

Escaping Realms

curated by Noor Fatima

a.r.t.



by Fatima Hamid

Curator's statement

Noor Fatima, a-rt.uk

"Escaping Realms" is a thought provoking show by sixteen extremely talented artists of Pakistan. This show highlights the power of important characteristics of human mind; its strength to explore and its ability to imagine, within ourselves, as individuals and more importantly as part of a community. The artists have used diverse mediums including sculpture, painting, and miniature among others to produce artworks. Their work, on thorough comprehension, is powerful enough to make the audience ponder upon the concept of being, its meaning and the process of transformation of life.

The artists in this exhibition are deeply motivated by various untold perspectives of their personal journeys of life. They seem inspired by both, their immediate environment and social interactions, and their internal feelings and synergic thoughts. These artists' work is a proof that, through their art practices, they strive to make peace within themselves to understand the essence of life, and to understand the process of staying alive; by holding onto the strengths from past and by finding new strengths in the future.

Accepting the existence of numerous perspectives among individuals, and its importance in understanding life is another major thought that arises in mind of viewers through the imagery created by these talented individuals. This concept itself is very close to my heart and I believe everyone should realize the differences among humans and embrace it as a reality. For this show, these skilled artists have fantastically covered above described concepts and theories about life in their art works, through multiple mediums.



Foreword

Fatima Hameed, 8B2

I take great pleasure in holding this group show curated by Noor Fatima, 'Escaping Realms' at 8b2. I am extremely excited to exhibit a group show by sixteen talented artists across Pakistan. Escaping Realms, is a show consisting of multidisciplinary artists who have worked out the theme in fine art and sculpture.

8B2 was conceived primarily as a space for displaying my hand painted silks and my friends arts and crafts. Slowly over the last year and a half the gallery has grown and become the focus of new emerging artists.

Looking Forward!

Director's statement

Shahjahan Bozdar, a-rt.uk

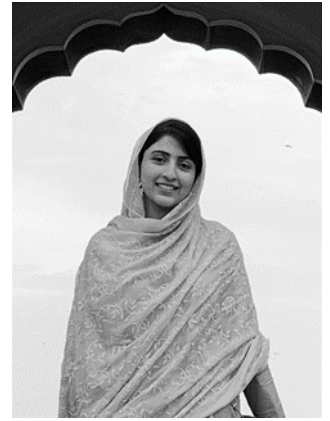
a-rt.uk is delighted to present, "Escaping Realms" a fantastic show by sixteen talented artists across Pakistan in collaboration with 8b2, Islamabad. All the artists in this exhibition are highly motivated by various untold perspectives of their personal journeys of life, through multiple mediums. The artists have skilfully used traditional techniques to create something unconventional. Their detailed imagery goes beyond the orthodox and delves into intrinsic directions.

a-rt.uk is committed to promote unique and extraordinary art globally. As a UK based gallery, we have a responsibility to continuously strive to promote the young emerging talent. We are extremely proud to showcase the amazing, thoughtful & exquisite artworks of the sixteen talented and skilled artists from Pakistan. Our heartfelt gratitude to art lovers community around the world for their continuous support and appreciation towards artists and their exceptional work.



Afreen Fatima

My idea of work started with my substantial obsession with the sky. Sky isn't a singular noun in my opinion; it's everything, it's enough it's everywhere. The colourful bloom of temporary lights in the sky is of emotions, of solitude and of desire, of the colours seen from here, the colours of where you are not. "In the sky, there are always answers and explanations for everything; every pain, every suffering, joy and confusion." Ishmael Beah said. "A way to feel the connection with the cherished who are physically absent and reside elsewhere with longitudinal divisions. Leaving me with a constant state of longing. Although the longest distance between two places is time, I am convinced that the sky liberates you to endure any circumstance and reach across any distance, through words or imagination".



Something Familiar,
Gouache on wasli, 14" x 16"
2019



Ahsan Memon

The portraits I make are of living beings and yet they appear like plants that shed leaves and grow new ones and are silently existing, yet very much alive. There is a sense of decay and gradual disappearance in the work something that happens naturally in the cycle of life that humans are a part of. The hyper-focus on technique in which I approach my practice helps in filtering out inspirations and feelings and keep my focus in the act of making itself which I find infinitely therapeutic. My inquisition into the medium has let my mind wander away from the pressures of keeping concept and image-meaning at the forefront, which has helped me to create a free and floating visual vocabulary.



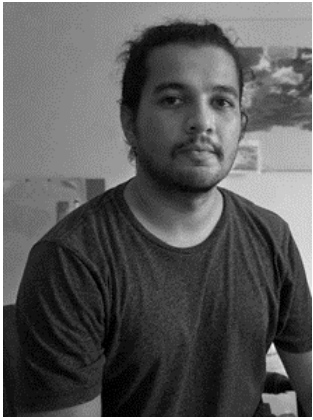
Untitled (reflection series),
Oils on canvas, 18.5" x 18.5"
2022

Ayaz Memon

My artwork is a reflection emotions, memories and shows understanding, interpretation of my life experiences. The world that surrounds me has been an important influence on my imagery. I have painted portraits of my family members, friends at different ages as well as different locations in Pakistan that I remember from my past, all the figures I create are myself in a way. They reflect my cultural upbringing, personal feelings and the outside world. I fuse classical concepts and traditional techniques into my work. These figures reflect the history of our background.

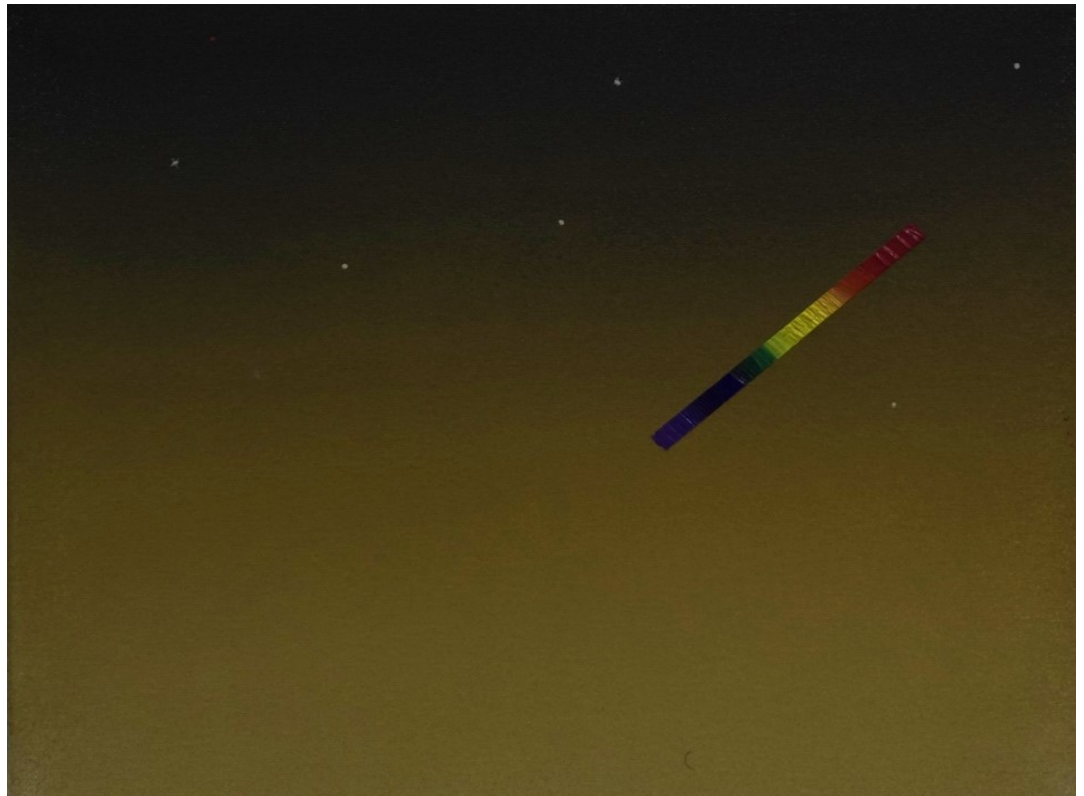


Source of mind,
Oils on canvas, 24" x 30"
2022



Faraz Aamer Khan

My artistic concerns involve reflection and resonance. My main body of work is to approach and experience human existence and the endeavours surrounding it. To take the structures and histories we create in order to better understand our, and specifically my own, place in the universe. Medium across medium, visual to visual, it's all an exercise to affirm and question everything



Making Parallels,
Acrylics on canvas, 12" x 16",
2022

Faten Suleman

My recent art pieces are a visual journal of my memories that have affected or changed me, thus all of my work carries a part of me until recently when I realized how we think life has been drafted in indelible ink and feel we can't go back to obliterate the past, tweak our errors or fill in the lost opportunities. When the moment ends our fate is sealed, but if we look closely we realize that the ink never really dries.

Think of the past in a way that is not only nostalgia and regret. The questioning that encircle our past experiences allows us to analyze and accept them in a new light. As our mind evolves, with each hindsight we see these experiences from different perspective allowing them to morph and form a new meaning whilst remaining consistent on its origin. By doing so, we can look fairly at a hurtful experience and are able to call it by its name or make what felt like the end of the world look like a natural part of life.



Untitled,
Oils on canvas, 20" x 28"
2022



Hamid Ali Hanbhi

Residing from a religious background I have always been told about the blessings of hours especially, when I had my sittings with noble and religious people. Meanwhile, practicing as a cinema painter at that time I was also mentioned about this final reward; from here my interest along with my imagination started to convert into an idea that, always made me curious to paint and draw to realize the visualization of such precious beauties in the form of art

Untitled (diptych),
Oils on canvas, 36" x 36" (each),
2020



Hassan Sheikh

During my early years experimenting in the field, I realized that to most South Asians, miniature is only an ancient artistic expression used during the pre-colonial times. Thus, I began my art practice by exploring ways to develop the expression such that it becomes relevant in today's context.



Through this exploratory journey, my body of work has evolved into a portfolio of playful compositions, merging mediums such as photography and digital collage with traditional miniature paintings done on wasli paper, which I create myself. By portraying ancient figures in traditional miniature technique and modern settings using modern mediums, my compositions comment on or create a dialogue on the identity crisis faced by South Asian communities whilst subtly blaming the region's colonial past for the said issue.

Most of my works include a figure from the South Asian history either appreciating a western figure or holding high, an element from the western culture. In some of my works, I have also compared the region's deteriorating present with the glorious yesteryears by juxtaposing historical local figures onto current environments.

Azaad,
Mix media on wasli, 11.5" x 16.5"
2022

Jahanzaib Akmal

Art today, is different from what it used to be. With an abundance of mediums, ranging from installations to projections and more, I believe that this era is all about appropriation. Since so much has already been done, it now depends on how you differentiate it or add a spin to make your art personal.

Growing up, I was intensely impacted and inspired by many video games from the 80's. Something about the aesthetics

always appealed to me. A mixture of games and miniature paintings is how I understand a contemporary visual language and juxtapose it with the visual language of yesteryears. Combining my love for history, games, and art, I came up with a refreshed concept of revisiting the 8-bit games and the Mughal Emperors for our recent generations to relate to.

I believe art lies in details. I have always been intrigued by detailed work over the years, and would often get inspired and incorporate more details in my own paintings. I feel they added character to my vision and helped me paint a better picture or extension of my imagination.

Monsoon Rendezvous 2.0
Mix media on wasli
10.7 x 13 inches



Khurram Abbas

War in every angle leaves permanent scars on the memories of sensitive artists, which is obviously converted into visuals. These visuals have an impact on viewers mind, which can lead to negative or positive impacts. My work is narrated with symbolic visuals.



Untitled,
Gold leaf and gouache on wasli, 18" x 24",
2020



Laraib Ahmed

My process embraces this uncertainty of the universe. My work highlights the diversity of human nature, belief in miracles, unanswered questions and mysteries. The elements, compositions and symbols endorse the connection between my mind and heart, and their will to take from the wisdom in imagination.

My work comments on the eternal chase of humanity to possess a certain feel of being eternal concludes that we can never know complete beauty, control or justice because we have never being acquainted with it. Their absence tells us that their forms of presence in our existence are consequences of our efforts at understanding them, and not entirely implementing them.



Who suffered their promises,
Mix media on canvas, 24" x 24",
2022

Mahnoor Asad



Like an endless rollercoaster ride I see mists rolling across grassy plains blooming with flowers. Twinkling stars falling one by one towards earth, like moths getting too close to a flame, on a backdrop of shattering, burning celestial entities. Am I dreaming or am I awake? Lost in a world between reality and what is pretty much my own private

amazement park, I go on a convoluted journey which leaves me amidst unexpected and

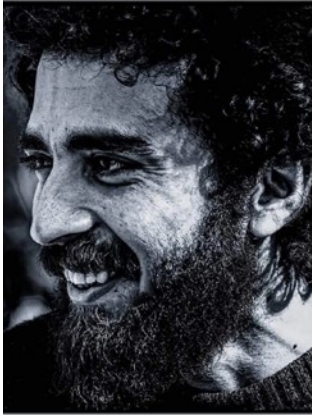
unexplored

places.

Places that are not always glittering, beautiful meadows, which within a blink of an eye can shift to scenes of Armageddon with burning fires raging all around me. But these scenes follow me into the land of living and like everyone else I find myself manoeuvring around a minefield known as 'life'.



Holy melancholy,
Gouache, markers, drawing pens & water-
color on wasli, 20" x 30",
2022



Nazir Hunzai

Nature has always been my key inspiration. The organic forms in my village, the rectangular buildings and straight line in the city all come together when sculpting. my recent sculptures are all about morphing a human into basic shapes, which usually is in a contrast of fluid curves, straight lines and sharp edges, a transformation from an organic form to a geometrical one.



Undesirable Growth,
Resin, fibreglass and Legos
13" x 10" x 8"

Neeli Ahmed

This series is called “Remembrance”, as the process of making these sculptures is rooted in my childhood memories. We manage to capture time in our memories, only to re-live it through our dreams. Making these sculptures are a dream taking me back to the mountains of Himalayas, protected from the distractions of modern era, when our young minds created their own distractions using wood, clay and stones. One of the strongest memory I have is of creating mud houses, layer by layer, drop by drop. This particular series is sculpted in cement, it follows the same process of building forms layer by layer by dripping mud.



Remembrance,
Cement, Variable
2019





Nyla Talpur

My artworks are mostly a combination of two contrasting themes, where the visual and the concerns being addressed are in contrast with each other. While the visuals are inspired from textile wallpapers, popular culture, floral and geometric patterns, the concerns being addressed are more of a socio-political nature, such as social inequality and power tussle or related to human issues. The fusion results into works which seem to be floral and tropical from a distance, but when looked closely there is more to it.



Untitled,
Gouache on paper, 11" x 13.5"
2022

Seema Perveen

My artwork accumulates 'feelings'. Time after time, we layer up experiences that build up into a feeling or a series of feelings. The intensity of these feeling is known through the number of layers we have. The gradual change of the greys in between black and white portrays infinity – infinity of a feeling! Looking past the apparentness of an individual feeling, my work shows the process and the development of feelings, through layers. Multiple washes in the painting represent that the acceptance of a feeling always comes gradually to an individual. The unusual black washes on the wasli paper shows my conscious decision to emphasize on the importance of acceptance of an unusual feeling. The non-objectiveness in most of the paintings, on the other hand, shows the lack of physicality of a feeling, as well as the collective consciousness of the mutual feelings of me and people around me.



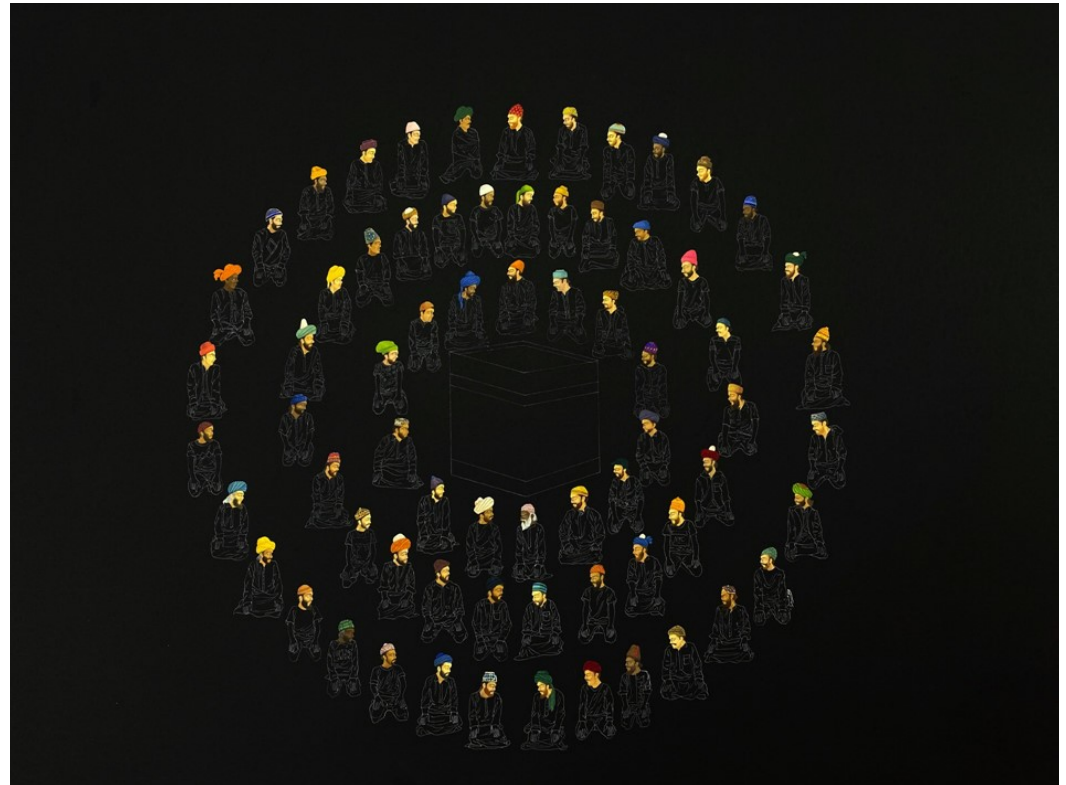
Going inwards I,
Siyah qalam on wasli,
20" x 26"
2022



Zaffar Ali

As an artist I am mostly concerned about various issues relevant to my cultural background and most of my works reflect multiple social, political, religious aspects as well as racism, sectarianism, injustice and terrorism. Being artist we are concerned citizens and get easily effected by the actions and extremism taken place in our surroundings. I am always keenly observing the human behavior rapidly changing in my surrounding.

Regardless of how different the sects are in their own beliefs and religious practices, I believe that their destination and focal point is one towards God.



Unity and multiplicity,
Gouache on wasli, 26" x 36"
2022



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our special thanks to

