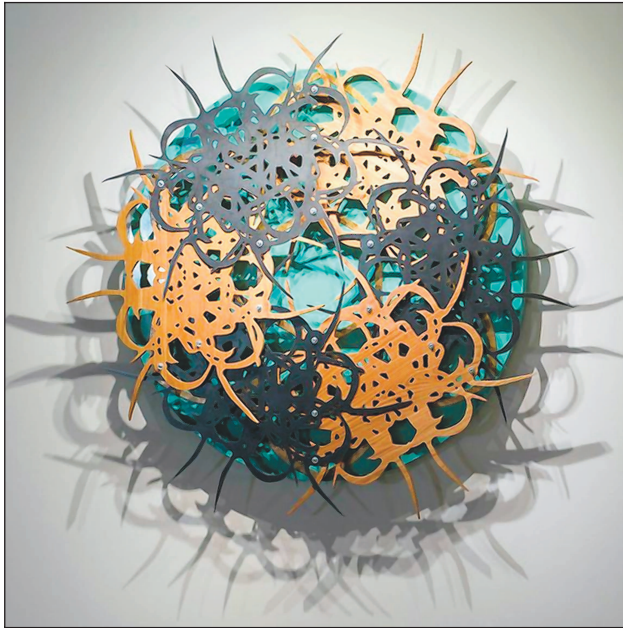


Visual and performing arts

Akram exhibits new work at Crane Yard



"New Arabesque" incorporates wood and steel powder coat.



Akram's "Prototype Seven" features evanescent filigrees that riff on Islamic patterns.



"Broken Illuminations" speaks of the frivolity of narcissism and dogma.

KC artist known for his elaborate Pakistani cargo truck displays sculptures.

By TANYA HARTMAN
Special to The Star

One attribute that is common to original thinkers is an ability to perceive what is intangible in human experience and to translate it into comprehensible terms. As Albert Einstein said, "The most beautiful thing that we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science."

Asheer Akram's "Sacred Spaces" exhibition attempts to express the concepts that Einstein describes. On view at the Belger Crane Yard Gallery, the works decode mystical experience into visual form. Dualities of material and content are paired in massive sculptures, large wall reliefs and smaller ceramic vessels.

Components that are ponderous and hefty, such as steel, oak and clay, are cut and formed in evanescent filigrees that riff on Islamic patterns.

Akram investigates weight and weightlessness by fusing the most monumental of sculptures to delicate and insubstantial bases. The effect is to allow the viewer to ponder an aspect of human experience that is paradoxical and difficult to define: our lives are intricate, mammoth and ephemeral simultaneously, as delicate, beautiful and easily upset as one of Akram's colossal works.

The artist has a beautiful sense of color and knows how to use it in support of visual metaphor. In "Luminous Girih" (2014), a roughly 4-foot-tall work in steel, stoneware, glaze and enamel,

PHOTOS BY MATT KOCUREK

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