

Artist Statement

My trajectory has always involved the use of fabric. My initial work which alluded to subjugation, delved into the cultural origins and significance of the Sari and the Dhoti, and addressed the inherent quality of free flowing fabric with the aim of showing rhythmic movement while restraining it.

Subsequent work which was informed by the existence of extremism brought into use universally recognised symbols such as the Kabbalah, the Cross and the flower of Mary. Arab headscarves and photographs served as the base which were painted on or embroidered over.

While referencing extremism and unrest, the calming and therapeutic practice of embroidering became a fitting antidote to the disturbing imagery that was being formed by it.

My current practice relies heavily on the use of textiles and revolves around the integration of personal memory, diverse histories and different cultures to come up with narratives that are isolated from the origins of all three

I work with textiles that are sourced from local flea markets, collected by me over a period of time. These textiles are sold by immigrants from the region, have rich histories and belong to different parts of the world. I pair them with embroideries usually from culturally rich, rural areas of Pakistan. Embroideries that have had a lot of time and effort invested into them. I then meld the two together by ruthlessly cutting the embroidery into little pieces which resonates well with the breaking up of traditions due to the effects of globalisation. I reconstitute the cut-up pieces by literally stitching an entirely different narrative that includes the stories of both, the embroidered piece and the fabric it is placed on.

The ensuing narrative, while pertinent to the present, is detached from both their individual truths and during this process the original identity of the fabric has been altered by imposition of an account it is unfamiliar to. In this way, new histories and new memories have been created which have their place in the present.

Lately I have been in the process of mapping out cultural influences through virtual and physical take-overs, by employing textiles sourced from stateless immigrants, who have themselves been the products of invasions and political conflicts.

Old carpets and kilims with strong Central Asian and Irani influence sourced from Baluchistan are used as a surface on which I superimpose beautiful indigenous embroideries with patterns having their roots in pagan culture to reference unlearnt lessons from history.