

Schedule *Patterns of the Past's* Conference: 18 September 2021
Half Day ZOOM Conference, *Textile, Tradition & the Contemporary*
Saturday, 18 September 2021, 1-3pm BST (British Summer Time)
5pm-8pm Pakistan Time Zone.
5.30pm-8.30pm India Time Zone.

This programme will pivot around the themes of the show, *Patterns of the Past: Weaving Heritage in Contemporary 'Pakistani' Art*, which includes artists **Ruby Chishti, Adeela Suleman, Liaqat Rasul, David Chalmers Alesworth** and **Bushra Waqas Khan** (Nominee for the Jameel Art Prize 2021). The exhibition brings together these contemporary artists because each of them explores the politics of memory in their work and have used textiles to unravel conventional notions of art, heritage and identity. They have worked *with* textiles, and *via* textiles, to fabricate complex comments on colonialism, unravelling its relationship to current socio-political concerns in the Subcontinent. Hence, even though these 5 artists have been defined as 'Pakistani', none of them are easy fits for the term. The especially 'tailored' works within the show dismantle inter/national stereotypes about 'Pakistani art' and the Conference has a similar aim. It will pull on certain thematic threads: South Asian heritage and textile history; ideas of British identity; current decolonising agendas with regard to both art history and British museum collections.

Speakers will include the exhibiting artists (who will explain their contributions for the show) as well as Prof. Salima Hashmi, Zohreen Murtaza, Uthra Rajgopal, Roisin Inglesby, Amrita Jhaveri and Prof. Shehnaz Ismail.

Schedule:

1pm-1.30pm BST

Welcome by Conor Macklin, Grosvenor Gallery and Sameera Raja, Canvas Gallery

***Virtual Tour & Artists' Panel* (30 minutes):**

Zehra Jumabhoy: Curatorial Concept and Explanation
Virtual tour of show with Kajoli Khanna, Grosvenor Gallery
Adeela Suleman
Bushra Waqas Khan
David Alesworth
Liaqat Rasul
Ruby Chishti

Panels: 10-15 Minutes Max per paper. Moderated by ZJ (unless otherwise stated).

Speakers & Sessions:

1.30pm-2pm BST

Weaving Tradition & The Contemporary

Speakers

Professor Salima Hashmi on "*I am my own maker*"

Abstract: Artists who are from cultures with rich lineages in textile have long delighted in celebrating its sensuous profusion: Think of the attire of Mughal princes and the carpets they trod upon. Artists today are not too distanced from the desire to investigate ornament and prod the fissures embedded within. *Threads Dreams Desires*, which Professor Hashmi curated at Harris Museum Preston, UK, in 2002, arose from such contradictions.

Zohreen Murtaza on *Art and design in Colonial India: A division at odds with itself?*

Abstract: This presentation will use Lahore's National College of the Arts (NCA) as a case study. Founded in 1875, several names were proposed for the institution: "Mayo Memorial School of

Industrial Arts”, “Industrial School of Art and Design”, “Lahore School of Art” and “Mayo School of Art”, amongst them. This indecisiveness about naming reflected the Imperial administration’s dilemma: should art be promoted or should design be combined with technical education to cater to Industry? Using documents from the NCA Archives, this talk argues that such confusion continues to bedevil divisions between art, craft and design in post-colonial Pakistan.

2pm-2.30pm BST

Inter-Woven Inheritance: Britain & South Asia

Speakers:

Uthra Rajgopal on *Cut from the Same Cloth: South Asian Textile Collections in Manchester*

Abstract: This talk will map out the history of how the South Asia textile collections were built in Manchester and why they remain of relevance to contemporary audiences today. And along the way we will see some brilliant highlights of acquisitions of South Asian contemporary textile art, past and present.

Studio Carrom on *Distant Fellowship: Morris and South Asia*

Abstract: Whilst lauded as one of Britain's greatest designers, William Morris’s global influences are less well known. This talk will highlight some of Morris’s connections to South Asia, which underpinned the research for the recent exhibition *Distant Fellowship*, at the William Morris Gallery, curated by **Priya Sundram** and **Nia Thandapani**, of Studio Carrom. The discussion will be framed and contextualised by **Roisin Inglesby**, Curator of the William Morris Gallery.

2.30pm-3pm BST

Textiles & Traffic: Connecting Pasts and Presents

Speakers:

Amrita Jhaveri on *The Fabric of Modernism*

Abstract: This talk will focus on the works of three Modern artists from the Indian subcontinent who engage with textile traditions: Anwar Jalal Shemza, Mrinalini Mukherjee and Monica Correa. It will discuss how through research and innovative programming, Jhaveri Contemporary was able to bring these artists to the attention of international museum curators and collectors.

Professor Shehnaz Ismail will *Weave to a Conclusion*

Abstract: As one of the founders of Karachi’s Indus Valley School of Art & Architecture and Professor Emeritus of its Textile Department, Mrs Ismail will provide an overview of textiles in Pakistan, focusing on why contemporary artists have chosen it as an effective medium to communicate their ideas.

Finale: Q & A with the audience.

Biodatas of Speakers:

Amrita Jhaveri is the artistic director of Jhaveri Contemporary, a gallery based in Mumbai. The gallery represents artists, across generations and nationalities, whose work is informed by South Asian connections and traditions. An exhibition maker at heart, Amrita co-curated *Thinking Tantra* at Drawing Room, London (2016 -17) and *South Asian Modernists 1953-63* at the Whitworth, Manchester (2017-18). Jhaveri sits on the Advisory boards of Khoj (New Delhi), Museum of Art and Photography (Bangalore) and Drawing Room (London).

Roisin Inglesby is co-ordinator of the 'Distant Fellowship' project, including an exhibition at the William Morris Gallery, curated by Priya Sundaram and Nia Thandapani which unravels Morris' connection with Indian textiles and design. Inglesby has worked at the V&A, Historic Royal Palaces and Teien Museum, Tokyo, and is currently Curator at the William Morris Gallery where she focusses on Morris's links with international Arts and Crafts movements including the Bauhaus, Młoda Polska, and Japanese Mingei.

Salima Hashmi is a pioneering artist, curator and contemporary art historian. Hashmi was the founding Dean of the Mariam Dawood School of Visual Art and Design at Beaconhouse National University, Lahore. She was Professor of Fine Art at National College of Arts [NCA] Lahore and was also Principal of the College. Hashmi has written extensively on the arts. Her book *Unveiling the Visible: Lives and Works of Women Artists of Pakistan* was published in 2002, and includes references to many of the artists in this Grosvenor-Canvas show. Hashmi's pioneering exhibition, *Threads Dreams Desires*, at Harris Museum Preston, UK (also in 2002), set the stage for the dialogue on South Asian contemporary artists engagement with the Subcontinent's textile traditions.

Shehnaz Ismail was the Head of the Faculty of Textile Design at Karachi's Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, of which she was one of the founders, and is now Professor Emeritus. Her major focus is on education and the revival of the indigenous textile crafts of Pakistan. She has extensively researched weaving and embroidery, covering the mountainous regions of Pakistan and the Potohar Plateau. Her research has been included in magazines, catalogues and a book on Asian embroidery published by the Crafts Council of India in 2004. She is committed to teaching and training craft persons in Baltistan (and in the adjoining valleys of Hunza and Manshera) in natural dyes, weaving and product diversification, and to make craft revival economically sustainable. It is in this function that she was strongly involved in the interior decoration of the Shigar Fort Residence. Ismail holds Undergraduate and Post Graduate degrees from the National College of Arts and Hornsey College of Art, London, in Textile Design.

Studio Carrom is a multidisciplinary design studio based in London and Bangalore founded by Priya Sundaram and Nia Thandapani. The Studio works on a variety of scales from designing hand-carved woodblocks to creating large-scale public installations, collaborating with arts, culture and heritage organisations on projects which explore and celebrate cultural diversity through a wide variety of media. Their recent projects include "Distant Fellowship", a group show at the William Morris Gallery in London, which traces Morris' South Asian connections. See: <https://www.wmgallery.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions-43/distant-fellowship>

Uthra Rajgopal is an Independent Curator with a specialist interest in South Asian textiles and dress and works nationally and internationally. In 2019, Uthra won the prestigious Art Fund New Collecting Award to build a collection of contemporary South Asian textile artworks for the Whitworth in Manchester, specifically works made by women artists working in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh and the UK diaspora. She has been a contributing author to *Textile History and Authenticity and Replication: The 'Real Thing' in Art History and Conservation* and is a former lecturer at Manchester School of Art. Uthra is a keen advocate of championing artists from or connected to South Asia and expanding the field of textile arts.

Zohreen Murtaza is a Lecturer in the Cultural Studies Department at The National College of Arts, Lahore. She also completed both her BFA and MA (Hons.) Visual Art from NCA. Although trained as a miniature painter and visual artist, since her MA she has branched into teaching and writing extensively on Art. Zohreen has been writing for various art publications and daily newspapers. Her research interests are diverse; as a Lecturer for the subject of *History of South Asian Design*, Zohreen has been delving into craft traditions, the development of South Asian textile and its relationship with Britain. Currently she is looking into the archival/colonial history of her alma mater formerly known as the Mayo School of Industrial Arts. Zohreen is interested in examining the pedagogical discourse of the Industrial school and the debates these colonial era archives generate regarding the ethos of the institution at the time with respect to the bifurcation of art and craft, colonial intervention and the reimagining of these definitions under British rule.

Biodatas of *Patterns of the Past* Artists:

Adeela Suleman (b. 1970), resides and works in Karachi, Pakistan. She has received her Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts (BFA) from the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi, in 1999. Prior to that she completed her MA in International Relations from Karachi University in 1995. Currently Suleman is Associate Professor at IVSAA and was the Head of the Department of Fine Arts from 2008 - 2019. She is the Founding Member and Director of Vasl Artists' Association, Karachi, Pakistan. Suleman has various solo exhibitions to her credit, having shown at Gallery 1X1 (2020); Sullivan+ Strumpf, Singapore (2019); Bawwaba Artists, Art Dubai (2019); Canvas Gallery, Karachi (2018), Galleria Davide Gallo, Milan (2017) and Aicon Gallery, New York, USA (2021). She has exhibited in group shows at notable museums and foundations internationally including those in Australia; the UK, Germany, Brussels and Italy. She has participated in the Karachi Biennale (2017 & 2019), the Singapore Biennale (2016), the Asian Art Biennial, Taichung, Taiwan (2013) and the Asia Triennial II, Manchester, UK (2011). Her work has been reviewed to critical acclaim by several magazines, catalogues and newspapers including *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *Artforum International* and *Art Asia Pacific* magazine.

Bushra Waqas Khan (b.1986) graduated from the National College of Arts, Lahore (2008) with a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts, where she trained as a printmaker. Her current practice incorporates the designs of a state document better known as an 'affidavit'. Khan manipulates the patterns – positioning them strategically or through repetition. Working with textile students has given her practice an unusual direction, taking it beyond the paper to beautifully crafted dresses on mannequins. Her practice marries the textile arts with sophisticated printmaking techniques. She says about the work in this show: "My drawings are rendered with motifs from affidavit paper done through collage, then they are deconstructed and printed on silk in continuous patterns. The silk eventually starts looking like leather because of the printing technique." Khan has most recently shown in *Wearable Variable* at Canvas Gallery, Karachi (2020), *Microcosm 3* at Aan Gandhara Art Space, Karachi (2019) and *Box Print* at Zahoor ul-Akhlaq Gallery, Lahore (2018). She has been shortlisted for the V&A's Jameel Art Prize 2021.

David Chalmers Alesworth is a sculptor, photographer and researcher of garden histories, working between Pakistan and the United Kingdom. Over the past decade, the garden has been a key metaphor for him, with which to question humanity's culturally specific relationships with the natural world. His work continues to dialogue with an expanded vision of the garden as 'global forest'. His own hybrid identity informs many aspects of his practice and he has an enduring commitment to public art projects. He was a pivotal member of the Karachi Pop movement in the 1990s, a former Head of Sculpture, IVSAA (1989-2003), Karachi, and is a member of the Royal Society of British Sculptors. His work has been featured in publications such as the *Architectural Review* and *British Art Studies*. Recent exhibitions include his solo show, *The Careless Mapping* in 2020 at Canvas Gallery in Karachi as well as inclusions in group shows such as the *Centre of Gravity* in 2020 at Soapworks in Bristol; *Lie of the Land* at Milton Keynes Gallery, 2019; The Lahore Biennale, 2018; The Karachi

Biennale 2017; Pera Museum, Istanbul, 2016, and *The Garden of Ideas*, Agha Khan Museum, Toronto, 2015. Alesworth is a Stanley Picker Fellowship Award Winner and was shortlisted for the V&A's Jameel Art Prize in 2016. He is a studio holder at Spike Island ArtSpace, Bristol.

Liaqat Rasul describes himself as “a gay welsh dyslexic Pakistani Male”. He was born in February 1974 in Wrexham, North Wales, and now lives in London. Liaqat studied Fashion Design, gaining a first-class degree specialising in Textiles at the University of Darby. He spent a year studying textiles at NIFT in New Delhi. Liberty, at Regent Street in London, bought Liaqat's graduating collection in 1999. His *Ghulam Sakina Limited* womenswear brand ran for 10 years creating beautiful textiles and clothing. When *Ghulam Sakina* liquidated in 2009, Liaqat decided to explore his life choices and visited lots of art exhibitions. In 2017, Liaqat started making collages for friends and he says “thus, a small but vital art practice was initiated”. Liaqat made a few pieces for commission and in 2019 he held his first stand-alone exhibition of 8 artworks at the Tracey Neuls shop in Coal Drops Yard, London. He says he wants to go bigger and bolder in his collage and fibre art practice, which encompasses wall works and mobiles. Liaqat's artworks can be viewed at <https://www.saatchiart.com/liaqatrasul>.

Ruby Chishti was born in Jhang, Pakistan (b.1963) but currently lives and works between Bushwick, Brooklyn, and Lake Peekskill in New York. Educated at the National College of Art in Lahore, the Pakistani-American is primarily a representational sculptor, her practice encompassing audio-visual installations and fabric-works made of found garments that evoke personal and communal memories. Over the last 22 years, Ruby's artistic environments – which she describes as “the fibrous architectonics of the unknown” – serve to initiate conversations about the passage of time even as they explore Islamic myths, gender politics, ideas of displacement and loss. Her installations, sculptures, and site-specific works have been exhibited at the Asia Society Museum, New York; Cornell University, Ithaca and New York's Queens Museum. In addition, she has shown *Art Asia Miami*; *Art Hong Kong*, 2008; *ARCOMadrid International Contemporary Art Fair*, 2010; *The India Art Fair 2013* and *The Armory* in New York, 2014. Her works have been collected by the National Museum of Qatar in Doha, Kiran Nadar Museum in New Delhi, the Harris Museum in Preston, the V & A Museum of Childhood in London and The Whitworth in Manchester, amongst other institutions. Ruby's work has been featured in numerous publications, including *A Companion to Textile Culture*, edited by Jennifer Harris, and *Unveiling the Visible: Lives and Works of Women Artists of Pakistan* by Salima Hashmi.

Biodata of Curator:

Zehra Jumabhoy is a UK-based art historian, curator and writer specialising in modern and contemporary South Asian art and its diasporas. She is interested in exploring and analysing the socio-political contexts of South Asian art history. She was the Steven and Elena Heinz Scholar at the Courtauld Institute of Art, London, where she completed her doctorate and has lectured on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes (2016-2020). She is currently lecturing on the MA in “Asian Art Histories” at Lasalle College of the Arts, Singapore. In 2018, she co-curated the landmark exhibition, *The Progressive Revolution: A Modern Art for a New India*, at New York's Asia Society Museum. She is now Curatorial Research Fellow at Glynn Vivian Art Gallery in Swansea, a position funded by the Paul Mellon Centre for British Art, working on a number of projects including co-curating with Katy Freer, Head of Exhibitions at Glynn Vivian, the major show, *Imperial Subjects: (Post)Colonial Conversations between South Asia & Britain*, scheduled for 2022.