

Imran Channa's Very Own 'Badshahnama'

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Imran Channa is a contemporary visual artist who is based in Lahore, Pakistan. He works with multiple media, including painting, drawing, sculptures, digital art and interactive art. Channa has completed his Masters in Visual Arts from National College of Arts (NCA), Lahore which is where he also earned his Bachelors. He is currently teaching at NCA in Lahore.

Channa's latest work, which has also been displayed in Paris recently, includes a series of digital prints which have been inspired by a well renowned book on Mughal miniature painting, Badshahnama (translated into the The book of Kings). The book serves as a visual history of Mughal kings during Shah Jahan's reign. Channa is reported to have said: "In this work I have dislocated and manipulated all the images of the book, creating the sense of construction, so as to question the making and authenticity of the history, by digitalizing this traditional miniature to question its conventional and traditional methods of making which is considered as unique and sacred piece of art."

Channa's work has been appreciated by several art critics including Asim Akhtar who wrote in "Pause Play" There is a revolutionary lexicography behind Channa's visual vocabulary that is deeply rooted in the syntax and morphology of that visual modernity, and without it one will never learn how to read his pictures. His art is the very vision of an alterity that sets the political tyranny of language off balance – and with that liberates those who have gathered around the festive occasion of his art". In addition, Maheen Bashir Adamjee wrote that: "Channa's work, 'Making of the History,' defies the norm with its very title. The deliberate inclusion of "the" in the title challenges more than just grammar. Channa questions the veracity of the Badshahnama – a tale of kings, commissioned by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan – and the practice of getting one's history written under one's own auspices".

Link: <http://nigaahart.com/issue-12/orbit-pakistan.asp>