

Two recent events have emphasized the criticality of connection between local and global art concerns, between the past and present and its bearing on the production and acquisition of art.

Art Dubai 2008, an international trade fair with a focus on galleries and seminars tailored to highlight the role of the art investors, this year introduced curated shows and Pakistan was invited to be the first. This exclusive showcasing of Art from Pakistan offered crucial support to artists who after a lone effort are emerging among the favorites in the South Asian Contemporary Art Market.

Another important subtext of the event was the cultural intervention by Guggenheim and Louvre in the Arab Emirates which will mark a departure from the indigenous museum based on local pride and culture to the Western museum franchise model for the first time in Asia.

A far cry from 'futuristic' Dubai was the small university town where the First International Art Conference was hosted by the Institute of Art and Design, Sindh University. Here the discussion centered round a dynamic vision for art education and the significance of context. The three-day interface with national and international art scholars offered an opportunity to debate on possibilities offered by national and global developments in the field. In this region steeped in the spiritual poetry and folklore of the Sufi saint Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai, and where the past seamlessly slips into the present to create timeless conventions, it shared the same anxiety as the Emirates about loss of identity when confronted by cultural change.

NuktaArt continues to address issues related to context and history and dedicates this issue to the country's most important sculptor, Shahid Sajjad. A detailed article on his life that runs parallel to Pakistan's history, discusses his journey from a destitute child of the Partition to a national role model in the arts. His interview in *Nukta-e-Nazar* provides the reader to read the artist's worldview in his own words. Compelling images from Shahid Sajjad's retrospective at National College of the Arts are included in the Photo Essay. To provide the context in which sculpture developed along divergent trajectories in post 1947 decades in Pakistan and India, two essays have been included.

The African response to Documenta, is a critique of the misreading of the African creative ethos and the exclusive claim of the West to Modernity which relegates local modernities to a subaltern position.

An essay from the foot of Mount Everest looks at the persistent motif of the feline form in Nepalese aesthetics and discusses its relationship to religious and cultural symbolism.

Details of the inauguration of South Asian Galleries at the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, and a significant event for the Diaspora are covered in an exclusive piece for *NuktaArt*. It gives an insight into this new collection that embraces ancient artifacts to the contemporary. In Pakistan, the living Mughal Museum, the Lahore Fort, gains a new focus when its legendary 'Shish Mahal' receives the attention of conservators. The account is illustrated with some striking visuals of this spectacular monument.

Prominent American ceramist gives his personal account on the emergence of ceramic art since World War II in which the GI Bill that helped educate war veterans played a pivotal role.

In another personal and exclusive account, we are informed of Contemporary Art developments by a member of the *NuktaArt* team who toured Beijing and Shanghai to find out why it has caught the attention of international art pundits.

In this issue the reader will get a rare glimpse of one of the country's most important art collections. An internationally renowned architect, Habib Fida Ali, who not only collects with passion, but displays it with an eye for detail to compliment the interior of his restored colonial style, tiled-roof, stone house in Karachi.

The Pakistani art community in the last few months has mourned the loss of its two stalwarts, Gulgee and Colin David. *NuktaArt* organized a memorial meeting in collaboration with The Second Floor (T2F) to acknowledge Gulgee's place in Pakistan's art and continues to call for urgent steps to preserve his Museum for the children of the country, to whom he had dedicated it during his lifetime.

As *NuktaArt* receives greetings on completing its three years of existence, it feels that this modest endeavor has given a voice to art issues from Pakistan and created a space for international artists and writers to participate in a multi-faceted print discourse sans boundaries.

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