

Grey Noise, Dubai

PRESS RELEASE

How do we remember?
Fazal Rizvi
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What would you do with an image that glistens?

The surface of this image has a clean film on it. Shot and developed many years ago, it is preserved on a sheet of paper. On paper that shimmers in light and is smooth to the touch. On paper that may crumble and tear with time. Paper that loses colour. Simultaneously the image within it shimmers too. It sometimes folds, crumbles, and breaks into fragments, and stains and ages to a point where there is hardly anything left to witness. Then, what of the person captured within this image?

My maternal grandmother, Jehanara Hasan, was diagnosed with dementia in her late 50's. She is most often remembered as one of the most beautiful women of her time. And there are photographs that testify this claim. Images which hold that truth within them. But what rests within the image, is not the Jehanara I ever saw. There is dissonance within these two images of her. And this body of work stems from this place of dissonance. It rests somewhere between the notions of forgetting and remembering, of the image and its form, of permanence and ephemerality, and of the material and the immaterial.

For the exhibition at Grey Noise, I am considering the figure of my grandmother as a mirage. An image that you can see, but never quite reach. How can I get close enough to her skin beneath that glistening film and touch her, smell her, hear her, know her. How do I remember her? How do others remember her? How would she have chosen to memorize and remember herself? These are the questions I am meditating on through this body of work, and in the process, I may reach the mirage, I may unravel the image, and I may end up building her a shrine.

Fazal Rizvi, Karachi, 2019

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About the artist

Fazal Rizvi graduated in Fine Arts from the National College of Arts, Lahore, in 2010. He has been an artist in residence at Arcus Studios, Japan, in 2011 and was the recipient of the Charles Wallace Pakistan Trust award for Gasworks Studios residency, London, in 2014. He is also the recipient of the Pro Helvetia New Delhi studio residency in Zurich, 2020. Rizvi has also been a member of The Tentative Collective.

With an interdisciplinary practice ranging from drawing, video, text and sound, Rizvi has exhibited widely across Pakistan and also in India, Sri Lanka, Germany, UK, Australia, Russia, Japan, and Poland.