



# Metaphors

Wardah Naeem Bukhari 2014

Dedicated to my beloved parents Mr. and Mrs. Naeem and friends







# **Metaphors**

Wardah Naeem Bukhari 2014



I graduated from Multan College of Arts, Bahauddin Zakariya University, in 2010 as a Graphic Designer. Also earned my masters in visual arts from the National College of Arts, Lahore, in 2012. Now I am pursuing my Ph. D in Art History from Punjab University Lahore. Art is a fuel of my soul and ultimate my life. For me, art is a visual language or a way of communication to express ideas. My art work illustrates the perceived notions of hidden and revealed elements of my life. With every creation, there is attached a moment of fear, a feeling of necessity, feeling of something that is stronger than me, which demands to be painted. No painting has been renounced by me because what is painted must be painted. When I received admission in the visual arts program at the National College of Arts, Murtaza Jafri was director over there. In my master's program, I was having great difficulties in my studio practice, but Jafri encouraged me by showing the displayed paintings in his room. I always wanted to paint; but he is the one who give me the right direction and that was the first step to come in art world from design background, I painted with enjoyment and started painting with a new focus. At the end of the degree, I executed twenty five paintings in one year. When, I was a child, my mother working in a government school near Sarafa Bazaar (gold market) Multan. My mother and I regularly visited this bazaar; i was always mesmerized Pattoli craft as my childhood memories. The element of decoration and bright color palette is derived from ethnic Pattoli jewelry being crafted traditionally in radiant colors, in the Sarafa Bazaar. This fascination grew as I entered the university in 2010 and decided to get to the core of my aspiration. Jewelry being my Centre of Interest made me to introduce and endorse the dying tradition of "Pattoli" Craft (decorated thread work which is usually embracing together expensive necklaces) in an innovative style. Multan (Pakistan) and Delhi (India) are famous all around the world, in Ethnic Jewelry Traditions. Living in Multan, I aimed to assemble the Jewelry in an Art form. My work ranges a transformation of Ethnic Jewelry "Pattoli" in my stylistic expression. Following the traditional garland embellishment of threads and knots, I tried to transform my ritual practice into contemporary Art Form. Threads, ropes, and their knots, twists and ties have always inspired me. The inner structure of our body reminds me of the same knots, twists and turns that are present in my jewelry making practice. Basically, I take the inner structure of human anatomy like veins, arteries, and organs inside our bodies and translate them into my painting. The end result looks different from its inspiration, but that is the result of the transformation in my art making process. As far as the process is concerned I usually draw or study anatomy details or take photograph of them through field research and add it to my visual library collection. I usually juxtapose those forms and shapes and compose them in a hierarchal way and later used them in my paintings. To work on my inner self is not only an adventurist experience for me, but also the thoughts and contemplations about the outer and inner worlds. I relate the inner world with metaphysical beauty which is ultimate reality, at the same time I relate the inside anatomy with outside beauty. In my recent paintings I juxtapose the physical world with metaphysical reality. I wanted to see and compose myself in different stances possible in order to see how this process works. This continues to create confusion within. The outer world is where my physical self-resides and the inner world is creates metaphysical relationship with God which has evolved and created various atmospheres appearing in the paintings and drawings. It creates a tension, a duality and a hierarchal conflict between metaphysical and physical, presence and absence, soul and body. The Halo has become the primary object in my paintings because it is deeply associated with my spiritual connection with God. The Halo of enlightened person represents holiness and symbolizes the divine, the magnificent, reflecting in a man or woman.

Wardah Naeem Bukhari has taken a remarkably gigantic leap in her work. Rather than forsake her earlier engagement with the traditional craft of jewelry-making as practiced by the rural womenfolk of Multan, she has found a contemporary context to translate that practice into a personal idiom: Xeroxed, drawn and/or painted images of human anatomy and physiognomy coupled with organic configurations fashioned out of wire, yarn, thread, metal wire either substituting or standing in for body parts, constitute her new aesthetic, formal and conceptual vocabulary.

To personalize the work further, Bukhari considered making drawings - images that deal specifically with the female form. After all, indigenous practices such as embroidery, stitching, knotting and knitting are a female domain, and almost exclusive to the female component of the rural economy. By combining a primarily feminine vocation with the female anatomy, Bukhari has been able to arrive at a novel approach that carries more impact and conceptual clarity.

Aasim Akhtar  
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Aasim Akhtar is an Islamabad-based artist, art critic and curator. He was a curator in residence at the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum in Japan 2002. His most recent curatorial project is “Amnesia: The Loss of Cultural Memory” (2011). His writing is published in magazines, catalogues, books, and journals, both nationally and internationally, and his work has been widely exhibited, more recently in “Where Three Dreams Cross: 150 Years of Photography in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh”. He is the author of three books: *Regards Croises: Peshawar and the Distant Steppe: Indus Kohistan*, and *Dialogues with Threads: Traditions of Embroidery in Hazara* (forthcoming). He teaches Art Appreciation at Fatima Jinnah Women University in Rawalpindi.



**THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF PHENOMENONS.** Art will always be an exposition or a manifestation of the interconnectedness of phenomenons. Simply because everything exists together, light and darkness, intellect and feeling, warmth and cold, life and death, appearance and disappearance. We have learnt through modern science that everything is particles, even atoms can be seen as big as a solar system because they are bigger than the subatomic particles that constitute them. And every atom, consists of huge areas of empty space, and this space, also exists in every particle, except in the ones that are the most dense. I think it is the work of the artist, not only to express himself or herself or the content we are concerned with, but also to balance our work, nearly in the same way as empty space and matter within a particle or an atom. Sometimes we need to be fluid, transparent, light, and with more spiritual purity, other times we need to be as compact as a stone, so to speak. And we should not forget that art has a profound effect some times, and this effect, comes most likely because the artist was clever to balance his or her work. In the work of Wardah Naeem Bukhari, it is easy to see this balance. And perhaps even on two levels, firstly on the level of content, secondly in the aspect of composition, in the layout of the content. On the content level, we have both light and darkness, both warmth and cold, both life and death, so to speak, the appearance and disappearance of elements, in a sense, and on the composition level, everything is balanced and comes together in a way that gives rich opportunities for interpretation and esthetic experience. The composition, conveys a space for reflection and esthetic experience, and both philosophical, psychological, spiritual and cultural elements are there, as a manifestation of the sincerity of an artist wanting to share and explore. And since all art also contains political aspects, and not only philosophical and emotional aspects, this also finds its balance. Perhaps a political aspect of Bukhari's work could be her interest and effort in giving rebirth to traditional Pattoli crafts work, because giving focus and new life to traditional styles and methods that are overlooked or could be forgotten, can also be seen as political work in a cultural dimension. When a poet talks about an ancient light that should not be forgotten, in a sense this also can be seen as political activity, because it means to save something, or to give priority to something, to value something, to set it as important on the general human agenda. Today, art can be absolutely everything, because all art is conceptual, and at the end of the day it can be seen as just an idea and the idea itself can be seen as the real artwork, and the way that the idea – although dressed in various physical representations – is presented, is the only important issue. If The Guggenheim Museum in New York makes an exhibition of a single subatomic particle, that no human being can see, because our perception is not finely tuned enough to see it, then this exhibition would mean a huge empty, white space, but with a hidden, invisible particle somewhere, and this could actually be very powerful and poetic as a comment to the secret of life, to the mystery of matter, to the mystery of energy and as a visual platform for all interconnectedness. And if a small gallery in the countryside of western Norway did exactly the same thing, perhaps it would go completely unnoticed, and people would just laugh at it and say that this is quite ridiculous and something we have heard before, about nothingness and perception and all that. So art is context, more than content, some times, or, the content is constituted by the context it appears in. Context, constitutes content.

The physical representation that envelopes the artwork, the spirit and the intention of it, may be photo, video, painting, installation, architecture, music, jewelry, dance, theatre, poetry or text, and so on. For the spirit of the work to shine, so to speak, the physical representation must convey the intention in a way that affects people, on an esthetic level, at least. And in our modern time, we must absolutely be more clever to make more context spaces, places to exhibit art and address esthetic and human values. It can be a gallery, but it can also be a resting place on the border of a highway, in a supermarket, in a public bus or in a beauty salon. Art should find its expression in all kinds of venues, because art represents the most profound way of communication that humanity can achieve, it seems. And since the aspirations of future work for Bukhari also includes the work of a curator, and work during international residencies, it will be very interesting to see how she can contribute in this way, to Pakistani art scene, to international relations and even interconnectedness, and by this, of course, to cultural and intellectual inheritance and to society itself. Presentation, is so important today, and to find new means and ways of doing this, in a meaningful and conceptually interesting manner, seems to be the best way to go. To find a balance for what we feel we should say, or must say, as artists, is difficult. Should we go lightly or more devoted and focused, so to speak. Should we be clear, or should we be more abstract and secretive, in order for the effect of our intentions to take place. And how should we present it, to balance the work into a broader context. Everything is about finding this balance, it seems, in life as in art. I really hope the work of Wardah Naeem Bukhari will find its proper place in global space, so to speak, both in Pakistan and internationally, as the fabrics and artworks come into being, because of the perpetual interconnectedness of all phenomena. THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF PHENOMENA. A reflection on art and the work of Wardah Naeem Bukhari. By Christian Wolther. Writer, philosopher, artist. Born 1964, in Oslo, Norway.

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Christian Wolther lives currently in Thailand, and has given art classes and lectures in Khon Kaen University, Thailand, during his stay as Artist in Residence in this university, between 2008 and 2009. He has also previously taught as a guest lecturer at The Academy of Theatre, Oslo Norway, in 1997. His two latest publications, are the two books that were published for his two exhibitions in Thailand, REFLECTIONS, in The Museum of Art and Culture, Khon Kaen University, in 2009, and UNTITLED OCEAN, in The National Gallery of Thailand, Bangkok, in 2011.



Wardah Naeem Bukhari has shown amazing creativity in her young life. Her compositions often include intricate designs mixed with intriguing renderings of real life images. She creates masterful compositions, sparking with color that leads the eye to explore the details and continually discover new nuances and delights. Her sense of color and threaded details is influenced by pattoli, the traditional gold jewelry of Subcontinent. She demonstrates a sophisticated aesthetic sense in many works by using the metaphor of inside and outside the body to show the connection between the physical and metaphysical. In recent works, she uses the Halo of an enlightened person to show the spiritual depth of men and women. I enthusiastically look forward to seeing and savoring her future works.

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David Georgi, professor emeritus, retired from teaching after 44 years at Santa Maria High School and CSU, Bakersfield. He earned a PhD from the University of California, Santa Barbara in Education (Dissertation: Wilderness as a Context for Learning). He was selected as a fellow on two Fulbright fellowships (Pakistan and Brazil), the Keizai Koho fellowship (Japan), the Korean Studies fellowship (Korea) and IDEAL (Mexico). He wrote and directed/evaluated many federal and state grants including Project Teaching with New Technologies and the Teaching/Learning Interchange in which he made presentations in many countries and cities. He served as president of the California Council on Teacher Education and as Chair of the Teacher Education Department at California State University, Bakersfield.

He currently runs a gardening website based on The Dude from The Big Labowski, thegardendude.com. He also teaches how to use trekking poles effectively and maintains polecats.org to spread the word. He is currently working to establish the Chumash Heritage Marine Sanctuary off central California. After several years in a Night writers critique group, he found his voice for a memoir and is currently working on it (Swedish Enchiladas).

## **Pulling On A Pattoli Thread Leads To Wardah Naeem Bukhari's Vision** Most contemporary art open to the expanding and

cross cultural merging global scene has at least partial roots in the

creative burst of European Modern Art Movements that began in the early 1900's. The hows and whys of global art that evolved over the last 110 years are too complicated to discuss here. However, two characteristics concerning art during this period can be applied to Wardah Naeem Bukhari's multimedia presentation: 1) the work is made of the warp and weft of object and idea and, 2) the Modern Art Movements came about as a cross cultural intersection of European and non-European cultural ideas and objects ("high" cultural artifacts and "folk" art).

All viewers see the same object, the artistic expression itself with its parts making a sum greater than its parts. The viewer's own individual idea(s), and the viewer's own experience and conceptual unraveling of the object's meaning and intent differ from one another and at times misses a significance such that a conclusion greatly differs from the artistic vibration set in motion. More time than not this latter conflict occurs when a new vision is presented to an audience unfamiliar with the contemporary integrated global art evolution. This brings us to the second characteristic, cross cultural fertilization of artistic traditions horizontally across national, regional and cultural borders and vertically between what is considered high art and folk art. One of the many important contributions of Modern and Contemporary Art Movements is recognizing the beauty, textures, patterns, materials and symbols imbedded in the countless varieties of human folk art. Another important contribution is careful selection of scientific materials that become rendered into and or mixed with a unique artistic illumination. Trying to understand such work at times takes us back to object and idea wherein the viewer must step outside her or his comfort zone and see anew.

While Bukhari's objects are paintings, photography, jewelry and fabric art, the basic underlying idea is homage to an art form with roots so deep in the South Asian past the length of its tap root cannot be measured; only guessed. All this work began because as a child she was captured by a beauty of colorfully woven elaborate patterns manifesting within her as wonder and awe. Later, during her inner deep most search of Self, she uncovered within the bright chamber of the heart identical colors with which to express. Also during this inner search, the beauty of the human body's — for is not the Creation a manifestation of Beauty? — miraculous inner weavings of tissues, arteries and veins that the biological sciences have illustrated in a variety of techniques and visual imagery, became an additional source of expression celebrating external and internal human beauty.

In addition, her elaborate interwoven painted artwork, with its human, plant and mineral subjects, points to or suggests ancient and yet remaining South Asian traditions such as the ritual kolam knots of the Indus-Saraswati Culture. Such ritual patterns continue as aids for the inward journey towards the Self to unify with the Unspeakable Source of Beauty. Knots and knot work rendered into artistic patterns and textures throughout history have signified the labyrinth one must traverse during the quest for self-discovery. Such knots point not only to the necessary and required external work but also the necessary and required internal work, and thus the physical body knots and mazes exposed are points



and textures of and for reflection. Nor should it be forgotten that in contemplation and meditation, spiritual knots must be found and then untied.

The attention to detail and the delicacy of her studied miniaturist strokes seen in the single strand flourishes or the intricate knot work in her paintings reflect back and forth between the detailed Pattoli Craft designs, weaving and fabric sculptures. By creating these back and forth reflections, she also juxtaposes and constantly alters our viewing scale. Our eyes shift from the human scale of jewelry to a journey into the body viewing woven complexities through an x-raying eye and then reducing us to where the viewer arches her or his head upward to study the towering jewelry on one hand and with a slight of her other hand transforms the jewelry into large bodily veins and arteries. She unites this important collection with the high vibration of bright colors chosen from the richness of her inspired source, her love of Pattoli. She unites the objects with an artistic vision presented in two, three and four dimensions that all pivot around an exquisite folk art focal point, Pattoli. And, she unites her viewers with a subtle invitation to probe deeper reflecting on That Beauty in which All is One.

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Karl is a widely published and exhibited poet, visual poet, editor and former publisher of Kaldron, An International Journal of Visual Poetry. He was the first American visual poet to publish contemporary Islamic calligraphy in his journal and continues to promote its new and evolving expressions. This interest has brought him in touch with the new and emerging artists within the broader Islamic cultural sphere such as Wardah Naeem Bukhari

The first thing I noticed about Wardah Naeem Bukhari's recent body of work is the title, "Metaphors", which is applied to these expressions. So my first thought is that these semantic expressions are to be viewed as a visual language. Yet I also noticed that none of the individual pieces had titles. Titles usually overlay a context onto a work to use as a starting reference point. Without a title on the individual pieces, the main context of the work must be supplied by the viewer. For the divisive delineations in the meaning of a language comes from the context as opposed to semantic objects themselves. So of course these works are going to be viewed through our own personal filter which is an extension of our cultural backgrounds. What I find unique in her expressions is her relationship of her (the) body to her (the) spirit. There is a sense to these works somewhat like the spiritual / body connection expressed in the works of the painter Alex Grey. However, Bukhari's work is more chthonic, gritty and plays in between the dichotomy of the ethereal and a tragic opening of the gut. Furthermore she does this all with beautiful technique rooted by the traditions of her cultural region in the world. There is an interplay of local cultural crafts, classical art and spirituality which should entice the viewer to continue to follow her work.

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born In 1980 Kaz Maslanka received his BFA in Sculpture from Wichita State University where he also studied music, mathematics and physics. He has been involved in the arts for more than 35 years and has been pioneering mathematical poetry since the early 1980's. He has a strong international presence not only on his blog "Mathematical Poetry" but also with exhibitions of his work. He currently lives in San Diego California and works as an artist as well as an aerospace engineering consultant for a technology company where he leads a group of engineers creating leading edge computer modeling techniques for aerospace manufacturing. He is on the board of directors for the San Diego based "Sonic Arts Studio" a group of composers and musicians devoted to the development and proliferation of microtonal music. He also serves on the advisory board of the Bronowski Art and Science Forum in Del Mar, California



***Pattoli*** craft *Pattoli* is an ancient thread jewelry tradition that originated in the Indian subcontinent, it is a decorated threadwork

which is used to embrace together expensive necklaces. Because of its immense appeal, people also wear it as jewelry, but unfortunately it was never recognized as jewelry on its own. The most recent evidence of *Pattoli* being used by the Mughals, they have paintings and some clear documentation of it being used with jewelry, stories of wealthy Mughals hired skilled *Pattoli* craftsmen to make ornamented thread lace (*dori*) can be found in several Mughals manuscripts and books. *Pattoli* found its way in to the cultural bazaars and the practitioners for this craft are also known as “*Pattoli*”.

Mohammad Sajad a master craftsmen and my inspiration was the key for me, into this amazing world of decorated threadwork. He works in Sarafa bazaar Multan along with seventy other family members, him and his family has been involved in this craft for centuries, as he explained me once during our several meetings that his great grandfather established their business in sarafa bazaar when he moved here from India right after partition.

Born in Multan, from bourgeois family, my mother working in a government school near Sarafa Bazaar (gold market) Multan. Mesmerized from a very young age I always wondered about this beautiful threadwork, this fascination grew as I entered my college years and decided to get to the core of my aspiration, but libraries, book shops even the internet deemed fruitless.



*Panch Lada* Necklace  
Silk & gold threads, mirrors and mix medium

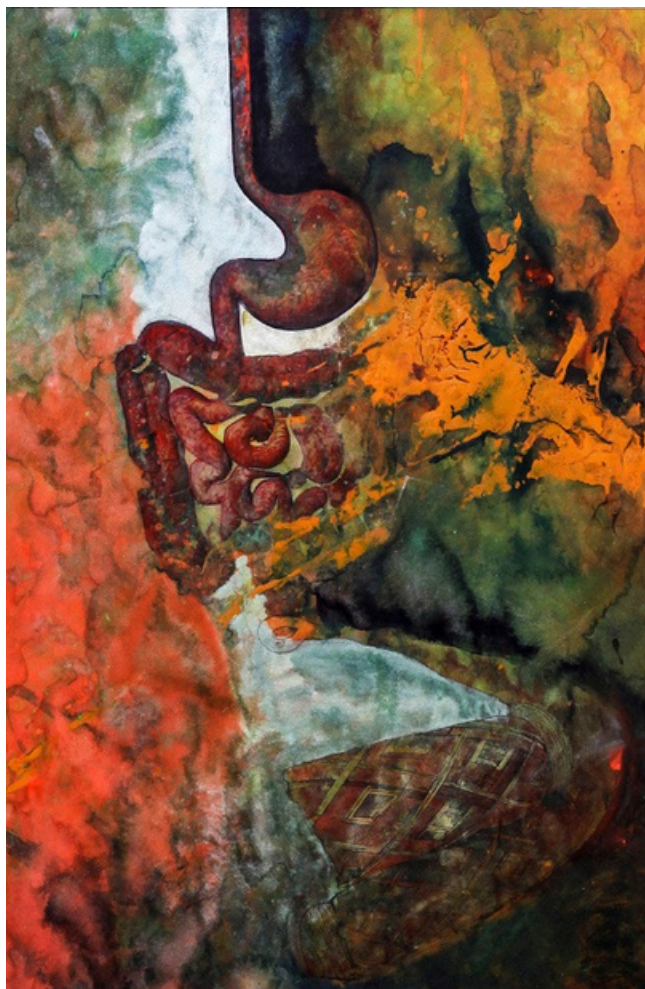


Skull ■ 11.5" x 8"  
Water color and mix medium on wasli





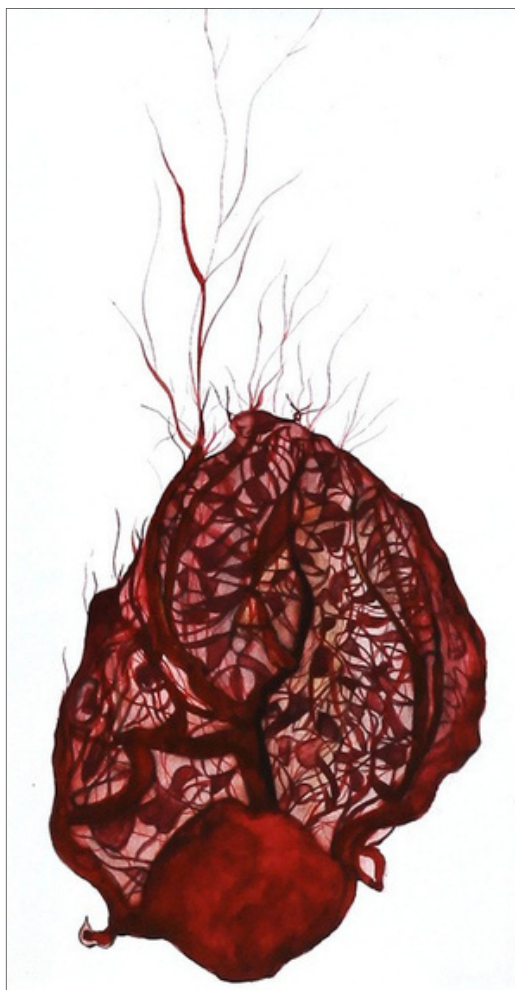
Untitled ■ 11.5" x 8.5"  
Water color and threads on wasli



Untitled ■ 18" x 12"  
Water color and mix medium on wasli



Untitled ■ 11.5" x 8"  
Water color and mix medium on wasli



Untitled ■ 6.3" x 3.3"  
Water color and mix medium on wasli



Untitled ■ 21" x 10.8"  
Water color and mix medium on wasli





Untitled ■ 2.2" x 21"  
Water color and mix medium on wasli



Untitled ■ 17" x 13"  
Water color and mix medium on sennelier grains



Untitled ■ 28.5" x 19.5"  
Water color and mix medium on sennelier grains





Untitled ■ 29.4" x 21.5"  
Water color and mix medium on sennelier grains

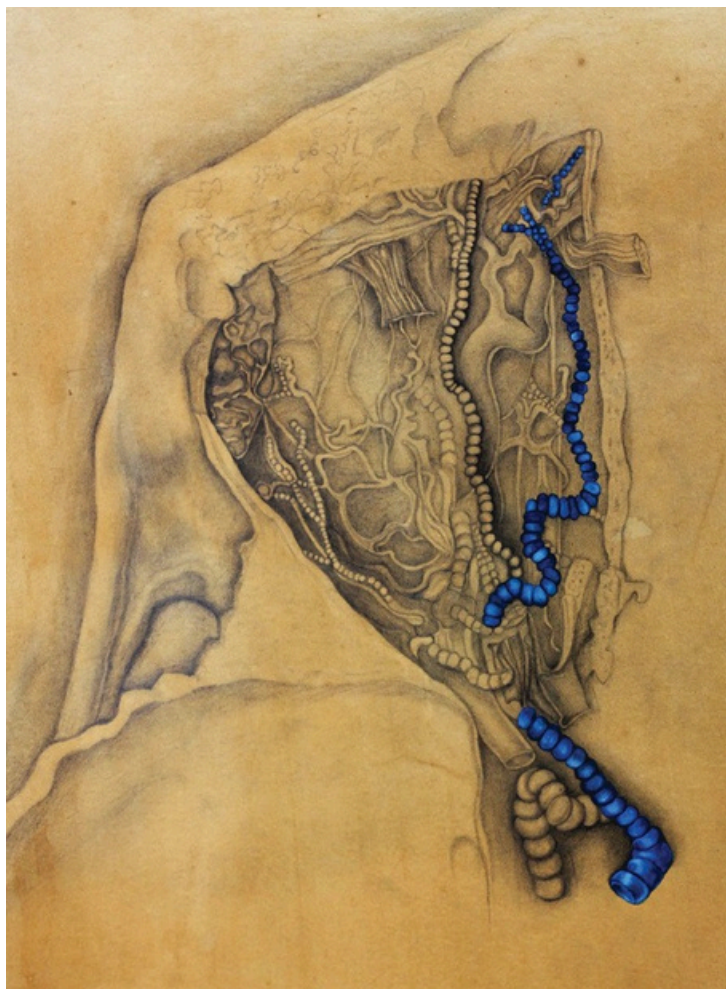


Untitled ■ 37.5" x 26.5"  
Water color and mix medium on sennelier grains





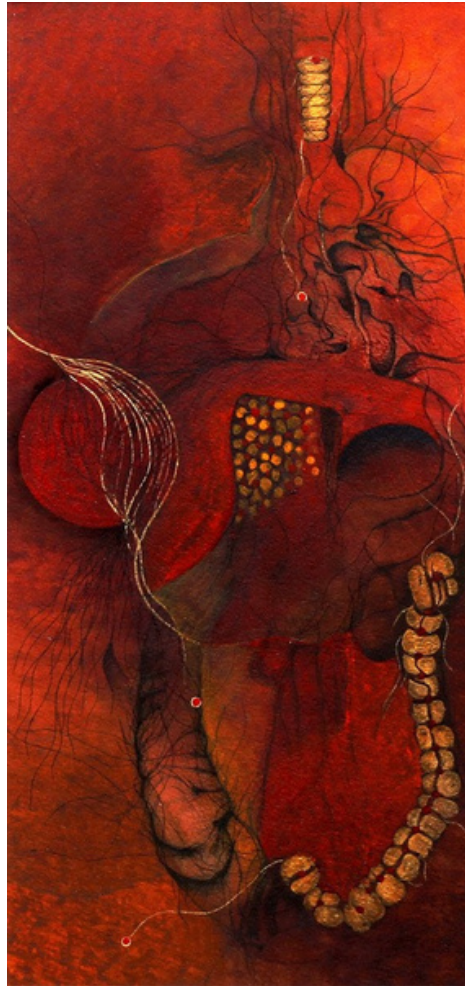
Untitled ■ 13.5" x 13.5"  
Pencil on wasli



Untitled ■ 11.5" x 8.5"  
pencil, tea wash, water color on wasli

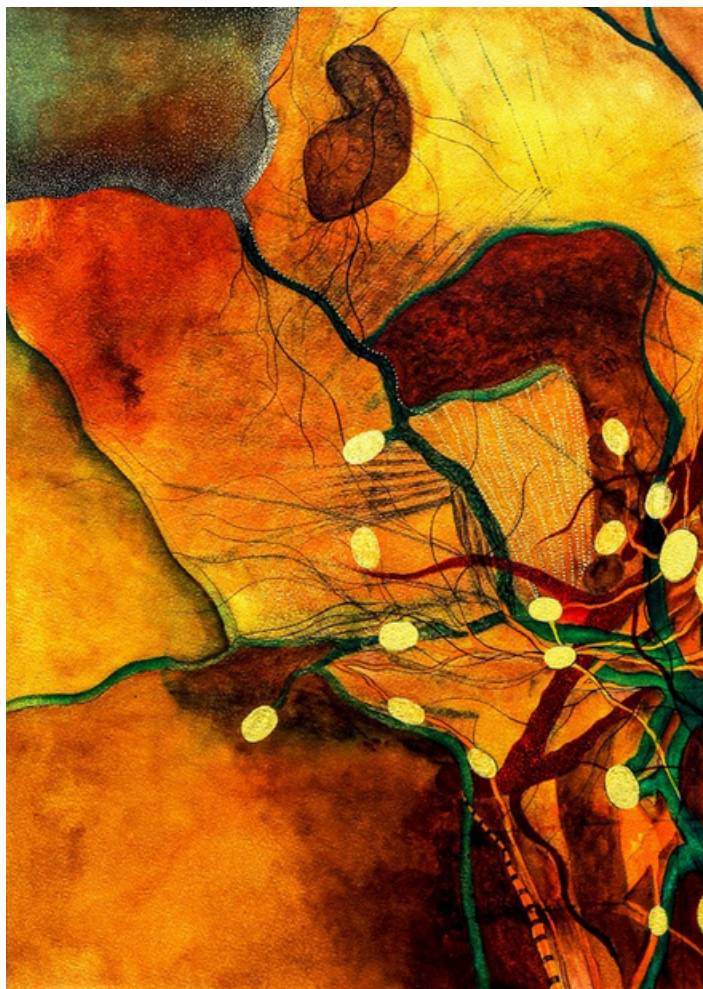


Untitled ■ 26.5" x 9.5"  
Pencil, tea wash, water color on wasli



Untitled ■ 19" x 9"  
Water color and mix medium on sennelier grains





Untitled ■ 20.3" x 14.5"  
Water color and mix medium on sennelier grains





Untitled ■ 10" x 9"  
Water color and mix medium on sennelier grains



Untitled ■ 19.2" x 27.5"  
Water color and mix medium on sennelier grains



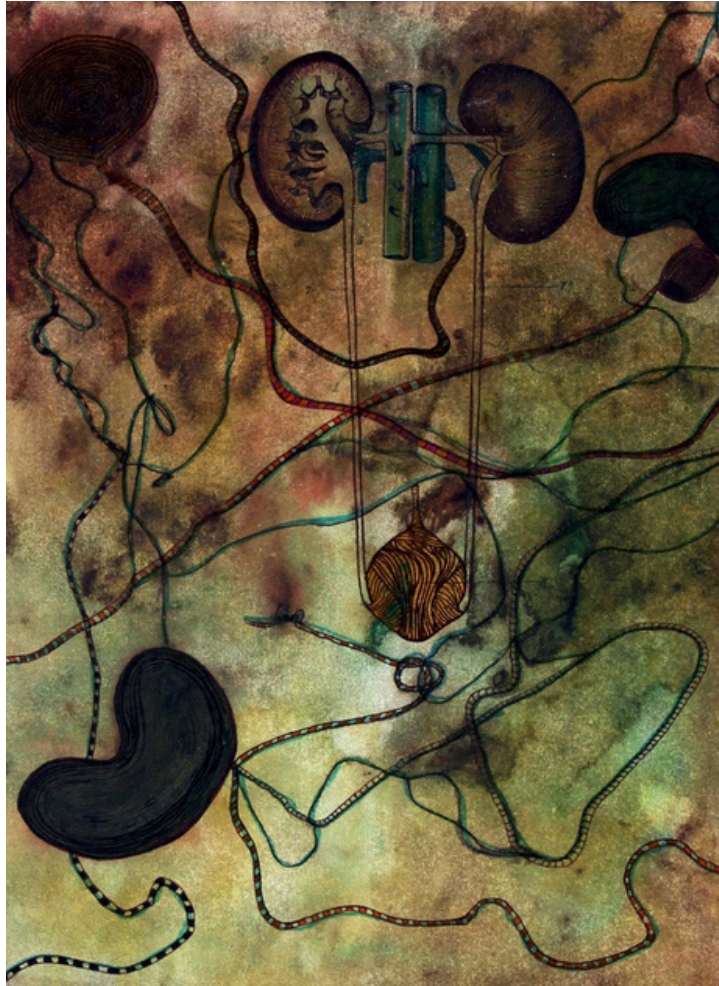
Untitled ■ 19.2" x 27.5"  
Water color and mix medium on sennelier grains





Untitled ■ 11.5" x 8.5"  
Water color and mix medium on wasli





Untitled ■ 11.5" x 8"  
Water color and mix medium on wasli



Untitled  
Threads & robes



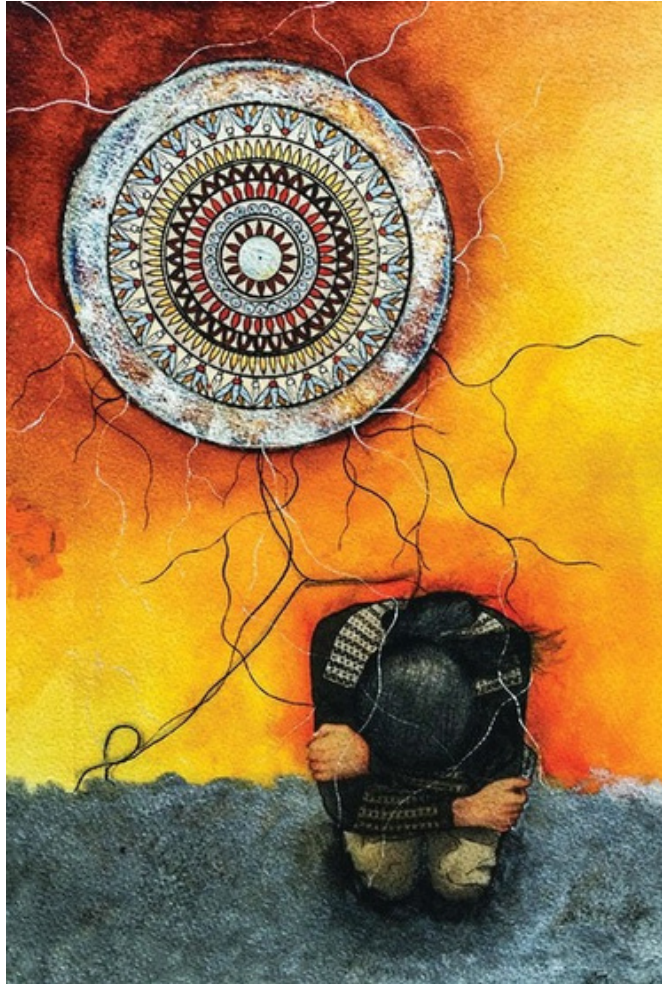
Untitled  
Threads & robes





Untitled ■ 11.5" x 8"  
Water color and mix medium on sennelier grains



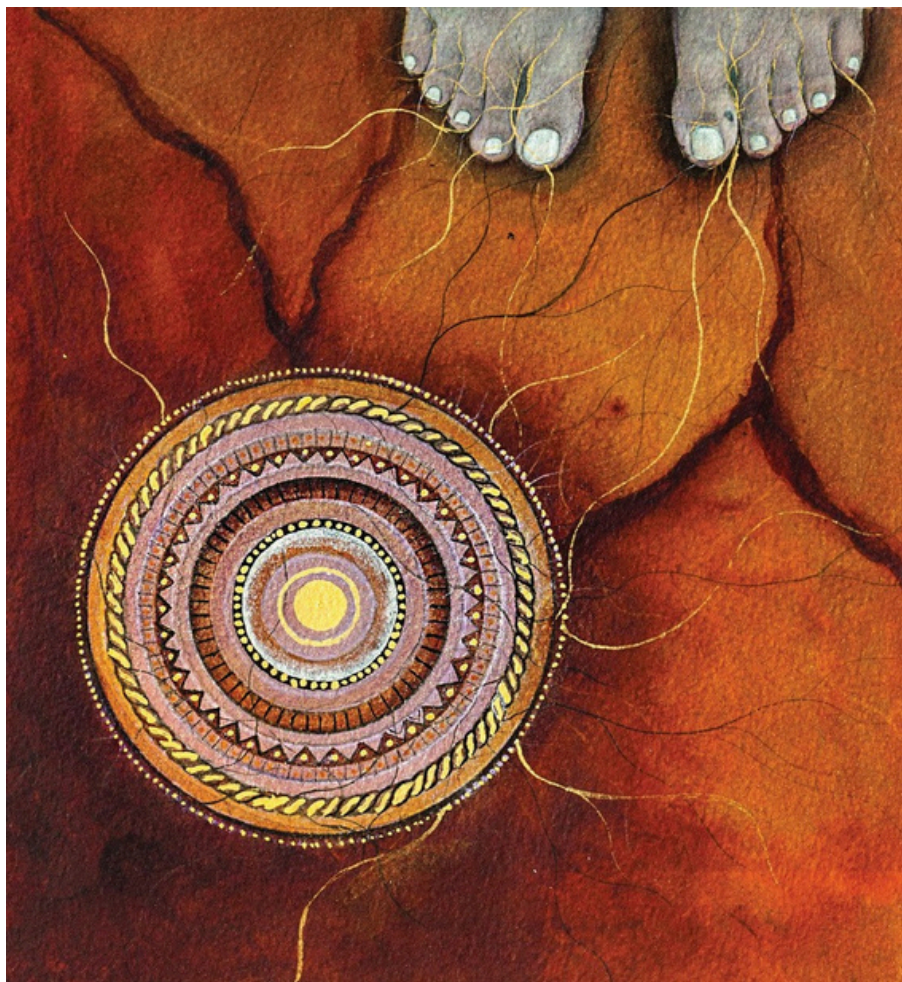


Untitled ■ 15" x 10"  
Water color silver leaf and mix medium on sennelier grains



Untitled ■ 8" x 11.5"  
Water color silver leaf and mix medium on sennelier grains





Untitled ■ 8.5" x 7"  
Water color silver leaf and mix medium on sennelier grains



Untitled ■ 20.7" x 20.7"  
Water color silver leaf and mix medium on sennelier grains





Untitled ■ 14" x 14"  
Water color silver leaf and mix medium on sennelier grains



Untitled ■ 14" x 14"  
Water color silver leaf and mix medium on sennelier grains



## Wardah Naeem Bukhari

### Qualification: Degree

Ph. D Scholar Art History (Theory)

M.A. Honos. / M. Phil in Visual Arts

Paintings, Sculpture.  
(1st Division)

B.S Honors in B-Design  
Graphic Design)  
(1st Division)

### Solo Show

2014 "Metaphors" at Hamail Art Gallery, Lahore.

### Institution

University of Punjab  
(College of Art & Design)  
Lahore, Pakistan

National College of Arts  
(NCA) Lahore, Pakistan

Multan College of Arts  
(MCA) Bahauddin Zakariya  
University Multan, Pakistan

Year  
(2013-2016)

(2012)

(2010)

### Group Exhibitions

1. Participated at Alhamra Young artist Group Exhibition 2014 Lahore.
2. Participated in Group Exhibition Punjab Art Council, Lahore Pakistan 2014.
3. Participated in Group Exhibition of Miniature Painting at Turkey 2013.
4. Participated at Alhamra Young artist Group Exhibition 2013 Lahore.
5. Thesis Show at (NCA) National College of Arts 2012 Lahore.
6. Participated in Group Exhibition LSE 2012 Lahore.
7. Participated at Alhamra Young artist Group Exhibition 2012 Lahore.
8. Participated in Group Exhibition in Vogue art Gallery 2011 Lahore.
9. Thesis Show at (MCA) Bahauddin Zakariya University 2010 Multan.
10. Participated in international Group Exhibition Art Expo 2009 Multan.
11. Participated in Interior design project, at SOS village 2008 Multan.
12. Participated in international Mango Festival at Shahjahan 2008 Multan.
13. Participated in interior design project at Children Hospital 2007 Multan.
14. Participated in art Exhi Group Exhibition at Multan art council 2007 Multan.
15. Participated in Group Exhibition at art council 2006 Multan.

### Professional Experience:

#### Teaching:

1. Visiting Lecturer at Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan 2014.
2. Delivered Lectures in digital art, painting and graphic design at Hazara University Mansehra.

#### Invited as a judge in art competitions:

1. Invitation as a judge in Zephyr (SIMS) All Pakistan Arts, Competition 2013 Lahore.
2. Invitation as a judge to IST Youth Carnival 2014 Islamabad.



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