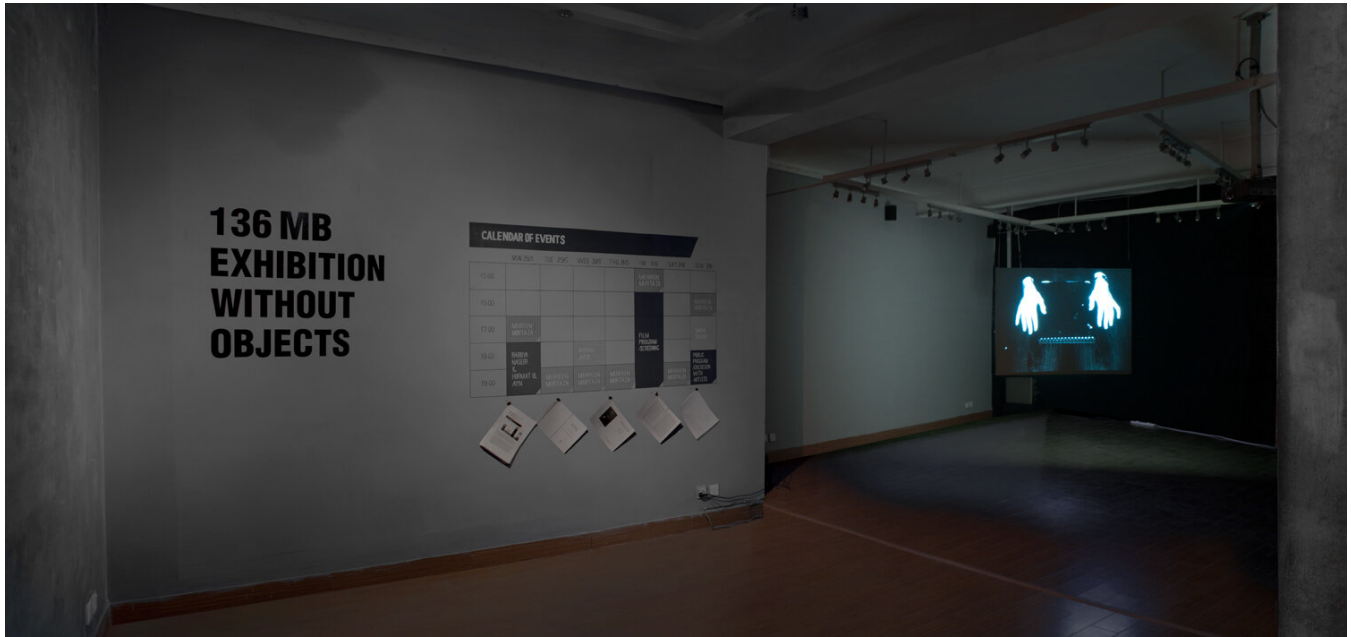


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Enter the artists' mind: Of (revealing) art as process

By Sonia Malik

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Installation view of *136 MB: Exhibition Without Objects*, The Drawing Room Gallery, 2012.

LAHORE:

Images from *Holy Mountain*, a 1973 film that uses sacrilegious imagery, and *F for Fake*, a 1974 film by Orson Welles that deals with the subject of artistic authorship and authenticity, were used by Mehreen Murtaza, an internationally acclaimed graphic artist, in a photo narrative to reveal the influences on her work.

The narrative, consisting of 122 Power Point slides, “is a non-linear film experiment aimed at creating a space for visitors to get an insight into the process of creating art,” Murtaza told *The Express Tribune*.

“My only intervention is to have put the work of different artists into a sequence to narrate my own story,” she said.

The narrative was synchronized with an industrial track composed by local musician Azeem Tahir.

The exhibit at the Drawing Room Gallery titled '136 MB/Exhibition without Objects,' also featured three other collages by artists Saira Sheikh, Hurmutul Ayn and Rabya Naseer. The exhibition will host a discussion by artist Ayesha Jatoi. Five films in different languages and a TV series recommended by each artist will be screened at the gallery on June 1.

Saira Sheikh's collage is titled "The moral rights of artists have been asserted," a line she takes from French philosopher Jacques Ranciere's book *The Future of the Image*.

Her presentation is an unfinished proposal, aiming to reproduce the Metropolitan Art Museum in New York. It features the work of artists from across the globe.

"The idea to communicate is that an artist's imagination knows no end," said Sheikh, a graduate of the National College of Arts (NCA) in 2000.

Learning how art is produced:

"The show intends to shift the attention from objet d'art displays and focus on the process of artistic practice," Sadia Shirazi, the event curator, said.

"It is for those interested in learning about art production, research and discourse, rather than display," she said.

It requires more than one visit to understand the exhibit, she said.

Artists Rabya Naseer and Hurmatul Ayn, displaying a joint presentation, joined the gallery via Skype.

Their collage featured family pictures, dated handwritten recipes and selected texts from personal letters and diaries.

Naseer said that the Skype conversation was aimed at providing visitors an insight into their interactive media.

"We used personal references to convey what inspires our ideas and work," she said.

Naseer has recommended French film *Jeane Dielman* and *Waiting for Godot*, a film based on the play by Samuel Beckett.

But the process is still hidden:

Speaking to *The Tribune*, Qudsia Rahim, curator of Zahoorul Ikhlq Gallery, said she disagreed that the curator could showcase the process of producing art.

"The works displayed through Power Point are final works," she said.

"If they say the process is being unveiled, I disagree. The process still remains hidden," she said.

An interactive medium such as Power Point is interesting but access to the work of other artists makes it

dangerous, she said.

She said that those using Power Point to display art should be careful not to violate copyrights.

“It is a dangerous but a beautiful tool. The possibilities it offers are endless,” she said.