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Flatland: A Landscape of Punjab

Max Kandhola

25 April to 20 June 2010

British Indian photographer Max Kandhola explores themes of memory, migration and Sikh diaspora through photographs of Punjab's rivers and landscapes. Following the formation of Pakistan in 1947, Punjab (meaning 'land of the five rivers') now straddles the borders of India and Pakistan.

Flatland is the second installment in his photographic trilogy mapping his family's heritage, continuing from *Illustration of Life*, a poignant document of his father's struggle with cancer first shown at Impressions in 2003. In *Flatland*, Kandhola takes as his starting point the Sikh tradition of scattering ashes in running water to symbolise a physical reintroduction of the body back into the land.

Kandhola's parents migrated from India to Bradford in the 1950s, before moving to Birmingham, where he was born. Returning to his ancestral homeland on the outskirts of the village Saidowal and Shadipur near Nurmahal in Jalandhar, he traveled from the centre of Punjab outwards. Although unfamiliar territory, his experience was informed by memories passed down to him by his family.

The images in *Flatland* are absent of people, landmarks and typography. Kandhola says, 'I wanted to avoid stereotypical representations of India, and instead my images have been influenced by European landscape painting, and British suburban gardens, reflecting my British-Indian heritage'.

The exhibition includes *Field Notes* and *Explorations*, a collection of drawings and Polaroids revealing Kandhola's working process, which has never been exhibited in the UK before.

To find out more, please browse the reading table or pick up a flyer for details of related events, including an Archive Connections and Artist Talk event on Tuesday 15 June. The publication *Flatland: A Landscape of Punjab* is available from the shop at the special exhibition price of £20 (usual price £30).