

Art-the Last Asylum

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The history of last two decades is very important in order to understand the conflicted mindset of current generation and situation of art in Pakistan. It is unfortunate that the commentary on the art and artists' creations is insufficient. In this article, I have made an effort to view the work of some artists from the artistic, the socioeconomic and the political milieu. An understanding of political situation in the late 20th century in Pakistan is necessary to appreciate the motivation of the artists. The fact is the present society reveals a state of socio economic and political chaos. Obviously, the artists, often highly sensitive individuals cannot remain alienated from this social condition. It seems, one way or the other, the prevailing depression has affected the collective psyche of the current generation of Pakistani artists. From the last fifteen years or so, these youthful artists have remained true to themselves and to the reality of the society in which they exist. With art in these dire straits, particularly in the present economic depression, it is a miracle of sorts that even a handful of impoverished artists have faithfully adhered to the genuine nature of their work and commitments. A salute goes out to these honorable and honest individuals of intelligence and intuition. They truly bring light to life in all its panoramic beauty and horror. It is they who accurately record the details of the universe of influence they inhabit on the canvas of their soul.

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“To do good work one must eat well, be well housed, have one’s fling time to time, smoke
one’s pipe, and drink one’s coffee in peace” (Vincent Van Gogh)