

PROPHECIES

Curated by Sajjad Ahmed

Adeel Uz Zafar | Ali Kazim | Ehsan Ul Haq | Muhammad Zeeshan | Roohi Ahmed | Shalalae Jamil

This publication accompanies the exhibition

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PROPHECIES: Time and Substance

Marshall McLuhan, a famous philosopher and public intellectual, once articulated the discussion of medium and content. "The medium is the message. This is merely to say that the personal and social consequences of any medium – that is of any extension of ourselves – result from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves, or by any new technology".

There are all kinds of tremendous influence of mediums on the world in regards to transformation of society in arenas of which it is constituted, including business, leisure, news, politics, religion, education, communication and more. For instance, the advent of television changed the way home interiors used to be imagined. The architects had to introduce a central space for the device in what we know as living room in today's lifestyle. T.S. Eliot said "Television is a medium of entertainment which permits millions of people to listen to the same joke at the same time, and yet remain lonesome". Similarly, the internet has profoundly transformed the aspects of contemporary life. Like rest of the aspects of life, the advent of new technologies leading to newer mediums has an astounding impact on the way art is created, viewed and collected.

The exhibition on view is an attempt to look at the transition in artists' individual practices as well as entirety of current forms and vessels to carry visual and conceptual concerns emerging in art today. The concept of time and its perception is the common link among the artworks that are on view.

In a multimedia installation by Adeel Uz Zafar, there is remarkable content around of the concept of time and delusion. The notion of

time as a carrier of past, through technological innovation is evident in form of Zafar's work. There is fascinating perception of paradoxical content in this installation. The visual of a glitch embodied through the screen of a vintage television set represents the very fundamental nature of time as a linear phenomenon where events are happening at a constant tempo in the grand design of universe. In context of Zafar's known visual practice, the processing of his familiar visual accent through the medium of video is done in an insightful and meaningful manner.

In the works of Ali Kazim, the intervention of light introduces the fourth dimension of time onto two-dimensional pictorial surface and hence the quintessential nostalgia in his works transforms as a phenomenon residing not in the past only but also in present and future simultaneously. It is startling the way time and space coexist in two different dimensions in his works in a lively form.

The works by Ehsan Ul Haq are loaded with content around the ideas of relationship between nature and manmade, and their transformation in time and spatial stretch. In his visuals, Haq documents live animals in strange situations that communicate a humorous configuration of elements from nature, in life and physical volumes of nature, around human.

Muhammad Zeeshan uses humour as a visually expressive tool in his gadget based performance installation that uses a deskjet printer churning out printed frames of a particular scene from the famous movie Titanic. The visuals bear a nude figure of a female character from the movie, censored through juxtaposition of a yellow rubber duck that has achieved an iconic status in popular culture. The title 'Aao Picture Dekhain' is a play on the word 'picture' as a visual/image and picture as a movie. The static images transform the role of

time when sequenced together in a moving image format. Zeeshan's installation imparts the relationship of popular forms of visual culture and their blurring boundaries, through embedded intuitive sense of hilarity.

The patterns constituted out of numerous sewing needles in Roohi Ahmed's works, take one's vision into an imaginary horizon of linear time through its visual portrayal possibility. The transformation of these patterns through time-based medium of video reveals a poetic sense of one's position in larger context of universe. The occurrence of time as an abstract phenomenon seems more metaphysical than its natural existence communicated through elevated stance of a mundane object like needle.

Shalalae Jamil pronounces illusion of time and space created through the complex attributes of modern communications in an installation that is fabricated to look like a slice from personal space. The installation recalls technological usage for long-distance communication. It is interesting the way images are made and understood through modern ways of exchanging information. The portraits and voices as experience of people become highly representational on screens of communications devices in today's lifestyles. We experience the idea of a person than the person him/herself in 'reduction' of time and spatial limits through channels of modern communication.

The mediums and their relative newness is the quotidian spirit of the art being produced today and it is overwhelming to see how a creative being can challenge the known notions of time and its various connotations. The force behind innovations and imaginations, the human mind, is the most fascinating medium.

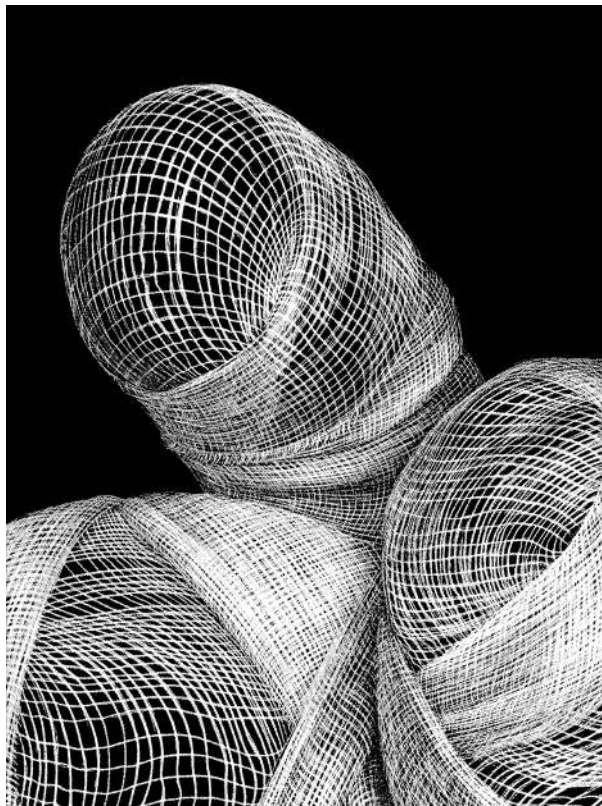


Adeel Uz Zafar

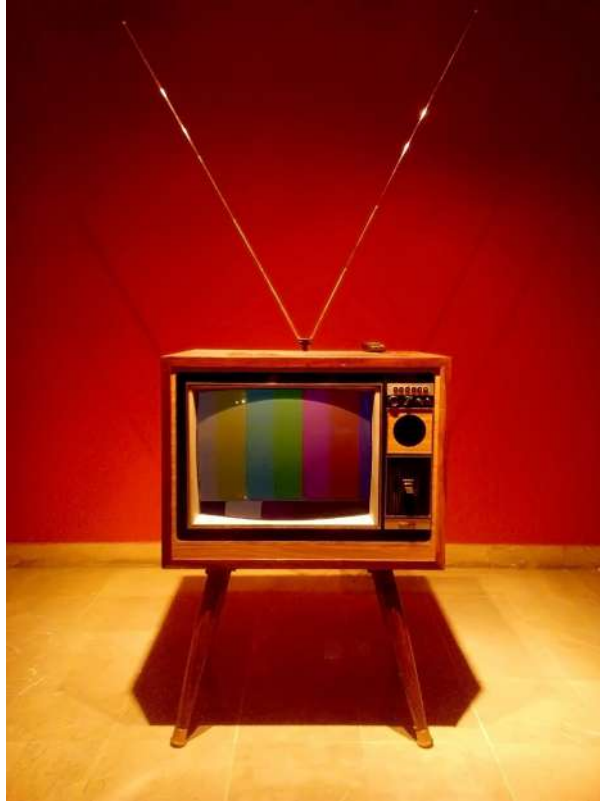
Glitch is a social experiment in which the artist has programmed and transmitted data or visual images of his work or visual vocabulary as a subliminal message by flickering or flashing effect faster than the eye can see. Subliminal perception is a deliberate process by which viewer receives information without being consciously aware of the instruction. The intention is to embed the visual in viewer's collective subconscious. The collective unconscious transpires the existence of similar visual, when exposed, demonstrates natural attraction or fascination.

Adeel Uz Zafar was born in 1975, in Karachi, Pakistan. Zafar holds a BFA (with distinction) from National College of Arts, Lahore (1998). After college, he returned to Karachi and joined Karachi School of Arts as an instructor. He involved himself into ensuing projects that marked his early identification as an illustrator. Size Does Matter at V.M. Art Gallery, Karachi was a turning point for this artist and his practice. This show held in 2009, catapulted him into the league of

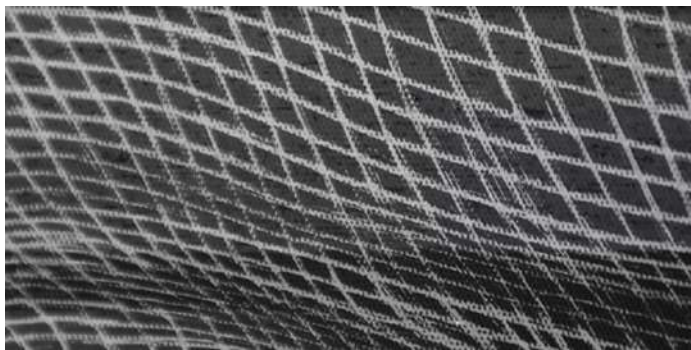
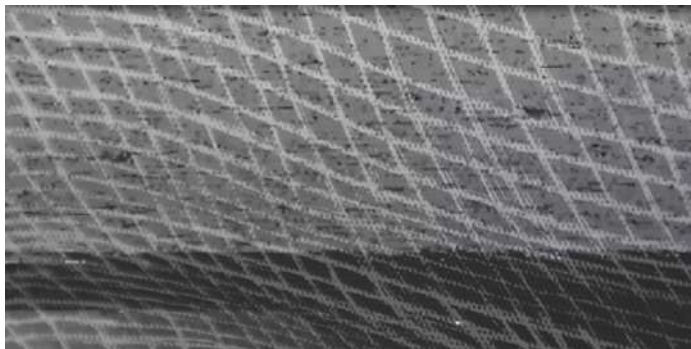
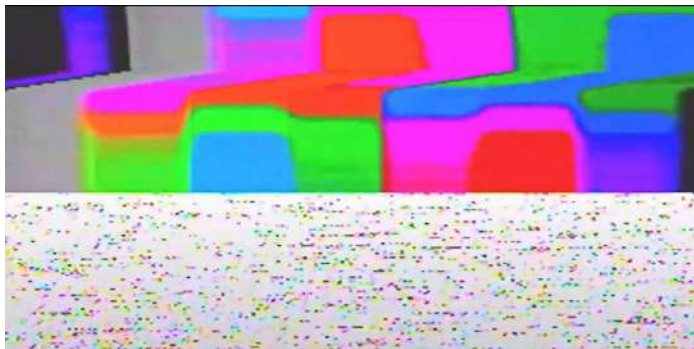
emerging artists of Pakistan. He came up with a humongous scale, retaining his hold on the meticulous skill and the objects he made an illustration history with. These props were singular, fluffed, "cuddly" toys, symbolically wrapped in gauze bandage. The small toy was blown up to a monstrous size with a pitch-black background; the intricately manifested concealing weave of the cloth opened many connotations regarding the furtive and ambiguous identity. Zafar's works have been featured in several national and international group exhibitions, Are you in character? (2013), Let's not talk about politics (2012) at Gandhara Art, Karachi, Personal-Universal (2016) at Hinterland Galerie, Vienna, Stop Play Pause Repeat (2012) at Lawrie Shabibi, Dubai, Two person show (2011) at Canvas Gallery, Karachi, The Rising Tide: new directions in Art from Pakistan 1990-2010 (2010), Karachi, and Size does matter (2009) at V.M Art Gallery, Karachi. He has also presented works in international art fairs such as Art Stage Singapore (2015-2016-2017), Art Basel Hong Kong (2013-2014-2015-2016-2017), Pulse Art Fair New York (2012) and the 2nd Kathmandu International Art Festival (2012). In 2014, Zafar held his first national solo exhibition Stranger than fiction at Gandhara Art (2014). He has also exhibited international solo exhibitions Monomania at Aicon Gallery NY (2015) & Protagonists at FOST Gallery, Singapore (2013). He has participated in both national and international residencies including the Studio R.M Residency, Lahore (2011), Paramatta Artists Studios and Cicada Press COFA UNSW (2013) and most recently at Creative Fusion International Artists Residency, Cleveland Foundation, Cleveland, Ohio, USA.



Untitled, Adeel Uz Zafar, silkscreen printed on Velin Arches 300 gsm,
76 x 56 cm, edition of 16 + 2 AP, 2013



Glitch, Adeel Uz Zafar, mono channel video, wood, MDF, TV picture tube,
162 seconds on continuous loop, 93 x 51 x 66 cm, AP (1/1), 2017



Glitch (details)

Ali Kazim



This series is an exploration of the physical transformation of natural landscapes, particularly the haunting stillness that occurs before such a change may occur. This stillness can be frightening and disorienting, especially since the entire natural event of a chaotic storm for instance, can bring about death and destruction. However, it is also the means of generating new life. The process of this work led to elimination of colour and brush strokes on a surface that would convey the fleeting nature of the time before the transition of the landscape.

Ali Kazim was born in Pakistan in 1979. He currently lives and works in Lahore, Pakistan. He received his BFA degree from the National College of Arts, Lahore in 2002 and an MFA from the Slade School of Fine Art, London, UK, in 2011. He has exhibited widely in solo and group shows internationally. His group exhibitions include: Human Image: master pieces of figurative art from British Museum at Seoul Arts Center, Korea; 'Dust' Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski

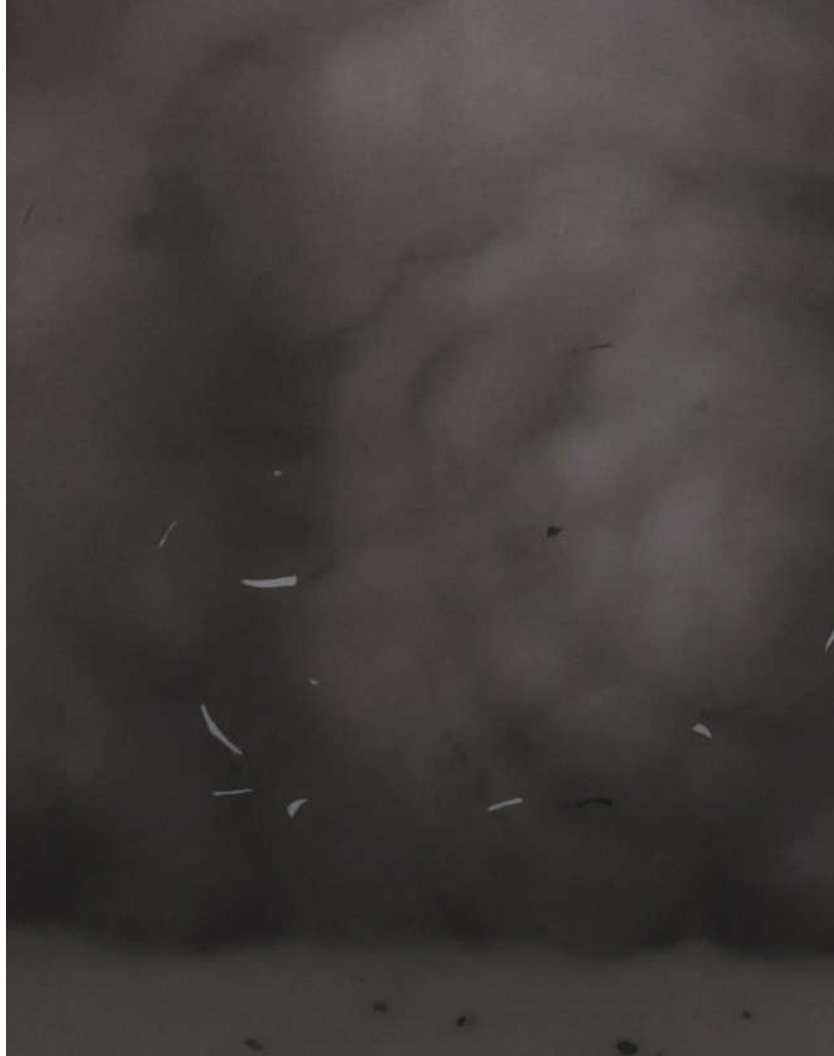
Castle Warsaw, Poland; Treasure's of the World's Culture Museumsmeile Bonn, Germany; Portraits at Selma Feriani Gallery, Tunis and London; The Missing One at OCA, Norway; 'Ethereal' Leilah Heller Gallery, NYC; Creative Cities Collection at the Barbican Exhibition Hal London; Chosen, Artgate gallery, NYC; Catlin Prize, Londoncastle project space. London; "Drawn from life" Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendal, UK; "Beyond the page" Asia Pacific Museum USA; "Drawn from life: drawing form" Green Cardamom gallery London, UK; 12th and 13th Asian Art Biennale, Bangladesh. His solo shows include: Of Darkness and Light at Rohtas II Lahore, Pakistan, Untitled (hair installation) Rohtas II Lahore, Pakistan. Jhaveri Contemporary Mumbai, India; Solo presentation at the Hong Kong Art Fair; "Rider" Green Cardamom London, UK and Rohtas gallery, Lahore, Pakistan; Gallery Espace, New Delhi, India; Mid-career survey at Cartwright Hall Gallery, Bradford, UK; VM Art Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan; "Sacred Souls, Secret Lives" Ethan Cohen Fine Arts Gallery, New York, USA and Greencardamom gallery, London; Alhamra Art Galleries, Lahore, Pakistan; Paradise Road Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka. He is a recipient of a number of awards and artist residencies including; Finalists for the Catlin Prize, UK; The Art House Residency, Wakefield, UK; The Land Securities Studio Award, London, UK; Melvill Nettlehip Prize for Figure Composition, UCL, London; Art OMI artist residency, New York, USA; Young Painter Award, Lahore Arts Council, Pakistan; ROSL Travel Scholarship: Residency at Hospital Field, Scotland, UK; Vasl Residency (Triangle Arts Trust), Karachi, Pakistan; International Artist Camp, George Kyet Foundation, Sri Lanka. His work is in the collection of Metropolitan Museum NYC; Asia Pacific Museum, USA; British Museum UK; Victoria and Albert Museum UK; Queensland Art Gallery Australia; Burger Collection Hong Kong; Creative Cities Collection, Beijing; Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi, India; Devi Art Foundation, Delhi, India; Samdani Foundation, Dhaka.



Untitled, Ali Kazim, pigments on polyester drafting film, light emitting diode,
55 x 36 cm, 2017



Untitled (storm series), Ali Kazim, pigments on polyester drafting film,
light emitting diode, 42 x 32 cm, 2017







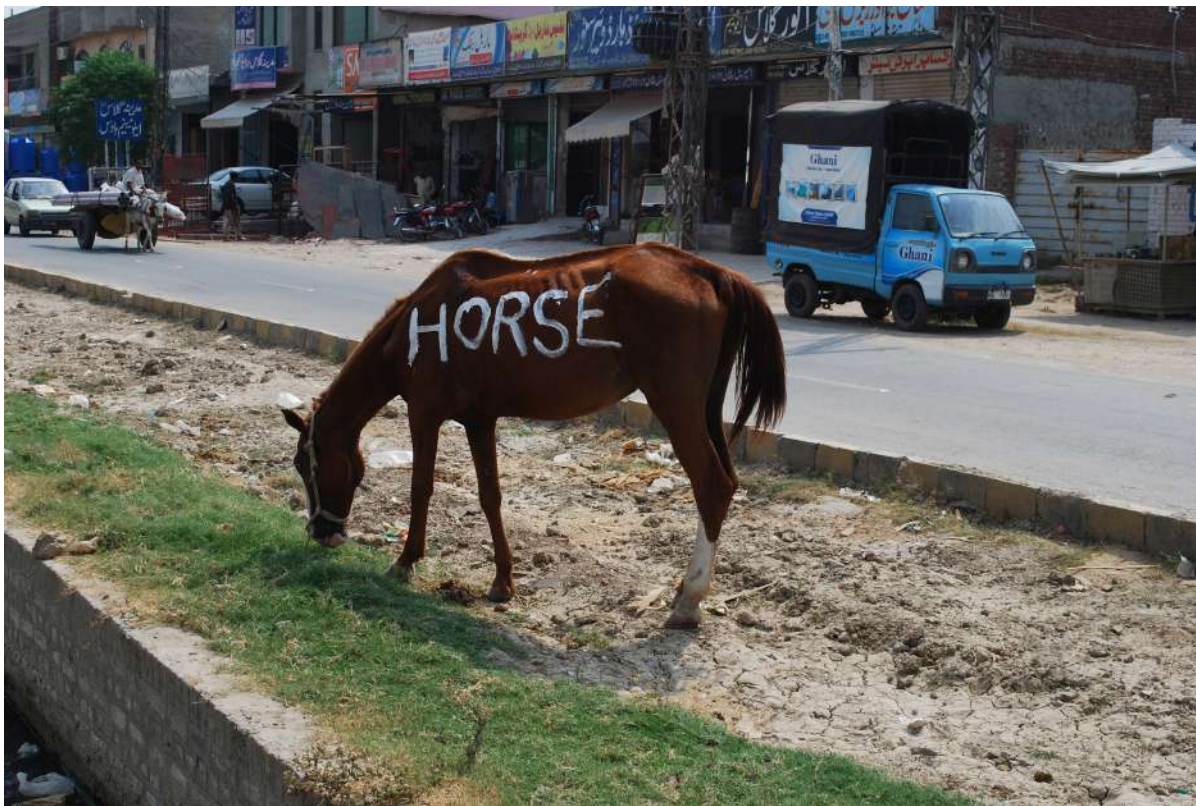
Ehsan Ul Haq

To sense, identify, and comprehend are basic cognitive abilities of a human being. All of the world's experience, knowledge and information are a relation of human self with the other, giving human beings an unconscious centrality. There is investigation in to human as an egotistical being negotiating with the idea of futility.

The world can be seen as a network of functionalities. The instance something circumvents its pragmatic existence; it facilitates itself to transcend its implicit character, henceforth entering a realm of the extraordinary. These works highlight the idea of purposelessness of human existence in contrast to its surrounding reality.

Born in 1983 in Lahore, Pakistan, Haq currently lives and works in Amsterdam. Haq works with sculptural forms that question their own inherent content, making, and object hood. Stripping away their histories, their functionality, and context, he engages the viewer with a new guidebook of perceptions for existing objects/meanings.

His recent solo show was called "1 is older than 2: Logics of a futile action" at Felix Frachon Gallery, Brussels Belgium. He has participated in "An Age of Our Own Making - On Another Nature and Ecology" Images festival Holbaek, Denmark (2016), "Back in 5 minutes", Martin Van Zomeren, Amsterdam Netherlands, "No Real Body": 3rd Ural Industrial Biennial of Contemporary Art, Yekaterinburg Russia (2015), "VOID: there's nothing more left, but a little trace from human beings", Ginkgo Space, Beijing China, Moscow International Biennale For Young Art, Moscow (2012), and 'The Rising Tide' at the Mohatta Palace Museum, Pakistan (2010). He has been a resident artist at Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten (2014-2015).



Horse, Ehsan Ul Haq, inkjet print on Canson Infinity Platine Fibre Rag 310 gsm, 76 x 114 cm, edition of 3 + 1 AP, 2013



Snow White and the grey sand, Ehsan Ul Haq, inkjet print on Canson Infinity Platine Fibre Rag 310 gsm, 76 x 114 cm, edition of 3 + 1 AP, 2013



Muhammad Zeeshan



"...hey, did you see this new picture Titanic?"

"Yep, Rose looked lovely in it...lucky Jack"

*"Look at Jack and see yourself! ...learn from him, look what he paints, and look at what you've been painting!" **

**a conversation that took place twenty years ago*

Muhammad Zeeshan (BFA, NCA Lahore, 2003) is a critically acclaimed visual artist who is currently an adjunct faculty at IVSAA, Karachi, Pakistan. He has several gallery, art fair, museum and institutional exhibitions to his credit including exhibitions at Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Herbert F. Johnson Museum at Cornell University, Abbot Hall Art Gallery at Kendal, Pacific Asia Art Museum at Pasadena, Art Gallery of Mississauga, British Museum, Gemak/Gemeente Museum, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum and Metropolitan Museum at Tokyo. His works are a part of the permanent collection of British Museum, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Pacific Asia Art Museum, Pasadena and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Aao Picture Dekhain, Muhammad Zeeshan, inkjet print, ink on paper, set of 24 prints,
30 x 42 cm (each print), each edition contains 1 print superimposed with a drawing by the artist,
edition of 13 + 2 AP, 2017







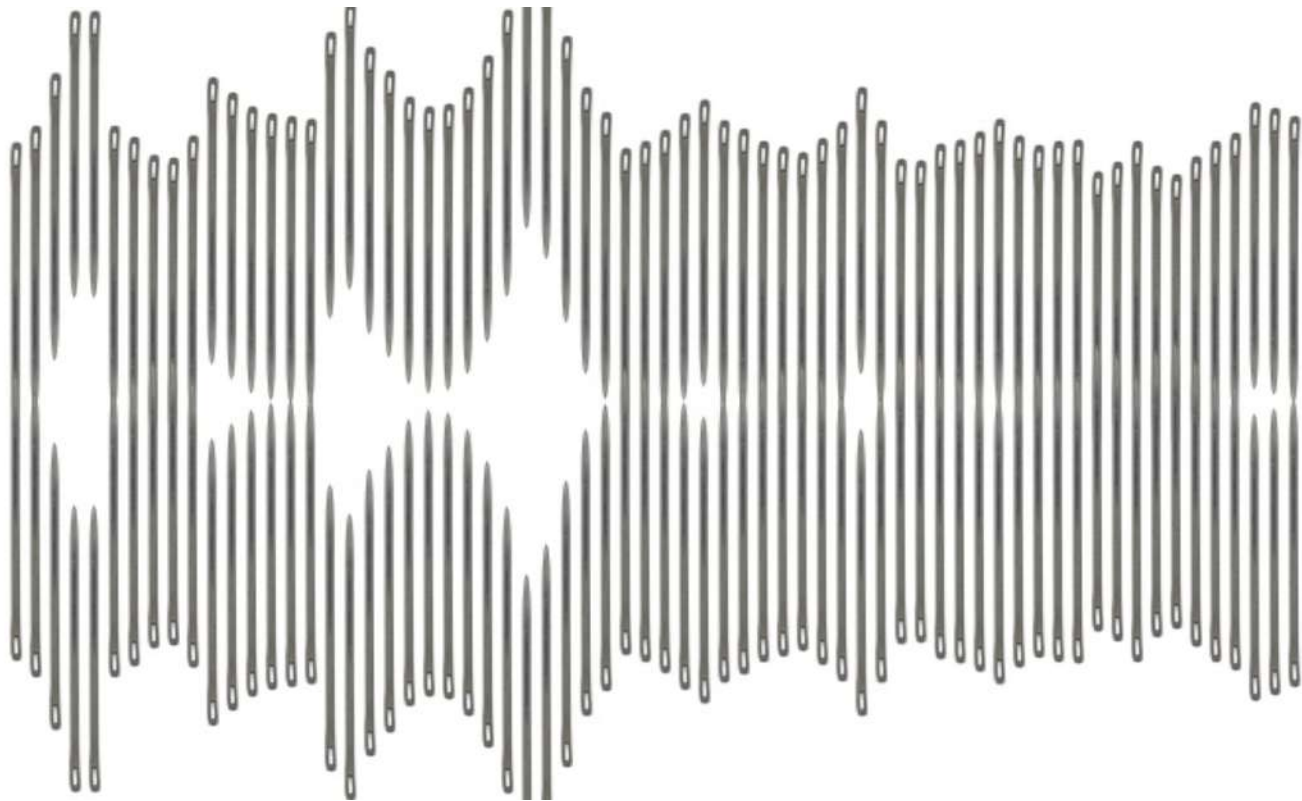
Roohi Ahmed

Being pulled towards the centre of gravity, the distance between ambiguity and certainty, light years away and eons back, in a whirlpool, wave length and frequency...Ever after...

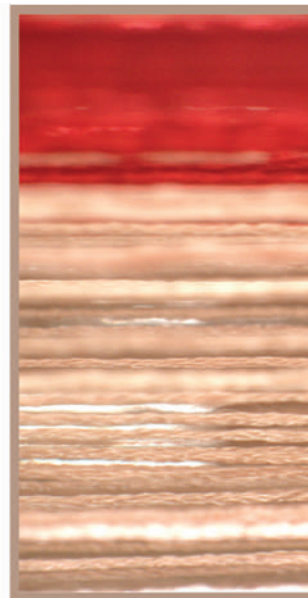
Determining the starting point...artificial horizon...light house, anchor, magnetic direction, follow your heart...or not, propel forward, escape velocity, breaks, jump with your parachute on, trim taps, miles to go...revolution per minute, thrust or reversal, catch the drift...oscillating between sanity and insanity!

Roohi S. Ahmed lives and works in Karachi, Pakistan. As a multi-disciplinary artist, her work often draws upon cartographical references in order to investigate the ontological realities of human existence in a degenerating political, social and religious environment. Ahmed is an Associate professor at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture (IVS) in Karachi and holds MFA from the UNSW Art and Design at the University of New South Wales,

Sydney. She has exhibited widely in Pakistan and internationally and her work has been featured in the 11th Asian Art Biennial, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Ahmed has coordinated the Foundation Programme at IVS and lectured at the University of Karachi's Visual Studies Department and UNSW Art and Design, Sydney. She has participated in International Artists' workshops, Britto (Bangladesh), Vasl(Pakistan) and Coast(UK) and has been an artist in residence at Cicada Press (Australia), Coast (UK) and VASL (Pakistan). She has curated Simply Paper! and her co-curating credits include: Michael Esson: A Survey of Drawing, Michael Kempson: A Survey of Prints, Aboriginal Dreams and Let's Draw the Line and 6X6: The Labyrinth in Karachi.



A moment of silence, Roohi Ahmed, mono channel video, 28 seconds, edition of 3 + 1 AP, 2017



From left to right: Untitled 1,2,3,4 & 5, Roohi Ahmed, digital image printed on Kodak Professional Endura Metallic Paper, 20 x 20 cm (each), edition of 3 + 1 AP, 2017



Shalalae Jamil



The process of re-contextualizing and repositioning personal images into the public arena is essential to Shalalae Jamil's work as an artist. Having employed family album snapshots, super 8 stills, passport scans and such ephemera in the past, she is currently exploring how the strategies of appropriation, distortion, and rescanning can be applied to new modes of communication and social memory production.

The disjointed, translucent and permeable qualities of her chat images echo the very experience of that particular mode, where sounds and gestures bleed into one another and are obscured by the limitations of the technology itself.

Shalalae Jamil was born and raised in Pakistan. Educated at Bennington College and The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, she has exhibited work in Pakistan, India, the United States and the U.K. She has served as faculty at Beaconhouse National

University, The National College of Arts and at The Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture where she has served as the Program In Charge of the Postgraduate Diploma Course In Photography.

Using photography, film, video, installation and elements of performance, she continually investigates how perception and meaning are altered by the shifting parameters of private and public space. Sometimes poetic but often terribly straightforward, her work uses the generic to address and reveal the unspoken aspects of shared experience.

Her work is in several private collections including the Arts Council in Pakistan and the Devi Art Foundation in India. Currently the artist lives and works in Karachi.



Petite madeleine, Shalalae Jamil, mono channel video, inkjet prints, furniture, 84 seconds, 14 x 29 cm (each), variable, 2017

Celebrating 70 years of art in Pakistan at Sanat Gallery

Art in Pakistan has been constantly evolving over the past 70 years, marked by its ability to adapt to an ever changing world. Post 1947, Pakistani artists adopted modernism as a mode of expression taken as a symbol of progress and change – a fresh start. Artists in the early 50s and 60s realized the futility of an escapist approach, and instead of a complete rejection of an oppressive past, they were able to reclaim it, own it and embrace it. Pakistani art, thus, evolved as a negotiation between a colonial heritage and sub-continental traditions, through which art in Pakistan discovered its unique voice. We were able to enter into the modern world and progress with it, and this is something we see in our art till this day.

As Pakistan's 70th Independence Day approaches, we gear up to celebrate a milestone in this bittersweet journey and proudly present "Prophecies", the first in a series of four shows in August 2017 at Sanat Gallery to mark 70 years of art in Pakistan.

"Prophecies" is the first curatorial venture by Sajjad Ahmed who has several exhibitions in Pakistan and internationally as a visual artist to his credit. Ahmed's work addresses a diverse scope of concerns around art, representation, abstraction, semiotics and globalisation, manifested through assemblages of found imagery, and executed in an array of mediums; prints, installations, mixed-media and time-based means of expression. Ahmed's works are a part of numerous private and institutional art collections in Asia, Europe, Middle-East and North America. In 2011, his works stemming out of research around 'oculus' paintings from Renaissance period, were inducted as permanent installation at Slought Foundation, Philadelphia in USA.


He is an awardee and alumni of South Asia Foundation, as well as finalist for Sovereign Asian Art Prize. Notably, his work has been exhibited at Cathedral Museum of Atri, Italy and Moscow Museum of Modern Art, Russia.


In his curatorial debut, Ahmed brings together seasoned artists namely Adeel Uz Zafar, Ali Kazim, Ehsan Ul Haq, Muhammad Zeeshan, Roohi Ahmed and Shalalae Jamil. "Prophecies" will see their core practice interpreted in new media formats "while retaining the sanctity of traditionalism visually intact".

Abid Merchant



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