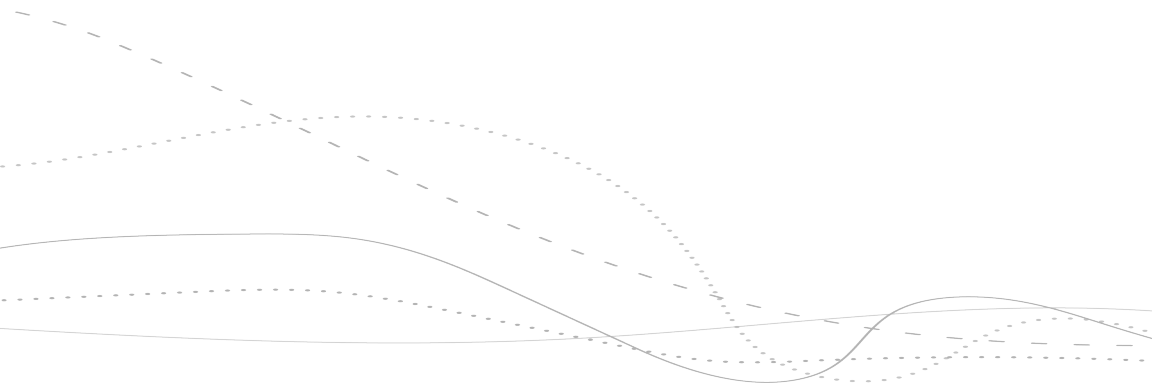


# How to Mango a Mushaira

Sabaah  
July, 2025



“You should not listen to the critique and just start doing” Sabar said, sitting on her bed facing me, when I was complaining.

Whenever Sabar would sit up on her bed with her blanket on her legs and call out “Sabaah tu kya kar rahi hai”, I knew the next hour we would drift into our usual conversation about our lives and art. Sometimes Hasvini would pop in our room and give her take about what we should do in the studio or make plans about what her next project is going to look like. Some nights, I would start a rant about “Do you know what happened in the studio today?” Some spicy or juicy gossip would lead Gunnica and Sabar to put their iPads and laptops aside, and we would indulge ourselves in these conversations again.

“I know I should start doing... but something doesn’t feel right...” We all knew our studio practices were not limited to the studio (in Nishtha’s case, it never occurred in her studio).

These conversations were a big part of what we were doing. During the evening, we would plan out our breaks according to the weather and some days it would happen in the kitchen studio when Nishtha didn’t want to walk all the way to get coffee from Sandeep bhaiya and then would decide to make chai (for everyone).

We would converse while waiting for the chai. Sunil Kumawat would also tell us about what new addition he is planning for our space, and Susanta Mandal would remind us how close we are to the final display.

Then the ‘conversations’ would be taken over by Priyesh Gothwal, he would sit on a chair while making a dad joke and continue carving the wooden spoon that I had started (he just took it like the conversations) “Haan batao...”

And Sabar and I would ask him questions for which no one has answers, but then he would answer or try to.



He would do this for all of us separately and together. Sometimes with all our professors (Gautami Raju, Payal Arya, Gopa Trivedi, Sunil K. and Susanta M.), that would be taxing for all, including the professors.

Then sometimes all of us would sit in the project room ( Avril, Manya, Mehar, Arjun, Arya, Rishita, Hasvini, Gunnica, Meher, Sabar, Nishtha, Nora, Sanna and me) and Jeebesh B. would come every Thursday and have similar conversations with us (he called it his side gig)

These conversations in and around a ‘C’ shaped studio become our breakfast, lunch and dinner

*A tangled loop unravelled itself as words came out, as actions occurred and as people heard. When people spoke, the lights went on... the loop started moving freely— it became a Mushaira*

This form of speaking, doing and listening is how conversations occur. Speaking, doing, and listening can sometimes interchange positions, and sometimes they form a loop, and sometimes a spiral.

The mangoed mushaira simply adopted this form as spaces for conversations occurred and reoccurred again and again around us. I just happened to record this one.











Tomorrow 3PM studio  
8 APRIL (Sabaah & Sabaah)

Manged Mushaira

Proffessor's & Haters

Not allowed.

Ps. Its tomorrow just got to know







My mothers hands ~~always~~ smelled  
like garlic, turmeric and coriander

My grandmother's hands smell ~~like~~  
like ghee.

and their skin is supple and tender.

like silk, and honey.

On festivals their kisses <sup>usually</sup> ~~left a~~  
leave <sup>a</sup> lipstick stain on my cheeks  
then ~~and~~ they smelled like roses and  
agarbati's, sometimes like chandan  
and sometime baby powder, and  
<sup>a</sup> ~~interest~~ <sup>tree</sup> as a child I ~~remember their base~~  
used to see their <sup>than today</sup> base stomachs  
more often peeking from a sari.

Sometimes like <sup>a</sup> forest tree

ne  
us a child ~~9~~ ~~remembers~~ ~~their~~ ~~base~~  
used to see <sup>them</sup> their base stomachs  
more often <sup>than today</sup> speaking from a sari.

manier times they became pillows  
for my head and seats for ~~my~~ <sup>for my use</sup> ~~me~~ <sup>for me</sup>  
touching. my sisters and me.  
for sit. wore

both ~~were~~ <sup>wear</sup> ~~bangles~~ <sup>wore</sup> of gold bangles

Simple and plain; ~~not~~ <sup>they</sup> felt  
like a part of their skin.

Supple and tender like silk.

and ~~to~~ <sup>their honeyed</sup> ~~their~~ lobes hang with heavy eaving

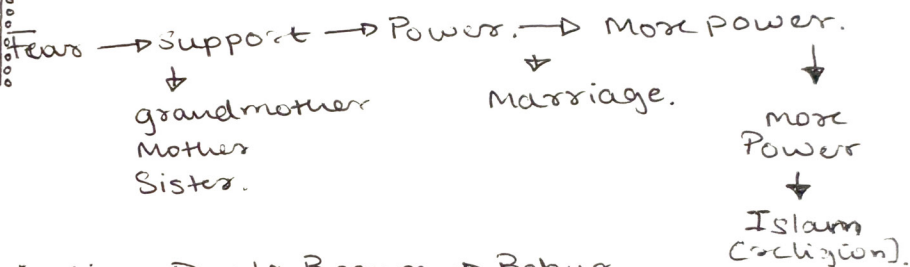
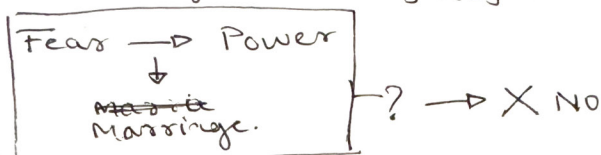
they adorn and my grandmother  
with a big red bindi between  
her brows ~~Smiling always~~ always  
my sisters I ~~remember~~ remember <sup>Smiling</sup>

were sometimes my worst enemy  
the younger one always hiding  
and stealing

communal ~~to~~ doings become power.

~~First~~ relation to women is through marriage  
~~the~~ to cultivate changed connection by marrying  
 Powerful changed women.

↳ emerges the title "guregen" son in law.



~~As~~ Aisan Daula Begum → Babur  
 grandmother  
 ↓  
 Intelligent  
 and good planner.

Honored in the name of religion  
~~Honored in the name of religion~~ → Aisan Daulat.  
 ↓  
 exudes power  
 and is fearless.

Surrender and silence and acceptance as a widow.  
 becomes the Power of women then.  
 they came out stronger.

I see my mother  
 like I see the mid wives  
 I can feel both  
 my house and the quarters with with  
 the idea of womanhood lies.

I have my mother's hair  
 my grandmother's nose  
 my great grand mother's face  
 and all their fbes.

I have my mother's anger  
 my grandmother's wit  
 and as to what I am told  
 my great grand mother's face.

I have my mother's frantic pace  
 my grandmother's eagle like gaze  
 and once my grand father cried as  
 I have my great grand mother's face.

I have my mother's anxiety  
 my grandmother's heightened emotional sensitivity  
 and by this you know my great grandmo-  
 ther's face

I have all of this but none of the  
glorious glory  
all I do is cook up stories,  
I will remind myself from now  
that myself is not my own.







