

KARACHI BIENNALE 2019

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“  
**BIRD'S EYE  
VIEW**”

**KB'19 Emerging Artist Prize  
Artwork Proposal**

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## **Section 1**

### *Title*

“Bird’s Eye View”

### *Overview*

In December 2018, I designed a unique tour of Karachi and took bloggers, performers, musicians, painters and photographers along for the ride. Beyond forging friendships and collaborations, we realized how much of Karachi was revealed to us if we only opened our eyes and hearts to it. We realized, how little of this city we had truly seen or understood. And it hit us; how easy it is to overlook what we do not even realize exists.

Travelling through the city with a drone, Karachi revealed itself to me as a dichotomy of neglect and perseverance; a juxtaposition of disrepair and resilience in the face of damage. ‘Bird’s Eye View’ seeks to capture the essence of this duality; the beauty inherent in Karachi’s deep rooted history, overlaid by careless disregard as we blithely live our lives with blinders on, in the throes of consumerism.

A narcissistic absorption in our gadgets initiates a self-centric lifestyle that prevents us from pondering over the state of the world around us. We don’t respect nature. We don’t value this city. Perhaps, we don’t even see either properly.

Pakistan, slow to catch up to the race of industrialization, is not a core contributor to CO2 emissions, but when nature inevitably retaliates, we are the 7th most vulnerable to its wrath. We will succumb to a vicious cycle of extreme weather changes impacting crop yields, aggravating social inequalities and resource distribution in the face of continued rapid urbanization which, in turn impacts habitats, lifecycles and migration patterns.

But the catastrophe of ecological deterioration lies not only in the actual damage we do to the environment, but in our inability to perceive the impact of our actions. Environmental change has been manufactured into a global controversy and the average person no longer believes it to be true. It is occurring all around us, its impact evident in climate changes, and yet we fail to see what is right before us.

‘Bird’s Eye View’, an augmented reality installation built from a real life interaction with the city of Karachi, addresses this myopia. Piecing together an aerial view of the city by travelling its length with a drone, it will be rendered on wood in a tapestry of textured acrylics, clay and stained glass tesserae. The painting created will capture an idealistic essence of nature; deceptively beautiful and judiciously silent. A podium before it will carry a tablet and audiences will be invited to view the painting through the accompanying device. The painting will spring to life transforming and inspiring the viewer’s imagination about our actions, their impact on the environment and nature’s retaliation.

‘Bird’s Eye View’ will capture the duality of Karachi’s nature, of our real and digital lives, and our inability to accept our footprint on ecological devastation simply because we cannot see it rapidly impacting us. ‘Bird’s Eye View’ will capture the essence of ‘flight interrupted’--a phrase that connotes far more than the impact of the anthropocene; a phrase that denotes Karachi’s condition as a city full of potential, poised on the brink of taking off, forever pulled down by mindsets, corruption and neglect.

## **Section 2**

### *Design*

‘Bird’s Eye View’ will be an amalgamation of digital and traditional art to interact with the viewer and inspire their imagination. It will consist of two parts:

1. **A textured hybrid of sculpture and painting presented on a large gesso board hung on the wall, representing an aerial view of Karachi.** Pieced together by the artist’s real time journey through Karachi, recording her expeditions via a drone, it will be rendered on the board using clay, acrylic paint, and shards of stained glass. Iridescent and vibrant, it will be an idealistic representation.
2. **Superimposition of digital layers using ARTivive (a mobile app that recognizes the painting) to transform the painting on screen.** A table before the painting will present an iPad to the viewer, instructing them to lift it up and view the painting through it. The app, recognizing the painting as a marker, will begin to display the digital layers,

transforming the painting on the screen, presenting a dual reality to the audience; the static painting on the wall versus the dynamic one on screen.

The digital layers will begin as an extension of the ideal; picture seagulls flitting past dipping waves, leaves fluttering in the wind, the shushing sound of shifting sand, the glint of skyscrapers. Gradually, it will transform into something murkier, snippets of video, edited to conform to the textures and colors of the painting, leading us through an aerial view of the streets of karachi revealing the tragic reality of what we have wrought on this city.

### *Medium/Materials/Technical specifications*

#### *Size*

50 X 25 inches

#### *Weight*

20 KG (maximum)

The painting will be created on a large gesso board using a variety of texture and fluid paint. The following materials will be used (process video attached):

- Acrylic paints
- Pouring medium
- Carvable modeling paste
- Air dry clay
- Shattered stained glass
- Acrylic inks

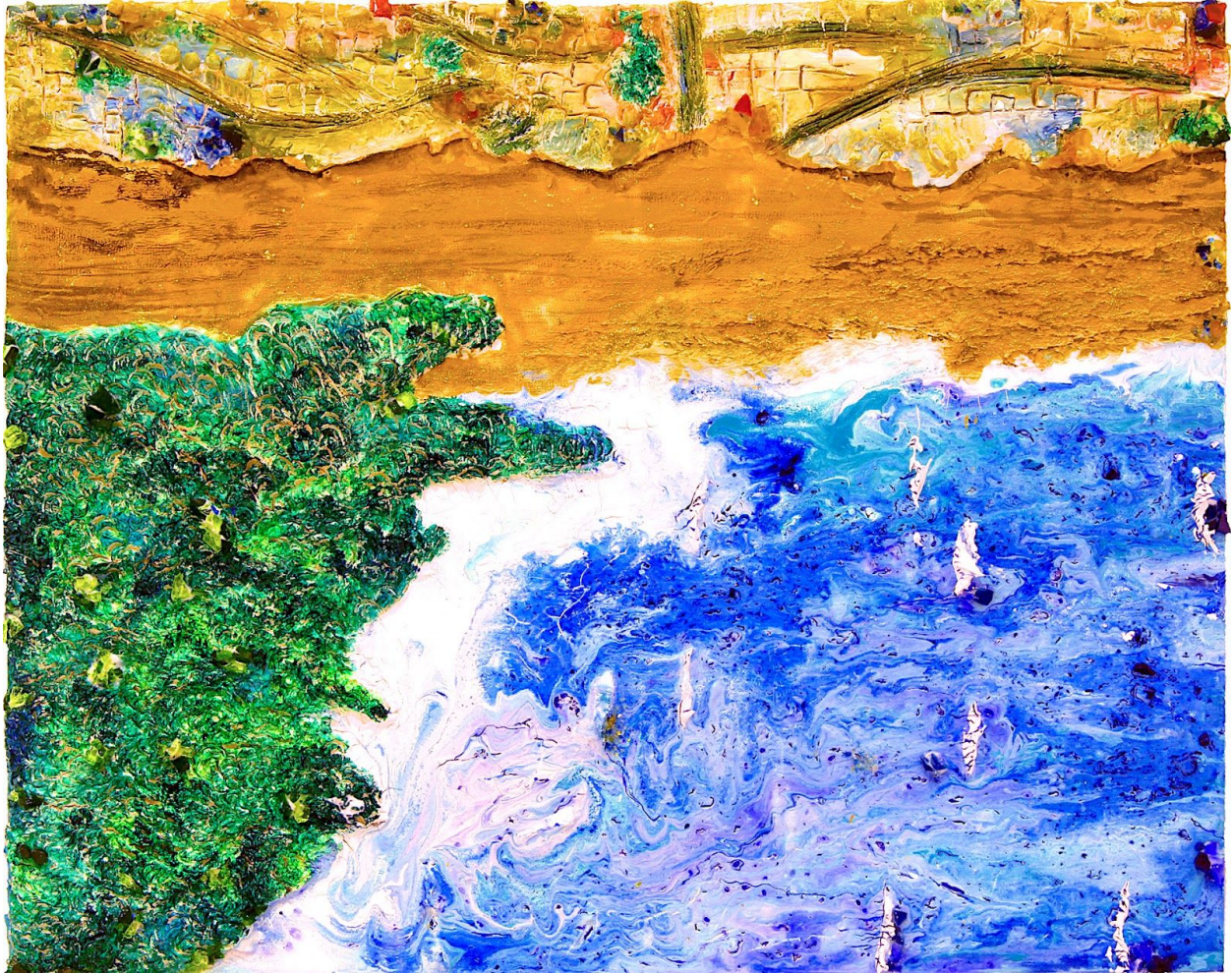
- Mosaic adhesive
- Resin
- Gesso
- Clay tools
- Glass cutter
- Mosaic nipper
- Brushes
- Palette knives

The digital layers will be created by photographing the painting and uploading it onto the Adobe Photoshop and Blender 2.79b. The painting will be changed gradually by adding, subtracting or transforming elements and each image saved as a sequence of .jpegs compiled in Lightworks 14.5 to form a stop motion animation. Video segments from the aerial capture of Karachi will also be transformed using the Adobe Creative Suite.

The painting, animation and any video segments will be uploaded onto 'ARTivive' Pro (a project compiled for commercial use can be purchased at [www.artivive.com](http://www.artivive.com)), edited and linked together. The ARTivive app will be downloaded into the device that will accompany the display.

### *Placement*

The placement of the painting, and podium before it, is deliberate, inviting the audience to actively step up and look Karachi in the eye; a meeting at once confrontational and nostalgic.



*Experimental Maquette (small, 16X20 inch) with basic, stop motion animation overlay*

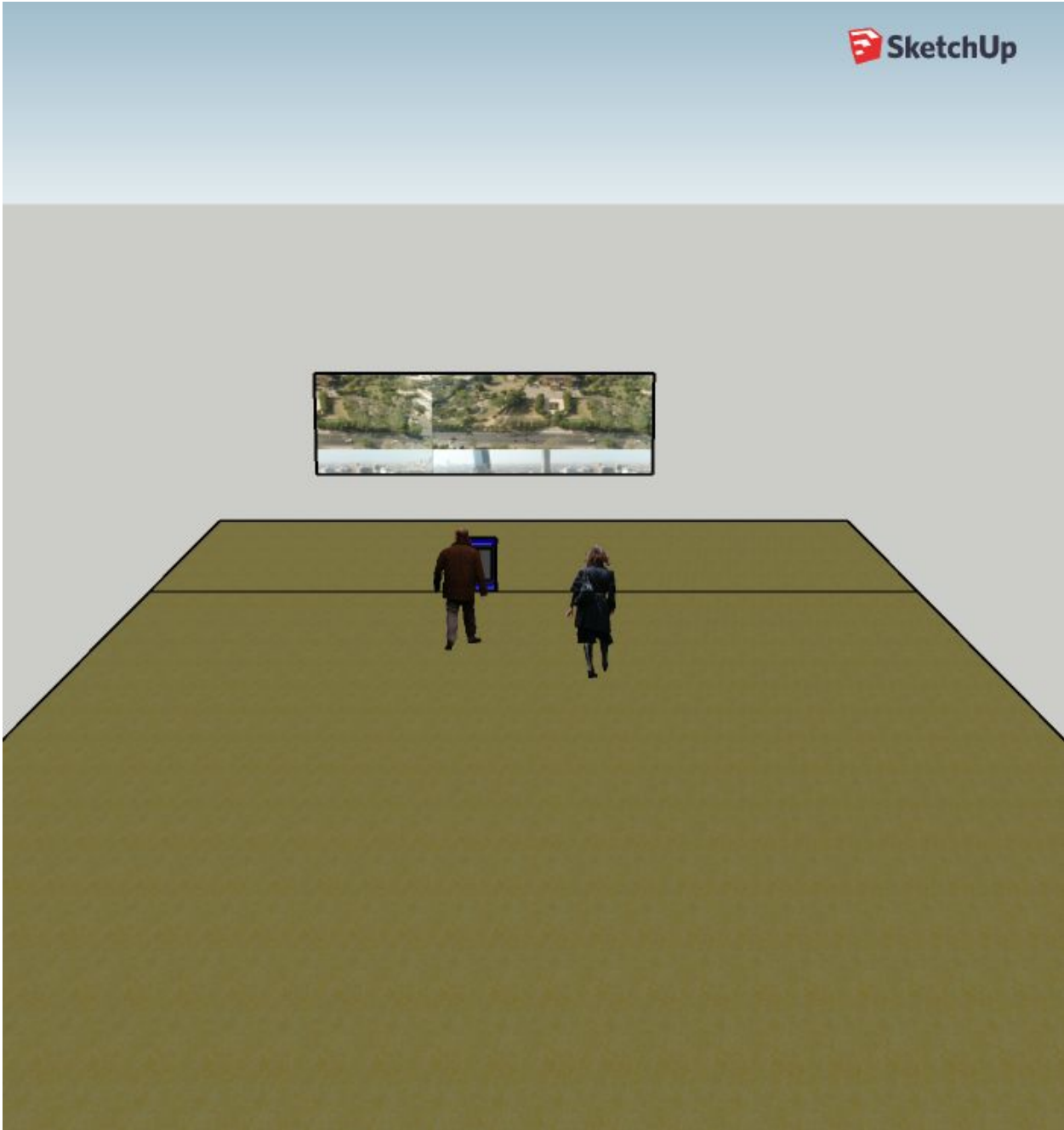
*To view its simplistic augmented reality demo, please download ARTivive and view the painting through the app.*

*NB: The final painting will be far more detailed and an accurate representation of Karachi. It's augmented reality version will also be carefully crafted to resemble the painting animating itself. The above version is simply an experimental demo.*



3D placement of the installation in a space





3D placement of the installation in a space



*Digital working sketch/brainstorming (sketching with a Wacom Intuos 4 graphics tablet, and photo manipulation)*

**Section two videos attached along with the pdf:**

- A **process video** showing snippets of the way I put together clay, paint, ink and glass.
- An **experimental exhibit** showing audience interacting with the maquette shown above and its augmented reality
- A **short trailer** of the project I organized, mentioned in section 1, #KolachiSaiKarachiTak.

## **Section 3**

### *Equipment requirements*

- A wi-fi connection (a device such as Jazz Super 4G or EVO or local wifi at the location) is needed to power the ARTivive app through which the augmented reality stop motion animation will recognize the painting and automatically play.
- An iPad or other easily held screen of high resolution of either iOS or android on which the ARTivive app can be downloaded.
- A drone to carry through Karachi and capture aerial shots of the city for the conceptualization of the installation through a real time interaction of the artist with the city

### *Installation/Deinstallation*

- The painting, while unframed, will be heavy and will require 4-5 heavy duty metal hooks to be drilled into the wall upon which it can hang.
- It will require 4 -5 heavy duty brackets placed along its bottom edge upon which it can rest to ensure stability for the duration of the exhibit
- Deinstallation will simply require these hooks and brackets to be unscrewed and removed from the wall and the holes to be covered using a patching compound
- A table or podium will be required to place before the painting upon which the iPad will be placed. This can be simply removed after the event.
- A printed label, laminated or covered by glass, will be required to place on the podium describing the work and inviting the audience to view it through the device.



*Sample Brackets*

*(images from Amazon.com)*



*Sample Hook*

## **Section 4**

### **Budget**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Expense type</b>	<b>Item detail</b>	<b>Breakdown of costs (PKR)</b>	<b>Total (PKR)</b>
1	<b>Materials</b>	Gesso Board (made to order)	20000	
		Acrylic paints	7800	
		Pouring medium (already present)	0	
		Gesso (Winsor Newton)	2400	
		Carvable modelling paste (liquitex or Winsor Newton)	8500	
		Stained glass	6500	
		Air Dry Clay (ROCO)	6700	
		Acrylic inks (Daler Rowney)	17600	
		Mosaic adhesive	1000	
		Resin	8800	
		Clay tools	2423	
		Mosaic nipper and Glass cutter	2570	
		Palette knives (assorted)	6700	
		Brushes (assorted)	15000	105993
2	<b>Software</b>	Adobe Creative Suite (one month use)	10202	

		ARTivive (purchase of software to create one project for commercial use)	4813	15015
3	<i>Hardware</i>	iPad (purchase is unnecessary, an existing device can be borrowed for temporary use)	0	
		Internet via Jazz Super 4G Wifi device	3000	
		Drone rental (with operator)	25000	28000
4	<i>Logistics</i>	Crating of the artwork	10,000	
		Wages for any labor employed	20000	
		Installation hooks and brackets	9850	
		Contingency amount	20000	59850
	<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>208858</b>