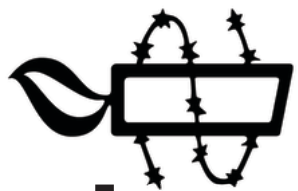


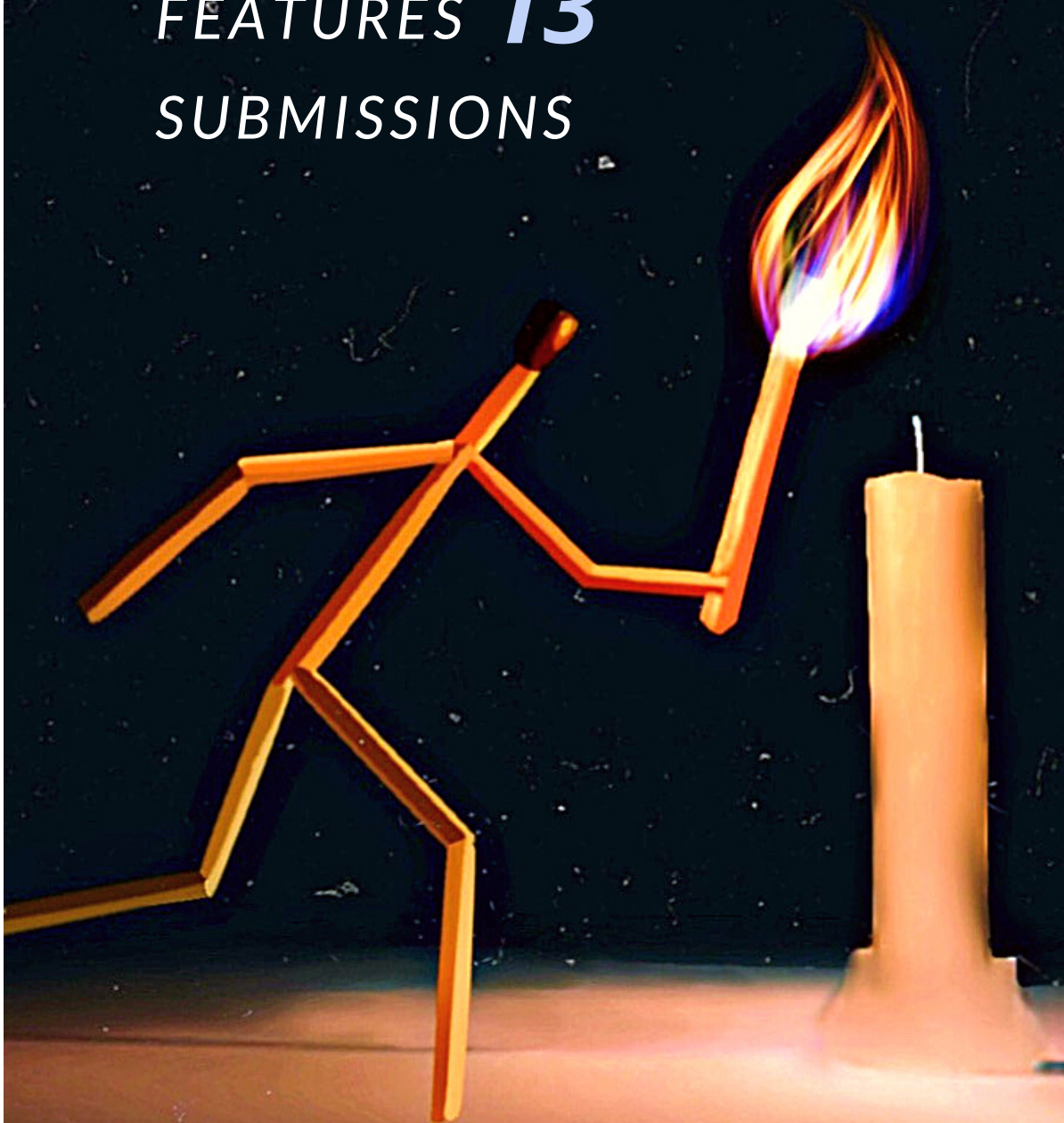
THE MATCHSTICK



AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



FEATURES **13**
SUBMISSIONS



CREATED BY AND FOR YOUTH

Issue 001
Aug 2021

The Matchstick is Amnesty Canada's Arts & Lit magazine dedicated to raising awareness of human rights violations through the creative imagination of young activists around the world.

CONTENTS

PIECES & ARTIST PROFILES

- 4 STRANGLING THE SERPENT
- 6 THE RIVER
- 8 I'M NOT A VIRUS
- 10 ANATOMY OF A WOMAN
- 12 THIEF
- 14 EXPOSED
- 16 AURAT MARCH
- 18 WHAT DOES THE PAST HOLD
- 21 DON'T BITE THE HAND THAT FEEDS YOU
- 23 FEED
- 25 REFUGEE
- 26 MALCOLM X
- 28 NO MEANS NO



OUR MISSION

BRIDGING THE ARTS AND ACTIVISM

Discover how we hope to achieve our mission / p1



MEET THE TEAM

MEMBERS OF THE EDITORIAL TEAM

Learn more about the people behind the publication / p 2



TAKE ACTION

AMNESTY RESOURCES

Explore a variety of actions related to the featured submissions / p 30



SOCIALS

SOCIAL MEDIA INFO

Follow us on our other accounts and platforms to stay up to date / p 33

OUR MISSION



The Matchstick is Amnesty Canada's Arts & Lit magazine, dedicated to raising awareness of human rights violations and the experience of young human rights defenders who meld their activism with their craft.

We offer you The Matchstick as a reflection of youth human rights advocacy today and a creative archive of global solidarity.

Our inaugural issue features the personal expressions of youth artists and poets who respond to the world as it exists today and, envision a more just, equitable, and free future.

Through 13 powerful submissions, our inaugural issue tells the story of a new generation of young activists committed to using their creativity as a means to expose the truth and spark action.

-The Matchstick Team

THE MATCHSTOCK

MEET THE TEAM

CO-EDITORS IN-CHIEF



Laila Jafri
(she/her)



Sasha Aristotle
(she/her)



Rachel Lim
(she/they)



Zainab Jafri
(she/her)

LAYOUT EDITORS



Supreet Singh
(she/her)



Megan Bailey
(she/her)



Mariam Tell
(she/her)



Miranda Monahan
(she/her)

WED DEVELOPMENT

LITERARY EDITORS



Noor Anwar
(she/her)



Pearl Leung
(she/her)



Abonti Nur
(she/her)



Sidra Khan
(she/her)



Tehreem Fatima
(she/her)

THE MATCHST⁰CK



LEADING

STRANGLING THE SERPENT

RACHEL LIM

Medium: Multimedia wire sculpture



ABOUT THE WORK

"Strangling the Serpent" is a multimedia sculpture that alludes to the battle at Standing Rock Sioux Reservation where the Lakota people defend their sacred and traditional territory from the invasive black snake, a metaphor for the Dakota Access pipeline.

Resource extraction projects are built on the foundation of colonial violence. Such exploitation and abuse of Indigenous women and two-spirit people in

man camps exacerbate the epidemic of MMIWG2S while destroying their cultures, languages, and histories. This industry's supposed economic prospects blind the public from the ongoing genocide, colonization, and displacement of their people.

The composition of the human and black snake wire sculptures reflects this continuous battle for self-determination, sovereignty, and climate justice.

RACHEL LIM

ARTIST PROFILE



Rachel Lim (she/they) is a youth activist located in Ottawa, Ontario on unceded and unsundered Algonquin Anishinaabe territory. She is an Honours Bachelor of Social Sciences student at the University of Ottawa specializing in Conflict Studies and Human Rights and minoring in Indigenous Studies.

Rachel holds various roles within bodies of Amnesty International Canada (English Section), such as, National Organizer, Chair of the Business and Human Rights

Specialized Team, and most recently, a Country Coordinator for MSB (Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei).

As a queer, Southeast Asian woman, they emphasize equity and justice through a decolonial, anti-oppression, and intersectional feminist lens. Their status as an activist comes first and foremost as they vow to use their privilege as a platform by amplifying the powerful voices of other advocates and grassroots organizations.

長江



THE RIVER

BRANDON CHU

He stood along the edge of the Long River.

The Dragon of the basin told him:

Drink from the river. Don't think about the tears that fell in Havana.

He drank from the bitter waters of the Long March.

He tasted the tears of the Strait.

He tasted the ichor of the Yalu.

He felt the sand of the delta between his lips.

But he did not see the tears of Havana, nor did he hear the screams from Surabaya.

He waded through the waters of the Long River.

The Dragon of the shores told him:

Bathe in the river. Don't think about those you left in Hokkien.

He bathed in the bloody waters of the Long March.

It was necessary, the river whispered.

It was so we could be free, the river thundered.

It was a war against the imperialists, the river crashed.

But all he felt were the tears of the Hokkien boy.

Who was left in the bloody waters of the revolution.

He swam in the deeps of the Long River.

The Dragon of the channel told him:

Plunge into the river. Don't think about those who have drowned for our kingdom.

He soaked in all the seeds of discord that slept under the covers of the river bed.

We are the people of Tang, who will always have a place to call home in a land that drove us away.

We are the children of the eternal flame and the yellow emperor.

We will always have our history, under a ruler that writes their own.

We were told we lived under a benevolent god, we were told the Dragon loved us.

As his lungs overflowed with the Dragon's breath he finally realized —

The Dragon did not love him and the red banks of the Long River were covered in his blood.



BRANDON CHU

ARTIST PROFILE

ABOUT THE WORK

'The River' offers a landscape of myth and metaphor to address some long-standing issues within the Chinese community and Chinese diaspora, specifically in terms of their relationship to their motherland, generational trauma, and collective memories and experiences.

Each river signifies an event in the history of the region that led to a time of displacement, reform, abundance, or resistance and which has shaped the community as it exists today.

This poem calls on the Chinese community and the Chinese diaspora to remember their shared history when advocating for justice in the future.



Brandon Chu is a photographer and graphic designer who grew up between Shanghai and Toronto and is currently based in Hong Kong. He is passionate about language, history, and social justice.

His writing, in terms of content and delivery, takes inspiration from Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish and his writings about land, love and self.



I'M NOT A VIRUS

MALAIKA QADEER

Medium: Digital art



ABOUT THE WORK

While anti-Asian racism is nothing new, the outbreak of COVID-19 played a crucial role in exacerbating the amount of violence, hatred, and discrimination experienced by Asian people. Sinophobia only refers to the Chinese, but it also contributes to discrimination against other Asian communities due to the Western world's misconception of Asia as a monolith dominated by China.

By falsely illustrating Asians as a foreign existential threat, this misconception divides and pits people

against one another. This hatred has also evolved from microaggressions to massive crimes, proving the lethality of racism and xenophobia. The weaponization of this fear has left many Asians wondering if leaving their home will cost them their life.

The assortment of flags in "I'm Not A Virus" addresses the necessary unity, kindness, and allyship between all Asian countries as they endure acts of racial injustice together.

MALAIKA QADEER

BEYOND THE WORK

“I’m Not A Virus” directly references harmful phrases like ‘China Virus,’ ‘Chinese Virus,’ ‘Wuhan Virus,’ and ‘Kung Flu.’

The sinophobic rhetoric which fuelled the surge in violence stems from various sources such as the concept of yellow peril, discourse over the CCP (Chinese Communist Party), and Chinese cuisine.



ARTIST PROFILE

Malaika Qadeer is a seventeen year old Pakistani artist who uses the visual arts as a creative outlet to express her emotions. Through her work she raises awareness about the issues closest to her such as anti-Asian racism.



ANATOMY OF A WOMAN

HEBA KHAN

i. A crown of ebony tendrils entwined with the poetry spilling from half scribbled poems, dancing with the dust rising from the wings of a moth seeking the light—

ii. Eyes, wide, burning with the fire of *ilm*, devouring the ink engraved on the scrolls of destiny, unapologetically arresting the gaze – an embrace – of *ishq*. These are not the windows to her soul but a portal to the castle of her poems, where golden tapestries of dreams are gleaming in the silver gleam of a marble moon.

iii. Gardens have become graveyards on her tongue where languages have withered in the wait of being spoken but the tongue, a blade, has slain all the words that tried to escape for fear that the web of faith will disintegrate.

iv. Chambers being painted in the hues of hope, leading to doors that refused to grow to accommodate the tides of the Red Sea that split for Moses but drowned her in the mercy captured therein.

v. The womb— equal parts home and warzone, a battlefield of bloodshed that births an amputee or a martyr but both are her honour because kindness in her genes is compassion in her chromosomes

Ilm: knowledge

Ishq: devotion, the most passionate love



HEBA KHAN

ARTIST PROFILE

ABOUT THE WORK

'Anatomy of a Woman' aims to capture the conflicts of a daughter who is navigating Diaspora and demanding justice for women's rights. It is a call to unite in our identities and differences and to mobilize our voices against systemic discrimination.

These poems present different perspectives advocating for what it is to be a daughter of Diaspora and a woman by accepting all her identities.



Poetry is not only a means of self-expression for Heba Khan, but also a mirror through which she aims to reflect the inner state of her readers. She has been writing for over a decade in a mosaic of languages that she has inherited and learned throughout her life. Heba has also published her work in local and global anthologies, along with some campus-based publications.

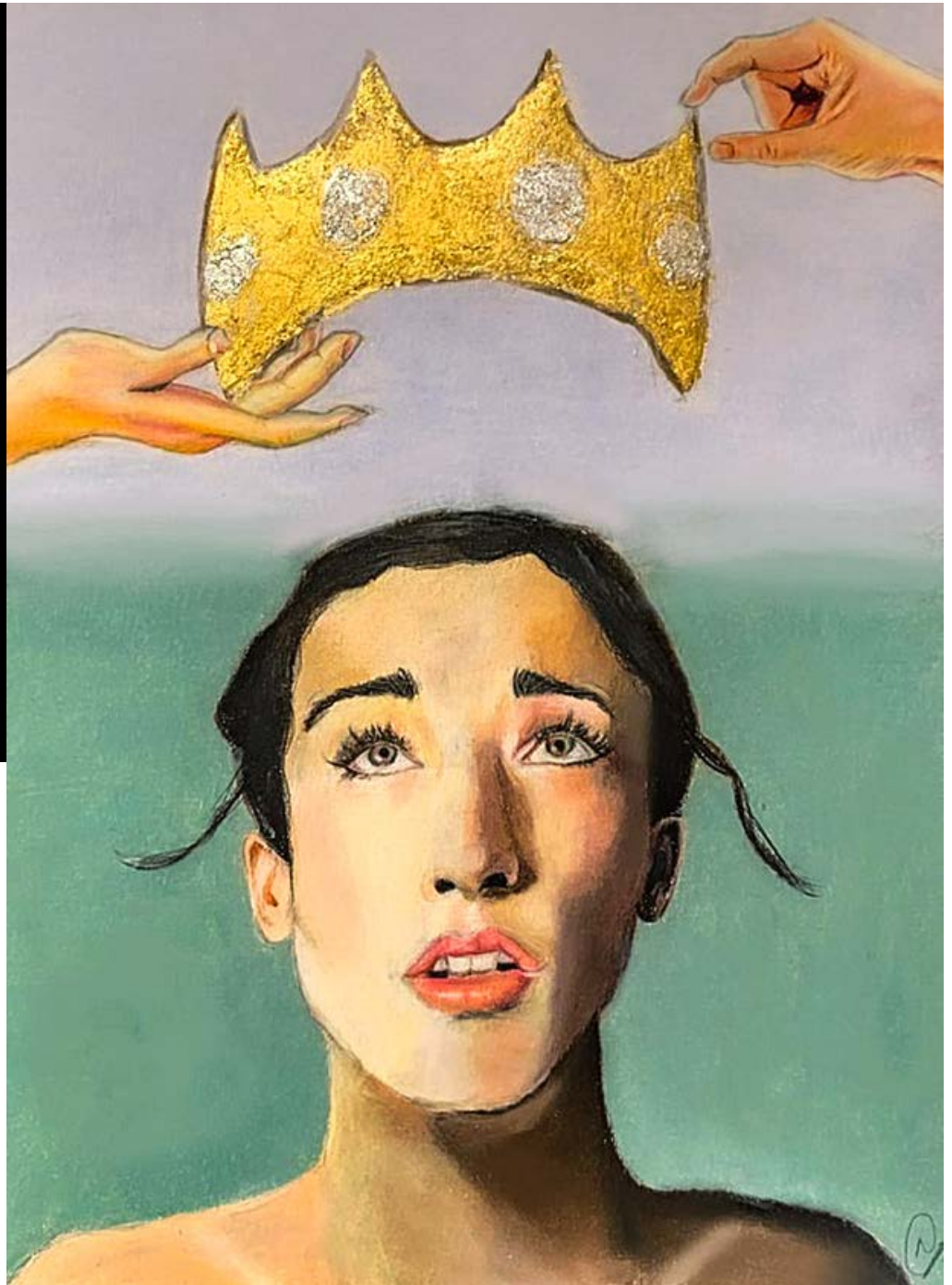
Her poem “A Poet’s Dead Languages” has also been selected as the best-written poem amongst a pool of talented writers. Recently growing her passion for poetry, Heba has expanded beyond the realm of the pen; she has been refining her craft in spoken poetry and earned third place in her first poetry slam. Heba aspires to bridge the distance between many worlds, one poem at a time.

You can find her work at [@anjaanography](https://www.instagram.com/anjaanography).

Medium:
Coloured pencils

THIEF

NIRANJANA
NAMBIAR



ABOUT THE WORK

'Thief' features themes of feminism, social justice, activism, and the concept of "breaking the glass ceiling". It addresses the constant threat that the many patterns of misogyny pose towards women in the workplace, especially members of the LGBTQ+ and POC communities who must break the glass ceiling to be seen and heard clearly.

The artist draws from experiences where women are invalidated regardless of what their pursuits in life are; for example, they are shamed for choosing a family-oriented lifestyle and shamed for working too hard on their careers. This piece invites you to consider the unjust and often rootless expectations that violate a woman's right to feel entitled to success, acceptance, and self-determination.

NIRANJANA NAMBIAR

ARTIST PROFILE

With each stroke of her pencils, Niranjana Nambiar, a fifteen-year-old artist from Brampton, Canada, aspires to convey her understanding of social issues through her art.

She runs an art account on Instagram and TikTok, known as “@nirandoesart”, and her passion to provide for the greater good of the world is what motivates her.

On her account, she posts emotionally - moving pieces of art and accompanies them with write-ups that are based on her interpretations of her work. As a result, she creates change in her authentic way by advocating through her passion.



EXPOSED

SATHYANI KOTAKADENIYA

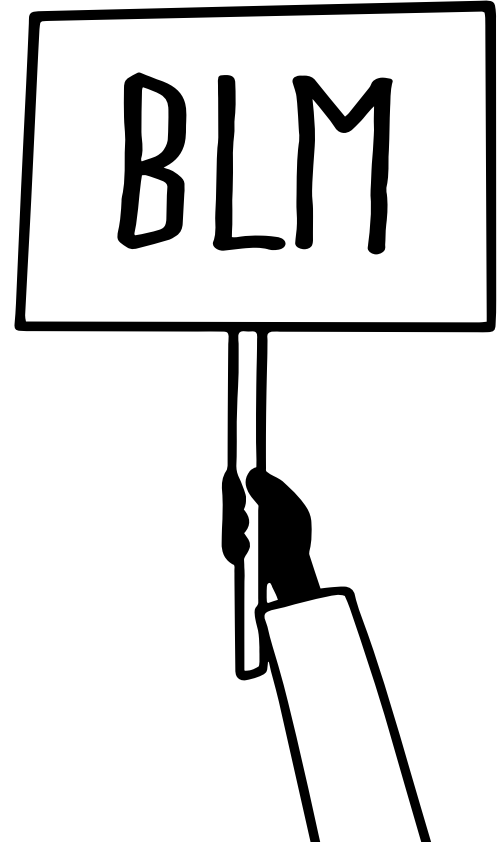
Wearing a crown of rusty iron, gold plated
Shouting “human rights”
The irony, the hypocrisy run wild.
And without a dollop of shame
Interfering constantly with the peace of other nations.

Do you see the history of oppression?
Again, and again it repeats itself
Showing its ugly head.
Covering now, dripping in humiliation
Threatening to show its military power.
Follow now very closely
Things have come around ten folds higher
From what went around heartlessly.

Now say, what are your answers
To the world’s burning questions?
Pinned under a foot of unruly power
An innocent man suffocates.
Suffering the longest minutes of cruelty
Pleading the sire of unruly power
Begging for life, for mercy.

They raise their heads only
When beneath the cop lay
The corpse of the man
Whose life could have been saved.

Themis; patron goddess of justice
Scale impartially, raise your sword
See below you, this scorched, divided world.
I beg of you, serve the innocent humans
With justice as you do
In your objective, own accord.




SATHYANI KOTAKADENIYA

ABOUT THE WORK

'Exposed' is a poem about anti-Black racism and policing in America. It addresses the brutality of police forces towards people of color, condemns the ignorance of political authorities, and highlights the importance of being aware and compassionate in the face of oppression.

It is a cry for justice to be served. This poem is a tribute to George Floyd and a cry against the anger, fear, and trauma spurred in the hearts and minds of communities that continue to be at threat.

It is a call to speak up and to stand up in the face of injustice.



Sathyani Kotakadeniya is a law and psychology dual degree student from the Queensland University of Technology, Australia (QUT). She is an avid reader, writer, and a published poet. Her poetry reflects her passion for issues concerning human rights violations and advocacy.

She states that she is still learning how to contribute more to society and be an active voice in the community. She vows to always stand up for what is right. Her wish is to use her privilege as a platform to be a voice for the voiceless and amplify the voices that deserve to be heard.

AURAT MARCH

ZAINAB NADEEM

ABOUT THE WORK



This digital painting was created in response to opposers of 'Aurat March,' Pakistan's annual feminist march. Critics include religious and political leaders who claim the woman-led public action reflects neither Islamic values nor Pakistani culture. This piece rejects those false allegations and their insistence on portraying Muslim women as voiceless figures whose religion and state do not entitle them to demand their rights. It is a call for a deeper level of intersectionality within the feminist movement in Pakistan: one that rationalizes women's rights within the religious framework and acknowledges that liberty and empowerment can also be found outside secular and western notions of feminism. 'Aurat March' is a statement on behalf of Muslim women who have found the motivating force of their feminism within Islamic tradition, culture, and history.

ZAINAB NADEEM

ARTIST PROFILE

Zainab Nadeem is a 20-year-old artist currently studying Visual Communication Design at National College of Arts, Pakistan. She loves to talk about important issues such as feminism, mental health issues, and her philosophies of life through different mediums.

She believes that art has the power to make this world a better place; this belief keeps her motivated.



WHAT DOES THE PAST HOLD

Yesterday did you
hear that mother's lamenting screech?
whose darling children
your ego's bullets
left riddled, bleeding
And now who is to tell her
of those homes and cradles, in thousands, ruined
emptied forever

Why must I not shout?

Why, must I not shout,
As if each mother bore new life
as prey for the hate you sowed
And you ask
What does the past hold?

Regretfully!

Regretfully, my pen
scribbles the truth, page upon page,
that you prefer to read

Even today I am ensnared by these chains
And no more than a puppet who
with eyes closed
when walks
finds her feet wrapped-chained-bound in your laws
And, again, falls
And you ask
What does the past hold?

Even today
I am the slave of that freedom, I dream of
And - still, you ask
What does the past hold?

Mister! It teaches us life

کیا تم نے کل
اس ماں کی چیخ پکار سنی؟
جس کے لخت جگر کو
تمہاری انا میں پھنسی گولیوں نے
چھلنی کر دیا؟

اب اسکو کون بتلائے
کہ ان ہزاروں اجڑی گودوں کو
وہ لعل دوبارہ نہ ملے گا
میں کیونکر نہ چلاؤں؟
میں کیونکر نہ چلاؤں
کہ ان ماؤں نے یہ جنم

تمہارے بوئے بیجوں سے اٹھنے والے تنازعات کی نذر ہونے کو
برگز نہ دے تھے
اور تم کہتے ہو
کہ ماضی میں کیا رکھا ہے؟
افسوس!

افسوس کہ میرا قلم
تمہارے کاغذات میں وہی لکھنا چاہتا ہے
جو تم پڑھنا چاہتے ہو۔
میں آج بھی زنجیروں میں جکڑی
اس پتلی کی عکاسی ہوں
جو آنکھیں بند کیے
جب قدم اٹھاتی ہے

تو تمہارے تہہ شدہ اصولوں کے بوجھ کی ضد میں آکر
پھر گر پڑتی ہے
اور تم کہتے ہو
کہ ماضی میں کیا رکھا ہے؟

Translated into English by:

*Muhammad Khurram
Women and Gender Studies
Erasmus Mundus Masters*

Our backs and walls
Scream
Telling us of your political yarns
that keep on spinning
Bangles broken, that lie in the street
ask reproachfully,
"Where is your neighbour's house?"
"The one where the Hindus once lived?"
Where have these questions disappeared?
dissolved in the mist of a history you created?
The stench of it lingers.
Wafting from the corners even as the questions dissipate
and you ask
What does the past hold?

In the annals of history, my name
tears, wears and loses its shape
as your venom drips down my throat
snapping my spirit away
Rendering me voiceless, helpless
And quietly, silently, you expect me
to drink the poison prepared?
Will you have satisfaction only then?

Partition?
Whose ghosts linger on in these streets, even today
Wandering here and there
Lost and chained
And you ask
What does the past hold?

Today, I shall set my English aright
And shrink my tradition, so it can comprehend within
the definitions of your confined dictionary
and I, myself, can learn 'my own culture', you say
And – still, you ask
What does the past hold?

The next step is for you to take
And for you to answer
With closed eyes and veiled truths,
How can we possibly move on?
And this 'freedom'
For which us women have always been parted and suffered
What is it?

میں آزادی کے اس خواب کی
آج بھی غلام ہوں
اور تم کہتے ہو
کہ ماضی میں کیا رکھا ہے؟
جناب، یہ زندگی سکھاتا ہے۔
ہماری پیٹھ اور دیواریں
چلاتی ہیں،
اور تمہارے سیاسی کھیل کی
روداد سناتی ہیں
تمہاری گلی میں ٹوٹی چوڑیاں
سوال کرتی ہیں
اس ٹوٹے گھر پر
جو تمہارے ہمسائے میں ہوا کرتا تھا
جہاں بندو آباد تھے۔
نہ جانے یہ سوالات کہاں گم ہو گئے
تمہارے کہے کی گھن
آج بھی وہاں سے آتی ہوگی
اور تم کہتے ہو
کہ ماضی میں کیا رکھا ہے؟
تم تاریخ میں میرا نام
اپنے کڑوے جھوٹوں کی گندگی سے بھر دو
اور میرے حلق میں اتار دو
اور میں اسے چپ چاپ نہ نگلوں
تو کیا یہ بات تمہیں بضم ہوگی؟
بٹوارہ؟
اسی کے جنات تو آج بھی تمہاری گلیوں میں
مندرائے ہیں۔
اور تم کہتے ہو
کہ ماضی میں کیا رکھا ہے؟
آج میں اپنی انگریزی کا تلفظ درست کرتی ہوں
کہ یہ سب تمہاری ڈکشنری میں تحریر کردہ
تعاریف میں سما سکیں
گر خود مجھے میری "تہذیب" سکھا سکیں۔
اور تم کہتے ہو
کہ ماضی میں کیا رکھا ہے؟
چلو اگلا قدم تم ہی اٹھاؤ
اور تم ہی مجھ کو بتلاؤ
کہ یوں آنکھیں بند کئے
حقیقت پر پردہ ڈالے
آگے کیسے بڑھا جاتا ہے؟
اور یہ 'آزادی'
کیا ہوتی ہے؟

AIMAN ASHRAF

ABOUT THE WORK

'What Does the Past Hold?' challenges the idea that our present is liberated from the shadows of our colonial past by revisiting traces that still shape lived realities in today's post-partition subcontinent (India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh).

The poem is a reminder that colonization was always more than just an event in our history; its bloodshed and violent reshaping permeate through generations to uphold structures of white supremacy, capitalism, and misogyny. It addresses the biased history we are taught in schools and the students who are mocked and humiliated when they dare to uncover the hold of the past.

More than anything else, this poem is an ode to the perseverance of women who have been the first to suffer at the hands of these violent tools. It is a call to never forget their sacrifices and never silence their voices, to unlearn and relearn, to decolonize our minds and institutions, and to provide women with the recognition, the freedom, and the rights that they deserve.



Aiman Ashraf is from Pakistan and is currently pursuing a Masters in Education Policies for Global Development as an Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters Degree Scholar at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, University of Glasgow, University of Cyprus and University of Bremen.

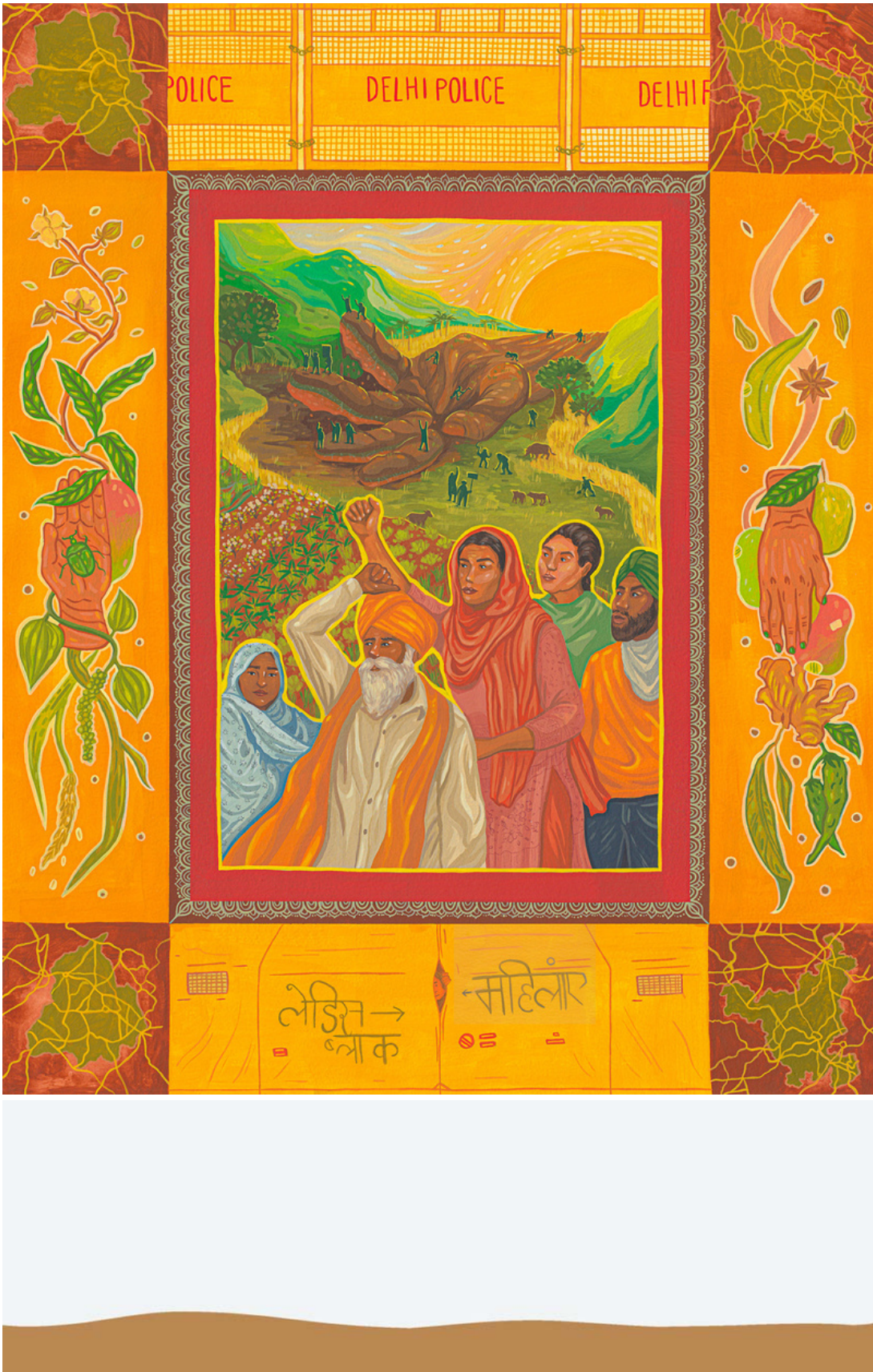
She is mostly found reading books, sipping chai, occasionally practicing her guitar, casually dismantling the patriarchy and enthusiastically advocating for girls' education. She is interested in postcolonial studies and South Asian history.

She can be reached at aiman.ashrafsharif@gmail.com.

MEEGAN LIM

Medium: Acrylic gouache, pencil crayon

DON'T BITE THE HAND THAT FEEDS YOU



MEEGAN LIM

ABOUT THE WORK

The topic of food is often perceived as inherently democratic and forgiving. However, in this illustration, that concept is challenged. Utilizing the idiom “Don’t Bite the Hand that Feeds You”, which describes unthankful, ungrateful, or unappreciative actions, the piece reinterprets the phrase as one of empowerment and protest to comment on the ongoing Indian Farmers’ Protest.

Since September 2020, thousands of Indians have gathered in New Delhi to protest three agricultural laws that privilege corporations and harm the everyday farmer (Singh, 2021). Through brightly colored symbols of crops and farming regions affected, the piece urges consumers to acknowledge the instrumental impact that India’s agricultural sector and small-scale farmers have on the world’s food supply.

“Don’t Bite the Hand that Feeds You” is a part of Meegan Lim’s undergraduate thesis for OCAD University titled “Hierarchies of Taste”. The body of work critiques the divisiveness of the food industry by reinterpreting common food idioms to expose how invisible barriers prevent food’s ability to bring people together.



Meegan Lim is an illustrator and multidisciplinary artist of Chinese-Malaysian descent, based in Tkaronto (Toronto, Canada). She is known for her detailed illustrations focusing on the intersections of food, culture & social change. Her work often provides a colourful entry point into social injustices that can be hard to digest.

In addition to her illustration practice, she is also an arts facilitator who values collaboration and nurturing community growth and healing through visual arts. In her free time, you can find Meegan bingeing food documentaries, cooking for her loved ones, and collaborating with her friends at Fuelled By Coffee Collective!

Socials: @meeganlim

Website: www.meeganlim.com

FEED

RAWAND MUSTAFA

Syria

People also ask:

Is Syria a safe country?

What is the problem in Syria?

How many people have died in Syria?



Croo-Doo-Doo-Doo, Croo-Doo-Doo-Doo: Laughing Dove Sings Sunrise

Grisly Killing in Syria Spawns Legal Case Against Russian Mercenaries

Slinking Stray Scales Garden Ledge, Shadow-Dappled through Lemon Leaves

Government Attack on Hospital in Northwestern Syria Kills 6

Pink-Kissed Pistachio Buds Brighten, Damask Roses Bulge

Will Latest Push for Accountability for Syria Torture Succeed?

O Wind, O Love, Take Me To My Country

In Turkey's Safe Zone in Syria, Security and Misery Go Hand in Hand

Elastic Ice-Cream and Berry Slush: Good Afternoon

Canadian Girl, 4, Freed from Syrian Detention Camp

Church Bells, Mosque Calls, One Canopy Sky

UN, US Condemn Russian Airstrikes on NW Syria

Baklawa, Liquorice Root Juice, Crescent Moons: Al Midan Overflows

Now the Truth Emerges: How the US Fuelled the Rise of Isis in Syria and Iraq

Day's Heat Burns Night's Lights: Perpetual Vitality

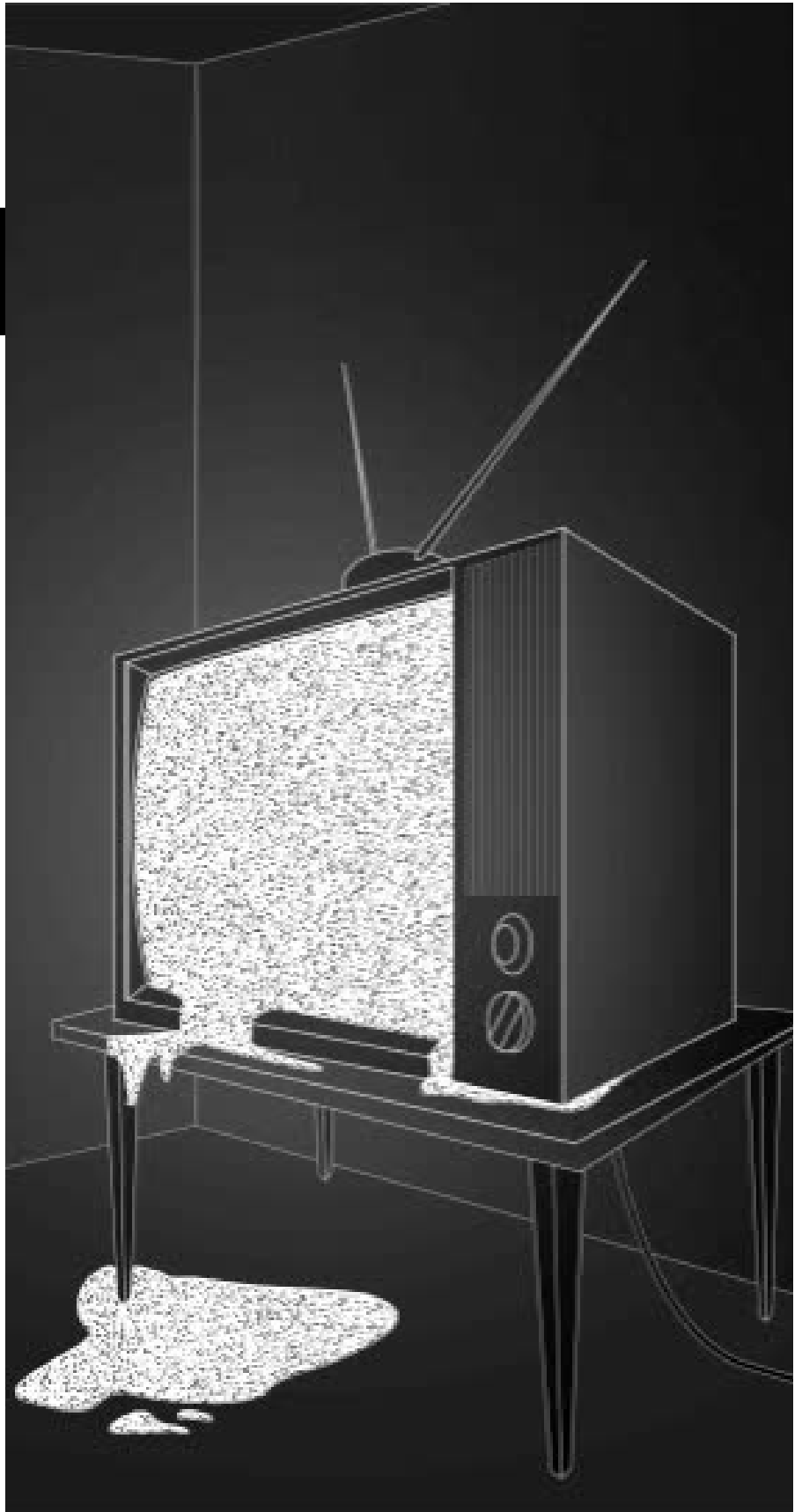
Why has the Syrian War Lasted 10 Years?

Croo-Doo-Doo-Doo, Croo-Doo-Doo-Doo: Laughing Dove Sings Sunrise

ABOUT THE WORK

“Feed” speaks to the danger of developing a warped view of an entire country (Syria, in this case) or its people due to the consumption of single-view media sources. While it’s important to acknowledge the real tragedies that have occurred and are occurring in Syria, it’s essential to learn about the resilience of Syrian people and the everlasting beauty that flourishes in Syrian streets.

The three questions following “People also ask” were retrieved from the Google search suggestions upon searching “Syria.” Starting with “Grisly Killing in Syria Spawns Legal Case Against Russian Mercenaries”, every other line in the poem is the title of a 2021 news article retrieved from The New York Times, CTV News, Al Jazeera, The Indian Express, CBC News, The Guardian, BBC News, and The Arab Weekly, respectively.



Medium: Acrylic paint

MALCOLM X

—
RAWAND MUSTAFA



ABOUT THE WORK

The painting is a recreation of a powerful image of el-Hajj Malik el-Shabazz (Malcolm X). The unity of the diverse shapes and colours coupled with the unwavering determination in Malcom's pensive eyes reflect Malcolm's own principles as an African-American Muslim activist: He believed in the unity

of humanity and particularly fought for unpopular causes--the oppression of African-Americans, of the Vietnamese, of the Palestinians. Created in the wake of the murder of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter protests, this painting evokes Malcom's unapologetic pursuits of justice.

REFUGEE

RAWAND
MUSTAFA

~~lost for words lump in my throat on the tip of my tongue~~
unable to think of anything to say through intense confusion shock a feeling of
tightness pressure in the throat due to emotion failing to retrieve a word from
memory but retrieval is imminent


~~there's no place like home is where the heart is anything but at odds are a smooth sea~~
~~never made a skilled sailor throw the baby out with the bathwater from the bottom~~
~~of my heavy heart a drowning man will clutch at straw do you understand~~
to have an affinity for one's home over every other place with which one has the
strongest emotional
connection is the place that one regards as home by no means conflicts with the
chances or balance of probability in favour of easy situations can never improve you
discarding something valuable along with other things that are inessential or
undesirable very sincerely weighed down with grief someone who is in a very difficult
situation and who will take any available opportunity to improve it do you
understand

RAWAND MUSTAFA

ABOUT THE WORK

'Refugee' speaks to the frustration of non-English speakers communicating in English, particularly focusing on the frustration of refugees who, on top of carrying the trauma of war, persecution, natural disaster, or alienation, struggle to express that trauma in a foreign language.

The use of idioms is commonly considered a hallmark of language proficiency and their manipulation in this piece depicts the struggle to communicate through the figurative lens of western perception. The crossed-out expressions are representative of another barrier that is overcome by the refugee speaker in their struggle for self-advocacy and self-actualization.

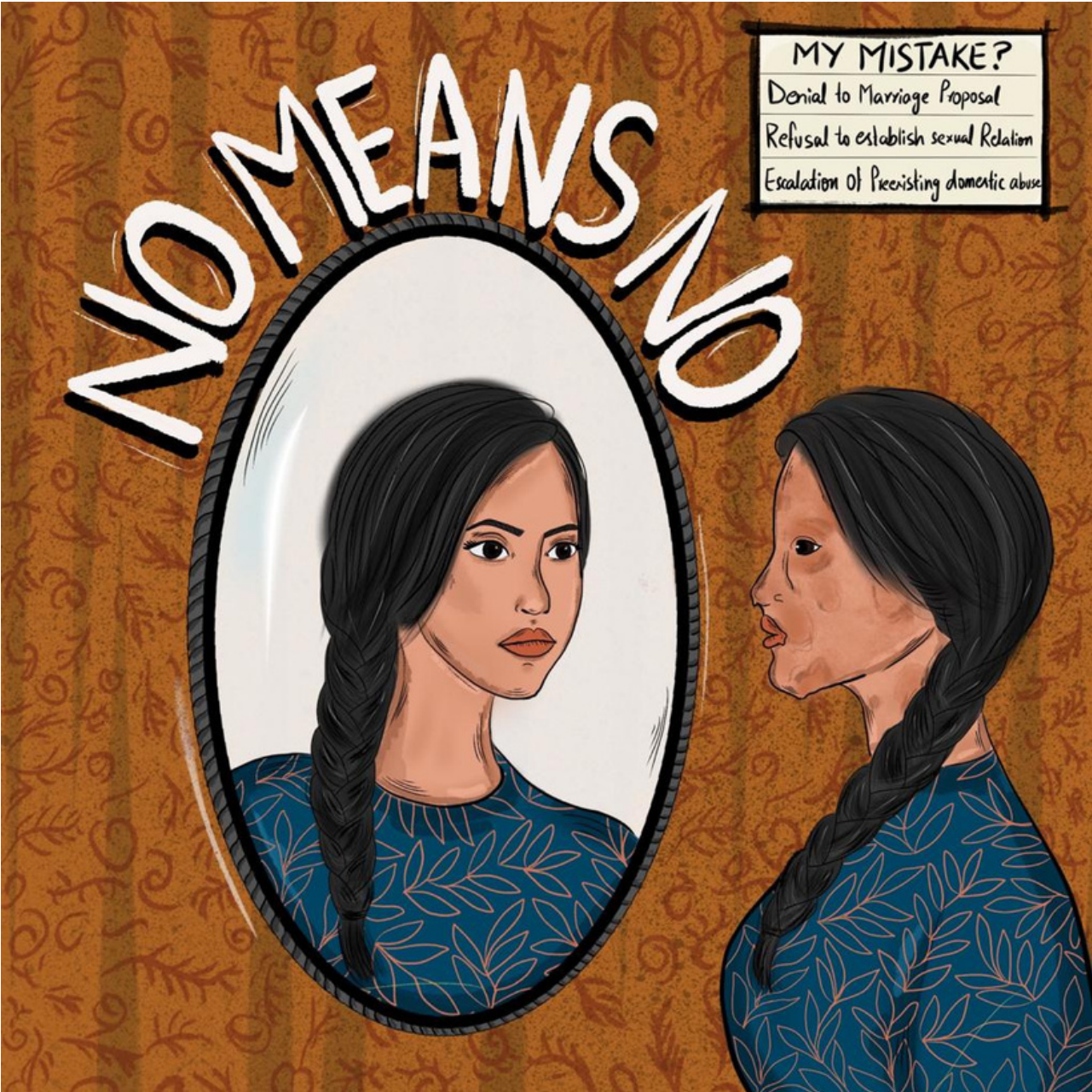
A portrait of Rawand Mustafa, a young woman with dark hair, wearing a black hijab and a dark blue or black top. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a gentle smile. The background is a blurred brick wall with warm, bokeh light spots.

Rawand Mustafa is a Palestinian-Syrian student living in Canada. She has recently graduated from the University of Windsor's English and Creative Writing program. During her degree, she conducted English research as an Outstanding Scholar and received the Edith Bowlby Scholarship in Creative Writing.

She has been accepted into the University of Windsor's MA program for English and Creative Writing, for which she received an Ontario Graduate Scholarship. Rawand draws inspiration for her writing from her experiences as a first-generation immigrant oscillating between Eastern and Western cultures, and she is particularly impassioned by the struggles and resilience of Palestinian and Syrian refugees.

NO MEANS NO

WASFA KAMAL



Medium: Digital Art


WASFA KAMAL

ABOUT THE WORK

“NO MEANS NO” calls out the lack of justice for women who have been severely injured or killed by acid attacks. The most common reasons for attacks on women and girls are the refusal of marriage, the denial of sex, and the sexual rejection of men and boys. The phrase “no means no” is an anti-rape slogan representing the significance of consent between partners when engaging in any sexual activity.

The majority of gender-based violence (GBV) cases stem from disregarding consent and bodily autonomy. While this digital drawing only refers to acid attacks, the magnitude of the problem extends far beyond its face value. Women are affected by numerous misogynistic practices, ideologies, and policies, including domestic violence, honour killings, anti-abortion laws, forced sterilization, and child marriage. Reduction of violence against women requires transforming patriarchal masculinities and dismantling stereotypical social norms.

Source – Action Aid:
<https://www.actionaid.org.uk/our-work/vawg/acid-attacks>



Wasfa Kamal is a 23 year old BBC-featured digital artist located in Pakistan. She bases her illustrations on various subjects but most of her work revolves around stereotypes that have existed in the world for too long. Wasfa’s work features themes of gender equality and other universal social issues. Many of these pieces focus on women in Pakistan as she draws inspiration from the various social and cultural experiences she has observed while growing up.

By highlighting important issues through artistic expression, Wasfa feels like she is, “in a small way, doing her part.” Her entire life has been centered around her role as an artist as she has realized that “design is art with a purpose and that illustration is a powerful tool for communication.” Such passion is reflected in her motive to create social change through illustrative work. Check out more of Wasfa’s art via Instagram: @throughwasfa.

TAKE ACTION

ENGAGING IN ACTIVISM



AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES

Take a look at some information and action links related to the art and poetry pieces featured in this issue of THE MATCHSTICK.

Strangling the Serpent

1. Call on the BC Government to pull the pipes from Quesnel Lake
2. Call on Manitoba Hydro to end the harassment and violence at Keeyask
3. Protect Maria, Jani, Joel and Danelly
4. The rising floodwaters won't hide the shameful criminalization of land defenders

The River

1. Demand an end to the targeted surveillance of Human Rights Defenders
2. Free Xinjiang detainees
3. Stand together with the people of Myanmar

I'm Not a Virus

1. Amnesty International Calls on Biden Administration to End “China Initiative”
2. Georgia shooting yet another cry for US government action to end gun violence, confront misogyny, and denounce anti-AAPI hate

Anatomy of a Woman

1. No More Stolen Sisters Campaign
2. Amnesty’s Action Items for Women’s Human Rights

Thief

1. Stand Up for the Brave
2. Hungary: Women face stark increase in discrimination and job insecurity in the workplace due to COVID-19 crisis
3. South Korea: Lawmakers must seize chance to pass landmark anti-discrimination act

Exposed

1. End unlawful police violence against Black Lives Matter protests
2. Learn about police violence
3. Canada: Stop Anti-Black Racism and Over-Policing
4. Canada: Hold Police Accountable for Anti-Black Racism

Aurat March

1. Mexico: Stop repressing women protesters
2. Saudi Arabia: Verdict upholding Loujain al-Hathloul’s conviction an appalling injustice

What Does the Past Hold?

1. Stand with the Russian journalist Elena Milashina
2. Demand truth and justice for the murder of Berta Cáceres

Don't Bite the Hand that Feeds You

1. Stand Up for the Brave
2. Hungary: Women face stark increase in discrimination and job insecurity in the workplace due to COVID-19 crisis
3. South Korea: Lawmakers must seize chance to pass landmark anti-discrimination act
4. India: Government must stop crushing farmers' protests and demonizing dissent

Feed & Refugee

1. Join the I Welcome Community
2. Denmark: Don't send refugees back to Syria
3. Americas: release migrants and asylum-seekers from detention during covid-19 pandemic
4. ACT NOW Demand accountability for civilian casualties in Raqqa, Syria
5. ACT NOW Canada: Don't abandon refugees
6. Protect the rights of the Rohingya refugees

Malcom X

1. Anti-Black Racism and Policing
2. End the Violence in Occupied Palestinian Territories
3. Anti-Black Racism and Policing in Canada: We need new, transformative approaches to upholding public safety
4. Black and Indigenous Solidarity Against Systemic Racism

No Means No

1. Mexico: Authorities used illegal force and sexual violence to silence women protesting against gender-based violence
2. Turkey: Women across the world demand reversal of decision to quit gender-based violence treaty
3. Sterilization of Indigenous Women without Consent
4. Women with Disabilities: Invisible Survivors of Domestic Violence in Kyrgyzstan

THE MATCHSTICK

FOLLOW AND CONTACT US

E-MAIL:
INFO@THEMATCHSTICK.ORG

INSTAGRAM:
[@AMNESTYTORONTO](https://www.instagram.com/AMNESTYTORONTO)

WEBSITE
[HTTPS://THEMATCHSTICK.ORG/](https://thematchstick.org/)

"IT'S BETTER TO LIGHT
A CANDLE THAN TO
CURSE THE DARKNESS."

- Chinese Proverb



AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



COPYRIGHT © 2021 AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL TORONTO ORGANIZATION.