

24/7

2ND ANNUAL STUDIOBQ ARTIST RESIDENCY PROGRAM 2016

24/7

Art is beyond then time, beyond the limits
its the feel the feel of creation the feel of do something so
for that the mind ever in search of something new,
in search of something extra ordinary without time limits,
it works for 24 hours
when the figure of 7 artists become together
then the term of 24/7 make its original form.

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Gone are the days of rigid artistic discipline, of definitions of art, normative models, sources of authority and the genre system. Contemporary art is all about the opposing generic discipline without being drawn into the programming of liberal and permissive societies which exert their own forms of control: almost by using this very freedom as a tool. 24/7 is a thematically complex, rich and idiosyncratic exploration of the boundaries of contemporary practice, making roaming gleefully across disciplines in a dissection of the specific and the seemingly trivial, possible.

Weaving together several ideas related to the notion of privacy in our times, 24/7 is about saying, revealing, confessing. It is also about withholding, concealing, and lying. The seven artists reflect on different aspects of the self – private and public – that say everything and nothing.

The exhibition collectively and the works individually are essays in self-analysis, social intervention and political projection, and invested with a wealth of precise meanings, coded messages and social significance. The artists have created works, which through the constructed narrative, framing and phrasing become a means of understanding both the aesthetic, psychological, social and moral content of an artwork and the role it must play in defining the bounds of the acceptable in liberal societies.

This year Studio BQ spent a reasonable amount of time reflecting on its programme. It appeared that the residency programme was at a crucial moment of transition, and that with this year's programme it will embark on an ambitious path towards the next phase of the Studio's journey. The Studio, as a consequence, expanded its team and concentrated on building internal capability to account for the growing requirements of the artists and the demands of logistics for exhibitions. Simultaneously, the Studio strived to bring to the audience exciting new practices. The culminating exhibition, therefore, is a representative overview of 'our' own thought on contemporary art.

The apparent transparency and visual privilege accessible to all the participants seem to be empowering, although any depth of understanding regarding the virtual space and its architecture, lays bare that it is a lie. This exhibition meditates on the condition of human existence as public and private, as free and unfree, and as secretive and exhibitionist. The accent, finally, is on the semantics of saying, the will to speech and silence, the politics of that freedom to choose between saying nothing and saying everything.

Aasim Akhtar

- **Alina Akbar**
Visual Artist (NCA), Islamabad
- **Anas Abro**
Visual Artist (CEAD, Muet Jamshoro), Hyderabad
- **Atia Javed**
Visual Artist (PUCAD), Lahore
- **Javaid Iqbal Mughal**
Visual Artist (PUCAD), Sheikhpura
- **Javeria Salar Khan**
Visual Artist (NCA), Islamabad
- **Mirza Zeeshan Hussain**
Visual Artist (NCA), Rawalpindi
- **Noreen Ali Parpia**
Visual Artist (IVS), Karachi



Anas Abro

Painter

Anas Abro throws into sharper relief the polarised options that confront, and are rejected by, the artists today, between the devil of pure abstraction and the deep blue sea of conceptualism (happenings, installations, etc.). These extremes, pure form and idea art, are both results of reduction embarked upon in the conviction that 'less is more'.

Abro shares an abiding belief in the power of paint. What unites the pigment-loaded expressiveness, the fastidious, exacting representation, the compelling, action-packed fiction, is the conviction that everything that matters can be said in paint.

While the artist may have questioned the impact of existentialism, Abro would probably still identify with the notion of artist as an outsider. The idea of the artist 'born under Saturn', constitutionally inclined to melancholy and eccentric behavior, has a long pedigree. This myth has consolidated into the belief that, because they are so sensitive to the very culture that alienates them, artists are natural critics of society and harbingers of change. This is not say that Abro is obsessed with perceptual transcription, but he does indicate a fundamental attitude towards the experience of reality. Whatever stylistic license he permits himself in the depiction, for instance, of the body, one always senses actual bodily experience – weight, muscular tensions, internal workings.



Directions | 32 x 32 x 32 cm | Metal Wire | 2015



Directions | 32 x 32 x 32 cm | Metal Wire | 2015



Directions | 32 x 32 x 32 cm | Metal Wire | 2015

Javaid Iqbal Mughal

Visual Artist

Historical dualities in art rarely map neatly onto later conflicts, but the form-content fight is alive in Javed Mughal's art, so much so that he can be punched from either direction. Like any artist really interested in content or attitude, Mughal may not have had the privileged access to the world of ideas or the dramatic realm. He manages to compress emotion and observation into paint without slipping into the fetishisation of either material or process. His essential aim is not so much to produce a picture that will be an object worth looking at, as to use the canvas as a theatre of operations for the assertion of certain realities. The canvas begins to appear as an arena in which to act, and what goes on the canvas is not a picture but an event.

Mughal holds the tension between gesture and appearance; his art, in other words, is a wager on the duality of form and content. For example, the pronounced awkwardness of his cross-legged seated figure betokens alert passivity. Mughal prefers to paint people he knows, ideally people who had been close to him during the residency programme. He is more interested in what is going on in people's heads, than in the way their bodies reflect light. This may seem a curious claim when usually his 'sitters' wear a nonchalant, resigned, neutral expression.



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Directions | 32 x 32 x 32 cm | Metal Wire | 2015



Directions | 32 x 32 x 32 cm | Metal Wire | 2015

Javeria Salar Khan

Visual Artist

Javeria Salar Wali's optical installations pop out of the dark like the bright facets of a kaleidoscope. They emerge not in chronological order, but according to a dynamic arrangement that highlights thematic relationships within her work. Time and space, memory and the present converge in installations with a strong visual impact, emphasising the process-oriented and narrative character of her oeuvre.

The work encapsulates Wali's long-standing connection to psychedelic art, and its concern for nature and the environment. Crystals and stardust, fluorescent palettes dusted with bright colours enliven an almost magical panorama, vast and microscopic at the same time. Water, air, fire, earth, spirit: The primordial elements break apart and recombine incessantly, in a pure and rarefied atmosphere, as it might have been at the genesis of the world.

The corpus of works that Wali has managed to put together revolves around three nodes: fiction, technology and nature are interwoven with memories and dream states. Together all of these elements provide a sense of Wali's nonlinear creative process; she moves back and forth in a sort of timeless arcadia between melancholy and poetry, paradox and irony.

Dreams, imaginative projection, and reality overlap and reassemble. Fragmentation, jumps in time, and out-of-sync effects produce a dynamic space-time universe, while the circle, the spiral, drawn with an almost obsessive repetition, suggest the endless cycle of birth and death. Wali's gestures have the rhythm of poetic verse: convulsive movements that energetically place one image over another, or decisive moments that erase the image, sweeping it away with the detachment of a Buddhist monk erasing away a freshly completed sand mandala.



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Directions | 32 x 32 x 32 cm | Metal Wire | 2015



Directions | 32 x 32 x 32 cm | Metal Wire | 2015

Mirza Zeeshan Hussain

Miniaturist

Painted or sculpted, animals have been a pillar of classical art, but in recent years they have literally invaded the gallery space: taxidermied, in formaldehyde, or alive; these encounters with animals are consistently different from those proposed by past representations. The animal body, the animal voice, the animal gaze and the animal trace are, in contemporary art, all new questioning entities.

We come to life surrounded by animals. They're among the first things we reach for as they hover over our cots in the shape of colourful toys; as stuffed teddies they spend the night with us, making us feel safe and warm; thereafter, as we grow older, they are ever-present through illustrated books, photographs, wildlife documentaries, films, as pets and pest, at the zoo, in the city, in the countryside, as entertainers or sports partners, and in Zeeshan Hussain's case, as symbols of lost innocence in his miniature paintings on wasli.

Hussain reveals a rather specific understanding of the stuffed toy bear. The animal is perceived as a material to be used in the work of art, or as a simple found object, like any other inanimate object that could become part of any artistic composition. The relevance lies in its open text, offering multiple interpretations, as well as in the offer of the paradoxically intense encounter. So there it is as an emblem of strength – lost and regained – the physical extension of man's power and the loss of childhood innocence. This encounter triggers a series of considerations. Most importantly, it questions our knowledge of the bear as, paradoxically, its persistent presence in Hussain's work seems to have established closeness rather than distancing us from the animal. Among other things, his work shows the secular limitations involved with painterly representation, highlighting the fact that animals are more than beautiful or fierce bodies.



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Directions | 32 x 32 x 32 cm | Metal Wire | 2015

Alina Akbar

Miniaturist

Alina Akbar's drawings are filled with a surreal vision and narrative impressions. At times cynical, sincere or perverse, her constructions engage restless, exaggerated characters that act out a range of emotions. Like the dreamlike atmospheres they inhabit, the fragmentary forms seem cloaked in a haze of memory.

Akbar's figures and portraits are formed through conventional means: they are drawn. Typically working in series, she often exhibits related pieces together; this is especially true of her drawings. A medium whose inherent directness provides a natural space for recording and chronicling, drawing is central to all aspects of her practice. Her illustrations are defined by the expressive nature of their lines and immediacy of their marks, qualities that constitute her narratives' emotive core. Realised without sketches or models, her compositions are developed through a process of layering and erasure. Akbar seems to be inspired by Honore Daumier's strong graphic style and acerbic caricatures. Art is not the only resource for her borrowings – she also quotes science fiction, cartoons and cinema.



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Directions | 32 x 32 x 32 cm | Metal Wire | 2015



Directions | 32 x 32 x 32 cm | Metal Wire | 2015

Atia Javid

Sculptor

Atia Javid's expression is precise though beyond language, set forth by objects that, while we know they are personal expression, seem to articulate the contradictory impulses that we navigate. She uses the vocabulary of architecture, but her work is conceptual, not an analysis of architecture. Javid is exploring form in space, and the place that closet spaces occupy in the psyche and in memory. She evokes association and memory through her use of the form of furniture pieces, but casts an overlay of doubt and unease by making her furniture unusable and unstable.

Javid sees pieces of furniture as solids waiting to be fit into the voids of windows and doorways. By opening them, privacy – so important an aspect of security and psychological comfort – is violated, the domestic leaks out and the public bores in. It is a modernist trope to objectify them and thus convert them or contort them into art objects, the focus of contemplation and awe.

Javid adds to the tension of what drawers and wardrobes, lockers and shelves evoke in us, and what she delivers in denying that what we long for is unavailable by making us stretch our sense of the work as both architecture and sculpture. Both formal and symbolic, these closets are receptacles where subconscious truths and enigmas of the conscious mind are stored. From this point, the three concerns of geometry, architecture and association with lived experience evolve together in her work.



Directions | 32 x 32 x 32 cm | Metal Wire | 2015



Directions | 32 x 32 x 32 cm | Metal Wire | 2015



Directions | 32 x 32 x 32 cm | Metal Wire | 2015

Noreen Ali

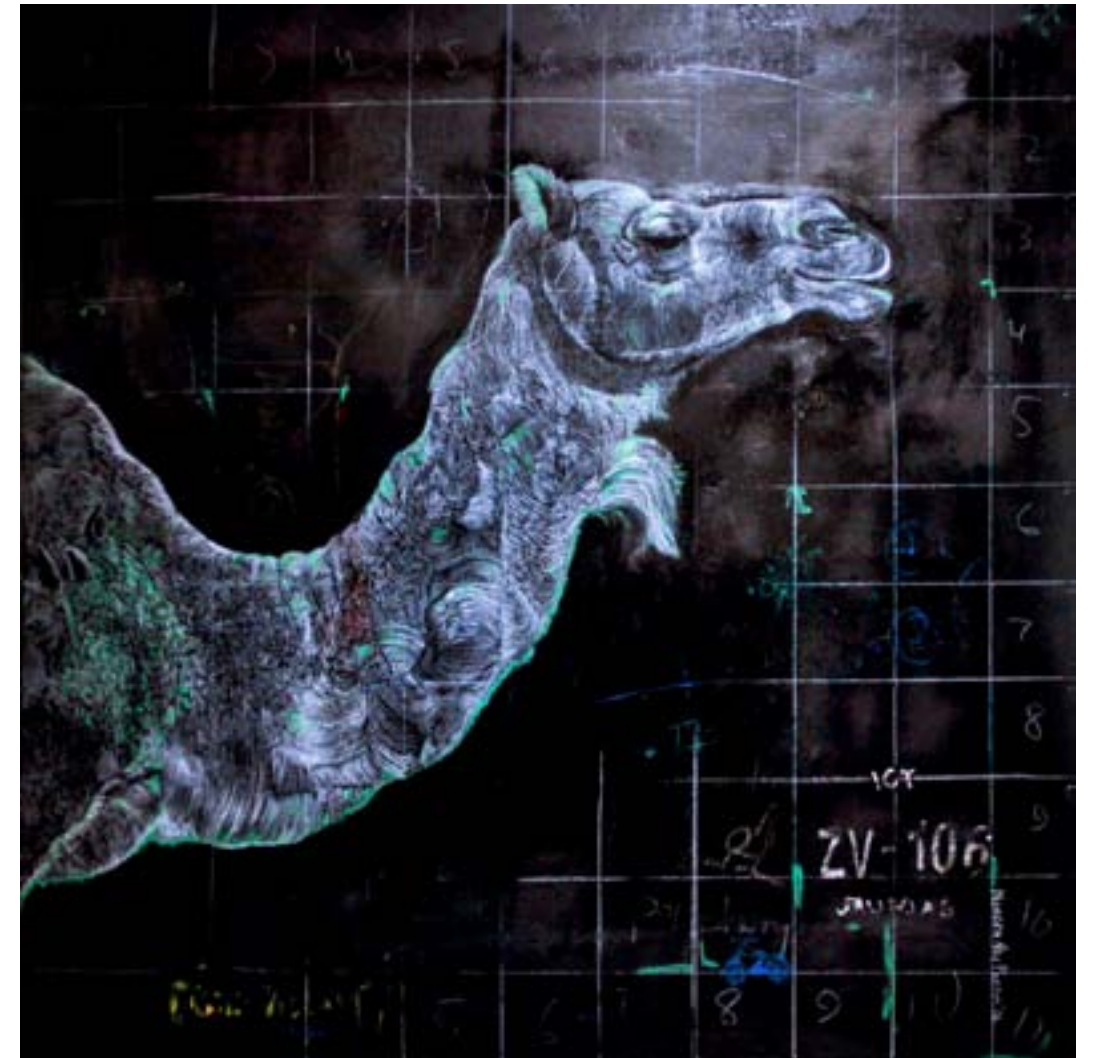
Printmaker

Lateness, as it turns out, is helpful when navigating the polymorphous nature of Noreen Ali's work. In thinking about her shape-shifting practice – which has variously manifested as drawing, sculpture, painting, abstract and representational photography, and installation – Ali first set about testing the limits and stabilities of found materials as viable means to communicate her thoughts and experiences.

Writing is both an invisible armature and present cipher in Ali's practice. Viewed in isolation, these works offer a richness that is discrete and intense.

Ali's work hinges on strategies of dematerialisation, but a keen sense of materiality as well as an enigmatic furtiveness and conceptual lightness can be felt in her work. These are attributes that define her work comprising found automobile registration number plates in metal – an installation simulating a floor rug and a water cooler. The work reads as a map, as an elaborate cityscape, but, as Ali suggested to me recently, it also speaks for the various regional backgrounds each participant in the workshop comes from. Ali's method, especially her manner of fashioning assemblages with materials at her immediate disposal, is anticipatory.

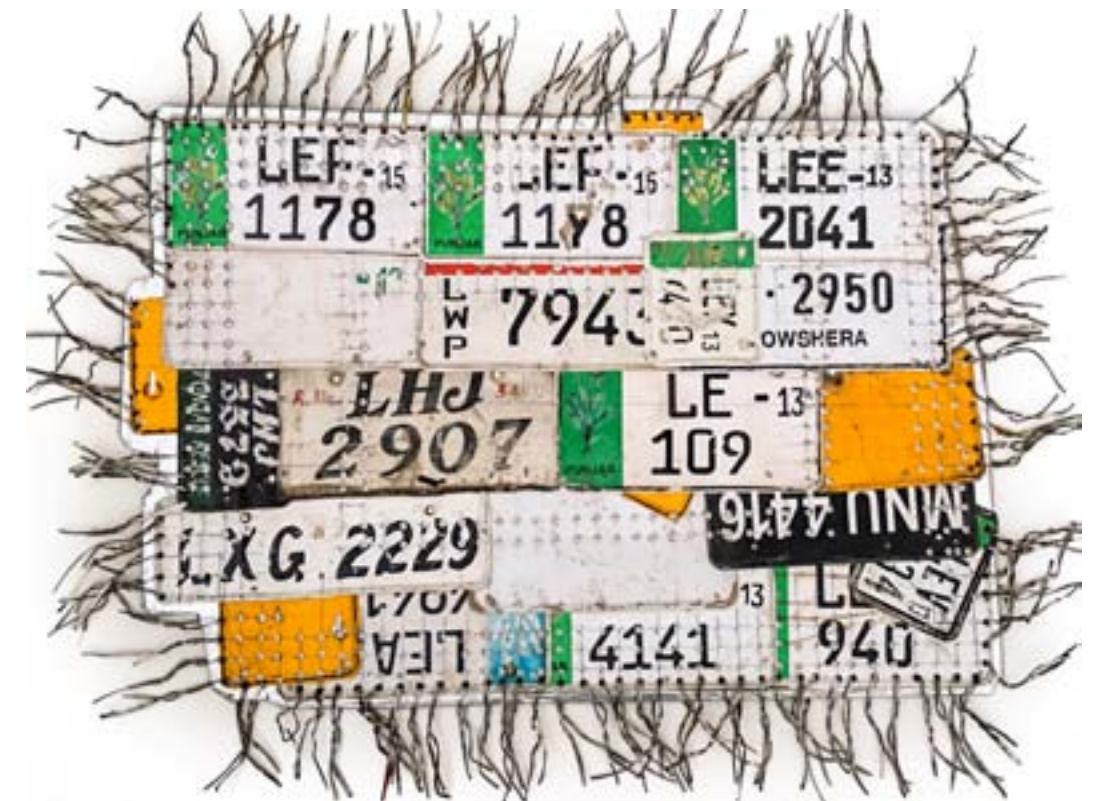
Ali is a listener, a sifter of signs from buildings, trying to uncover the words we give to the world. She cuts away the dangerous, metaphoric characteristics of language that allow it to be attached to received meanings. Words cut loose from the burden of description or commentary – language that exists as reality rather than at its service – are poetry. Even if we could imagine a world without words, it would be held together by a kind of typography. Standardised sets in size, colour and material: sheets of metal, shades of green, sources of energy and identity – the structures of an irrepressibly modern world, configured around unit-shifting patterns of production, display and consumption.



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24/7 at Studio Saeed Akhtar

an outcome exhibition of studioBQ artist residency 2016 (LAHORE)



Saeed Akhtar Studio, a renowned place in Lahore was founded in 1966. It is a place which represents the legacy of Saeed Akhtar with all his previous and recent artworks. This studio is not only for Saeed Akhtar rather it is open to all. It is currently run by Umar Saeed and Usman Saeed who held workshops for young artists and shows are also organized by the professional artists.

Recently, StudioBQ's second residency exhibition "24/7" was held at Saeed Akhtar's studio on 24th May 2016. It was a collaborative work between StudioBQ and Studio Saeed Akhtar. The residency was of a one month time period where seven artists lived and worked together to overcome their fears and experiment with their work in order to develop something new. The exhibition credit goes to the director BinQulander, as it was his effort to create such environment where these artists from different regions can live and work, providing them with all the needs for the progress of work. The exhibition was a big success and a boost up for the artists for their future as it gives them confidence to represent their artworks among people. We hope that the residency was a life time experience and in future it will be beneficial for them.



24/7 at Satrang Gallery

an outcome exhibition of studioBQ artist residency 2016 (ISLAMABAD)



Satrang Gallery, located at Serena Hotels Islamabad, run by Asma Khan and her team is quite dedicated in supporting and promoting Pakistani arts and artisans, particularly young contemporary artists. Since the beginning this gallery has held numerous shows and tried their best in displaying artworks which represent artist and Pakistan among the visitors on a broader horizon.

Currently Satrang Gallery hosted an exhibition titled as "24/7" curated by Asim Akhtar, he is an eminent art critic and has currently curated numerous shows. 24/7 was a travelling show, after Satrang gallery the exhibition moved to Lahore at Saeed Akhtar Studio. It was the outcome of second residency organized by StudioBQ. As far as Satrang Gallery is concerned this was the first residency exhibition held there. It was a three day preview and it aims to provide artistic delight to all the art lovers in Islamabad.

BinQulander, director of the studio has done abundant efforts in supporting these young budding artists. The credit goes to him for providing such platform where these artists can produce quality work and can present themselves whenever there is an artist discussion organized. These artists among other applicants went through a complete selection process after which only seven were chosen.

The exhibition opened on 17th May 2016, with a panel discussion where Asma Khan, Asim Akhtar and BinQulander gave away their views about the residency and the artworks produced during this one month period.

According to the curator these residencies should be held more as they allow people to exchange ideas, explore immediate environment under one roof.

Each artwork has its own individuality and proves that residencies should be held more and more for the beneficial of artists. In this panel discussion each artist also represents his/her artwork in-front of the visitors and other high officials who were present at the moment. This panel discussion gave them a confidence to publicly represent their artworks.





Studio B.Q under the administration of Binquander provide environment to emerging artists for the purpose of visual art, painting, sculpture, digital art and also offers progressive discussions about art and art activities around the world. In this way, Studio B.Q is a great environment in the development and evolution of genre of art which provides a healthy workplace for young and senior artists, where they are involved in visually centered work and discussions on art work in an open environment. Studio BQ organizing an event named as "Studio BQ Artist Residency" for visual artists (2015). Studio B.Q invites applications from artists with professional standing in their field (graduates in art field) or emerging artists with familiar talent for the first Studio B.Q residency. While focusing on objectives Studio B.Q residency aims to provide a platform for the artist to develop projects with new horizon blending modern and traditional thoughts with exchange of ideas. The residency programs terminate to a group show, exhibiting and introducing the artists and their works.

Residency Activities





Acknowledgement

studioBQ is going to thanks all those persons who participate in this Residency at their best, like

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- Ikhtlaq Hussain Chishti
- Muhammad Iqbal



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