

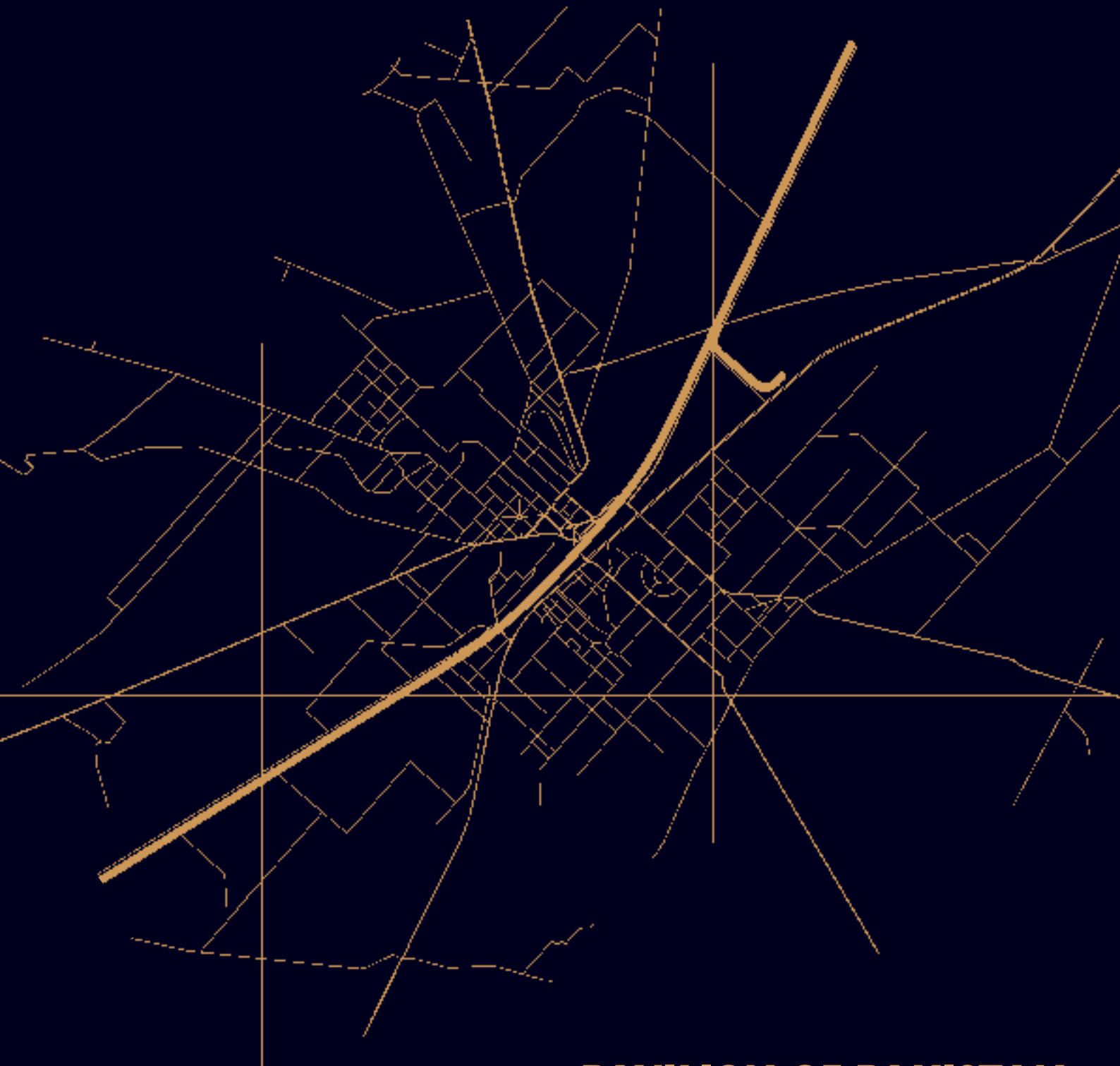
# MANORA FIELD NOTES NAIZA KHAN



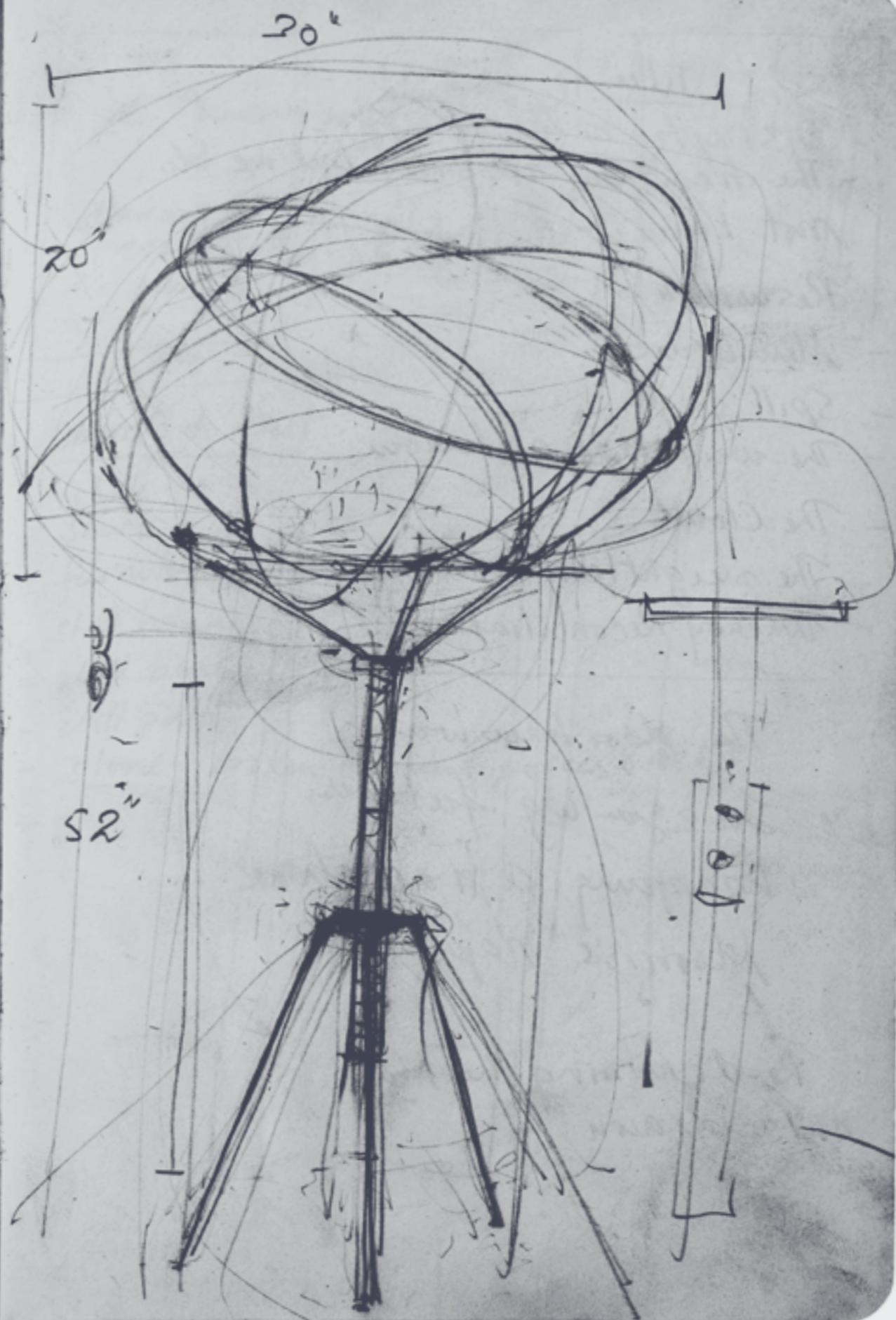
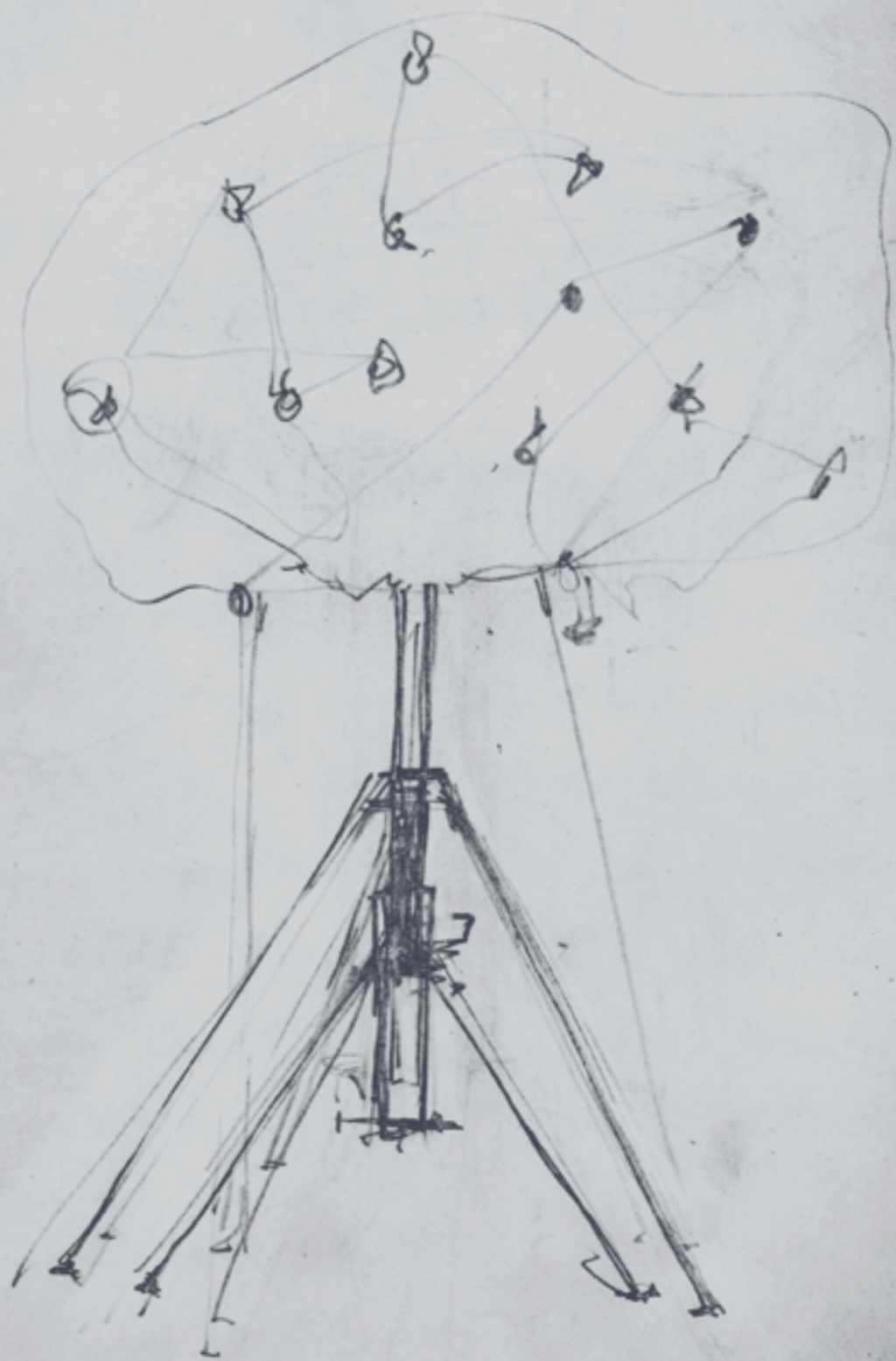
La Biennale di Venezia

58. Esposizione  
Internazionale  
d'Arte

Partecipazioni Nazionali



**PAVILION OF PAKISTAN**  
CURATED BY ZAHRA KHAN



**MANORA**  
**FIELD NOTES**  
NAIZA KHAN

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# FOREWORD

The 58th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, *May You Live in Interesting Times*, has truly proven to be a vital platform for the exchange of ideas on an international scale. Conceived by curator Ralph Rugoff, the presentation is exquisitely embellished by artists, curators and a highly inspired team put together by Paolo Baratta, President of the Biennale Arte. The Biennale effectively highlights the amazing diversity of human experience, upon which only art is capable of giving critical reflection.

The 2019 Biennale includes four first-time national pavilions: Ghana, Madagascar, Malaysia and Pakistan. The landmark decision to feature Pakistan's official pavilion at the Biennale this year was fundamentally the result of Zahra Khan's sincere efforts. She has made Pakistan proud, and I feel particularly privileged to be a part of the project for providing my support as Director General, Pakistan National Council of the Arts, and the Commissioner of the Pavilion of Pakistan. The curator and her team have done a tremendous job in presenting the work of one of the country's most significant artists, Naiza Khan. Through this project, they have presented a new viewpoint and fresh imagery about the Pakistani experience, which is very different from what we often see portrayed in the media.

With all its complexity, the Biennale celebrates the dreams, aspirations and struggles of people in our times. The equally complex layout of the festival, whilst complementing the city of Venice, also showcases *Life Spent in Interesting Times* all over the world, from the Giardini's Central Pavilion to the Arsenale, which includes seventy-nine participants and eighty-nine national pavilions. Walking through the intricately designed artistic spaces makes one feel like talking to the works as well as the artists, each getting intimately informed about the 'other'. This forum offers a

bridge to cross the distance between ideas and artistic production, which need to be exchanged between artists around the world.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of Pakistan, under its former minister Mr Fawad Chaudhry was very supportive of granting approval for the idea of this undertaking. The Pavilion of Pakistan thus garnered a great deal of attention and support from the art community as well as the entire country. Pakistan's participation in this prestigious international art event has provided a global audience with an unforgettable introduction to Pakistani art.

I congratulate Zahra Khan, for her commitment and hard work, and Naiza Khan, for being the first significant Pakistani artist to represent the country, along with everyone who played a part in this initiative's success. I particularly thank Asma Rashid Khan, Director of Foundation Art Divvy, for partnering with the project, in addition to all our generous sponsors for their valuable support in the execution of our first-ever national pavilion.

We are aware of the challenges ahead, and it is our hope that this will be the beginning of Pakistan's continued participation in editions of the Venice Biennale and in other international platforms. We look forward to assisting and promoting the artistic excellence of artists from Pakistan and its diaspora.

## **Jamal Shah**

Director General

Pakistan National Council of the Arts

Commissioner of the Pavilion of Pakistan

# INTRODUCTION

Foundation Art Divvy is delighted to have partnered with the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) to introduce the Pavilion of Pakistan at the 58th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. On this most prestigious art stage, we present *Manora Field Notes* (2019), a solo exhibition by the artist Naiza Khan, curated by Zahra Khan.

We extend our congratulations and gratitude to Naiza Khan for the exceptional body of work she has produced for the Pavilion of Pakistan. Spread throughout the pavilion's three spaces, *Manora Field Notes* immerses visitors in an environment combining sculpture, sound and film works, thus introducing the audience to the nuances of Manora Island, the city of Karachi and the larger surrounding region. Amongst wider concerns, this topical exhibition explores ideas of climate change, technology and transforming landscapes and histories.

Foundation Art Divvy also commends curator Zahra Khan, who has realised the aspiration of bringing the Pavilion of Pakistan to Venice. This pavilion comes at a time when Pakistan is turning a corner and looking ahead to new horizons. Participating at the Venice Biennale is an important opportunity for the country to engage in cultural exchange and dialogue with the rest of the world and to present its rich culture and heritage.

Since its founding in 2016, Foundation Art Divvy has endeavoured to bring the remarkable stories of contemporary Pakistani artists to a broader audience, with major retrospectives, ongoing exhibitions and high-level events across the country. The Pavilion of Pakistan is the Foundation's first international venture, and we are very proud to be representing Pakistan in Venice.

Founded in 1895, the Venice Biennale is the archetype for an international platform created for the purpose of discussing contemporary art practices that were not represented in art museums at the time. These conversations are urgent and

necessary, and in this great port city – even into the modern age still sitting at the crossroads of many cultures – they continue to augment this platform in a way that incorporates contemporary themes: climate change, displacement, diversity, inclusion, technology, heritage and the preservation and integration of culture.

Artists and curators working out of Pakistan today engage in dynamic practices in an ever-evolving context. They are sociopolitical commentators, affected by and aware of the difficult years the country has endured. In many ways, contemporary art from Pakistan therefore feels emblematic of curator Ralph Rugoff's 2019 Biennale theme of *May You Live in Interesting Times*. We hope that this first Pavilion of Pakistan not only opens a new window into the diversity of talent with which the Pakistani art scene brims, but also communicates an alternative narrative to existing interpretations.

We are grateful for the partnership of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of Pakistan, as well as the PNCA, both of which recognise that there are many more voices that need to be heard and stories waiting to be told.

We also deeply appreciate the contributions of Mr Jamal Shah, the Director General of the PNCA, for being the Commissioner of this pavilion and for writing the foreword to this catalogue.

The Pavilion of Pakistan has been made possible by the generosity of our sponsors, and we are indebted to each of them. Particularly, we thank the Qazi Foundation, the Mahvash & Jahangir Siddiqui Foundation and the Mercantile & Maritime Group for their unwavering support for this exhibition and publication.

Finally, our gratitude to La Biennale di Venezia for its guidance through this extraordinary process.

**Asma Rashid Khan**

Director

Foundation Art Divvy

# ESSAYS

# MANORA FIELD NOTES ZAHRA KHAN

The 58th edition of the International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia – Ralph Rugoff’s *May You Live in Interesting Times* – alludes to an era of fake news and an age of social divisions and polarisation, in which individuals are privy to fragments of the larger picture. Amidst a sea of misinformation and incorrect ‘facts’, the Biennale implies that the only truth-tellers are artists: they act as mediums, and their work provides insight into untraversed landscapes and unknown peoples.

It has been a great privilege to curate *Manora Field Notes*, Pakistan’s inaugural national pavilion at the Venice Biennale. This is an important milestone for the country, as the Biennale is amongst the world’s most prestigious forums for contemporary art. The Pavilion of Pakistan contributes to the breadth and depth of the art that is shown at Venice, as the addition of new national pavilions creates a fuller vision of global art. The Biennale is a celebration of international art, but it also offers a critical platform upon which to openly debate and query political, social and historical challenges being faced by communities and nations around the globe. In keeping with this spirit, the solo presentation by Naiza Khan (b. 1968, Pakistan) employs lenses through which to observe transforming ecologies, technological advancements, trade and navigation.

Pakistan has experienced tremendous upheaval in recent times, out of which artistic expression has found a strong voice. In addition, the country’s significant art schools and long cultural history have fostered a vibrant and diverse art community. A vital culture of public art is now being encouraged with the advent of local biennials and museum exhibitions. Artists are speaking clearly and powerfully about issues of identity, violence, society and climate



change. The motivation behind this first participation at the Venice Biennale is to amplify these voices and nurture crucial discourse between Pakistan and Venice – and beyond. These discussions, which are set within Pakistan, deal with local concerns, but simultaneously resonate with audiences in Venice, because they are current in their relevance and global in their outlook. Whilst contemplating the potential conversation between Pakistan and Venice, the parallels between Manora Island, the city of Karachi and Venice became apparent, some of which are discussed later in this essay. Thus, rather than trying to offer generalisations about Pakistan or its dynamic art scene, this pavilion has chosen to initiate a dialogue with audiences in Venice by closely examining the locality of Manora Island – a peninsula off the coast of Karachi – as seen through the work of the artist Naiza Khan.

Khan's critical engagement with Manora first began eleven years ago, when she started to document its evolving topography through fieldwork, research and artistic production. Her topical presentation for this exhibition emerged from conversations between the artist and myself about an archival document tabulating weather patterns in British India, which she found in a dilapidated weather observatory on the island. Manora can be viewed as a microcosm of Pakistan, since it is subject to many of the same forces and transformations in the country, and its terrain is representative of the lived histories the land has endured. However, as the pavilion seeks to illustrate, many of these factors are not simply limited to Pakistan or South Asia, but have a broader significance, especially for other cities and sites that have an intimate relationship with the sea.

*Manora Field Notes* cultivates an immersive environment within the pavilion's spaces. With Khan's insights, the presentation encourages a unique vision as a lens through which the public can encounter a more nuanced view of the area and its inhabitants. The artist records the contemporary moments and historical traces that give the island and larger vicinity their specific character. This project actively explores and uncovers the fabric of Manora and its neighbouring landscape. It investigates how organic and synthetic reshaping reflect variations across the greater expanse,

conveying the artist's fascination with the terrain and her broader concerns regarding postcolonial histories, climate change and displacement.

This publication includes extracts of a series of conversations that the artist has had with key interlocutors who have informed her practice over the past decade. Each of these has been juxtaposed with an iconic image from Khan's archive of drawings and photographic works. The exchanges further illustrate the different modes of enquiry she has had into the island's history. This curatorial text introduces the larger themes and aims of this exhibition, which include creating a deeply engaging viewing experience: one in which visitors are invited to reflect upon places across the world undergoing similar modifications. Essays by Iftikhar Dadi, Emilia Terracciano and Aamir R. Mufti, each focussing on distinctive facets



*Manora Postcard IV: Friday Afternoon at the Beach*  
2010  
Silver gelatin print  
60 x 41 cm (23 1/2 x 16 in)



The artist Naiza Khan (left) with curator Zahra Khan at the Karachi Port Trust Office, Manora Island, 2018

of Khan's project, follow this note. The Pavilion of Pakistan is grateful to the authors and interlocutors for their important contributions to this publication.

Part one of Dadi's two-part essay, *Naiza Khan's Engagement with Manora*, is a text first published in 2010. It maps the artist's initial association with Manora and the beginning of her conceptual ideas around geography, which she continues to explore today. Part two delves into her current considerations,

such as the dichotomy between technological and analogue practices. In her essay *Hundreds of Birds Killed*, Terracciano examines Khan's installation *Hundreds of Birds Killed* (2019) by centring on climatic change, linking the fate of humans with that of their surroundings. Terracciano draws out the sociopolitical and colonial nuances in Khan's work that are, in this piece, represented by the flight and displacement of birds. Mufti, in *The Tide Marks a Shifting Boundary*, traces Khan's journey in the public realm, probing her relationship with the city of Karachi and its encounters with the sea. He writes about the body of work presented at Venice, identifying overarching themes and motifs.

Manora Island has an intriguing multireligious and multicultural history. It is part of an archipelago, and is a short boat ride from the Port of Karachi. The island appeared intermittently through historical dialogues, including the histories of Alexander the Great, when his fleet, under the command of Admiral Nearchus, began its journey home.<sup>1</sup> From

the eighteenth century onwards, Manora served as a defensive outpost facing the Arabian Sea. It has a diverse architectural framework, which includes remnants from the former powers that have controlled South Asia. The Talpur Fort, now a naval base, joins British colonial buildings, such as the Manora Weather Observatory and the Manora Lighthouse. Scattered throughout are historic sites of worship: the Shri Varun Dev Mandir, Saint Paul's Church and the Shrine of Yousuf Shah Ghazi, amongst others.<sup>2</sup>

Khan's work is often directly in conversation with the sites and objects she observes and gathers, as well as the community with which she interacts. As the artist considers on page 57, her earlier work is embedded within the myths of the island and the history that Manora has witnessed. My discussions with the artist, prior to the production of work for the pavilion, centred on her extensive personal archive – drawings, diary notes, photographs, filmic material and recorded exchanges. These documents form an important element in the development of her work. They have been bolstered by a collection of objects from the island's beaches and tourist souvenirs, in addition to cartographic papers she salvaged from Manora's observatory.

Like the pavilion in Venice, which opens a window into Pakistan, Khan's collection of archival documents and objects provides insight into the artist's distinctive process and her experience of engaging with the island.

The changes that Khan has tracked on Manora are not unique to Pakistan's coastline, and are akin to climate-related factors that impact other international countries. However, the artist's perspective and her relationship to the island are particular. For this body of work, Khan revived her archive, revisiting and reformatting her materials and sifting through layers of enquiry. Moving easily between mediums, the artist produces sculpture, film and soundworks that weave together the many personal interactions and wider geopolitical and historical events that have shaped Manora. The resulting artworks are critically expansive in terms of viewpoint and address the challenges being faced by the larger Global South.

The works in this presentation have been exclusively created for the Pavilion of Pakistan. They are a continuation of Khan's investigation into public spaces on Manora Island and Karachi's coastline. The first installation, *Hundreds of Birds Killed* (2019), a soundscape and sculptural work, was primarily inspired by the 1939 *India Weather Review*, an archival document that Khan retrieved from the island's nineteenth-century weather observatory. This was once an important facility that guided ships and recorded the movement of weather and the skies. As a result of advancements in navigational systems, the observatory's nautical equipment and the carefully tabulated data of almanacs and guides are mostly defunct, and are kept in the offices of the Karachi Port Trust. Consequently, the redundant observatory building is currently in a state of disrepair and abandonment: the roof has caved in, blocking access, and the structure has been left to the mercy of the weather it once logged.



The Manora Observatory, 2010

Interested in the materiality of objects and the modes of information transfer, Khan developed the *Weather Review*, converting it into a soundscape. Through the ambient sounds of storms, a female narrator guides the viewer through the information of the review and creates an immersive aural environment within the installation. In a minimal presentation, the *Weather Review* lists the everyday reality of the catastrophic effects of weather calamities that cities in India faced in 1939. In a further reformatting of the report's data, the accompanying sculptural works comprise eleven maps cast in brass of the referenced cities. The meticulous process, described by Khan on page 44, echoes the idea of advancing technologies and also emphasises the collaborations that she enjoys through her working

practice. Illustrating a further example of cartographical transformation, the selected cities, which were once part of British India, are currently in three separate countries: India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The installation consciously creates a darkened environment with the objects and maps placed on lowered, asymmetrical plinths. Visitors can manoeuvre their way through the objects on display, investigating the terrain from an elevated point of view, evoking a sense of discovery.



Telescope on Manora Beach  
2012  
Giclée print  
60 x 41 cm (23 1/2 x 16 in)

The artist's vision is the central fulcrum of *Manora Field Notes*, positioned both metaphorically and physically as a telescope linking the exhibition spaces. Installed in the pavilion's courtyard, *Doorbeen (Telescope)* (2019) is a sculptural installation of a film playing inside an authentic, vintage metal telescope from Karachi. This telescope makes an appearance in *Sticky Rice and Other Stories* (2019), the two-part film which is the final work in the pavilion. Telescopes are a fixture on Manora's beaches, a source of entertainment for visitors to the island who delight in gazing out into the distance and tracing the journeys of far-off ships.

The eye is our oldest astronomical tool. It senses light from objects in the sky, but many of these are too small or faint to see in detail. To extend the view, our eyes need a boost. The telescope changes everything. It helps the eye gather more light and magnifies what we see. Suddenly, points of light become planets. Indistinct glows resolve into beautiful nebulae and galaxies.<sup>3</sup>

The telescope shortens distances and contracts views, allowing one's gaze to travel into distant sites. It is a device that provides the viewer with a glimpse into a parallel landscape. This particular installation generates a portal through which visitors can access a different world from that of Venice and the Biennale Arte. The film inside the telescope, *A Moving Landscape*, shows the artist's journey from one end of Manora Island to the other. Ideas of optics and erasure are relevant considerations in this presentation. Khan's camera hangs surreptitiously around her neck, as filming is not permitted on the island. The audience thus accompanies Khan as she makes her way through the narrow streets of Manora. The artist walks past its new developments, playing children, shops and animals resting in the street, to the harbour on the other side. *Doorbeen (Telescope)* is a means of emphasising the overarching strategy of the pavilion: a focussed examination of the terrain of Manora Island, which also serves as a platform from which to observe the larger region.

Installed within a former coal depot, a setting of exposed brick, rough concrete floors and visible wooden beams, *Sticky Rice and Other Stories*, the four-channel film installation, has been created from new footage as well as Khan's substantial film archive. This final work of the exhibition presents very real concerns regarding industry, migration and labour conditions.

The first part of this two-part film conveys Khan's exploration of the new Silk Road, as well as ideas of scale and displacement. The film accompanies the artist as she meets with artisans – who ordinarily produce souvenirs for tourist consumption – to develop small-scale models of historic trading ships. The second part of the film moves deeper into ideas of optics and navigation as well as local forms of commerce, aspects of labour and progressing technologies. Both parts of this film illustrate Khan's enduring



Sticky Rice and Other Stories  
Part I (video still)  
2019  
Four-channel video installation  
13.10 min.

association with the texture of Karachi's coastline and Manora Island, which is echoed by voice-overs, excerpts of which are reproduced in this catalogue. Khan's conversations with the artisans addresses issues of making, whilst Matloub, the telescope maker, opines on supply networks, present-day smuggling patterns and new high-tech equipment. Her discussions with Arif Hassan and Iftikhar Dadi delve into current international alliances, colonial influences and contemporary trade routes.

The Pavilion of Pakistan appreciates and accentuates the strong and enduring maritime associations shared by the cities of Venice and Karachi. Scenes of water run in conjunction with the filmic conversations. Water surrounds and infiltrates Venice, and is also an essential characteristic of Karachi. Both are vital ports on historic transnational routes, and both have had to negotiate modernity and industrialisation. Karachi is Pakistan's largest metropolis, and it continues to be the country's most utilised port. Venice is a popular tourist destination and the Arsenale, to which the Pavilion of Pakistan is adjacent, is still a major shipyard. Global warming and rapidly deteriorating ecologies are leading both cities to rethink their future options.

For many visitors, a national pavilion at the Venice Biennale provides a view into an uncharted space. The first Pavilion of Pakistan has elicited curiosity and enthusiasm for the strength of its vision and the quality of work it presents. In addition, it portrays a country that has been persistently mischaracterised by global media into a flattened representation of its complexities. *Manora Field Notes* seeks to highlight the characteristics of a city, a nation and a region manoeuvring its way through a volatile cultural sphere and shifting set of political challenges. Like any nation, Pakistan encompasses a multitude of cultural nuances, languages and opinions. Whilst it is impossible to adequately represent an entire country's diverse, multilayered and dynamic art world within the confines of a national pavilion, *Manora Field Notes* presents a particular view into Pakistan and provides a point of departure from which audiences can gain an understanding of the wider region.

<sup>1</sup> The Maritime Heritage Project, 'Seaports of the World', accessed 17 June 2019, <https://www.maritimeheritage.org/ports/pakistan>.

<sup>2</sup> The British Library, 'St Paul's Church, Manora, Kurrachee [Karachi] Harbor', accessed 17 June 2019, <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/apac/photocoll/s/019pho000000201u00094000.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Wall label, Griffith Observatory, Los Angeles, CA, February 2013, reproduced by Niels Van Tomme, 'The Image as Machine', in Harun Farocki & Trevor Paglen, *Visibility Machines (Issues in Cultural Theory)* (CITY: Centre for Art, Design and Visual Culture, 2015), 25; shared by Naiza Khan with the curator.

# NAIZA KHAN'S ENGAGEMENT WITH MANORA IFTIKHAR DADI

## Part One

*In following Naiza Khan's engagement with Manora, one discerns continuities with long-standing concerns. These include issues of co-existence and ongoing dispossession in favour of dreams of elite development. 'Manora's Fraught Trajectories', which was written by me in 2010, delineates these concerns from about a decade ago, many of which remain salient today.<sup>1</sup>*

## Manora's Fraught Trajectories

For several years now, Naiza Khan has been engaged with a series of interlocking questions regarding artistic agency and the social world; these inquiries have been sharpened by her engagement with Manora Island.

A small island near Karachi with a recent population of 14,000, Manora has a long history of habitation and possesses various historical and religious sites, such as the Shri Varun Dev Mandir, a Sufi shrine, colonial-era buildings, a church, a lighthouse, a defence fort and modern structures. They point to a multireligious social fabric that once existed, a site for Hindu and Muslim pilgrimage, and non-elite leisure. Manora's everydayness has a different texture from the frenetic urban metropolis of Karachi. Yet on a quieter scale, it evokes the same play of history, urban decay and transformation that many cities in the region are undergoing.

Since 2006, most residents have left the island after receiving a 'Golden Handshake Scheme'. For some 3,000 civilian residents who chose to stay,

crumbling playgrounds and homes marked for demolition remain. The artist understands the collective memory of this community through the Manora apartment blocks built in the 1960s. They now lie empty and haunted, bleaker than the church and temple nearby. However, their incomplete state of demolition is also due to the establishment's neglect in rehabilitating the lived space.

Manora thus serves as a metaphor for the wrenching transformations in much of the region, where globalised development has yet to begin, but whose rhetoric of technological progress and promise of newness threaten to erase existing sociality. Nevertheless, as modern development remains a real need for most peoples of the region, the artist's intervention is not a call for nostalgia, but one for reflection and concern for subaltern lifeworlds caught within structures of inequality.

A compelling myth capturing aspects of displacement and belonging was rendered by the great Sindhi poet Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai (1689–1752), in his *Risalo*, a magisterial work of Sindhi literature influenced by Jalal al-Din Rumi, everyday life in Sindh, and local Hindu and Muslim legends. In the 'Sur Ghatu' section, Bhittai

describes the legend of Morirro and the treacherous sea (a Sufi analogue for the relation between the self and the world). The wise Morirro was handicapped and would stay home when his six brothers would go fishing. When Morirro learnt one day that all six had been swallowed up by a giant shark or a whale, he asked ironsmiths to make him a steel cage (or a glass and steel machinelike structure) with hooks and blades on its outside. Morirro climbed inside the structure and asked fishermen to tie strong ropes to it and lower it into the treacherous waters between Karachi (Kalachi) and Manora. The shark (or whale) swallowed the structure, but its blades and hooks lodged into the creature's mouth. The fishermen then reeled in the creature and killed it. Morirro emerged safely and cut open the monster's body, finding his brothers' bones. He buried them near Karachi and settled there. Morirro's myth emphasises self and community in the face of larger predatory forces.

The artist has been visiting Manora since 2008, documenting its buildings and its people through a range of mediums, which include photographs, drawings and video works. She has also faced ethical quandaries, as Manora residents often construe her documentary activity to be that of a journalist or a legal activist, and expect her to advocate on their behalf in matters of policy. The artist has succinctly summarised her own fraught and liminal positionality:

The narratives that are at play in this context are immense, and I am imposing my own personal subjectivity to reclaim this space; a space that is at the brink of erasure. I also realised that landscape could be used in a metaphorical way. Aesthetically, my process is being driven by content that is continuously in flux. So each time I return from Manora, I ask myself, 'How do I reclaim this space and what is my position in all this?' I am neither a journalist, politician nor property

developer, but an artist who is witnessing certain changes in small and large proportions. My decisions are measured by the immensity of what I find and my anxiety of aestheticising the misery out there. I am trying to find strategies of accessing this space and needing to negotiate this on terms that I cannot completely control.<sup>2</sup>

Khan's attention has been captured by a number of especially striking developments: rusting ships and trawlers in the water; the modern ruins of the Karachi Port Trust building blocks on the island, which are also reminiscent of a graveyard, like the rusty ships; and the site of the F. B. Public School building, where, in September 2008, four children died when a wall collapsed on top of them.

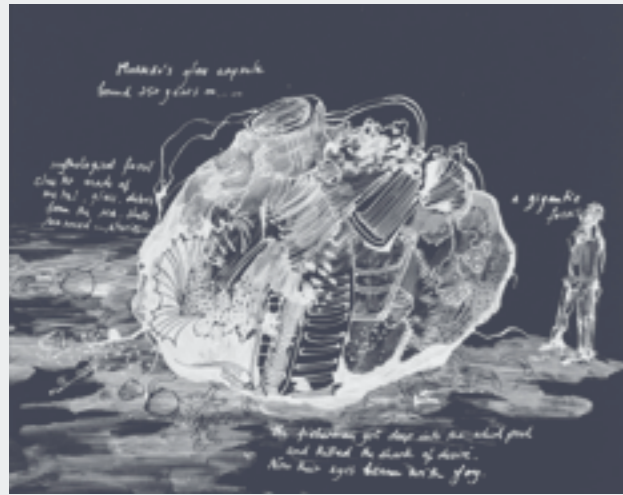
Abandoned furniture has been piled up in a heap in the school's courtyard, a fossilised reminder of the ambitions to convert Manora into a mini Dubai. Whilst many of the proposed changes to the site have been held back due to legal activism as well as by the country's current financial crisis and instability, the plans had promised a messianic, hyper-modernised utopia seeking instantaneous realisation, without fully accounting for their social costs on the marginalised populace. Of course, none of the promised structures would ever be remotely affordable by Manora's original residents.

Manora's beach also has *doorbeenwalas*, areas where ordinary visitors can pay twenty rupees to stand and view the distant ships on the horizon through home-made telescopes. This is especially poignant, as most of the visitors come from the inner city of Karachi, where there are not many open spaces to view the horizon and reflect on such sublime sights. For the artist, the telescopes on the beach emblemise a sense of stretched imagination, the possibility of apprehending something far greater than one's immediate self.

Now neither fully inhabited nor completely ruined, Manora is a compelling and painful site, uncanny and disorienting, where stretches of sensory emptiness and rupture are suddenly punctuated by functioning defence establishments, historic structures

and local life. Perhaps due to the processual and uneven character of Manora's ongoing transformation, the artist has chosen to adopt a longer-term experimental approach to this project, deploying a variety of mediums and aesthetic strategies as probes that seek to record the fraught persistence of lived experience and memory: 'I wanted to keep this visual research moving at a slow pace', she notes, 'without the pressure to produce results immediately and to avoid aestheticising the issues that were quite complex'.<sup>3</sup>

Khan's intervention is multilayered and ongoing; here, I discuss only a few of its valences. The artist is in the process of creating clusters of fossilised objects that are, in part, inspired by the myth of Morirro. These are fragments from the 'fossil' of Morirro's vessel, a magical and mythical object that has



Preliminary drawing for Installation of Morirro's Fossil, No. 1  
2009  
Acrylic ink on paper  
36 x 40 cm (14 x 15 3/4 in)



Homage (video still)  
2010  
Video  
13.10 min.

ostensibly been ‘found’ by the artist 900 years later. The fragments of this large capsule have washed up on the shore, but crucially, they are reimagined here as an amalgam of objects from different time frames. The capsule fragments begin to offer glimpses of ways to imagine other futures, as the telescope frames counter-posit them in a liminal space that stretches forwards indefinitely.

And the dialectic between non-monumental memorialisation and lived experience is vividly captured in the video *Homage* (2010), in which Khan focuses on a pile of broken and discarded school furniture in the middle of a desolate, rubble-strewn site. The artist intervenes by painting the furniture in a sky-blue colour, the exact hue of painted gravestones nearby, where the children, who died from the collapse of the school wall, are buried. She is assisted in her labour by local residents, and one also hears the voices of onlookers who describe their everyday concerns with droll and resigned pathos. The video grapples with the questions of everyday marginalisation, displacement and disenfranchisement, as alluded to in these unscripted parallel conversations. Here, the very process of memorialisation is continually punctuated by lived subaltern concerns, suggesting that the transformation of Manora is apprehended only in its immediacy, not in its larger sociopolitical totality. This experience of the local residents is also emblematic of the challenges that the artist has set for herself in this project: the question of visualising Manora’s historical palimpsest under erasure, the problem of voicing the concerns of the subaltern voices and the choice of aesthetic strategies. The artist’s approach, therefore, does not privilege a single method or voice, but attempts to fashion narratives, metaphors and dialectical juxtapositions, which offer the viewer a series of illuminating flashes of Manora’s fraught trajectories.



*Sticky Rice and Other Stories*  
Part II (video still)  
2019  
Four-channel video installation  
13.10 min.

## Part Two

*Reflections on Naiza Khan’s 2019 project, Manora Field Notes, for the Venice Biennale, which imbricates her ongoing work on Manora and Karachi with new directions emerging in her practice.*

On the one hand is the artist’s growing interest in global-scale techno-political infrastructure, such as strategic ports and major shipping lanes, along with aerial vision and drone surveillance. These operate at a vast scale and at a level far above the consideration of individual humans or even communities. The

assemblage of capitalism and superpower geopolitics that attends to these technologised formations is often less than benign for those who happen to be in its path.

On the other end of the scale are subaltern life and the informal socius. Specifically, Khan’s engagement with these is via the modality of fabrication and circulation of artefacts in the informal arena, as well as the larger issues of contemporary worldmaking and culture that these practices evoke.

The addressing of both scales by the artist is most evident in *Sticky*

*Rice and Other Stories* – the four-channel video installation created in 2019, but partly based on research and materials with which Khan has engaged for many years. These videos also move between Karachi and Manora, such that the latter is no longer examined by itself, but the concerns of the small place and the megacity seep into each other.

The videos focus on the low-tech craft of making these artefacts, which include small ship models based on images of historic and contemporary industrial vessels. They also examine the precarious process of circulating and using them, in addition to the cleaning and mounting of binoculars in handmade conical metal sleeves. However, the voice-over discussion ranges across other topics, such as the historic marginalisation of informal artisanal practice in South Asia during the twentieth century and the technological assemblages that have been marshalled by contemporary superpowers.

Khan’s fascination with the relation between technological infrastructure and handmade informal *techné* is also evident in her process of making the eleven city maps featured in *Hundreds of Birds Killed*, which combine digital mapping techniques with sand casting.

The artist’s attention to levels of scale, technology and visibility suggests that life in the urban Global South is characterised today by dualist experiences – the constant play between formal and informal livelihoods, the visible and the occluded, in terms of cultural recognition, and very local social concerns and abstract geopolitical forces.

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Restore the Boundaries: The Manora Project*, ed. Naiza H Khan (London: Rossi & Rossi, 2010), 7–10. Reproduced here with light edits for clarity.

<sup>2</sup> Reem Fekri, ‘Interview with Artist Naiza Khan’, *Art Dubai Journal*, Issue 7 (2009/2010).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

# HUNDREDS OF BIRDS KILLED

EMILIA TERRACCIANO

Humans have long looked to birds as messengers. Before the advent of meteorology (literally, ‘the study of things high in the air’), birds were read as signs for weather and the changing of the seasons. In Maharashtra, India, tribal elders know it is time to plant when the blue-streaked *perti wha* bird appears, presaging the monsoonal rains. The call of the bird, interpreted by villagers as ‘*perti wha*’, literally means ‘let the sowing begin’.<sup>1</sup> By looking at the bird’s nest, villagers can also predict the year’s rainfall: expect heavy rains if built high up on trees, lesser rains if lower down. For them, this mobile and highly localised harbinger of precipitation provides far more reliable prediction than the regional forecasts issued by the national weather bureau.<sup>2</sup> Yet rising temperatures have greatly reduced the numbers of the *perti wha*.<sup>3</sup> How to make sense of the weather? How to make sense of the future, then?

Naiza Khan keeps her head close to the ground with her installation *Hundreds of Birds Killed* (2019), a work that is part of the display of the Pavilion of Pakistan at the 2019 Venice Biennale. Allusive and apocalyptic – Hitchcock’s 1963 *The Birds* surely springs to mind – *Hundreds of Birds Killed* comprises a soundscape and a constellation of maps and cast-brass objects. In many ways, this hybrid work develops upon Edward Said’s radical challenge to produce imaginative geographies that question the eerie links between political power, development and climate knowledge in the contemporary moment.<sup>4</sup> Produced through painstaking labour and in-depth forensic analysis, the installation designates an implied ‘crime scene’ of collapsed spatial and temporal distances.<sup>5</sup> The soundscape component is read by Pakistani radio and theatre performer



The Manora Observatory, 2010

Nimra Bucha, and is inspired by an *India Weather Review* published by the Authority of the Government of India in 1939. Khan located the review in 2011 amidst the ruins of the Manora Island Observatory. Like many other nineteenth-century observatories of its kind, the structure was erected along the coastline of the subcontinent, facing the Indian Ocean. Its primary function was to offer administrators of the imperial bureaucracy an elevated and undisturbed platform from which to observe and study atmospheric movements. The Manora Observatory was important for its strategic location. Literally 'islanded' on the peninsula of Manora, off the harbour of Karachi, the two-storey stone building was used to forecast marine weather as it related to maritime and coastal safety. Weather data forecasted more localised areas and was collated

in a centralised, tabulated fashion to bring unruliness under control; the ghostly agencies of weather were reproduced methodically.<sup>6</sup>

A couple of entries from the 1939 report read (see page 47):

Madhubani (North Bihar) June 2<sup>nd</sup> DO Thunderstorm 3 dead  
Several houses blown away, trees uprooted, mango crops destroyed

Large area in Cawnpore District March 1<sup>st</sup> Afternoon Hailstorm  
Much damage to crops; *hundreds of birds killed*

The tabulated commentary produces weather as climate 'abstraction' and presents a series of numbers and plain facts.<sup>7</sup> The document implies that, under the supervening intelligence and care of British administrators, the devastation of humans, their dwellings, means of sustenance, cattle and infrastructures can be duly reported, quantified and calculated dispassionately to advance the development project.

The scholar Sunil Amrith writes that weather monitoring and communications infrastructures were part of a broader colonial project in which meteorology and economic forecasting played a huge role.<sup>8</sup> Weather prediction was chiefly tied up with the business of risk calculation, damage control, trade and cash-crop investment. Such calculations, in the case of India, were complicated by the monsoon and its unpredictable behaviour. Frequent colonial famines, which haunted India, put a premium on weather estimation and the supply of man-made water irrigation systems to mitigate risk.<sup>9</sup>

The voice of Nimra Bucha breathes life back into the deadly neutrality of data, restoring pathos to a tabulation so lacking in emotion. Khan worked with a sound artist to bring lively ecosystems, such as the deafening call of starlings and the hubbub of raucous crows, to bear upon the verbal information. Cities listed in the weather review are today spread across the four nations of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Khan creates an

imaginary – horizontal – geography that does not reflect the cartographic realities instantiated by the Radcliffe Line in 1947. The result of a multi-temporal and supra-continental feat, the maps were produced under Khan's direction with a team of devoted collaborators. The process of converting abstract information and mathematics into a material, three-dimensional object involved painstaking labour and multiple steps: sourcing GIS data from satellite research engines and imaging software of selected cities; purging extraneous graphic information from the maps; superimposing a grid structure over the maps to yield individual tiles; cutting tiles with a laser; and final casting of the tiles in brass.<sup>10</sup>

Khan's intervention from 'above' is an iterative take on the significant role aerial technology has played in defining territories and producing climate knowledge. Long before manned flight was common, the term 'bird's eye' was used to distinguish those maps, models and blueprints drawn from an imagined (bird's) perspective from those constructed through direct observation at high locations (for example, a mountain or tower). In his *Codex on the Flight of Birds* of 1505–06, Leonardo da Vinci offers graphically detailed renderings of moving birds and their wings. The *Codex* also includes anatomically unrealistic models of men flapping pathetic feathers. This modern Icarus speculated about the dreams of visibility that mechanical flight could afford humans and penned ideas on paper that would lead to the spreading of man's artificial wings. Da Vinci's flying machines would be developed much later in the form of the airplane and other twentieth-century military technologies. Avian flight continues to inspire expansionist imaginations; modern and contemporary military technologies, for instance, mimic bird

'vision': from the unmanned aerial technologies developed during the World Wars to today's satellite and drone photographic systems. Here, the very human wish to be able to fly is connected to the totalised might attached to vision.

Climate, moreover, is observed on a global scale; vast weather monitoring and communications systems trace wind patterns, ocean currents and states of the atmosphere the world over.<sup>11</sup> But images of the planet, such as the iconic blue marble photograph made from Apollo 17 in 1972, neither brought about the radical changes of consciousness for which environmentalists had wished, nor generated a new 'family of man to follow the end of colonialism'.<sup>12</sup> This infamous image, which features

a tropical cyclone hitting the coast in the Bay of Bengal, was overlooked by millions of viewers. As Nabil Ahmed puts it, the photograph is a monument to the 'continuation of the colonial and genocidal frontier of modernity'.<sup>13</sup>

The biopolitical violence of climate is distributed unevenly. Crime without criminal, weapon or witness, climate change – in frequency and intensity – is both a threat and human disaster multiplier, say the military.<sup>14</sup> Livelihoods are destroyed by flood and erosion; migrants and the poor are forced to



The artist at Shri Varun Dev Mandir, Manora Island, 2014

flee their lands in search of clean water, food and shelter. In the absence of a definitive cause linked to the catastrophic loss of habitable environment, climate migration puts pressure on normative legal principles of harm, redress and responsibility.<sup>15</sup> The very notion of refugee claimant is at stake insofar as climate migration does not occupy a specific legal category.<sup>16</sup> Though it may not be possible to attribute any single, isolated climate event to anthropogenic forcing, man-made greenhouse emissions have a lot to do with it; the increase of extreme phenomena is exactly what scientists have been predicting for more than a decade.<sup>17</sup> In 2010, at least 1,500 people died and more than a million were displaced when monsoonal rains caused unprecedented inundation in Pakistan. At the beginning of 2011, some 800,000 people were displaced by the floods in Sri Lanka. The reality is that all life forms will have to face ever more frequent periods of intense heat stress. Today, military and corporate elites continue to develop and implement security agendas designed to manage climate change and its devastating consequences for the few.<sup>18</sup> Capitalising on risk, such supra-national bodies rely on the prediction that the political turbulence of the future will be about climate change, along with water and food security.<sup>19</sup> Re-enacting *Hundreds of Birds Killed* may presage or reflect such likely political and ecological effects. As such, the installation partakes in producing a *forum*



The Manora Observatory, 2010

that questions the attribution of 'liability and causes, methods of identification, and corresponding frames of recognition'.<sup>20</sup> The work becomes a site for the process of translation, mediation and figuration, which puts to test both climate violence and its denial.

The latent message of *Hundreds of Birds Killed* is that humans are their environments, and that includes climate. This perception highlights the concept of bio-intimacy; in this version, bodies and ecologies are not distinct and there is nothing 'inter'-dependent about this relationship.<sup>21</sup> Compelling us to relate different scales of abstraction from local to global, *Hundreds of Birds Killed* also pushes one to think of a world in which humans and non-humans are always vitally and irrevocably imbricated. At least

from the seventeenth century, Dutch still-life painters included a dead bird, usually a sparrow or starling, as a *memento mori* (reminder of mortality) at the foot of a canvas usually depicting opulent vases with gorgeous flowers, foodstuff or an extravagantly set table. Today, few of us live in more than extravagant conditions and continue to consign uncanny effects – rare and implausible events related to climate – to the subgenres of science fiction, horror and fantasy.<sup>22</sup>

*Hundreds of Birds Killed* connects human and avian fates in frightful ways. Dislocating any assumed sense of history as already written, Khan submits the issue of climate to colonial and postcolonial analysis. As such, the installation participates in creating an alternative chronology of climate, as the scramble for sovereignty extends to the atmosphere and its life-giving capacities. The rain of hundreds of dead birds is a dark image. Khan

appears to suggest that the displacement and extinction suffered by birds is likely, in the long run, to be our own.<sup>23</sup> Could this work act as a rejoinder to protect the rights of human and more-than-human worlds?<sup>24</sup>

- 1 Aparna Pallavi, 'Nature's Forecast', *Down to Earth*, 28 June 2015. See: <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/coverage/natures-forecasters-3622>, accessed 3 June 2019.
- 2 Kath Weston, *Animate Planet: Making Visceral Sense of Living in a High-Tech Ecologically Damaged World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), 121.
- 3 A. P. Møller, W. Fiedler and Berthold, eds. *Effects of Climate Change on Birds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). See also the Audubon Society's mass findings: <https://www.massaudubon.org/our-conservation-work/climate-change/effects-of-climate-change/on-birds>, accessed 4 June 2019.
- 4 Ashley Dawson, 'Edward Said's Imaginative Geographies and the Struggle for Climate Justice', *College Literature: A Journal of Critical Literary Studies*, vol. 40, no. 4 (fall 2013): 33–51.
- 5 Eyal Weizman, 'Introduction: Forensis', in *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth*, a project by Forensic Architecture, Centre for Research Architecture, Department of Visual Cultures, Goldsmiths, University of London, eds. A. Franke and E. Weizman (Berlin: Sternberg Press and Forensic Architecture, 2014), 9.
- 6 The object of atmospheric studies, 'climate' designates the statistical average of weather conditions in a local condition of scalable difference over a period of time, from seasons to millennia; for the World Meteorological Organisation, the standard time is thirty years.
- 7 See Delhia Hanna, 'Cloud Walking', in *A Year Without a Winter*, ed. Delhia Hannah (New York: Columbia Books on Architecture and the City, 2019), 65–80.
- 8 Sumit S. Amrit, 'Risk and the South Asian Monsoon', *Climatic Change*, vol. 151, no. 1 (2016): 17–18.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 The maps were cast in brass by a team of artisans from Golimar, Karachi. Author in conversation with the artist, May–June 2019.
- 11 Mike Hulme argues that the idea of 'climate' is a human abstraction. Methods of calculation serve to fashion 'a sense of stability or normality into what would otherwise be too chaotic and disturbing an experience of the unruly and unpredictable weather'. See Hulme, 'Climate and its changes: a cultural appraisal', *Geo: Geography and Environment*, vol. 2, no. 1 (21 May 2015): 1–11. See also Paul N. Edwards, *A Vast Machine: Computer Models, Climate Data, and the Politics of Global Warming* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013).
- 12 Anselm Frank, 'The Forensic Scenography', in *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth*, 485.
- 13 Nabil Ahmed, 'Radical Meteorology (2013): Video, 5'53", 3'46" and 4' 12"', in *Architecture in the Anthropocene: Encounters Among Design, Deep Time, Science and Philosophy*, ed. Etienne Turpin (Ann Arbor: 2013).
- 14 Lahoud Adrian, 'Floating Bodies', in *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth*, 495–98.
- 15 Ibid., 507. See also Robert Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011).
- 16 Lahoud, 'Floating Bodies', in *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth*, 497.
- 17 The greenhouse effect has already raised the global mean temperature by one degree Celsius. The non-binding Paris Agreement of 2015 states that the goal of the international community is to limit further warming to two degrees. Important exchanges with Physicist and Climate Professor Laure Zanna at Wadham College, University of Oxford, have shaped this short article. See: <https://laurezanna.github.io>
- 18 Nick Buxton and Ben Hayes, eds., *The Secure and the Dispossessed: How the Military and Corporations Are Shaping a Climate-Changed World*, with a foreword by Susan George (London: Pluto Press, 2016).
- 19 Susan George, 'Foreword', *The Secure and the Dispossessed*, xv–xvii.
- 20 Lahoud, 'Floating Bodies', in *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth*, 497.
- 21 Weston, *Animate Planet: Making Visceral Sense of Living in a High-Tech Ecologically Damaged World*, 1–33 and 78–79.
- 22 Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016).
- 23 Peter Doherty, *Their Fate Is Our Fate: How Birds Foretell Threats to Our Health and Our World* (New York: The Experiment, 2012).
- 24 Lahoud, 'Floating Bodies', in *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth*, 515.



# THE TIDE MARKS A SHIFTING BOUNDARY

AAMIR R. MUFTI

Naiza Khan's work is difficult to take in on the hoof – the preferred mode of encounters with art in the age of the global biennial and the mega-exhibition. Her works draw you in and make you linger, setting off challenging questions about their composition, the emotions they elicit and the ideas they engender. You might notice that certain objects or images – from a corset or chastity belt to a beached whale – show up again and again, travelling, as it were, from work to work and across different materials, scales and mediums. Throughout her career, Khan's work has displayed a deep attention to process, with individual works often moving between two or three mediums before acquiring their final form. Her art has a remarkable range – across motifs, influences, forms: from her early copper engravings and woodcut prints, to a sustained drawing practice, large-format oil paintings, sculptural corsets in galvanised steel, video installations, site-specific works and, now, assemblages of cheap plastic toys cast in brass, bought from second-hand markets in Karachi. Khan's early work shows the powerful results of her formal training at Wimbledon College of Arts and, later, at the Ruskin School of Art at Oxford: haunting charcoal drawings that explore the female form, simultaneously evoking the sensuous and ethereal nature of bodily experience (*Her Body in Four Parts*, 1995), and copper engravings that heighten the tension between abstraction and the figural (*Wave VIII*, 1989).<sup>1</sup>

Yet it was only once the artist had self-consciously stepped outside the studio environment and begun to enter and explore the sheer density of life in Karachi, which has been her home for more than two decades, that her work began to show the originality and mastery of visual idiom and process that has been its hallmark ever since. Her iconic work of this period is the site-specific



*Henna Hands (detail)*  
2002  
Henna pigment on a public wall  
Dimensions variable  
Site-specific project near the  
Cantonment Railway Station, Karachi

project, *Henna Hands* (1993), stencilled prints of henna pigment on the walls of a working-class neighbourhood near one of the city's two main colonial railway stations, walls already crowded with writing and images, from advertising to political slogans. Henna is associated with weddings throughout South Asia and used to decorate the hands and feet of brides. The artist's descriptions of her own motivations are revealing, as they go directly to the situation of 'high' or 'gallery' art in a society such as Pakistan's. In a recent conversation in London, she noted, 'My initial desire to take the work out into the city was to step out of the studio and the white cube and to figure out how this work could sit in the public

space, which is so gendered, how could we spatialise the body in the public space, and what kinds of readings would this bring back? This was an attempt to reclaim the public space as a female artist'.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, by their very nature, these were ephemeral works, so their decay and disappearance became part of the artist's process. As she states:

Reactions from the residents of the community have informed my understanding of the works over a period of time...the implied march of three women was all but scratched out soon after it was made. The residue remains as part of the wall, marking a different sort of web with graffiti, 'paan' stains and party political slogans. In another location, the work remained for some time, children enjoying it, women angered by the blatant use of the woman's body, arguing to see it replaced by a man's body. The images have slowly been erased, scratched, in part preserved, integrated with the writing on the wall.<sup>3</sup>

The works of art are offered up to Karachi, to be disposed of as it pleases. Having made this offering, the artist steps back to observe how the city receives the gift and how it continues to live on its streets. It is a remarkably tender gesture, and as far from a philanthropic one as may be possible, given the stratifications and social distances within the city and the country. This entire process is an important key to understanding the artist's relationship with the city with which her work has come to be most associated.

Khan is often described as a quintessential Karachi artist. It is certainly true that her work has been deeply immersed in the life of the city. Yet it is important to understand the exact nature of this immersion. Although she has lived there for twenty-five years, it is nevertheless a partial outsider's eye she brings to her explorations of the life of her adopted city. It is not just that the work is not exhausted by its relationship to Karachi; rather, the particularities of life in this megapolis on the littoral of the Arabian Sea provide in her work occasions for ruminating on some of the most fundamental questions facing human and non-human life at this troubled moment in its history on this planet. City and wasteland, habitation and ruin, land and sea, nature and artifice, the ordinary or the everyday and the sublime – these are some of

the concepts and categories that are at play in one way or another in the visual language of Khan's extraordinary body of work.

For more than a decade now, Khan has become engaged with Manora Island, a strange and extreme locale on the western edge of the Karachi conurbation. Her current work in the Pavilion of Pakistan, presented under the rubric *Manora Field Notes* (2019), shows evidence of this engagement. A relatively short distance but a world away from the colonial centre of what is now a vast urban expanse, Manora is a one-time tidal island southwest of Karachi harbour, now connected to the mainland by a causeway built on a reinforced sandspit, which marks the western edge of the harbour. The island is home to a British-built naval base (now a naval academy) and a small remaining civilian population. Manora thus offers glimpses of both the past and a possible future of the city it has watched emerge across the harbour from a cluster of

fishing villages, and then explode into an enormous metropolis, the entire process having taken place in well under two centuries.

However, given its strategic location at the mouth of a natural deepwater harbour, it is not surprising that the island has a longer and more storied history as well: it appears in Ottoman, Arab, Persian, Portuguese and British travelogues and chronicles, and in local vernacular literature. It is even believed to be 'Morontobara', one of several islands in the harbour described in chronicles of Alexander the Great's military campaigns, such as Arrian's second-century CE texts, the *Anabasis Alexandri* and *Indica*. The Macedonian army had travelled a thousand miles down the Indus and its tributaries, the conqueror having decided not to go further into India and to turn his overextended and exhausted army back towards home. After their campaigns in the Indus Valley, it was from this island that the fleet was launched towards the Persian Gulf and Babylonia under Nearchus, as Alexander proceeded on land on his fateful trip across the Makran

Coast into present-day Iran – Manora is thus, in some ways, literally a historical palimpsest and a sort of microcosm of the history of the subcontinent as a whole.

In Khan's work over the last decade, Manora has emerged as a complex metaphor for the intersections and overlaying of numerous historical processes that have shaped the region and many other parts of the world over decades, centuries and even millennia. These include global capitalism and its effects on local communities and geography as well as its relation to human habitation, the forming and un-forming of societies through colonisation and decolonisation, and the 'slow violence' of environmental degradation on marginalised communities.<sup>4</sup> It functions as a conduit through which the art can harness such processes and produce uncanny images that render them both strange or alien and intimately familiar. From paintings to sculptural works and video installations, the *Manora* project has appeared in the full range characteristic of Khan's visual practice.

The work being presented in the first gallery of the Pavilion of Pakistan is



*Manora Postcard I: Doorbeenwalas*  
2010  
Silver gelatin print  
41 x 60 cm (16 x 23 1/2 in)

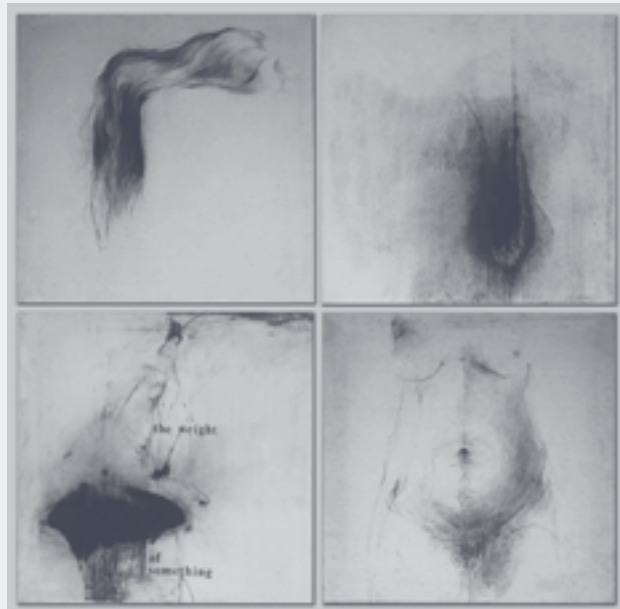
linked to a discovery made by Khan on Manora – a tabular summary of weather reports of ‘storms and depressions’ in different parts of British India, published in 1939. She found the volume amidst the debris of the island’s ruined nineteenth-century meteorological observatory, whose roof had caved in, and its contents have provided the raw materials for *Hundreds of Birds Killed* (2019). A female voice recites the details of destruction caused by storms in different cities, towns and villages across the subcontinent, localities now divided between four nation-states as a result of the two partitions of the subcontinent, in 1947 and 1971. Crops, homes, schools and official buildings are destroyed; boats capsize, an airplane crashes, livestock are killed; and people are injured, displaced, or killed under a variety of climatic conditions. In the background, one hears multiple sounds of wind, rain, thunder, hail, flowing water, crashing waves, barking dogs, crowing roosters – that have an almost ambient quality. There is something obsessive and mesmerising about this litany of weather-caused destruction, but the scientific and bureaucratic objectivity and emotional restraint of the narration leaves open a door to imagining the lives, homes and places devastated by climate forces. The soundscape accompanies an installation of brass maps on plinths, the arrangement on each plinth representing the map of a selected city mentioned in the weather

report. These plates are the latest of Khan’s brass works, made through a complex process in collaboration with traditional brass artisans in a working-class neighbourhood of Karachi.

Points of contact between human and non-human worlds, and the environment and nature as such, are recurring preoccupations for Khan. Often in these works, the edge of the sea – at beach, port or harbour – offers such places of contact. Even in the midst of the detritus of uncontrolled urban growth and uneven industrialisation, the world of nature, the earth’s own biodome, constantly marks its presence. Two seasonal streams and their tributaries pour the city’s raw sewage into the harbour, uncleaned oil spills further pollute its waters and the mangrove forests that once lined the shore have been in retreat for many decades – but these extreme forms of the degradation of nature nevertheless live within the world of nature.

The sea, polluted and instrumentalised for the purposes of global capitalism, still abuts and frames the human artifice, retreating from it and approaching it again in a daily cycle.

In the second gallery, the four-screen video installation *Sticky Rice and Other Stories* (2019) has a more contemporary historical focus than *Hundreds of Birds Killed*, highlighting the plight of spaces, habits and traditions of local communities. This region plays a pivotal role in China’s Belt and Road Initiative, an enormous network of globally dispersed infrastructural projects, including roads, railroads, ports and airports meant to link the economy of mainland China to its markets worldwide. Pakistan is one of the hubs of this global network, with a new port and a whole city under construction at



*Her Body in Four Parts*  
1995  
Charcoal on canvas  
Four panels  
Each: 61 × 61 cm (24 × 24 in)



*Sticky Rice and Other Stories*  
Part I (video still)  
2019  
Four-channel video installation  
13.10 min.

skilled labour that go into their production. One scene in the video shows a detailed and sometimes anxious conversation about the design of the boats that have been commissioned by the artist. The artist’s meticulous attention to her medium and process parallels the care of the artisans who fabricate the model boats. It is their knowledge and process that she places within the filmic dialogue, which concerns labour and production within the global supply chain. It is important to note that there is not even the hint of a sentimental suggestion that the work can overcome or cancel the great social distance that separates the worlds of the artist and the artisan, the studio or gallery and the workshop. Yet, despite this distance, there is also the insistence that the encounter and engagement between these distinct and parallel practices can and should take place.

At a crucial moment in the conversation about a specific design element, one of the men in the video says to another that he will relay the design specifics to him ‘by WhatsApp’. Pre-capitalist modalities exist alongside the products of the most technologically advanced sectors of the global economy, somehow nestling into one another. This same perception is reinforced on a second screen, as the model boats, strung with bright lights, are wheeled slowly on a rickety street vendor’s cart, up and down the beach by a visibly working-class man, with the cranes of the Karachi container port barely visible through the haze in the distance across the water. The crowded assemblage on the cart includes models of sailboats, historic vessels and a cargo container ship, the whole appearing in the video as a sort of capsule of the harbour’s history, a compression of space as well as of time. What, exactly, is the man pushing down the beach so deliberately, as he stares fixedly at the modern port on the horizon? This subaltern figure pushes forwards an alternative history of life and labour – one that makes visible the existence of social worlds that cannot be assimilated into the narrative of progress, efficiency and automation – which is represented by the bridge and gantry cranes in the distance. The video also includes a segment of a conversation about the Chinese initiative and the role of the Indian Ocean region within it.

Part II of the video installation focuses on a local vendor and entrepreneur, who makes his living from second-hand binoculars installed on tripods along the beach, customers paying a few rupees for the chance to peer through them at ships or at the city in the distance. It is a leisure activity for day visitors from



*The Streets Are Rising*  
2012–13  
Oil on canvas  
200 x 256 cm (78 ¾ x 100 ¾ in)

the city's congested neighbourhoods that offers them an experience of expansiveness, scale and 'distance seeing'. (The Persianate word *doorbeen* etymologically parallels the Latinate 'telescope'.) The binoculars are enclosed in handmade metal casings that give them a bizarre, elongated and other-worldly look, like objects from a low-budget science-fiction film. One screen shows the man cleaning and repairing his binoculars, whilst the other focuses on a spot on the beach where they are installed, with beachgoers milling about and occasionally looking through them. The camera, itself, also peers through them at ships on the horizon. A conversation between this man and the artist concerns at first the business, itself, and the man's acquisition of the optical instruments from sellers engaged in irregular

cross-border trade with Afghanistan – 'smuggling' seems too harsh a word in this context. Having mentioned that he, himself, has witnessed deaths by drowning on this beach, he notes that it is 'the will of the water', whether or not it returns the bodies of those who have drowned. The artist then steers the conversation towards drone warfare, and what follows is a fascinating exchange about the origins of telescopy in military exigencies, the mediated viewing of drone warfare and the 'truthfulness' of sight and vision, as such. The video thus draws attention to sight and vision as political (and even geopolitical) processes, not merely biological ones.

One of the centrepieces of Khan's decade-long engagement with Manora is *The Streets Are Rising* (2013). Her practice has travelled far from her early formal training, but she has avoided the familiar narrative of a one-way path from painting to installation or conceptualist art. The painting presents the scene of a catastrophe: what looks like a beach, presumably at low tide, viewed from the direction of the sea; a line of buildings on the horizon, visible beyond the beach, parallel to the upper edge of the painting; an upturned vehicle; illegible, handwritten text throughout the frame; and in the bottom half of the frame, where the sea ought to be, disruption of perspective and orientation, partially completed outlines of buildings and other structures from discordant perspectives, the upturned wreck of a car, a staircase that seems to lead nowhere, fragments of brick walls and barely

discernible human figures, possibly in a boat. Finally, in the top half of the frame, a little to the right, lies something to which the eye cannot but be drawn – a beached whale, mouth open, lying on its side. Is this Jonah's whale, waiting to swallow whole those who have defied God (or nature) and brought about this catastrophe? Or, perhaps, it is Ahab's, a reminder of our obsessive and never-ending pursuits that can only lead to our extinction? Yet the whale is, of course, probably dead, thrown up by the sea at our doorstep as rebuke and reproach. The



*Homage* (video still)  
2010  
Video  
13.10 min.



*On the Front Line*  
2007  
Silver gelatin print  
61 x 51 cm (24 x 20 in)

painting invites reflection on catastrophe and ruination, which links it, we might say, to other artists and works in other places – to Anselm Kiefer, for instance, and his *Aschenblume* (2006), which he dedicated to Paul Celan, the Romanian-Jewish Holocaust survivor who lived in France and wrote poetry in German. However, perhaps the 'death fugue' of the slowly unfolding catastrophe evoked in Khan's works remains still to be written.<sup>5</sup>

To the human observer, the tide marks a shifting boundary between land and sea, between the finite and the sublime or infinite. Standing at this 'edge' on a beach, we are put in touch with the finitude of our lives, of our

modes of life and of our very presence on this planet: the incoming tide gradually erodes and finally washes away the traces left by human presence during the previous day; and at low tide, the sea leaves behind hints of its many mysteries, the detritus it may or may not reclaim during the eternal return of its rhythmic, diurnal cycle. To reflect phenomenologically on the tide is to wonder whether all we are doing is building and rebuilding sandcastles on the edge of the sea, in the path of the inevitable incoming tide. Yet the shifting tide is also a powerful metaphor for the fluctuating relationship between land and sea on the macro scale, geological as well as historical. This relationship has come to threaten, in our very lifetimes, numerous communities and ways of life, and seems more or less inevitable and unstoppable. In a whole group of large-format oil paintings that belong alongside *The Streets Are Rising*, and in works such as *On the Frontline* (2007), the sea deposits on the beach not only the various bits of its own organic soup – its recurring primordial gift to the land at its edge – but also a minuscule portion of the discarded detritus of the human artifice, the ubiquitous trash of the global 'throw-away' economy, as if insisting that we ought to take care of our own crap.

Khan wishes to document all this, without nostalgia for some lost origin, without mourning or melancholia, and offers her adopted hometown to us as a series of parables about the way we live now, no matter where we may be on the planet. The presence in the Venice Lagoon of these complex, evocative, often haunting and carefully crafted works inspired by the harbour and marine margins of Karachi adds another layer of complexity. The ancient centre of the silk and spice trades situated off of Italy's Adriatic Coast, oriented existentially towards the east, and an emergent cluster, along Pakistan's Arabian Sea Coast, of hubs in the Sino-centred network of contemporary global capitalism are put in some sort of conversation – a conversation of unequals, of contrasts, disalignments and disparities. Yet beyond the asymmetries, there is always the common presence of the sea.

1 See Iftikhar Dadi, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).  
2 Also see 'Circling Space. Observing Time: Naiza Khan in Conversation with Hammad Nasar, London, November, 2017', in *Set in a Moment and Still Moving* (Karachi: Koel Gallery, 2017).  
3 'HENNA HANDS', project description on the artist's website, <http://www.naizakhan.com/data/uploads/galleries/henna-hands-site-specific-project-cantonment-railway-station/henna-hands-2006.pdf>.  
4 See Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).  
5 See Paul Celan, 'Death Fugue', in *Selected Poems and Prose of Paul Celan* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2001).

# MAP-MAKING PROCESS

4 WEATHER DIARY of Month 19

FOR WEATHER DIARY, A DAY SHOULD BE COUNTED AS FROM 0600 HRS TO 24 HRS LOCAL TIME



The weather diary should be written in ink or blue ink on plain paper, but suitable observations may be made on forms. In the examples for days of detailed weather are given below.

1. Daily Morning entry. On 1 and 2 morning conditions were 010-020 hrs, with an accumulation of 0.05 in. (0.2 in.) of rain and on 1 and 2 the rain was 0.10 in. (0.4 in.) and 0.15 in. (0.6 in.) respectively. On 3 the rain was 0.20 in. (0.8 in.) and on 4 the rain was 0.25 in. (1.0 in.) respectively. On 5 the rain was 0.30 in. (1.2 in.) and on 6 the rain was 0.35 in. (1.4 in.) respectively. On 7 the rain was 0.40 in. (1.6 in.) and on 8 the rain was 0.45 in. (1.8 in.) respectively. On 9 the rain was 0.50 in. (2.0 in.) and on 10 the rain was 0.55 in. (2.2 in.) respectively. On 11 the rain was 0.60 in. (2.4 in.) and on 12 the rain was 0.65 in. (2.6 in.) respectively. On 13 the rain was 0.70 in. (2.8 in.) and on 14 the rain was 0.75 in. (3.0 in.) respectively. On 15 the rain was 0.80 in. (3.2 in.) and on 16 the rain was 0.85 in. (3.4 in.) respectively. On 17 the rain was 0.90 in. (3.6 in.) and on 18 the rain was 0.95 in. (3.8 in.) respectively. On 19 the rain was 1.00 in. (4.0 in.) and on 20 the rain was 1.05 in. (4.2 in.) respectively. On 21 the rain was 1.10 in. (4.4 in.) and on 22 the rain was 1.15 in. (4.6 in.) respectively. On 23 the rain was 1.20 in. (4.8 in.) and on 24 the rain was 1.25 in. (5.0 in.) respectively.

KARACHI  
TUNG AND SETTING TIMES FOR THE YEAR 1918

Month	Day	Time
Jan	1	06:00
Jan	2	06:00
Jan	3	06:00
Jan	4	06:00
Jan	5	06:00
Jan	6	06:00
Jan	7	06:00
Jan	8	06:00
Jan	9	06:00
Jan	10	06:00
Jan	11	06:00
Jan	12	06:00
Jan	13	06:00
Jan	14	06:00
Jan	15	06:00
Jan	16	06:00
Jan	17	06:00
Jan	18	06:00
Jan	19	06:00
Jan	20	06:00
Jan	21	06:00
Jan	22	06:00
Jan	23	06:00
Jan	24	06:00
Jan	25	06:00
Jan	26	06:00
Jan	27	06:00
Jan	28	06:00
Jan	29	06:00
Jan	30	06:00
Jan	31	06:00

Month	Day	Time
Feb	1	06:00
Feb	2	06:00
Feb	3	06:00
Feb	4	06:00
Feb	5	06:00
Feb	6	06:00
Feb	7	06:00
Feb	8	06:00
Feb	9	06:00
Feb	10	06:00
Feb	11	06:00
Feb	12	06:00
Feb	13	06:00
Feb	14	06:00
Feb	15	06:00
Feb	16	06:00
Feb	17	06:00
Feb	18	06:00
Feb	19	06:00
Feb	20	06:00
Feb	21	06:00
Feb	22	06:00
Feb	23	06:00
Feb	24	06:00
Feb	25	06:00
Feb	26	06:00
Feb	27	06:00
Feb	28	06:00
Feb	29	06:00
Feb	30	06:00

RAISE OUR FLAG

# MAP-MAKING: SLOW AND FAST TECHNOLOGIES

NAIZA KHAN, PATRICK HARVEY, ARSALAN NASIR

Originating from an archival weather report Naiza Khan discovered years ago in a ruined observatory on Manora Island, the installation *Hundreds of Birds Killed* (2019) was developed through many layers of visualisation and production to create the brass maps and narration of the tabulated weather history that constitutes the work. What emerged through the intensive process of conceptualising and producing were differences in the technologies of production, dichotomies between long-established artisanal processes and rapidly evolving software, and the concurrence and overlap of traditional cartography and satellite mapping. This is a short account of the slow and fast technologies that were used in this process.

As with many cartographic exercises, the methodology used to create this series of maps was initially informed by how our team could accurately transpose GIS data (i.e., Google Earth and OpenStreetMap data) into physical representations of the eleven sites Khan had selected out of the report. This selection was guided by cities that sit within the three nation states of Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, and by the artist's personal association with them. This transformation – from the digital and spherical to the final tangible and planar forms of the brass-cast maps – required our team, based between Karachi, London and Berlin, to navigate numerous software programs and methods of fabrication.

Throughout this process, we worked with imaging software such as Maperitive, WGS 84, Pseudo-Mercator, Adobe Illustrator and Rhinoceros 3D. In the beginning, we queried and extracted all available OpenStreetMap data from a specified city, which was exported at our selected scale. The

last step was to overlay a grid of 330 x 330 mm (13 x 13 in) tiles over the final map. Each (soft) tile was then manually exported and sent to Karachi, where it was laser-cut as a Plexiglas pattern, before finally being cast in brass. We cast a total of seventy-six tiles (not including the ones that went wrong) and more than 300 found objects that form the amalgams of toys and clusters.

The process of brass casting is a local tradition in Golimar, a neighbourhood in North Karachi. Many of the artisans are third-generation casters who came in 1947 from Moradabad, a town north of Delhi that continues to be a manufacturing centre for objects in brass and copper. Their process of sand casting is similar to that which has been passed down through generations, despite the fact that other methods of mass production have developed.

Given the scale of the project, three brass foundries in Golimar stretched their work hours to meet our requirements. The process of producing brass tiles on such a scale was challenging and technically unpredictable. The translation of the tiles from a digitally produced, precise pattern that was cut by a laser promised certain results. In reality, it was more difficult to control the slippage of liquid brass and to predict how the tiles would sit together to make up the whole map. The resistance and consistency of the molten metal and its fragility, in addition to the scale of each tile, produced outcomes that we did not anticipate. Yet these organic corruptions, along with the resulting imperfect textures and depths, developed a more natural and earthy quality in the work.

The dichotomy between the technologically excavated image and the slow, equally labour-intensive sand-casting process posed several challenges to this project. Khan was interested in how both of these processes point to ideas of excavation and extraction – of taking something into sand and then excavating an object or a map from that mould.

DCO.3.39C  
691  
*Holiday*

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT

# INDIA WEATHER REVIEW, 1939

ANNUAL SUMMARY

PART C  
STORMS AND DEPRESSIONS

CONTENTS

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Depressions and Cyclonic Storms . . . . .	C 1	Local Storms . . . . .	C 17
Western Disturbances . . . . .	C 14	Winds of force nine or more in Indian Seas . . . . .	C 19

Published by the Authority of the Government of India

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF

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*Director General of Observatories*

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1941

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LOCAL STORMS.

Of the local storms reported in newspapers the following are noteworthy:—

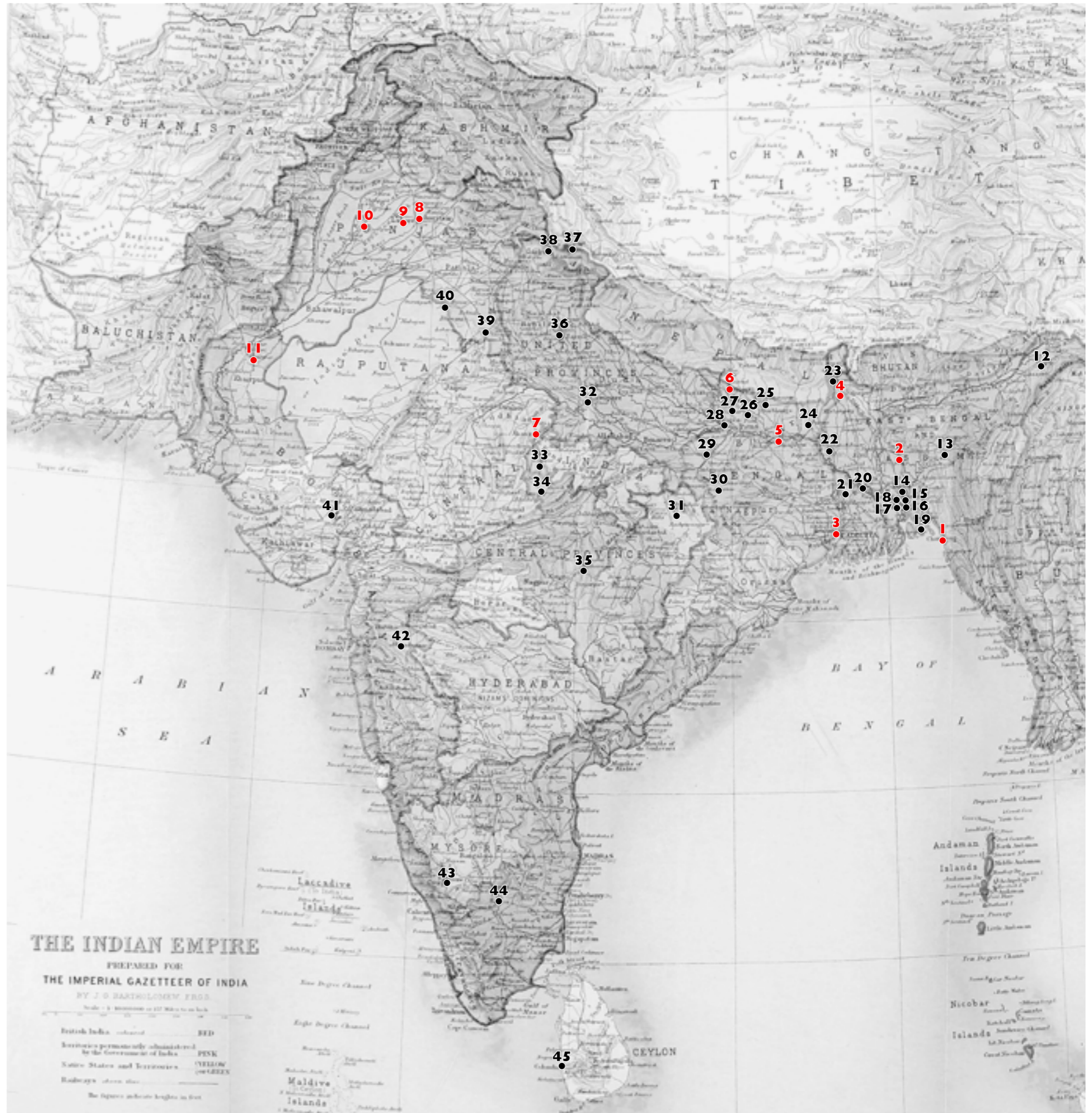
Place.	Date.	Time.	Character of storm.	Loss of human life.	Remarks.
Jakkara (Bihar) and 29 neighbouring villages.	January 24th	..	Heavy hailstorm.	3	The storm lasted for about 30 minutes; many cattle and birds killed.
Tangbari and Surajpura (thana of Muzshiganj sub-division (Bengal)).	February 14th	Afternoon.	Do.	....	Hail fell for about an hour; the standing rice crops, vegetables and mango-trees were totally destroyed.
Vikrampur and several neighbouring villages (East Bengal).	February 14th	..	Do.	1	Vegetable crops destroyed, several crops being sunk.
Dabri (Bihar)	February 22nd	2-45 a.m.	Do.	....	All standing rice crops, most of which were ready for harvest were destroyed.
Goodia (C. P.)	February 28th	..	Do.	....	Fields and tiles of roofs of houses damaged; glass panes in railway carriage broken.
Mothbari, Durbhanga and Manas-Rangpur Districts (Bihar).	February 28th	..	Heavy hailstorm and gale.	Many persons killed in Pargi thana (Manas-Rangpur); 11 in Rangpur thana (Durbhanga); 4 in Rangpur-Rangpur thana (Manas-Rangpur).	Thousands of people rendered homeless; many injured; several houses demolished.
Larga area in Coochbehar District.	March 1st	Afternoon.	Hailstorm.	....	Mark damage to crops; hundreds of birds killed.
Amlisar, Huar, Gurgaon, Lyalpur District.	March 20th (7)	..	Do.	....	All the more advanced crops of wheat, sugarcane, cotton and rice destroyed; 40,000 acres of crops affected. Estimated loss in food revenue and other Rs. 2,50,000.
Sikring (Chota Nagpur)	March 26th (7)	..	Do.	1	13 head of cattle and large number of birds killed.
Dijraigarh (Assam)	March 17th	Evening.	Do.	....	Several houses collapsed; many trees uprooted; electric wires damaged.
Sylhet (Assam)	March 17th	Do.	Thunderstorm.	....	An area of 1,000 sq. miles affected; trains held up in several stations for some time.
Dibrugarh (Assam)	March 29th	..	Do.	....	Several persons injured; many hats blown away and buildings damaged; trees uprooted; telegraph and telephone lines destroyed.
Maida (Bengal)	March 23rd	..	Hailstorm.	2	2 persons injured by lightning in Durgam; several districts plunged in darkness; 600 telephones put out of action.
Calcutta and suburbs	March 29th	Night.	Thunderstorm.	....	
Gurgaon (Dubboung)	April 3rd	..	Hailstorm.	Several killed.	Many persons injured; large number of cattle killed; standing crops destroyed; houses demolished.
Charuarj (Kamrup Suba, Assam).	April 6th	Evening.	Thunderstorm.	....	Houses of 120 families completely gutted.
Bond (Hooghly, Bengal)	April 16th	Do.	Thunderstorm.	....	The storm lasted half an hour; 4 persons rendered unconscious; many lives struck by lightning.
Bawangan (Bihar, Hyderabad)	April 23rd (7)	..	Do.	3	The storm was very sudden.



**Cities listed in the  
India Weather Review, 1939**

- |                 |                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Chittagong*  | 12. Dibrugarh             |
| 2. Mymensingh*  | 13. Sylhet                |
| 3. Kolkata*     | 14. Dacca                 |
| 4. Siliguri*    | 15. Vikrampur             |
| 5. Jamalpur*    | 16. Munshiganj            |
| 6. Motihari*    | 17. Tangibari             |
| 7. Jhansi*      | 18. Serajdigha            |
| 8. Amritsar*    | 19. Noakhali District     |
| 9. Lahore*      | 20. Kushtia               |
| 10. Faisalabad* | 21. Meherpur              |
| 11. Sukkar*     | 22. Malda City            |
|                 | 23. Darjeeling            |
|                 | 24. Purnea                |
|                 | 25. Madhubani             |
|                 | 26. Muzzaffarpur District |
|                 | 27. Darbhanga             |
|                 | 28. Saran District        |
|                 | 29. Dehri                 |
|                 | 30. Sohdag                |
|                 | 31. Surguja               |
|                 | 32. Cawnpore District     |
|                 | 33. Sakhaura              |
|                 | 34. Saugor                |
|                 | 35. Gondia                |
|                 | 36. Bareilly              |
|                 | 37. Niti Valley           |
|                 | 38. Chorabari             |
|                 | 39. Gurgaon               |
|                 | 40. Hisar                 |
|                 | 41. Viramgam              |
|                 | 42. Sawargaon             |
|                 | 43. Mysore District       |
|                 | 44. Shevpet               |
|                 | 45. Colombo               |

\* indicates cities developed as brass maps for *Hundreds of Birds Killed* (2019)



Map of British India by J. G. Bartholomew (with the locations of towns and cities mentioned in the *India Weather Review*, 1939) Imperial Gazetteer of India (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1922)

## Guide to Maps

### *Hundreds of Birds Killed, 2019*

Map guide showing eleven cities selected from the archival *India Weather Review, 1939 of 1939*

Maps produced in brass are at scales: 1:25,000 and 1:40,000



### Jamalpur

1:25,000  
27 x 15.1 cm x 0.5 cm



### Jhansi

1:25,000  
93 x 82.5 cm x 0.5 cm



### Chittagong

1:25,000  
145 x 79.9 cm x 0.5 cm



### Mymensingh

1:25,000  
66.4 x 18.5 cm x 0.5 cm



### Amritsar

1:25,000  
80.5 x 68 cm x 0.5 cm



### Sukkur

1:25,000  
72.3 x 41 cm x 0.5 cm



### Siliguri

1:25,000  
60.4 x 34 cm x 0.5 cm



### Motihari

1:25,000  
27 x 20.8 cm x 0.5 cm



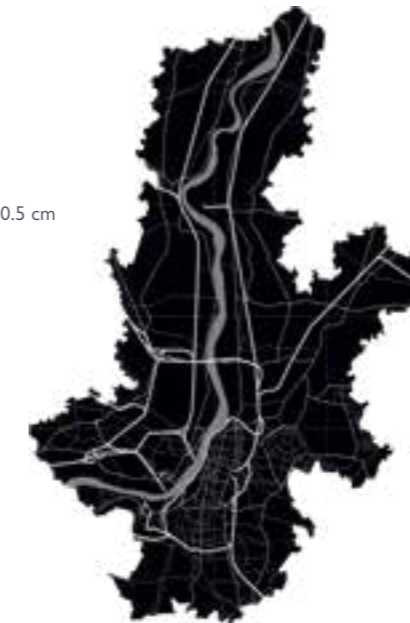
### Lahore

1:40,000  
147 x 130 cm x 0.5 cm



### Kolkata

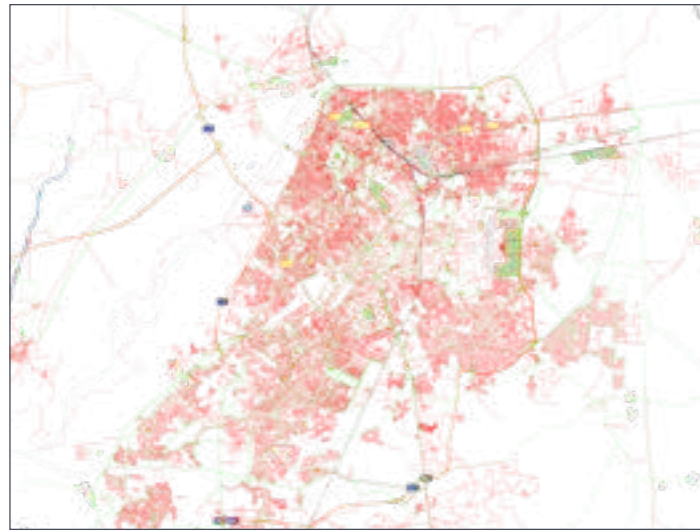
1:40,000  
178.5 x 114.5 cm x 0.5 cm



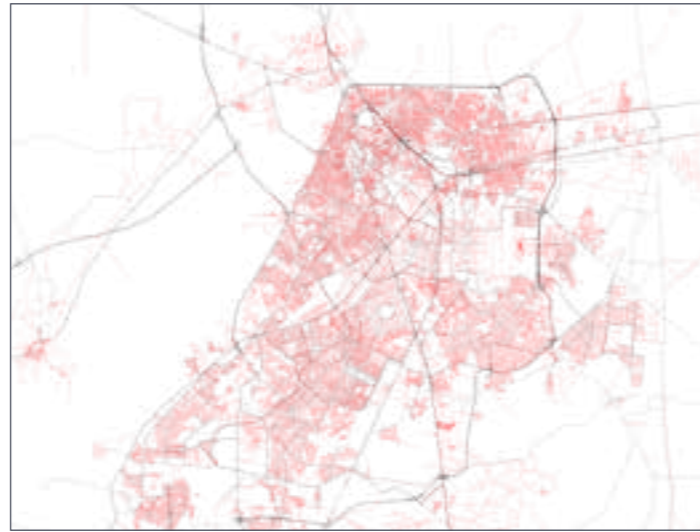
### Faisalabad

1:40,000  
99.5 x 84.5 cm x 0.5 cm





Process No. 1



Process No. 2



Process No. 3



Process No. 4

Process No. 1, uses GIS data from the OpenStreetMap (OSM) database. The OSM data is translated by Maperitive to alter and create different layers of roads, railways and bodies of water, which are then placed into Adobe Illustrator.

Process No. 2, takes the information from Adobe Illustrator and translates it into CAD format (lines and shapes). The data is exported from Illustrator as '.dwg' files, and then placed into Rhinoceros 3D modelling software.

Process No. 3, imports all river and water data into the drawing and transforms it into raster hatches for laser cutting.

Process No. 4, places a tiled grid of 33 x 33 cm (13 x 13 in) across the map. The railway lines are offset by 3 mm. The underlying line work is then 'split' in relation to the overlaying grid. Each tile is manually imported into CorelDRAW as a .dwg file.

Process No. 5, Finalised form of the map (before laser cutting)

Process No. 6, final brass map of Lahore



Process No. 5



Process No. 6



Artist working in Golimar,  
Karachi, 2019

# CONVERSATIONS WITH THE ARTIST

*Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography. That struggle is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imaginings.<sup>1</sup>*  
– Edward W. Said

The following five extracts derive from a series of conversations with interlocutors that have taken place over the last decade. (Bios on pages 132 to 133) I have chosen sections that bear significance to the current project, *Manora Field Notes* (2019), and inform my practice through their insights, knowledge and critical reflection. I am interested in ideas of imaginative geographies<sup>2</sup> and understanding how material and lived culture is inextricably linked to the land.

## Kamila Shamsie | Naiza Khan

Khan's Karachi studio, 2009

Extract from an interview first published in  
*Restore the Boundaries* (London: Rossi & Rossi, 2010)

Kamila Shamsie (KS): When I first got to know Manora as a child, the lighthouse was the most significant part of the island – I'd go to the top and look out, back at the sea, and never consider the rest of the island. And then later, I read about Manora's fort – the construction of which marks the founding of the city of Karachi. So again, I remained blind to the present realities of the island and its people. Today, the [Talpur] Fort and lighthouse are used by the navy and are kept in good shape, whereas if you look at the more recent constructions – the schools and apartment blocks – they're in ruins. So, it's the recent history which is in ruins, whereas the past is preserved. There's this odd sense of backwardness.

Naiza Khan (NK): A sort of reversal of preservation...like two time frames operating at different speeds.

KS: In a journal entry you wrote shortly after your earliest visits to Manora, you said, 'It is extremely difficult to position oneself as an "artist" in this context, and think about how to create work in which I can mark / make a protest in the face of the establishment. [How do I] keep this "hat" on, of being an artist, and make work which will empathise with the loss of a community / family and, at the same time, be about making work in some way?' It seems you've really found a way to do that – to mark the community and make work. That struck me particularly whilst I was watching the video *Homage* [2009] of you painting a stack of abandoned desks the same colour as the tombstones of the children who were killed by that collapsing wall. Whilst painting, you're talking to people from the community – and one of them says, 'When you came before, I thought you were just a visitor'. And really, he's implicitly saying, 'Now I know you're not, you're not just a visitor'. Do you feel you've found how to be an artist in this space, in a way, which resolves the questions and concerns you had when writing that journal entry?

NK: Yes, I think so. I feel I've let go of myself as an artist, loosened the reins from my studio space and stretched out quite a bit. I had to move away from the traditional relationship I previously had with my work and subject matter. I think the space and interaction with people brought about this shift. It has made me porous.

KS: Much of the work you're doing calls to mind interconnectedness: all these objects clustered and spinning around each other, bound together whilst their exact relationship with each other remains nebulous.

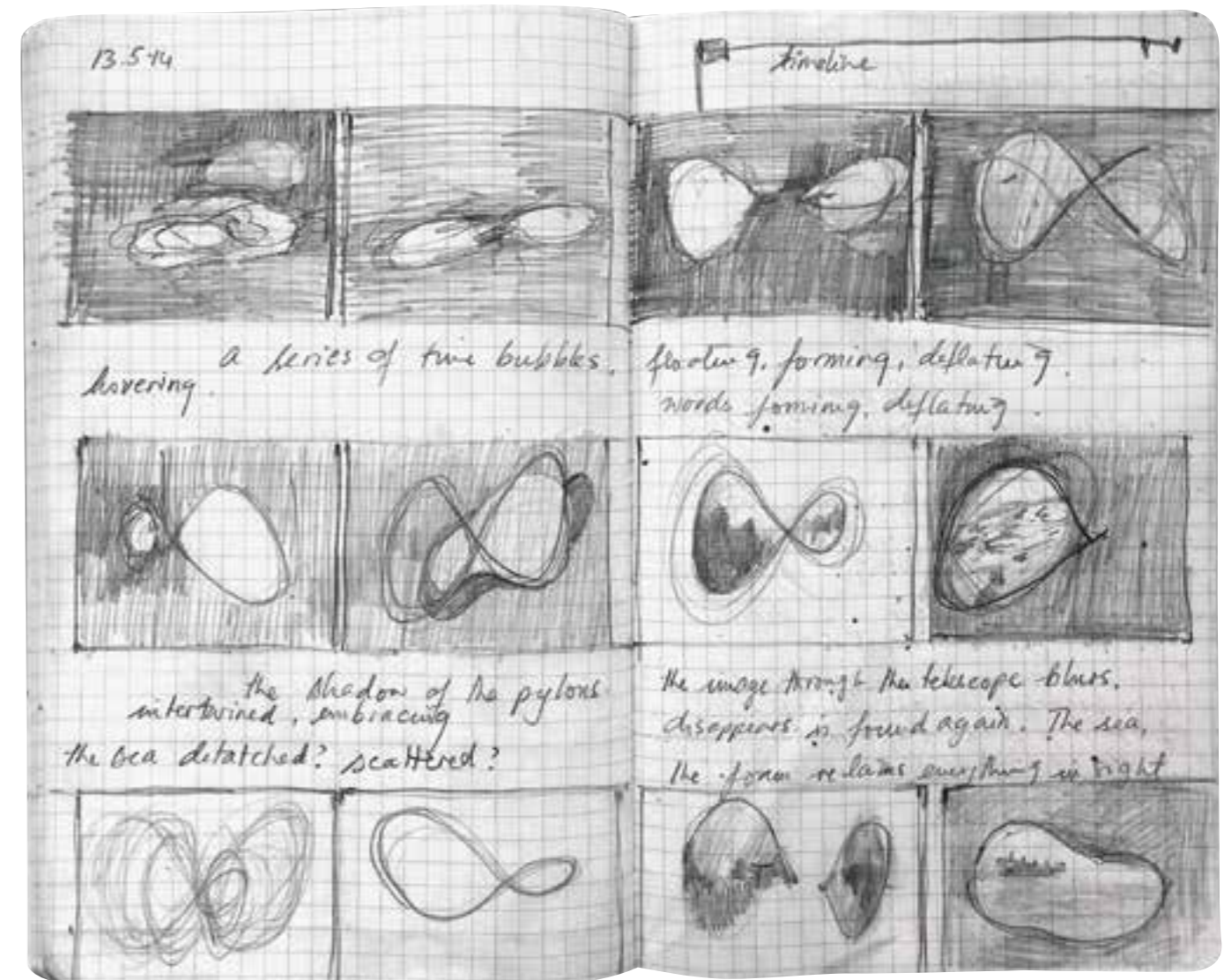
NK: I was thinking about this myth of Morirro and the whale. It's in the *Risalo* of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, in which a group of fishermen,

all brothers, are swallowed up by a giant whale. Morirro, who is the surviving brother, builds a glass capsule and lowers it into the sea, with him inside. The whale swallows up the capsule; Morirro cuts it open and then kills the whale. So, I thought of installing a huge capsulelike structure on the beach that would look like something washed up from the sea 600 years later. A sort of futuristic fossil with things encrusted on it; disparate objects clunked together, video screens projecting different stories... This is quite an important element of what I'm trying to do, the idea of wrapping a narrative into that space, around its buildings, and creating a new myth... but the Sufi myth unlocked my imagination!

KS: Yes, we were talking about the fort and the lighthouse, and how they fit into a grand narrative, whilst other things, such as the demolished buildings, get left out. I think what you're doing is creating another narrative which gives space to those left-out things...

NK: Yes, which are equally heroic... it is my relationship to these other stories that makes up the lost narrative. As an artist, I've tried to use my imagination, which is yours as a writer – to visualise situations and give form to them in such a way that they become completely convincing. So, I want to create and craft my imagery – the paradoxes and the narratives – so they become entirely believable. For this reason, the idea of the fossil was really important: out of the notion of the fossil came the idea of creating clusters; that they become miniature worlds in collision. I cast about 300 objects in brass, and started working with them. It's like building up a drawing with objects, which carry different histories and narratives within them – memory-bound objects.

KS: You are going to become part of the mythology of the island through your multifaceted immersion in it.



Drawing towards a video  
2014  
Graphite on paper (sketchbook image)  
21 x 26 cm (8 1/4 x 10 1/4 in)

**Arif Hasan | Naiza Khan**

The URC (Urban Resource Centre), Karachi

Extract of an interview, April 2018

Arif Hasan (AH): There is always a moment in history when certain ideas and ways of thinking become important. For instance, in our [previous] discussion on urban planning, the argument was that the whole world of housing has collapsed. The poor – nowhere in the world, doesn't matter where – cannot get a house, and the modernist method of delivering a house has completely failed.

Naiza Khan (NK): London is in a similar situation; the housing crisis in London is really acute. The price of real estate is pushing people off the housing ladder and breaking up communities and neighbourhoods in places like Brixton and Dalston.

AH: So, why haven't we been able to develop a new paradigm, as we were able to in the late '50s? It's interesting, in the late '50s, the post-war modernism was to provide housing. Failed completely. It was recognised by all the agencies, UN etc., that it had failed. And so, one man comes up, and his name is John Turner, and he writes a book, *Housing by People* [2000], and that becomes the policy for a long period of time. New ideas developed out of it. Why can't it happen today?

NK: I agree, there needs to be some pragmatism with some imagination... at the Centre for Research Architecture [at Goldsmiths], I am doing research on the global supply chain and [China's] Belt and Road Initiative. We have been looking at sand mining and how the extraction of sand for terraforming to build new ports is devastating life and islands in many places. I was reading about the infrastructural projects that China is developing in Pakistan, and was interested in your views.

AH: First of all, I think that the way we have embraced China is not in our interest, because as a result of this, we have no friends in the neighbourhood. That's one thing, so that's a foreign policy issue. Secondly, what I fear most – more than the trillions of cubic metres of sand and gravel being excavated from the streams and rivers of Pakistan – is the emergence of Chinese political culture in Pakistan. It is already there, in some ways, all these 'disappearances' which never happened before. They happened to a few leftists, communists under the Ayub era and in the Zia era, but apart from that, it was something that was unknown to us. Next day, you made a habeas corpus and the court asked for the body and the body was presented... today, the court keeps asking and nothing happens, and the court remains silent after that.

NK: So, I was reading about how China is boosting its food supply chain by outsourcing cultivation [or] its food supplies to address

its growing food security [issue]. So, hybrid rice varieties are being cultivated in Pakistan.

AH: I attended a conference on China, about the Friendship Corridor. It was entirely about this corridor from Urumqi to Gwadar, and the reasons for it are fairly simple [*begins to draw points on a map*]. From the Strait of Djibouti and the Persian Gulf, from here to China, about 70 percent of all oil-related traffic takes place. And both these points are controlled by the Americans. [This traffic] has to go through the Strait of Malacca. There, you have Singapore, a very big place; the Chinese have built a very powerful defence base in Djibouti. So, all this oil has to go through these unfriendly places. China is dependent on this oil for the next fifty years; it has no other options. So, China is negotiating a port in Somalia, and they've got a port in Gwadar, in Sri Lanka, they've got a port in Burma.

After these are built, they will no longer be dependent on this corridor. The only problem is [that the Chinese] have been helping the Iranians build Bandar Abbas as a major military base to counteract the Americans.

And this is what I have been able to understand: now the Indians and the Americans want the Delhi-Kabul corridor through which India's trade can go and they can cut China down to size; and then, their plan was to cut through Herat, from Herat to Almaty, and connect to the Soviet rail system and onto Europe. But that the Chinese have already done that, they have connected Urumqi to Almaty, to create this link with Europe.



Telescope on Manora Beach  
2012  
Giclée print  
60 x 41 cm (23 1/2 x 16 in)

**Matloub bhai | Naiza Khan | Arsalan Nasir**

Interview conducted at a telescope workshop, Manora Island, March 2019

Naiza Khan (NK): You were telling me about these binoculars. Where do they come from?

Matloub bhai (MB): Well, actually, Germany makes them. Russia used to make them, at one time; China also. But the best ones are Russian, because they are durable. They are smuggled into Quetta from the border at Chaman. They come in lots – cameras, telescopes, digital cameras – brought into the country from outside. The goods brought in containers are unloaded there and auctioned. There is a route for smuggled goods into our country. The border at Chaman is notorious.

NK: So the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the war between the United States and Russia that began in 1979, I mean, the war before 9/11. Was it at this time that the borders and smuggling routes were created?

MB: Yes, exactly at that time. Even now, if you go to the border at Chaman, you will get everything... Chaman is approximately a four-hour journey from Quetta.

NK: So, what's sold there? Telescopes, weapons, toothbrushes...

MB: Yes, yes, everything. Items from around the world, like toys and fabric. So, what they do is they collect all this trash, then load it onto cargo vessels. So, second-hand items from all over the world end up here, in this market.

NK: At one point in time, the telescope was used to locate a target. Like when you are aboard a ship, you look through a telescope to find the target – so this was one use of the telescope?

MB: Yes, the first type of telescope had a single lens, as my father used to tell me. You looked through [it] with one eye. It wasn't a common thing. In olden times, when wars were fought by hand, with swords – it was a simple age. At that time, the white man made these with a single tube. The more you pulled it out, the further one could see into the distance.

NK: You can see from really far away now. How far do you think they can see from, now?

MB: It's good for about fifteen kilometres.

NK: Ok, so in Waziristan, for instance, when they do drone strikes, they view from even further away?

MB: What you just asked, it's a good question. The telescopes they have now,



they cost about 120,000 rupees. The ones that can be used in the day as well as in the dark. They have laser light and are normally with the government; you can use them at night. Nobody else has them. They're not available at vendors in the markets, nor can anyone get them, because I have asked a few people. They're for military use. You asked a very good question. You know, when they do the drone strikes in Waziristan, they see from really far away, and even at night. Even if something is a hundred kilometres away, even if it is like a small speck, first the laser light will hit it. Then you will automatically see it as it is illuminated.

NK: So imagine: when there is a drone strike in Waziristan, it doesn't start from here. It is from elsewhere that a location is set.

MB: Yes, yes, yes.

NK: Via a satellite in space, to see where there may be a terrorist that they want to target with the drone strike. So this is done remotely, from another country.

MB: Yes, definitely.

NK: It's quite advanced, and a different means of targeting or sighting – if you bear in mind this technology...and compare it with what we see through this telescope. Do you think this telescope reflects a more accurate reality? It's your own straight line of vision, your target, something you are seeing first-hand, with your own eyes.

Arsalan Nasir (AN): It's something seen in plain sight.

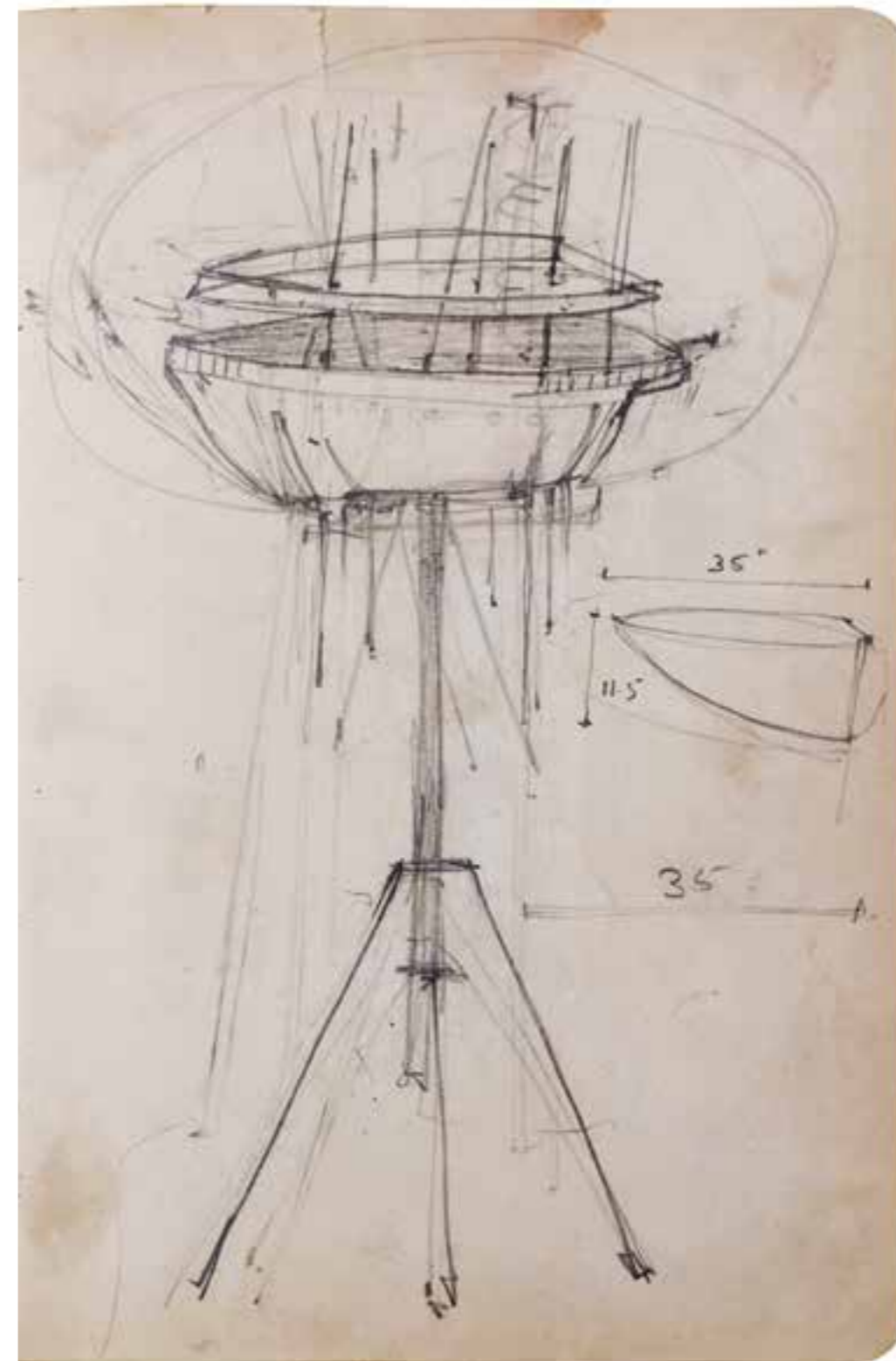
MB: Yes, a direct sight.

AN: And when you are looking through a computer screen – located remotely, as you said – with modern technology, you are seeing this on the computer screen. Often, the reality on the ground is not what you see on the screen.

MB: Yes.

AN: What you see with your eyes – you know, it's said, 'truth is only that which you have seen with your own eyes'.

MB: That's very true. Only attest to that which is heard with your own ears and seen with your own eyes. The eye is a blessing from our Lord Allah. It's from nature, and its ability is not superseded by anything else. But this is something the politicians have made use of – it's amazing how they have polished glass, made a cylinder, then fitted the two together. It's about applying the mind, and then such amazing technology can be invented. But despite all that, the eye is incomparable.



Preliminary drawing for *Miniature Worlds*  
2012  
Graphite on paper (sketchbook image)  
21 x 26 cm (8 1/4 x 10 1/4 in)

**Iftikhar Dadi | Naiza Khan**

Extract of an (unpublished) interview, Cornell University, June 2018

Iftikhar Dadi (ID): So, [my collaborator Elizabeth and I] have been working with and thinking about the megacity of the South, and thinking about its productive capacities, about technologies. This is a long-standing interest that goes back to the '90s – to look at the abilities or the capacities of creativity and production in these spaces. In that sense, there are a number of ways to think about it. If you come from the craft angle, there are practices which are engaging with technology, engaging with new materials, new forms. They don't really figure in national cultures or folk cultures, which are constructed in a kind of 'pure' way, in which they're not supposed to change.

But what's really happening in these cities, especially in megacities where you have a variety of people who come in and people are making a living, there are commercial practices. Many are visible, but many more are invisible. You also have in these cities a relationship between the formal sector and the informal sector; informality is a really important part of this arena. Informality can be thought of in very different ways, it can be thought of in terms of the economy.

So, in terms of economic arrangements, many of these people work off the books; they don't work in recorded ways. And even labour practices are not formal labour. So, in a sense, they evade, or they are not subject to many of the rules and regulations of industry. On the other hand, industry, itself, is very dependent on input from the informal – so there's a kind of symbiosis. One can't really be thought without the other, and the question of informality, especially in South Asia, goes back into the colonial period.

What happens from the British colonial era onwards is that, on the one hand, we talk about how the British in the nineteenth century ended up destroying craft by basically import[ing] from Manchester, and so on. And that's all true. But the question to be asked is, 'What happened to all those people?' Of course, many of them became very impoverished, so I'm not discounting the cost of that. But the other argument is that what happens when nationalism begins to emerge, [is that] nobody is looking at modernity, nobody is really looking at the city. This is true in Indian nationalism, with Gandhism – the rural, the village, the handmade and so on.

Naiza Khan (NK): Coming back to this question of what the British did, this idea of pushing craft backwards in South Asia, but much more to create markets elsewhere, and production of things elsewhere. So, in a sense, bringing India's raw materials into a kind of global supply chain at that time, in the nineteenth century.

ID: The East India Company is established around 1600. At that time, it's the export of Indian textiles – finished works, finished textiles – to much of

the world. But when the Industrial Revolution gathers pace, India becomes a net supplier of raw materials. Which is what ends up impoverishing and destroying the traditional practices of many, many people.

What happens is that people become invisible. Speaking, in a sense, historically, what's missing is about a 100-year gap. So, we talk about a late nineteenth-century destruction of craft practices, and then we talk about a global megacity today. But what happened in between 1880 and 1980?

NK: It's interesting: the relationship of undocumented labour within the informal sector is an act to evade certain scrutiny. And colonialism's rendering of peoples as subjects rather than citizens – both of these processes create the same invisibility.

ID: That's also the time of bio-power – the mid- to late nineteenth century is the time when all the modern technologies of bio-power are coming into India. So, you have these regimes of fingerprinting, you have the census... but then, you think of populations as statistics, but they're also all subjects, they're not citizens. So, that's the other thing. That they are still ruled, and they don't have a formal voice, or they have a limited formal voice. So, what I'm saying is, all of this pushes people into other arenas. And that is why, when you go to any city like Karachi and Lahore, and you find it to be very visually vibrant, with all this graffiti and street signs, because all of this has been pushed into those arenas.

NK: It's also a kind of regeneration of processes through technology.

ID: Exactly. So that's the other thing. People come to the city or grow up in the city with certain kinds of skills, and as technology changes, they adapt to [it].

I think the question of the artist's position is a very important one, because one can't abdicate that. One can't just say, 'I'll just enter this space in a naive way'... So, in that sense, we also have to make the work legible in that space. It has to be a kind of critical negotiation.



*Building Terrain I*  
2012  
Giclée print  
60 × 100 cm (23 ½ × 39 ½ in)

### **Maha Malik | Naiza Khan**

This conversation took place on a sailboat between Kaemari Pier and Manora Island, Karachi, January 2011

Maha Malik (MM): It's a naval base.

Naiza Khan (NK): But there is no civilian resistance.

MM: Because there are so few civilians here now – they have, for the most part, been evacuated. There are incidents all over the world for islands taken over by naval bases. This is, perhaps, just a much slower and more inefficient process...[where] the anguish is extended.

NK: I was writing about Manora having different kinds of habitats on the island – the Sikh gurdwara is one, and so is the Hindu temple. But this relationship of establishment versus civilian is another ecosystem that exists on the island. We have witnessed this, haven't we?

MM: Yes, it seems the die is cast, so this is not a point of resistance. But, it may be really useful to think through the structure of the island. You are mapping it, and we have been walking across the island constantly; it seems part of the work is registering a living, relational structure to this space. And, not to sound cliché, but the potential for this particular island, what's been on it in a culturally dynamic way...this directly gets blocked by military presence. The island's own natural potential is thwarted completely.

NK: Yes, and also its multireligious history and how that is now understood.

MM: A rhetorical question that comes to mind is this: How does military-civilian diversity exist in one space – can it ever? And by 'civilian diversity', then one also means a multireligious community with evidence of their lived lives in architecture and ritual.

NK: You know, it's only more recently that I realised the impact of the military-naval base on the island...and how it's pushing everything into the margins. And it's not just the physical presence, but it's also an attitude, their notion of Manora as the base...Public space is almost invisible to them. There is no overlap.

MM: There is no shared public realm.

NK: So, there is a very clear demarcation of space. So then, against this, what are the expressions of civilian habitation? We've moved from resistance to civilian habitation.

MM: As we draw closer to it by boat, originally, the island's first marker used to be the lighthouse. Now, we have the naval base, and what's most visibly

happening here is a continuing shift in scale. Against construction, in relationship to body / human proportions – there is a renewed turn towards monumental scaling across the island. And that, itself, speaks volumes. From a distance, it is strange – are we not approaching a fantasy US naval base, in the middle of this clutter of Karachi? There is this *transposition* or transference, of fantasy. You have visually the exact same structure – but it's in automatic decay.

NK: Because it is built in concrete and steel, which doesn't hold in this salty sea atmosphere.

MM: The architectural design of this building is purely a fantasy of a naval base, but flanked by the *attar-pattar* of our very local, oil-ridden Manora.

NK: I'd like to define the '*attar-pattar*'...What are the smaller narratives that are in conversation with the structure of the naval base, which is so well defined? I am thinking of the *seepi-ghar*, the small souvenirs made of shells sold along the sea bazaar. These are fragile objects made on an intimate scale, which are bought by the visiting public. As an artist, I see my imagination working with the idea of what the *seepi-ghar* can embody, in contrast to the naval base. So, there are two different fantasies in circulation, which have very different outcomes.

NK: You talked about the experience of a walk – as primarily a physical experience – and out of that, you drew out a conceptual framework...So, there is the visual surprise, and the multiple, temporal layers to what we see. The points of reference we are trying to explore include the military; the urban reclamation project; the decay and ruin; the small findings. The landscape continues to unravel as you said: 'in no ordinary manner'.

MM: Yes, in a seemingly ungoverned kind of way, suddenly you realise there are underground tunnels that traverse the whole island. There is the so-called 'Polish cemetery' here and the nineteenth-century observatory; these ruins suddenly become a central nodal point, as opposed to something in passing.

NK: And the fact that it's a very generative space. So, to draw out of that rich experience – the idea of art as knowledge-building. It is interesting to think about the work as visually free-form, as generative and conceptually directional.

MM: So then, the next step is to really begin to look at your archive, really immerse yourself and allow events to happen in the looking, with this conceptual framework. We have *the motive / the journey* of a walk, but now theoretically or textually, [we bring in] conversations that have been part of your creative process.



Nautical Almanac, 1966  
Archival document  
Collection of the Karachi Port Trust

1 Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 2012).

2 Ashley Dawson, 'Edward Said's Imaginative Geographies and the Struggle for Climate Justice', *College Literature* 40, no. 4 (2013): 33–51.

**MANORA**  
**FIELD NOTES**  
PAVILION  
OF PAKISTAN

# HUNDREDS OF BIRDS KILLED

*Hundreds of Birds Killed*  
2019  
Soundscape with brass installation  
Dimensions variable

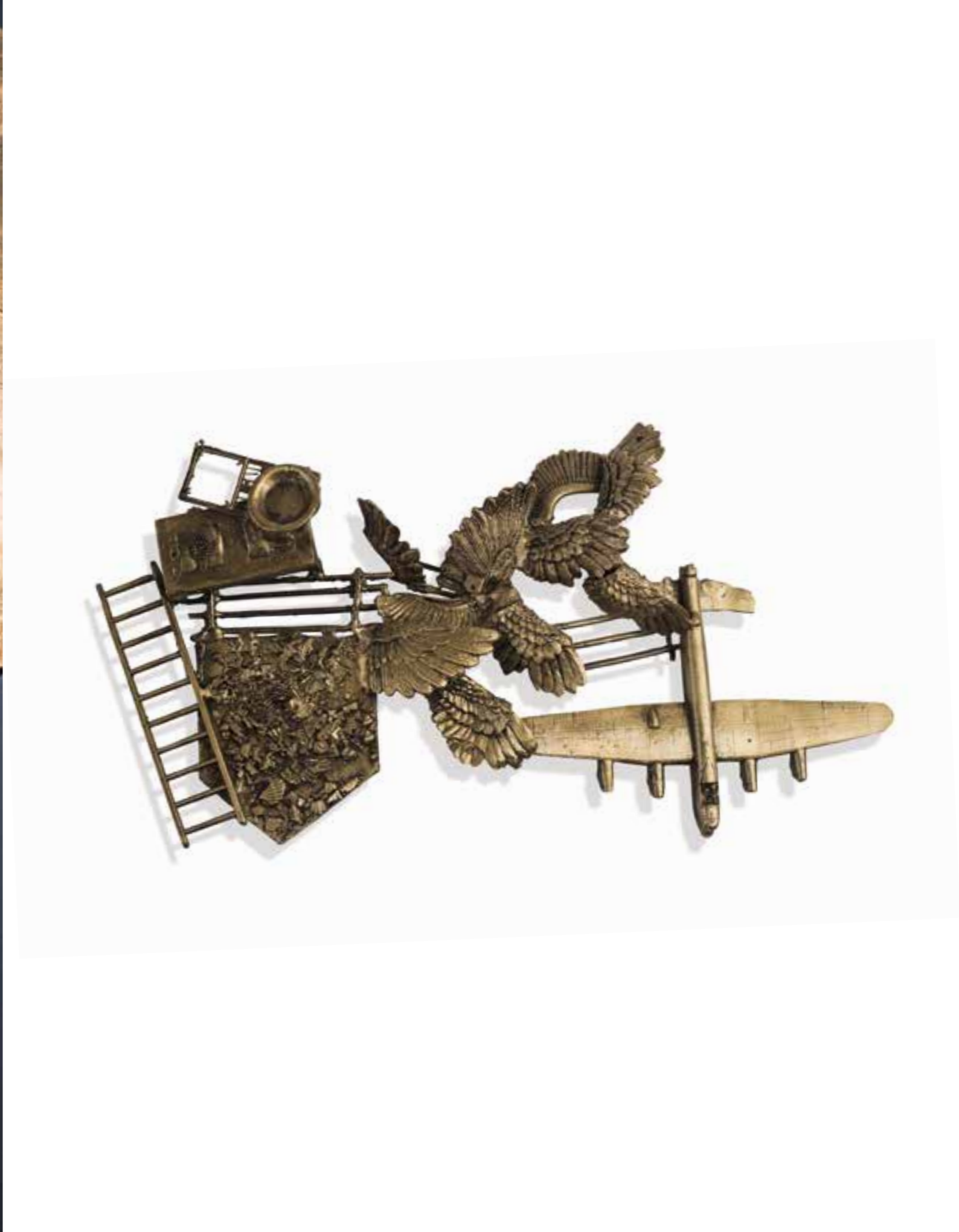














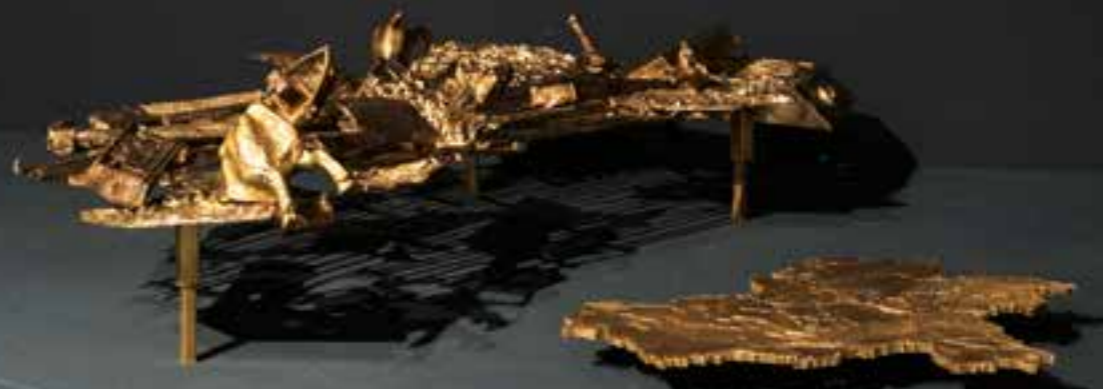
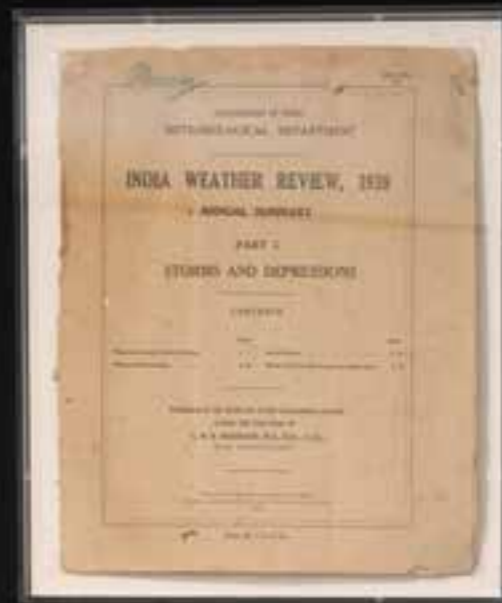
















1

1.  
*Cast of a City I*  
2015  
Watercolour on Fabriano paper  
56 x 77 cm (22 x 30 ¼ in)



2

2.  
*Cast of a City II*  
2015  
Watercolour on Fabriano paper  
56 x 77 cm (22 x 30 ¼ in)

# DOORBEEN

*Doorbeen (Telescope)*  
2019  
Steel telescope, leather and iphone with  
digital film  
Dimensions variable

*A Moving Landscape*  
2019  
Digital film  
6.54 min.



# STICKY RICE AND OTHER STORIES

*Sticky Rice and Other Stories*  
*Parts I & II*  
2019  
Four-channel video installation  
13.10 min.

Video stills and installation views  
Pavilion of Pakistan  
2019





imagine if the ship's thickness is four point five



and both these points are controlled by the Americans







these are historic ships from olden days













# **BIOGRAPHIES & CREDITS**

# NAIZA KHAN

## ARTIST

Naiza Khan (b. 1968, Pakistan) looks at geography as a heterogeneous assemblage of power, colonial history and collective memory. Built on a process of critical research, documentation and mapping-based exploration, her multidisciplinary practice raises questions about erasure as well as friction between old and new infrastructures. Through a range of media, including drawing, archival material and video, she brings together ideas of embodiment and ecology.

Khan trained at the Ruskin School of Art at the University of Oxford and the Wimbledon College of Arts in London. She currently works between London and Karachi, and is a research candidate at the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths, University of London. Amongst her exhibition credits is a major retrospective, *Karachi Elegies*, at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan (2013), in addition to the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane (2018), the Lahore Biennale 01 (2018), Art Basel Hong Kong (2017), the Kochi-Muziris Biennale (2016), the Shanghai Biennale (2012) and *Hanging Fire: Contemporary Art from Pakistan* at the Asia Society, New York (2009).

In 2000, Khan co-founded the Vasl Artists' Collective, Pakistan, which is affiliated with the Triangle Network. She has been part of the Fine Art faculty at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi (1991–2009) and is currently a senior advisor in the Visual Studies Department at the University of Karachi. In addition, she has curated several exhibitions of contemporary Pakistani art, notably *The Rising Tide: New Directions in Art from Pakistan, 1990–2010* at the Mohatta Palace Museum, Karachi, in 2010.

The artist received the Prince Claus Award in 2013, in recognition of her work in the fields of art and culture in Pakistan. Khan is the first artist to represent Pakistan at its inaugural pavilion at the 58th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, with the project *Manora Field Notes* (2019).



# ZAHRA KHAN

## CURATOR

Zahra Khan is a curator based between the United Kingdom and Pakistan who focuses on contemporary South Asian art. In her role as Creative Director and Curator of Foundation Art Divvy, she works to promote contemporary artists from Pakistan and build the organisation's presence on the international art scene. Her latest venture with the Foundation has been to curate the first Pavilion of Pakistan, *Manora Field Notes*, a solo exhibition by Naiza Khan, at the 58th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia.

Khan previously curated *Aisha Khalid & Imran Qureshi: Two Wings to Fly, Not One* at the National Art Gallery, PNCA, Islamabad (2017), and *I, too, am a part of this history* at Fakir Khana Museum, Lahore (2018). Khan is the Director of Project Art Divvy, a London-based platform that exhibits the work of emerging contemporary artists from Pakistan. She has been the lead curator at Satrang Art Gallery, Islamabad, since its inception in 2012. She previously worked in art galleries and institutions, including Ronald Feldman Fine Arts in New York and Sotheby's and Blain|Southern in London.

A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Khan studied International Relations and Fine Arts. She received a master's degree from the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, in the History of Art and Archaeology: Contemporary Art and Art Theory of Asia and Africa.

# PAKISTAN NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE ARTS COMMISSIONER

Jamal Shah, the Commissioner of the Pavilion of Pakistan is the Director General of the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA). The PNCA was setup to spearhead the development of arts in Pakistan. Its aims to build a robust arts ecosystem by creating an environment conducive to the flourishing of the arts, where the arts are accessible to everyone and artists and art groups have the commitment, financial support and resource and to excel at home, and on the world stage.

A holistic and integrated cluster development approach was initiated to develop the arts ecosystem. Dedicated teams were established to champion the performing, visual and literary art forms. These team works on the entire value chain from seeding arts start-ups, grooming talents, developing arts groups and arts businesses, to internationalization. This total approach allows each art form to blossom independently with its own focus on specific areas of opportunity, and cultivate new areas for long-terms growth and sustainability.

In developing artistic talent, The Council provides total support through grants, training, arts housing, commissioning of work and overseas touring. Major festivals and arts shows are organized to showcase the best of local and international artists. New talents are identified and developed through music and writing competition. Annual awards are given to artists in recognition of their achievements and to patterns for arts sponsorship.

To build new audience and broaden arts participation, the Council engages the wider community in the arts through outreach programmes targeted at different sectors of the population. It also endorses arts education programmes for artists and arts groups.

# FOUNDATION ART DIVVY ORGANISER

Conceived as a platform to 'divvy up' and spread contemporary art from Pakistan around the world, Art Divvy supports and develops large-scale exhibitions of contemporary Pakistani art in public spaces. The Foundation also fosters the careers of Pakistani artists by introducing their unique work and the stories behind it to the general public.

Art Divvy was established in 2016 by mother-daughter team Asma Rashid Khan and Zahra Khan. Asma Rashid Khan is the Founder and Director of Satrang Gallery and the SerenArts Programme, two unique enterprises dedicated to promoting arts and culture in Pakistan. She has also been the long-term Chair of the Islamabad Supporters of The Citizens Foundation, a charity that provides quality education in Pakistan. Zahra Khan is a UK-based curator who specialises in contemporary South Asian art. Since completing her undergraduate studies at the University of Pennsylvania and receiving a master's degree from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, she has been undertaking groundbreaking curatorial projects in Europe and South Asia.

In 2019, together with the Pakistan National Council of the Arts, Foundation Art Divvy presented *Naiza Khan: Manora Field Notes*, the first Pavilion of Pakistan, at the 58th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia. The Foundation also recently organised and curated *I, too, am a part of this history* at Fakir Khana Museum (FKM), Lahore (2018), a collateral event to the Lahore Biennale 01, which marked the first time that the historic, private FKM had exhibited contemporary art. Prior to that, the Foundation exhibited *Aisha Khalid & Imran Qureshi: Two Wings to Fly, Not One* at the National Art Gallery, PNCA, Islamabad (2017), the first museum exhibition in Pakistan of these leading contemporary artists.

Foundation Art Divvy is committed to showcasing contemporary Pakistani art through a diverse range of arts education programming both within the country and internationally. We envision a future where a global understanding and connection with art and culture is prevalent.

# CONTRIBUTORS

**Iftikhar Dadi** is an associate professor in Cornell University's Department of the History of Art. He has written and edited numerous books and essays, including *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia* (2010) and *Unpacking Europe* (2001). He is also a practicing artist working collaboratively with Elizabeth Dadi. Their practice investigates popular media's construction of memory, borders and identity, as well as the productive capacities of urban informalities.

**Arif Hasan** is a Pakistani architect and planner, activist, teacher, social researcher and writer. He studied Architecture at Oxford Polytechnic. After his return to Karachi in 1968, he established an independent practice that evolved into dealing with national and international urban planning and development issues. He has taught and lectured widely at Pakistani and European universities.

**Matloub Hussain** repairs and refits binoculars into steel funnel casings, and offers visitors a chance to look at objects out at sea. He has worked with the telescopes on Manora's beaches since 1996.

**Maha Malik** is a freelance writer and curator based in Karachi. Her work explores ideas of inhabitation and embodied life through a range of critical frameworks. Previous collaborations with Naiza Khan in Karachi include the artist's solo exhibition *The Weight of Things* (2014) at Koel Gallery, as well as group shows *Intimacy* (2013), also at Koel Gallery, and *Markings: Contemporary Drawing and Questions of Space* (2016) at Chawkandi Art.

**Aamir R. Mufti** was born and raised in Karachi and is currently Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of California, Los Angeles. Amongst his writings are *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture* (2007) and *Forget English! Orientalisms and World Literatures* (2017).

**Kamila Shamsie** is the author of seven novels that have been translated into more than twenty languages. *Home Fire* (2017) won the Women's Prize for Fiction and was longlisted for the Man Booker Prize; *Burnt Shadows* (2009) was shortlisted for the Orange Prize for Fiction and won the Premio Boccaccio (Italy). Three of her novels have received awards from the Pakistan Academy of Letters. A fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and one of Granta's 'Best of Young British Novelists', she grew up in Karachi, and now lives in London.

**Emilia Terracciano** is a writer and scholar. She is the TORCH/Ruskin AW Mellon Global South Fellow, Bowra Junior Research Fellow in the Humanities at Wadham College and was previously a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at the Ruskin School of Art (2015–18). Her monograph *Art and Emergency: Modernism in Twentieth-Century India* was published in 2018.

# PRODUCTION CREDITS

## **Artist's Studio Team, London | Karachi**

Studio Associate: Sophia Hinton-Lever  
Research and Production: Malika Abbas, Naheed Bilgrami,  
Henry Bradley, Aamir Habib, Hassan Mustafa, Arsalan Nasir,  
Mohamad Qasim, Lily Thomson, Momin Zafar  
Logistical support: Arif Masih, Jaintee Lal Parmar, Nabiullah Shah

## ***Hundreds of Birds Killed, 2019***

Digital Mapping: Patrick Harvey  
Production: The artisan community in Golimar, Karachi;  
Shahid Hussain, Danish Hussain, Kashif Hussain,  
Owais Hussain, Abdul Hamid, Hasan Ali and Arsalan Nasir  
Sound Design: Oriol Campi  
Narrator: Nimra Bucha

## ***Sticky Rice and Other Stories, 2019***

Director: Naiza Khan  
Video Editor: Henry Bradley  
Sound Design: Oriol Campi  
Camera: Daaver Shah  
Subtitles: Samar Zia  
Actors: Matloub Hussain, Muhammad Imran,  
Yousaf Masih, Aslam Masih, Arsalan Nasir, Ataullah  
Speakers: Iftikhar Dadi, Arif Hassan, Matloub Hussain, Arsalan Nasir

## ***Doorbeen, 2019***

Production and Technical Support: Aamir Habib, Mohamad Qasim

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Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia

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Websites: [pakistaninvenice.com](http://pakistaninvenice.com)  
[projectartdivvy.com/pakistan-in-venice](http://projectartdivvy.com/pakistan-in-venice)

Instagram: @pakistaninvenice; @artdivvy  
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**Editor**  
Zahra Khan

**Copy Editor**  
Eti Bonn-Muller

**Authors**  
Iftikhar Dadi  
Naiza Khan  
Zahra Khan  
Aamir R. Mufti  
Emilia Terracciano

**Photography**  
Arif Mahmood  
Bilal Ahmed Qazi  
Daaver Shah  
Riccardo Tosetto

**Catalogue Design**  
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Front Cover: Map of Faisalabad, Pakistan

Inside cover: Preliminary drawings for *Miniature Worlds*, 2012; graphite on paper (sketchbook image); each 21 x 26 cm (8 ¼ x 10 ¼ in)

Back inside cover: *Building Terrain I* (detail), 2012; digital C-type print; 60 x 100 cm (23 ½ x 39 ½ in)



