

Figure, City(E)scape

Curated by Aamna Hussain



Jamil Baloch
Kaleem Khan
Maria Khan
Scheherezade Junejo
Suleman Khilji
Zahid Mayo

Figure, City(E)scape

This exhibition comprises of artworks that are investigations into the idea of figure in urban spaces, through artists' unique visual approaches executed in various mediums that determine their respective visual languages. This exhibition aims to combine two very basic contents of visual imagery that have been persistent throughout art history. i.e. figure and landscape/cityscape. The larger subject of figure in cityscape has enough thematic stretch to carry sub-ideas of social, political, formal and aesthetics-based concerns, dealing with age of loneliness, transition of time and diversity through cityscape as background, both visual and thematic.

Jamil Baloch's work comments on different situations occurring in our surroundings like natural disasters, droughts etc. His work is inspired from deserted landscapes.

Kaleem Khan's work has a gospel essence of landscape. He paints on-site with live reference of nature. He paints tiny looking figures with distant backgrounds of barren land depicting loneliness of human beings in vastness of universe.

Maria Khan inquests about suppression of females in our society. In her work, visuals of exaggerated male and female figures in a secret garden can be seen, presenting a secret side of everyone.

Scheherazade Junejo's work is critical of capitalism and how it affects individual lives. The current era of everything digital has introduced rapid changes that bring convenience as well as a desire to advertise personal physical appearances rather than prudery.

Suleman Khilji emphasizes on the process of painting. He used various mediums as he gathered soil from different areas representing diversity. He is fascinated by transition and transformation of landscapes and figures while traveling through various places.

Zahid Mayo places himself as a storyteller as he paints from mundane surroundings and everyday events; the extraordinary events that have become ordinary over a period of time due to desensitization through news media.

Figure and cityscape are two very basic yet very important and contemporary topics of art in the current era and throughout history. All the participating artists in this group exhibition have investigated these two elements with their own perception and personalised styles. Everyone observes their surroundings differently, as everyone has gone through their subjective journey through time and place.

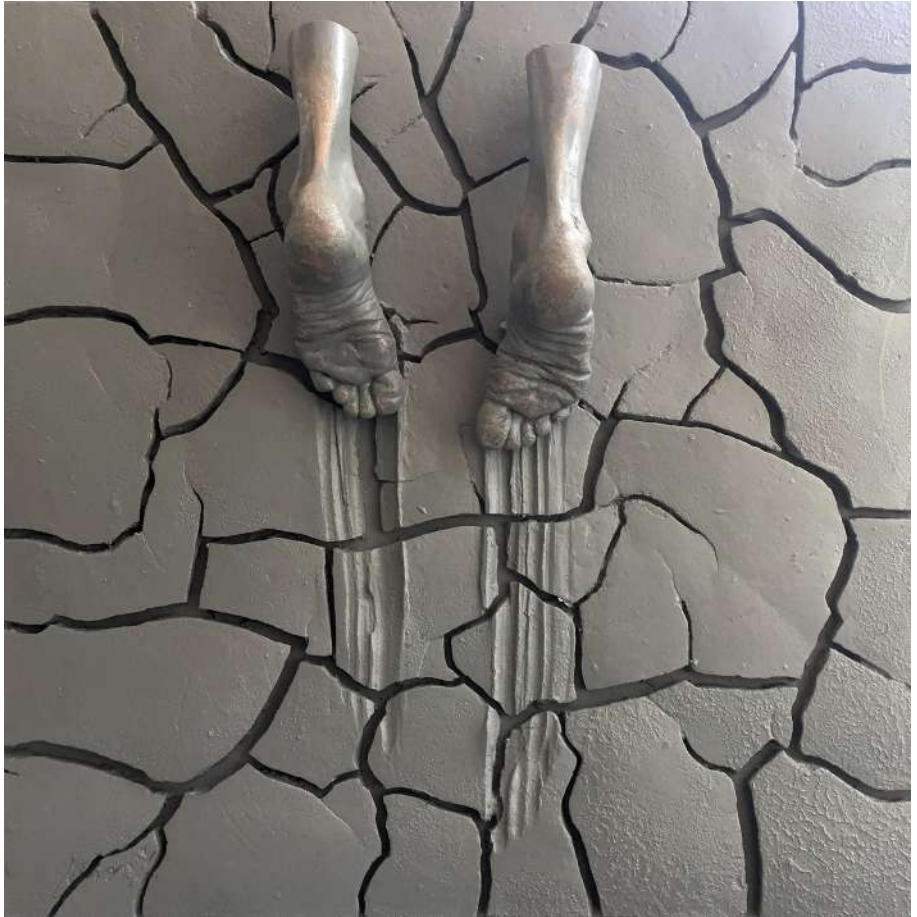
Aamna Hussain



Jamil Baloch

Jamil Baloch's work deals with the situations in our surroundings, mainly the current socio-political scenario in the whole world. He specially draws his inspiration from his region, that is going through turmoil, bullets, droughts and deserted landscapes. With this he has always tried to maintain a fine balance between his themes and all other art values and aesthetics, he tries not to accept the boundaries that seem to separate materials or inspirational sources. He has always explored diverse media and a variety of themes, which somehow are inter-related to one another and through them - to him.

Jamil Baloch graduated from National College of Arts Lahore in 1997. He has been artist in residence at numerous art residencies including Art Omi, USA in 2015, Vermont Studio Center, USA in 2011, Theertha, Sri Lanka in 2006 and George Keyt Foundation, Sri Lanka in 2004. He is the recipient of Rangoonwala Award, Pakistan and Honourable Prize at International Art Biennale, Bangladesh. He is currently a faculty member at National College of Arts Lahore.



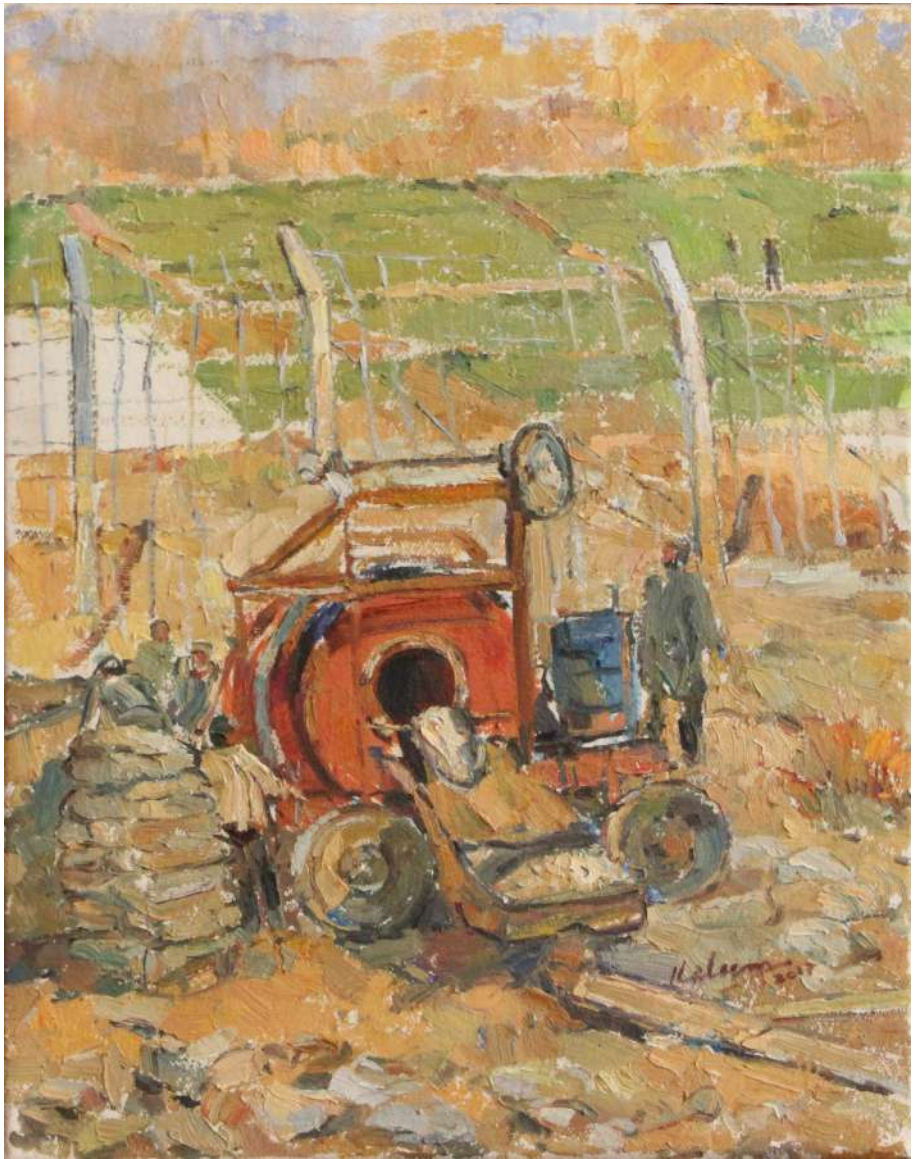
Mother and Child, Jamil Baloch, fiberglass, 122 x 122 cm, 2017



Kaleem Khan

Kaleem Khan's works are a study and documentation of the common rural scene and rural life. To him creativity is an outlet of self-expression. Inspired by nature and using paints and brush as tools, what he brings forth is an amalgamation of his feelings, moods and perceptions.

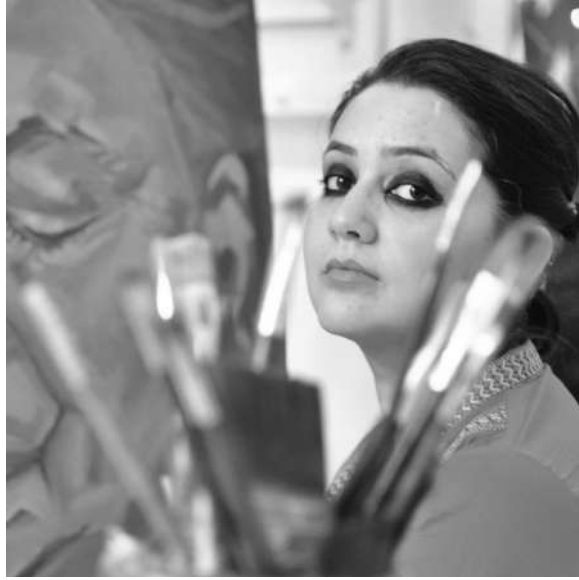
Quetta based Kaleem Khan is the recipient of President's Pride of Performance Award. He has been trained under the master landscape artist, Khalid Iqbal, at National College of Arts Lahore graduating in 1982. Khan has exhibited extensively across Pakistan and abroad including Canada, China, Germany, India, Korea, Oman, UK and USA. Currently, he is the Director of Fine Arts Department at Balochistan University of Information Technology Engineering and Management Sciences, Quetta.



Untitled I, Kaleem Khan, oil on canvas, 38 x 33 cm, 2017



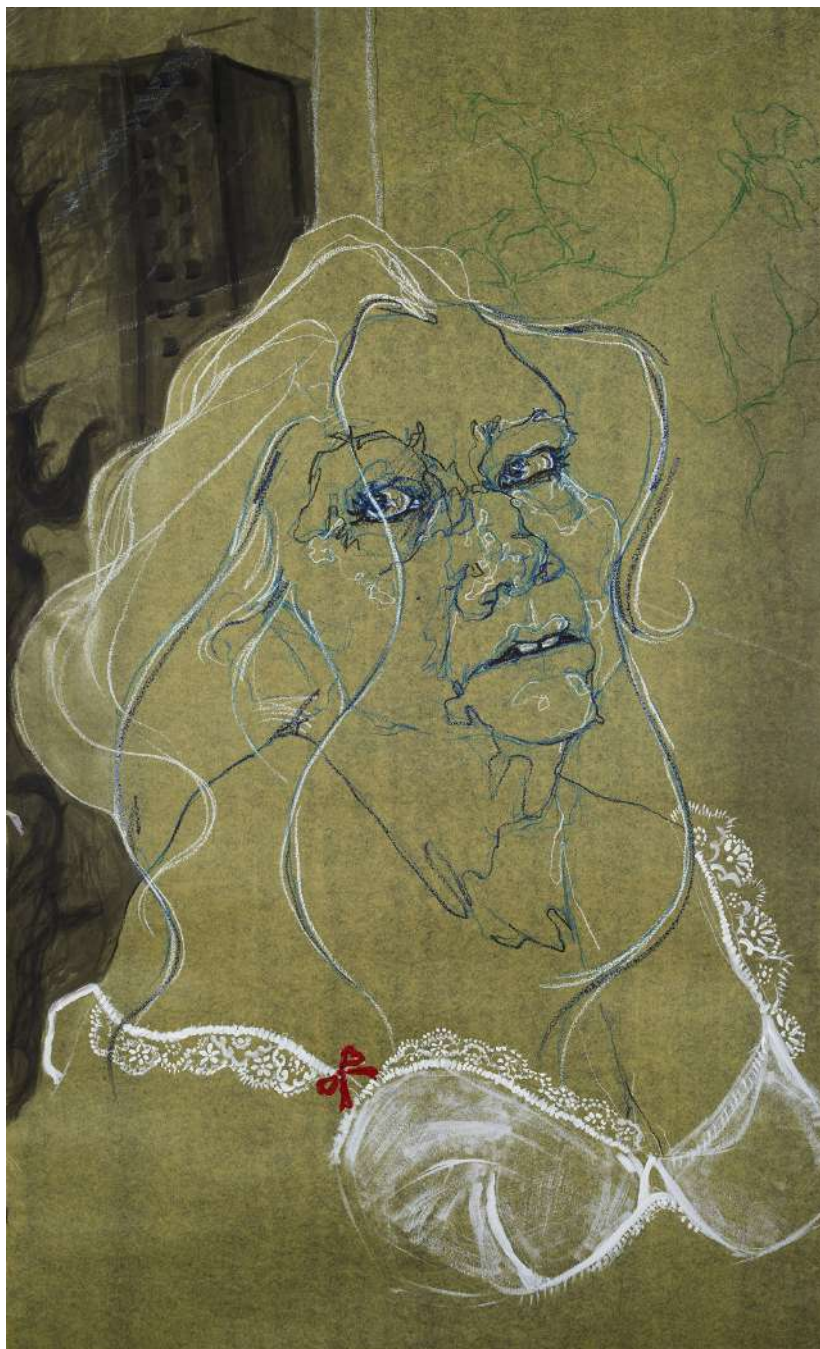
Untitled II, Kaleem Khan, oil on canvas, 38 x 33 cm, 2017



Maria Khan

Characters in unusual settings having an unnerving gaze, caught in a moment that is not in sync with their clothes nor their bodies are the essence of Maria Khan's work. They bare their grotesque figures in dreamlike settings exposing their bodies, emotions and desires. These emotions range from love and longing to lust and anger and come out on the canvas in the form of fantastically drawn figures. These figures appear on the canvas with deformities - showcasing larger-than-life, scandalous characters, big-bosomed mature women who sit comfortably in their corpulent flesh and fancy clothes, in their secret gardens of roses, shrubs and berries with their pets...something is delightfully wrong yet very close to real life about them. Inspired from the works of Botticelli, Manet and Paula Rego, her process is a journey in exploring woman's inner nature, including herself; visualising the more disturbing aspects of the self, which are normally kept locked in our heads away from public scrutiny. She feels that these figures somehow depict themselves in a rather grotesque manner probably because these are characters from her part of the world, where they are taught from an early age to suppress their desires and feelings. These figures are an antithesis of all that is expected of them in her culture; regardless of their age and shape they are comfortable in their skin.

Maria Khan is a Lahore based visual artist. She did her graduation from College of Art & Design, Lahore with majors in Painting and went on to do her M.A.(HONS) Visual Arts from National College of Arts Lahore. Maria works with a myriad of mediums such as oil paints, charcoal and paper collages. She was featured twice amongst the best at the Young Artists Exhibition at Alhamra Art Gallery in 2010 and 2012. She draws her inspiration from the works of Paula Rego and Lucien Freud. Maria Khan currently teaches fine arts at College of Art & Design, Lahore.



I am a heart patient II, Maria Khan, conté crayon and acrylic on paper , 168 x 84 cm, 2017



I am a heart patient I, Maria Khan, conté crayon and acrylic on paper , 168 x 84 cm, 2017



Scheherezade Junejo

Global culture has evolved at a rapid speed with the advent of the digital era. The trends of this age are led by consumerism, mass production and imitation. In such a time, one's character and uniqueness should be celebrated. Instead, society seeks to fit everyone into a place, a mould. We have evolved into a species whose identity is defined by the facades we wear. These faces and characters are for presentation. Skin, bone, feathers, glass and cloth are all just costumes for our daily use. Identities are built on concepts of vanity and ownership rather than modesty and accountability. Animate and inanimate are no longer distinguishable. Scheherezade Junejo's practice seeks to not just desexualise the nude figure but to dehumanise it as well. It is an attempt to de-objectify and redress our perception of identity.

Scheherezade Junejo was born in 1986 in Karachi. She graduated from National College of Arts Lahore in 2010 with a BFA (Honours) Degree. Using her knowledge and study of human anatomy, Junejo attempts to highlight the duality in our psychosis, while simultaneously trying to de-objectify/re-objectify the nude form.

Junejo has participated in a number of exhibits, both group and solo, and both national and international; since June 2010. The most notable international shows in which she has taken part are: Moniker Art Fair at the Old Truman Brewery, London in October 2016; "Mirrors of the Artosphere" at Amsterdam Whitney Gallery, New York in August 2016; "Art Expressions" at Capital Club, DIFC, Dubai in June 2016; Art Basel, Miami in December 2015; Pakistan Art Today at the Lalit Hotel, New Delhi in October 2014; and Affordable Art Fair at the Royal Exhibition Museum, Melbourne in May 2012. She was featured in the 1st edition of Current Masters, a publication of contemporary artists by World Wide Art Books in 2015. Junejo designed customised sculptural pieces for the Fall Cabaret Collection by Monsieur Fox in July 2013.



Glass Fortress, Scheherezade Junejo, oil on canvas, 91 x 76 cm, 2017



Suleman Khilji

Drawing around the idea of painting a figure in a cityscape, looking at urban characters, those he met while travelling around Quetta Karachi and Lahore. Suleman Khilji has been examining the process of painting and how a figure is continuously moving in transitional space; a transitional space of a drawing, watercolour and lastly oil on canvas, using various mediums like pigments, and soil collected from different areas.

Born in 1985 in Quetta, Suleman Khilji lives and works in Lahore, Pakistan. Khilji was one of the students selected for a student exchange program to (Ecole de Beaux Art Paris) in 2009, he was awarded the medal for outstanding achievement in 2010 and went on to achieve a distinction in painting in 2011 from National College of Arts Lahore.

In March 2016, Khilji was selected for VASL Single Artist Residency in collaboration with IVS, Karachi, and, later in August 2016 he was part of Murree Museum Artist's Residency in Murree, Pakistan.

He has been displaying his work across Pakistan, and has shown in group shows in France and UK. His most notable solo show include "See View" at IVS Gallery, Karachi and "Inayat and Others" at Sanat Gallery, Karachi. He has participated in a number of group shows including "Pahore" at Ecole de Beaux Art, Paris, "Four and Other Elements" at Canvas Gallery, Karachi, "Overcast" at IVS Gallery, Karachi and "Second Glance/Double Take" at SOAS, London.

His works are part of numerous prestigious collection such as DIL Foundation, New York, Shahrukh Khan Collection and Luciano Benetton Collection.



Untitled, Suleman Khilji, pigments, sand, ink and acrylic on archival board, 127 x 76 cm, 2016-17



A figure floating with objects, Suleman Khilji, pigments, sand, gold



and oil on canvas mounted on plywood, 91 x 122 cm, 2016-17



Study 1 - A figure floating with objects, Suleman Khilji, pigments and gouache on acid-free paper, 32 x 24 cm, 2016-17

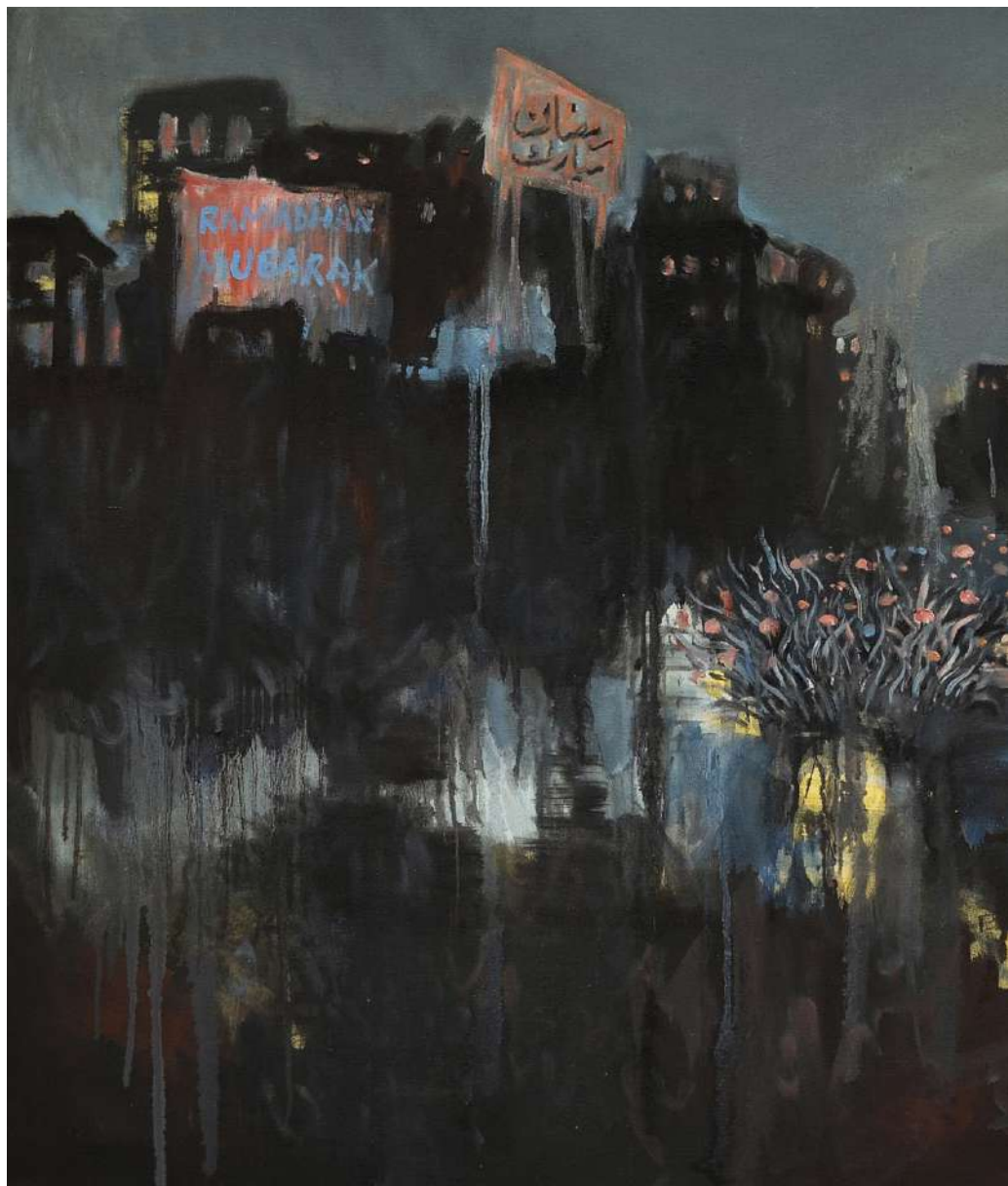
Zahid Mayo



Zahid Mayo is a story teller and he believes that stories need not always be structured from words or such that be verbally told and heard. Keeping this premise in mind he wants to narrate these stories through a visual form in so much that he is a witness of his times as well as a testimony to his existence. His testimony is thus both, visual and literary.

He is a witness to those countless eyes who embarrass his own vision and to those faces that become an imprint on his subconscious. He is not able to face them directly so with the help of his photography and sketch book he lets go of his subconscious. He covers the subject in the garb of traditional visual depiction and finally expresses the narrative onto his canvas.

Zahid Mayo graduated from National College of Arts Lahore in 2013. He has participated in various exhibitions nationally and internationally including two solo exhibitions at Sanat Gallery, Karachi in 2015 and 2017. He was an artist in residence at 2nd Sanat Residency, Karachi in 2014.



5th Ramadan, Zahid Mayo,



oil on canvas, 91 x 152 cm, 2017

This publication accompanies the exhibition

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Front Cover
Detail of "A figure floating with objects" by Suleman Khilji

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