Artist statement

My current body of work continues an ongoing observation of barricades and protective structures in the urban landscape. Once encountered as objects of obstruction, control and security, these forms have become so embedded in the city that their presence often goes unnoticed.

I am interested in this shift in perception. A barricade left on the roadside, no longer blocking or redirecting movement, begins to exist differently. It leans against trees; birds perch on it, animals rest beside it, foliage grows around it. Its paint fades, gathers marks and weathers. Removed from the moment of tension, it loses some of its hostility and becomes part of the landscape.

The painted patterns of these structures particularly interest me. Black and yellow, red and white, and other colours of warning and demarcation have travelled beyond the barricade onto walls, gates, grills, planters and residential façades, entering the graphic vocabulary of the city. Through repetition, a language meant to signal caution begins to operate as pattern, decoration and design.

In this work, I isolate, rearrange and extend these patterns through colour, composition and architectural form. The boundary between barricade, architecture and image becomes uncertain in my current series of work.

Profile

Seema Nusrat is an artist working with site - specific public art, installation, and urban intervention. Her practice engages the intersections of architecture, urbanism, and material culture, examining how people navigate and negotiate built environments. Her work often explores security infrastructure, urban barriers, façade culture, and the shifting dynamics of public space.

She works collaboratively with artisans and technical specialists, integrating process and production into the conceptual core of her practice. Nusrat has exhibited internationally, including at the Abu Dhabi Public Art Biennial, Busan Biennale, Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale, Gasworks London, and the National College of Arts Triennale, Lahore.

Alongside her practice, she has been engaged in art education for over a decade. She has served as Associate Professor and Head of Fine Art at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi, and currently teaches in the Sculpture Department at the National College of Arts, Lahore.

Originally from Karachi, the artist now resides in Lahore.

Education

2010 - 12 Masters in Fine and Media Arts Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, Canada
1999 - 02 Bachelor of Fine Art threatens Indus Valley cultural School heritage of Art and and Architecture, contributes to Karachi, ecological Pakistan disasters

Biennials and Triennials

2025 Site Interrupted Site - specific installation, National College of Art Triennial, Lahore, Pakistan
2024 Floating Fragments Site - specific installation, Public Art Abu Dhabi Biennial, Abu Dhabi, UAE
2023 Flickering Shores, Sea Imaginaries Sea Art Festival organized by Busan Biennale; curated by Irini Papadimitriou, Busan, South Korea
2020 Sagar theatre on Queens Road Collateral event, Lahore Biennale; curated by Zahra Khan, Lahore, Pakistan
2019 When Birds Collide Site - specific installation, Karachi Biennale, Karachi, Pakistan
2018 Domestic Elevation Lahore Biennale, Lahore, Pakistan
2017 Containing the City Site - specific installation, Karachi Biennale, Karachi, Pakistan
2016 New Urban Landscape Dak Art: African Contemporary Art Biennale; curated by Sumeshwar Sherma, Senegal, Africa

Art Exhibitions

2026 Studies in Integrated Facade II, Canvas Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan
2024 Urban Screen White Wall Gallery, Lahore, Pakistan
2023 Studies in integrated façade Solo exhibition, Canvas Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan
2022 Pop South Asia: Artistic Explorations in the Popular Sharjah Art Foundation; curated by Iftikhar Dadi and Roobina Karode, Sharjah, UAE
2020 Brave New World Solo exhibition, Canvas Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan
2018 Sweeping Back the Sea | New Contemporary Art from Pakistan Group show, curated by Adeela Suleman, Aicon Gallery, New York
2018 Young Sub - Continent Project Serendipity Arts Festival, Goa, India
2018 Gateway: Structures of Meaning | Architecture of Perception Site - specific installation commissioned by Abu Dhabi Art Fair, Abu Dhabi, UAE
2018 The Other Storey Pioneer Art Residency, curated by Canvas Gallery, Khushab, Pakistan
2017 Proposal Towards A New Architecture Solo exhibition, curated by Zarmeene Shah, Gandhara Art Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan
2016 New Urban Landscape Solo exhibition, Koel Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan
2015 Access Denied Solo exhibition, Clark House Initiative, Mumbai, India
2015 Buntting Group show, curated by Sumeshwar Sherma, Chemould Gallery, Mumbai, India
2013 Items of Re-use Solo exhibition, curated by Gemma Sharpe, Canvas Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan
2012 Traverals NSCAD thesis exhibition, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Residencies

2018 Pioneer Art Residency, Curated by Canvas Gallery, Khushab, Pakistan
2015 Space 118, Mumbai, India
2014 JSW, Abhisaran SAARC Artist Residency, Vijyanagar, India
2009 Can Serrat Artist Fellowship, Can Serrat, El Bruc, Spain
2009 Artist in Residency, 4th Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Fukuoka, Japan
2008 Charles Wallace Pakistan Trust - Rangoonwala Foundation Residency, Gasworks, London, UK
2008 3 Island Workshop, Scotland, UK
2008 Theertha - International Artists' Workshop, Hantana, Sri Lanka
2007 Taaza Tareen - VASL Residency, Karachi, Pakistan