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Reem Khurshid: Long-time artist finally shows work

Reem Khurshid has an avid fan following online and has several cool feathers tucked into her artistic hat, including album art for local band, Mole

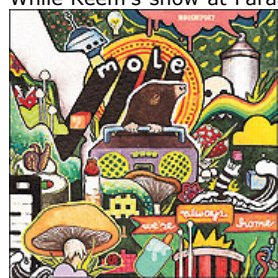
Amina Baig
Karachi

Reem Khurshid is very young and very talented. And she paints. That is probably all one needs to say about her - if one sees her work, the statement will make sense enough to stand on its own. But then that would be unfair to someone who has managed to show her work solo while still pursuing an education.

One has been acquainted with Reem's work for about five years now, having come up with her link on DeviantArt while searching for examples of drapery and the human figure. And just like that, one was sold onto the skill of someone much younger and not yet at art school. It takes not just great academic skill, but lots of patience and passion to actually sit down and make the kind of really intricate art that is Reem's strength - and that too in quick-drying mediums such as acrylic and water colour!



While Reem's show at Faraar, the T2F (The Second Floor) shows that she has gravitated towards taking on bigger surfaces to work on, sometimes more loosely than one would expect her too; one feels her strongest suit is still the smaller pieces she makes. Getting your hand to move across a surface, let's say about 12" x 12" is much, much harder than sweeping your arm across and even working tinier details out on a bigger canvas is perhaps not as tedious as hunching over a small canvas, working it over in brushes that more often than not cannot exceed size three. However, that is just personal opinion and in no way suggests Reem cannot take on the deceptively tough looking large canvas.



After all, Reem practically sold out within the first couple days of her show. And one is particularly a huge fan of a painting called Cinderblocks Tinderbox, one of the artist's larger canvases.

But once again, Reem's smaller pieces are a sight to behold. And one of the things that is particularly impressive about her body of work is that she already has two album covers under her belt.

Album art, as one will never tire of saying, is a very ignored aspect of any musical production in Pakistan. In recent years perhaps the only people who had bothered dealing with the minor issue of the album cover have been Ali Azmat on Social Circus and Klashinfolk, Aamir Zaki on Rough Cut and the Mekaal Hasan Band for Saptak. While Reem might not have worked with big names just as yet, one feels she probably will some day.



One of the covers she has done for are for the Mole (who aslo played at the opening as Reem painted to their music) album, We Are Always Home, while the other is for Dalt Wisney's Lifetime Psychedelic Dance Lessons. Mole is Danial Hyatt's endeavour, while Sheryar Hyatt is Dalt Wisney -not only these two talented musicians are brothers, they are also one of Pakistan's earliest pop icons, Rohail Hyatt's sons.



The album covers both are these elaborate, precisely drawn and inked/painted in designs that boggle the mind slightly. They are at the same time bright and dark, if that makes sense - and the Mole album art suits the music perfectly. When someone working out of her home can pull off this level of design for an album cover, one wonders why more established musicians, or those backed by record labels can't do the same.

Of course, to have apt album art, one has to commission someone with an ear for music as well, and with artists such as Reem Khurshid doing such brilliant work, one feels safe saying that our musical acts have a huge pool of artistic talent to draw from. Which basically translates into; there is no excuse to paste your face on a pink background anymore - hunt around and find someone to design to impress for your albums now - we have already pointed you towards one person up to the challenge!

-Photos by Nosheen Sabeeh

Reem's photos by Jamal Ashiqain

Mole play while Reem paints...

There is something instantly engaging about an artist's work when you can see or feel the process behind it. Fever Dreams by Reem Khurshid which opened last week at T2F's Faraar Gallery, displayed work vividly highlighting just that. As the crowd trickled in slowly and grew, each piece had a constant group of people gathered in front of it.



The opening was followed by an unusual gig - Reem live-painting on the canvas while the band Mole played their "phunkadelic, indietronic" music - their words, not mine - alongside. Here was an interesting change of sound for all of those who are sick of hearing mass-produced clones at every second gig.

Danial Hyatt, Amman Mushtaq and Faizan Riedinger started off with their electronic 'Big Bubble' and went on playing with a wide assortment of equipment, including a harmonium and a MacBook while Reem Khurshid continued painting, occasionally syncing her brushstrokes along to the music or breaking into a little jig. Vibrant colour and vibrant sound - the audience was undoubtedly as lost in the show as Reem seemed to be in her work. The result was a spontaneous piece, auctioned off at the end of the event, which for those forty five minutes kept everyone in the room permanently engrossed in the duo (it is a mesmerizing performance that keeps people standing for so long without complaining).



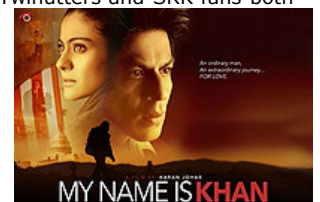
Part of the reason was watching the painting develop right there, from an initial drawing to the distinct dark, nostalgic hues that seem to run through most of her paintings, to the stunning completed piece (called Enduring Atlas) of a street-boy carrying a load on his back represented by a block of buildings. Witnessing the process behind her paintings and seeing the level of involvement she takes in them, was something that connected with the audience. In the meantime, Mole kept the crowd in constant applause and despite a few technical faults, pulled off innovative tracks for the evening. Both the artist and the band represent their own distinct, stylistic approaches, which a lot of upcoming artistes otherwise lack.

- Sadia Khatri

Lifetime Psychedelic Dance Lessons and We're Always Home can be downloaded off www.mooshymoo.com

My Name Is Khan gets 8 crore... minus Mumbai!

You would think this film had something to do with Team Edward vs Team Jacob! Okay, before Twinutters and SRK fans both decide to egg us, can we just say, well done, Team My Name Is Khan.



You have done riproaring business despite all odds and we bet that a certain gang of people we do not feel like naming at the moment is sitting at home crying. Although they'd probably tell anyone who'll listen they were practicing tai bo to be able to kick SRK's behind properly. Whatevs.

The fact remains that MNIK opened in India, excluding the Maharashtra-Mumbai area, with a tremendous Rs 8 crore. That is big bucks! In our heads we are picturing Amitabh praying to turn into Shah Rukh Khan, just for a couple of weeks.

The response by people on the first day is something that actually seems even more fantastic than the opening numbers.

Delhi, where SRK supporters had already held a protest against the Shiv Sena, celebrated the opening of the film with firecrackers and a band. You'd think SRK and Kajol were finally getting married!

Filmgoers in Patna were treated to roses by a man who gave one to everyone that had come in to watch MNIK. This is the kind of support and warmth we wish we could sometimes see in Pakistan for something apart from cricket. Maybe it would spur our film industry into doing great things.

Congratulations to the MNIK team - you might beat 3 Idiots yet!

Lindsay Lohan does it again

Lindsay Lohan either meticulously plans her each move, or is highly careless with her life. It seems ever since her career started, she has always been in the limelight, either for the excessive partying, stories about her personal relationships with her family, or her dramatic weight loss. There is always something or the other to keep us interested.



Only recently, she seized the attention yet again, by appearing on the cover of the French magazine, Purple. The cover has stirred some religious controversy, as her photograph is being perceived as a sign of disrespect to Christianity.

On the cover, Lohan poses with her hands outstretched, dressed in a white robe, and to tie the whole look together, she wears on her head a crown of thorns. Christian critics are deeply offended, as the pose and her getup are completely inappropriate. Also, it seems rather ironic that somebody like Lohan should be dressed in a manner similar to Jesus Christ.

Not only are the religious leaders offended, but others are also disagreeing with the cover simply because it depicts Lindsay Lohan to be somewhat heroic, whereas she has done nothing to deserve such respect or honour.

We can keep criticizing this as much as we'd like, but that is the point of such controversial acts: to keep coming up in the