

CLAY - EARTH. MALLEABLE. MEMORY

December 17, 2024 January 07, 2025

Kashigar Karkhana Moach Goth Potters Gull Kashi Centre - Hala NITA - Nasarpur Chagatta Kumbhars - Harappa

> Aamna Talpur Abeer Asim Adeel Uz Zafar Aisha Tahir Anila Ashraf Fraz Mateen Javaria Ahmad Mian Salahuddin Nabahat Lotia Sadia Salim Salman Ikram Shazia Mirza Shazia Zuberi

Curatorial note

The essence of clay is a story written in the soil; a tale as old as the earth itself. In its humble form, the material holds a promise of transformation—waiting for the hands that will shape it, and the fires that will temper it. Clay whispers of ancient landscapes and human touch, a bond between the elements and our imaginations. Through its journey, it carries with it the weight of civilizations, the imprint of our shared past, and the ongoing dance between creation and permanence.

Selected clay works uncover and trace transformation across time and showcase elasticity, durability, and an eco-friendly composition, now even more essential to our daily lives. Its natural hues—ranging from kaolinite whites to iron-rich reds—reflect the geography of lands. Close ties are drawn to the Indus Valley civilizations through Mehrgarh, Harappa, and Mohenjo-Daro, where mastery of clay was evident in pottery, figurines, and the sophisticated brickwork that built cities.

Today, the living tradition of modeling with clay continues, as artisans and visual practitioners use and innovate with age-old techniques passed down through generations to shape toys, ornaments, vessels, tiles, and sculptural forms. A connection is drawn to the investigation and significance of different earths, celebrating their relevance through contemporary practices.

The tension between raw malleability and fired permanence is as central now as it was thousands of years ago, revealing how the material embodies resilience, memory, and cultural continuity—shaping both history and our lives.

GALLERY GALLERY

Nurayah Sheikh Nabi

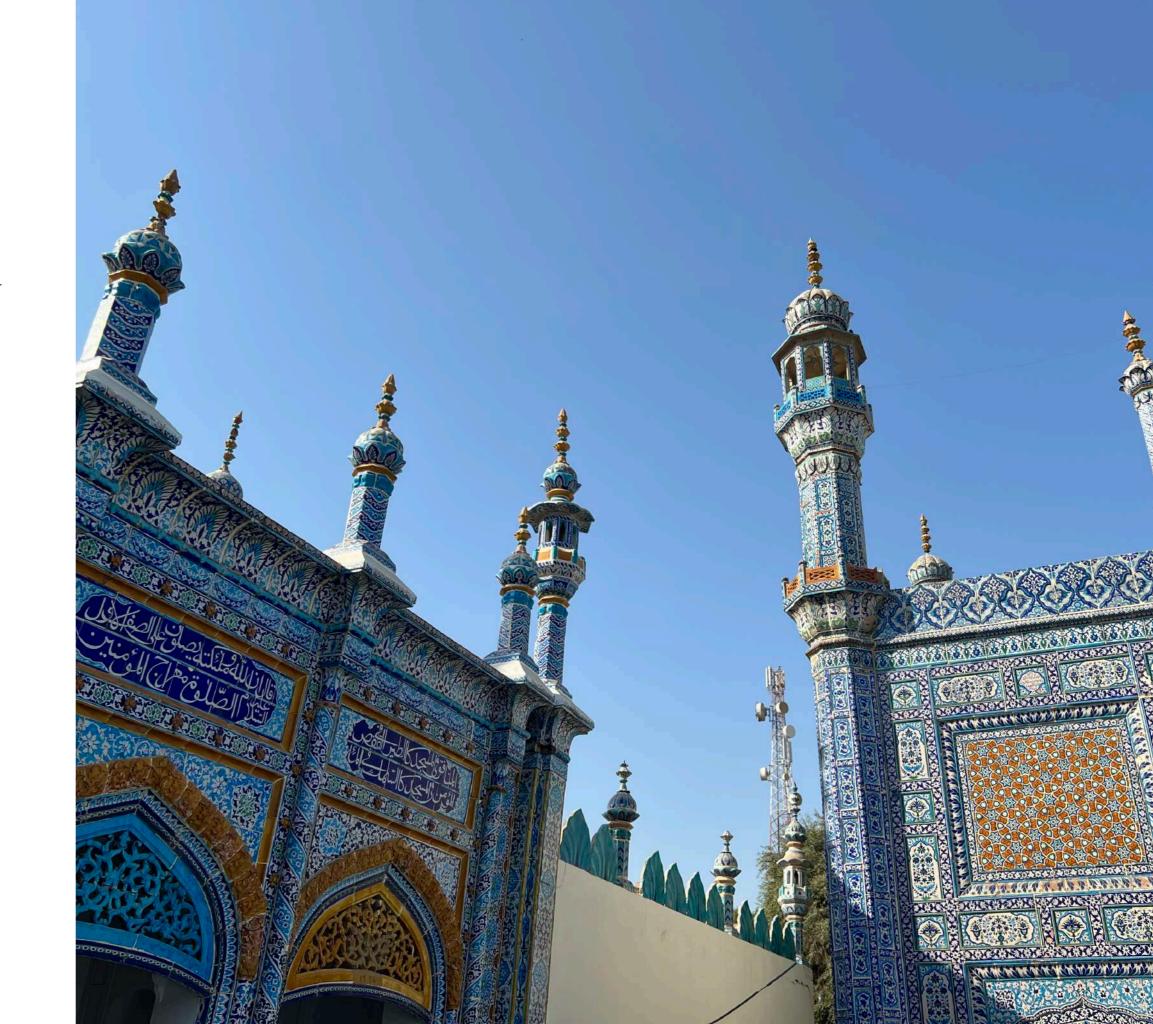


Nasarpur, an ancient town in Sindh, Pakistan founded during the Soomra dynasty, holds significant historical and cultural relevance to the region's craft traditions, particularly pottery and Kashikari (glazed tile work) of the Kalhora and Talpur periods. Nasarpur served as a major center for trade and craftsmanship, flourishing in the 14th century as a trade hub along the Indus River. Its artisans are renowned for expertise in ceramics and tilework, a legacy that links them to the broader traditions of the Indus Valley Civilization.

Local craftsmen have utilized the riverbed clay for centuries, producing high-quality pottery and ceramics. Nasarpur's Kashigars (ceramic artisans) are known for intricate blue and white tiles, which have been used in historical and modern architectural projects. Notable structures, like the Jilani mosque and tombs in the area, showcase the local artisans' skills that integrate aesthetic and functional design elements

Despite its rich history, the artisanal industry in Naserpur faces challenges. The shift in production methods, lack of resources, and diminishing generational transmission of skill mirrors the struggles seen across other historic centers of craft in Pakistan, endangering this heritage. In the context of Pakistani ceramics, Nasarpur serves as a reminder of the historical continuum from ancient to modern craftsmanship.

Nasarpur remains a symbol of craftsmanship, with artisans contributing to Pakistan's cultural heritage and influencing restoration projects and traditional arts worldwide. The Kashigar families connect modern practices with centuries-old techniques, making Nasarpur pivotal in the region's art landscape.





The Mushtaq Kashigar family of Nasarpur played a pivotal role in traditional ceramic arts of the region, especially in the craft of Kashikari, or decorative tile-making. Hasan, Irfan and Qasim continue their forefather's practice through mostly through government funded restoration projects.

Unlike most artisan families in Nasarpur, they are dedicated to continuing the intricate craft of Kashkari, which involves painting floral and geometric patterns on glazed ceramic tiles. These designs are made by dabbing graphite onto perforated paper to trace patterns and filling in areas with cobalt, copper, or other metallic pigments. Their craft aligns with broader historical contexts of ceramic tile-making, inspired by Egypt, Iran, and China.

These artisans remain committed to passing on their knowledge, under difficult circumstances, to keep traditions alive. The Mushtaq Kashigar family is central to the local ceramic tradition of Nasarpur and the broader preservation of Kashikari in Sindh, Pakistan.

KASHIGAR KARKHANA Nasarpur

Hassan & Irfan Kashigar Mushtaque Ahmed Kashigar FATHER Late Muhammad Hassan Kashigar GRANDFATHER Gul Muhammad Kashigar GREAT GRANDFATHER Muhammad Urs Kashigar

GREAT GREAT GRANDFATHER



Moach Goth potters' communities are located off Hub Chowki Road in the West Karachi District of Sindh. These potters use sedimented earth clay, sourced from excavation sites around Karachi and fired in large flat bed underground kilns. It is a common misconception that they use trash to fire their kilns; in reality, they use clean cotton byproducts purchased from textile factories around Karachi.

These communities were originally located around Baldia Town but relocated to Moach Goth due to concerns from residents about kiln firing fumes. This relocation occurred after a tragic incident in September 2012, when 258 factory workers died in a textile factory in the Baldia district.

Mohammad Ishaq, a potter in his late seventies, learned the craft from his father, Abubakar, and has passed it down to his sons. Of his four children, the three sons have learnt the craft he proudly claims as his birthright, practiced for generations. Only two actively practice and have also taught in smaller schools around the city. One son continues teaching pottery, while the eldest is considered a master craftsman in the community and carries on the familial legacy.

MOACH GOTH POTTERS





Hala, a town in Sindh, Pakistan, plays a critical role in the broader history of ceramic arts and pottery, especially in Kashikari tradition. Like Nasarpur, Hala has been a hub for production of handmade pottery and glazed tiles, notable for its rich cultural connection to the region's Islamic artistic heritage. The town and its artisans have carried forward techniques that date back to the Indus Valley Civilization.

Hala is known for its blue-and-white glazed tiles, a hallmark of the region's ceramic tradition. This work, deeply tied to aesthetics of Islamic architecture, is expressed in decorative motifs that were integral to both public and religious buildings, including mosques, tombs, and shrines. This tradition, rooted in ancient craft practices, has continued to evolve and be influenced by the cultural exchanges between Persian, Central Asian, and Mughal artisans.

The traditional wood-fired kilns used in Hala, Sindh, are similar to those from the Indus Valley Civilization, indicating a continuity in ceramic production techniques over millennia. This connection underlines the reliance on local resources and ancient methods in the region.

The relevance of Hala to the broader conversation about the ceramic traditions of Sindh, is in its historical role as a key site of pottery production. Like Nasarpur, Hala's artisans have faced challenges in preserving traditions, especially in the face of industrialization and the decline of artisan workshops

Nevertheless, the town remains a symbolic and practical center for continuation of Sindh's ceramic and tile-making traditions, with local efforts to sustain this valuable cultural heritage. Through preservation and educational efforts made at academic institutes, Hala's continued focus on these crafts highlights the importance of these skills in Sindh's/Pakistan's cultural identity.

GULL KASHI CENTRE

Qadir Bux Jani Soomro

Gull Muhammad Soomroo

FATHER

Haji Manam

GRANDFATHER

Muhammad Salih

GREAT GRANDFATHER



The Daudpota brothers Ghulam Hyder and Amjad have worked to preserve and modernize Nasarpur's Kashikari tradition. Both trained at the National College of Arts in Lahore and went on to King's Foundation School of Traditional Arts in London. (Formally known as The Prince's Foundation School of Traditional Arts)

In 2012 they set up NITA Crafts Development Co-operative Society in Nasarpur, Ghulam and Amjad ensured the survival of this art form, through adaptation in the face of modern industrial challenges. Their workshop is organized with extended family members working together in making processes. Their ceramic tile-making processes were influenced by the Iznik style of making and glazing in Turkey. In this technique, clay shaped in molds or on potters' wheels, undercoated, kiln-dried, and then is decorated. When the paint dries, it is glazed and fired again. This method is the most widely used "underglaze" technique.

Ghulam Hyder's international exposure, including his award-winning MA thesis inspired by Kashikari and Islamic tile traditions, highlights the global relevance and artistic merit of the craft. Amjad specialises in Ceramics Chemistry, focusing on clay bodies, glazes, ceramics colours, and firing techniques. He is proficient in wheel throwing, modelling, molding, and carving, and excels in traditional Kashi Kari, including tile making, stencil making, Kashi painting, engobing, glazing, and firing.

National Indigenous and Traditional Arts - NITA Nasarpur

Ghulam Hyder and Amjad Daudpota



The Muhammad Nawaz family of District Sahiwal has played a vital role in preserving the ancient pottery traditions of the Harappan heritage. Their age-old techniques were a source of inspiration for the Harappan Archaeological Research Project (HARP), initiated in 1986 by George Dale and Mark Kenoyer. This skilled family reproduces figurines, jewelry, and toys inspired by original Harappan designs as old as 5000 years.

They have showcased pieces in exhibitions through ASNA, a non-profit established in 1997 to explore the intersections of contemporary art and traditional crafts. They continue to produce replicas for museums and have been a source of inspiration for renowned ceramist Scherezade Alam.

The potters use clay from fertile soil deposited by Ravi River floods, sourcing it from riverbeds and surrounding areas. Their kilns are fired using wood from Keekar and Tali trees, ensuring continuation of this timeless craft.

CHAGATTA KUMBHARS

Harappa

Allah Ditta Mohammad Nawaz **FATHER** Mohammad Variam GRANDFATHER Mohammad Hashim GREAT GRANDFATHER Mohammad Sultan

GREAT GREAT GRANDFATHER





Aamna Talpur is a Fine Artist based in Hyderabad, Sindh, with a creative path that is profoundly connected to her cultural background. She completed her degree in Ceramics at Shaheed Allah Buksh Soomro (SABS) University of Art, Design and Heritages, Jamshoro, in November 2024. Her creations demonstrate a deep investigation of themes like cultural identity, memory, and emotional connections, frequently influenced by the rich traditions and detailed craftsmanship of her heritage.

My ceramic creations investigate cultural identity through the lens of Sindhi Ralli, a traditional art of quilt-making. Featuring lively colors, complex designs, and textured layers, Ralli represents much more than a mere craft; it embodies resilience, community, and cultural heritage. Handed down through the ages, it serves as both solace and conservation, providing a concrete link to my ancestry.

Having been raised outside Sindh, my connection to Ralli is simultaneously both remote and intimate. This duality shapes my identity, impacted by a rich cultural legacy and contemporary influences. The distance from Sindh has intensified this connection, as they embody a symbolic tie to my ancestors' traditions and a story of cultural preservation in a swiftly modernizing world.

In my ceramics, I express the core of Ralli by employing carving, glazing, and layering methods that enable me to replicate the textures, patterns, and intricate details found in the quilts. Translating these aspects into clay allows me to capture Ralli's warmth and visual intricacy while examining the duality between the fragility and strength that ceramics and cultural identity embody.

The surfaces I create resemble Ralli's layered narratives, reflecting how time, place, and memory influence the layers of identity. Every work serves as a form of dialogue, both tactile and visual, that clings to Sindhi customs while reflecting my evolving connection to heritage.

Ultimately, it is in the honoring of Ralli as a traditional craft but as a symbol of endurance and adaptability. In my work, I hope to draw together the textures and motifs of these quilts into a contemporary medium, thus enabling the past and present to connect and deepen our appreciation for the role of cultural heritage in shaping identity. These ceramics are an homage to my roots and a reflection of my journey in redrawing those connections in modern context.



Aamna Talpur

Rallis, Folded Stoneware clay (Glazed) 14 x 27 x 21 cm 2024



Ralli Stoneware clay (Glazed) Fired at 11300 C. 2024



Abeer Asim is an entrepreneur, art therapy practitioner and a highly skilled ceramic artist, who possesses a deep passion for engaging with people of all ages through the medium of clay and art. She did her Post Graduation in Ceramic Art from the esteemed Cardiff School of Art and Design in Wales, UK and her graduation in Ceramic Design from the renowned Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture in Karachi, Pakistan, where she developed a keen eye for detail and a deep understanding of her craft.

Abeer's work seamlessly blends contemporary and traditional elements, incorporating modernist principles that challenge the conventional boundaries of ceramics. She pushes the medium by integrating various techniques, such as printmaking for surface decoration, which enhances her pieces and develops rich narratives. Her unique use of color and texture invites viewers to connect with the stories embedded in her work.

In addition to her artistic practice, Abeer is a certified art therapy practitioner, believing in the transformative power of art for mental health and well-being. As the founder of Mudpie Studio, she makes art accessible to individuals of all skill levels, fostering a supportive and inspiring environment. Abeer continues to experiment and innovate, solidifying her role in the contemporary art scene.

'Layers of Memory' is an ode to the transitional phase of traveling and the longing for home. This ceramic piece encapsulates the complex emotions tied to the places we leave behind and the memories we carry with us. It reflects a journey that is both deeply personal and universally resonant, drawing on the spaces that have profoundly shaped my identity—environments rich with warmth yet often tinged with the bittersweet nature of change.

The work features organic forms and textures that evoke the landscapes of my home- Karachi. Each curve and indentation symbolizes a memory, capturing the essence of connections to the places I once inhabited. The earthy tones of the clay evoke the grounding nature of home, while the fluidity of the shapes mirrors the impermanence of those memories. As I shaped the clay, I became increasingly aware of its tactile quality; its malleability reflects how our memories can bend and shift over time.

The interplay of light and shadow across the surface invites viewers to engage with their own recollections, fostering a dialogue between the past and the present. This piece serves as a testament to the beauty of transience and the resilience of memory.

Ultimately, 'Layers of Memory' inspires a reflective exploration of the spaces we occupy, both physically and emotionally, celebrating the intricate relationship between memory, identity, and the evolving notion of home. In this way, the sculpture becomes a vessel for shared experiences, inviting viewers to contemplate their own narratives of belonging.



Abeer Asim

Layers of Memory Ceramic 10 X 14 inches 2010



Adeel uz Zafar is an artist, illustrator and art educator. Zafar holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from National College of Arts, Lahore (1998). 'Size Does Matter' at V.M. Art Gallery, Karachi was a turning point for him and his practice. This show, which was held in 2009, catapulted him into the league of emerging artists of Pakistan.

Zafar's works have been featured in several national and international exhibitions including 11 solo shows and numerous group shows. He has also presented works in international art fairs such as Art Stage Singapore, Art Fair Philippines, Art Dubai, Art Abu Dhabi, Art Basel Hong Kong, Pulse Art Fair New York and India Art Fair. He has participated in both national and international residencies.

He is represented by FOST Gallery, Singapore & AAN Gandhara-art Space, Karachi-Hong Kong. Zafar currently serves as a Faculty member of the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi. Zafar is also acting as a nominator from Pakistan for the Sovereign Art Prize. Two of his nominees Ahmed Javed & Sameen Agha were awarded SAAP in 2019 & 2024.

Soon after concluding his studies Zafar spent time working as an illustrator, an experience that greatly influenced his practice. The form of his signature work has since evolved to a haunting depiction of monochromatic images and his fascination with black and white pushes his medium and practice towards newer directions with broader connotations. Zafar always interested in history relates to the modern time and re-contextualizes timeline, connoting the credence, countries, conquests and casualties that have occurred to shape social, cultural, religious and political identities, as they stand today.





Aisha Tahir is visual artist based in Tando Allahyar, Did bachelors in Fine Arts (BFA), (major in Ceramics)at Shaheed Allah Buksh University of Art, Design & Heritages, Jamshoro . Her work explores the material transformation.

Pages in Perspective explores the transformation of paper into a permanent medium through ceramic sculptures that mimic its delicate and temporary nature. By creating an illusion of paper using clay, the work highlights the contrast between the fragility of the material and the lasting impact of the information it carries

This project examines the diverse forms and roles of paper, from its use in education and creativity to its practical applications in daily life. Inspired by my personal connection with paper as both a student and an artist, the sculptures aim to evoke curiosity and reflection. Each piece invites viewers to reconsider their relationship with paper, recognizing its multifaceted significance and the layers of meaning hidden in what is often dismissed as ordinary or disposable.



Aisha Tahir

Carton Piece and rolled paper
Stoneware and paper ceramic
2024



Carton Box Stoneware and paper ceramic 2024



Newspaper Stoneware Ceramics 39 X 22 X 3 cm 2010



Based in Dubai, UAE, Anila Ashraf is a self-taught ceramic artist specializing in wheel throwing and experimental techniques. Since beginning her journey in ceramics in 2020, she has been captivated by the transformative power of clay. Her work reflects a fearless approach, exploring themes of bravery amid the uncertainties of life. Ashraf established La-Takhaf Ceramics, in 2022. La-Takhaf, meaning "fear not," reflects the essence of her work: confident, imaginative, and grounded in presence.

Ashraf often blends functional and sculptural elements, altering wheel-thrown pieces and enhancing them with unique glazes to invite deeper engagement. Currently, she is focused on a project that challenges traditional ceramic practices, pushing boundaries and celebrating innovation. For Ashraf, art transcends its medium - a vital means of connection and expression, inspiring change in understanding our world.

Often viewed as a mechanical process, wheel throwing is at the heart of Ashraf's practice. For Ashraf, it is a disciplined yet deeply emotional art form. Each stage—centering, pulling, shaping—requires precision and focus. Clay, in her hands, is not an outlet for chaotic emotion but a medium where technique and feeling converge. Her personality quietly weaves itself into every gesture, transforming the clay into a vessel of artistic expression. On the wheel, the clay demands complete presence. Through disciplined focus, the potter, the clay, and the wheel become a unified force.

Through the moon jar series Ashraf, reflects on tradition and innovation, with textures and forms that inspire diverse interpretations, and transcend a physical structure to become vessels of meaning. Rooted in the 17th–18th century Joseon tradition, moon jars embody harmony and universality through their lunar shape, blending softness and harshness, freedom and restraint. Ashraf encourages viewers to explore personal narratives in an active, participatory experience. Exemplifying the universal relationship between emotion, presence, and discipline into a transformative journey.



Anila Ashraf

Untitled
Stoneware Clay
Height 8 Neck 3.1 inches
2022



Untitled
Stoneware Clay
Height 10 Neck 4.5 inches
2022



Untitled
Stoneware Clay
Height 11 Neck 4.5 inches
2022



Untitled
Stoneware Clay
Height 11 Belly 32 inches
2022









Untitled
Stoneware Clay
Height 10 Width 4.5 inches
2022

Untitled
Stoneware Clay
Height 10 Width 4.5 inches
2022

Untitled
Stoneware Clay
Height 10 Width 4.5 inches
2022

Untitled



Untitled Stoneware Clay Height 11 Neck 4.5 inches 2022



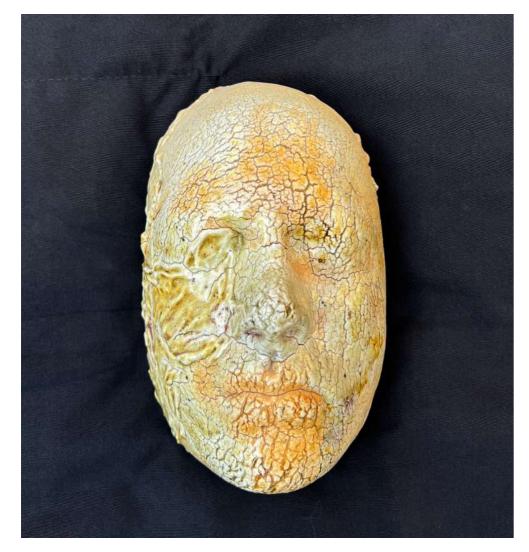
Fraz Mateen, a Karachi-based artist and educator, graduated from the Karachi School of Art in 2006. Since 2007, he has exhibited extensively nationally and internationally, using diverse materials to push artistic boundaries. His notable exhibitions include "Simply Paper" (IVS Gallery, 2008), "Behtreen for Taza Tareen" (Canvas Gallery, 2009), a solo at Art Chowk Gallery (2013), the "Indian Art Fair" (2014), and the "Kathmandu International Art Festival" (2012).

Recent showcases like "Eclectic Mix" (Sanat Art Gallery, 2020) and "Four Forty" (Sanat Art Gallery, 2022) highlight his evolving artistic voice. An educator at Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture since 2006, Fraz also contributes to the art and production industry.

Clay, a substance formed from the earth, holds an ancient quality. In my work, I sought to explore its deep-seated connection to memory, transformation, and the human condition. Clay, in its raw state, is both malleable and fragile qualities that mirror the essence of human experience. It remembers every touch, every impression, every moment of intention, echoing the hands that shaped it and the stories it carries. The face, as an object, has historically served as a powerful symbol of identity.

By choosing clay as my medium, I aimed to juxtapose the transient nature of memory with the permanence of fired piece. The malleability allow to infuse details that reflect persona. Yet, once fired, the clay becomes unyielding, a metaphor for how moments, once lived, are crystallized in the past.

The earthy tones and textures connecting the piece to its origins in the soil. This grounding element is a reminder of humanity's intrinsic relationship with nature, and how our identities are shaped by the environments we inhabit. The lines endures impact of experience. It is not just a representation of a face but an exploration of the many layers that form our identities. It is an invitation to consider the stories embedded in the materials around us and the way they connect us to the past. The mask bridges the tangible and the intangible, the malleable and the immutable, grounding memory in something tactile and timeless. Through this work, I hope to inspire a reflection on the delicate interplay between creation and preservation and the impermanence of our moments. It is a testament to the transformative power of clay, a medium that captures not just form, but the very essence of what it means to be "being".



Fraz Mateen

Layers of Being 01

Stoneware, Wood fired
10 x 8 x 8 inches
2008



Layers of Being 02
Stoneware, Wood fired
10 x 8 x 8 inches
2008



Layers of Being 03
Stoneware, Wood fired
10 x 7 x 8 inches
2008



Javaria Ahmad (she/her) is a Pakistani artist based on Lahore and teaching ceramics at National College of Arts since 2018. She holds an MFA from Alfred University (2023) and an MA in Art & Design Studies from BNU Lahore (2016). Her notable solo exhibitions include 'Finding Cherry Blossoms' at Shigaraki Ceramic Park and Museum, Japan (2024), 'Mashq' at Sculpture Space, NYC, and Robert C. Turner Gallery, Alfred University (both 2023), and 'To Whom It May Concern' at Zahoor-ul Akhlaq Gallery, NCA Lahore (2021). Ahmad has been a Visiting Artist Fellow at Lakshmi Mittal Institute, Harvard University (2020-2021). Her works can be seen in the collections of Yinggie Ceramic Museum, Taiwan and Alfred Ceramic Art Museum, New York.

The discourse surrounding women's everyday lives, cultural stereotypes, and traditions has deeply shaped both my life and my work. I explore the complex meanings of middle-class domesticity and gender bias, particularly for South Asian women. The meticulous intricacy in my work serves as a metaphor for the unrealistic expectations placed on women, subtly reflecting the hard work and submission often demanded of them. Mashq reflects this by focusing on the "dream house" ideal, where women's roles are defined by labor and duty. The hand-rolled clay strands, or paper-thin clay sheets, symbolize the quiet strength and resilience women display as they navigate societal roles, highlighting their enduring perseverance in the face of these expectations.











Javaria Ahmad

Mashq - b Stoneware Reduced Fire to Cone 10 3.75 x 3 x 0.5 inches 2022

Amma Ke Khatt - a (My mother's letters)
Stoneware, Cone 10 Reduced Fire 5.25 x 4.25 x 0.3 inches 2022

Amma Ke Khatt - e (My mother's letters)
Stoneware, Cone 10 Reduced Fire 4.5 x 3.5 x 0.1 inches 2022

Amma Ke Khatt - d (My mother's letters)
Stoneware, Cone 10 Reduced Fire
6.5 x 3.5 x 0.1 inches
2022

Mashq - a
Stoneware Reduced Fire to Cone 10
2.5 x 2.5 x 1.25 inches
2022











Amma Ke Khatt - c (My mother's letters)
Stoneware, Cone 10 Reduced Fire 5 x 3.5 x 0.25 inches 2022

Amma Ke Khatt - f (My mother's letters)
Smallest Brown Folded
3.5 x 2.25 x 0.5 inches
2022

Amma Ke Khatt - e (My mother's letters)
Stoneware, Cone 10 Reduced Fire 4.5 x 3.5 x 0.1 inches 2022

Amma Ke Khatt - f (My mother's letters)
Beige Small
4.5 x 3 x 0.5 inches
2022

Mashq - c Woodfired Earthenware 5.5 x 1.75 inches 2023











Amma Ke Khatt - f (My mother's letters)
White Porcelain
2.25 x 2.2 x 0.6 inches
2022

Amma Ke Khatt - f (My mother's letters)
Smallest Brown with Iron Seal
2.75 x 2.25 x 0.6 inches
2022

Amma Ke Khatt - f (My mother's letters)
Small Brown Folded - 2
3.5 x 2.5 x 0.8 inches
2022

Amma Ke Khatt - f (My mother's letters)
Porcelain & Stoneware, Cone 10,
Reduced & Wood Fired
4.5 x 3 x 3 inches
2022

Paighaam
Stoneware Cone 10 Reduced Fire
6 x 0.75 inches
2022



Legendary, Mian Salahuddin was undoubtedly the father of contemporary ceramic art in Pakistan and the pioneer in studio practice. He played a significant role as an educator and artist in developing awareness of the art form. He worked to blend modern and traditional techniques, drawing from traditions of the Indus Valley and Islamic ceramic artistry to influence generations of Pakistani ceramists.

Salahuddin's works highlighted tactile and organic qualities of clay, reminiscent of ancient pottery traditions. This aligns with the region's ceramic heritage, as seen in his emphasis on form and texture. Inspired by traditional techniques and his own training under Koichi Takita (Japan), Salahuddin fused artistic influences of Japanese and Islamic ceramics. His work involved sculptural exploration and glaze experimentation, echoing the ancient practices of kiln firing to create dynamic surface effects.

Salahuddin's impact was clear in his teaching at the National College of Arts (NCA), where he introduced students to traditional Pakistani ceramics and contemporary studio techniques. His focus on reinterpreting local traditions with innovation approaches, provided a bridge between the past and future of ceramics. Additionally, his retrospective Born of Fire at the Indus Valley School of Art & Architecture in 2008 and book published in 2007, both curated by Noorjehan Bilgrami highlighted Salahuddin's contributions, further underscoring his role in connecting contemporary work with centuries-old traditions.





Nabahat Lotia is a ceramicist based in Karachi with almost 30 years of experience working in the medium. In 2009, she returned to school and earned a Bachelor's degree in Ceramics from the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture. Since then, she has participated in international group shows and residencies and conducted workshops in Karachi, Lahore, Toronto, Bali, and Istanbul.

Most recently, she launched her book, Pottery Traditions of Pakistan, which had been in the making for many years. The book is a result of her extended informal interactions with the traditional potters and more focused research and documentation for almost a decade. Nabahat is soon launching 'Gehnay" her ceramic jewelry line at Koel Gallery Karachi.

Once the potter completes shaping the clay, the work must face the transformative fires of the kiln. In a gas-fired kiln, temperatures are carefully controlled, yet the process still holds room for unexpected outcomes.

Tall red clay vessels, carefully placed inside, surrender to the intense heat, melting and flowing together as the controlled atmosphere interacts with the clay surface.

Variations in temperature zones, reduction (oxygen-deprived firing), and positioning in the kiln can create surprising textures, flashes of colour, and unique effects on the vessels. The process fuses them into a unified, strengthened formation, their forms melding to reveal unplanned beauty.

The kiln shelf becomes a canvas of transformation, showcasing the delicate balance between the potter's intent and the kiln's unpredictable artistry.



Nabahat Lotia

Kundan Red clay gas-fired 2001



Sadia Salim is a multidisciplinary artist whose pedagogical engagement is as much informed by her practice as the thematic narratives she articulates. Real, everyday issues like changing eco-structures, evolving visual traditions, and research in indigenous craft, form the overarching narratives in her work. Though ceramics has been Sadia's primary medium, her investigations have led her to proficiency in photography, mapping, text, video, and the discovery of found objects.

Sadia Salim has exhibited widely and participated in numerous artist residencies, conferences, and symposia. She established the first Graduate Programme, an interdisciplinary study in critical and creative practice, at Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture (IVS); the programme, the first of its kind in Karachi, was led by her for four years (2018-2021). Previously she led the Department of Ceramics at IVS, developing its academic direction and facilities (2005-2010).

The series, Memory of a Landscape, spread over a number of years, is a way to record, retain, remember, and engage with a landscape, akin to the process of drawing and thinking. Branches, stems, pods, nests or beehives that fall on the ground or are abandoned, are gathered and transformed into ceramic objects. The process becomes a means to study the plant forms and their uses, sometimes a way to engage with the communities that are sustained by these systems, or to explore the politics of the land. The delicate ceramic objects are a further reminder of our fragile and threatened ecosystems.



Sadia Salim

Memory of a landscape
18x24 inches
2018
All images by Humayun Memon



Sadia Salim

Memory of a landscape
Porcelain

Variable (vitrine size 16x24 inches)
2018/2024



I am an experienced ceramist and educational researcher with a deep-rooted passion for studio pottery. Throughout my career, I have developed a diverse skill set in ceramics, driven by a dedication to both artistic innovation and education. My journey has been enriched by opportunities to exhibit my work on national and international stages, where I have shared and celebrated the art of ceramics with a global audience.

My work is driven by the interplay between form and surface. I begin with symmetrical shapes thrown on the wheel, which I often alter to introduce a sense of movement and individuality. At times, the use of crystalline glazes further enhances this transformation, inviting viewers to engage with my pieces from multiple perspectives, ensuring each angle reveals something new and compelling.

The glazing process is equally important to my practice, as I see it as the "complexion" of my ceramic forms. Designing my own glazes is an intricate and thoughtful process, where I envision the final appearance of a piece long before its completion.

Using carefully selected combinations of white powders and oxides, I create surfaces that uncover intricate crystalline patterns, rich depths of colour, and subtle tonal variations, sometimes pairing lava and matte glaze combinations. Each glaze application is the result of thoughtful experimentation, driven by a commitment to both innovation and harmony.

Through this dynamic conversation between form and surface, I aim to create forms that not only captivate the viewer but also celebrate the seamless harmony between material, technique, and my artistic vision.



Blues & Greens
Crystalline, Medium: Stone ware
20cm H x 9.5cm W x11cm
2024



Galaxy
Crystalline, Medium: Stone ware
28.3 cm H x 12.5cm W x14.2cm
2024



Cascade
Crystalline, Medium: Stone ware
27.7cm H x 10cm W x10cm
2024



Emerald
Crystalline, Medium: Stone ware
34.5cm H x 17.5cm W x15.5cm
2024



Cosmic Crystalline, Medium: Stone ware 31.5cm H x 14.5cm W x14.5cm 2024



Gold Crystalline
Crystalline, Medium: Stone ware
25.5cm H x 12.7cm W x14cm
2024



Fiery Bloom Stone ware 39cm H x 25.5cm W x20cm 2024

SHA Z1a Mirza

With an undergraduate in Ceramics Design from NCA, and an MFA in Ceramic Arts from State University of New York through a Fulbright grant, I practice and teach Ceramics at NCA. My mediums vary from fabric, to paper, to clay and to written word. I have created ceramic objects during various artist's residencies in Seattle, Aix-En-Provence, Hungary, China, Netherlands, Thailand, Iceland and Pakistan.

I live with this constant urge to change the form of materials around me into objects with some soul; all the while trying to understand the nature of the urge itself. This back and forth disquisition exposes layers of meaning about materiality, processes, issues of utility, and nature of enclosed spaces . As homo faber,I rely on these discoveries to help me discern the true essence of intimate objects that I want to place in vicinity of human body.









Crackle 1 (wrist cuff)
High fired porcelain, with crackle glow-inthe-dark glaze
5.8 cm inner diameter
2017

Crackle 2 (wrist cuff)
High fired porcelain, with crackle glow-in-the-dark glaze
5.8 cm inner diameter
2017

Rondure (Ring)
High fired porcelain
3.5 cm wide
2017

Rondure (Ring)
High fired soft brown stained porcelain
3.5 cm wide
2017





Shazia Zuberi began as a clay artist in the late nineties, she pursued her education in Pennsylvania, USA, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Economics with a minor in Studio Arts. She later completed a Master's degree in Gender Studies from SOAS, UK. She currently runs earthwarestudios.karachi, a space dedicated to providing studio access for pottery enthusiasts, conducting workshops, and creating unique handmade pieces for online retail. Since 1997, her artistic practice has evolved to reflect natural, organic forms, drawing inspiration from geology and landscapes. Her work documents nature while preserving the purity of clay, her chosen medium. She develops handmade clays and glazes through extensive experimentation, incorporating natural oxides and techniques that honor the environment. Her process involves relief and surface design using oxide rubs, slips, burnishing, and multiple firings, resulting in textures that range from serene to richly layered. Her work celebrates and safeguards nature, exploring the delicate balance between humanity and the environment. Over the years, Zuberi has participated in numerous group and solo exhibitions.

I have over the years developed a language in art that reflects the natural, organic form – paying a tribute to geology and landscape. My work mimics geological detail and processes. I aim to tell a story by documenting nature in my work; through which I aim to safe guard the purity and essence of clay; my chosen medium.

My work is heavily dependent on the use of natural oxides and techniques that complement the natural world and pay a tribute to our environment. Both my clays and glazes are handmade. Recipes/formulae, all original, have been developed over time through extensive experimentation.

I have woven a documentation in the form of relief and surface design, sometimes calm, sometimes agitated, sometimes subjected to intense layering of oxide rubs, slips, burnished surfaces and multiple firings. The entire process is connected. Wet clay, slow drying to a leather hard state, moving into a bone dry ready for a bisque (thermal shock integral for vitrification) and finally glorious glazed transformation.

Clay tells a story of the natural past-my series often highlight nature's footprint of present. Not a narrative but a snapshot of existence. The process of documentation moves the present into the annals of history. My recent works, since 2011, have encapsulated the representation of human existence in scape of the past- my figurative work (abstract) has been used as a documentation of our (human -gender neutral) presence in nature and the symbiotic relationship required to exist.



Shazia Zuberi The clay artist's studio



Untitled I Stoneware clay 8 x7 inches 2024



Untitled II
Stoneware clay
7 x 7 x 2 inches
2024

