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Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

by [Fawzia Naqvi](#)

Welcome Readers to the October issue of ArtNow. I'm happy to announce that this month we celebrate our 6th Anniversary as an online magazine dedicated to the documenting and archiving of contemporary art in Pakistan, and my heartiest congratulations and well wishes go out to our team, our contributors and all those involved in bringing us to where we are today. I would especially like to express a big thank you to ArtNow's editor, Quddus Mirza. A Professor and Head of the Fine Art department at the National College of Arts, Lahore, Quddus has always worked diligently in making sure we provide our readers with a thorough and exciting issue every month. The ArtNow team continues to ensure an in depth coverage of all that is happening in the Pakistani art world. I would also like to thank our readers, as the growth we have experienced would not have been possible without their relentless support. As we continue to move forward with our mission of offering critical insight into the art of Pakistan, both within the country and its diaspora, we also reflect on this incredible journey of 6 years with pride. Not only has the magazine continued to improve in quality, but has established an unchallenged authority as a platform for meaningful discourse on current Pakistani art practices by engaging with its audience through various art events, artist talks, panel discussions, and exhibitions. As the Pakistani art scene grows, it becomes imperative for platforms such as these to serve as its voice among an even wider audience in the global



arena. Throughout these past six years we have ensured a unique perspective and intellectual grit every month with essays, photo essays, profiles, interviews, studio visits, reviews and news from galleries all around the world for a comprehensive insight into the art of today.

It is a great honor to see Pakistani artists achieving great things abroad. A big congratulation to Shahzia Sikander for being chosen as one of the members for the Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments and Markers. This diverse group, consisting of visual artists, architects, professors etc. has been chosen to advise the New York mayor on issues surrounding public art and monuments around the city. Important conversations have sprung about historical representations in public art and it is the job of this group of experts to create guidelines that are inclusive of the complexities of history and the concerns of the New Yorkers.

Internationally acclaimed artists, Maha Ahmed Qureshi and Muhammad Zeeshan participated in the Ci Contemporary Istanbul fair earlier this September. Both artists exhibited exceptional pieces at a booth held by London based gallery, Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery. Later on this month, we witnessed the opening of a solo show by another Pakistani artist, Adeel uz Zafar. Zafar displayed his new body of work titled, 'Hell, Purgatory and Paradise' at the FOST Gallery in Singapore. Based on the Dante's 14th century epic poem, this artist created monochromatic pieces that have seemed to greatly reduce in size compared to his previous oeuvre but continues to captivate all the same. Lahore based artist, Waqas Khan recently displayed his message of love through his first solo show at the Manchester Art Gallery. His work was received with warmth by the audience especially his public art installation, '*Khusamdeed*'.

ABRAAJ art prizewinner, Risham Syed's solo show just opened at the Manchester Art Gallery featuring her postcard sized paintings of urban Lahore. Her exquisite small scale works speak of love and loss in the context of ones city as she replaces picture-perfect postcard images with recently built houses and their unfinished back walls, marring the beauty of this old city. The artist criticizes the large scale construction and the neglected beauty of her beloved hometown.

Congratulations to Ghulam Muhammad, the recipient of the Jameel Prize 4 of the Victoria & Albert Museum which is currently being displayed in Gwangju, South Korea. Since the opening of this travelling show at Asia Culture Center (ACC), it has attracted over 50,000 visitors. The show will now travel to A. Kasteyev State Museum of Arts in Almaty, Kazakhstan next month and will be open to the public from

29th of October to 7th of January 2018. This is the first time that the Jameel Prize has launched at an external venue and the exhibition will in future rotate between the V&A and guest venues around the world. The Jameel Prize is an international award for contemporary art and design inspired by Islamic tradition. It aims to explore the link between contemporary art and traditional Islamic design as part of the wider debate about Islamic culture and its present-day role.

The Frieze London and Frieze Masters, two coinciding art fairs in London are scheduled to begin on the 5th of October 2017 at Regents Park. Featuring 160 of the world's leading art galleries, the programme will include the critically acclaimed and well-anticipated Frieze Projects and Frieze Artist Award, as well as a number of talks and panel discussions, site specific works performances by renowned contemporary artists, film and music. I look forward in particular to the "Sex Work: Feminist Art & Radical Politics" exhibit which will feature works by radical female artists since the 1960s. Presented by the Loewe Foundation, the Frieze fairs remain one of the most influential art events of the year where visitors can view and buy artworks by some of the most renowned artists from around the world.

Set to coincide with Frieze London, Shehzad Dawood Studio will host private viewings to inaugurate the new studio space with a selection of the artist's most recent body of work, Leviathan Cycle, as well as works from previous series. The Leviathan series was recently shown in Venice, Italy as part of the Venice Biennale 2017. It marked the launch of *Leviathan*, a ten-part film cycle conceived and directed by Dawood that will unfold over the next three years. In dialogue with a wide range of marine biologists, oceanographers, political scientists, neurologists and trauma specialists, *Leviathan* explores notions of marine welfare, migration and mental health and their possible interconnections. The new studio is located at Ink Court and the viewings will be held by appointment daily.

Among teasers sprouting up all over Karachi Biennale's social media, I anxiously await what they have in store. The dedication of managing trustee of the KBT, Niilofer Farrukh is evident through the first biennial held in Karachi. Without her aegis, this event would not be possible. The curatorial team, headed by the extremely talented Amin Gulgee, is hard at work handling several artists, both national and international, and spaces, which includes the Foundation of Museum of Modern Art. They have also secured iconic curator Paolo de Grandis as their international guest- curator for the biennale, who is also a pioneer curator for the Venice Biennale as well as the founder of OPEN, an exhibition of sculpture and installation, of which Amin Gulgee was a part of earlier this month.

As part of the Vasl Rooftop Series and in support of KB17, Vasls' Artists Association hosted a talk titled, 'The Hospital and the Cinema'. This conversation was held between Karachi based curator/art critic, Zarmeene Shah and Canadian artist, Althea Thauberger. There was a discussion about her previous works in Prague, Czech Republic. Similarly, another talk will be held on October 3, 2017 with another international artist, Stephen Sheehan titled, 'This Could Go On For Awhile...'. Based in Liverpool, Sheehan's works with performance, film and video in his practice. Both artists are also currently working on upcoming projects for the Karachi Biennale.

Preparations are underway at the Mohatta Palace Museum for a Retrospect to the late, great Imran Mir. This show titled, 'Alchemist of Line' is scheduled for October 20, 2017 and will display the artist's works during the years. Imran Mir was an artist, sculptor and designer whose work confused the art critics of his time. His art was described as cutting edge, as such bold displays of modernism and minimalism was never before seen. Mir became known as the artist who dared to experiment with colour and planes and one of the major driving forces behind the inception of the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, as well as being actively involved in setting up the first Museum of Modern Art in Pakistan and several philanthropies such as the Citizens Foundation.

Munaqqash has been an on-going public art project on an abandoned canteen at National Museum, Karachi initiated by I AM Karachi. Execution on site began on 15th July'2017. The sole purpose of this project is to involve the general public in the process of art making and increase public engagement in the arts through workshops at schools and motivating volunteers from different art schools. So far four workshops has been conducted including The Garage School, SMB Fatima Jinnah Government Girls School, Khatoon-e-Pakistan Government Girls School and Arts Council, Karachi. This project is a continuation of the Heidelberg project initiated in 1986 by artist Tyree Guyton. In connection with Heidelberg project, work was done with mainly found objects while depicting the vibrant local culture. Several every day elements can be seen installed on the walls and arches. Vibrancy of this execution can be seen from the entrance of National Museum. Its opening reception was held on September 14, 2017.

Aisha Khalid is hard at work at the Islamabad Airport on her mural piece designed for a space near passport control. The gigantic work looks magnificent on her social media and I look forward to viewing it at its completion when it is inaugurated. As the first initiative of the Khurran Kasim Art Foundation, Delfina Foundation is offering a three month residency to Pakistani Artists. This open call application offers the chosen artist to engage with United Kingdom's art and culture. This residency is opened to the

emerging talent of the country and is a great opportunity for their practice to progress. Deadline for applications in November 17, 2017.

The fifth project of the Drawing Documents series headed by Seher Naveed was held in the beginning of September at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture. Titled 'The Impossibility of Loving a Stone', the gallery displayed the works of artist-duo, Omer Wasim and Saira Sheikh. Simple and beautifully executed, the show was a perfect example of the late Saira Sheikh's message living on. The reception was also a space for the publication launch of the first four projects held earlier which included artists, Suleman Khilji, Moeen Farooqi, Yasser Vayani and Saba Khan. This ongoing series looks at various drawing practices used as research in Pakistan.

Chawkandi Art recently hosted the opening reception for Abdul Jabbar Gull's solo exhibit. 'Winged Thoughts' displayed a delightful array of sculptural pieces by the renowned artist. Artist-cum-curator, Roohi Ahmed took on the new gallery space at Koel and held a group show titled, 'Botany of Desire'. A blend of recent and renowned artists, the show displayed intriguing work and included greats like, Noorjehan Bilgrami, Durriya Kazi and Meher Afroz. The Foundation of Museum of Modern Art also inaugurated a solo exhibition by upcoming artist, Asad Kamran. Studying architecture in London, Kamran pours out his soul onto his canvases, which were displayed during his show, 'Expression'. Events such as these continue to allow artists to create intriguing discourse with their viewers as well as allow the progress of contemporary art practice.

With heavy hearts we say goodbye to Tassaduq Sohail, a master of his generation. The artist passed away on the October 2nd, 2017. His work will forever be remembered, with his iconic use of trees and females in his canvases. He was one of Pakistan's finest contemporaries of painting with an unmatched style and practice. Sohail's ever-intriguing life will continue to live on in his work. Gone but never forgotten.

Farewell readers, until next time.



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