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Painting by Masuma Halal
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Moeen Faruqi
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Mona Naqsh: painting by her.

Masuma Halal Khawaja (b.1967 at Karachi) graduated in Fine Arts from the University of Karachi in 1990, majoring in Painting. She captured public attention when she exhibited a special show of 50 women artists in the National Gallery, Islamabad. She had painted a woman largely hidden in piles of bed linen, with only one leg partly visible and one arm against repression, rendered in a new and skilful way. Still more powerful is her "Inferno" which shows flames leaping at a woman's face.

Moeen Faruqi is another new artist who came into the limelight when he exhibited an exhibition was held at Karachi in 1993, although he had been taking part in group exhibitions since 1989. His work is figurative and thematic and he is deeply exercised by the human imagery of his own (head tapering down to a pointed chin, thin neck and limbs) which serves his purpose. The up-raised pupils of the sad eyes express the weight of alienation when the individual is lost in a crowd, especially when he is a displaced person. Primarily an educationist and a recognized poet, he is a well-known artist. He impresses more by the drama he depicts and the feelings he conveys than by technical skill.

Mona Naqsh (b. 1968) exhibited her first painting in an art gallery in 1987 and became an eminent figure painter, Jamil Naqsh. Mona selected flowers as the subject of her paintings into prominence in the 90s. She has the benefit of constant guidance from her parents and thus filled a void in the art scene. If the American woman artist Georgia O'Keefe could build up such a high reputation with her much enlarged and thoughtful and philosophical flowers, why not a Pakistani artist? The flamboyance of colouring and the elimination of lines. However, the huge bunches of same flowers that she painted create a saturation and profusion of colour that is not dainty and delicate but overpowers. Far from the botanical exactness of the olden Mughal flower studies, she seems to merge masses of flowers to create a burst of colour. The big crystal vase invariably provides an excuse for bewildering play of light and colour. She has much to learn and new directions to explore but the beginning is promising.