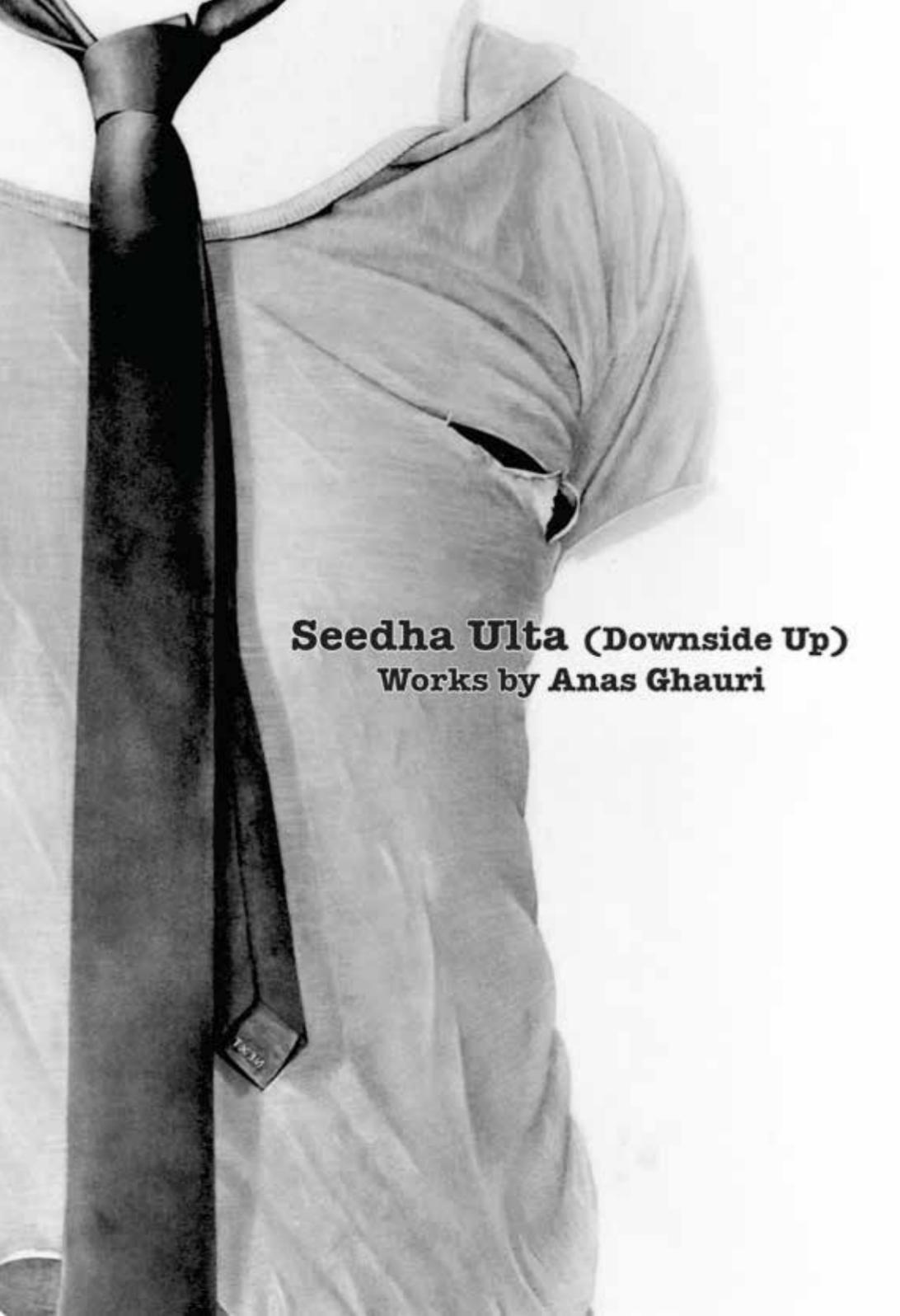
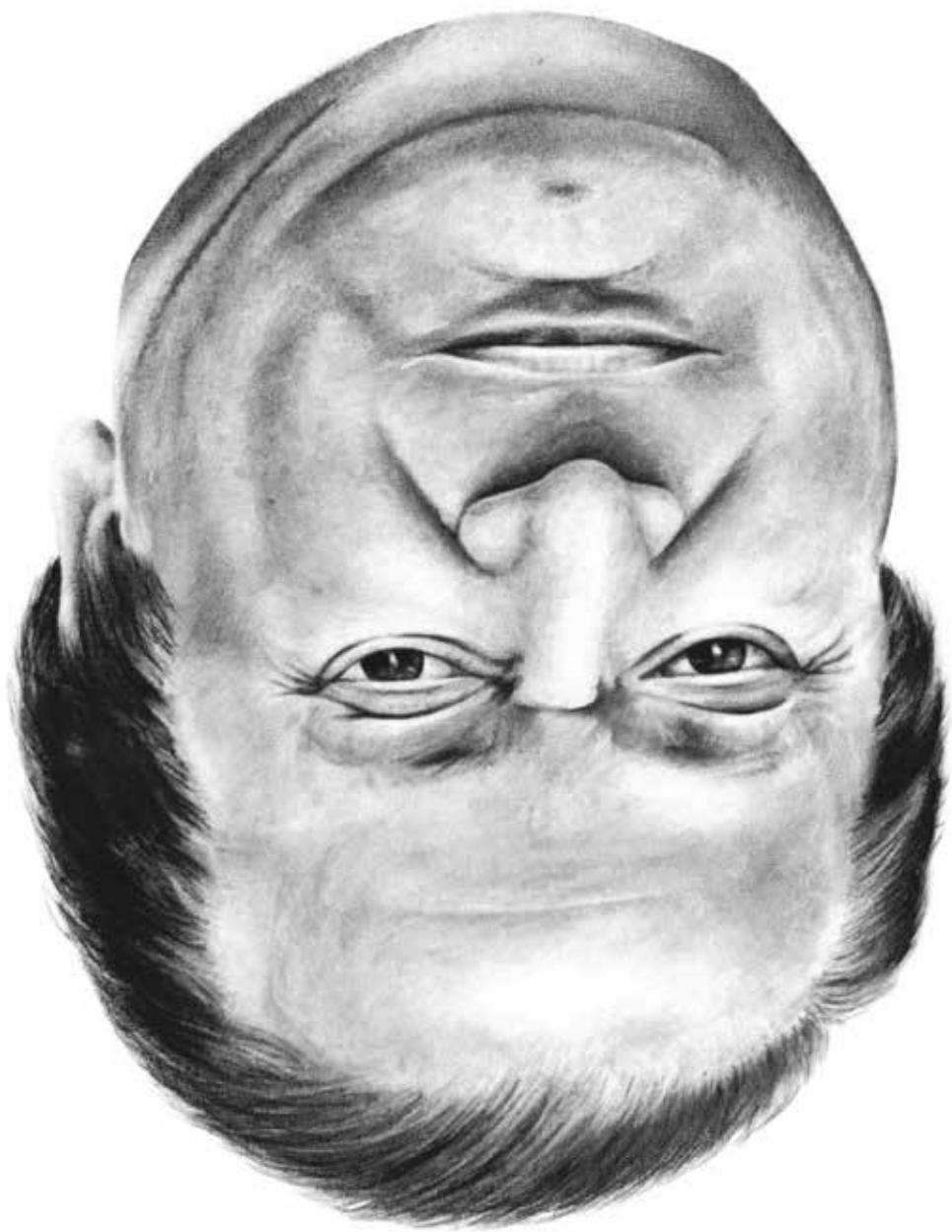




✉ sanatgallery@gmail.com  [@sanatinitiative](https://twitter.com/sanatinitiative)  www.sanatinitiative.com
 Sanat Gallery  www.facebook.com/initiativesanat



Seedha Ulta (Downside Up)
Works by Anas Ghauri



Untitled I, graphite and charcoal on paper, 101 x 66 cm, 2016

“Mirror, Mirror on the Wall....”

Sehrish Mustafa

Since the beginning of the very first Greek philosophers, it has been alleged and putative that midst the universe we breathe from, our knowledge, perception, and the idea of knowing is in fact incomplete, thus, deriving the fact that we are often mistaken! We tend to form and accumulate our own *world* of endless reasoning from our existence, creating a sense of dispute and uncertainty amongst the mirrored truths and representations of these realities' we ought to achieve. We as humans, with the development of the personified changes and evolutions, tend to build our evident and forsaken knowledge and beliefs on what desires or pleases us to do so.

Anas Ghauri, a graduate of National College of Arts Lahore since his graduation in 2014 has gyrated his practice on much similar notions of illusion and knowing, which he often refers to as *Seedha Ulla* (*downside up*), which is furthermore the corresponding title of his first solo show with Sanat Gallery. His artistic fascination claims to the reason of him being born to a journalist father and artistically infected by his grandfather, who happened to be a calligrapher. It was not a surprise that Anas's work is the juxtaposition of the socio-political happenings amalgamated with the most profound and satirical approached image making that he takes on.



Phati Bunyan, graphite and charcoal on paper, 152 x 101 cm, 2016



Policeman, graphite and charcoal on paper, 101 x 213 cm, 2016

We live in the age of destruction of everything human, we inhale and exhale the realm of politics, may it be in any arrangement. Relations that we create, spawn and invent with people closest to us – that's politics. Relations we articulate and structure when becoming a part of a community or an institution – that's politics, and certainly the relations we profile with numerous public discourses in one way or the other – that is, assuredly politics! When it concerns art, all of these procedures of relationships come in sync with a singular visual expression. Amongst many artists from the beginning of time of industrialization and eventually globalization till now, have shown no mercy or



withheld their say regarding the genre of socialist or political art.

Taking and capturing his satire humor to more humane and humble planes; a more profane and relatable phenomena of aesthetics and visual vocabulary takes place. The birth of these visual vessels dates back to his college times where he had witnessed a terrorist activity is of the most nostalgic of his memories. The series *Seedha Utha* were born where he merely was amused and appalled by the *tamashas* (an absurd activity) taking place at the much chaosed and bombarded location, where everything he witnessed had turned upside down!



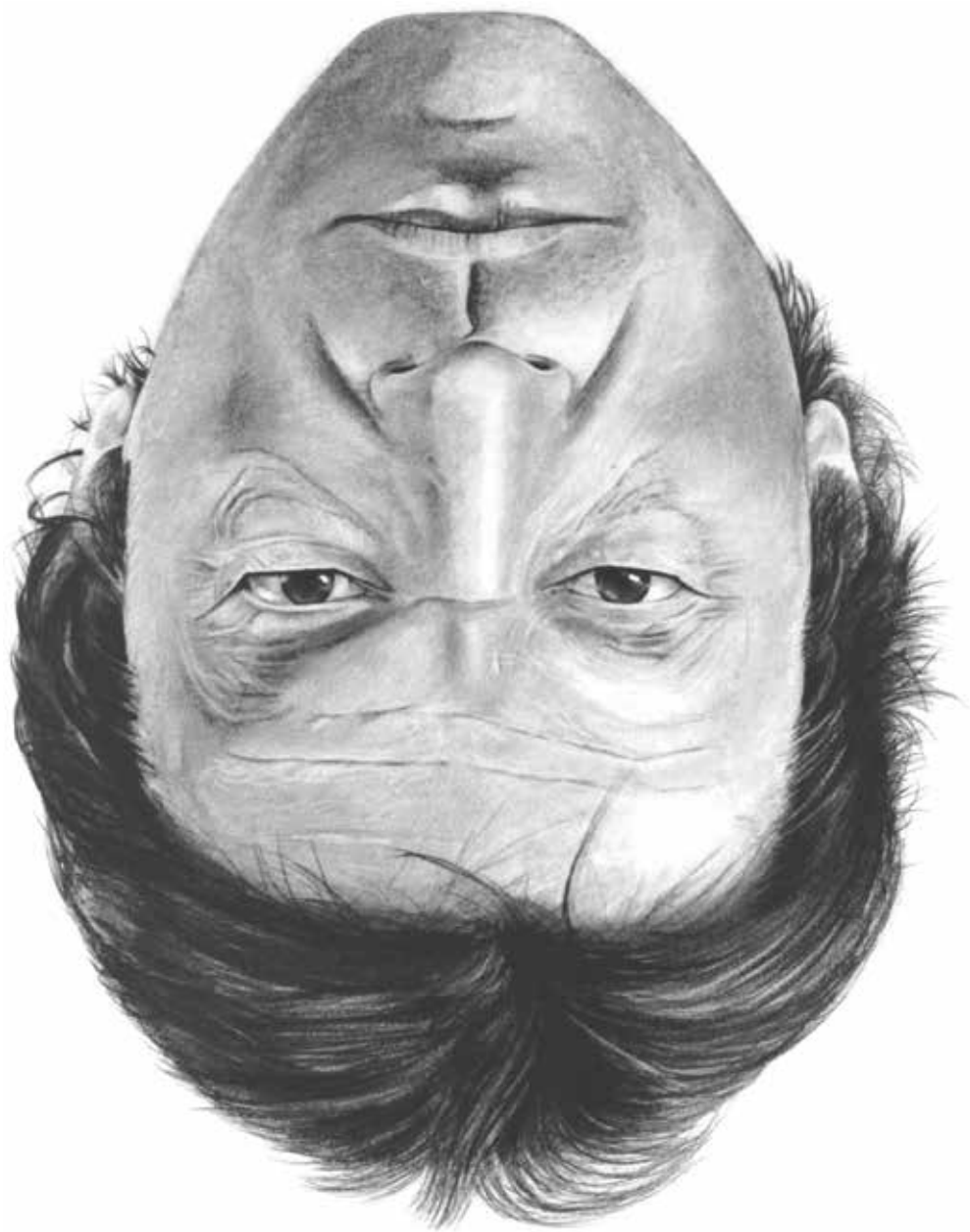
Mr., graphite and charcoal on paper, 152 x 101 cm, 2016



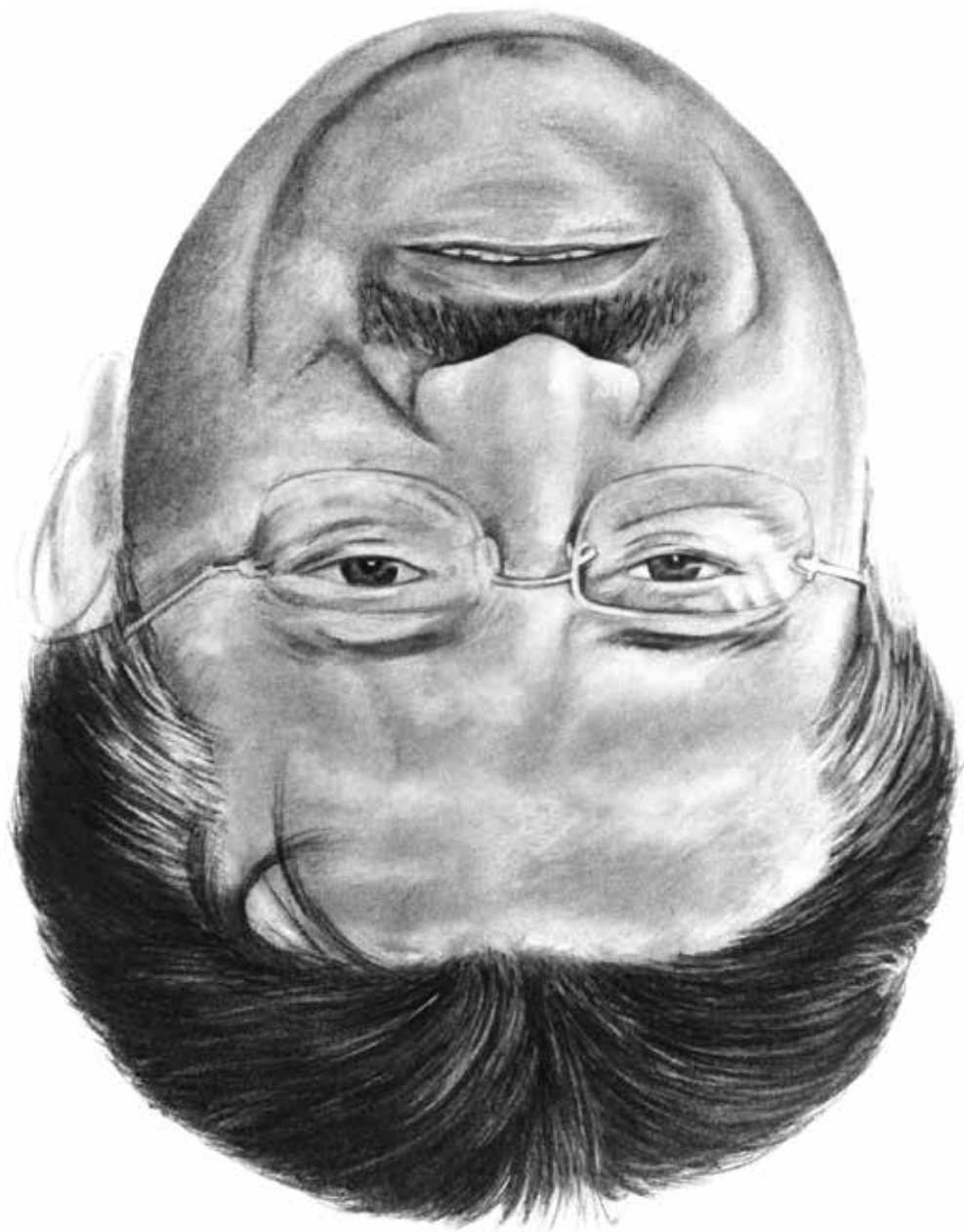
The illusionist with his iconic hat and cloak is far-flung from being the master of such illusions. This unconvinced peculiarity belongs to the politician. Behind their towering podium, they eulogize plusses of a utopian world while illusorily masking factual intent, no matter what good might exist within them - that's for you to endeavor upon. Comparing and correlating the extent "heavy on meaning" symbolism of images to his conventional treatment, Anas addresses the affair regarding politics, propaganda, power, common man and symbolic meaning. Thus his work has adopted the visual sensibility of the Thatcher effect*, which he politely attaches to his political portraits. Rendered and treated with the utmost evoking realism in graphite, these portraits of political icons Imran Khan, Zardari, Shaikh Rashid, Nawaz Sharif and General Musharraf are over life sized drawings that are going to mesmerize anyone, yet the dilemma that they parade and account for are far peculiar and particular. The apparent normal looking upside down portraits implies and insulates a much larger memo, a rather deceiving one to the human eye.

Being the social animals we are, and according to the famous Chinese proverb; we all have two wolves inside of us, the good and the bad, it's a constant battle amongst the two, so who wins? Let's just say, the one you feed!

What in particular makes these works rather enthralling is the shrewdly placement of a hanging crystal ball right in front of these, which rotates the portraits and reveals a rather disturbing yet amusing facial phrases, prompting and inducing the viewer to take a second look and thought to their acquaintance of knowing.



Untitled II, graphite and charcoal on paper, 101 x 66 cm, 2016



Untitled III, graphite and charcoal on paper, 101 x 66 cm, 2016

His medium acquires recognition as a part of his statement, where these large works hold and render shades of black and white, in a way airing to the idea of power and authority mingled with mirrors of purity and innocence. Anas's imagination and compositions of uniforms of the authorities are layers of questions that he contemplates the viewer to capture. These bizarre massless monologues are in fact human figures attired in clothes upside down! At times these strict uniforms are entangled in absurd interacting compositions giving these out of the ordinary referents a rather politically disturbing statement. At times his work may yield certain sexual or psychological substances, regardless of the original ideology. These interactions of the authoritative attires scream for the act of negative indulgence that one way or another we all reap to. A uniform regardless of its title, makes you wear a certain degree of proudness and aloofness that comes with, which we inmate ourselves in, however, does a piece of clothing acquire such power over the human mind and soul? Let's blame the clothes, since we are *humans*!

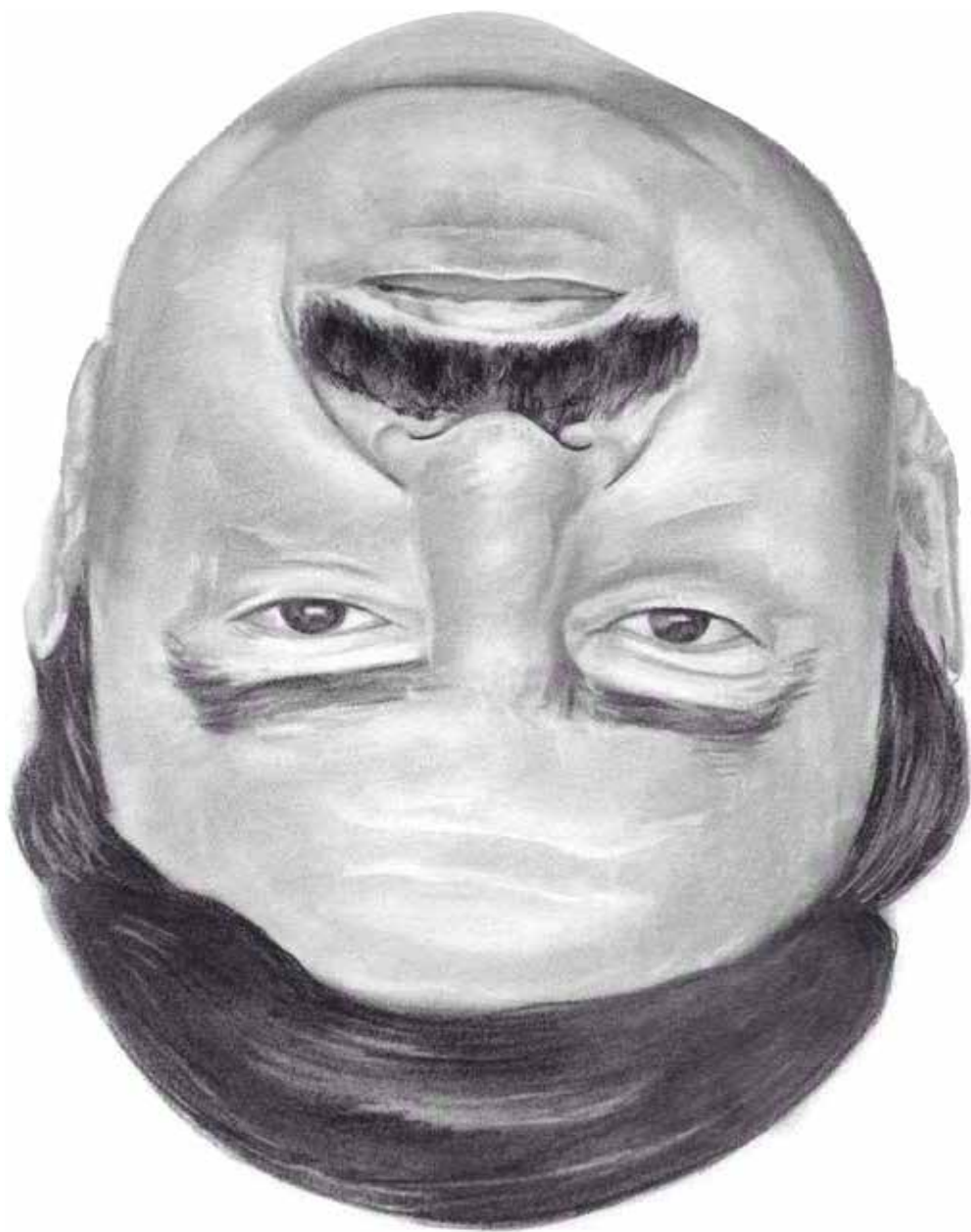
The artist does not simply interpret the socio-political bait that we have become, in fact he states that we have licensed ourselves with the negative fascinations around us to the extent where we hypocrite the phenomena and then bury them under . As he produces his own upbringing and what made him banter and caricature the realities that he was so utterly fascinated and bound with, believes we live in an environment adhered similar to a playground where everyone is utterly exercising meaningless engagements instead of what they are actually meant to!



"Ik Nukte Vich Gahl Mukdi Eh"

He confides to this intriguing verse of an inspiring poem by Baba Bulleh Shah, a Punjabi Sufi poet, humanist and philosopher and attains its context for his purpose. Wherein regard to his works, it simply implies that there is a very thin line between good and bad, negative and positive, right and wrong. It is a matter of time that with a mere diversion of any figure, may transform it into an opposite entity.

Under this methodology he continues to seek a universally known propaganda of art of politics, in one of his bona fide piece of work, occupies a drawn chest of a human body, attired in a torn and old shirt, yet wearing a proper clean necktie to an anonymous individual acquiring no identity. In such a mild composition there exists a compelling usage



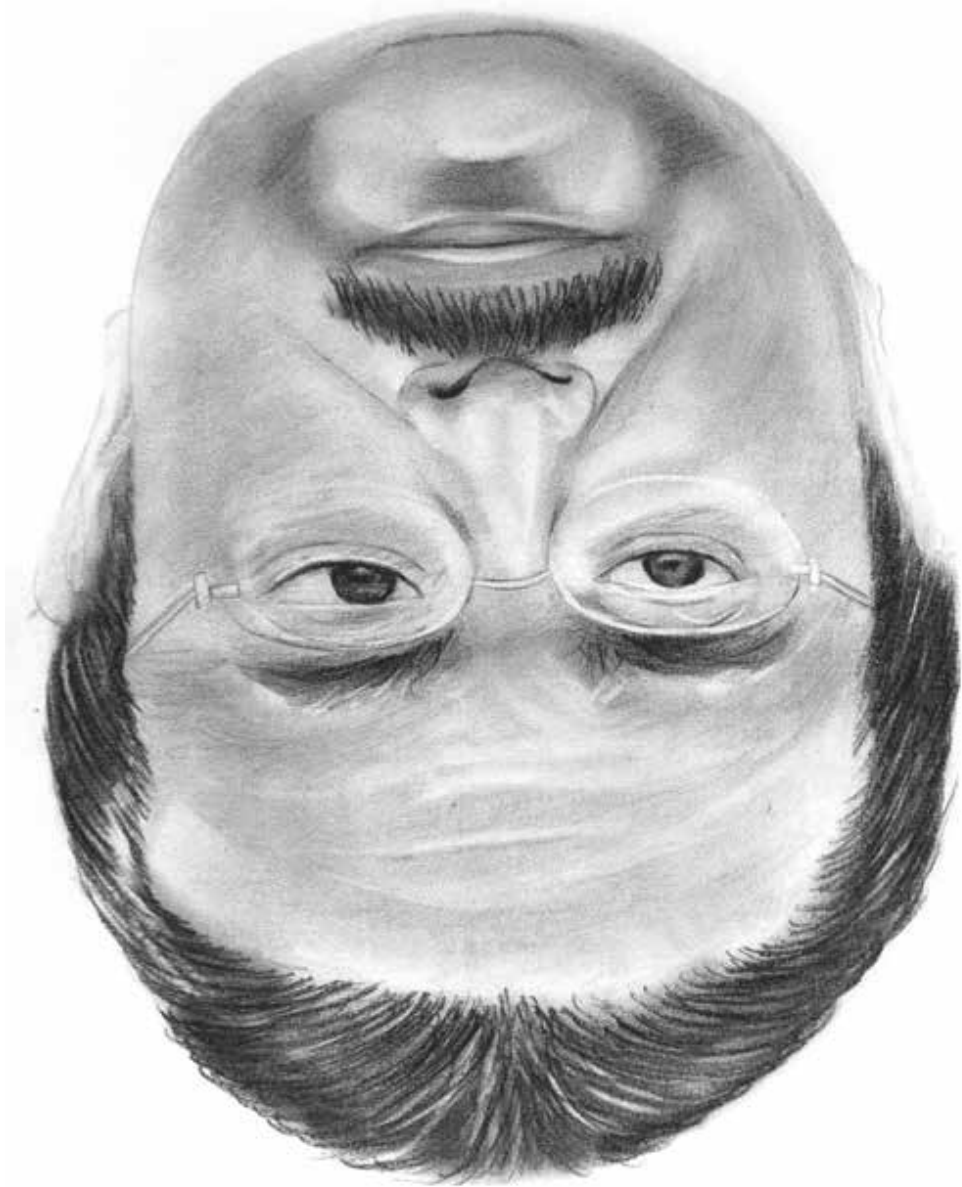
Untitled IV, graphite and charcoal on paper, 101 x 66 cm, 2016

of symbolism. Don't you think? Does it make one wonder of the umbrella of illusions and beliefs we have made ourselves of? To what extent are we going to master the art of masking? He speaks for and of the layman, for them to fret and protest is a part of who they have been metamorphosed into.

His series are notions of distresses and a tension that very much exist and counter play what we have become, yet his humble approach of simplicity coupled with his appalled high spirited wisecracks that he takes on, seeks an unusual and a noteworthy direction. Knowing is not the same as believing, we inmate ourselves to directed idealism and a sense of belonging to acquire what? Reality consists of ideas and the minds that perceive them. For an idea to be born it has to be perceived, right? However if something only tends to prevail, does it cease to exist if there are no minds to perceive them?

This individual attempts to bayonet what we perceive and know, using idealist and its calculated symbolisms which he has hurdled through to give his viewers a more involving and intriguing series of work. With the help of his incredible artistic proficiency, the absence of an identity within the uniforms perhaps adheres to a vast and a universal language, making anyone lean forward and enforced to create a stream of thoughts and get caught in a self Q and A . His work solely confronts the viewer's eye to engage in a second speculation. Despite the fact it does not urge to create a political tension amongst the masses yet it invites anyone and everyone to rethink and reinforce oneself. *They* have risen amongst us, what does that say about us?





Untitled V, graphite and charcoal on paper, 101 x 66 cm, 2016

His work is quiet and withholds many conversations and conventions and the urge to narrate a story, perhaps a story of his own? Or to explore the *tamashas in-between*? However, its at the same time the ridiculous ironies that co-exist and shape the modern exceeding environment around us. We essentially ought to be rational animals, right? Well, checkmate!

The series *Seedha Ulta* “adores” our existence and the intelligence of a human mind as being a part of. It is the pathologies of neglect that we cherish.

*Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:—
We murder to dissect.*

~William Wordsworth, “The Tables Turned”



*About the Thatcher effect or Thatcher illusion

The Thatcher Effect, also known as Thatcher illusion, illustrates that the brain can't properly process a photo of a face that is upside down. The interesting part is that the brain thinks it can so you get a confident feeling that everything is alright, until you turn it over.

Once its right side up the way your brain is used it, it becomes quite obvious that something is wrong. In fact what you see is that the mouth and eyes are upside down.

The illusion is named after Margaret Thatcher, former British Prime Minister, because her photo was first used to famously illustrate the illusion.





Artist's Statement

Since my childhood, I observed different but interesting conditions around me. As I grew up, I found them to be harsh. I strongly feel that something negative survives with us all the time. We can also call it negative of a positive. My work is about social and political interests. I belong to a family of journalists, thus I have developed a habit of reading columns and newspapers every day. My recent body of work is about the scenario we all are facing in today's time.

*Cheekh uthta hai badan mera phati bunyan se
Bara collar sajaaye phirta hoon mein*

As my work is "Downside Up", so this time around I have also used "The Thatcher effect or Thatcher illusion" in my body of work which is all about the political parties, power, chair game, a common person, authority, society.....

*Bazeecha-e-it fal hai duniya meray aage
Hota hai shab-o-roz tamasha meray aage*

(The world is a children's playground before me
Night and Day, this theatre is enacted before me)

~Ghalib

Biography

Anas Ghauri graduated from National College of Arts Lahore in 2014. He has twice exhibited at Sanat Gallery in group shows "They Live By Night" (2014) and "Milestone" (2015). Using graphite on paper, he represents the human form and emotions by the mere use of articles of clothing. The images stir up chaos and disorientation as the invisible human body is rebelling against the conventionality and restrictions within society. In his first solo exhibition "Seedha Ulta" (Downside Up) (2016), in addition to developing his earlier series, Anas also experiments with The Thatcher effect to produce his works. He lives and works in Lahore.

This catalogue accompanies the exhibition

Seedha Ula (Downside Up)

Works by Anas Ghauri



Publisher

Sanat Initiative

F-39-1/A, Block IV, Clifton

Karachi, Pakistan

Layout Design & Editing

Anzal Afzal Khan

Printer

The Times Press (Private) Limited

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means without the prior permission in writing of the publisher.

