



## **STAIN**

*Old Cathcart Parish Church in Glasgow and Lahore, Pakistan*

As in most contemporary European countries, Scotland's population worships diverse faiths. All of these faiths however, share the common desire of helping people to make sense of their purpose on earth and to cope with their daily lives. I want to create pieces of art that denote 'faith' and acknowledge the existence of a force that is infinitely greater than any individual being. In addition, I am concerned with how faith, particularly fundamentalist versions of Christianity and Islam, is shaping the modern political process in a way that affects the whole world. Therefore, when Reverend Neil Galbraith approached me to develop an idea for the South facing window of Old Cathcart Parish Church in Glasgow, I felt that this was a real opportunity to convey a strong sense of a particular tradition of public art i.e. stained glass, as well as reflecting the 'here and now.'. Stained Glass windows are akin to 'time capsules of faith' and often illustrate living faith. However, in creating my piece, I would like it to be regarded as a 'gift of faith' as opposed to being a gift of the wealthy, as stained glass windows often were in the past.

**STAIN** will be international and actively link and circle the relationship between Scotland and Pakistan. It will explore the nature of belief and look at how Islam is practised in Glasgow and examine the teaching of Christianity in Lahore, Pakistan. Two art works will be created to transcend the geographical boundaries

in order to question peoples' faith. In Glasgow the permanent work will consist of thousands of multi - coloured glass bangles, (gifts from the female community of East Pollokshields), hanging in front of the South window of Old Cathcart Parish Church to create a curtain of beautiful stained glass effect. In Lahore the temporary work will be determined once a venue is identified.

All my previous work has involved social engagement with the public. I have a record of successful involvement with a wide range of communities, often promoting difficult ideas and displaying my ability to inspire others. Over the last few years NESTA has allowed me to develop new ways of working with other cultures. The form this has taken is mainly in relating to a particular place or certain social aspects of it. Like *Terrible Beauty* , which is concerned with cultural longing. **STAIN** will enable, for the first time, my working practice to go beyond social engagement, to embrace the notion of belief. Its international dimension, with considerable research being conducted both here in Scotland and in Pakistan, will also be made tangible in a local setting in that direct connections will be made between two distinct communities in Glasgow i.e. the Muslims of Pollokshields and the Christians in Cathcart.

Nicola Atkinson.Davidson 2005