



Imran Channa sitting before
"Find the real Jinnah," 2009,
Digital print on panelflex

Imran Channa

Q. How do you categorise your work in this exhibition?

A. I comment on and question history and how it has been fabricated by power. After Partition our history books were distorted because they were written based on a single perspective on state ideology. This propaganda presents us with a half-baked picture. Through the state's power of tampering with history, we become mere puppets who think and feel they are free. "Find the real Jinnah" is questioning the representation of the founder of Pakistan. As an artist it is my role to pose an alternate reality and question the making of history through my art.

Q. What is your process and how does it reflect the meaning of the work?

A. Process is the framework of art. I work in various mediums to fulfill the conceptual requirement of my work. The work chooses the medium, whether it is drawing on paper or digital, and the arrival of a new medium questions the nature of art, space and visuals. The use of digital media breaks traditional notions of making art and expands the meaning of art, while in Pakistan there are also many reactionary artists who believe in traditional methods.

Q. What are major gaps in Pakistan's art infrastructure today?

A. There is a need for critical books on Pakistani art. Although there are a few art magazines, we need a strong body of literature. There is a major lack of art educators, critics and historians. ■

Nusra Latif Qureshi



"Did You Come Here to Find History?"
2009, Digital print on clear film

Q. Where do you see contemporary Pakistani art heading both locally and internationally?

A. There will always be artists who make work for particular tastes and then there are artists who focus on what is important to them. Like any other art scene, Pakistan has both kinds and there are followers and collectors of both kinds of works. There are now more opportunities on an international level for Pakistani artists due to faster and personal ways of global communication and a rise in the number of international art events, especially biennales. This leaves out the convoluted and almost tortuous official channels of communication. As the work produced by Pakistani artists has merit, more of it is shown in the international context due to these reasons.

Q. How do you explain your work in TRT?

A. Also shown at Venice Biennale in 2009, 'Did you come here to find history?' is fairly recent work, a departure in terms of technique. On one level, it was created in response to history in general and on another level in response to the particular history of Venice. I also wanted to explore the relationship of the artist to art history.

Q. What is your process and how does this reflect the meaning of the work?

A. On a basic level, it is extremely important to learn the alphabet before one attempts to present a well structured