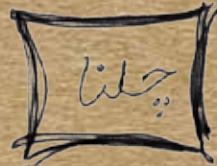


# **WE WALK LAHORE**

**HONI RYAN**





Walking in  
Urdu Language.

# WE WALK LAHORE

HONI RYAN

bustle, beep, a clamour of rickshaw, we're  
*there*, long stare, bricks, dust, an invitation,  
hot corn bites, bikes, ladies sitting side  
saddle, scarf colours whirl, children on  
handlebars, a call to prayer, donkey cart  
laden with bananas, the next with chains of  
dried figs, *feet on the road*, ornately carved  
doorways, barbed wire crowns a fence,  
cut glass in cement, red pomegranate  
juice like blood pouring from narrow alleys  
with children playing, cricket balls, piles of  
broken bricks saved for later, piles of stone,  
it once was, ruins remain, rubbish in piles,  
rubbish burning in smoke, *choke*, lush  
green foliage, women covered, bras for  
sale strewn on the fence, tea boiling in milk  
and sugar transferred to small porcelain  
cups with saucers, generous encounters,  
hostile glances, sheep bellies strung like  
baskets, heads on the counter, hoofs, a clay  
oven built into the front steps, fresh naan,  
potato on sticks, mixed chai sips, a hole  
underfoot, *don't look*, tent homes, beggars  
ask, deserted marketplace, forgotten fruit  
flies, itchy eyes, *blink*, soot, a stack of fabric  
seduces with colour, black burqa, water pipe  
spurt, pot hole, cars exhaust, makeshift table  
and chairs in the middle of the street. *sit. eat.*

Honi Ryan would like to thank everyone who has supported and contributed towards this project, particularly all those who participated in the walks and generously shared their presence, knowledge and reflections while walking in Lahore.

Participant responses and conversations are contributed by Attiq Ahmed, Eemaan Kaleem, Farrukh Adnan, Mariam Ansari, Mariam Waheed, Munadi Ahmed, Naira Mushtaq, Naveed Alam, Rida Fatima, Stefan Winkler, Sultan Ali, Waleed Zafar, Wardah Naeem Bukhari, and others who contributed anonymously.

in Lahore

For several reasons people, don't get a chance to walk, seeing the city from the window of a car or a bus is like watching a film, passing by rapidly renders it into something that is not really real or solid, rather something - that is ephemeral existing for a fraction of time or far away from us. Walking is the opposite of this; experiencing reality and existence of the city, with all its elements, on a <sup>deeper</sup> ~~larger~~ and profound level.

- Sultan

9 November 2016

This artistic research manifested in four main strands, which are represented in this publication as the four chapters listed below. Chronologically the first two chapters would be reversed, as *Subjective Geographies* was the initial research phase, followed by *Walking Presence* and *Footpath Feasibility*. The project culminated at the symposium on *Urbanities - art and public space in Pakistan* at Alhambra Arts Council in December 2016.

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When I got to Lahore, I wasn't sure if I would be able to walk the streets or not. I had heard it was not commonplace to be on foot, not for women, not for the well-to-do. Walking has been both the process and outcome of my work. In Lahore it was my topic and my method for an artistic research project on what it means to be a body in public space in Pakistan.

This walking practice speaks to a right to be physically present in the urban scape and to the importance of that presence for a city and its people to grow together. In my performances in Lahore I invited participants to take time to acknowledge our relationship with our public spaces, exposing our physical presence to it, and vice versa. In the process we contemplate our reciprocal responsibility and interdependence, and imagine how we can give to our environment with each step that we take. It is an act of reduction, creating space to focus in on the moment at hand with generosity.

The streets of Lahore are busy, alive with daily life, and occupied in a myriad of innovative ways. They are also often difficult or hostile for some, especially those without an obvious purpose for being there. There are a multitude of factors that can make it uncomfortable to walk the streets of Lahore: social, environmental, and architectural to name a few. Many women I spoke to said that although they were keen walkers, over time they got tired of the harassment they experienced, and stopped.

The semiotics of the security measures on the streets often led me to conjure images of my flesh being torn apart by barbed wire, sliced by broken glass or impaled on a sharp object; and these images left a violent shadow on harmless actions.

I heard a memory, alive in people still, of times when people did walk the streets comfortably, safely, equally, freely. It was a time not too long ago, and in its place now stands a complexity. This complexity breeds a certain futility, one that surpasses the philosophical futility I have played with in the past in order to welcome failure. This futility threatens hope. In the face of such complexity, I turn to actions of simplicity and reduction so as not to stagnate possibility. There are so many reasons not to do anything, and walking is the most active way to do nothing.

My work activates awareness within the everyday by using mindful techniques such as silence, slow pace, absence, and repetition as performative guidelines for actions in everyday life. These actions are encounters that form relationships, allowing social sculptures to take root. In a time when urbanisation is exponential, it is apt to foster this kind of encounter between a city and its citizens.

To activate an organic and harmonious transformation of the city, first we need to be able to *be*, harmoniously, in the city.



# Walking Presence

## Gulberg, Lahore

Start	End
31°30'21.6"N	31°30'46.2"N
74°21'18.9"E	74°21'15.9"E

November 20, 2016  
20 participants  
2 hours

Mid morning on a Sunday in November, when the weather in Lahore is mild, 20 of us met in a small green enclosure in the central area of Gulberg to take a walk. The intention: to walk together, yet individually, in silence; to activate deep presence and to listen to the city with all of our senses; to walk for the sake of walking in a place where that is rarely done. This walk was led by local women and attended equally by both genders.

**We walked slowly.**

**We did not speak.**

**We did not consume anything, nor use technology.**

We wore white or beige clothing, binding us together — and like individual cells of the blood pulsing through the veins of the city, giving it life, we walked the streets. We walked from a park, through a commercial shopping and eating area, past a couple of schools, to another park, through a domestic colony, down a busy street, and ended in the centre of a local market place.

In Pakistan, a procession in white symbolises a funeral, and this sense of mourning accompanied us on our walk. Women do not attend a funeral procession, and so to the onlooker we were an anomaly. Silently, slowly, and in step, we lost the boundaries of ourselves to each other, and to the space. Many spoke of a sadness that permeated us as we surrendered to these streets on that quiet Sunday morning, and of a liberation in the act of doing so.

Only days before, I had made an application with Lahore City Council to build an installation of a temporary footpath along this route. I did not yet have an answer (our action today, preparing the path with our presence, is a non imposing gesture that does not need official permission) but in the morning when we showed up, the area had been cleaned, cleared of much of the rubbish and debris that had lined this way. I wondered, was it because we said that we were looking at this area that it has been cleaned? Was the idea of our possible presence enough to incite the government step in and care for the space and improve it for the people? If so, then the piece was effective even in its conceptual form.

One of the participants had suggested that we leave a trail of powder behind us, marking our way. Upon researching this gesture I discovered that in Lahore, when an urban area is being surveyed by the government, white powder is dropped in lines in the area. I wanted to communicate to the local community that we would be working along here this week; and so we left behind us a line of pale marble dust.

You will find some participant responses to this walk in the pocket at the back of this book.











پھوٹی جیٹی پٹری  
کالے رنگ ری

صرف دو سفید ریتاواں  
اُگ رائیں تے اُگ بائیں پر تے  
اُٹاں رتے رفتیاں تے اڈیں بھدکتی

تے فر ایک پیل

میں جی اُگ پیل لاواں گا

کدن میں سوچیا سی

میں جی اُگ گھر بناواں گا

اُگ پلاٹ میں دیکھیا سی، شہر تو تھوڑا دور  
فریریا سی پر فر میں شہر سگرن دھمے زدا قریب

رے دھکار چٹا چولا پاکہ

فر ایر، غریب ری مو متوسا طبقہ

چنگے منڈے، سوچے، کوچے

میں نرں جی اتھے شیخ سرے مل جاون

تے میں جی بسن جاساں شہر رے دسیاں

اٹاں رے بیڑاں ورج بھدک اڈیں

کالی چڑی، رس میں، کتے زیر لاوا

میں چٹا چولا پاکے تیرے شہر گھمیا بکریا  
پرین دین دا کوئی ٹھکانہ نہیں لہدا

منڈے کرکٹ کھیڑن

تے سینرں مڑ مڑ کھن

اچے چٹے چولا آلا بابا

ہن جوان جاکان کھریاں

نال کیوں پھرنیدا؟

کوئی مہر گیا، کوئی نہ بیا

لوکے کرکٹ آلا منڈے پھچھوڑے

پہ میں ایناں نرں کی رساں

نظر آسنی تھلے دکان

تے جد کوئی تئے قسے را ٹوٹا نظر آوے

تے جیک کے کوڑا کرکٹ آلا ژبہ ڈھنڈا

میں نرں دینا اسے شہر

چھتے کوڑا سنن ول کوئی ژبہ نہیں

ہن میں ایسیاں ناران گلان

کسی نرں رساں؟

A little bird, black,  
 two white stripes  
 across the right and left wing,  
 flits among the mango branches.  
 Can I call it a sparrow? And then  
 I come across a shady pipal tree. I too  
 shall plant a pipal, I once thought.  
 I too shall build a house. I even bought  
 some land, a little distant from the city,  
 a little close to the quietude I bought some space.  
 Now I've put on a white kurta and walk across the city.  
 I walk through streets wide and narrow, walk past  
 the opulence and poverty of a mundane Sunday.  
 If only I could find a little space here I might as well  
 settle down in the middle of the city...  
 Lead, little black birdie, lead us to a nest.  
 I wear a white kurta and I follow  
 and I seek and I can find no abode.  
 Boys playing cricket turn their heads.  
 Why is this middle aged man roaming around  
 in the company of young all dressed in white?  
 A funeral? An anniversary? A Widow's Day?  
 Why are you all walking so quietly in white?  
 I avoid the curious looks of the roadside cricketers.  
 I lower my gaze, and when I find a shard  
 of broken glass, I bend, I pick, I try to  
 find a garbage can. I can't live in a city  
 where you must walk and walk  
 seeking a repository for the broken.  
 My companions dispersed, try me  
 again, black birdie, I can make do  
 with false consolations.

By Naveed Alam

written in Ghalib market directly after  
participating in Walking Presence











## Walking Presence

An Urban Walk for Pakistan  
activating deep listening to place.

Meet in a pre-decided urban location.

Choose a destination, or a length of time (set an alarm).

Allocate one person to lead, who alone is responsible for the navigation.

Stay together and ~~remain silent~~ *remain silent.*

Do not consume (eat, drink, smoke or buy) anything.

Do not use your phones or cameras or other devices.

Listen intently to the place, with all of your senses. If you drift away into thought, return to your ears, and become aware of the sounds around you until you are present again.

With each step, contemplate how you ~~use~~ give to the city, and how it gives to you everyday.

## Your Walk

-----  
Start

End

-----  
Date:

Participants:

Duration:









# Subjective Geographies

My research method began by asking people: What does walking mean to you? Will you walk with me? Suggest a route and tell me why. In this way, I discovered Gulberg, Model Town, Anarkali, The Cantonment, Icchra, The Walled City, The Railway, Gawalmandi, and surrounding areas on foot. I began to form my own map of the city through the subjective realities and experiences of the individuals with whom I walked.

While we walked, I wrote down my observations and some quotes from my companions, allowing my research and the specifics of the documentation to be shaped by the conditions of walking these streets. After each walk, my companions also wrote down their thoughts, some of which are included here.

As regularly as it was possible to walk, it was not, and the reasons why are an indication of some of the restrictions Lahoris face when setting out for a stroll. But when it does happen, and when accompanied by locals, walking in Lahore is insightful, vulnerable, sometimes exhausting, and always eventful.



### **Jinnah Park to Anarkali**

Start	End
31°33'18.9"N	31°34'04.2"N
74°19'55.2"E	74°18'36.4"E

November 9, 2016  
5 participants  
1.5 hours

Along this route is one of Lahore's main arteries and a place of regular political protest, the Mall road. The day we walked it the doctors were on strike and had occupied an intersection. The traffic stopped, and we were late to meet. Mall road is lined with many historical buildings, although you cannot see them as they are encased with high walls, protected by gates, wire, men, and guns. There is the feeling that these barricades never end, that everything in Lahore is a self contained island, protecting itself from interacting with the city. The spaces in between are left as no-man's land, at risk of becoming toxic through neglect.

It's been a long time since I walked this long. This place brings me joy and sorrow at the same time as it's very dear to my heart and is deeply imbedded in my childhood memory. There's always this rush that I feel looking at the old buildings, moving by them I try to sense the early 1900's. Leaving a mark in this world is one of the most important thing for me and by taking every step that has a decision and motive behind it is like leaving a mark on this very land this is so dear to me. History has a lot in store for us ~~to~~ and by taking every step I feel like unraveling it.

At first I felt a little discomfort of people staring but afterwards it went away. I focused on my walk than others people's job. It was nice to see the life going on around me.

I think if you are mindful of your surrounding and trying to feel and sense things, you feel different. You notice things more.







At the railway station we buy a platform ticket so that we can walk on the platform, but we do not board a train. We follow the tracks as far as we can. We walk through the metal markets where not a single other woman is in sight. Munadi walks here often. He steps onto chaotic roads with a calm and deliberate constancy. "If you keep a steady pace, the cars can predict you, and you won't get hit," he says. I try it later and it works. Here, a pedestrian needs a strategy and bravado to get through unshaken.

We reach Delhi Gate and walk into the ancient walled city from there. In the old city everybody is walking, so it is one place where it is comfortable to be on foot in the street. A welcome relief. There is a refreshing lack of cars, and the small winding streets welcome pedestrians with their lively street life. Historical sites are scattered throughout, some lovingly restored and protected, some in the flux of daily living. Dying daily.

For Munadi, "It's a time capsule. Like a painting in motion."

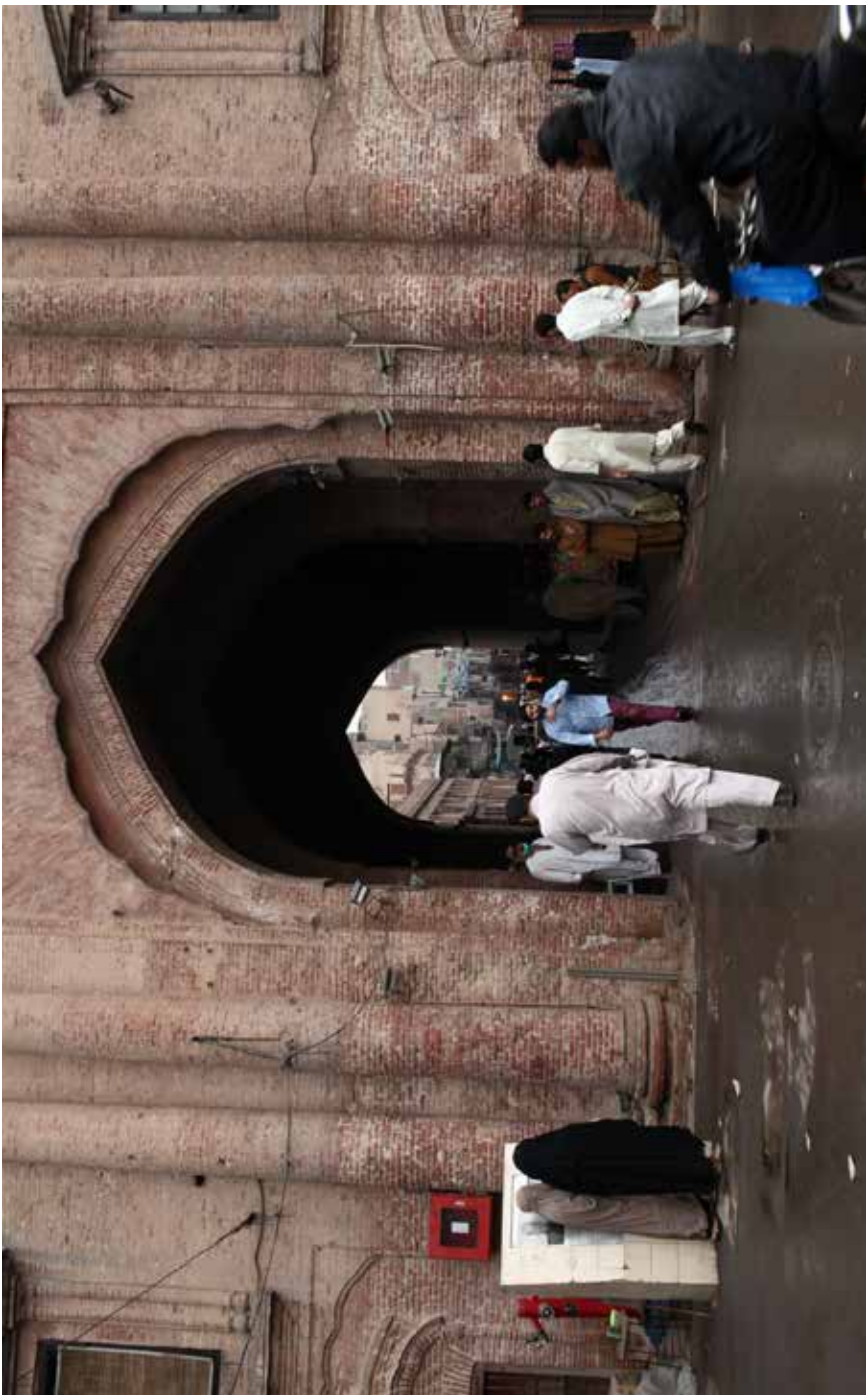
### Railway to Delhi Gate

Start	End
31°34'36.4"N	31°34'59.6"N
74°20'10.3"E	74°19'10.7"E

November 12, 2016

3 participants

1.5 hours



Suddenly you walk. You don't walk to reach a place. There is no aim. The walk is the aim. That changes everything. You start to connect to the pathways, the lanes, the people on the street. Location is where you are, here and now.

I come to this part very often and every time it has that amazing mystical feel to it. It feels like time has somehow stopped. Like you are in the present but ~~some~~ can see or experience the past. History is layered here. Buildings are mixed Mughal, British, and present time all stacked on each other. You can see the time in layers.







It's been a week since the smog that hangs thickly over the city was deemed the worst in forty years. Even before it came I would return after an hour of walking with itchy eyes and a heavy chest.

Now, it is generally recommended that we do not go outside and that we keep all windows shut. Even so, the rooms inside have a dense layer of smog thick to the ceiling. My lungs are beginning to recover and the fever that I got from the pollution has passed.

Perhaps soon I can go walking again,  
if anyone will accompany me.

Now, more than ever, is not the time to walk the streets of Lahore.



## Model Town

Start	End
31°29'13.0"N	31°29'13.0"N
74°18'53.6"E	74°18'53.6"E

November 10, 2016  
2 participants  
1.5 hours

I have a plan to walk in the city today with a young woman named Mariam who wrote to me about the gendered nature of being able to be in public in Pakistan. She wants to walk in Heera Mandi, the (old) red light district of Lahore, a place rich in history and taboos. The perfect place to discuss her theme. However our plans have been halted. Today, the President of Turkey visits the city, and I am advised by my hosts not to go outside for political reasons, that it is not safe. Despite regular alarms of the like, my hosts have rarely been so explicit in their injunctions, and I heed their advice.

Outside, every surface of the inner city is painted in red and green lights to welcome the guest.

And regardless of our inactivity, the sentiment remains in this invitation to walk, written to me by Mariam:

"...walking to me is a job. I was born and raised in Pakistan and I have seen how the idea of walking or being by myself in public has evolved. When I was young it was kind of okay, I went out and played but came back before it was dark outside. As I grew up the idea of me being outside on my own became less and less common and now it's alien to me because I don't walk unless I absolutely have to walk and there's no other option. But you know for whom it's still the same? My brother. I don't blame my parents for it because they are just trying to protect me like all the other parents who don't let their daughters go out alone. I blame our society where gender roles are specifically assigned and anybody who tries to break them is immediately stopped."

Rida, a woman with whom I walked on the outskirts of Model Town, says:

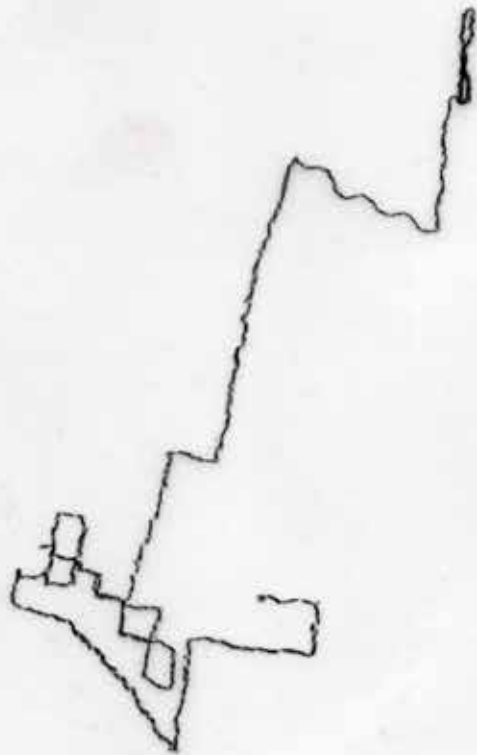
"We need to step out. In order to achieve it, we women just have to step out for leisure. Make it normal.  
We are just going for a walk.

... it's all about how you walk. When they look, I look back. Don't let them feel dominant. Make them think we are equal."

A car edges so close that it forces us to step aside.







## Anarkali

Start	End
31°34'10.0"N	31°33'50.0"N
74°18'43.9"E	74°18'34.4"E

City in Context symposium  
December 2, 2016  
18 participants  
1 hour

As efforts are being carried out passionately across Pakistan to make the first validated dossier of national history since partition, other histories are being turned to rubble and buried.

The Orange Line train construction lies like an open wound through the city. Some of the oldest parts of Lahore have been torn up for it, heritage buildings and sacred sites demolished, and communities ripped apart. "Can they not run this train line underground?" one activist commented, defeated after attempting to maintain the urban fabric around it.

Of one of the affected areas, a lady wrote to me:

"I would like to walk in Krishanager. It's a place that was there before Pakistan was formed, my whole family used to live there. They still have the *mohalla* (community) concept there. There are small houses and small roads and I want to see what life is like for those people."

Only days later she followed with:

"I'm sorry to announce that this place is under construction. I went there a few days ago and it's jam packed and dusty because of the orange line construction. It's not a suitable time to visit."

It's hard not to visit the orange line construction sites. Walking through Anarkali with its rambling Hindu and art deco architecture, you stumble onto it. The barren landscape of cut dirt sits stark and sorrowful in the middle of the otherwise bustling city. And there, there is a stillness, one that could be mistaken for peace.

Some people remain living in the semi-demolished housing around it, determined that they will not be pushed from their homes, but the construction makes it difficult. It reminds me of the way they cleared many domestic buildings in China — just a painted symbol on the building in red meant that you had to leave, this place was zoned for development. But relocation for some is not an option, so whole families remain in ruins of buildings, with their amenities mostly cut off, kids playing in the rubble outside.







# Footpath Feasibility

Along the same route that we had prepared in the *Walking Presence* performance, I carried out some action-research in collaboration with Lahori architect Attiq Ahmed that culminated in a change of governmental urban planning to include seven foot wide footpaths in a heavily pedestrian travelled area of Gulberg in central Lahore. This research took the form of a 1200 foot long temporary footpath as a public art installation.

We had observed that the space for pedestrians had been overtaken by cars, vendors, or building owners pushing their frontages out until there was no space to walk, except on the busy and often dangerous roads. We wanted to gauge how the public would use designated walkways if they were available. We called the work *Footpath Feasibility*.

Attiq and I considered various sites for our intervention, and we marked out a stretch connecting two green areas with adjacent schools, and which passed through a central shopping and eating district. The area facilitates the convergence of an unusually diverse range of demographics. The urban uses shift significantly as the day goes from morning stillness, to school children and their parents coming and going from a lower class housing colony or affluent private houses, to corporate and domestic workers arriving and departing, and on to evening traffic of diners and restaurant workers until the late hours.

In the process of gaining permission to install the footpath, I met with the DCO (District Coordination Officer) in the government offices of Lahore to discuss the idea. I appreciated the DCO's openness to look to the arts for ideas on how to rethink the urban scape. He talked about their project to beautify the city through art with light installations under bridges, which had been inspired by another artwork from the Lahore Biennale Foundation. I explained that this project would not be spectacular, but offered that beauty could be found in its functionality, the daily experiences people have with it, and the social relations it fosters. We then met with seven more departments of local government, with whom we surveyed the site for the logistics. They immediately decided that these paths were needed and would be included in the forthcoming development plans for the area.









Although the authorities never considered the temporary nature of our intervention, Attiq and I were given permission to move ahead with constructing a temporary footpath as artistic research. The whole area was cleaned and, with the help of local labourers, over 1200 feet of brick and plaster-paint paths were installed, including five pedestrian crossings. Finally, extra rubbish bins were installed along the route, and a private pledge was made to put benches and bins in the parks that were now connected, enhancing their use as community gathering areas.

When it was done, we watched as the people on foot moved to the threshold of the path and the road, staying mainly on the road. Most thought the space was not for them. The next day we stencilled a small walking man on the path, and people began to occupy it. Families moved easily across it, the elderly stopped safely to rest, and a group of school children walked comfortably from their gate to the park at the other end. Vendors began to occupy the area, and others sat on the path, watching the day go by. I wondered if some of them would sleep there that night. This white path was quickly coloured by the charming chaos that is the streets of Lahore, and so long as there was a raised edge stopping the automobiles, it was helping to relieve the people on foot from the congestion of the motor cars and bikes. After three days, the bricks were removed, and the plaster turned to dust.

It is more than a path that is needed to enhance pedestrian accessibility in Pakistan's urban space. It is ultimately a cultural question. But where does the shift begin? Local activists like the *Girls At Dhabas* are bravely embodying the gestures needed to guide this shift; and Attiq with his urban agency *Occo* continue to work on the infrastructure for viable walkways in Lahore.











# Alhamra Installation

## City in Context symposium

Dec 01 — Dec 04, 2016

Alhamra Arts Council, Alhamra Arts Gallery and  
Annemarie-Schimmel-Haus, Lahore

This project culminated as a part of the four day symposium *City In Context*, which brought together all the work under the broader project *Urbanities - art and public space in Pakistan. We Walk Lahore* took the symposium to the streets with a presentation in the form of an urban walk similar to the *Walking Presence* performance. It was also represented as an installation of materials from the streets into a traditional white cube gallery, along with photo and video documentation of the public actions. Finally, the project was discussed in a public panel with urbanists and artists from Pakistan, Egypt, Germany, Australia, and the US.

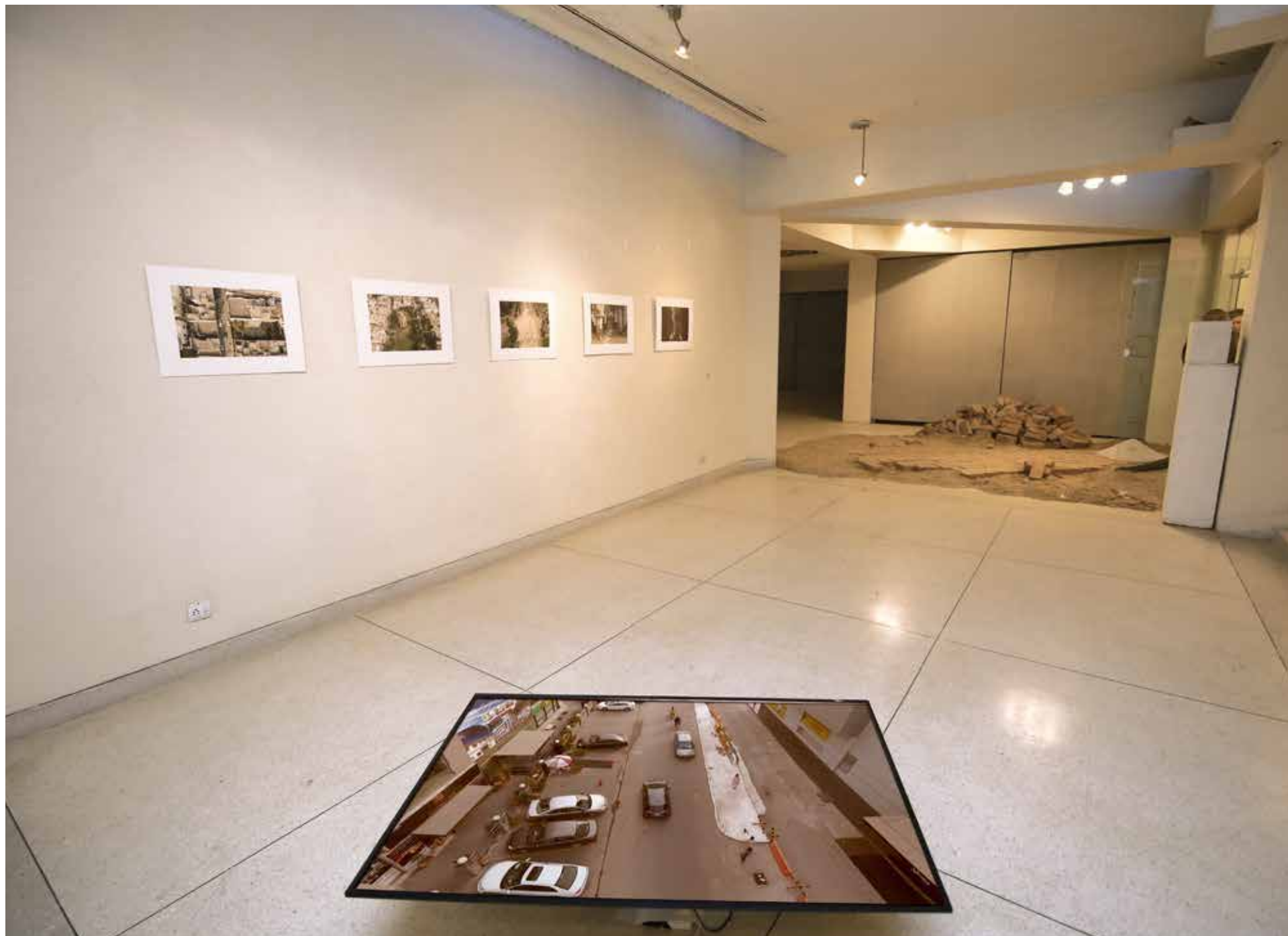
These presentations were active inversions, bringing the outside in and the inside out. A reflection on how an environment (a city or otherwise) is internalised by its inhabitants, while also becoming them.







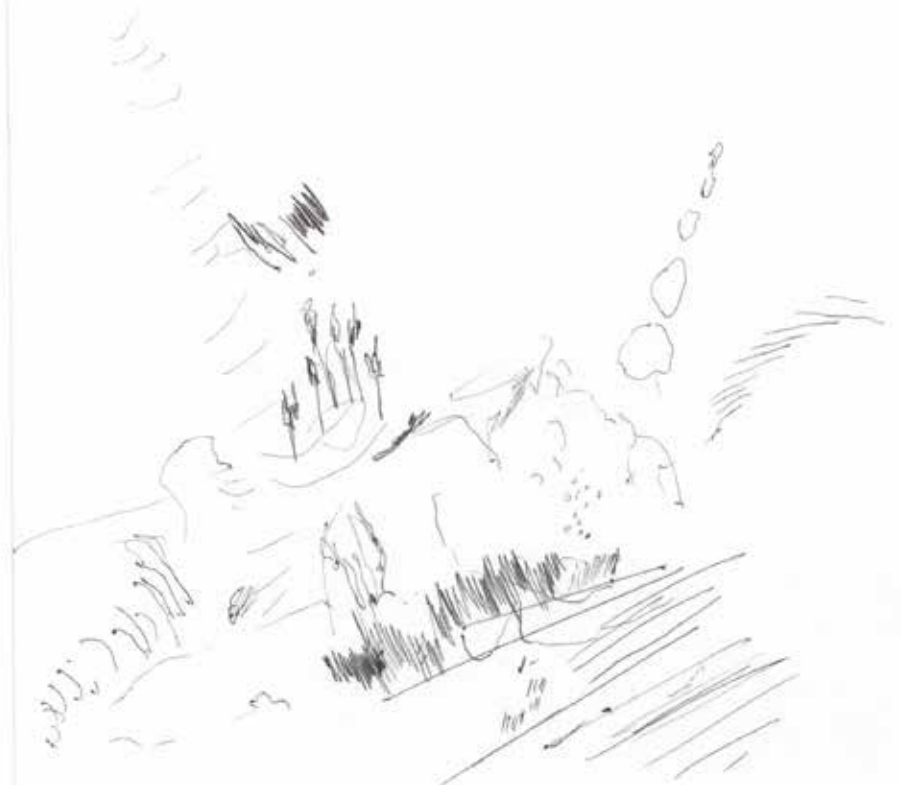






after a what felt like an hour  
long walk, all the while my  
mind a labyrinth of sounds -  
now that I sit down I hear  
nothing.

almost as if my mind and  
my body were both taking  
a breather.



I feel that we are not talking  
and walking together in a unit it an  
other form of unity or a group of  
activists who were trying or telling something  
to others.

The experience was ....

relaxing - It was nice to be able to wander aimlessly - without any sense of purpose, without feeling rushed or stressed. It was comforting to be in a group. I know as a woman on my own, it is almost impossible to walk in this city without being stared at or harassed. Of course we were also stared at, but it didn't feel as uncomfortable because we were in a group.

It also felt empowering to occupy the streets as pedestrians. Of course there was also a feeling of self-consciousness as well because I am sure people thought we looked silly and strange.

And many people were also occupying the space of the city without being so self-conscious about it, which also made me feel that this exceptional feeling that we had was also ~~of the~~ g-like bourgeoisie. Overall, however, I had the experience liberating.

I look in the mirror everyday and ask myself to look me in the eye regardless of what the person in the mirror ~~wants~~ wanted to say. It's a cry that my reflection hears everyday but I heard the same cry walking past the streets of this city today, "Look! Yes you! Look me in the eye." I looked but the image was faded away similar to the ones that my reflection sees in my eye everyday. It seems like ~~it's~~ it's tired of the redundant act and it's not a cry anymore it's a habit that's hard to leave.

When we start walking, I felt something inside my body which I cannot describe through words but from the past one week, I was facing some kind of depression which this walk made me realize that what kind of depression I was facing, I should thank god cause I have seen so many people while walking they were in tension, some had financial issues. I heard someone talking about their problem and then I thought my problem is nothing in front of them. My Husband was not allowing me to go for this walk but Honestly getting out my bed, and making it for this walk, will never forget. I ~~see~~<sup>saw</sup> many happy faces and thinking of myself. I forgot everything whatever was in my mind. I feel much motivated now after this walk. It's like a new start in my life.

Walking in a group felt somewhat strange, usually people walk in such groups for funerals or protest but we were walking for the sake of walking which felt strangely liberating. It was awkward at first, the way people looked at us with curiosity but no one approached us due to the sheer number of us, like a herd of antelope. It was strange, how as soon as we separated, people started asking for our purpose. There are two types of walking, one where the act is for a purpose and one where the act is the purpose itself. Doing the latter is like redemption for all time we have underestimated the human body to carry out its function. If our Roads were better, if the people were inviting, then what would stop us from walking.



I'd like to do this walk again, feel this place out at different times of the day. The path took us through a community I had never seen the inside of, and at this time in my life, when I'm thinking of putting down roots, I'm drawn to places like that community - narrow alleys, open doors, children running around, children working, adults playing, plants growing out of unlikely corners, in unlikely directions, the smell of someone's bath soap, someone cooking "paayay".

But I'd like to be alone next time, why walk in a line, on the path laid out, why write between the lines? Why not make a path through the roofs? That's what I'd like to do next!

~~Thank you!!!~~

**We Walk Lahore** was created by Honi Ryan during her two month artist residency in Lahore, Pakistan, hosted by Lahore Biennale Foundation, in the framework of **Urbanities – art and public space in Pakistan**.

**Urbanities – art and public space in Pakistan** is a critical exploration of the urban, its complexities and possibilities under the premise of individual artistic work and research approaches. Throughout 2016, the partner project between the Goethe-Institut Pakistan and the Lahore Biennale Foundation, in collaboration with Vast Artists' Collective, Annemarie-Schimmel-Haus, Marvi Mazhar & Associates, and other partners, incited discursive and artistic contributions related to Pakistan's controversial and contested urban space. By recollecting Henri Lefebvre's "right to the city" for critical discussion, the project aimed to enable a broad audience to engage with contemporary art and urban space, and to link the emerging generation of artists, curators and urban researchers in Pakistan with the scenes in Germany within the broader framework of the curatorial processes leading up to the Lahore Biennale.

The project **Urbanities – art and public space in Pakistan** was conceived by Stefan Winkler, Goethe-Institut Pakistan, and directed and co-curated by Sara-Duana Meyer.

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bustle, beep, a clamour of rickshaw, we're  
*there*, long stare, bricks, dust, an invitation,  
hot corn bites, bikes, ladies sitting side  
saddle, scarf colours ~~whirl~~, children on  
handlebars, a call to prayer, donkey cart  
laden with bananas, the next with chains of  
dried figs, *feet on the road*, ornately carved  
doorways, barbed wire crowns a fence,  
cut glass in cement, red pomegranate  
juice like blood pouring from narrow alleys  
with children playing, cricket balls, piles of  
broken bricks saved for later, piles of stone,  
it once was, ruins remain, rubbish in piles,  
rubbish burning in smoke, *choke*, lush  
green foliage, women covered, bras for  
sale strewn on the fence, tea boiling in milk  
and sugar transferred to small porcelain  
cups with saucers, generous encounters,  
hostile glances, sheep bellies strung like  
baskets, heads on the counter, hoofs, a clay  
oven built into the front steps, fresh naan,  
potato on sticks, mixed chai sips, a hole  
underfoot, *don't look*, tent homes, beggars  
ask, deserted marketplace, forgotten fruit  
flies, itchy eyes, *blink*, soot, a stack of fabric  
seduces with colour, black burqa, water pipe  
spurt, pot hole, cars exhaust, makeshift table  
and chairs in the middle of the street. *sit. eat.*