

# Let's Go Fly a Kite

## Guggenheim Recipient to Use Kites to Connect Children Across the Globe

BY SALA LEVIN '10

In Mahwish Chishty's native Pakistan, and across South Asia, kites are celebrated with festivals and are prized for their high-flying prowess. But in Pakistan, especially near the border with Afghanistan, kites can sometimes fly into danger: Living near a war zone has made the very act of going outside risky.

Last year, Chishty MFA '08 was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, a grant that will allow her to connect children and families living near the U.S.-Mexico border with children and families living near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border by building kites. Chishty plans to invite children in both locations to create kites, which they will exchange and later fly at the same time as video captures the scene for livestreaming.

"People will be able to see each other at two extreme ends of the world," says Chishty. "They'll be able to connect."



Chishty's inspiration for the project came from a 13-year-old Pakistani boy who told an Amnesty International conference that he plays outdoors only when it's raining, because drones can't operate then.

Drones have played a pivotal role in Chishty's work since 2011, when she visited Pakistan and discovered that her friends and family were talking about drone strikes—a topic Chishty hadn't heard much about in the U.S.