

You are the divine mystery.

Proclaiming the religion of you, Of which, I am the sole convert.

I, a prophet.

Revelations of you, I await.

Bouts of expression escape my lips.

Not violent, But gently dissolving my soul.

In return, silence.

Infinite beauty. Mysterium tremendum.

Inevitable death,

In separation, the pain proves deadly. Thus, I conquer death. How can death annihilate the annihilated?

In union, I lose myself.

Awaits at each end.

I crave you as the drowning crave air. This craving dismantles my pride.

I see millions.

I know thousands.

I love only you. To meet you, against all odds, is enigmatic. You are an enigma.

I like hundreds.

Poetry is a failure. To fail is poetic.

To describe your beauty, I exist in this failure.

I exhaust language in the process.

I reach its end.

The last word I pronounce is your name.

(This futile attempt to name is poetic)

To not fail constantly is to die from longing.

Thus setting aside my worldly cares, I perform the lover's duty:

To constantly fail at poetry, To exist in this failure.

Time is altered. Your presence claims it. The rest is for waiting. Thus, I exist outside of time. Day is your presence. Night is your absence.

Love is a waiting.

Awaiting your return,

Love is a waking. I lie awake when you are absent. And, Who would sleep when you are present? I am poor. Like the infant being nursed. My nourishment comes from you. Rescued from the world,

Hated by the world;

I contemplate you.

I become everything it fears. By loving you, I become an individual. Alone (with you) in this solitude. Those who seek god hide inside temples. I, who seek you, hide a temple inside me.

Who gives? Who receives? I am not distinct from you.



Threatened by you,

When thought arrives, the threat is past.

With no escape.

Snatched from the world.

When it leaves, I am threatened again.

Beyond help am I.

At places you are infinitely soft. I, being finite, feel a pressing need to press against this infinity.

You are my death. Yet I love you. The river knows the sea is its death.

Still it flows towards it.

My being demands it.

Its the same with me.

When two bodies love, the offspring is rapture.

When two minds love, the offspring is language.

When two souls love, the offspring is silence.

When we love, the offspring is a language of

silent rapture.

Your body evades me.

I only access skin;

Wrapped around you,

Folded onto itself.

It is this I touch. Your body remains unknown.

I hover on skin.

Always outside.

I enter only to touch the skin of this inside.

While your body becomes an outside where I touch the infinite.

Woman is sensation.

I contain this sensation as a potential; A seed awaiting moisture to flower. I realized this potential when embodied in you. I blossomed in your presence.



Aphrodite! Let us give birth to Eros. I touch you with language.

Yet language separates us. My yearning exists in language, Born when I proclaim, "I yearn".

This proclamation pulls me out. Rescues me from the void between "I" and "yearn".

This tension stretches me thin, till I become a specter,

Your face shining through me.

Was I destined to meet you?

How does the raindrop decide where to fall?

It is destined to fall where it must.

But what about free will?

The raindrop has free will!

It can decide to be a raindrop and, thus, fulfill

its destiny.

Sipping the gardener's blood, A rose pure white, Adorns the empty bud.

Black rose withered in the night.

Seconds, minutes, hours, days, Weeks, months, years, decades, Centuries, millenniums, eons, eternities,

love you.

Are too scanty, too sparse, too scarce to

Longing claims my being– Poetry is this longing given body. My melted pride becomes a river, And waters your garden. My house is an inn where I await dawn, To search for you once again. A veil of pain over her face, Over her shoulders a garment of grief. Under these hide in disbelief,

A divine, holy, celestial grace.

There is a grove under the hills,

Where once we played while the world was young. Your laughter echoing amidst the trees,

Earthy fragrance of moss longing to mingle with yours, Depressions where moist ground met your bare feet.

Your star studded crown still lies there.

Your robe of night roses still longs to be worn.

The path of river stones still winds through trees.

The moonlight still dances with the night.

The nightingale still sings your name ever so sweetly. Return, O Beloved, for without you, nothing's the same.

I've been

So wrong,

In love, my love,

That now when I'm right, I'm afraid I still might, Lose all that to folly, Which I deem holy.

For so long,

Neither angel nor demon,

Am I.

Neither god nor satan,

Am I.

Love, I am.

A song unto myself.



Beauty within is reborn,

When it perceives beauty without.

Beauty within loves beauty without,
And longs for union.

Love	is a failure of the rational	,
In it, we	become more than one	yet
	less than two.	

It saves me from the gods, And from the godless, It saves me from the infinite,

And from the finite. It saves me from daydreams,

And from night screams. It saves me from light,

And from the night. It saves me from losing myself,

And restores me to me.

I may love to extremes,

But love itself is not an extreme. Love is,

The middle way,

So to say,

Of Buddha and Christ.

I lose, god in god and, him in the god-head,
I lose, me in you and, you, to lose in your stead.

Poetry's

A phenomenon, A sculpting of time.

A bleeding wound, Seeping suffering.

I burn my longing.

With the ashes I sculpt. When all longing is consumed,

I shall sculpt with light.

I am he who sculpts silence.

I am he who sculpts night.

I am he who sculpts nothing.

I am silence. I am night. I am nothing.



Lifted my tear filled eyes to greet you. O what ecstasy when the idol spoke back ample: "I, too, descended a thousand steps to meet you."

I ascended a thousand steps to reach your temple.

I will teach you the true genesis story:

Our universe was created when two lovers met.

So let us meet and create a new one!

Faced with the insatiable void, Let us proclaim: "Let there be light"

I want to bear you, from this world, afar, And make a nest for us on the highest star. What are you if not A force that turned this saint into a god. You're my life's sole heiress.

I laid it down at your feet, Death cannot daunt my heart,

To vanquish it, my loftiest feat. But, it was a battle won.

Death, in war, none can beat,

It won't consume me in your stead, Its claim on you it won't forfeit.

But then I told my wrenching heart,

Such beauty, mortal, is not indeed.

Longing crowns me. Remorse clothes me.

Absence crowds me.



When you left, I married your absence.



### Julius John Alam

2016 MFA, The New School, New York
 2013 BFA, National College of Arts Lahore

# Shows Curated

2013 The Lost Archive, Zahoor-ul-Akhlaq Gallery, National College of Arts Lahore

## Awards and Grants

2014 Fulbright Award

### Solo Exhibitions

2016 Shama Jalti Rahi, Koel Gallery, Karachi

2014 And darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining, Rohtas, Lahore

# **Group Exhibitions**

2017

2017 Sleepless Constellations, 1 x 1 Gallery, Dubai

Love Letters, Sanat Gallery, Karachi

2016 Lived Experiences, Twelve Gates Art Gallery, Philadelphia

2016 I Can Because You Do, Participant Inc, New York

2016 Puncture, 25 East Gallery, The New School, New York

2014 Four and Other Elements, Canvas Gallery, Karachi

2014 Size and Scale are Not the Same, Gallery of Light, DUCTAC, Dubai

2014 Stet, Lahore Literary Festival, Alhamra Art Gallery, Lahore

2013 Left, Right and Center, Taseer Art Gallery, Lahore

2012 Attic Studio, Alhamra Art Gallery, Lahore
 2011 Correspondence, Zahoor-ul-Akhlag Gallery, Lahore

2010 Correspondence, Zanoor-ui-Akniaq Gallery, Lanord 2010 Overflow, Gallery 39K, Lahore

overnow, dancing 3711, Earlore

Published Work

Alam, Julius, "From the 'Silence of Language' to a 'Language of Silence' ", ArtNow Pakistan, July 2016

Alam, Julius. "Being Hopeful Together", in exhibition catalogue for I Live Pakistan, Studio Seven, Karachi, September 2016

Alam, Julius, "Hermann Nitsch: Sacrifice and the Crises of Performance Art", ArtNow Pakistan. October 2016

Alam, Julius, "Rabeya Jalil: Painting's Skin as the Site of Suffering", ArtNow Pakistan, November. 2016

Alam, Julius, "Of Trees and Other Beings", ArtNow Pakistan, December 2016

Alam, Julius, "Face-to-Face With Silence", ArtNow Pakistan, January 2017 Alam, Julius, "The Archive as an Arena for Play", ArtNow Pakistan, February 2017

Alam, Julius, "The Ethical Artwork", ArtNow Pakistan, March 2017

Alam, Julius, "Pain-(t)", ArtNow Pakistan, April 2017 Alam, Julius, "How Artist Imran Qureshi Transforms Pain Into Pleasure", Herald Magazine, April 2017

Alam, Julius, "Painting Hope", Libas Magazine, April 2017

Alam, Julius, "The Lover's Flight", ArtNow Pakistan, May 2017 Alam, Julius, "Body Drawing Body", ArtNow Pakistan, June 2017

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Ahmed, Saba, "Spaces in the dark", Good Times, February 1-15, 2014
Taseer, Aatish, "Making Art From Pakistan's Chaos", The New York Times, June 27, 2016
Tareen, Seher, "The Prodigal Son Returns", Artnow Pakistan, August 2016
Mirza, Quddus, "Dark to Light", The News, August 7, 2016
Mirza, Quddus, "On Art and Other Minorities", The News, October, 23, 2016

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