

The Green Room

'Then, break the glass panes ... with the fragments, compose a stained glass.'

Claude Cahun, 1930

My work is about binaries that permeate multiple levels of social perceptions and interactions turning them into mediated experiences. My practice explores themes of perception and identity. How an individual perceives and relates to the social environment, the idea of connection and separation is the basis of my work. I use geometric patterns in my practice to suggest an external order or organization enforced onto the surface of the canvas. These patterns, derived from my cultural heritage and cross-cultural life experiences, continue the theme of screens that has been central to my recent practice.

Within the Indo/Islamic architecture tradition, screens are used for separation, for demarcating a space, to form boundaries, to shroud and reveal, depending on the perspective of the viewer. The architectural device keeps out and keeps in, and in the process of ordering the environment produces something else.

Similarly, the motif of the grid operates as a screen that filters and constructs and constrains. They are metaphors for points of separation within a space. The patterns within the work speak to notions of cultural difference and similarity, to constructions of gender and identity, in front of, behind, and within a problematic screen. In my work, screens and patterns are used to refer to how socially constructed spaces of separation operate as makers - not merely markers - of Identity.

The use of repetition as a meditative tool within my practice is an attempt to break down conscious thought about a subject through repetition to a point where the process and materials allow access to deeper knowledge about the subject. Even though the naissance of my work is from binaries within language, the act of repetition allows a certain freedom of thought outside linguistic formulations, into abstract territory.

Nazia Ejaz