

Words Without Voices; Forms Without Bodies

The impetus for my current body of work comes from the ambivalence of my dual nationalities, Pakistani and American, and with the countries growing tension and mistrust for each other. This duality has allowed me to see the two worlds from multiple perspectives. These ideas are based on my personal observations and living in worlds that have become very paranoid and distrusting of others.

By creating ethereal female forms, veiled or unveiled, in a variety of media, I deal with the issues within Western conceptions about the veil. Observing that the Western news media has a rather simplistic perspective of the veil, I try to demonstrate the many layers and mysteries attached to the veil, some of which are: mysterious, complex, provocative, delicate, and sensuous. At times, I incorporate poetic verses in Urdu, my native language, written by classical Pakistani and Urdu speaking poets, such as, Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Mirza Ghalib. I have chosen these poems because they represent very stimulating and powerful ideals, intended to bring change to a society and quest for life. The dense cluster formation of the text is to express their poetic power with an explosion of visual energy. The text, whether deciphered in their literal meaning or seen as a flowing pattern combined with the ethereal figures, creates a mystical environment in which an intellectually dynamic dialogue can occur.