



Landscape and Cityscape Painters (1980's and 1990's)

“ART IN PAKISTAN”

BFA-IV (VISUAL ARTS)

CLASS INCHARGE: MS. FARAH KHAN

INSTITUTE OF DESIGN & VISUAL ARTS, LCWU

Introduction

- ▶ Landscape and cityscape painting has been observed as a popular genre of expression in the art scene of Pakistani art since Independence. This art form has always been well received by the viewers, even a layman is a decent admirer of landscape painting. Ustad Allah Bux portrayed the culture of Punjab with focus on its landscape and people whereas Anna Molka Ahmed also represented the indigenous subjects with emphases on the landscape of Punjab in her expressionistically rendered surfaces.
- ▶ Pakistan's rich landscape has inspired its own generation of painters. Khalid Iqbal was Pakistan's master landscape painter (1929-2014). He taught and inspired many of country's landscape painters. Pakistan's landscape painters have aspired to reach Khalid Iqbal's level of detail, observation and command on the subject. His ability to capture the breath of a moment in landscape remains unmatched. He masterfully captured the light and sentiment of a very particular moment – for example the subtle tint of red light in his sunsets or the filtered atmosphere after a rain, both are clearly communicated to the viewer. Zulqarnain Haider, a follower of his style and philosophy represented the same mood and expression in Landscape painting.
- ▶ Another important artist Ghulam Rasul explored contours around Islamabad; and Zulqarnain Haider, Dr. Ajaz Anwar and Ijaz-ul-Hassan painted Lahore, its surrounding areas and historical sites. Whereas Zubaida Javed and Khalid Mehmood saw the landscapes and cityscapes in their localities through the lens of impressionistic palette. These landscapes represented multiple connotations painted in realistic, impressionistic, expressionistic or symbolic manner.

Zubaida Javed (1938-2015)



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- ▶ Zubaida Javed, an versatile artist of exciting palette and mysterious ambiance, is considered as the harbinger of conceptual landscape painting in Pakistan. Known for her cityscape and landscape paintings, she was a recipient of Pride of Performance on her contribution in the field of Fine Arts.
- ▶ She was born in 1937 at Aligarh, India. She got her early education from Aligarh and after partition her family migrated to Pakistan. Interestingly, she planned to become a doctor but her fear of scenes from the operation theatre never allowed her to take up that profession. Her father knew that she was good in sketching so he guided her to opt Fine Arts as a subject for professional studies. He first studied Fine Arts at Lahore College for Women and she then went to Fine Arts Department of Punjab University for obtaining the degree of Masters in Fine Arts. There she studied under the guidance of Anna Molka Ahmad, Khalid Iqbal, Zakia Dil Muhammad and Mrs. Anwar. She did her Masters in 1961 and then remained busy in making impressionistic landscapes, a style she practiced during her academic studies for her thesis exhibition. In 1964, she was selected as a Lecturer at her Alma Mater and taught history of Art with emphases on Islamic Art and basics of art particularly the ‘Composition’.
- ▶ In 1974, she had her first Solo Exhibition in Rawalpindi which was well appreciated by the viewers. Her art was perceived as an abstraction enwrapped in vanishing visions, beauties, prides and patterns of Lahore’s cultural life and history. Instead of painting the Walled City or its outskirts like many other contemporary realist or cubist painters, she very innovatively and skillfully used her palette knife for creating textures and coloring essence of subject matter.

Zubaida Javed (1938-2015)

- ▶ Besides, she participated in group shows. She worked for two more Solo exhibitions, which were held in Islamabad and Karachi. She had one exhibition in Lahore Art Gallery in 1995. The works represented her recognized personal idioms, loaded with freshness that entire she had perceived, conceived and expressed through art.
- ▶ From Misty Morning to creeping darkness, one could read in her practice oriented modern impressions, cheerful and gloomy stories of her beloved city, Lahore and its people.
- ▶ As a painter, she worked very dynamically, though she got retired in 1997 from Punjab University where she also worked as a Chairperson of the Department but she never got retired from her practice and continuously worked till the last days of her life. She remained busy in matching and composing on canvas or paper romantic tunes of past and present with changing tonalities of native hues and lights.
- ▶ Remembering the days of her University life as a student of Fine Arts, she once said: *During studies at Fine Arts Department, I found myself fully involved in doing original work. I followed what was being taught to me and expressed accordingly in my realistic drawings and paintings. At that time, although I was painting in realistically but it didn't satisfy my creative impulse. It seemed to me a dry imitation of nature and life around me. Like my early copy work, I wanted to get rid of this style too. In fact, I wanted to express my ideas creatively, differently and impressively.*

Zubaida Javed (1938-2015)

- ▶ *My problem was solved when I attended lectures of Khalid Iqbal on various type of Impressionism. Also while studying art books, I took much interest in the work of Manet, Pissarro, Degas, Cezanne and Renoir. I was inspired by Anna Molka Ahmed's style of using palette knife for creating impressionistic paintings. Then there was Mr. Nutley who had come from America as visiting Professor. Every Sunday, he took us to the outskirts of Lahore. We enjoyed a lot while making landscapes on the spot in watercolor mediums. Finally, in 1961, I displayed my thesis work, which helped me to earn Master's degree with distinction.*
- ▶ After this academic boost, she never stopped painting. In those days she mostly concentrated on understanding what she had been painting and why her impressionistic art was considered abstract and semi-abstract. On canvas and paper, she continuously used oil colors with palette knife for painting subject matter of her own choice in the same abstract impressionistic style with which she had experimented in the beginning. She not only developed her own individualistic style in Pakistan but being an art educationist also left strong influence on her students, a number of whom practiced impressionistic palette and style throughout their artistic journey. Durre Wasim, Munawar Muhyiddin, Samina Nasim are prime examples who are still practicing impressionist palette in their work while focusing on cityscapes and Landscapes.

Zubaida Javed (1938-2015)

- ▶ In an interview, she said: *“My paintings are reflections of my thoughts, feelings and emotions. I always like to say something purposeful on canvas. Painting without any purpose has no attraction for me. I have never been in favor of works, which are produced only after seeing the market-index. I have never been able to understand the drama of intellectual art. I always love to see the works of Masters like Abdur Rehman Chughtai, Amrita Shergil, Ustas Allah Bux, Anna Molka Ahmed, Khalid Iqbal, Shakir Ali, Zubeida Agha and Zahoor-ul-Akhlaque. As far as my art is concerned, apparently, it does not say anything unusual. Thematically, its about the indigenous cultural life style of urban and rural areas of Lahore. My interest remains on highlighting the traditional loveliness of this city. I paint what I see and feel. For instance, while looking at an ignored historical building, I become nostalgic and start thinking about the people who built it and who lived in it. Similarly, sometimes I find myself romantically recalling my experiences of seeing peasants, green fields, harvesting seasons and colorful melas in Lahore. Now, in search of some natural spot for painting a Lahori-landscape, I have to pass through my modern housing societies. I took notice of all such haphazard changes and think about things that were losing so rapidly”*
- ▶ Being an artist she was gifted with the vocabulary of colors, which were used in a meaningful diction on her surface. With the help of colors she created abstract, impressionistic as well as expressionistic environment in her paintings. Her expressive work had layers of readability with references of fading past, nostalgia, city of the lost, creeping darkness, tunes of freedom, prayer for the Dawn and Monsoon.

Murree Hills



Murree Hills



Untitled



Untitled



Untitled

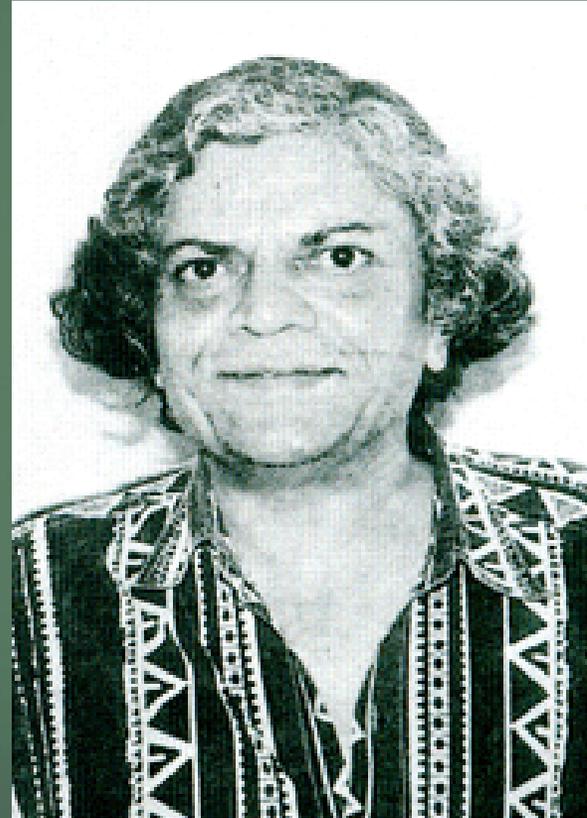


Untitled



Dr. Ajaz Anwar

(b. 1948)



Dr. Ajaz Anwar (b. 1948)

- ▶ A son of a cartoonist, Dr. Ajaz Anwar (b. 1948) developed his interest in art after looking at his father's socio-political, economic and political cartoons. To study Fine Arts, he joined Government College, Lahore and then got admission in the Department of Fine Arts, University of the Punjab. In 1967, he was awarded with Master's Degree with a Gold Medal and afterwards for a short span he taught at his alma mater. Then he went to Turkey for pursuing Doctorate Degree in Islamic Art and Architecture. His focus remained on Lahore with title of his dissertation "Domes of Lahore".
- ▶ In 1977, he was awarded a UNESCO scholarship for doing a course in conservation of historical monuments. In 1980, he started his teaching career as Assistant Professor, Department of Academics, National College of Arts.
- ▶ In the paintings of Dr. Ajaz Anwar, one can see his splendid vision about the historic city of Lahore and its cultural activities, illustrated in bright but sober water colors. Particularly, our swiftly vanishing indigenous architectural heritage is highlighted in his paintings. All over Lahore, especially in the Walled City and close to its vicinity including Shahra-e-Quaid-e-Azam, old buildings were being demolished to make way for modern construction. The committed conservationists like Dr. Ajaz Anwar agitated against the commercialization of historic buildings and succeeded in saving some of them. The old building of Tollinton Market was one such example.

Dr. Ajaz Anwar (b. 1948)

- ▶ Through his cityscapes, he advocated the significance of these buildings and also portrayed the cultural life of Lahore. His contributions in this genre are message-oriented, thought-provoking and aesthetically rich. Retired as Associate Professor from National College of Arts, he sustained his love of painting the old city of Lahore.
- ▶ He used water color as a medium of representing his subject on the surface of paper. His command on water color shows the influence of his father who used the medium of water color for making cartoons. His compositions of the cityscapes revolves around the busy life of Lahore and its people. In the words of Dr. Ajaz Anwar: *“A city is not merely a group of buildings. It has people, greenery, sunlight, weather, and a cultural life of its own. Some painters emphasize on one or more factors out of the above, whereas my focus remains on the fast disappearing historical buildings of Lahore. Especially, as these buildings were designed by very meticulous craftsmen who took care to apply proportions and to finish them in a very refined decorative manner. Incidentally, the mellow color scheme of these buildings also imparts to them a rich, harmonizing and fascinating blend. A painting primarily has to be designed in terms of subject matter, composition, color and execution. I love to paint in the watercolor medium because it suits the subject matter of my cityscape paintings. My subject matter also requires me to lay emphasis on decorative details. Therefore, some areas in my paintings have to be highlighted and finished in detail, whereas other areas have only secondary importance. My color schemes may appear to be realistic but they are strongly influenced by shaded and highlighted areas.*

Dr. Ajaz Anwar (b. 1948)

- ▶ He believes that a piece of art should be original, it should be one of its kind, if not, the only one. His message-oriented large scale watercolor paintings are well- conceived, well-designed that is why they succeeded in attracting the viewers at large. On the bases on his mastery in both his subject and technique he is solely appreciated as a water colorist of high esteem and his work is well-received by the viewers.
- ▶ The red and yellow-colored buildings, a clear blue sky dotted with multi-colored kites and the young, children on rooftops, was a common sight in his paintings. The celebration of the kite flying festival called Basant, reminded of a cheerful past of the city when the eve of spring was celebrated with full fervor. The depiction of the legendary architecture of Lahore, in the paintings of Ajaz, is a brilliant reminder of the diminishing city culture as most of the old buildings of Lahore have now disappeared or their fascia's have been badly damaged.
- ▶ The characters in the paintings such as a Tonga rider, women walking in the bazaar, children playing, milkman, old people talking, and sellers of all kinds represent the daily life in Lahore.
- ▶ He also received Pride of Performance from the Government of Pakistan for his valued contributions in the field.

Temple of Murli Dhar, Anarkali Lahore



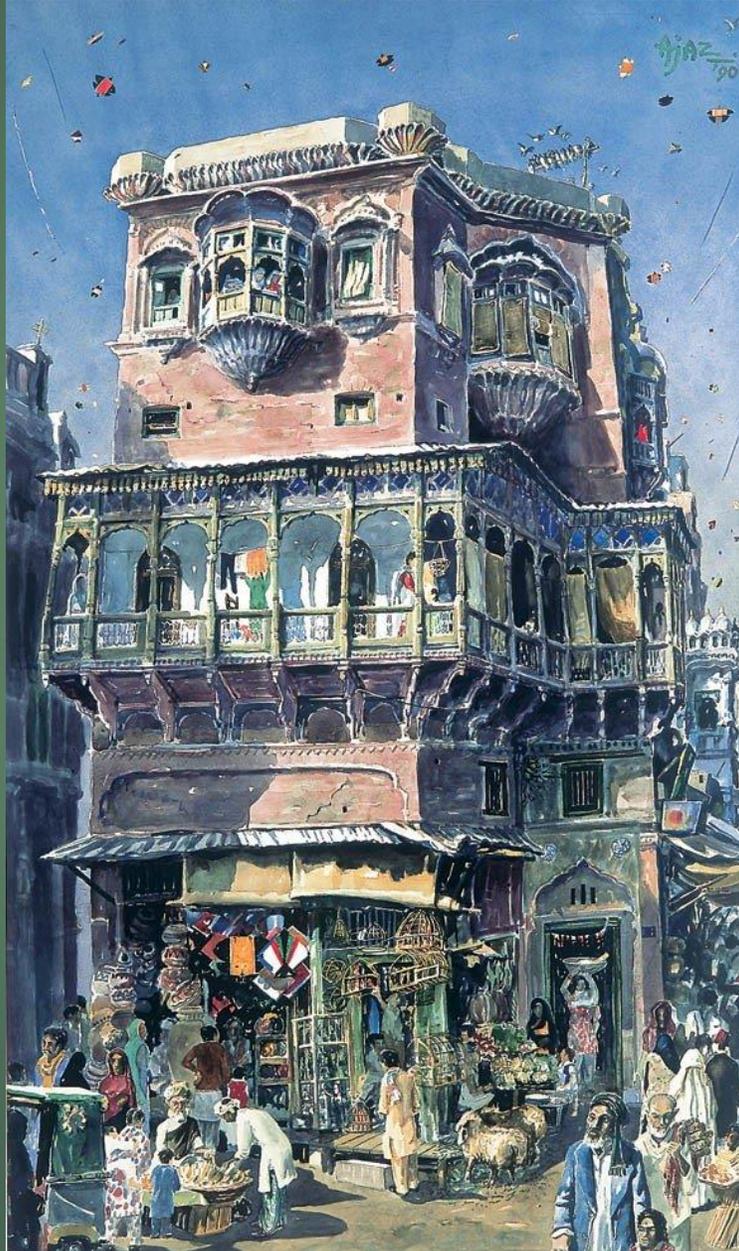
Lohari Gate, Lahore



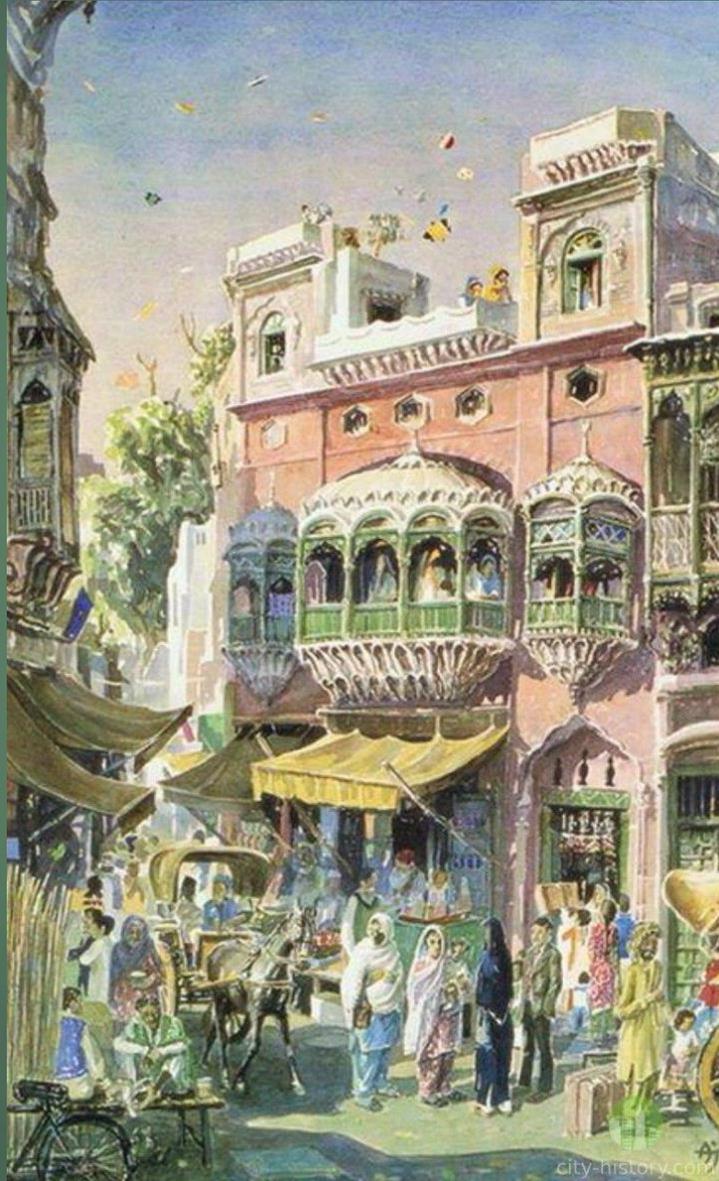
Lahore Museum, Lahore



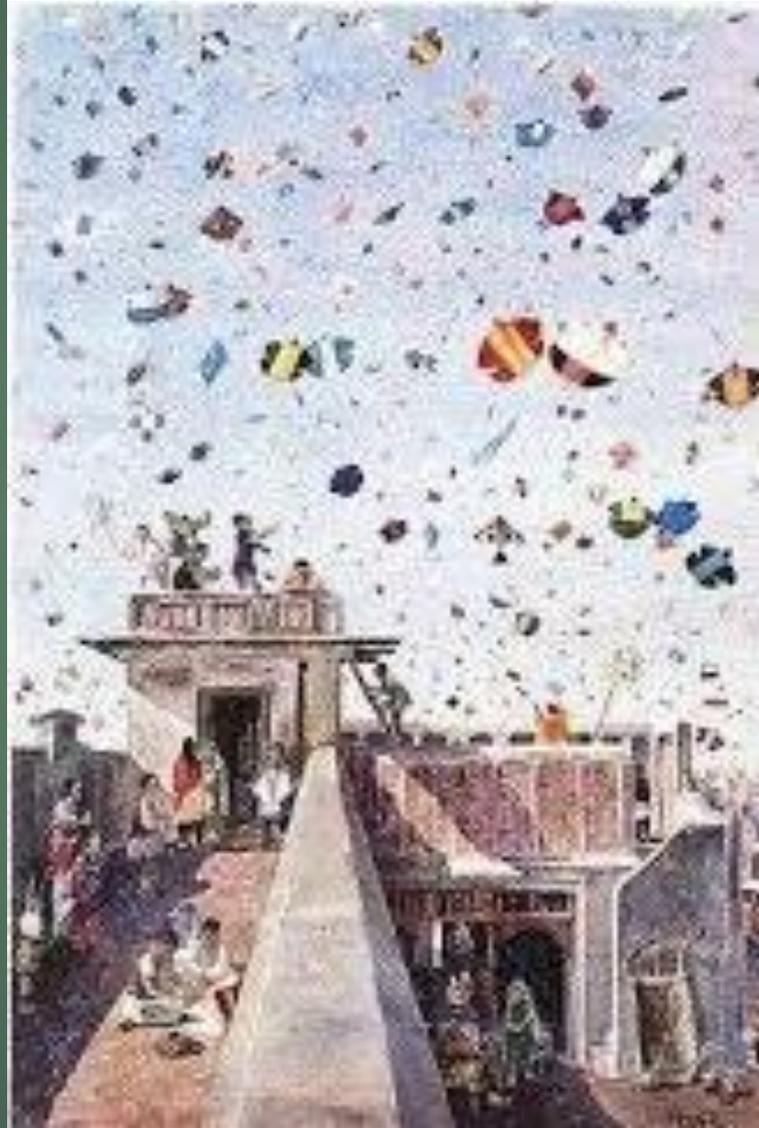
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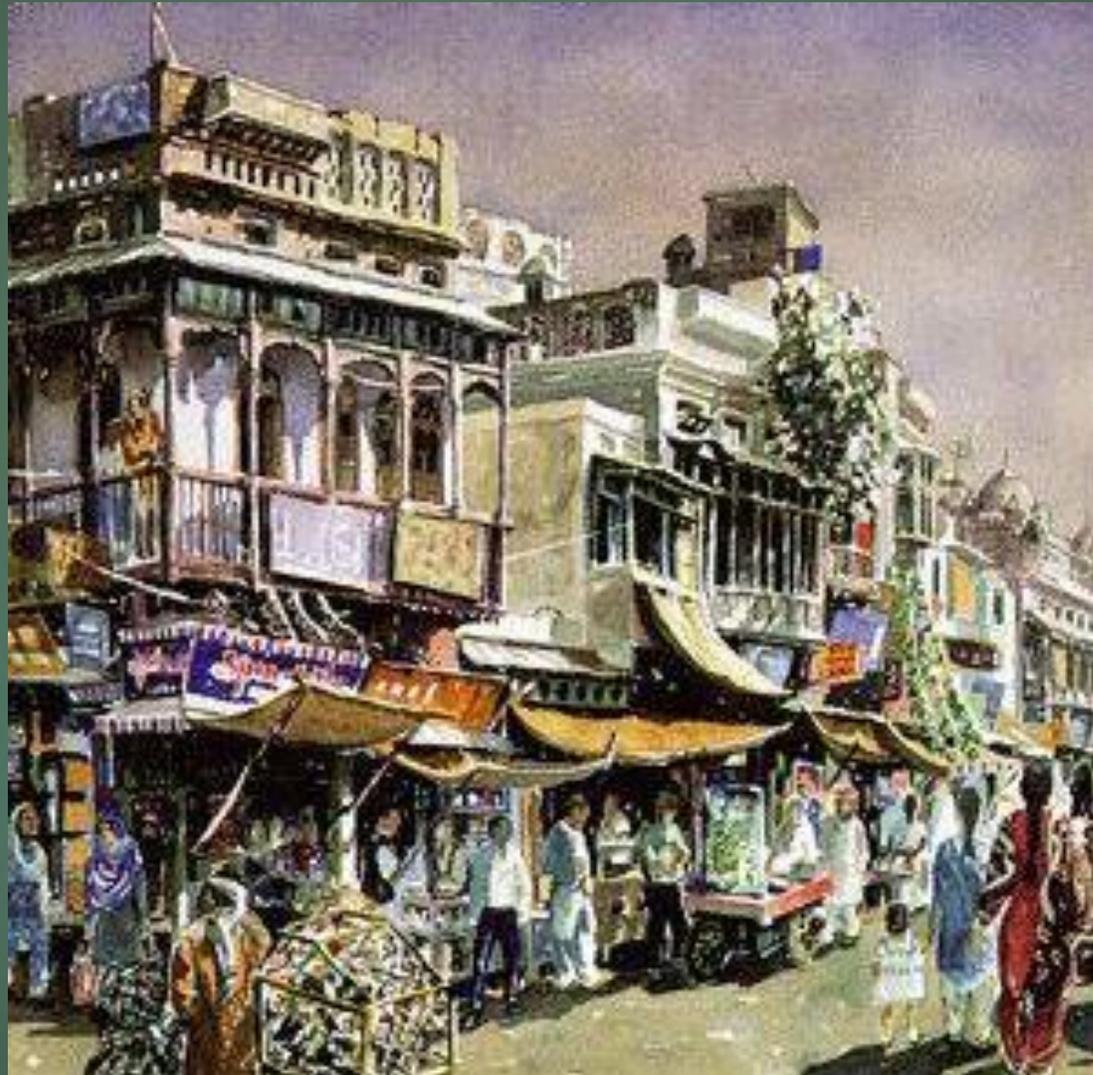
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Ghulam Rasul

(1945-2009)



Ghulam Rasul (1945-2009)

- ▶ A recipient of the President's Award for Pride of Performance in 1986, Ghulam Rasul did his graduation in Fine Arts from the Department of Fine Arts, University of the Punjab in 1964, post graduation in printmaking in 1970, M.F.A from Northern Illinois University, Dekalb, US. A teacher of art and history in the US and Lahore for several years, he retired as the Director General of PNCA in 2001.
- ▶ Marcella Nesom Sirhandi, wrote in her book, *Contemporary Painting In Pakistan* that Ghulam Rasul is a landscape artist of the Punjab School. “*Gulam Rasul's landscapes firmly rooted in the Punjab landscape school, add dimension of human habitation in nature. In the early eighties, Ghulam Rasool's landscapes changed from the flat, design oriented abstractions of neatly divided glowing in the Punjabi sunlight to more detailed realistic visions of the local landscape. His Panorama of Buffalos is very much part of the Punjab landscape tradition and a reminder of his realistic student day landscape under the tutelage of Khalid Iqbal at Punjab University.*” (*Khalid Iqbal , the great landscape painter is considered the founder of this school*). She said: “*here again is evidence of a recurring concern for veracity in imagery and color*”. *Ghulam Rasool moved from Lahore to Islamabad in 1974. Perhaps it was here that I saw his paintings first. Dr. Sarhindi says ' Ghulam's paintings have responded to the particular moods and atmospheres that distinguish these cities.*

Ghulam Rasul (1945-2009)

- ▶ He was at the Atelier 17 in Paris in 1984 for an year , after which he returned to Islamabad. ‘His style grew more expressive, and he became interested in relationship between man and nature. He began to concentrate more on intimate village scenes, particularly at Saidpur near Islamabad. (Saidpur is a picturesque ancient village in the foothills of Margalla). His paintings later developed more individuality, with freer interpretation of nature and human depiction in scenes of villages.
- ▶ Primarily a landscape painter, Ghulam Rasul is known for his impressionistic artwork that gave message of life. He travelled around the world to observe nature and landscape to make them part of his paintings. He was immensely inspired by the autumn. During one of his creative sessions, he is remembered to have said: *“The leaves and cloudy evenings sing mellow songs of fading life to him; the grief and sorrows of nature are more lasting than the happy moments it shares with us.”* He successfully translated the moaning of departing life mostly in bright pallet, to add a color of hope. He used a rich palette that brought a pictorial richness to his canvases. A vibrant painter who painted of his land and people, he always took his inspirations from a direct observation of nature, using rich palette that brought a pictorial richness to his canvas. The most celebrated landscape Maestros of Pakistan, Ghulam Rasul is remembered for his impressionistic artwork that gave message of life and living. According to him, *“art is where wonderful becomes imaginable”*.

Ghulam Rasul (1945-2009)

- ▶ Be it a rustic scene, or an urban setting with multicolored kites interspersed in the sky, or raindrops blurring the horizon, or cattle out in the open fields, Ghulam Rasul always rendered on his canvas such images with amazing dexterity. Popularly known as GR amongst his friends and fans, with the enthusiasm and exuberance of a youth, he chased the landscape of Pakistan from one corner to the other in his quest to paint his land and people. With an illustrative and lucid depiction, the austere beauty of both the rural and urban landscape with its entire natural and nomadic heritage became vibrantly alive and thriving on his canvas. The mustard fields, rain, haystacks, flying leaves, dust storm and harvesting were the main subjects of his creative pursuits, besides new shades of kasha trees and leafless trees that are core identity of his paintings.
- ▶ Remembered as the 'nature man' of green and yellow fields, and of buffaloes shown as distant dark smudges, and men and women seen in red and white clothes, breaking the green and grey of the plains, he also ventured into the deep mountainous region of Pakistan in his creative quest in a life devoted to art. Ghulam Rasul in his creative quest travelled through his land, from the green fields of Punjab, the deserts of Sindh, the enigmatic coastline of Balochistan, to the mountains and valleys of northern Pakistan, capturing the breathtaking sights and sounds of people in their real colors. From the Glacier to the proud snow laden high peaks of the north, he captured the eternal beauty on his canvas with all the historic and cultural background of the people of the region.

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Ghulam Mustafa

(b. 1952)



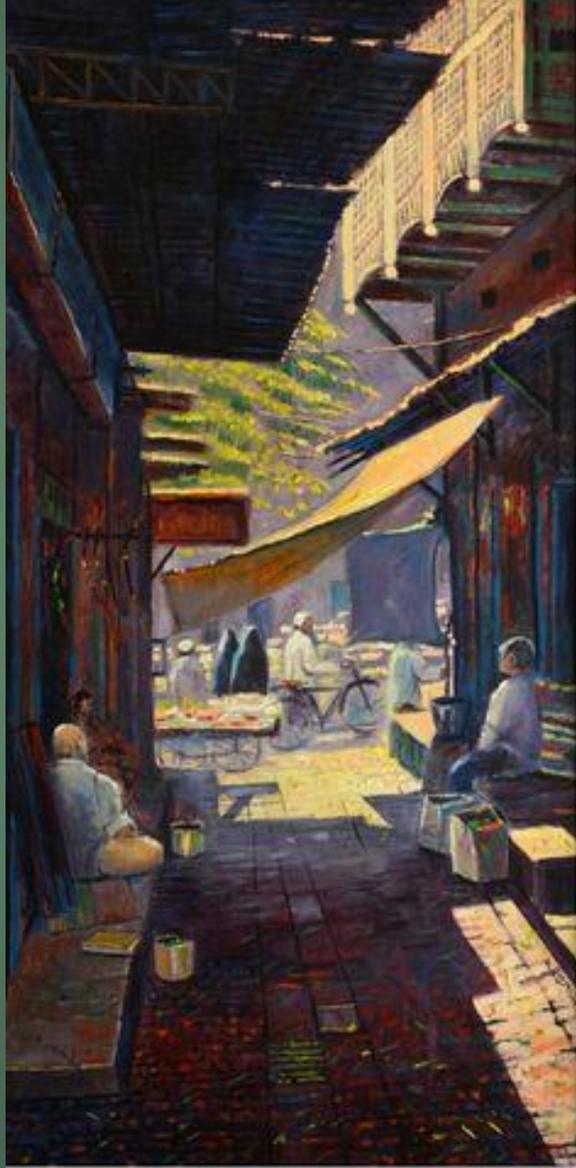
Ghulam Mustafa (b. 1952)

- ▶ A student of Khalid Iqbal from National College of Art, Ghulam Mustafa continued to follow in the footsteps of his teacher and to immortalize the beauty of diverse regions of the country.
- ▶ In the words of Marcella Nesom Sarhandi: *“In his practice he focuses on realistically depicting the inner beauties of nature”*
- ▶ A recipient of Pride of Performance, he belongs to the ‘*plein air*’ school – a French term meaning ‘open air’, particularly applied to painting outdoors, also referred to as ‘*peinture sur le motif*,’ and describing ‘what the eye actually sees at the time of painting’.
- ▶ Cityscapes remains his favorable genre of representation. Besides his skillful work with cityscapes, he has taken inspiration from nature, and one finds in his landscapes wonder and undeniable magnificence in his unspoiled views of majestic mountains, changing skies and rich colors.
- ▶ The well known painter, teacher, art critic and writer Mian Ijaz-ul-Hassan shared his views by saying: *“In the present works there is greater reliance on tone rather than on livid conflict of light and color... The heavy textures are replaced by smooth surfaces glazed by soft tints of light that help Mustafa to establish a greater illusion of space. The eye can now with less strain retreat to the distant hills, recede along formations of trees or (concerning cityscapes), peer at monuments through wooden balconies... (These things) seem to point towards a new direction being pondered over by him.”*

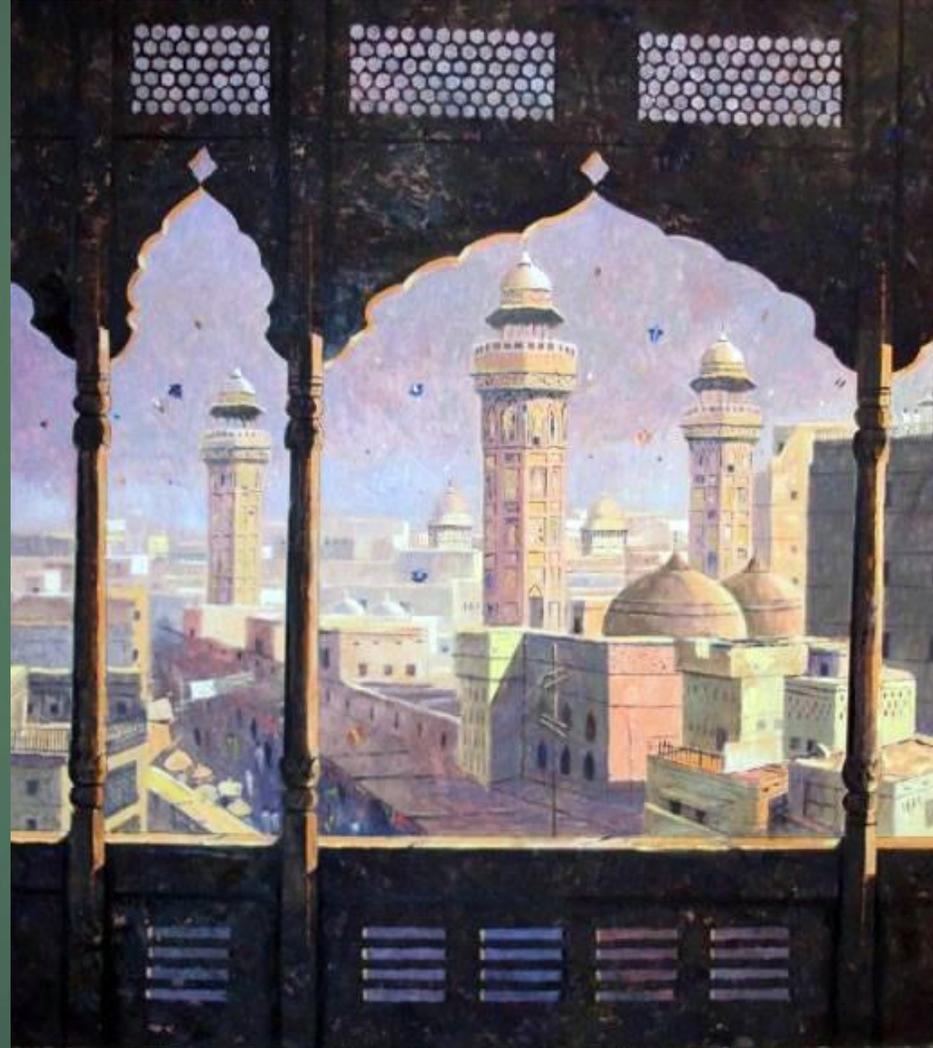
Ghulam Mustafa (b. 1952)

- ▶ Also rather less formal are Ghulam's numerous bazaar pictures, some of them showing dark alleys with their usual fascinating aspects: with shops and merchandise well displayed, whilst kites add their decorative touch and birds fly about far above, near where the sun gives its light to the upper storey's of buildings close to the ends of the alleys, and human figures may be seen indistinctly. An attractive, colorful bazaar fascinates us with its more generous allowance of light. Elsewhere we are fascinated by multicolored, beautiful architectural details, such as lattice-work and arches, with customers wandering around down below in the sunlight. Ghulam, as a faithful '*plein air*' adherent, has certainly painted "what the eye sees," though these and other such paintings seem to belong to the days before kites and their accoutrements were banned.
- ▶ Amongst his village pictures, some showing signs of human habitation, some without, the artist has presented a number of Punjabi villages where mustard flowers – with their impressive history – dominate the scene. As the eye follows the neat arrangement of a certain piece, one is treated firstly to the sight of closely planted single blooms, whilst across the road is a regular, lucrative forest of yellow-flowering plants, terminated by a row of slender trees. Mustafa is greatly attracted by the color combination of mustard and lilac, and this we see in several of his mustard-producing villages – one in particular a collection of square mud huts, with such homely features as a line of clothes hung out to dry. Here and there are judiciously placed trees, including a line of stoutly formed trees in the background, beneath a lilac sky, whose color deepens as the eye rises.

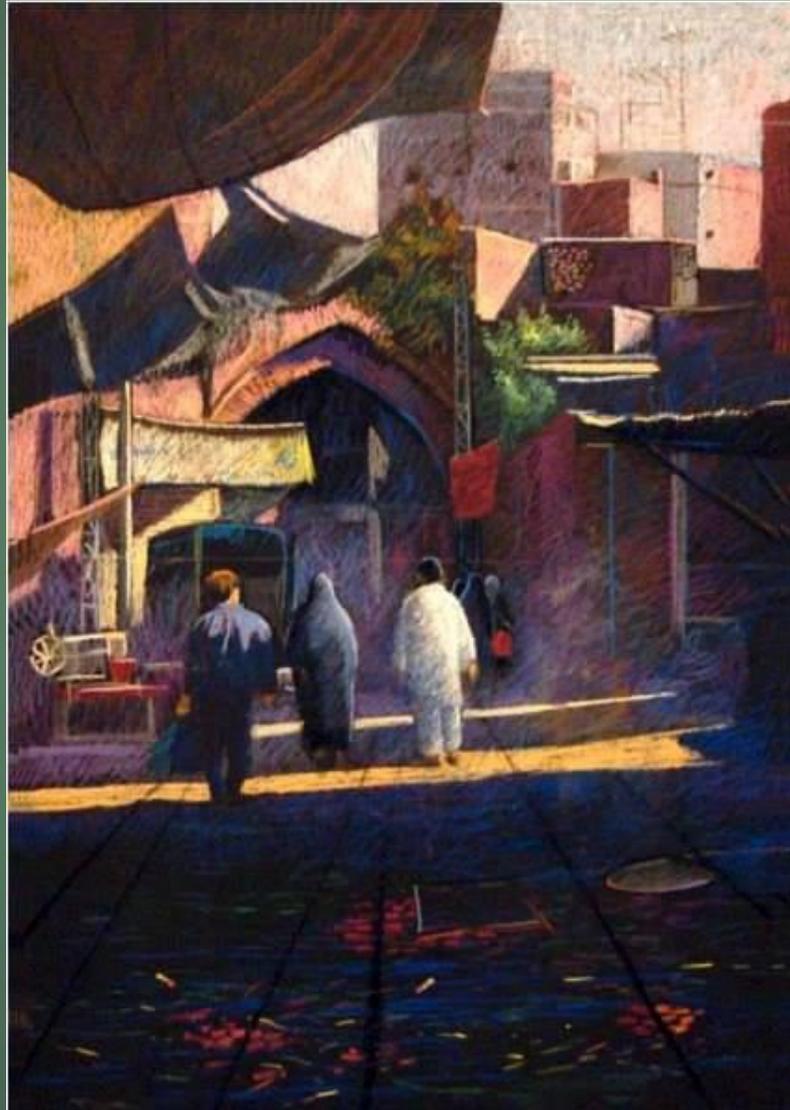
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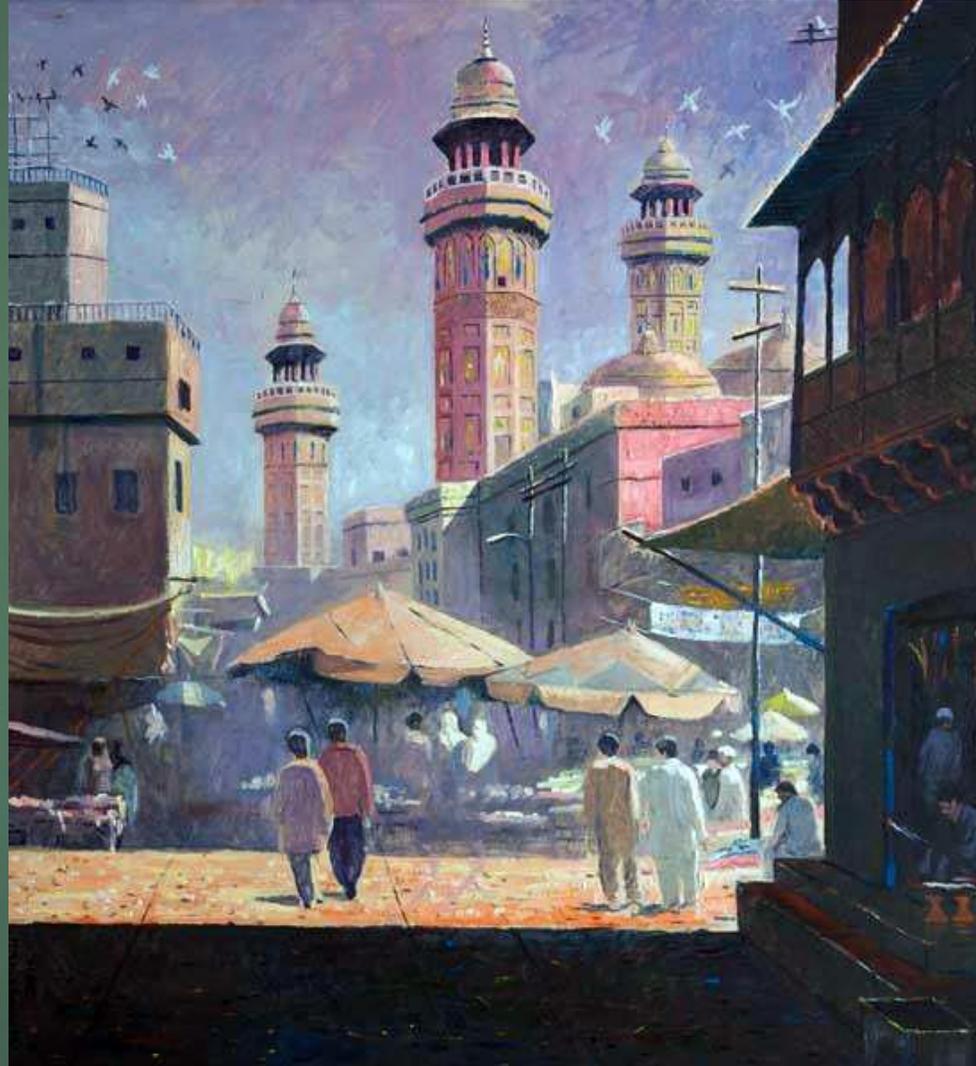
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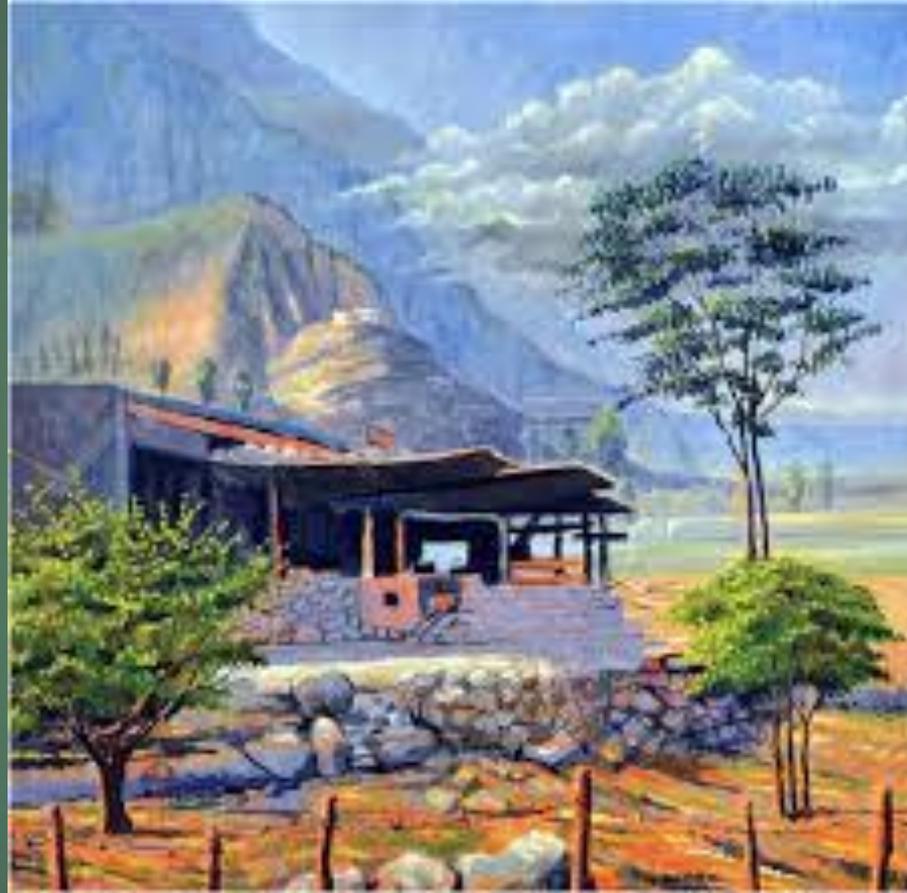
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Wazir Khan Mosque



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