



interior selves

ABDUL MANNAN
LAIBA ABID
MAHNOOR AZAM
MUQEET HAIDER
YUSRA WASEEM

22nd July 2025
6:00 PM

artscene
gallery

Main 26th Street, D Street F-39, Clifton Block 4 Karachi |
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Curatorial Note

"Interior Selves" brings together five contemporary artists whose practices explore the psychological landscapes of the human experience. Through portraiture, figuration, and emotional realism, the works in this exhibition navigate the space between what is seen and what is felt — the subtle terrain of memory, identity, and inner tension.

Whether through the haunting recollections in Abdul Mannan's symbol-laden compositions or the quiet confrontations of self in Laiba Abid's reflective portraits, each artist invites the viewer inward. Mahnoor Azam captures the stillness of everyday life with expressionist sensitivity, while Muqees Haider paints soft fictions that blur the line between memory and invention. Yusra Waseem's emotionally resonant canvases reveal the tenderness of connection and the effort of belonging.

Together, their works form a collective portrait of the self — not as a fixed image, but as a shifting, layered presence. Interior Selves is a meditation on what lies beneath the surface: the unspoken, the unresolved, the deeply personal. It is a reminder that the most profound portraits are not always of the face, but of the space within.



Abdul Mannan

Bio:

Born in 1996, Abdul Mannan is a visual artist residing in Lahore, Pakistan. He earned his MFA from PUCAD in 2024, following his BFA in 2021. Showcased his work group exhibition in Dubai and numerous galleries across Lahore and Karachi, including Haam Gallery, Lahore Biennale, Main frame Gallery, Muse Art Gallery, Numaishgah, The Reservoir Art, Oart Space, ArtSoch Gallery, Ocean Art Gallery, Ejaz Art gallery, Studio 46, Tagheer Art Gallery and more.

Statement:

"A Beautiful Caution"

"Revisiting a memory once held closest to the heart—one that glows with emotional weight yet threatens the stability of the present and future—can initiate a complex and transformative journey for artists. Imagine a compelling scene where the central figure confronts this haunting recollection within a space marked by scattered traffic signs, their presence symbolizing caution, direction, and the consequences of veering off course. These signs act as silent witnesses and subtle guides, reflecting the inner tension between nostalgia and necessary boundaries. Around them, the 'good haunting' of the past is rendered in rough, raw oil pastel strokes—vivid yet unstable—evoking the beauty and danger of emotional memory. The resulting composition transcends aesthetics, revealing the universal struggle to honor our past without becoming trapped in it, and the resilience it takes to move forward with clarity and strength."

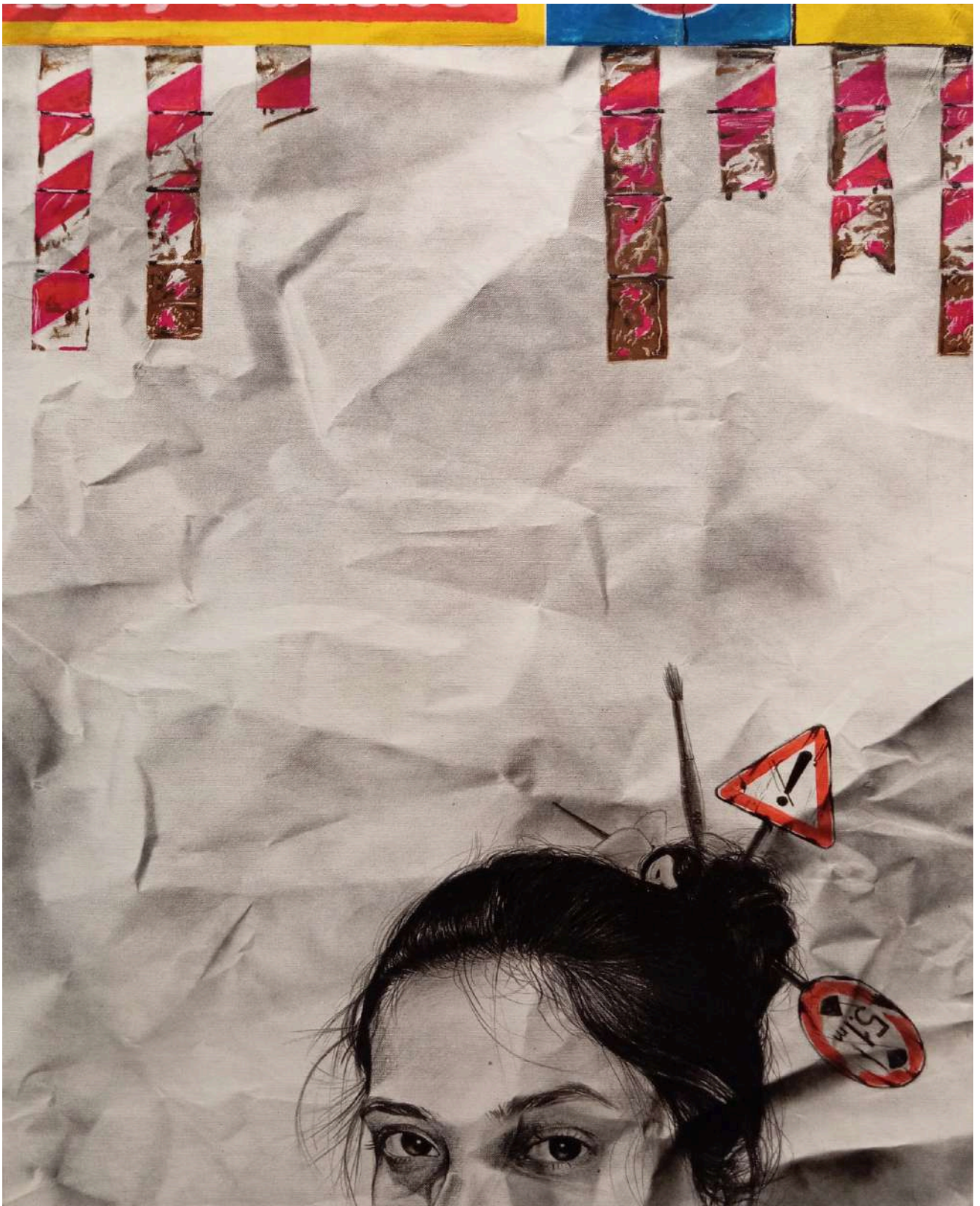


19 x 31 inches - Charcoal, Oil Pastel, Soft
Pastel & Acrylic on Canvas

Barriers



43 x 43 inches - Charcoal, Oil Pastel, Soft
Pastel & Acrylic on Canvas
No Left Turn



18 x 24 inches - Charcoal, Oil Pastel, Soft
Pastel & Acrylic on Canvas

5.1 m



16 x 16 inches - Charcoal, Oil Pastel, Soft
Pastel & Acrylic on Canvas
Round About - II



7 x 12 inches - Oil Pastel & Pencil on
Canvas
Divider



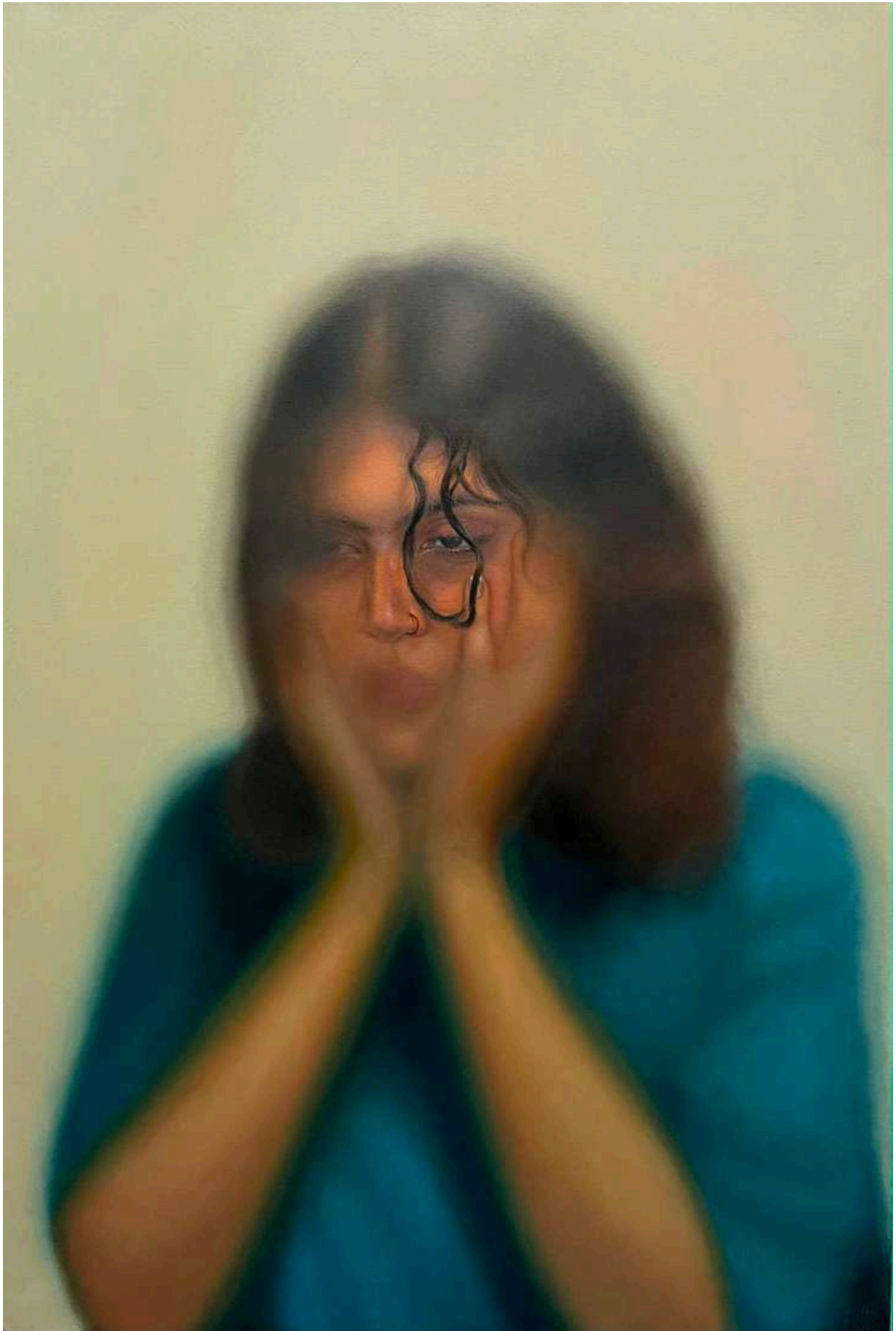
Laiba Abid

Bio:

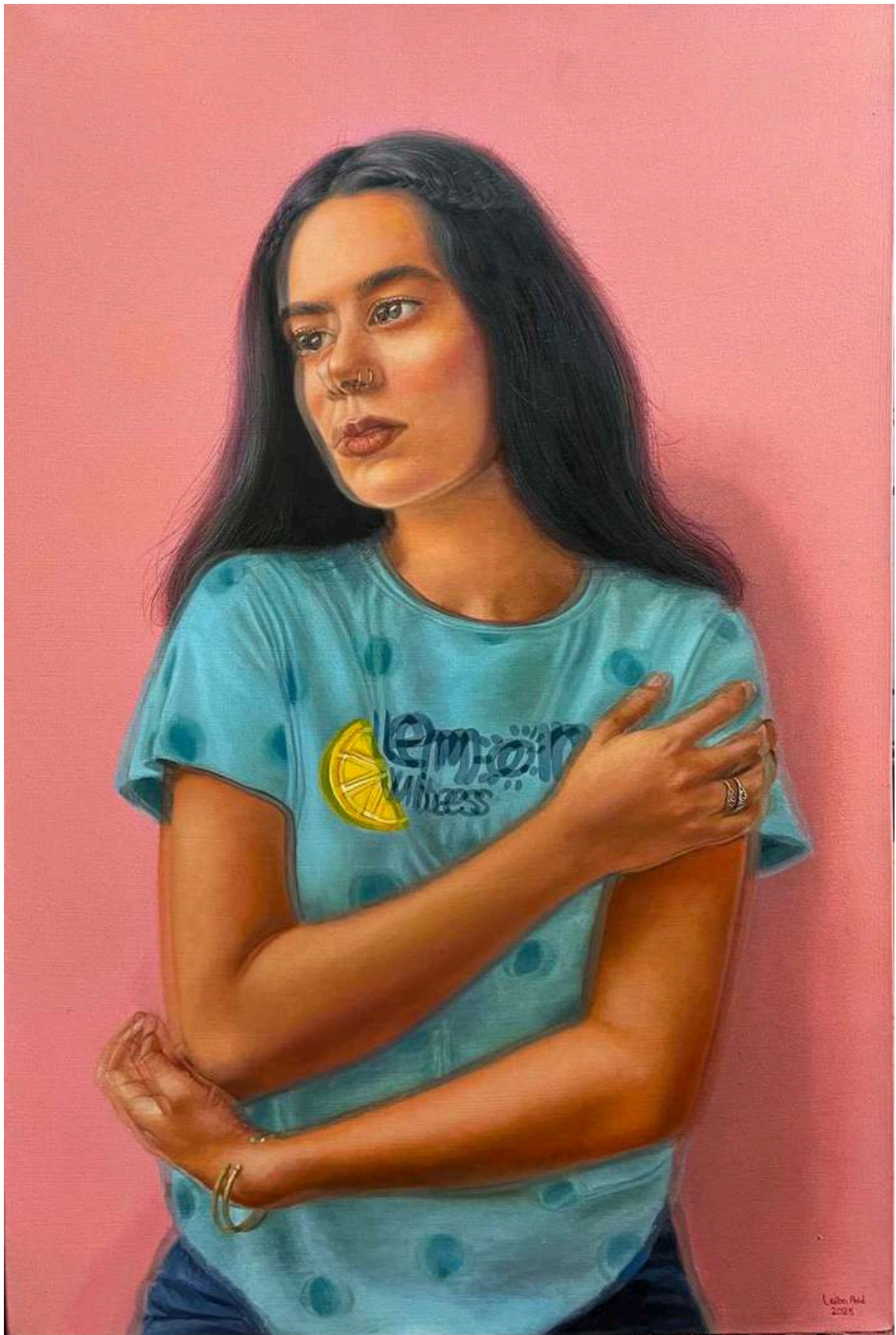
Laiba Abid, born in Peshawar in 2000, is a Lahore-based visual artist known for her refined realism. She graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts, majoring in Painting, from the College of Art and Design, Punjab University in 2022. Her artistic practice is deeply rooted in the tradition of realistic portraiture, exploring human expressions and form with technical precision. Laiba has participated in numerous group exhibitions across Pakistan, and her works have been featured in both private and public collections.

Statement:

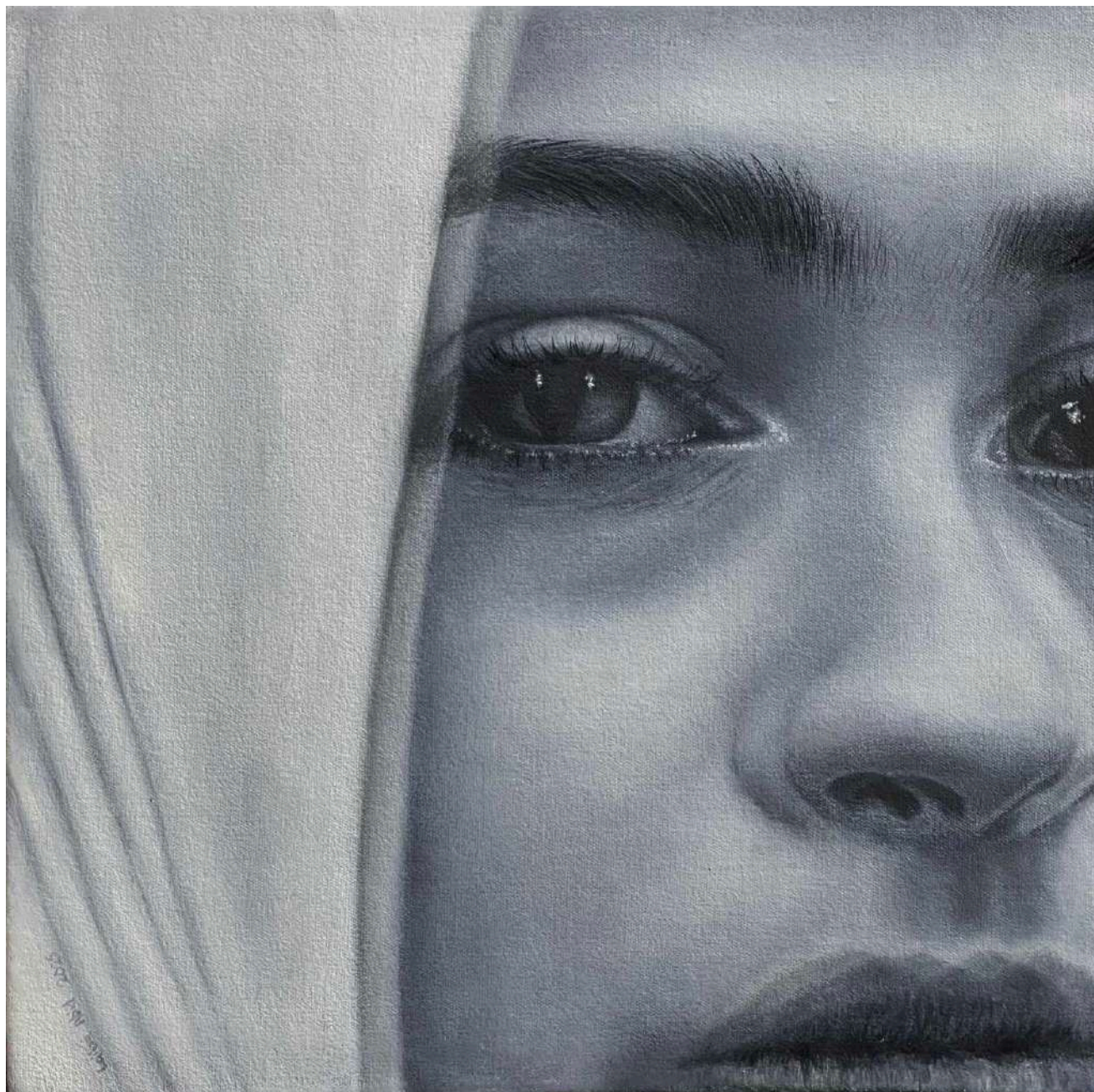
In my work, I explore the question: Who am I? I often reflect on how others perceive me and how I see myself. Many people have different sides to their personality, yet fear of judgment causes us to hide our true selves. We hold back, worried about how others might react. While some may not feel this fear, I believe most do. This inner conflict can lead to struggles like indecisiveness, emotional suppression, and a lack of empathy. Through my art, I aim to reveal these hidden dimensions of identity and explore how societal expectations shape our behavior and emotions. We are united, yet not truly one; no matter how much we try, we never fully reveal ourselves. Even when we are clear, we still see ourselves as blurred. This reflects the ongoing tension between who we are and how we are perceived.



24 x 30 inches - Oil on Canvas
Dissolving Into Silence



24 x 30 inches - Oil on Canvas
In Between



10 x 10 inches - Oil on Canvas
Silence



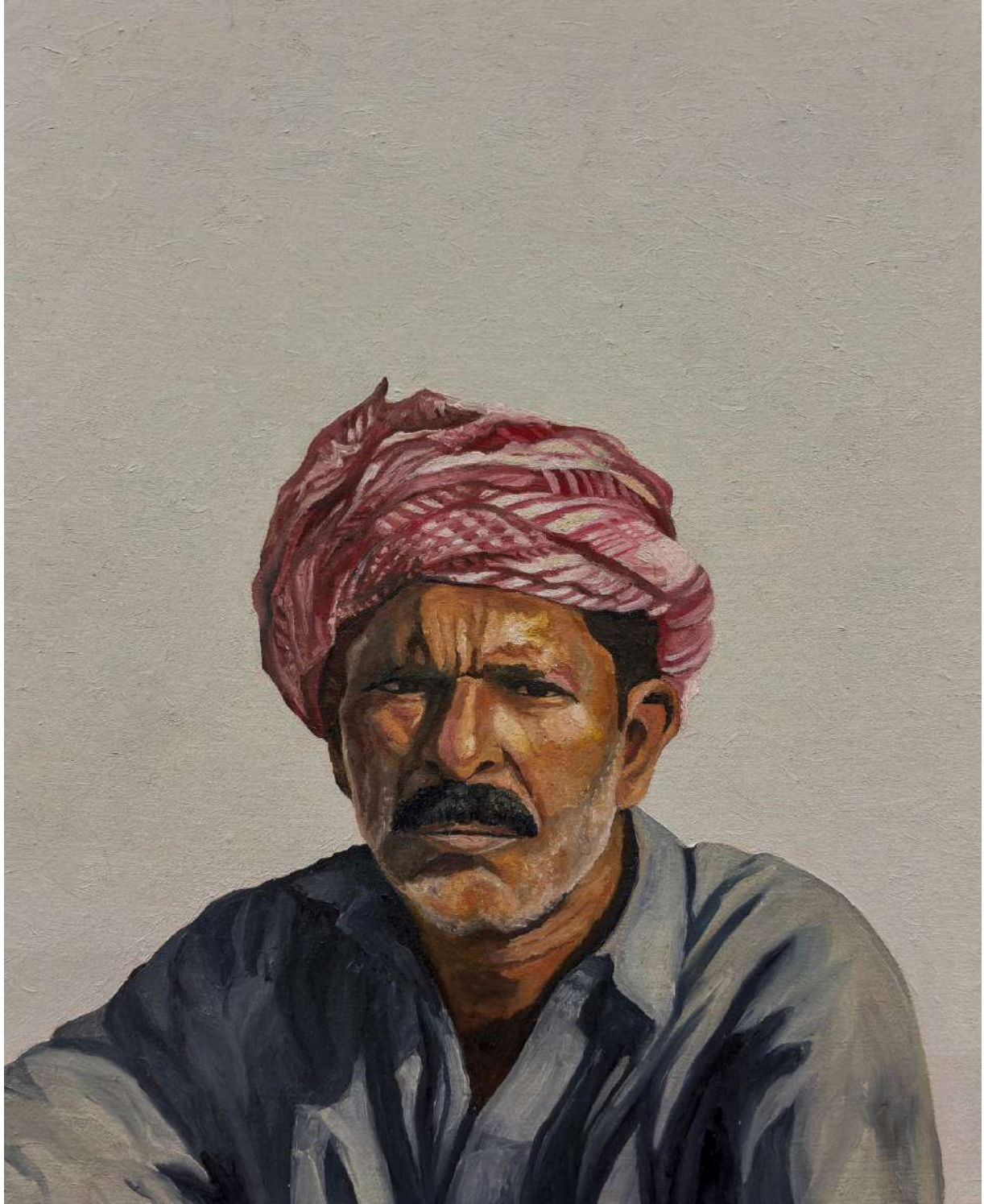
Mahnoor Azam

Bio:

Born in 2001, Lahore, Pakistan. Earned Bachelor in Fine Arts in 2024 from College of Art and Design, Punjab University.

Statement:

In her artistic practice, Mahnoor Azam seeks to portray the quiet, unbothered moments of everyday life—those overlooked fragments that carry a subtle, emotional weight. She is drawn to the stillness within the mundane and the quiet truths found in ordinary scenes. Primarily working with oil paint, Mahnoor adopts an expressionist approach that favors intuition over representation. Through gestural brushwork, nuanced textures, and a carefully restrained palette, she translates fleeting moods and subtle tensions into visual form. Her interest lies not in capturing what is seen, but in evoking what is felt. Rituals of the everyday, unremarkable environments and passing gestures form the visual language of her paintings—spaces where time feels paused and presence lingers. By recontextualizing the mundane, she challenges traditional hierarchies of subject matter, emphasizing the profound within the ordinary. While rooted in close observation, her process is fluid and responsive. Each work evolves organically, shaped by instinct and emotional resonance. In this way, her practice becomes a quiet meditation—on stillness, perception, and the complexity of human experience woven into the fabric of daily life.



14 x 17 inches - Oil Paint on Canvas

Untitled - I



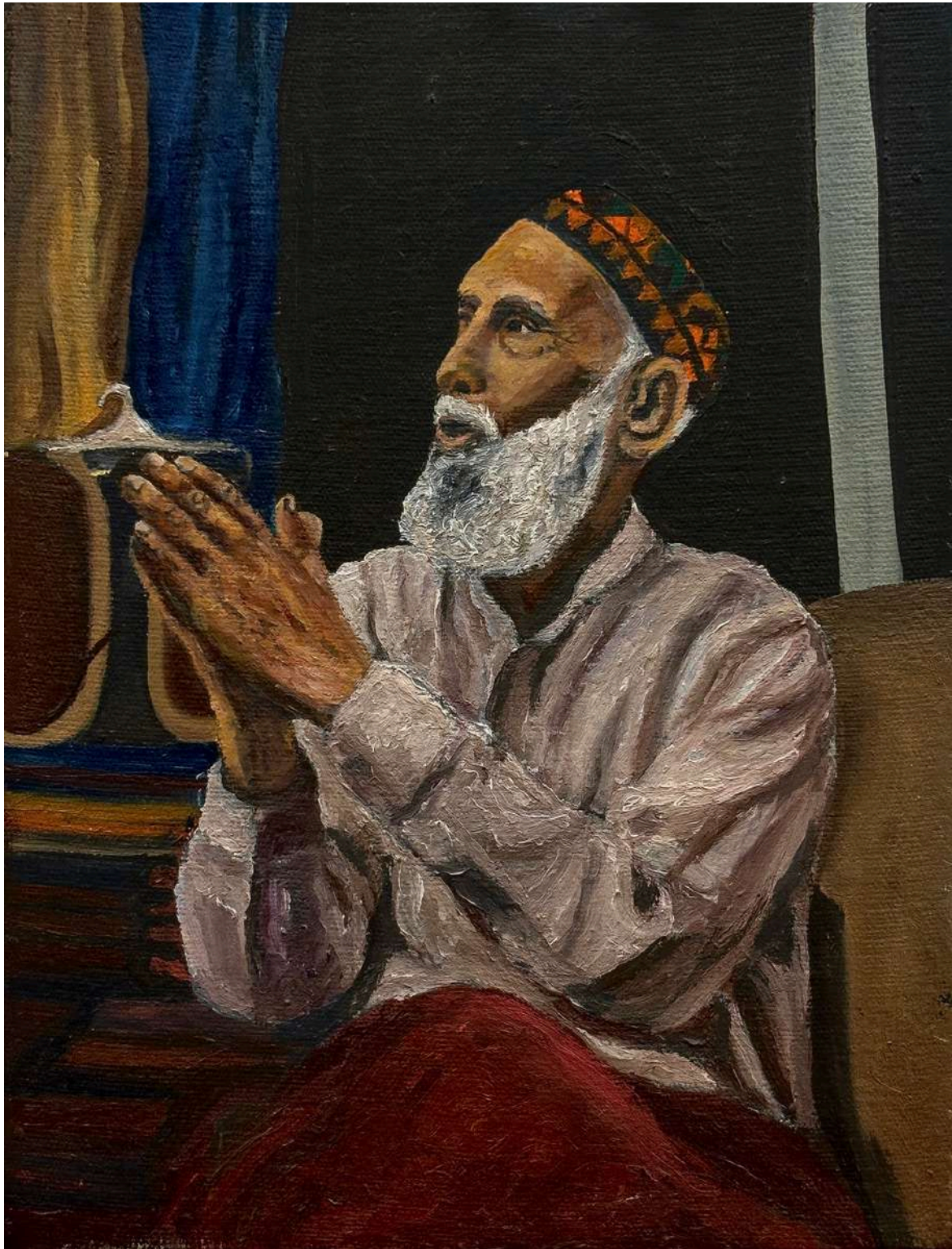
16 x 20 inches - Oil Paint on Canvas

Untitled - II



18 x 24 inches - Oil Paint on Canvas

Bachpan



6 x 8 inches - Oil Paint on Canvas
Untitled - III



20 x 36 inches - Oil Paint on Canvas
(Khokha) کھوکھا



36 x 42 inches - Oil Paint on Canvas

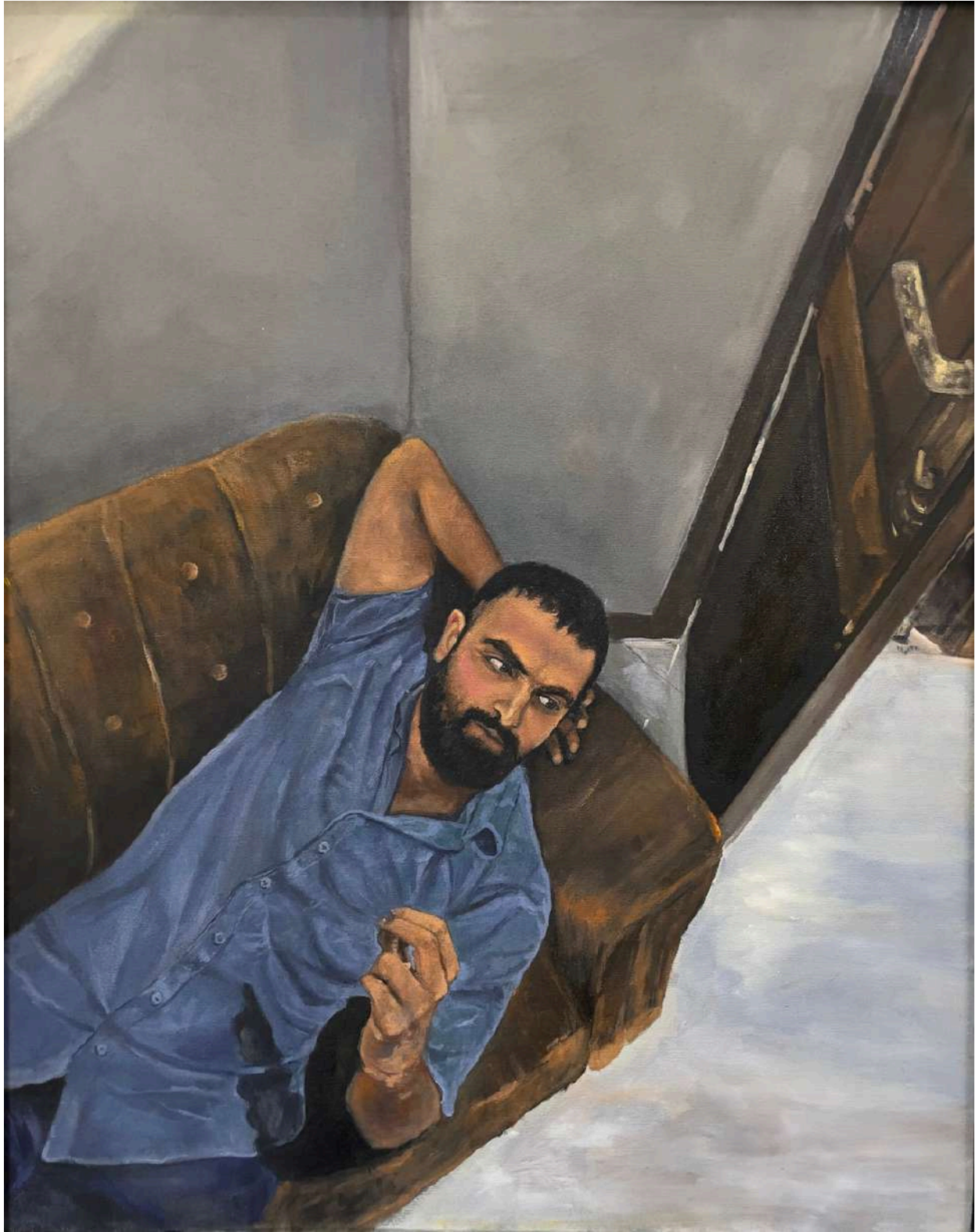
Unkahi



Muqeeet Haider

Statement:

My work reflects how I experience the world quietly, often from a distance but over time it has become less about observing life as it unfolds and more about reimagining it. The figures I paint are grounded in reality, yet they inhabit spaces that are part memory part invention, moments that never truly happened, but feel like they could have. I am drawn to the subtlety of human presence, the gestures that carry emotion without declaring it. There is a certain poetry in the way someone sits, pauses, or turns away and through these gestures, I build imagined narratives. Light, texture, and stillness are tools I use to create not just depth in space, but depth in feeling. Though I work primarily in oil and often draw from life, the scenes I paint are quiet fictions. They are composed reflections of mood, solitude, and psychological space where my subjects are caught between presence and absence. Through these imagined interiors and softened landscapes, I invite viewers into a slower world, one where the unsaid and unseen carry the most weight.



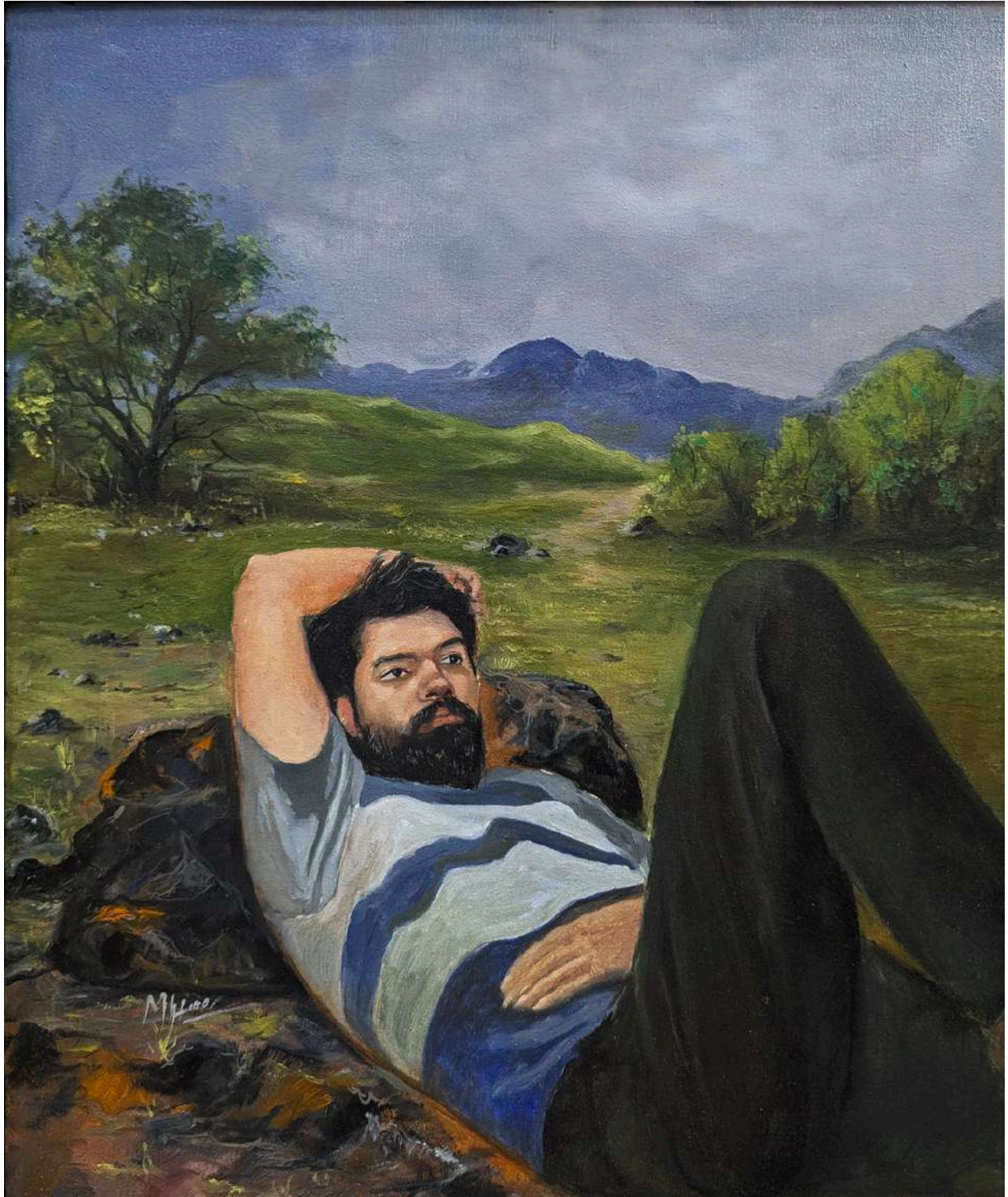
24 x 30 inches - Oil on Canvas
Gravity of an Idle Hand



30 x 39 inches - Oil on Canvas
She was a Place Once



30 x 39 inches - Oil on Canvas
He Looked, She was Elsewhere



18 x 22 inches - Oil on Canvas
He Paused in the Garden of Time



Yusra Waseem

Bio:

Born in 2002, Lahore, Pakistan. Earned Bachelors in Fine Arts in 2024 from College of Art and Design, Punjab University

Statement:

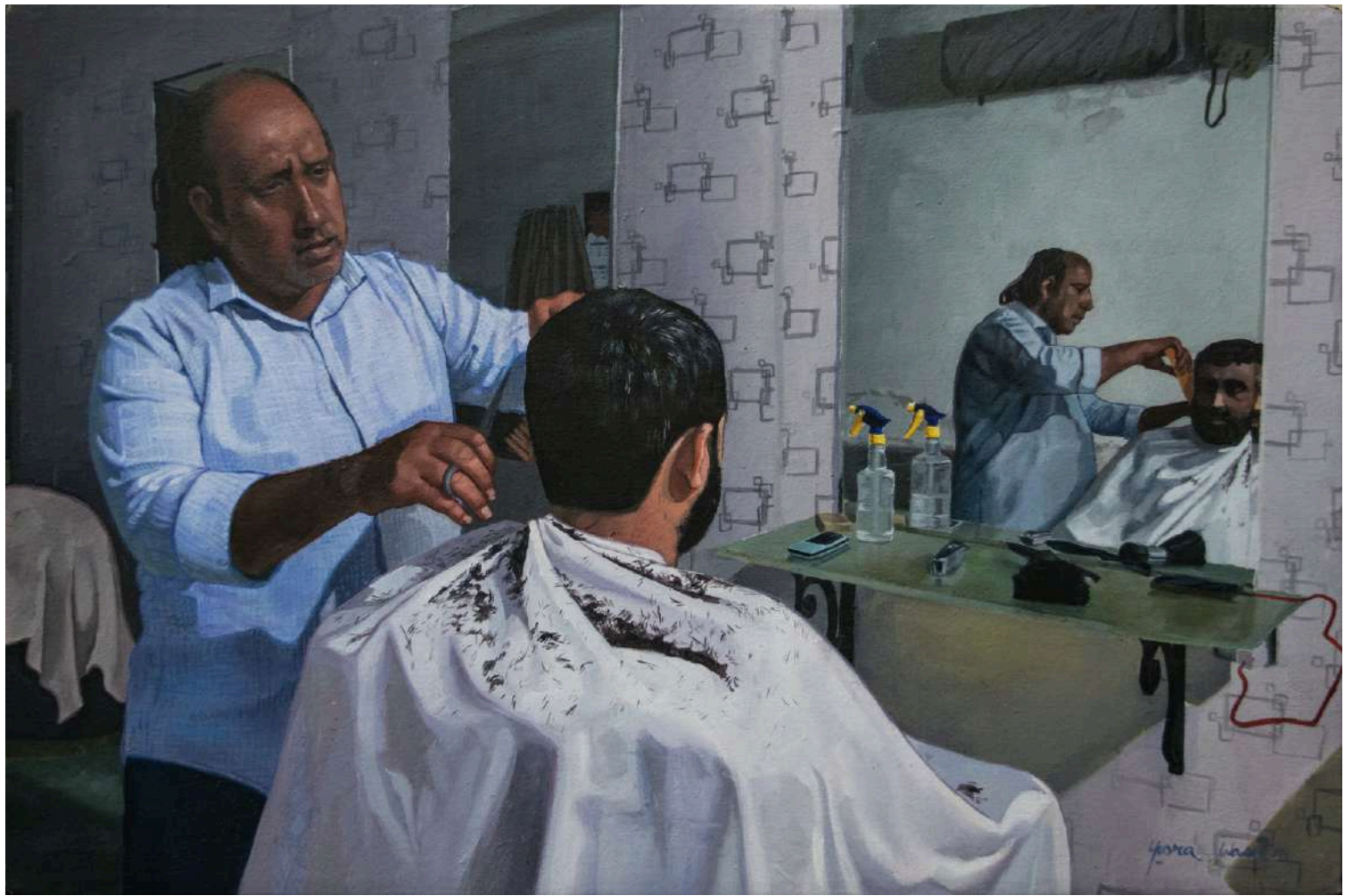
The motive for my paintings is to encapsulate the essence of "human experiences." As a child I always used to crave deeper emotional bond with people around me. Since it came naturally to everyone where I struggled with fitting in; and so, observing people around fulfilling that need through drawing and coloring for as far as I can remember. And hence, just capturing the human essence became special to me. No matter how basic we need to stop and appreciate every little thing being related to it or no. My dry-on-dry technique reflects how human relations are built. With patience and building it step by step. Through expressive details, rich textures, and vibrant color palettes, skillfully capturing lighting; these paintings go beyond realism to reveal the emotional depth and dignity in ordinary lives.



24 x 18 inches - Oil on Canvas
Midnight Hustle, Morning Spirit



22 x 18 inches - Oil on Canvas
Breather

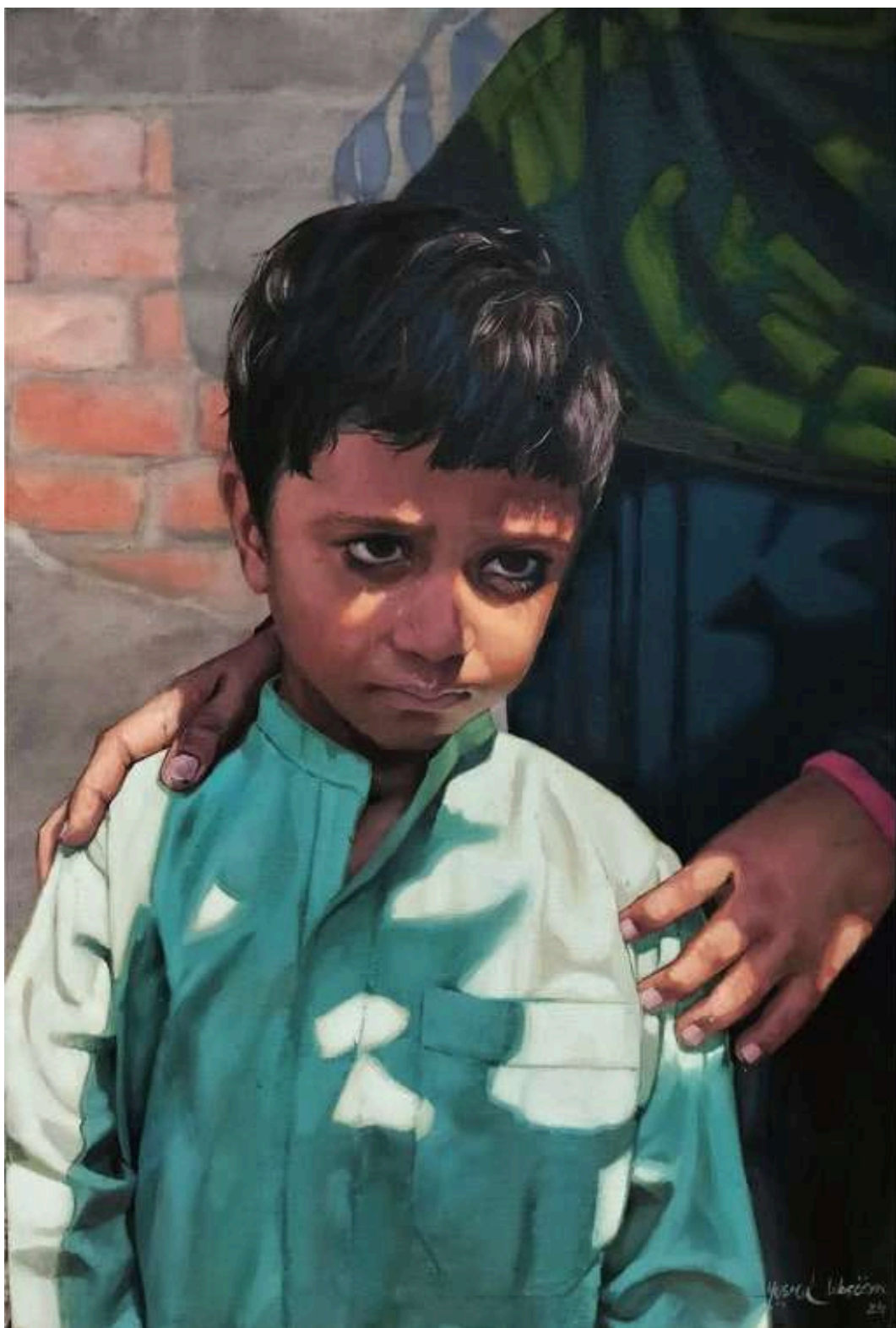


18 x 12 inches - Oil on Canvas

Routine Rituals



18 x 12 inches - Oil on Canvas
Companionship



12 x 18 inches - Oil on Canvas

Emotional Security

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