

JAGAH

IS THERE A SPACE? | THERE IS A SPACE!

HAI

CONTENTS

- 1 **Foreword** John McCarry
- 5 **Jagah Hai: The Wake-Up Call** Sara Vaqar Pagganwala
- 9 **Karachi, Chaos, and Rainbows** Adam Fahy-Majeed
- 13 **Space: The Final Frontier** Amin Gulgee
- 29 **Driveway**
- 37 **Foyer**
- 45 **Big Gallery**
- 59 **Small Gallery**
- 67 **Courtyard**
- 77 **First Landing/Mezzanine**
- 85 **Second Landing/Third Landing**





**“Fremd bin ich
eingezogen...”**
(A Stranger,
I Arrived)

Claudia Arnold



Yumna Ali (b. 1999, Lahore) is a fourth-year architecture student at the Indus Valley School of Architecture in Karachi. She has been professionally trained as a kickboxer and can express herself best through poetry. She also paints and has a deep interest in performance art.



Claudia Arnold (b. 1960, New York, USA) was raised and educated in Vienna, Austria and Mississippi. She earned a graduate MBA degree from Millsaps College in Jackson and worked with EFS Consulting and Schoellerbank's private banking division in Vienna. After marrying a German diplomat, she moved with him to postings in Latin America, the US, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Now based in Berlin, she is associated with Maerz Contemporary Gallery.



Jamal Ashiqain (b. 1979, Karachi) trained as a graphic designer before dedicating himself to painting and photography. Over the years, he has assiduously photographed the Pakistani art scene, earning him a Niggah Award for Art Photography. His multidisciplinary practice ranges from installations to purely conceptual works to performances extending over a period of years. He has participated in several shows and curated exhibitions as well.



Ruqaiya Abdul Aziz (b. 1997, Karachi) is a multidisciplinary visual artist. She received her BFA with distinction from the Department of Visual Studies, University of Karachi in 2019. Based in Karachi, her current body of work is a satiric epigram on colorism. She has exhibited her work nationally in several group shows, including *Welcome Back Home* at Full Circle Gallery, Karachi.

He writes: "*Irtiqa Aur Inteha* (Evolution and Extremity)" is a performance-based, exploratory sound installation piece centered around the act of self-archival. It aims to draw out essences from the roots of primitive extreme metal, a genre I have practiced as a performance artist for nearly the past three decades." Usama Ali Khan Khattak traversed the entire building carrying a double-faced, ornate mirror which he had designed. An architect by education and now a model, he reflects: "I too had been consumed by this conceit, evoking the narcissistic in my work."

Some of the artists commented upon the private space that exists in relationships between two people. Their mouths gagged, Vaneeza Ali and Zujaja Irfan wrestled each other to the ground and then embraced. The two women continued this action repeatedly on the third landing for their collaborative work *Metamorphosis*. Vaneeza writes: "The ideology of this performance circulates around the portrayal of a love and hate relationship between oneself and your significant other..." Wearing a

burqa with a miniskirt underneath it, Jamal Ashiqain held a shirtless Vajdaan Shah in his arms like a Pietà in the small gallery. At times Vajdaan would slip from Jamal's protective embrace and fall to the ground. Vajdaan and Jamal muse about their work, *Jagah Hai in Arms*, in their joint written statement: "Swaying in-between the acts of letting go and exploring the shades of power and tenderness."

In *Peace in Rest*, Gabrielle Brinsmead spoke of the subconscious space of dreams. Wearing pajamas and a sleep mask, she lay on her back on the floor of the foyer. "In our dreams, in our dream-spaces, there is always a place for us; in fact, we occupy no space at all," she states. Faryal Yazdanie allowed us into her personal, spiritual space. Sitting in the driveway, she baptized herself with mud and clay. "It is a formless reflection of an energy/A loud and bigger existence that I am trying to reach/I will keep trying until I reach so I can know where I belong." (FY) Claudia Arnold's work *Fremd bin ich eingezogen...* (A Stranger, I Arrived...) spoke of the constant journeys she has taken in her

life. Seated next to a small red suitcase, she whispered to random audience members. She writes: "Musings on the great rivers that have touched my life (from the Danube and the Mississippi to the Indus with the Nile in between) and other things, in quiet discourse with myself and the wanderers passing by." In *Lives and Lovers*, Ali Samoo also referenced migration. Placing himself in my steel and mirror *Q Rickshaw* (2019) parked in the driveway, he carefully sewed strips of fabric to a quilt. "For 'Jagah Hai,' I am looking at personal migrations within the city of Karachi. For this I have collected pieces of clothing from my chosen family and some very close friends who have, or are intending to, migrate into and/or within the city. I use their discarded clothes as repositories of imagination and memory, of a life they once lived."

In a 1967 interview for *Newsweek* magazine, the musician Ray Manzerek, who co-founded the group the Doors with Jim Morrison, was quoted as saying:

"There are things you know about and things you don't, and in between are the doors—that's us."³ The artists in this section explored the "doors" that are "in between" the question "Is there a space?" and the statement "There is a space!"

In Karachi, it is common to find a structure called a *barsati*, or rain space, on the roof of a home. The *barsati* traditionally is a small room where the inhabitants of the house can enjoy a cool breeze during the monsoons. For me, the sliver of my *barsati*, measuring 21 feet by 11 feet overlooking the main roof, has always been a liminal space. In "Jagah Hai," it was occupied by Noreen Ali and Angeline Malik whose works were titled *Buddhi ke Baal* (Old Woman's Hair) and *The Forbidden Fruit*, respectively. Entering the steamy *barsati* was a psychedelic experience; all the senses were challenged. Ultraviolet light illuminated the two women. Poised upon a colonial bed, Angeline wordlessly offered slices of apple to the audience, touching them lightly. On the other side of this narrow area, Noreen Ali, dressed in a sari, methodically made