

In the last ten months Faiz Art Prize has been a catalyst in creating a link between a literary philosophy and visual arts, and **NUKTAART** is privileged to be a partner in such an initiative. A large section within this special issue brings to its readers a catalogue of the works competing for the awards. Also included are statements from Shahid Sajjad and Habib Fida Ali, two eminent Pakistani personalities from the fields of art and architecture whose creative input in the project has made it even more special.

In a parallel theme, **NUKTAART** investigates the dynamics of emerging local and global art markets and its impact in China, United Arab Emirates and Pakistan where diverse factors have brought art and investment together as never before.

In China, which is the second biggest art market in the world today, a sharp rise in personal wealth has been the driving force behind its increasing number of billionaire collectors. While contemporary art is attracting some buyers, the primary art investment remains in traditional arts. This trend also needs to be seen in the context of the government policy to restrict investment in real estate at home and abroad, which has made the wealthy look for other avenues for investment.

The phenomenal upsurge in art activities in the last decade in United Arab Emirates has given it visibility with a unique art infrastructure investment which has very little to do with local cultural expression. Except for Sharjah that has made attempts to integrate art as a part of its education, Dubai and Abu Dhabi are pouring money into galleries, art fairs and museums primarily as an economic strategy to enhance cultural tourism.

In two articles, one from a global perspective and the other that takes an insider's perspective of the art market and related concerns in Pakistan, bring into focus the dichotomous realities influenced by national economics and international politics.

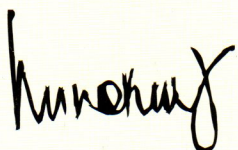
This year, at the Venice Biennale, the Indian National Pavilion was dominated by artists living outside its geographical boundaries which has prompted a discussion on the changing perception of national representation. The Venice Biennale, for almost a decade, has looked at possible internal reforms to make it more relevant to the times. Focusing on the progress in this area becomes the subject of the second article on the Venice Biennale.

Burke and Norfolk, two photographers, a century apart, who documented wars in Afghanistan were on display in a curated show at Tate Modern, UK. This summer, **NUKTAART** invited two independent writers, one each from Pakistan and UK, to examine it through the historical and critical subjectivity of war documentation.

In recognition of the contribution of two important Karachi based gallerists, Zohra Hussain of Chawkandi Art and Riffat Alvi of VM Gallery, **NUKTAART** has a conversation with them in Nukta-e- Nazar, on the outreach and strategies that each has evolved simultaneously with the art market in Pakistan, and the implications of this growth is addressed.

Arif Mahmood has curated the Photo Essay for this issue under the rubric, *Families*, a selection from a larger portfolio previously exhibited at VM gallery. The Youth Lens is delighted to showcase the work of talented young photographers from Karachi and Faisalabad.

Faiz Art Prize is the first public event on a national scale that **NUKTAART** has been involved within its six years of existence. This participation was motivated by the publication's mandate to engage in debates and projects to narrow the gap between the overly commodified art practice and the de-linked community. In previous years **NUKTAART** has hosted The Anxious Century, a regional seminar with art critics from Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Iran and Germany and One Mile Square- Mai Kolachi, the country's first full-fledged ecological awareness workshop and exhibition for artists. Creating an opportunity for artists and art students to re-discover one of Pakistan's greatest poets and understand the relevance of his message to our times has been both a challenge and a memorable experience for **NUKTAART**. We thank our partners and sponsors for their support.



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