

Multiple Narratives

8 Contemporary Artists from Pakistan

PRESS RELEASE

Grosvenor Gallery is pleased to announce its upcoming exhibition; **Multiple Narratives: 8 Contemporary Artists from Pakistan**. The exhibition, held in collaboration with Canvas Gallery, Karachi, opens on **Friday 26 January, with a reception from 6-8pm. Dr. Virginia Whiles* will give a talk at 7pm**. The show will be open to the public from **27 January – 16 February 2018**.

The exhibition features works of art by artists either residing in Pakistan, or Pakistani artists working overseas. Artists include Imran Mudassar, Mahbub Jokhio, Muzzumil Ruheel, Noor Ali Chagani, Sajjad Nawaz, Salman Toor, Wardha Shabbir, and Yasser Vayani. Whilst a number of these artists have shown their work internationally, for some it will be the first time their work is exhibited outside of Pakistan. **The prices range from £300 - £11,000.**

Imran Mudassar (b. 1982) is a graduate from the National College of Art (NCA), Lahore. In his installation titled *'The Holy Invitation'*, he has created 4 sets of beautiful leather-bound books with traditional Islamic symbols and motifs on the covers (while being blank or filled with non-religious material inside.) These ornate covers are meant to attract viewers and challenge their preconceived ideas and associations with sacred and religious books and to give them an opportunity to experience something different to their beliefs.

Mahbub Jokhio's (b. 1992) works consider the nature of images; their claims to objectivity and ability to manipulate meaning and perception. Working in various mediums, he questions image production and reception through subjects ranging from history and religion to love and violence. These investigations often incorporate irony, dark humour and self-referential critiques that locate and decode the image's capacity to mediate reality. He is a graduate from Beaconhouse National University in Visual Arts and currently teaches at the National College of Arts, Lahore. He has recently completed **a residency at Gasworks, London**, and is about to open his first solo-show in the UK at the **The Tetley in Leeds from 9 February - 22 April 2018**.

Muzzumil Ruheel (b. 1985) is a graduate from Beaconhouse National University whose current body of work utilises traditions of the calligram. Rather than adapting individual characters, he appropriates the calligraphic script by layering words and phrases in order to form images. Adapting images from the media, culture and art history, even his words are extracted from borrowed sources. Derived from news broadcasts and publications, Ruheel exploits the vocabulary of the news media while writing within the precise rules of the calligraphic script. He currently lives and works in Karachi.

Noor Ali Chagani (b. 1982) is a graduate from the NCA, Lahore who uses his traditional training to inform his contemporary practice. He combines both the high art of exquisite miniature traditions passed down from the royal Mughal and Persian courts, with the low art of ceramics and techniques of brickmaking craftsmen, equally centuries old. An ode to his training, he constructs his own miniature terracotta bricks by using old-fashioned kilns and firing methods. The tiles are often constructed into 'walls' which represent Pakistan's society, as walls are often used as a form of public expression.

Sajjad Nawaz's (b. 1984) recent body of works have developed out of an attempt to explore alternate ways of looking at forms, shapes and textures found in nature. Using charcoal as a medium, he has enlarged simple images from his surroundings that have been painstakingly executed. The viewer is invited to focus solely on the visual form of the drawings rather than to see them in the context of a landscape. He is a graduate of the NCA, Lahore.

Salman Toor (b. 1983) is a graduate of The Pratt Institute, New York. His paintings are derived from fiction and autobiography. Allegorical illustrations accompany text based narrative, resembling whitewashed writing with elements of drawing. His paintings bring together the world of fantasy, memories and literary fiction. They are a testament to his incredible skill and the result of a complicated relationship with Western Art History, by which the artist has re-interpreted his own place in his native social fabric while exploring complex relationships between class, sexuality, and violence.

Wardha Shabbir (b. 1987) is a miniature painter who graduated from the NCA, Lahore. Her work is inspired by eclectic sources of personal experiences, where (cunning) rules and obligations dictate her life as definitive 'last words'. Her current body of work is inspired by the symbol of the 'path' or *siraat* as having an influence over our lives and the concept of choice –choosing right over wrong, eternal bliss over worldly comfort. The *Siraat* becomes a means of navigating oneself through the clutter of these possibilities. It becomes a course for clarity in the midst of contradictory values and states of being. **Shabbir is nominated for the 2018 Jameel Prize, awarded by the V&A Museum, London.**

Yasser Vayani (b. 1992) is a graduate from the Indus Valley school of Art and Architecture. His works represent the lost history of an object. "An Object can through time find itself either in a prestigious museum, a local flea market or the rubbish. Their nostalgic history is unspoken, their sentiments forgotten with a past owner but the visual attributes of the object tells the truth." His works give us a sense of warped time, allowing us the freedom to imagine the past and dream of the objects future. He has recently completed a residency with 'Fish Factory', Iceland in April 2017.

*Trained as a painter, art historian and anthropologist, **Dr Virginia Whiles** has worked as a critic, curator and lecturer in cultural studies for over 40 years in UK, France and South Asia. She initiated the M.A. Fine Art theory programme at NCA in Lahore. Author of *Art and Polemic in Pakistan - Cultural Politics and Tradition in Contemporary Miniature Painting* (I.B Tauris 2010), she has written many articles and curated five exhibitions in India, Japan, Switzerland and France. Critical texts published in Third Text, Art Asia Pacific, Art in America, Art Monthly, Studio International, Quinzaine Litteraire, Artscribe, Contemporary, Flash Art, Sohbet, The Friday Times, Times of India, Dawn (Pakistan), Critical Collective (India). Currently Associate Lecturer at the University of Arts, London (Chelsea). She lives in London and Southern France.

***Canvas Gallery** is recognised as one of the leading art galleries in Pakistan. Founded in 1999, the gallery is committed to the discovery, support, development and promotion of Pakistani art and artists. Situated in Karachi, the commercial and industrial capital of the country, Canvas Gallery has served to focus on the new art of Pakistan, especially by the modern and contemporary artists. In its attempt to move beyond the mere act of selling or showcasing the art pieces, this gallery concentrates on bringing artists from various parts of the country together, and to encourage young and talented artists. In this course, Canvas Gallery displays works of cutting edge nature and experimental quality - ranging from paintings, sculptures, digital prints to installations and video installations. Due to its high reputation, not only young artists seek to associate with Canvas Gallery, but the well established artists of the country are also showing with Canvas. Internationally recognised, Canvas Gallery has curated Pakistani art shows in USA, UK, Middle East and Far East. With two shows a month, Canvas is a stimulating and unique visual arts venue with a constantly changing inventory of approximately 1,000 original works by more than 100 established and emerging Pakistani artists. For discerning collectors as well as first time buyers, a visit to Canvas is a worthwhile experience. Canvas offers services that range from general advice to searches for particular pieces - to consultations for individuals, businesses or corporations wishing to start or build their collections."

Gallery Timings:

Mon – Fri: 10 am – 6 pm

Saturday: 12 – 4pm (By appointment during exhibitions)

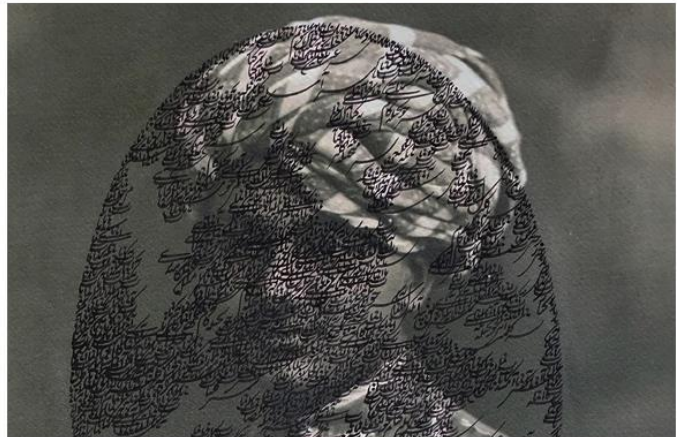
Sunday: Closed

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... OF LIQUID. ... THE TOP HAS A HOLE THAT LETS WATER IN, BUT THAT IS THE ONLY OPENING FOR IT. SO MAYBE IT IS NOT FOR DRINKING. IT LOOKS LIKE THE LAMP FOR FROM ... GLADIN BUT IS MADE OF GLASS. WHICH OBVIOUSLY ... LIKE IT WAS BROKEN FROM THE FRONT SO IT ALSO ... THIS ANIMALS ... TYPE TRUNK TO IT. I SEE A ... ELEMENT ON THE SIDE. WHO KNOWS WHAT THE ... OR WAS USED FOR. I DID TRY CLEANING IT BUT IT TOOK ... TIME SO I JUST LET THE DIRT INSIDE AND DEC ... UPON TRYING TO CLEAN IT. BECAUSE I WAS UNABLE ... THAT THE OBJECT IS, I ASKED A FEW OF KIMMI'S FRIENDS ... BY TOLD ME IT LOOKED LIKE SOME SORT OF VASE, BUT ... OF A WHALE. SO THE ANIMALS ... PART WAS ... USE THE FIN ON ONE SIDE DOES GIVE THAT FEELING.

Images (clockwise from top left):

Sajjad Nawaz | *Ephemeral* | Charcoal on paper, 101.6 x 127 cm

Noor Ali Chagani | *Wall (detail)* | Terracotta bricks and acrylic | 21.6 x 64.8 x 2.5 cm

Muzzamil Ruheel | *The Night of the Storms (detail)* | Ink on printed image | 30.4 x 22.8 cm

Mahbub Jokhio | *Blue Pen (detail)* | Charcoal on paper | 94 x 152 cm

Yasser Vayani | *A Glass Object (detail)* | Ink on paper | 27.5 x 20.5 cm

Salman Toor | *The Picknickers (detail)* | Oil on canvas | 144 x 139 cm

Imran Mudassar | *The Holy Invitation 2* | Leather bound books | 29 x 68.6 cm

Wardha Shabbir | *Siraat-e-Sajar II/III I (detail)* | Gouache on wasli paper | 51.2 x 92 cm
