

Panorama of Heritage
A. Q. Arif

ARTCITI
Invites you to an exclusive exhibition
of paintings by

A. Q. ARIF

31st Jan - 3rd Feb 2019

Exhibition Opening
31st Jan 2019
6pm - 8pm

Visit our gallery or view the virtual exhibition at
www.artciti.com



2nd Floor, Plot # 36-C, Bukhari Commercial Lane-13, Khayaban-e-Shujaat, Phase-VI, DHA, Karachi.
Ph: +9221-35250495-96 Whatsapp: +923362700975

PANORAMA OF HERITAGE

To an observer, the ancient structures floating in oceans of diaphanous mist, appear to emerge majestically from the incorporeal depths of dreamy objects. Casting an inescapable magnetic spell, these are the artworks of A Q Arif, who paints with a maven's insight and proficiency of a pundit. As much as a brief glimpse of these canvasses instantly reveals the artist's identity owing to the deep-rooted signature style that the artist has honed over decades of ceaseless application.

Arif's choice of subject stems from his childhood experiences with traditional architecture and lush landscapes of Sindh and Punjab. Genesis of his art career began with water color sketches and elaborate oil landscapes in the said provinces, which eventually culminated in distinct buildings of historical nature. In an environment of rich traditional architecture of holy places, tombs, shrines, shanty towns and hovels, Arif continued to document architectural heritage to preserve history before its inevitable urbanization. These inspirations were later augmented with landmarks and structures that he witnessed during sojourns abroad, particularly the Middle East and Europe. Meaningfully influenced by the intricate motifs and structures of Muslim art and architecture, Arif continued to expressively portray their divine spirit through his visual vocabulary of form and color. Coupled with devotional empathy and conviction to create exceptional compositions, the artist has conducted numerous experiments in various mediums to unleash the hidden splendor of regional and international architecture, regardless of their triviality or magnificence.

In the current wave of paintings, Arif has added yet another remarkable dimension to his composition by portraying traditional customs and lifestyle of the subcontinent both in the olden days and the present times. The inclusion of life forms although remains fairly inconspicuous, however, the overall impact of the paintings has become more meaningful and informative. The logical association of elephants, horses and men with forts and strongholds represents the solemn awareness of security to preserve authority, freedom and sovereignty during the Mughal period (1526-1857). The artist's depiction of fierce confrontation of horses and elephants in a war-strewn environment is extraordinary in its movement, aggressiveness and archival significance.

Looking retrospectively back in history, it was in the 16th century that architectural painting developed as an independent genre in Northern Belgium and the Netherlands, and reached its peak in 16th and 17th century Dutch painting. Soon to follow was the era of Romantic paintings where this genre was used as a tool and scenes of old ruins and famous landmarks began to appear in paintings. It was in the late 19th century when painter Edwin Lord Weeks from Boston, USA, travelled through Egypt, Persia and Morocco and painted numerous marvels of Muslim architecture. Arif's work is perhaps a continuity of similar imagery that is replete with vivid imagination that goes beyond fantasy!

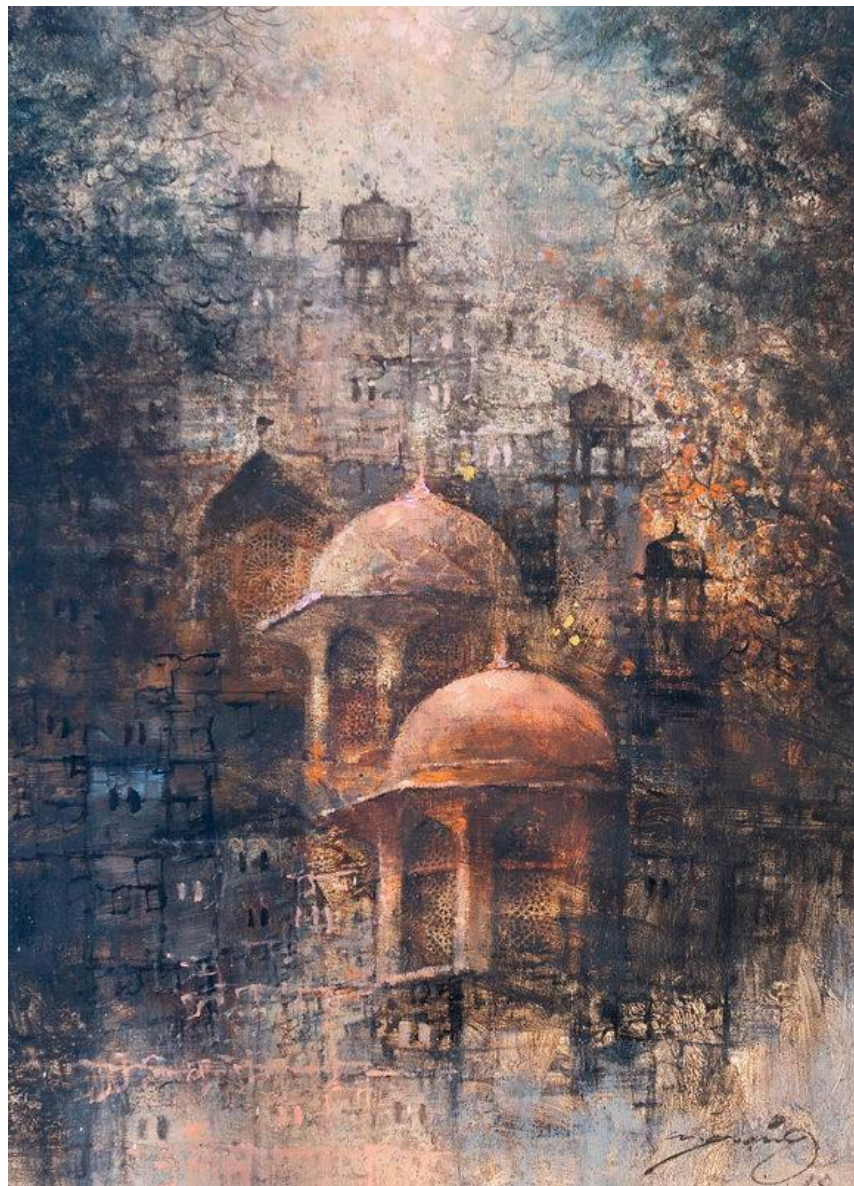
Having studied the art of miniature painting, Arif also imbibed its unique architectural geometry, perspective and its illumination. As a consequence, he improvised a distinct method of arranging and embellishing his own compositions in an unconventional manner. Henceforth, from the cerebral depths of his mind, Arif envisions a surreal fantasy when recalling the crucial segments of his painting. The dexterously painted assemblage of domes, minarets, flora and fauna appears to be suspended in time and space continuum. To the audience the canvas emulates a dynamic scenario that manifests subtle metamorphosis of the elements in proximity. Over and above the spontaneous fragmentation of textural spaces, the painting's massive impact is driven by the vibrant hues imbued by the artist. The rich spreads of lapis-lazuli blues punctuated by dabs of warm orange tones, layered with reflections within reflections, the works of Arif continue to challenge the viewers with their infinite prospects and diversity of concept.

While symbolism is inherent in Arif's work, ornamentation plays a dominant role in the overall characteristic of this rare genre. In contrast to the bold architectural forms, the artist's handling of the intricate embellishment on these structures with sensitive patterning and inscriptions is a source of awe and excitement for the audience. The interwoven Arabic script with undulating arabesque patterns, skillfully faded to emulate eroded aging crust, gives an aesthetic impetus to the compositions. The judicious deployment of nature, vegetation, streams and ponds under the graceful antiquated structures further enhances the paintings' characteristics.

The singular and exclusive nature of Arif's work is unique by way of his unchained principles of expression, which are bold, yet highly sensitive. Brazenly innovative, yet remarkably logical, it fearlessly navigates uncharted territory, yet arrives successfully at its destination!

Arif graduated from the Karachi School of Art in 1996 and conducted art workshops in different institutions. With numerous solo exhibitions to his credit in Pakistan and abroad, his work has been acclaimed internationally. Some remarkable highlights of his art career include the Trevisan International Best Artist Award amongst 75 countries (Italy 2014), and selection in a group of artists chosen to represent Pakistan at an exhibition held at Asia House, (London 2016).

M Saeed Kureshi
Sitara-e-Imtiaz
Art Critic



Golden Minarets
18 x 24 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-213, Rs. 80,000 (\$575.54)



Eternal Serenity
18 x 24 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-214, Rs. 80,000 (\$575.54)



Endless Horizon
22 x 28 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-216, Rs. 95,000 (\$683.45)



Blue Tomb
22 x 28 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-218, Rs. 95,000 (\$683.45)



Mirage over the Trees
22 x 28 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-219, Rs. 95,000 (\$683.45)



Reflections of the Past II
22 x 28 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-220, Rs. 95,000 (\$683.45)



The Final Battle
24 x 47 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-222, Rs. 190,000 (\$1366.91)



Amber Sunset of the East
24 x 42 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-223, Rs. 175,000 (\$1258.99)



River Merchants of Bhambore
24 x 42 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-224, Rs. 175,000 (\$1258.99)



Walkway of Nirvana
24 x 42 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-225, Rs. 175,000 (\$1258.99)



Doused in Blue
24 x 42 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-226, Rs. 175,000 (\$1258.99)



Mirage over the River
24 x 42 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-228, Rs. 175,000 (\$1258.99)



Reflections of the Past
24 x 42 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-229, Rs. 175,000 (\$1258.99)



Dawn in Blue
24 x 60 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-230, Rs. 250,000 (\$1798.56)



Spiritual Era
24 x 60 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-202, Rs. 250,000 (\$1798.56)



Rising above the Ordinary
24 x 60 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-231, Rs. 250,000 (\$1798.56)



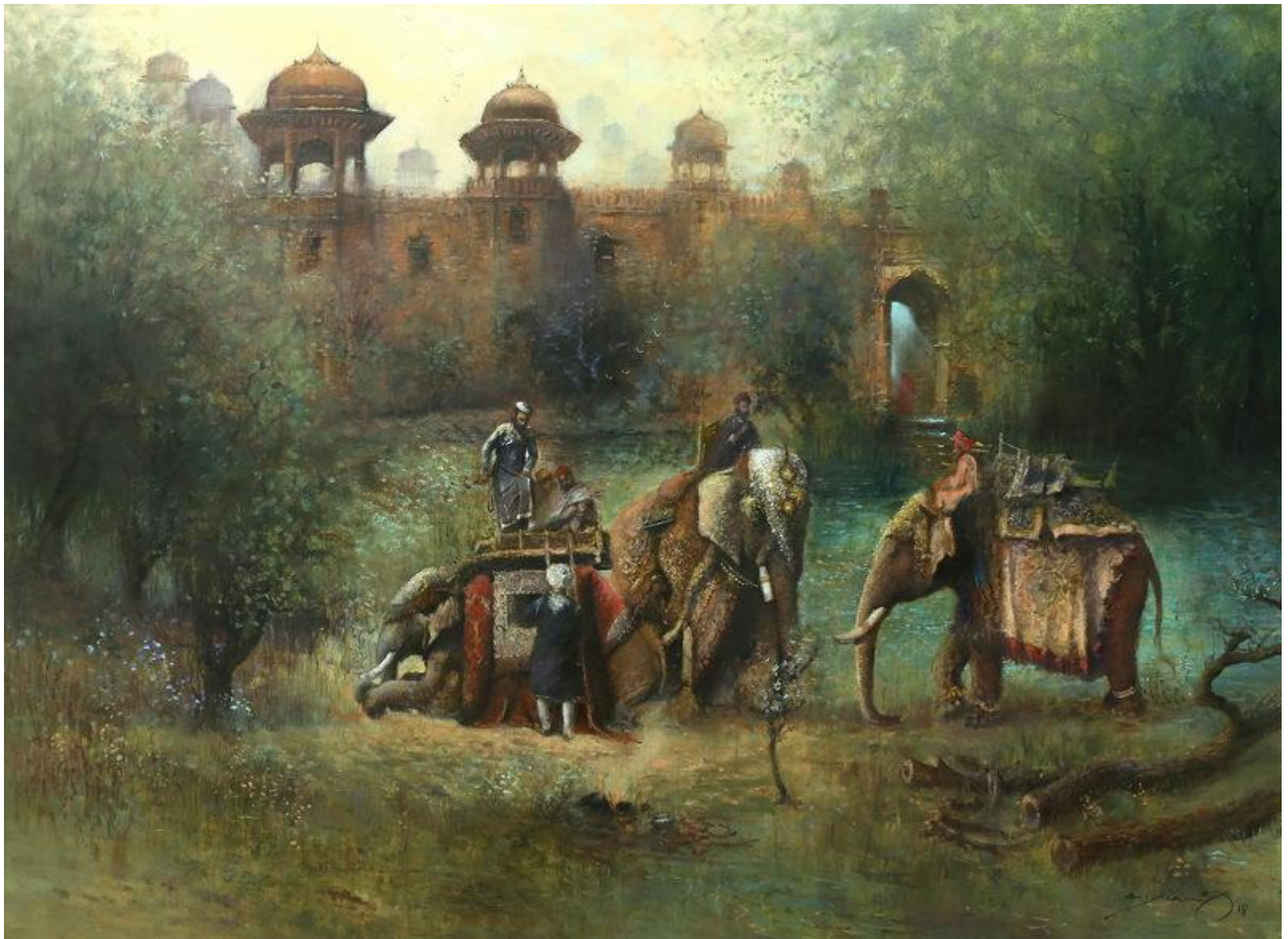
The Royal Livestock
30 x 36 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-232, Rs. 190,000 (\$1366.91)



Golden Mirage on Blue
36 x 48 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-233, Rs. 250,000 (\$1798.91)



Arches of Grandeur
36 x 48 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-234, Rs. 250,000 (\$1798.91)



Respite under the minarets
36 x 48 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-235, Rs. 290,000 (\$2086.33)



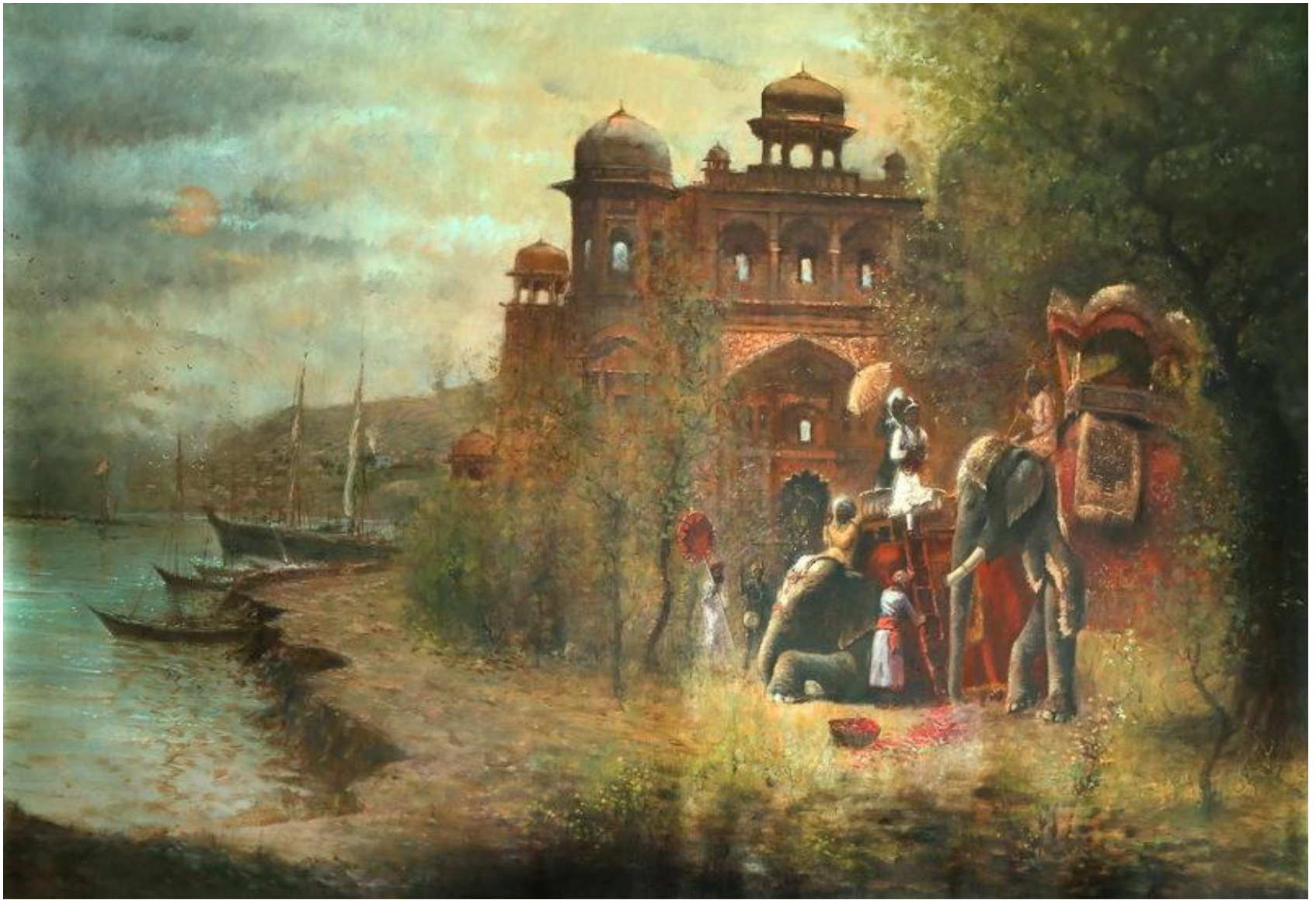
The Hunter's Caravan
36 x 48 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-236, Rs. 290,000 (\$2086.33)



Distant Fortress
40 x 60 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-239, Rs. 350,000 (\$2517.99)



After a Day's Work
40 x 60 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-238, Rs. 400,000 (\$2877.70)



Troopers at the River Bank
40 x 60 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-240, Rs. 400,000 (\$2877.70)



The Resting Warriors
36 x 72 inches, Oil on Canvas, AC-AQ-241, Rs. 550,000 (\$3956.83)

My tribute to Edwin Lord Weeks

Since I have started painting architectural pieces with landscape, I wanted to add certain figures and elements in my paintings from that time period which I paint. This was around 2003 when the internet was not that widespread and it was very difficult to find references, but I still wanted to find out the essence of those eras. Most impressionist artists need inspiration for their work, I think impressionism is painting what inspires you and what affects you.

One day I was searching for something and an artist caught my eye, Edwin Lord Weeks (1849 – 1903) who was an American artist, noted for his Orientalist works. After looking at his beautiful work I realized that there are some artists who are not known by many, even though they are very talented and so I thought to myself, why don't I give tribute to his work and merge the essence of his work with mine. There is no doubt that he is a great inspiration to me, of course I cannot do work like his, but I have tried to encapsulate the essence of his work and merge it with mine, in some of the paintings in this exhibition.

I want to salute Mr. Weeks over how he did such amazing work and captured that era so beautifully and from the era when there was only black and white photography. His colors have transcended time and his work carries on.

This is a little effort by me to capture and show the world what continues to inspire me and the era that I can never forget.

A. Q. Arif (Artist)





A. Q. ARIF

Born 1975 in Karachi, Pakistan. Lives and works in Karachi, Pakistan

EDUCATION:

1996 Four-year professional Diploma in the fields of Fine Arts,
from Karachi School of Arts.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES:

2002-2008 Faculty member, Asian Institute of Fashion Design, Karachi,
Pakistan. Indus Valley School of Art & Architecture.

WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED:

2003-2011 Textile Institute of Pakistan.

2004-2010 Karachi School of Arts, Pakistan.

2011-2017 Indus Valley School of Art & Architecture.

SOLO SHOWS:

2019 ARTCITI Gallery, Karachi.

2017 ARTCITI Gallery, Karachi.

2016 ARTCITI Gallery, Karachi.

2015 Nomad Art Gallery, Islamabad.

2014 Chawkandi Art Gallery Karachi.

2013 Collectors Gallery Lahore.

2012 Tanzara Art Gallery, Islamabad.

2011 Tanzara Art Gallery, Islamabad.

2010 Art Scene Gallery Karachi.

2009 Art Scene Gallery, Karachi.

2008 Art Attack , Dubai.

2007 Native Art Gallery, Lahore.

2007 Nomad Art Gallery, Islamabad.

2007 Clifton Art Gallery, Karachi.

2006 Croweaters Art Gallery, Lahore.

2006 Ejaz Art Gallery, Lahore.

2005 Nomad Art Gallery, Karachi.

2004 Clifton Art Gallery, Karachi.

2003 Chawkandi Art Gallery, Karachi.

2002 Zainani Art Gallery, Karachi.

1998 Sheraton Hotel, Karachi.

GROUP SHOWS:

- 2016 Two men Watercolor Show, Ocean Art Gallery Karachi.
- 2014 Two men Show, ARTCITI Gallery Karachi.
- 2012 Hyderabad Dakkin, India.
- 2012 ICAC Gallery, Bombay, India.
- 2012 Two men Show, Ejaz Art Gallery, Lahore.
- 2012 Group Show, Jeddah.
- 2012 Group Show, Italy.
- 2012 Two men Show Ocean Art Gallery, Lahore.
- 2011 Participate in Group show Art Space, Florence, Italy.
- 2011 Artistic Fusion from Pakistan, Singapore.
- 2011 New York, Expo.
- 2011 IVS for Usman Ghauri, Karachi.
- 2010 The DUST exhibition New York, ICO Gallery USA.
- 2010 Masqat Group Show by Ejaz Art Gallery.
- 2008 Selected by Pacific Asia Museum for Himalayan Festival, California, U.S.A.
- 2008 Pakistan & Bangladesh Artist, Delhi, India.
- 2008 Moods of Art, Organized by Native Art Gallery, Pakistan and Art attack Gallery Dubai, U.A.E.
- 2007 South Asian / American Art Festival, Gallery Arrena 1, The Santa Monica Art studios, California, U.S.A., Organized by Zambeel Art Gallery.
- 2007 Indus Strokes, Organized by Ishi Jami and Retu Jain in association with Taj Mahal Palace and towers, Mumbai, India.
- 2007 Gulmohar Art Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan.
- 2007 Throw Winds, Organized by Ishi Jami and Retu Jain, London.
- 2006 15 Senior Artist, Clifton Art Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan.
- 2006 20 Pakistani Artist Show, Hong Kong.
- 2006 Transcending Borders, Organized by Ejaz Art Gallery, Lahore.

- 2006 ITC Maurya Sheraton by Ishi Jami, Delhi, India.
- 2006 Auction for Earthquake Victims by Ejaz Art Gallery, Lahore, Pakistan.
- 2006 Auction for Earthquake Victims by Hunerkada, Islamabad, Pakistan.
- 2006 Group Show at Louvre Art Gallery, Karachi.
- 2006 Work for Siratt Arts, London, United Kingdom.
- 2005 25 Senior Artists at Clifton Art Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan.
- 2004 8th National Exhibition, Lahore, Pakistan.
- 2001 Zainani Art Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan.
- 2000 Millennium Show at Ejaz Art Gallery, Lahore, Pakistan.
- 1999 Co-opera Art Gallery, Lahore, Pakistan.
- 1999 V.M. Art Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan.
- 1999 Urban Voice Show, Sheraton Hotel, Karachi, Pakistan.
- 1994 7th National Exhibition, Lahore, Pakistan.
- 1993 Water Color Exhibition, Arts Council, Karachi, Pakistan.

PRIVATE SHOWS:

- 2002 Two Private Shows, Boston U.S.A



Plot # 36-C, 2nd Floor, Bukhari Commercial Lane-13,
Main Khayaban-e-Shujaat, Phase VI, DHA, Karachi. 021-35250495-6

www.artciti.com