

Artist statement

Longing for immortality, supernatural powers, and a dreamland has always been a deep and ancient human desire, passed down through myths, magic, and folktales. In today's technological age, those ancient dreams are reborn, not in legend, but through machines. With the rise of AI, robotics, and biotechnology, technology now simulates altered realities and dream like experiences, worlds once imagined in folktales, where stones speak, trees weep, and mountains whisper. Technology makes us believe in magic again.

We live in a post-truth era, where the fabrication of information is accelerated by technological tools, and the line between what is real and what is artificial has become almost indistinguishable. This exhibition is an inquiry into the politics of land and landscape and how the idea of a perfect homeland is rendered as a place of security, and how technology, no longer just a tool, but a system with its own agency to produce truth, plays within the architecture of power to manufacture and mediate truth.

“Enchanted Land” consists of imagined landscapes that don't exist, yet feel familiar, serene mountains, cascading waterfalls, veiled woods and visions promised by politics and faith alike. The idea of a perfect homeland, a paradise, is often a fantasy forged in the crucible of violence. I feed this fantasy to the machine, asking artificial intelligence to generate visions of heaven: idyllic, lush, uninhabited. By intervening in these AI-generated images, painting them with gouache on paper and oil on canvas, I assert the presence of the human hand, blurring the boundary between the machine-made and the emotionally charged. Despite their beauty, these landscapes feel eerily empty: monumental yet desolate, suggesting the destruction of a promise never truly realized. These are landscapes as propaganda, as prayer, as betrayal. Beauty becomes a form of erasure. Each work is accompanied by Morse code statements proclaiming a homeland shaped by religious, political, and moral purity.

“Tangible Fiction” arises from the void left by one of the largest displacements in modern history. I return to the 1947 Partition archive of India and Pakistan, when the camera became one of the earliest machines to document mass human displacement. Photographs by Margaret Bourke - White, published in Life magazine in the 1950s, became visual records of trauma and transition, objects of historical memory. I extract silent, overlooked, non-human objects from the 1947 archival photographs: a tea kettle, a mat, a container, chickpeas, a box, a plate, a shoe, and a bundle of cloth, objects without a homeland, yet heavy with memory. I rebuild them in 3D software using Autodesk Maya and then materialize them using 3D printers with PVC material. Each object speaks like a human, telling stories of displacement, migration, and memory from a non-human perspective. These narratives are fictional, yet they feel plausible. They inhabit the uncomfortable space between testimony and invention.

This exhibition is not only about the past. It is about the stories we choose to carry forward, the fictions we construct from them, and the technologies we use to retell and reshape those stories, or that ultimately reshape us. What remains when people are gone, when promises break, when the land itself becomes contested memory?

Profile

Imran Channa (b. Shikarpur, Sindh, Pakistan) is a visual artist whose work critically engages with history, memory, media, and power. Based in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, Channa's practice spans drawing, painting, sculpture, moving image, installation, and archival research, often interrogating the construction and manipulation of collective narratives in South Asia and beyond.

Educated at the National College of Arts in Lahore (BFA, MA Hons. Visual Arts), Channa has developed a distinctive voice that resonates across global institutions. He currently teaches at the esteemed Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam and has previously held academic positions at the National College of Arts, Lahore, and the St. Joost School of Art & Design, The Netherlands.

Channa's work has been widely exhibited at major international venues, including the MAX Ernst Museum (Brühl, Germany), EYE Filmmuseum (Amsterdam, The Netherlands), the European Media Art Festival (Osnabrück, Germany), Museum of Modern Art Algeria (Algiers) Lahore Biennale # 03 (Pakistan), and Troy House Art (London, UK). His works have been exhibited in art festivals, biennales, museums and various galleries across Europe, North America, the Middle East, and Asia, including the UK, USA, Germany, France, Israel, UAE, Algeria, Switzerland, Belgium, Singapore, Hong Kong, India, and Pakistan.

He has undertaken significant research projects in collaboration with institutions such as EYE Filmmuseum (Amsterdam), Film & Video Umbrella (UK), and Philomena+ (Austria). Channa has participated in prestigious artist residencies and research fellowships, and has delivered talks at leading venues worldwide, including the Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam), Harvard University (USA), Jan van Eyck Academy (Netherlands), Akademie Schloss Solitude (Germany), and Gasworks (London).

Imran Channa is the recipient of multiple prestigious awards and grants, including the Werkbijdrage Bewezen Talent (2018–2021) and Kunstenaar Basis (2023–2027) from the Mondriaan Fonds (The Netherlands). In 2013, he was honored with the Award of Excellence by the Artists Association of Punjab at the Alhamra Arts Council.

Qualification

2008 MA (Hons.) Visual Arts (National College of Arts), Lahore, Pakistan
2004 Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting (National College of Arts), Lahore, Pakistan
2000 Intermediate (G.M.S.C) Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan

Artist - in - Residence / Fellowships

2024 Artist in residence at Philomena+, Vienna, Austria
2021 - 22 Artist in residence at EYE Filmmuseum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
2019 - 20 Artist fellowship at Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, Germany
2018 Artist fellowship at Harvard University South Asia Institute, Massachusetts, Boston, USA
2016 - 17 Artist fellowship at Jan van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, Netherlands
2011 Artist in residence at Gasworks residency, London, UK

Teaching Experience

2025 Teacher at Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam, Netherlands (current)
2025 Teacher at St, Joost School of Art & Design, Breda, Netherlands
2024 Teacher at St, Joost School of Art & Design, Den Bosch, Breda, Netherlands
2024 "Programme Power Up" organized by Mondriaan Fonds, NEST, Den Hague, POST, Arnhem, Netherlands
2023 Teacher at St, Joost School of Art & Design, Den Bosch, Netherlands
2023 Guest Teacher at KABK, Den Hague, Netherlands
2023 External examiner for graduation year at Centre of Excellence Art & Design Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan
2021 Guest Teacher at Kinnard College for Women, Lahore, Pakistan
2021 Guest Teacher at Institute of Art and Design, University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Pakistan
2017 Guest Teacher at HKU - Beeldende Kunst, Utrecht, Netherlands
2007 - 16 Assistant Professor in Department of Fine Arts at National College of Arts, Lahore, Pakistan
2015 - 16 External examiner for graduation year at Kinnard College for Women in Lahore, Pakistan
2015 Guest Teacher at Institute of Art & design, Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan
2015 External examiner for graduation year at Centre of Excellence Art & Design Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan
2012 Guest Teacher Centre of Excellence Art & Design Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan
2009 Guest Teacher Centre of Excellence Art & Design Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan

Solo shows

2025 Tilism-e-Hoshroba.exe, Canvas Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2022 Imran Channa: Landscapes, Consciousness, Colonialism solo project at EYE Film Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
2021 Lost Pages from One Thousand and One Nights, Canvas Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2019 Dust to Dust at Kang Contemporary Gallery, Berlin, Germany
2018 Pasts in Particles at Twelve Twelve Gallery, Den Haag, Netherlands
2018 Holy Water Open Studio 2018, at Jan van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, Netherlands
2017 Light on the Fringe of Time Open Studio at Jan van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, Netherlands

2015 Enclosure / Erasure at Koel Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2013 Age of Mythology with XVA Gallery at Art Basel, Hong Kong
2012 Lik Likoti at Canvas Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2011 The Memory is The Message at XVA Gallery Dubai, UAE
2010 Badshahnama at TMproject Gallery Geneva, Switzerland

Group shows, Talks, Seminars, Screenings

2025 Tajammul XVA Gallery, Dubai, UAE
2024 A Fable for Tomorrow, a two person exhibition at Philomena+, Vienna, Austria
2024 Lahore Biennale #03, Of Mountains and Seas, Lahore, Pakistan
2023 Surreal Futures MAX ERNST Museum, Brühl, Germany
2023 Never Cross The Same River Twice, Chapter 4: The Sociality of New Performance and Film at Troy House Art, London, UK
2023 Trembling Time, 36th Edition of European Media Art Festival (EMAF) at Kunsthalle, Osnabrück, Germany
2023 Two Shadows One Sun film screened at 18th Edition: International Human Rights Film Festival in Albania (IHRFFA)
2023 Moving Art at XVA Gallery, Dubai, UAE
2022 Imran Channa interviewed with Parasite Radio on "Abstracting Parables" exhibition at Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Germany
2022 Allegory of Cave Men 77 min feature film, screened at EYE Film Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
2022 Two Shadows one Sun 08 min short film, screened at EYE Film Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
2022 Artfest22, Karachi, Gallery organized by Culture Department Government of Sindh, Sambara Art Gallery, Karachi, Paksitan
2022 Conquering the White space, Khaas Contemporary, Islamabad, Pakistan
2019 Neighbourhoods and Communities, Sommerfest, at Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, Germany
2019 Engaging with Histories at Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, Germany
2019 Badshahnama, 2 Person Show at XVA Gallery Dubai, UAE
2019 Mera Safar, Koel Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2019 Common Border, Ch: 1. Sanat Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2018 Within /Without Asia House London, UK
2018 Seen Unseen, Kasteel Oud-Rekem, Lanaken, Belgium
2018 Video screening and artist Talk Kino @ NEST. Den Hague, Netherlands
2018 Revelation: Reclaiming South Asian Narratives, exhibition and seminar at Harvard university, South Asia Institute, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA
2018 Changing Places, Phoenix, Leicester, UK
2017 The Materiality of the Invisible at Marres, Centre for Contemporary Culture Maastricht, Netherlands
2017 The Great Wall Karachi Biennale # 01, Karachi, Pakistan
2017 Changing Places, Osterley Park and House, London, UK
2017 Changing Places, Hastings Museum & Art Gallery, UK
2017 Changing Places, Cliffe Castle Museum, Keighley, UK
2017 Changing Places, Film and Video Umbrella touring exhibition at The House Mill London, UK
2017 Taqseem, Koel Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2016 The Materiality of the Invisible # 01 at Jan Van Eyck Academie, Maastricht, Netherlands
2016 Hopes of Paradise, with Canvas Gallery Karachi, displayed at Grosvenor Gallery London, UK
2016 Vanishing Point Artport, Tel Aviv-Yafo, Israel
2016 IFAA Contemporary Project Phase I at Solutions! Musee de L'Art et de l'Espace, Paris, France
2015 The Lay of the Land, at Gallery Latitude 28, New Delhi, India
2015 And Nothing But The Truth: Parrhesia II, at Koel Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan
2015 Art15 London, with Khaas Gallery, UK
2014 SINDH Reverberating sounds echo through the dessert at Koel Gallery, Pakistan
2014 Along with Anwar, group show at Zahoor-ul-Akhlaq Gallery, NCA, Lahore, Pakistan
2014 I.D at the Islamabad Literature Festival 2014 by My Art World Gallery, Islamabad, Pakistan
2014 Stet, at LLF, Alhamra Art Gallery, Lahore, Pakistan
2014 Sindh Art Fest 2014, curated by Canvas Gallery, Karachi displayed at Frère Hall, Karachi, Pakistan
2013 Asian Art Fair, London with Joost van den Bergh, UK
2013 Bonhams London: Charity Auction of Pakistani Art by Rising Pakistan, UK
2013 Paper at XVA Gallery Dubai, UAE
2013 27th Annual exhibition of Punjab art association Alhamra Arts Council, Lahore. (awarded the award of excellence), Pakistan
2012 NCA Faculty show" at Zahoor-ul-Akhlaq Gallery National College of Arts, Lahore, Pakistan
2012 Attaining Heights at VM Art Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2012 Soul searchers 3 persons show at Rohas Gallery Islamabad, Pakistan
2012 Band Baaja Baraat with Canvas Gallery, Karachi, displayed at IVS Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2011 The Return 3rd International Festival of Contemporary Art at (MOMA). Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Algiers
2011 Open Studio at Gasworks Studio, London, UK
2011 Contemporary Istanbul, with XVA Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
2011 After All at Royat Gallery Lahore, Pakistan
2011 Finalist exhibition of "The Sovereign Asian Art Prize 2010", at The Rotunda, Exchange Square, HongKong
2011 Contemporary Shahnama, millennium painting Exhibition, traveling show at NCA in Lahore, Pakistan
2011 Common Threads: Contemporary Art from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iran and Pakistan, Xerxes Gallery with NM Art Gallery at the Bastakiya at the Heritage House Gallery, Dubai, UAE
2010 Contemporary Shahnama, millennium painting Exhibition" at The Prince's Foundation Gallery, London, UK
2010 The Rising Tide at Mohatta Palace Karachi, Pakistan
2010 The sovereign Asian Art prize finalist exhibition, ARTSPACE at Helutrans, Singapore
2010 Slick 2010 with Drawing Room Gallery, Lahore. Displayed at Slick 2010 Art fair, Paris, France
2010 Creating Common wealth, at Ragini Gallery, New Delhi, India
2010 Exhibition of Finalist for the sovereign Asian Art prize 2010, ARTSPACE at Helutrans, Singapore
2010 Fatah Je Asay Pasay, with Green Cardamom at V.M Art Gallery Karachi, Sindh Museum Hyderabad, Pakistan
2010 Structures Within an Intervention at The Guild Art Gallery, New York, USA
2010 Making of The History, Two person show at Canvas Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2010 The Havelian Express, 3 persons show at CAIS Gallery, HongKong
2009 Tradition & Tension at Art Scene Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2009 Patrons Of "Oh My God! I Can Buy Art!" at Grey Noise Gallery Lahore, Pakistan
2009 Redo Pakistan, Deptford X festival London, UK
2009 Redo Pakistan, Group show in the form of symposium at Alhamra art council Lahore, Pakistan
2009 Between Black & White, 4 persons show at Canvas Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2009 Redo Pakistan, a traveling show (Karachi, Lahore, Pakistan, England, UK, Dhaka Bangladesh) arranged by Other Asias, a London based organization at Shanakhit Festival Karachi, Pakistan
2009 Starring: The Artist at Indus Valley Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2008 Degree show MA (hons.)at Zahoor-ul-Akhalq Gallery National college of Arts, Lahore, Pakistan
2008 Young artist exhibition at Alhmara Art Council Lahore, Pakistan
2007 Drooping Tears Together an anokha laadla collective live art performance at Alhamra Art Council Lahore, Pakistan
2006 Places Real and Imagined at Alhamra Art Gallery, Lahore, Pakistan
2005 Art Aid at Convention Center Islamabad, Pakistan
2005 Voices, Group Exhibition by Pakistan Development Forum Islamabad, Pakistan
2005 Emerging Talent at V.M Art Gallery Karachi, Pakistan
2005 Memories, Degree Show, BFA at National College of Arts Lahore, Pakistan

Awards, Prizes, Funds

2023 ADA awards 2022-23, "Honorable mention", Pakistan
2023 - 27 Recipient of "Kunstenaar Basis" by Mondriaan Fonds. Amsterdam, Netherlands
2018 - 21 Recipient of "Werkbijdrage Bewezen Talent" by Mondriaan Fonds. Amsterdam, Netherlands
2013 Awarded the " Award of Excellence" by AAP Lahore, Pakistan
2011 Selected for the Charles Wallace Trust & Gasworks, artist in residency in London, UK
2010 Finalist for the Sovereign Asian Art Prize 2010, HongKong
2003 - 04 Merit scholarships at National College of Arts Lahore, Pakistan
1999 1st Prize in painting competition on celebrity of artist A.K Sheikh at Sindh Museum Hyderabad, Pakistan
1999 Won an award in painting competition at Khana-e-Farhang Iran, Pakistan

Reviews, Articles

2023 Iftikhar Dadi, "Art and the 1947 Partition of South Asia" book "Art and Architecture of Migration and Discrimination" Routledge
Ankan Kazi, "Erasing the Past: Photography in the Archive and the Work of Imran Channa" - ASAP Art
2023 Westart: "Surreal Futures at Max Ernst Museum, Bruhl, Germany" WDR: German National Television. 26.08 - 29:18 Min
2021 Qudus Mirza, "Back to Baghdad" The News newspaper, Pakistan
2011 Numair A. Abbasi, "The Memory of Objects" Daily Dawn newspaper, Pakistan
2021 Salman Peerzada, "Lost and Found" Daily Dawn newspaper, Pakistan
Zahid Chaudhary, "Itinerant Photography: Medium and Translation in the work of Imran Channa" "Photography in India: From Archives to Contemporary Practice" Published by Bloomsbury, USA
Visiting Artist Profile: Imran Channa, Harvard
Mirthe de Leeuw, "Holy Ghost" Mistermotley
Merel Bem, "Holy Ghost" Volkskrant
"Dust to Dust" FVU.co, UK
Ella Bjurman, "About the Issue, Sindh Guardian" Sindh Guardian
Iftikhar Dadi, "Spectral Memories" Tanqeed, Magazine of art and culture
2015 Zarameene Shah, "The Hidden Truth" Herald, Pakistan
Iftikhar Dadi, "Spectral Memories, Enclosure/Erasure" exhibition catalogue, Lahore, Pakistan
2015 Qudus Mirza, "The Art of Disappearance" Encore, The News, Pakistan
Rabia Jalil, "Reviews: Reworking Memories and Histories" ArtNow, Pakistan
2015 Sadeia Salim, "A Journey into Abstraction" Daily Dawn, Sunday, Pakistan
Studio visit: Imran Channa by Sehr Jalil Raja, ArtNow, Pakistan
2013 Interview: "Re-Aligning Historical Perspective" in conversation with Amra Ali, Dawn
2013 Alina Husain, "Art as Communication" Herald, Pakistan
2013 M. Saeed Qureshi, "Elucidating Illusion". Daily Dawn, Pakistan
2012 Peerzada Salman, "Lik Likoti opens at Canvas Gallery". Daily Dawn, Pakistan
Shahim Akhtar, "Imran Channa, Lik Likoti" Pakistan art Review, Karachi, Pakistan
"The Memory is the Message" Al Itihad, Saturday, 11th June, UAE
Meilz Manfred ed, "Painting The Persian Book of Kings Today" Cambridge: Talking Tree Books
Saira Ansari, "Three Blind Mice" Papercuts Vol 7, online magazine
2010 Artist Talk, Interview by Herald, Karachi, Pakistan
2010 Khan Naiza h. Khan "The Rising Tide, The Rising Tide New Directions in art from Pakistan 1990 - 2010" Karachi, Mohatta Palace Museum
2010 Nasar Hammad "Engaging Urban Realities Through A 'Thinking' Photography" The Rising Tide New Directions in art from Pakistan 1990- 2010: Karachi, Mohatta Palace Museum
2010 Imran Khan, "Myth and Reality" Pakistan's rising tide, Al-Jazeera
Marjorie Husain. "New Directions in Art" Mohatta Palace Museum. Thursday, 04 Nov, Daily Dawn, Karachi, Pakistan
2010 Peerzada Salman. "The Rising Tide opens" Dawn, Karachi
2010 Raania Azam Khan Durrani, "Karachi; you who demolish me, you whom I love", Word Press
2010 Asim Akhtar. "Pause Play". Libas international Magazine, Volume 23, Lahore
2010 Qudus Mirza. "His Pupil's Voice" The News
2010 Nasar Hammad, "Fatah jay Aassay Paassay" In the Milieu of Fatah Halepoto, published by Green Cardamom, London
2010 Taimur Ahmed, "Think Beauty and Heritage," Herald
2010 Salwat Ali, "Brush with the Past" Newslinemagazine, Karachi, Pakistan
2010 Maheen Bashir Adamjee, "Messages for the Discerning" NEWSLINE, Karachi, Pakistan
2010 Salwat Ali "Miniature on the March" Daily Dawn, Karachi, Pakistan
Ameer Ahmad H, "Nostalgia, experimentalism and political games: 'Making of History/Green Patrol'" Daily Times, Karachi, Pakistan
2010 Yee-Wan Koon, "Blindness and Insight" MUSE, Hong Kong
2010 Mary Agnew, "The Havelian Express" TIME Out Hong Kong
2010 Whitney Ferrare McInnis, "The Havelian Express" Orientations, Volume 41 - Number 1
2010 Whitney Ferrare McInnis, "The Havelian Express" Asian Art News
2009 Nadeem Zuber, "Art Fact: "Tradition and Tension" Business Recorder, Karachi, Pakistan
Saira Dar, "Fresh Perspectives", Sunday 22 November, Dawn, Pakistan
Ahsan Hamja, "National Pavilion: PROJECT BIENNALE". This publication is supported by Chelsea College of Art & Design, University of the Arts London; Department of Art History & Theory, University of Essex; and, Sheffield Hallam University
2009 Mirza, Qudus "Starring: The Artist" IVS Publication Karachi, Pakistan
2009 Aleem, Uzma. "Art Transforms into Industry" The Nation, Sunday Plus, Lahore, Paksitan
2007 Mian Naeem, "Fusing Real with Abstract" Weekly Cutting Edge, Lahore, Pakistan
2005 Farrukh Nilofur, "Art and Sensibility" Daily News Karachi, Pakistan