

Artist statement

To evoke the unknown, I weave symbolic landscapes and figures, exploring the union of opposites. 'Some Kind of Marriage' navigates the soul's longing for unity, echoing the eternal return. This transformative odyssey invites contemplation on inner balances and the universal quest for harmony.

1) Cosmic Sandwich

Defiance of gravity and convention. Initial impressions could be of duality, two lands, mirrored yet distinct. Upper and lower realms: spiritual and material worlds. Roots in the shared sky, symbolizing spiritual growth or upheaval. Colour dichotomy: Red (passion, life) below, Yellow/Ochre (wisdom/clarity) above.

2) Beyond Horizon

This painting explores the human experience of disorientation and reorientation. The figure, turned away from the viewer, embodies the search for inner balance amidst life's turmoil. The inverted landscape symbolizes the blurred boundaries between reality and subconscious. This juxtaposition invites contemplation on the harmonious coexistence of opposing forces.

3) Harvest

Death-Rebirth Cycles: Universal theme. Acceptance of Mortality: Transmutation. Rebirth's promise.

4) Shadowed Radiance

The interplay between light and darkness symbolizes the balance between intuition and ego. The black sun represents the acknowledgment of our shadow aspects, while the red floral field embodies the suppressed ego, allowing intuition to flourish. This harmony enables a deeper understanding of existence, transcending binary distinctions.

5) Luminescent

This painting invites introspection for transcending shadows. Emerging from the darkness of abuse, finding inner light. From oppression to empowerment. A journey through the veil of deception, beyond ego's shadows. Being one's own light, the light that was birthed by darkness.

6) Eid

This painting examines the intricate dance between light and shadow, abundance and sacrifice. The seated woman's enigmatic gaze invites contemplation on the weight of collective burdens, while the goat's presence underscores the hidden costs of our choices.

7) Raising the Bride

In this painting the 'bride' could be seen as a metaphor for the subconscious and the collective unconscious. Raising the Bride would mean acceptance of death by killing the ego, and embracing intuition. On a different note, the 'bride' could be seen as a metaphor for the motherland. This painting serves as a ritualistic homage to the feminine, intuitive forces guiding the soul.

8) The Scarlet Sensation

This painting embodies the essence of feminine creative power, embracing sexual expression and the cyclical forces of nature. As a symbol of Mother Earth's fertility, she represents the transformative energy that nurtures growth and renewal. This artwork invites the viewer to contemplate the profound connections between creativity, abundance, and the human experience.

9) Tableau of Consuming Thoughts

This painting captures the transformative power of conscious integration. Three figures, lost in thought, gather around a table, symbolizing the communal sharing of experiences. The woman in red embodies the catalyst for change, as they navigate the complexities of human emotions. This painting represents the journey of self-discovery, where one confronts and accepts their inner depths, embracing the darkness to emerge reborn,

10) Fractured Harmony

This painting, if taken literally, embodies the dissonant symphony of Pakistan's music scene, where youthful energies struggle to resonate amidst societal forces. On a more conceptual note, the musicians' piercing gazes transcend the viewer, inviting contemplation on music's capacity to heal, inspire, and awaken. The paint-splattered background symbolizes the ephemeral nature of creative expression, threatened by the shadows that seek to silence it.

Profile

Muhammad Ali is a multidisciplinary visual and performance artist who graduated in 2010 from the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture (IVSAA) with his Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts (BFA).

In the proceeding decade, Ali exhibited widely locally and internationally, with several solo and multi-person shows to his credit, including displays at the Bruckenthal Museum of Contemporary Art in Romania and being selected as a finalist for the Sovereign Asian Art Prize 2013, as well as a seminal group show at Dubai's leading Lawrie Shabibi Gallery in 2012. His work was subsequently shown in Hong Kong and South Korea, and he was nominated and selected to represent Karachi Biennale 2017 (KB17) at a performance art intensive in Leeds.

Ali's creative process weaves together intuition, emotion, and imagination. His works become portals to alternate realities, fostering connections and conversations.

Education

- 2010 Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts (BFA)
(Specialisation in Miniature Painting & Photography)
Indus Valley School of Art & Architecture (IVSAA) Karachi

Solo Exhibitions

- 2024 'Some Kind of Marriage', Canvas Gallery, Karachi
2023 'From Karachi, With Love', PAF Gallery, Lahore
2020 'Love Letters to Lost Lovers', Canvas Gallery, Karachi
2016 'Emperor's Real Clothes', Canvas Gallery, Karachi
2014 'A Rainbow of Y/Our Own', Canvas Gallery, Karachi
2013 'Let Them Eat Butterflies', Canvas Gallery, Karachi

Group Exhibitions

- 2023 'Revolution/Evolution', Sambara Art Gallery, Karachi
2021 'Past-Present-Future', Koel Gallery/O Art Space, Karachi
2021 'PAF Collectors' Soiree 2021', PAF Gallery, Lahore
2021 'Every Second Counts', Tanzara Gallery, Islamabad
2020 'The Trojan Donkey', Virtual Performance Art Happening
2020 'Laal Jadoo/Red Magic', Karachi House, Karachi
2018 'Mix Tape [1]', Canvas Gallery, Karachi
2017 'Marination', The Tetley, Leeds, UK
2017 'Karachi Biennale' 17 (KB17), Karachi
2017 'Botany of Desire', Koel Gallery, Karachi
2017 'Portraiture', Canvas Gallery, Karachi
2016 'Slippery Grammar', Full Circle Gallery, Karachi
2016 'Magnum Chocolate Party Art Show', Pearl Continental Hotel, Karachi
2016 '70s: Pakistan's Radioactive Decade', Amin Gulgee Gallery, Karachi
2016 '700 Stitches', Creative Karachi Festival, Alliance Française de Karachi
2015 'Nescafé Dolce Gusto Launch Exhibition', Mohatta Palace Museum, Karachi
2015 'They Really Live the Real Reality', Twelve Gates Arts, Philadelphia
2015 'Speaking in Tongues', Karachi Literature Festival, Beach Luxury Hotel, Karachi
2014 'Dreamscape', Amin Gulgee Gallery, Karachi
2014 'FRESH', Amin Gulgee Gallery, Karachi
2013 'Pursukoon Karachi', Arts Council, Karachi
2013 'Sovereign Asian Art Prize Finalists' Artworks', Seoul Auction Pyeongchang Space, Seoul
2013 'Sovereign Asian Art Prize', (Finalists) Sovereign Art Foundation, Hong Kong
2013 'RIWAHYTI: One Night Stand', Amin Gulgee Gallery, Karachi
2012 'Usman aur Mein', Koel Gallery, Karachi
2012 'Stop, Play, Pause, Repeat', Lawrie Shabibi Gallery, Dubai
2012 'Concern Worldwide Summer Party Live Auction Items', Mango Tree, London
2012 'Band, Baaja, Baaraat, IVSAA Gallery, Karachi
2011 'Condolence Theatre', two-person show, Canvas Gallery, Karachi
2011 'Moderate or Otherwise', ArtChowk Gallery, Karachi
2011 'Desire is War', The Contemporary Art Gallery, Brukenthal National Museum, Sibiu, Romania
2011 'And Nothing but the Truth', IVSAA Gallery, Karachi
2011 'What's Hot', Poppy Seed Gallery, Karachi
2011 'Floors, Wall, Roof', Rohtas Gallery, Islamabad
2011 '9th Emerging Talent Exhibition', V.M. Gallery, Karachi
2010 'Thesis Degree Show', Indus Valley School of Art & Architecture, Karachi
2009 'A Feast in Exile', Alliance Française de Karachi, Karachi
2008 'Group Show', Alliance Française de Karachi, Karachi

Work Experience

- 2017 Visiting Faculty for Design, Iqra University, Karachi
2017 Visiting Faculty for Drawing, Iqra University, Karachi
Volunteer Art Teacher for children with special needs from Karachi Vocational Centre, IVSAA (Fine Art Community Service Programme)
Visiting Faculty for Continuing Education Programme, IVSAA
Internship (Gallery Management), Poppy Seed Gallery, Karachi