

An exhibition on celebration of 120th
anniversary of Fakir khana Museum
in collaboration with ICOM Pakistan on
International Museum Day

Hertiatge Revived: Artistic Expressions From Punjab's Golden Era

Curated by
OZMA BHATTI
DR.WARDAH NAEEM BUKHARI

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From Punjab's Golden Era**

Fakir Khana Museum

(The House of The Humble Ones) is one of the biggest private museums in Pakistan, and has been open to public since 1905. The building originally belonged to Raja Todar Mal, Finance Minister of Akbar. It was later renovated in the 20th century as a mansion housing almost two centuries of history of the eventful life of some of the greatest personalities of the region and period. Fakir Khana Museum is actually a house turned inside out in the sense that what is actually private in the house, has been made public. Access to all parts of the building is unhindered. The Fakir Khana Museum is now being run by the 6th generation of the Fakir family. It is situated barely five minutes walk from Bhatti Gate, one of the famous 13 gates of the walled city of Lahore. It is the only privately owned museum recognized by the Government of Pakistan. The history of the museum can be traced back to that of the Fakir family that settled in Lahore in 1730, where it established and ran a publishing house. Over the years, the family has acquired a collection of ten thousand manuscripts. The Fakir Khana Museum currently houses over twenty thousand specimens of art and artifacts encompassing three centuries, from the 18th to the 20th. The Miniature Hall is the most impressive of all the sections of Fakir Khana Museum, with exhibit arrangement having been maintained for three quarters of a century.



Advancing Museum Practices through Sustainable Development Goals and International Collaboration

The Future of Museums in Rapidly Changing Communities

Every year, on 18 May 2025, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) organizes International Museum Day (IMD), a global event highlighting the transformative role of museums in society. In 2025, IMD will explore "The Future of Museums in Rapidly Changing Communities", focusing on how museums can navigate and contribute to a world undergoing profound social, technological, and environmental shifts

Museum as catalysts for change

Museums are more than spaces of preservation—they are active participants in shaping sustainable and inclusive communities. This year's theme aligns with three Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- **SDG 8:** Museums support local economies by creating employment opportunities and offering educational programs that empower communities.
- **SDG 11:** Museums contribute to sustainable urban development by acting as cultural hubs that promote inclusion, resilience, and heritage preservation.

This project will discuss SDG 8 and SDG 11 below:

SDG 8: Fakir Khana Museum contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8) by fostering economic growth and decent work opportunities for local artists. By offering commissioned projects inspired by the museum's Sikh collection, the museum empowers local and contemporary artists from Pakistan's art institutes. This initiative bridges the gap between institutional and self-taught artists, providing equal opportunities for both to work on museum-level projects. Through oral history projects guided by Fakir Syed Saifuddin, Director of Fakir Khana Museum, artists create innovative artworks that preserve cultural narratives and historical experiences, while gaining education and economic empowerment. The oral history approach allows artists to tap into the rich cultural heritage and personal stories embedded in the museum's collection, adding depth and context to their creative work. By promoting local artistic talent, Fakir Khana Museum supports the local economy and contributes to the United Nations' SDG 8, ensuring decent work and economic growth for artists.

SDG 11: The Fakir Khana Museum's initiative also contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. By serving as a cultural hub, the museum promotes:

- 1. Inclusion:** Providing opportunities for local and self-taught artists.
- 2. Resilience:** Preserving cultural heritage through art and oral history.
- 3. Heritage preservation:** Showcasing Sikh collection and Punjab's rich cultural legacy.

Curatorial Note by Ozma Bhatti & Dr. Wardah Naeem Bukhari

Heritage Revived: Artistic Expressions from Punjab's Golden Era

Heritage Revived: Artistic Expressions from Punjab's Golden Era celebrates the rich cultural legacy of Punjab's 19th-century marvels, marked by unprecedented advancements under Maharaja Ranjit Singh's reign whose legacy remains preserved through the rich collections at the Fakir Khana Museum. This exhibition showcases the transformative power of art in reviving and reinterpreting historical narratives, bridging past and present through creative expressions.

Featuring works by Aliya Aadil, Arshia Sohail, Ghulam Hussain, Hassnain Awais, Muhammad Umer Jamil, Noman & Sheema, Ozma & Faiza, Rahim Baloch, Sarah Ahmad, Shahzad Tanveer, Sidra Liaqat, Wardah Naeem Bukhari, and Yaseen Khan, this exhibition offers a diverse range of perspectives on Punjab's golden era. Each artwork reflects the grandeur, artistic excellence, and cultural depth of the Sikh period, while also highlighting the enduring legacy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's reign.

The Fakir Khana Museum's remarkable collection of Sikh-era artifacts, including weapons, miniature paintings, manuscripts, textiles Phulkari of Punjab, (Mai Jindan Shawl, Sword holder (Gatra), Saish (Kamar-Kasa), Mahraja Ranjit Singh Dress), Mahraja Ranjit Singh funeral cloth in red and blue grid (godri), decorative objects such as pots and personal belongings of the Maharaja serves as a foundation for this exploration.

By engaging artists in dialogue with museum pieces, this exhibition generates innovative storytelling that speaks to contemporary audiences. By reimagining the past, these artists create a vibrant visual conversation that showcases art's power to reshape our connection to history and heritage. This show explores identity, cultural continuity, and the function of art in maintaining collective memory while honoring Punjab's rich cultural heritage.

Aliya Aadil

Aadil's artwork explores the interplay between subject matter and tangible form, generating new meanings through creative expression. By highlighting the harmony between diverse symbols and ideas, Aadil's piece reflects on coexistence and unity. This work invites viewers to contemplate the relationship between intangible concepts and material reality.

Arshia Sohail

Arshia's artwork bridges past and present, merging tradition with contemporary techniques. By using a mirror as a canvas, Arshia invites viewers to engage in a dialogue with the artwork, exploring the relationship between reflection and representation. This piece challenges viewers to reflect on their position within cultural frames.

Dr. Wardah Naeem Bukhari

Wardah Naeem Bukhari's "Dedicated to Mai Moran" blends ecology and history through traditional Phulkari embroidery, inspired by the legend of Mai Moran and her enchanting dance. Peacock motifs symbolize her mesmerizing movements, captivating Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Working with Faqir Khana Museum's only Phulkari piece, Bukhari celebrates International Museum Day 2025 and showcases the museum's Sikh period collection. This artwork sparks conversations about cultural continuity, nature, and women's stories, honoring Punjab's rich legacy.

Ghulam Hussain

Ghulam's woven artwork shifts perspectives, revealing different aspects of a story rooted in warrior spirit and leadership. As viewers move around the piece, the image changes, symbolizing the complexity of history and identity. This work invites viewers to engage, question, and reflect on how we see our past and define heroism.

Hassnain Awais

Hassnain's piece erases Maharaja Ranjit Singh from his equestrian portrait, leaving only the regal horse. This absence speaks to the fragility of historical narratives and what we choose to remember. By questioning the nature of history and memory, Hassnain's work reflects on the power dynamics involved in storytelling. The artwork invites viewers to ponder the significance of the Maharaja's legacy.

Muhammad Shahzad Tanveer Sufi

Shahzad's artworks and poetry-infused visual piece reflect his exploration of law, art, and Sikh heritage. His creative inquiry returns to the enlightened reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, distilling the silent poetry of justice and visual narratives. Shahzad's work embodies the dialogue between legality and liberty, structure and expression.

Muhammad Umer Jamil

Muhammad Umer Jamil's artist vision beautifully encapsulates his creative vision, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between nature and human existence. His artistic process involves deeply interacting with the subjects he paints, often deconstructing and reassembling them to reveal profound connections. In his miniature painting "The Last Light," Jamil juxtaposes a rose with the funeral shawl of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, symbolizing the universal themes of legacy, loss, and impermanence.

Noman & Sheema

Noman and Sheema's collaborative work celebrates the golden era of Punjab, uniting miniature painting and metalwork. Sheema's exquisite miniature of Maharaja Ranjit Singh is complemented by Noman's metal frame, designed with Sikh-era motifs. This piece weaves image and object into a unified tribute, reflecting on art and craft's role in preserving cultural memory. Their collaboration showcases the timeless synergy between traditional crafts.

Ozma Bhatti & Faiza Bhatti

Ozma and Faiza's jewelry piece is inspired by Rani Jindan Kaur's shawl, reimagining the paisley pattern in silver and stone. This work honors the queen's strength and resilience, blending heritage with personal expression. By transforming historical objects into contemporary art, Ozma and Faiza reflect on the role of women in history and the power of storytelling. Their piece serves as a tribute to female voices.

Rahim Baloch

Rahim's painting imagines a symbolic garden with Konj birds in flight, evoking journey, migration, and time's fleeting nature. Inspired by Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Gatra, Rahim's work meditates on life as memory and the traces we leave behind. The delicate floral motifs and silver leaf create a sanctuary of remembrance and reflection. Rahim's artwork invites viewers to contemplate the fragility and beauty of life.

Sarah Ahmad

Sarah's "Acts of Reclamation" explores pattern and geometry, drawing inspiration from Maharaja Ranjit Singh's attire and traditional caps. This installation layers caps over a geometric collage, recognizing pattern as a unifying force. Sarah's work invites viewers to reflect on the connective tissue binding us to one another and the earth. By investigating interconnectivity through recurring patterns, Sarah's art becomes a visual language of unity, linking the local with the global, the personal with the cosmic. Her use of traditional motifs in a modern context creates a powerful narrative.

Sidra Liaqat

Sidra's work reimagines Sikh architectural heritage through miniature painting, merging historical forms with poetic intimacy. By amalgamating landscape traditions with ornate structures, Sidra creates a visual dialogue between architecture and environment. This piece reflects on the enduring glory of Sikh cultural past and its lasting imprint on the present.

Yaseen Khan

Yaseen's artwork stems from his experiences as an artist, reflecting adoration for manual work and craftsmanship. His abstract patterns and lines create art that is relevant and embedded in Pakistan's traditions and history. Yaseen's practice triggers questions regarding various art forms, using a common language of expression to create art. By combining his background in mechanics with artistic skills, Yaseen produces unique pieces that showcase his perspective.



Aylia Aadil

Bio:

Aylia Aadil (b. 1985) is a multidisciplinary artist, based in Lahore, Pakistan. His work spans from the classical traditions of architectural ornamentation to contemporary conceptual practices, reflecting a dynamic and evolving creative journey. Aadil earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Karachi in 2010 and has since exhibited in various art galleries across Pakistan. In addition to his fine art practice, he is actively involved in commercial sculpture making, with over seven years of experience doing commissioned projects for Interior Design Practice for popular brands. With a growing clientele both nationally and internationally as well, Aadil continues to expand his artistic footprint across diverse platforms.

Artist Statement:

There's a word 'we call "subject matter"
this portmanteau always fascinates me...
The Subject—as an intangible Idea, or even a kind of Negative Space,
And Matter—as something tangible, like Form, Mass, or Material
Exist in contrast, yet fully complement one another.
When they intermingle, they generate something new
"a piece of art".
In this creative act,
There is a kind of intercommunal harmony
A unity of diverse symbols, forms, materials, and ideas.
I believe this is what we call coexistence

In my recent work, I blend traditional Sikh architectural patterns with modern design, creating a contemporary dome that embodies the spirit of communal harmony in Punjab. Inspired by the region's shared history, the piece features a pair of pigeons, symbolizing devotion and loyalty, as seen in the story of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's beloved pigeons that sacrificed themselves at his cremation. This artwork celebrates Punjab's rich cultural heritage, where diverse influences converge, highlighting the beauty of shared histories that bridge communities.



TREASURE BOX 2025
Mixed Media | 22 x 22 x 24 inches | 2025



Arshia Sohail

Bio:

She is a Lahore-based artist with strong academic background in visual arts. She holds two degrees, Master of Arts (Hons.) in Visual Arts from the prestigious National College of Arts (NCA), Lahore (2015) and Bachelor of Fine Arts (Hons.) in Painting from the Institute of Art and Design, Government College University, Faisalabad (2011). Along these degrees she attended various national and international training courses and workshops and conferences in Art and Heritage Conservation and Museum Curation including the prestigious 19th ICOM-CC Triennial Virtual Conference in Beijing China, International heritage Conservation from Boston Architecture College USA, Curator's Regimental course from National Army Museum UK and trainings under UNESCO and an alumnus of the US state Department's IVLP.

Her work has been displayed in various exhibitions and art fairs both nationally and internationally. She won 2nd place in Bloom award by Warsteiners in Art Dusseldorf Germany in 2017, amongst 2300 artists from 93 countries. She also claimed the Merit award in 2021 in an international Art Exhibition titled "Skies" at Art Room Gallery UK and young artist award in 2016 and 2017 at annual young artist exhibition of the Alhamra arts council in Lahore. She is currently serving as the Restoration and Exhibition Officer at the Lahore Museum. Her experience also includes Curator (Maintenance / Conservation) at the Army Museum Lahore and the Assistant Curator at Zahoor ul Akhlaq Gallery at NCA, as well as visiting faculty member at LCWU and NCA, Lahore.

Artist Statement:

In this artwork, I draw inspiration from the exquisite craftsmanship of Sikh miniature paintings, a rich cultural heritage that embodies intricate detail and vibrant storytelling. The artwork serves as a bridge between past and present, merging tradition with contemporary techniques. Through my work, I invite viewers to engage in a dialogue with the artwork, encouraging them to explore the relationship between reflection and representation. The mirror not only serves as a canvas but also as a medium that transforms the viewer's experience, what you see is not just the artwork but also yourself, interacting with a history that informs your identity.

The borders of the miniature paintings in the piece, symbolizing the boundaries of culture and the universality of art. This work challenges the viewer to reflect on their own position within these frames, prompting an introspection of how we connect with our heritage while navigating the contours of modern life. Ultimately, this piece is a celebration of resilience, beauty, and the shared narratives that bind us across time. Through this transparent lens, I hope to illuminate the stories that come alive in reflection, bridging generations and inviting a deeper understanding of cultural identity.



LOOK AT IT

Looking and transparent vinyl | 10x15 inches | 2025



Dr. Wardah Naeem Bukhari

Bio:

Dr. Wardah Naeem Bukhari (b. 1988, Pakistan) (she/her) is a critically acclaimed visual artist, art educator, and independent curator with expertise in South Asian textiles. Her work explores the history, aesthetics and evolution of traditional art practices in reference to today's visual culture. Bukhari has completed her Doctorate in Art & Design in 2021 from PUCAD, Lahore. Idara- Farogh-e Taleem bestows upon her the Gold Medal Award at the Governor House in Lahore, making her the youngest Ph.D. recipient in Pakistan in the field of Fine Art. She has travelled extensively and invited for artist talk at South Asian Women Collective, New York in 2016 and selected in International-Artist-In-Residence program in Arthub, Arizona in the following year. She was invited in international conferences in Pendik, Istanbul in 2015. Bukhari has done 4 solo shows in Lahore and participated in 13 International shows and 35 National shows, including Material Thinking & International Fiber Art Biennale in Beijing, AsiaEurope Mediations Biennial in Turkey. She was invited for an artist talk at South Asian Women Collective, New York in 2016. Her work is part of the permanent collection at Ambiance Art Hotels, Pakistan. Bukhari is an Assistant Professor in the Design Department, IDVA, LCWU.

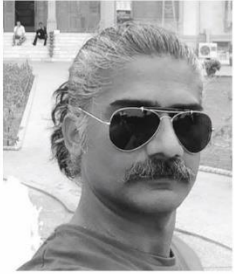
Artist Statement

Dr. Wardah Naeem Bukhari's recent work, "Dedicated to Mai Moran," weaves ecology and history through traditional Phulkari embroidery, incorporating peacock motifs inspired by the legend of coins minted in Mai Moran's honor during Maharaja Ranjit Singh's reign. This piece connects her ongoing exploration of ecology through art, reflecting on the cultural significance of Phulkari in Punjab. Faqir Khana Museum entrusted her with their only Phulkari piece for this project, celebrating International Museum Day 2025 and showcasing the museum's extensive Sikh period collection. Through this artwork, Dr. Bukhari aims to spark conversations about cultural continuity, the natural world, and the stories of women like Mai Moran, who captivated Maharaja Ranjit Singh with her enchanting dance, similar to a peacock's movements. By blending traditional techniques with modern themes, this piece honors Mai Moran's fascinating story, connecting Punjab's rich cultural legacy of Phulkari shawls with the intriguing history of the Sikh period.



DEDICATED TO MAI MORAN

Floss silk on white handmade khaddar | 52 x 85 inches | 2025



Ghulam Hussain

Bio:

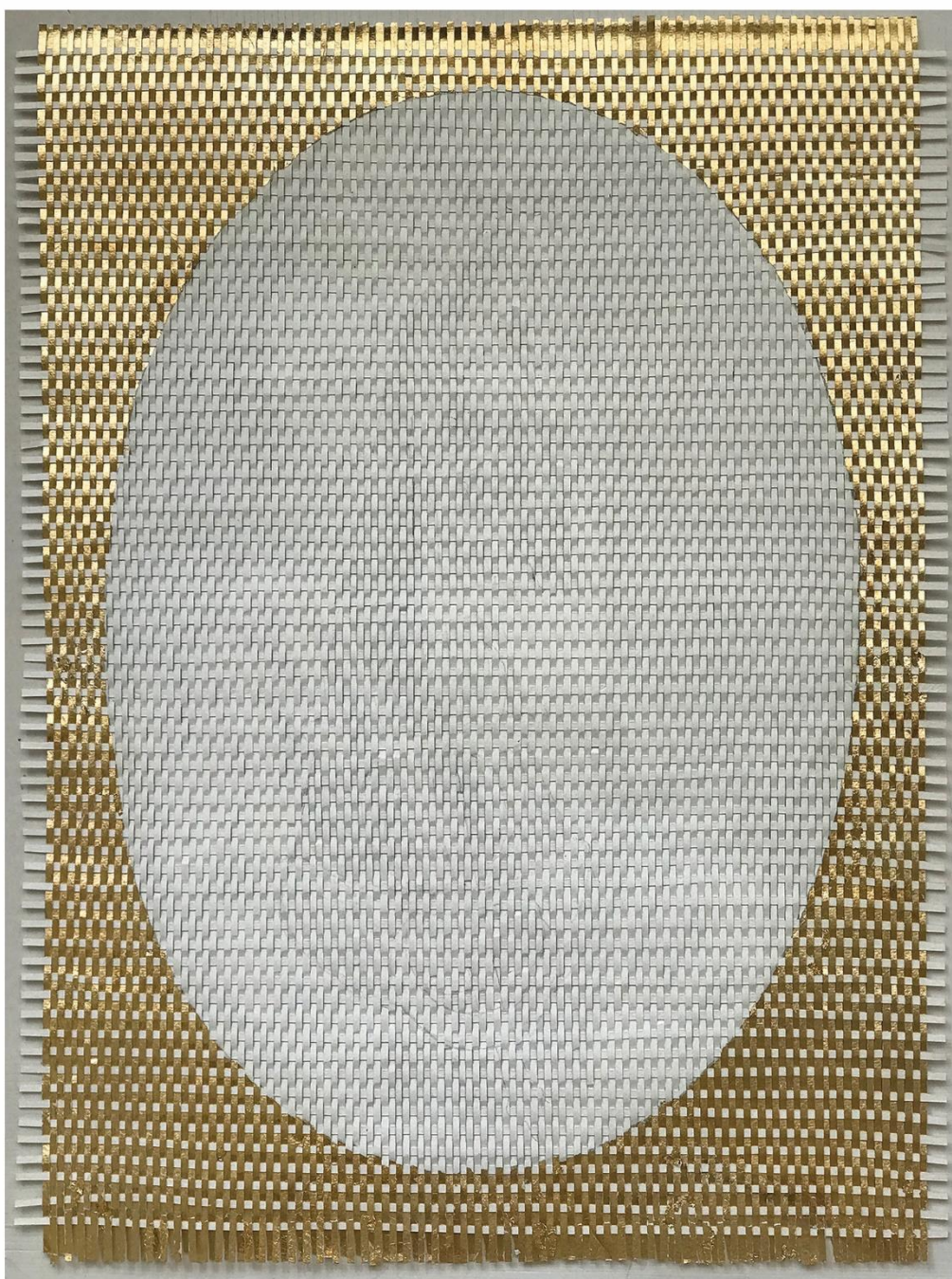
Ghulam Hussain is a contemporary visual artist from Hyderabad, Sindh, a region rich in the heritage of the Indus Valley Civilization. Trained in miniature painting at the National College of Arts (NCA), Lahore, Hussain's work challenges the boundaries between high art and low craft, reinterpreting traditional weaving and brick-building techniques within a contemporary artistic framework. Drawing from his Sindhi roots, he integrates artisanal weaving—historically considered "low craft" with the precision and aesthetics of miniature painting, creating a unique dialogue between tradition and modernity.

His technique, defined by simplicity, repetition, and geometric abstraction, opens new possibilities for both the artist and the viewer, transforming textile-based mediums into conceptual art. Hussain's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally at renowned institutions, including: Devi Art Foundation Museum (New Delhi, India), Fifth Beijing International Art Biennial (National Art Museum, China), Rockefeller Brothers Artist Residency (New York, USA), The Artist Students League Residency (New York, USA), Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (Pakistan), Satrang Art Gallery (Islamabad, Pakistan), Sanat Initiative (Karachi, Pakistan), Rohtas 2 Gallery (Lahore, Pakistan), O Art Space Gallery (Lahore, Pakistan), and ArtSoch Gallery (Lahore, Pakistan). Through his work, Hussain continues to explore the intersection of craft, abstraction, and cultural identity, positioning traditional techniques within contemporary global discourse.

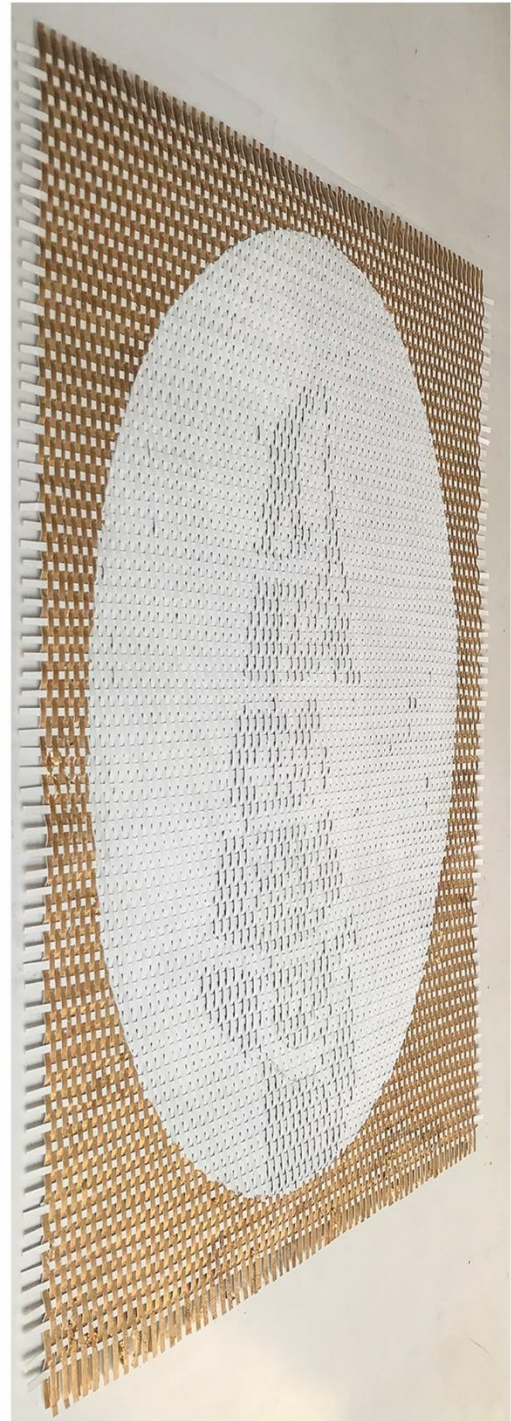
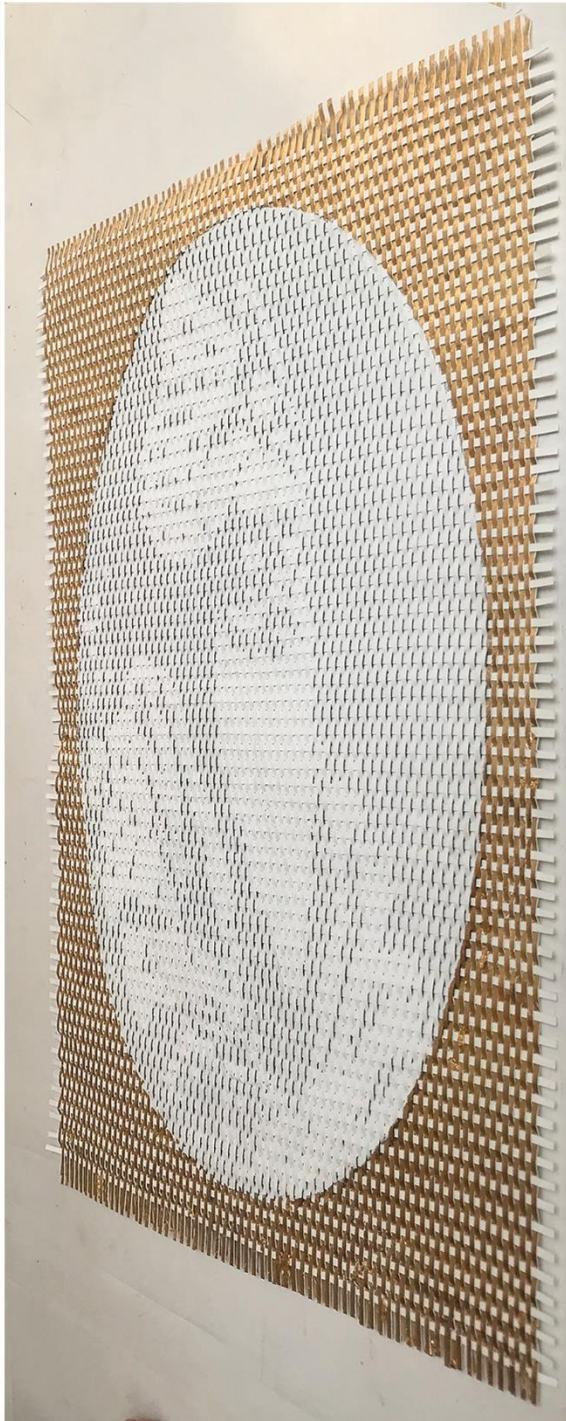
A Shifting Perspective Artist Statement:

This piece is an exploration of perspective, history, and identity. At first glance, it might seem like a simple woven artwork, but as you move around it, the image shifts revealing different aspects of a story deeply rooted in warrior spirit and leadership. One angle reveals the powerful presence of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, a ruler known not just for his conquests but for his vision of unity and strength. From another viewpoint, a warrior's cap emerges, a symbol of the countless fighters who stood on the frontlines, shaping history with their courage. The third perspective ties them together, reminding us that leadership and sacrifice are inseparable.

The weaving itself is a metaphor threads of gold and white interlacing like history, blending past and present, personal and collective memory. The textures and forms change depending on where you stand, just like our understanding of history shifts with perspective. Through this work, I want to invite viewers to engage, to move, to question how do we see our past? Who do we choose to remember? And how do these perspectives shape the way we define heroism today?



WARRIOR'S LEGACY (FRONT SIDE)
Gold,charcoal powder on woven paper | 16 x20 inches | 2025



WARRIOR'S LEGACY (RIGHT & LEFT SIDE)
Gold,charcoal powder on woven paper | 16 x20 inches | 2025



Hassnain Awais

Bio:

Hassnain Awais is an artist born and raised in Lahore. Graduated with the degree in fine arts, majored in printmaking, was awarded with honours in 2005. He has exhibited his work in various galleries nationally, such as Taseer Art Gallery, Khass gallery, Artchowk gallery karachi, Art scene Gallery, Rothas 2, Ijaz Gallery and more. Also took part in international exhibitions such as New York Art fair, Basement Art Gallery Dubai. He has worked as a faculty member in the printmaking department at National College Of Arts, Lahore and also at Punjab University's department of Art & Design. Currently working as a freelance artist and running an Independent printmaking studio by the name of Studio Hassnain providing other fellow printmakers a facility to do printmaking, alongside conducting workshops and residencies. Hassnain is also running a fashion photography and art direction studio by the name of Gadrang Designs.

Artist Statement:

Looking back at the past—with its ever-changing empires that rose and fell we begin to foresee patterns that shape the future. History often forgets the individuals behind these legacies, as narratives tend to prioritize certain eras, events, or ideologies, leaving others in the shadows. My work is inspired by An Equestrian Portrait of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, a depiction of a ruler in all his glory. The Sikh Empire, once a significant power in the Punjab region under his leadership, is now often a footnote in the broader story of empire and colonialism. In my piece, I have deliberately erased the figure of the Maharaja, leaving only the regal horse a symbol of his power, presence, and journey. This absence speaks volumes. It reflects how, over time, history can reduce grand narratives to fragments—glory without the man, journey without the name. It questions what we choose to remember, and what we allow to be forgotten.



A FLIGHT OF MEMORY's GWARDEN
Gouache on wasli | 22 x 28 inch | 2025



M. Noman Siddique



Sheema Khan

Bio:

M. Noman Siddique is a multidisciplinary artist based in Karachi, Pakistan. He Graduated from Central Institute of Art and Craft, Karachi in 2005 where he trained as a Painter. Currently in his practice he uses a satire particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues. He has widely exhibited in National & International shows to name a few he has most recently shown in The Comedy of Errors as solo project at Sanat Initiative, Karachi, Reexamine / Retrac a printmaking project at AAN Art Space & Museum, Karachi, 2021. Furthermore, he has shown at 2nd Karachi Biennale in 2019. He was invited to present his work at Como Museum of Art, Lahore in Self Portraits in the Age of Selfie in 2019 and Sugar Coated, London, 2018. Dil to Pagal Hai (the Heart Is Crazy) at Santa Initiative, Karachi 2017, Participated in the Imago Mundi Project incollaboration with Venice Biennale and KB Karachi Biennale, in 2017. He has his work in permanent collection of COMO Museum of Art, Lahore, German Consulate Karachi and (AKUH) Aga Khan Foundation, Karachi. Siddique has been part of the 4th Sanat Artist Residency, Karachi 2017 and Vast Artists' Association's Public Art Project in 2019 Loud Speaker Karachi. Currently he work as Visiting Faculty for the Department of Fine Art, Visual Studies (University of Karachi).

Sheema Khan (b.1982) is a Karachi based Visual artist. She holds a Master's degree in History 2020 and has received a distinction in Miniature Painting from Visual Studies department, Karachi University 2005. She has been on the visiting faculty at Karachi University, Department of Visual Studies. Sheema has participated in more than 50 group exhibitions international, and local shows and is highly sought after Artist in Pakistan. She is the recipient of Faiz Ahmed Faiz Award in 2011 (out 150+ artist) organized by Nukhta Magazine. She has also been covered by numerous publication including international articles surveying her work as innovative with a twist on the past. Her work exhibited in UK, UAE, Canada, Switzerland, Iran, Singapore and USA. She practiced mainly on traditional miniature with a fusion of contemporary socio political issues. Mostly of her work is the combination of 2d and 3d miniatures.

Artisy Statement:

This work is the result of a shared vision between Sheema Khan and Noman Siddique, uniting two distinct crafts to celebrate the golden era of Punjab. Sheema Khan has rendered Maharaja Ranjit Singh in exquisite miniature style, using traditional gouache on wasli. Through delicate brushwork and a rich palette, she captures his regal bearing, his spirit of tolerance, and the cultural renaissance she inspired. Noman Siddique has designed and fabricated the complementary metal frame, drawing upon Sikh-era motifs and architectural forms. His frame not only protects and accentuates the painting but also extends the narrative into three dimensions evoking the strength of the Lion of Punjab, and the enduring structural legacy of his reign. Together, our collaboration weaves image and object into a unified tribute: a visual and tactile encounter with a leader whose values of justice, unity, and grace continue to resonate. On this Museum Day, we invite viewers to engage with both the painted surface and its handcrafted frame, and to reflect on the timeless synergy between art and craft in preserving cultural memory.



RADIANCE OF THE LION HEART
Bronze gouache on wasli | 10 (h) x 6.5 (w) 1 (t)| 2025



M. Shahzad Tanveer Sufi

Bio:

Born in 1982 in Faisalabad, Muhammad Shahzad Tanveer Sufi is a practicing lawyer, poet, and visual artist based in Lahore. He earned his LLB from Punjab Law College (2007–2010) and LLM in 2018 has served as Deputy Registrar / Legal Representative at the National College of Arts, Lahore, since 2017. Immersed in a creative academic environment, Shahzad began his artistic journey in 2011 through photography and video. Deeply influenced by his legal background, he reinterprets case documents as visual surfaces treating each artwork like a courtroom narrative that evolves from dispute to verdict. His unique intersection of law and art earned him a place in SLICE LAHORE LONDON, a 2011 collaborative group show between artists from Pakistan and the UK, held in both London and Lahore. Beyond visual art, Shahzad's poetic sensibility has led him to write and recite poetry at various literary gatherings and "mushairas," where he is regularly invited to share his work. His verses reflect his introspective and humanistic worldview. He is the author of two legal books Pakistani Civil Drafting & Pleading (2012, 2016) and How to Draft Deeds & Documents (2013) and a contributor to Monthly Legal Affairs and NCA newsletters. Shahzad has participated in multiple exhibitions across Pakistan, including at PNCA, VM Art Gallery, Full Circle Gallery, and others. His diverse interests include reading, poetry, painting and music, enriching his multidisciplinary creative practice.

Artist Statement:

As a law graduate, practicing lawyer, and currently serving as Deputy Registrar / Legal Representative at the National College of Arts, Lahore, I have been deeply engaged with the world of art and architecture for over a decade. My interactions with renowned artists and creative students have inspired me to explore the intersection of law and art. I have been experimenting with artistic practices that reinterpret legal systems as artistic processes where legal cases unfold like layered compositions of color, line, and form. For me, art functions like a legal case file beginning with an issue, evolving through complexities, and culminating in a verdict. This journey mirrors life itself, with all its social, political, cultural, and spiritual undertones. My poetic inclination further shapes my expression; I write and recite poetry at literary events and Mushairas, giving voice to themes of justice, emotion, and humanity. Reimagining case documents as artistic expressions, I embrace both structured and spontaneous approaches. As a self-taught artist, I am not confined by formal methods. My art comes from the heart and soul, serving as a space of freedom and reflection. In a world dominated by materialism, I see art as a path toward liberation, inner peace, and universal human dignity.

بابا گرو نانک

نانک آیا نور لے آیا
پیارہ محبت، شہر لے آیا

محنت کو اس نے شان کہا
سچائی کو ایمان کہا

بھوکوں کے لب پر رکھا نوالہ
نفرت کا ہر زہر دھو ڈالا

ذات پات کے قتل توڑے
سب ایک ہی صف میں جوڑے

ظلمت میں اک چراغ جلایا
ہر دل میں محبت کا پیغام بسایا

نام جپے، نیکی اپنائی
ہر دم خدمت راہ بنائی

نانک کی باتیں زندہ ہیں صوفی
محبت کا درس ہمیشہ ہے باقی

شہزاد تنویر صوفی

مہاراجہ رنجیت سنگھ

پنجاب کی مٹی کا وہ انچر تھا
شجاعت کا سورج، آہن سوار تھا

فرقوں کی دیوار، نہ نفرت کی راہ
انصاف کا سایہ، وہ الفت کا لہ

جہاں غم دیکھا، وہیں لٹ گیا
ہر اک بے بہارا کا حال دیا

نہ ہمد، نہ مکہ، نہ مسلم کی بات
انسانیت کی بات، اور مساوت

عدالت میں اس کی جگہ کا ہنر
نہ دھوت، نہ طاقت، نہ جھوٹ و جبر

جو مظلوم آیا، وہ محفوظ تھا
ہر کوئی زندگی سے محفوظ تھا

اگر ترس بیٹھتے کا منظر بنا
"گولڈن ٹیمپل" کا معرہ تھا

جنتِ لاد کو روٹی بخشی
شہر کی ہر اک گلی کھری

کلیں و پٹار کی لہجہ اس کی تھی
سرحدِ ملتان پہ مہر اس کی تھی

کوہِ نور بھی اس کی سلطنت میں رہا
"پنجاب کی عظمت کا روشن دیا

"مٹی، نہ دریا، نہ ہرنی گوند
وہ تھا عدل و نہایت کا رُعب گوند

شہزادہ مرنوی



M.Umer Jamil

Bio:

He born in Lahore. He graduated from National College of Arts Rawalpindi in miniature painting 2021. His art works have exhibited The New Odyssey in PNCA 2021, 3rd National Exhibition of Visual Arts in Alhamra Art Gallery 2021. Untitled Show in Rangrez Gallery and Karbath 04 Artist Residency 2021, Around the Corner 18th Alhamra young artist's exhibition 2022 and Arriving 19th Alhamra young artist's exhibition in 2023, Lahore Museum a tribute to the eminence Allah Bux Timeless Elegance 2023 and Reimagined contemporay art and ecology at Fakir Khana Museum 2024. He currently works in Lahore.

Artist Statement:

As an artist, I strive to create paintings that communicate first to myself, and then to others the magnificent relationship between nature and human life. Before I begin painting, I spend as much time as possible interacting with the precise object I intend to replicate on canvas. Currently, my work contrasts human life with nature. By selecting an element like the rose, I deconstruct and reassemble it in a way that reveals its quiet resemblance to our own existence. As we witness the rose's journey from blossom to doom, viewers may glimpse the human condition the silent arc of struggle, from birth to death. In The Last Light, clouds gather not in sorrow, but in reverence. Enlightened rays descend gently upon a single rose, casting their glow on the funeral (godri) shawl of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. This is not just a historical reference, but a symbolic meeting of legacy, light, and loss. The rose speaks of grace in grief. The rays, of divine presence. The shawl, a silent heirloom of memory. Together, they form a moment suspended between earth and sky a farewell to a great ruler, and a meditation on the impermanence we all share. This painting is my offering a surface where nature mourns, light remembers, and the human journey is gently honored.



THE LAST NIGHT
Gouache on wasli | 10.3 x 8.7 inches | 2025



Sarah Ahmad

Bio:

Sarah Ahmad is a graduate of the National College of Arts, and multi-media artist with a MA in Arts Education and MFA (2015, Memphis College of Art), in the United States. Currently based in the American Southwest, Ahmad has exhibited world-wide, including: the Sharjah Art Museum; James Gallery, CUNY Graduate Center, New York; Bates Museum in New England; Delhi Contemporary Art Week; 1x1 Gallery, Dubai; Manchester's Asia Triennial; OKPop and Gilcrease Museums in Tulsa; Rohtas and Koel galleries and Lahore Museum in Pakistan. Ahmad has forthcoming shows at Glyndor Gallery, WaveHill, New York and a solo show at Koel Gallery, Karachi. She has been awarded numerous residencies, including recent fellowships at Art Omi, NY (2025), Santa Fe Art Institute (2024), NARS foundation, NYC (2024), Tulsa Artist Fellowship (2019–2023), and the Virginia Center of Creative Arts (2023). Her work has been featured in mainstream art and academic publications (USA Today, NPR's Gallery America, PBS NewsHour; ARTnews, Bomb; American Alliance of Museums; MIT Press). Her research projects have been funded by organizations including Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Andy Warhol Foundation. Ahmad's solo show Struggles in Art & Radical Becoming at Alhambra Arts Center, was just hosted by the 2025 Faiz Festival and Lahore Literary Festival in Lahore.

Artist Statement:

Acts of Reclamation draws inspiration from Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Gatra (sword holder) and Kamar Kasa (sash), uncovering shared visual language through patterns found in textiles and crafts across Pakistan. Embroidered motifs on traditional caps from Northern Pakistan mirror those on the Maharaja's attire, forming a symbolic dialogue across cultures and eras, showing human connections through shared art forms and expressions. My work is rooted in notions of Sacred Geometry and pattern as both building block and unifying force underpinning existence. I investigate interconnectivity through recurring patterns in nature and human-made designs. In Acts of Reclamation, site-specific installation layers these caps over a geometric collage of rocks from Gilgit-Baltistan. I recognize pattern as both a social force and aesthetic experience. As the world conflates socially, politically, environmentally, what can pattern offer us? In a fractured world, pattern becomes a visual language of unity, linking the local with the global, the personal with the cosmic, illustrating the connective tissue binding us to one another and to the earth.



ACTS OF RECLAMATION

Digitally manipulated photos printed on Matt Litho paper with archival inks
| 9.5 x 18.1 inches | 2025



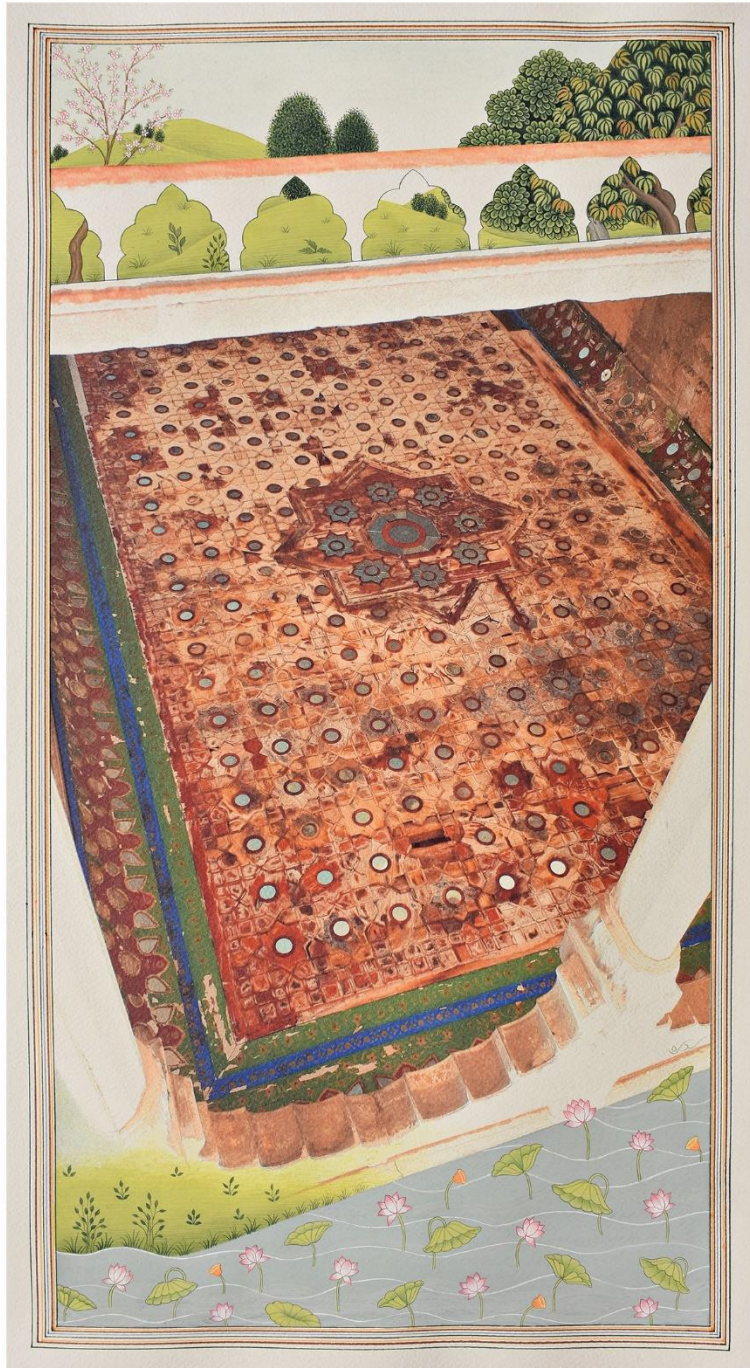
Sidra Liaqat

Bio:

Sidra Liaqat is an educator, research scholar, and visual artist based in Lahore, Pakistan. She completed her BFA and MS in Fine Arts, earning gold medals in both the degrees from Lahore College for Women University (LCWU) in 2011 and 2014, respectively. In 2025, she achieved the degree of PhD in Fine Arts from the same institution. Currently, she serves as an Assistant Professor of Visual Arts at the Institute of Design & Visual Arts, LCWU. Alongside her academic role, she is an active visual practitioner with a primary interest in miniature painting. Her work has been exhibited extensively, both locally and internationally. She has participated in numerous group exhibitions, an artist residency, and held an international solo exhibition in China. Her portfolio has been published in the prestigious journal *Visual Communication Quarterly* by Taylor & Francis. She has received multiple national awards in recognition of her creative expression. Her work is held in the collections of various art enthusiasts and collectors.

Artist Statement:

My work is rooted in the exploration of cultural memory, architectural legacy, and the traditional visual language of Sikh heritage in the Indian Subcontinent. The Athdara Pavilion at Lahore Fort is an architectural remnant from the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, that embodies a significant chapter in the cultural and political history of the Region. The decorative ceiling of the Pavilion bears traces of imperial aesthetics and grandeur, echoing the splendor of Sikh patronage. By amalgamating the landscape traditions of Indian miniature painting with the ornate structure, my work serves as both homage and response, creating a visual dialogue between architecture and environment, permanence and transience. This juxtaposition reimagines historical forms, merging Sikh architectural heritage with the poetic intimacy of miniature painting. Through this synthesis, the work reflects on the enduring glory of the Sikh cultural past and its lasting imprint on the present layered, resilient, and harmoniously interwoven across time.



SIKH HERITAGE REIMAGINED
Gouache on wasli | 9.5 x 18.1 inches | 2025



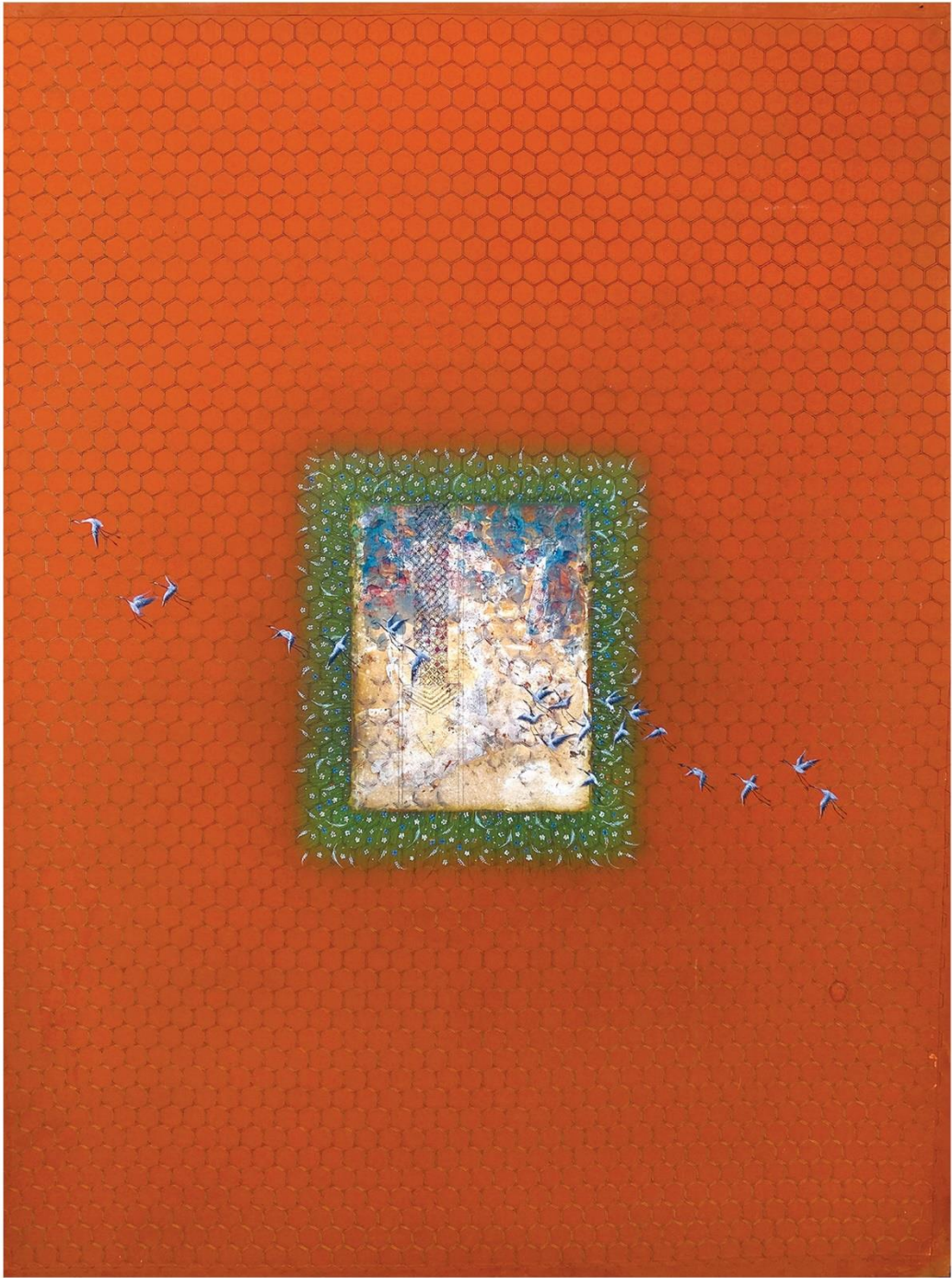
Rahim Baloch

Bio:

Rahim Baloch is a miniature artist from Noshki, Baluchistan, and a graduate of the National College of Arts, Lahore, where he earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts with Distinction and received the Best Artist Award in 2014. He has held six solo exhibitions and participated in numerous group exhibitions both nationally and internationally. Two of his artworks have been acquired for permanent museum collections—one at the Vines Museum through the Amago Mundi Project, and the other at the Bursa Museum in Turkey. His work is a profound exploration of love, nature, and resilience, conveyed through the intricate discipline of miniature painting. Using fine squirrel hair brushes on wasli paper, his process is both meditative and labor-intensive. Each painting involves countless brushstrokes to create delicate layers of color and detail, establishing a deep, personal connection between the artwork and himself. Rooted in the tradition of Mughal miniature painting, his practice expands into contemporary themes and personal narratives, blending timeless techniques with emotional depth.

Artist Statement:

In this painting, I've imagined a symbolic garden at the center — a sanctuary composed of layered textures, embellished with silver leaf, and surrounded by delicate floral motifs. This garden serves as a space of remembrance and reflection, evoking the fragile yet enduring beauty of memory. Scattered across the composition are numerous Konj birds (Demoiselle Crane) in mid-flight, a visual metaphor for journey, migration, and the fleeting nature of time. These birds are more than figures in motion; they represent stories carried across distances, silent witnesses to the passage of life and the persistence of spirit. The inspiration for this work came from the Faqir Khana Museum collection, where I encountered the Gatra (sword holder) once used by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Though still and silent, the object held the weight of a life once lived — a personal history transformed into a relic. It stirred something deeply within me: the awareness that life itself is a memory we carry, and that each of us leaves behind a unique archive of moments. This painting is a meditation on that realization — that every life, like a bird in flight, is in constant motion, leaving behind traces of beauty, struggle, and remembrance.



A FLIGHT OF MEMORY'S GARDEN
Gouache on wasli | 22 x 28 inches | 2025



Ozma Bhatti



Faiza Bhatti

Bio:

Ozma Bhatti is a visual artist and independent curator who has been actively engaged in the art world for over a decade. She graduated with a degree in Fine Arts from the National College of Arts, Lahore, in 2009, where she showcased her thesis work *Two Shades of Grey*. Her artistic journey spans a variety of platforms, including significant contributions to the Lahore Museum. Ozma's work has been featured in numerous group exhibitions across Pakistan and internationally. Notable venues include Alhamra Art Gallery, Lahore (2010, 2013, 2015, 2018), Rohtas Gallery, Islamabad (2012), Lahore City Heritage Museum (2014), Ejaz Gallery, Lahore (2015), Art Scene Gallery, Karachi (2016, 2021), and Art Chowk, Karachi (2019). Her international presence includes an online exhibition in the Philippines (2022). More recent showcases include *Timeless Elegance* at Lahore Museum (2023), *Moving Dots* at Art Scene Gallery Karachi (2023), *Reimagined: Contemporary Art and Ecology* at Fakir Khana Museum, Lahore (2024) and *Cultural Heritage at Risk: Climate Change, Museum Sustainability and The Way Forward* at Lahore Museum 2025.

Faiza Bhatti, born in Lahore, is a visual artist and museum professional who has been actively involved in the museum field since 2017. She earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Beaconhouse National University, Lahore, in 2015. Faiza Bhatti has participated in various group exhibitions across Pakistan and internationally. Her early exhibitions include the Color Art Gallery, Lahore (2014), and Alhamra Art Gallery, Lahore (2015, 2017, 2018). She has also exhibited at Art Chowk, Karachi (2018), and Luna Galleria in the Philippines (2022). Her recent curatorial and artistic contributions include the special exhibition *Timeless Elegance: A Tribute to Ustad Allah Bux* at the Lahore Museum (2023), *Reimagined: Contemporary Art and Ecology* at Fakir Khana Museum (2024), and *Cultural Heritage at Risk: Climate Change, Museum Sustainability, and the Way Forward* at the Lahore Museum (2025).

Artists Statement:

For this exhibition, we have chosen to focus on Maharani Jind Kaur's shawl, an exquisite piece from the Sikh collection that reflects both royal elegance and the artistry of her time. The shawl's finely detailed paisley pattern, a traditional motif symbolizing fertility and life, particularly caught our attention. Its rich red and green color palette, often associated with power, vitality, and harmony, inspired us to reimagine this textile legacy into a contemporary jewelry piece. By transforming the paisley design into an ornamental form, we aim to honor Rani Jindan Kaur's strength and resilience as the last queen of the Sikh Empire. She was not only a symbol of royal grace but also a political figure who fought bravely for her son's throne. Through this jewelry piece, the intricate curves of the paisley pattern are reinterpreted in metal and enamel, preserving the aesthetic and emotional power of the original shawl. Our work serves as a tribute to the female voices of history, blending heritage with personal expression. This transformation of textile to ornament reflects how historical objects can continue to inspire new forms of storytelling, connecting the past with contemporary identity and design.



THE LAST QUEEN'S LEGACY
Silver and Stones | 1.5 x 2 inches | 2025



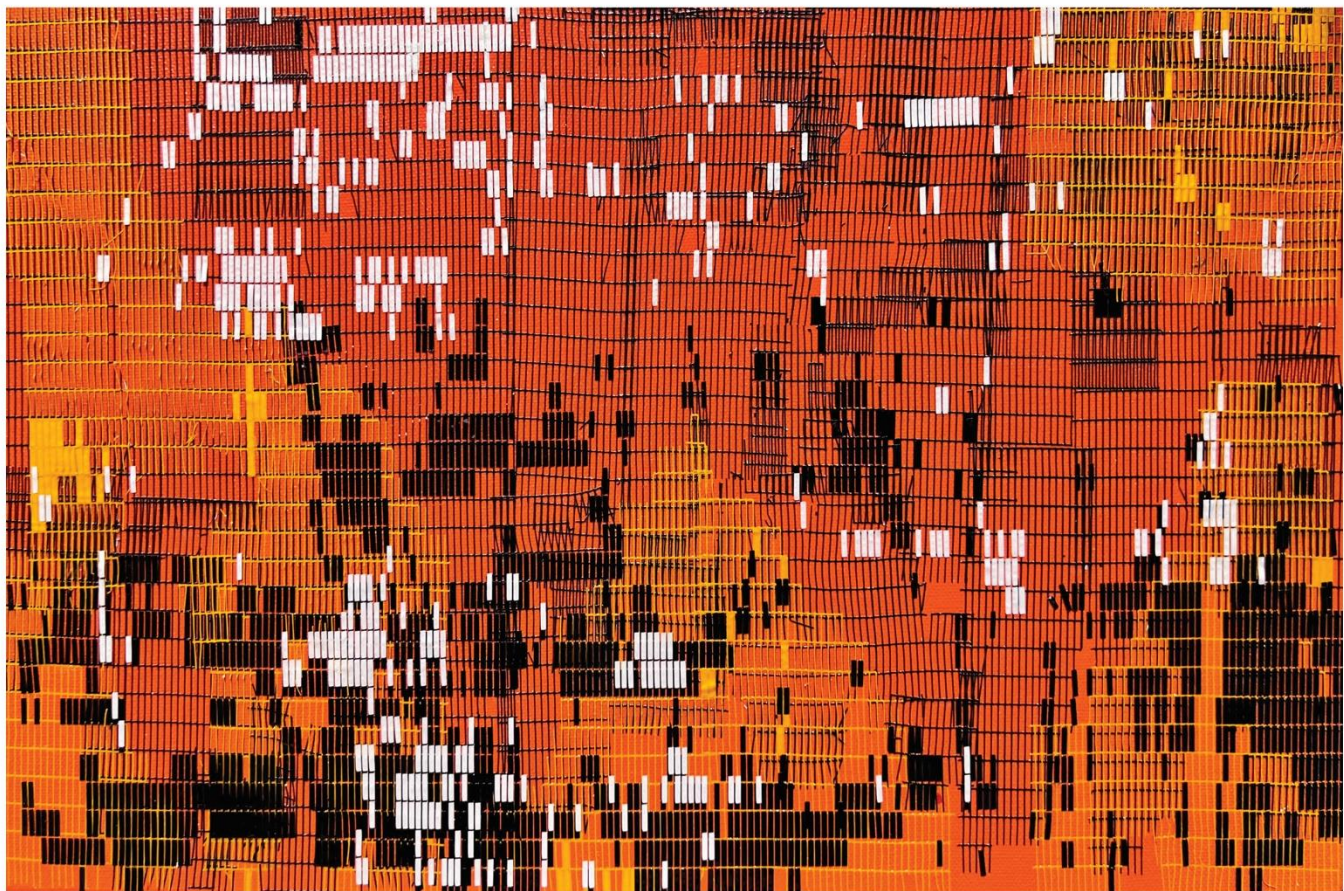
Yaseen khan

Bio:

Yaseen Khan is a visual artist currently based in Lahore, Pakistan. He completed his BFA from the National College of Arts, Lahore, in 2019, where he was awarded a Distinction. From the very beginning, showcasing immense talent and an avid interest in art, he was driven to pursue a career in it. Khan has showcased his artworks in the Young Artist Exhibition in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2021. He has also taken part in a group show at the Zahoor Ul Akhlaq Gallery, Lahore, in 2016. Khan also participated in "Real and its Double" in 2018, held at the French Embassy, Islamabad, where he was awarded First Position and subsequently had the opportunity to travel to Paris. Khan has also exhibited works at O Art Space, Lahore, Sanat Gallery, Karachi, Canvas Gallery, Karachi, and the Lahore Biennale 2020. Selected artworks of his are housed within the permanent collection of the Ambiance Boutique Art Hotels. He has been involved in Power of Art and Articulate Residencies in collaboration with HQ Art Foundation, Lahore. Khan was also part of a public art project under the Lahore Biennale Foundation.

Artist Statement:

My artwork is very personal to me; it is the outcome of my experiences, travels, and relationships I have built over the years. Growing up in both Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and now living in Punjab, I am able to absorb the vast cultural landscapes they have to offer. From a very young age, I worked as a mechanic and also decorated trucks with Chamak Patti (a medium used to decorate trucks in Pakistan). Through this medium, I was able to study aesthetics and cultural nuances between various regions and styles that a normal inhabitant may not be able to differentiate. I learned the skills from various Ustads over the years and converted the skill into an art practice after learning from the best artists in Pakistan at the National College of Arts, Lahore. My abstract patterns, lines, colors, and imagery of objects stem from adoration and respect for manual work as an artist, mechanic, and craftsman. My practice triggers in me questions regarding various art forms that exist around us and helps me to use a very common and understandable language of expression to create art while being relevant and embedded in the traditions and history of Pakistan.



UNVEILING THE HIDDEN
Chamak patti on canvas | 10 x 15 inches | 2025

Faqir Khana Museum:

Under the patronage of Faqir Saifuddin, a group of skilled miniature artists undertook the significant task of visually documenting Sikh oral histories. As a respected courtier and a key figure in interfaith dialogue during the Sikh Empire, Saifuddin received rich narrative accounts from his own family members, who served in the Sikh court. These stories rooted in personal memory and lived experience were translated into miniature paintings through intricate brushwork and symbolic detail. The resulting artworks not only depict historical events and legendary figures but also embody the spirit of cultural syncretism and mutual respect that defined the era. Today, these miniatures serve as rare and invaluable visual records, bridging oral tradition with enduring artistic expression.

Artists: Faqir Syed Hasnain uddin, Irum Zahid, Saima Shaheen, Sana Kareem, Shahbaz Saifi and Rabia Biaji



SHAHBAZ SAIFI
SUPREME COUNCIL OF MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH
Gouache on wasli | 21X27 inches | 2025



SAIMA SHAHEEN
MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH
Gouache on wasli | 9 x 12 inches | 2025



SAIMA SHAHEEN
MAHARAJA SHER SINGH
Gouache on wasli | 9 x 12 inches | 2025



SAIMA SHAHEEN
MAHARANI MEHTAB KAUR
Gouache on wasli | 9 x 12 inches | 2025



RABIA BIAJI
BABA GURU NANAK
Watercolor on Paper | 10 x 13.5 inches | 2025



RABIA BIAJI
BABA FARID & BABA GURU NANAK
Watercolor on Paper | 10 x 13.5 inches | 2025



FAKIR KHANA
MUSEUM

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