Song of a Coward II, 2021

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Pigment,

30 cm x 45 cm

₹ 55,000.00



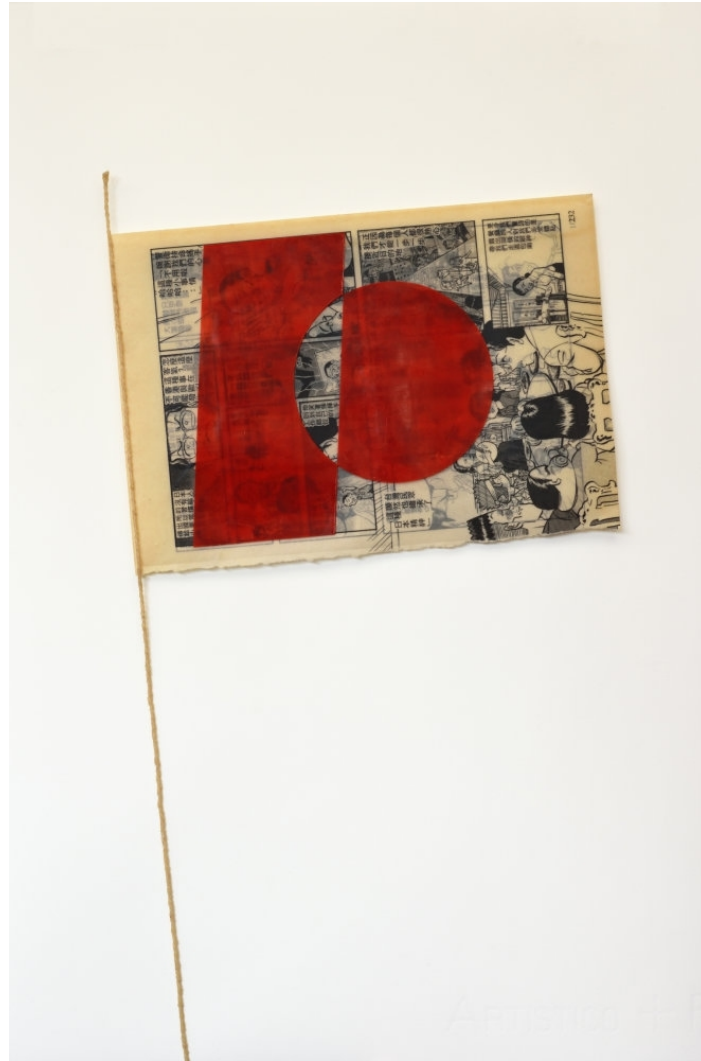
Mansha Chhatwal

Staff Advisor, 2021

Beeswax, Resin, Pigment

109 cm x 75 cm

₹ 130,000.00



Mansha Chhatwal

Taiwan Ron, 2021

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Pigment, Thread

45 cm x 30 cm

₹ 55,000.00



Mansha Chhatwal

The Mute's Soliloquy, 2021

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Pigment, Thread

45 cm x 30 cm

₹ 55,000.00



Mansha Chhatwal

The Mute's Soliloquy II, 2021

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Thread

57.5 cm x 57.5 cm

₹ 90,000.00



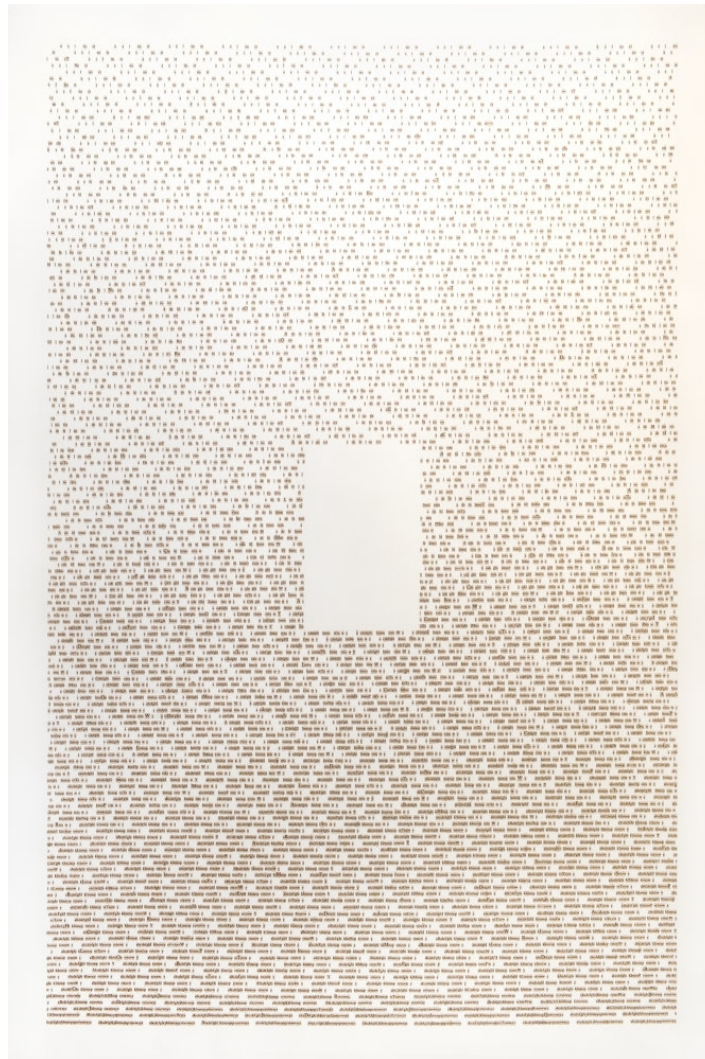
Mansha Chhatwal

Two Boys Kissing, 2021

Book Page, Beeswax, Resin, Pigment, Nails, Thread

45 cm x 30 cm

₹ 55,000.00



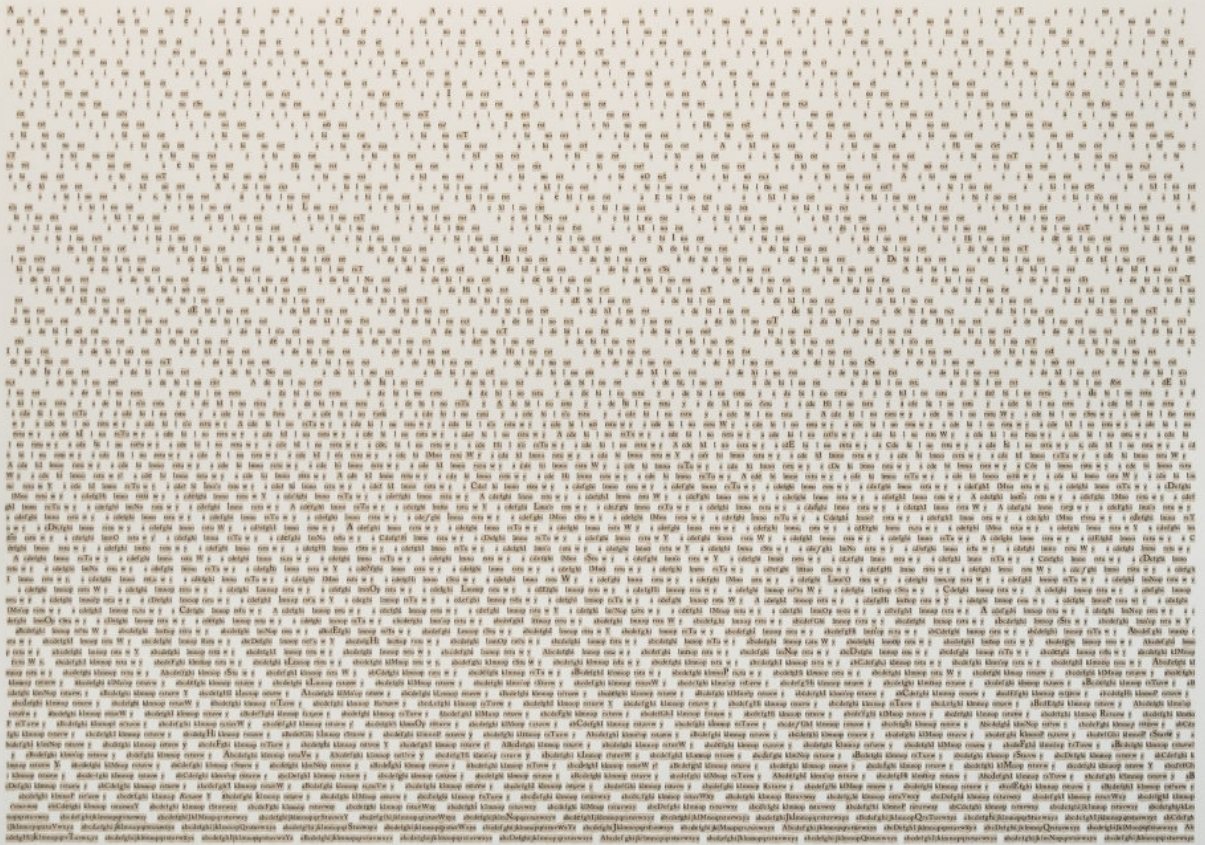
Mansha Chhatwal

Song of a Coward I, 2021

Book Page, Acid-free glue

114 cm x 77 cm

₹ 300,000.00



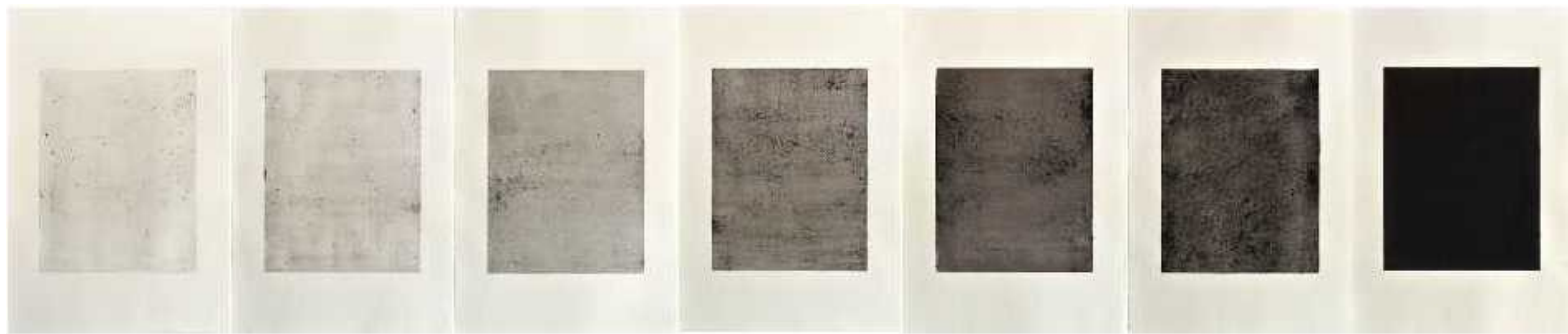
Mansha Chhatwal

Songs of a Coward, 2019

Book pages, Glue, Archival paper

55 cm x 75 cm

₹ 200,000.00



Mansha Chhatwal

Drawing the Line of Intolerance - . Abu Nuwas, A Genius of Poetry, 2019

Book ash, Acrylic medium, Archival paper

55 cm x 37.5 cm each

₹ 200,000.00