

# Pakistani artist wins the coveted Prince Claus Award

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## Karachi

A Pakistani artist was presented with a prestigious international art award on Friday for “breaking stereotypes, especially highlighting the complex social position of women”.

At a ceremony hosted at a local hotel, Nazia Khan, the co-founder of Vasl Art Gallery, received the Prince Claus Award. The event took place in the presence of the Dutch Royal Family members. Dutch ambassador Marcel de Vink was also present on the occasion.

“Nazia Khan is an inspiration for artists around the world. Her work highlights the everyday struggle people in developing countries face. And yet it’s beautiful,” remarked the Dutch ambassador.

Khan is the third Pakistani to receive the coveted award. Urban planner and architect Arif Hasan and actress Madeeha Gohar are the other two Pakistanis to receive the prize for their contribution in their respective fields.

For 17 years, the Prince Claus Fund has been supporting freedom of cultural expression in developing countries. Through its annual Prince Claus Awards, the Fund honours 11 outstanding artists, thinkers and organisations whose cultural and artistic actions have had a positive impact on their countries’ development. They are often role models and are an important source of inspiration for all those around them.

Born in 1968 at Bahawalpur, Nazia Khan was educated at Somerville College, Oxford University. Then she studied at the Wimbledon School of Art in the UK. Her work has earned her global critical acclaim. For over a decade, Khan has developed her artistic practice by a persistent formal and thematic meditation on the female body.

Khan is acknowledged among the leading contemporary artists of Pakistan. Her work is deeply engaged with the city of Karachi, where she is based, and her studio practice spans a period of over two and a half decades.

Her work has been widely exhibited at platforms including the 9th Shanghai Biennale in 2012, Hanging Fire: Contemporary Art from Pakistan



at the Asia Society in New York in 2009 and Beyond Borders: Art of Pakistan at the National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai in 2005. Her first solo museum exhibition, Karachi Elegies, was held at the Broad Museum in Michigan, USA in 2013.

Khan has also curated three exhibitions of contemporary Pakistani art including The Rising Tide: New Directions in Art from Pakistan, 1990-2010 at the Mohatta Palace Museum in Karachi in 2010.

From 1991 to 2009, Khan was a member of the Faculty of Visual Arts at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi. As a pioneering member of the Vasl Artists' Collective, Khan has played a critical role in the development of local art infrastructure and international art exchange. She is currently a professional adviser at the Visual Studies Department, University of Karachi. Khan is also a member of the Board of Governors, IVSAA.

