

The image features a central logo for the Dhaka Art Summit. The logo consists of a pink square with the words "DHAKA", "ART", and "SUMMIT" stacked vertically in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. This central element is surrounded by a series of approximately 12 concentric white octagonal outlines. The entire composition is set against a background of a light blue-grey, heavily textured surface, possibly concrete or stone, which shows signs of wear and cracking. The background is divided into four quadrants by a vertical white line and a horizontal white line that intersect at the center of the octagonal pattern.

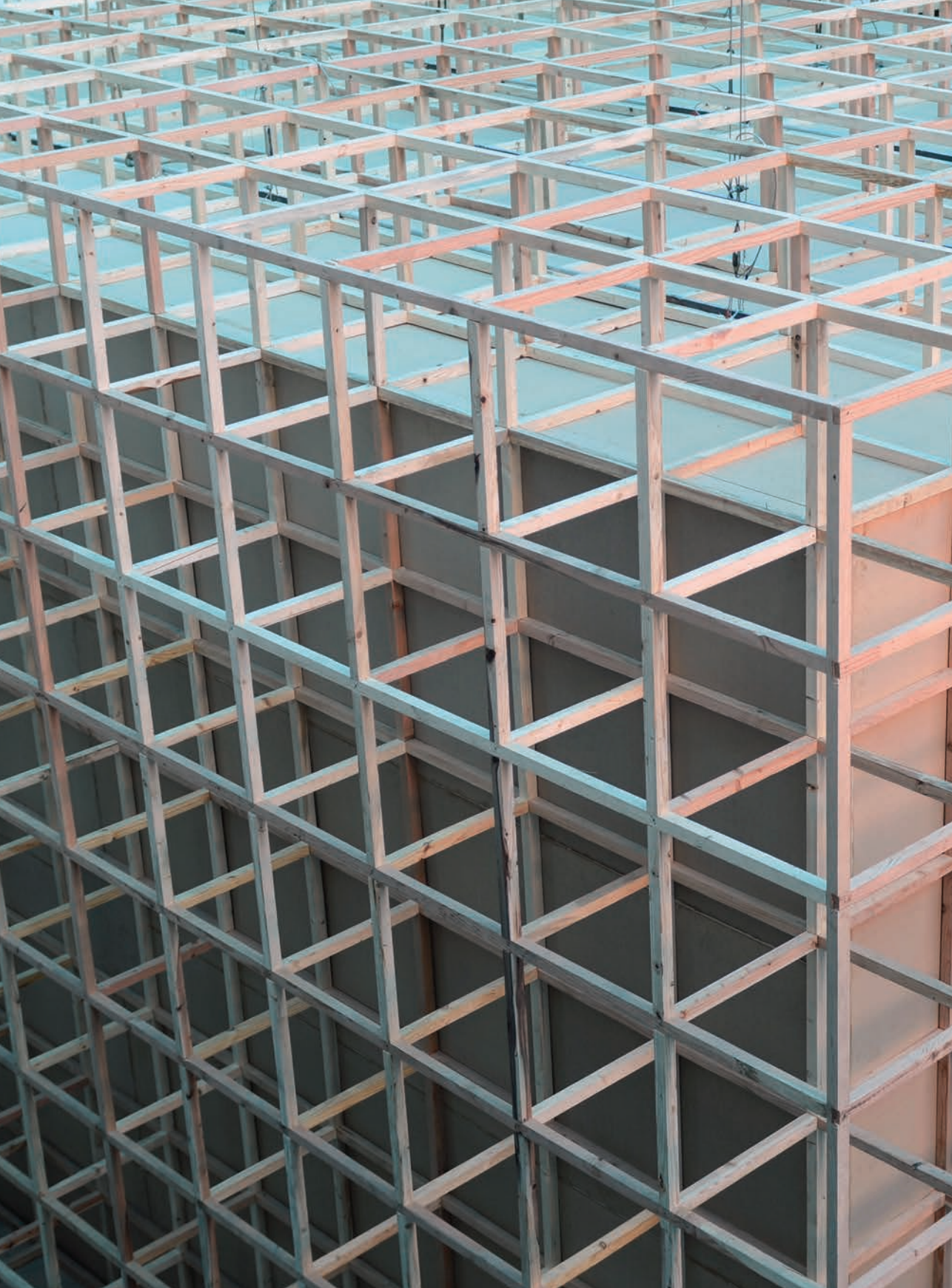
**DHAKA
ART
SUMMIT**

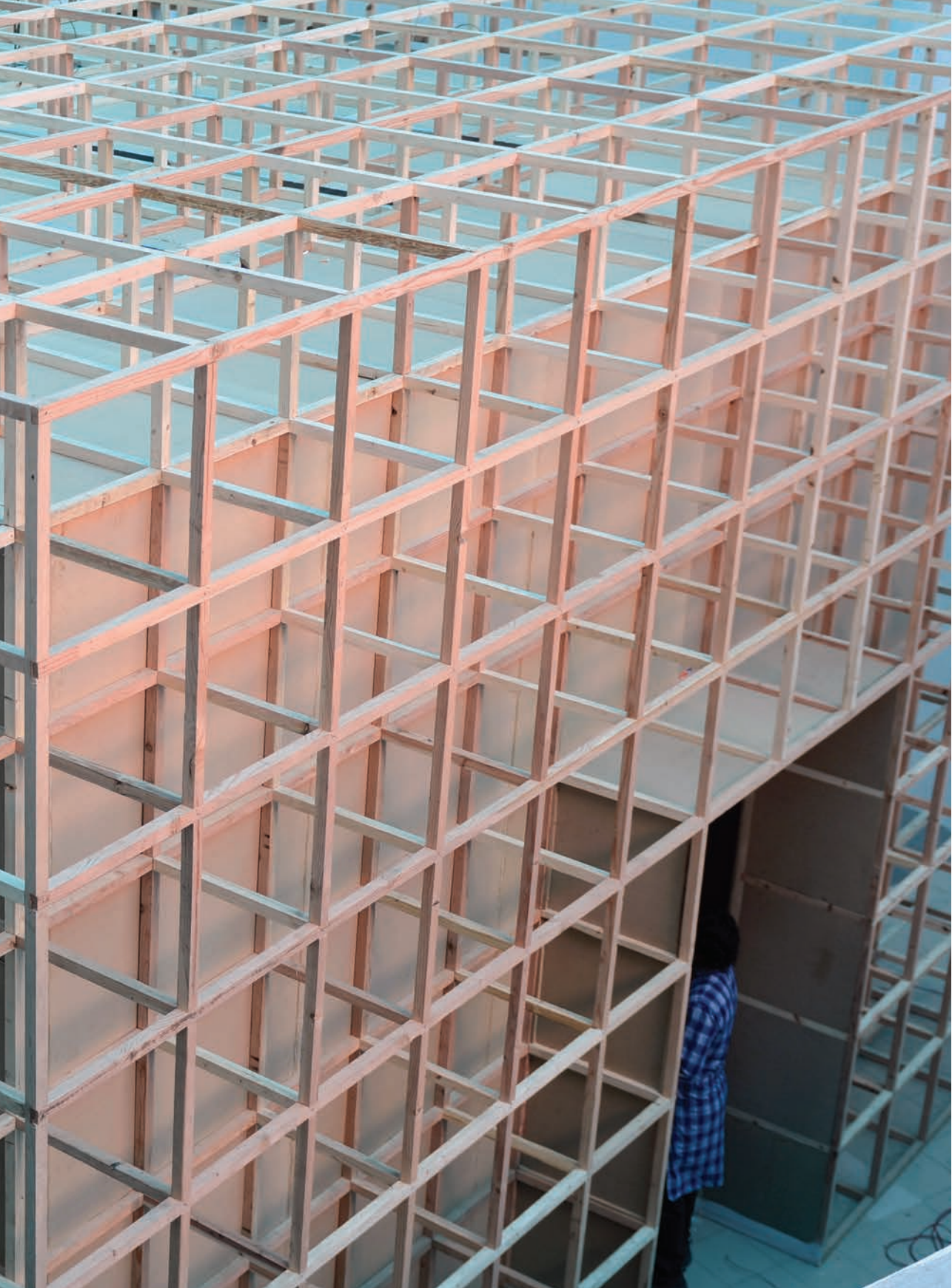


SAMDANI
Art Foundation



বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমী





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Foreword



NADIA SAMDANI

Welcome to the second edition of the Dhaka Art Summit, the world's largest non-commercial art festival dedicated to South Asian art. We were very encouraged by the positive response that the first edition of the Dhaka Art Summit received. The first edition mainly focused on artists in Bangladesh. Over 250 artists from the country had the opportunity to exhibit their work during the three day art festival to an audience of over 50,000 people. We were pleased to see that after the Summit, international museums like the Guggenheim, the Tate Modern and the British Museum began acquiring works by Bangladeshi contemporary artists for their permanent collections.

Despite the large interest in South Asian art globally, there has not been a united and dedicated platform to highlight art from the region without any commercial agendas, which often limit the type of work that can be shown. We created the Dhaka Art Summit with this in mind, and from this second edition onwards, it will solely focus on South Asian contemporary art, welcoming art lovers from all over the globe to come learn about the vibrant art practices that have roots in this part of the world.

We have been privileged to work alongside seven curators who have worked diligently and passionately over the last year to present South Asian Art at its best over the 120,000 square feet of the Shilpakala Academy. The second edition of the Dhaka Art Summit presents a panoramic survey of artists from South Asian countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and features internationally acclaimed figures as well as emerging talent.

The Summit is proud to present 14 solo art projects by internationally acclaimed and established artists from the region, most of which are new commissions supported by the Samdani Art Foundation for the Dhaka Art Summit. The exciting programme also includes: thirteen experimental film screenings, nine performances, five curated group exhibitions and a city-wide public art project across 160 billboards and road signs throughout the city which have been transformed by Raqs Media Collective. This will be the largest public art project to take place in Bangladesh to date. We are also thrilled to bring together 33 local and international galleries who we invited to Dhaka so that they can share highlights of their engagement with South Asian art with you.

The Summit will also include a series of panel discussions that will bring together various collectors, curators and art professionals, allowing them to share their perspectives on collecting, innovation, institution building and the history and future potential for artists in Bangladesh. We hope that this three-day meeting of the minds will foster increased exchange between Bangladesh and the rest of the world, and that other people in Bangladesh will be inspired to contribute to the growth of artistic infrastructure in the country.

Another highlight of the Dhaka Art Summit is an exhibition of the 10 shortlisted artists for the Samdani Art Award. As part of the bi-annual Samdani Art Award, the Samdani Art Foundation has collaborated with the Delfina Foundation in the United Kingdom to award an outstanding young Bangladeshi artist the opportunity to attend a three-month residency at the Delfina Foundation in London. This is one of the most respected residency programmes in the world, and we are so thankful for the opportunity to enable this wonderful institution to engage with art from Bangladesh.

The Dhaka Art Summit has kept young audiences in mind and we are thrilled to realise a new interactive workshop for school children, which will be conducted by renowned Indian Artist Reena Saini Kallat. We hope that we can contribute to new generations' excitement about art and are honored to invite schools to tour the summit on the 9th of February.

On behalf of the organisers, I would like to thank Mr. Liaquat Ali Lucky, Director General, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Mr. Farooq Sobhan, Chairman of the Summit Organising Committee, Mrs. Diana Campbell Betancourt, Artistic Director, Samdani Art Foundation, all our partners, participating artists, galleries, sponsors, and most importantly the Samdani Art Foundation and Dhaka Art Summit team who have been working for the past year to make this event a success. We look forward to see you again during the 3rd edition of the Dhaka Art Summit in 2016.



Nadia Samdani
Director
Dhaka Art Summit

LIAQUAT ALI LUCKY

My heartiest welcome to the guests of the second edition of the Dhaka Art Summit!

It is a great honour and privilege to work alongside the Samdani Art Foundation and host the largest South Asian art-dedicated festival in the world. We hope that the second edition will augment the new interest in Bangladeshi contemporary art and take it to new heights by bringing together and highlighting the best of art from the South Asian region. The first edition welcomed 50,000 visitors, and we hope this edition will surpass that fantastic statistic.

Since its inception, the National Academy of Fine and Performing Arts (Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy) has striven to promote and be involved in different endeavours that highlight the creative work of our country including painting, sculpture, graphic art, pottery, photography, theatre, music etc. We support these creative practices through our facilities and programming. Out of the many activities of the academy such as organizing workshops, seminars, short-term specialized trainings, providing scholarships/financial grants for talented artists, and organizing competitions in the various fields of fine and performing arts, we hope to build the academy into a hub for young and old artists and theatre enthusiasts alike. We also hope to have made a significant difference in preserving the enthusiasm for art and culture.

The Academy has organized tributes to Nobel laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore; musical programmes dedicated to Fakir Lalon Shah's timeless verses; highlighted and preserved the beautiful music of indigenous tribes from around our country; staged musical events involving Jari, Sari, Baul, Murshidi and many others; organized photography exhibitions; preserved and promoted the dying traditional Putul Nach theatre; encouraged different drama groups and performers to stage plays by assisting them with staging facilities, auditoriums, seminar rooms and studios; as well as offered audiences an array of diverse experiences throughout the years.

After arranging the Asian Art Biennale and firmly establishing Bangladesh's international artistic status, the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy realized the immense potential of providing contemporary artists with exposure through international channels of enabling cultural development through combining the rich history of the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy with the awe-inspiring elements of the Dhaka Art Summit.

After the success of the first edition of the Dhaka Art Summit, the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy took the opportunity to collaborate with the Samdani Art Foundation for the second time to present you with the best of South Asian Art. This tremendous platform includes five exhibitions by local and international curators; 14 solo art projects by South Asian celebrated artists like Jitish Kallat, Shilpa Gupta, Mithu Sen, Rashid Rana, and Shahzia Sikander; a city-wide public art project by internationally acclaimed Raq Media Collective; and presentations by Bangladeshi and international galleries including galleries from Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Karachi, Islamabad, Istanbul, Colombo and Barcelona. There will be several performances and experimental film screenings by South Asian artists as well. The Summit will include three Speaker's Panels, inviting speakers from all over the world including representatives from Tate Modern and British Museum from England, the Guggenheim from New York, the Centre Pompidou from Paris, the Triangle Network from United Kingdom, KHOJ from India, Colombo Biennale from Sri Lanka, etc. The Samdani Art Foundation has also collaborated with Delfina Foundation for the Samdani Art Award, which we are most excited about.

I would like to thank Samdani Art Foundation and all the other partners and organizers who have worked very hard on this event.

Hope to see you all during the brilliant Summit.

Best wishes,



Liaquat Ali Lucky
Director General
Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

FAROOQ SOBHAN

Distinguished guests, friends and art lovers, greetings from the Dhaka Art Summit!

On behalf of the Dhaka Art Summit's Organizing Committee, I would like to welcome you to the Second Dhaka Art Summit. After the successful debut of the Dhaka Art Summit in 2012, the second Summit is being organized on a much larger scale, bringing together the best of art from all over South Asia and sharing it with audiences in Bangladesh as well as an eminent group of artists, art critics, gallery owners, museums, and art lovers from the region and beyond.

South Asian art has experienced significant growth over the past decade, and the increased interest in this part of the world is understandable. India has been a leader in the region when it comes to highlighting the vibrancy of its art scene, followed by Pakistan. The art scene in Bangladesh today is bursting with vitality, innovation and imagination. Since Bangladesh does not have a contemporary art museum, and there are few opportunities for international artists to exhibit in Bangladesh, the Dhaka Art Summit (DAS) intends to serve as a platform for both Bangladesh art and also the best art from the region. This exchange of talent and ideas across borders will, we are confident, help in taking both Bangladesh art and that of the region to new heights. We believe that the Second Dhaka Art Summit will provide an opportunity for art lovers in Bangladesh, in the region and beyond, to savor and enjoy under one roof, the very best of South Asian contemporary art. We want this to be an exciting, and indeed an unforgettable experience, for both the participating artists, all the visitors to DAS and our many friends from home and abroad.

In addition to the rich exhibition program, DAS is also presenting a series of talks by leading artists, experts and eminent personalities, from South Asia and beyond who have an interest in South Asian art. We believe that this will help to present and project the many great and exciting developments in contemporary art in South Asia today to the rest of the world.

I would like to thank our partner Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy; Co-partners- Alliance Francaise, Indeitex Chair of Spanish Language and Culture, Goethe Institut, British Council, Britto Arts Trust, Swiss Arts Council ProHelvetia; Award Partner, Delfina Foundation; Logistics Partner, Nippon Express; Marketing Partner, Grey; Equipment Partner, Sharjah Art Foundation; and all our media partners for supporting this event. My special thanks to all our organizing committee members and the Dhaka Art Summit and the Samdani Art Foundation team, without whose support and hard work these two DAS would never have happened. I would also like to extend a very special thanks to all the curators who have worked so very hard to put together this three-day event.

We look forward to welcoming you again to the third Dhaka Art Summit in 2016 which we are confident will include even more exciting and path breaking exhibits, which will form a part of a breath-taking programme. Our aim and ambition is to make the Dhaka Art Summit a landmark event on the global art calendar: a must-attend event for every art lover, in Bangladesh, in South Asia, and in the world.



Farooq Sobhan
Chairman
Organizing Committee, Dhaka Art Summit

DIANA CAMPBELL BETANCOURT

Thank you so much for your interest in the Second Edition of the Dhaka Art Summit, which we hope will be a catalyst to greater interest, research, understanding, and opportunities for South Asian art. I have been privileged to work with Rajeeb and Nadia Samdani and their team for the last ten months and their work and commitment to sharing these three days with you is humbling and admirable. The Samdani Art Foundation is using its resources to enable new thought and new creativity, rather than simply accumulate and own the best of what already exists. With this comes a risk as we are bringing new ideas to life in Bangladesh for the first time, and we are so thrilled that you are committing your time and attention to this country and the wider region.

The Foundation has been at its core primarily about sharing; sharing ideas and resources and opportunities to help soften barriers that keep audiences in South Asia from enjoying art from other countries (barriers which are financial, technical, logistical, political, etc.), and which keep other countries from becoming more engaged with the region. We had nearly a 100% success rate when inviting illustrious speakers to our panels, and inviting artists to show in Bangladesh for the first time. With this great trust comes great responsibility from us, and we hope this will be the beginning of longer-term partnerships.

One of the things that impressed me most about working on this exhibition was that the Summit was not a “job” for our team, the staff kept “Global Standard Time,” responding in the middle of the night to queries ranging from helium purity levels and basket weaving techniques. We are also fortunate to have the expertise of Eidotech to help us show works that would have been otherwise impossible to install in this part of the world. I have been thrilled to see staff from various industries, such as packaged foods and property development, jumping at the opportunity to work with artists on realizing their ideas, and this is only the beginning. We are also very grateful to Tessa Jackson from Iniva for her help with this publication.

Another key aspect of the Foundation is its role as an enabler. With our curated exhibitions, the Samdanis decided to give opportunities for young curators (myself included) to develop exhibitions that would be difficult for them to realize in their own home countries, as most opportunities allowed to young curators are limited to commercial galleries. We also enabled artists to extend their research into Bangladesh, and I was impressed when the production grant for Shilpa Gupta’s project was not for the creation of a massive artwork, but was rather used for her and her team to travel to border enclaves of Bangladesh within India and to learn firsthand about barriers to movement for people and goods between the two countries.

I am also thrilled to announce the next artist that the Samdani Art Foundation will be enabling under my leadership as Artistic Director, Shahzia Sikander. Shahzia has long been working with the history of migration, colonialism, and border politics, and when you see her here in Dhaka, she will be beginning her research to look at the historical ties between East and West Pakistan. At the Samdani Art Foundation, we strongly believe that studying shared histories can soften borders, and the Dhaka Art Summit is just one of the ways which we can work toward increasing exchange across South Asia and with the rest of the world.

I have been so privileged to work with energetic, unwavering patrons who are supporting art from the region without any commercial agenda, who want to share works that people can see at the best museums and biennales with local audiences in their home country, and who want to give life to new works which hopefully can be exhibited in other parts of the world. When the Guggenheim acquired Tayeba Begum Lipi’s “Love Bed” after seeing it as a commission from the first DAS, the Samdanis realized that they did not get as much satisfaction from collecting for their home as they did from enabling new audiences to connect with Bangladesh. The Second DAS is a testament to that, and moving forward, we will be developing new initiatives supported by the Foundation with this energy fueling it.

We hope to work with many of you to support your research and passion for South Asia, and to see many of the artists and works that are part of the Dhaka Art Summit in future exhibitions all over the world. Thank you so much to our partners for making this possible, and I am especially grateful to all of the artists for lending their creative energy and faith to this exciting but challenging exhibition. On behalf of the Foundation, I am also grateful to Shabnam Lilani, Thierry Betancourt, Splendour, Rasika Kajaria, Susan Hapgood, Jet Airways, Priya Jhaveri, Sree Banerjee Goswami, Shireen Gandhi, Eve Lemesle, Frances Loeffler, Reema Gehi, Shanay Jhaveri, Ashiesh Shah, and the countless other people who went out of their way with logistical acrobatics to make this exhibition happen.

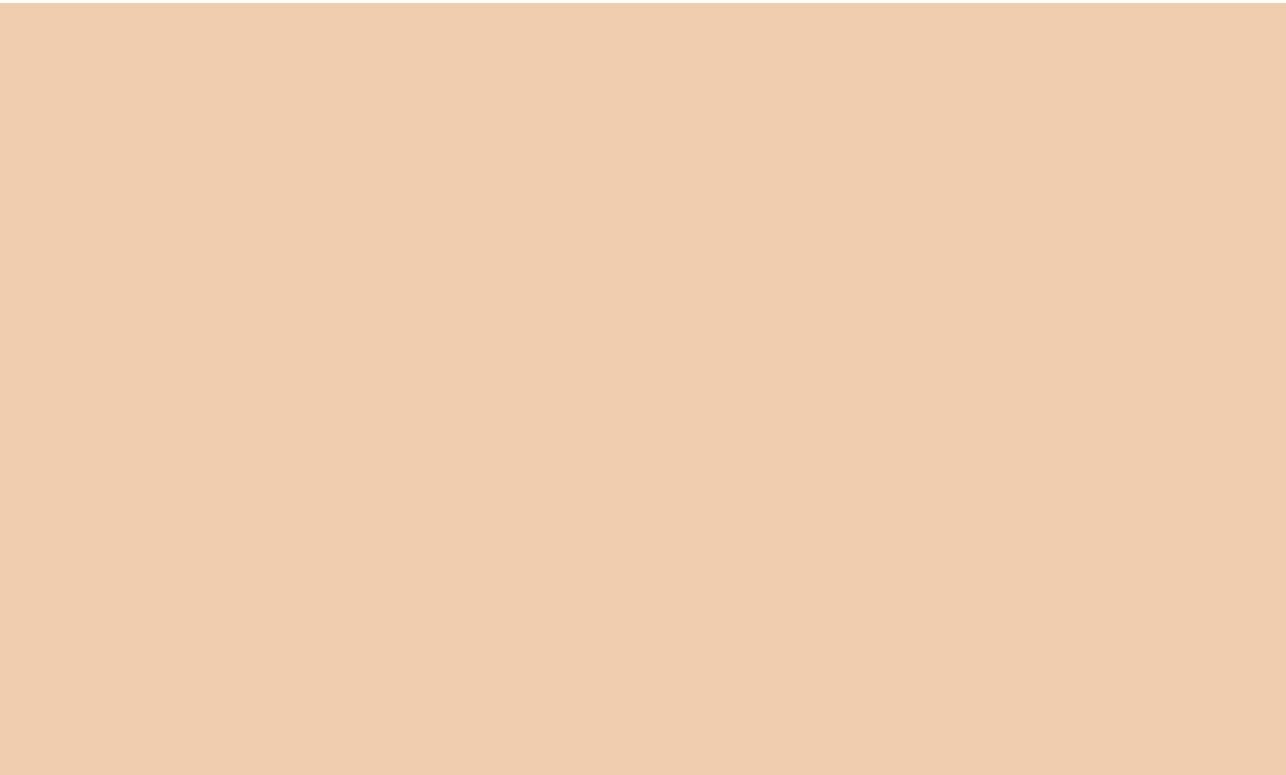

Best,



Diana Campbell Betancourt
Artistic Director
Samdani Art Foundation

Country Vignettes

Firsthand accounts by Contemporary Artists from South Asia



You Probably Expect Me to Drink Fresh Pomegranate Juice

Afghanistan Country Report by Aman Mojadidi

Sitting with a friend one afternoon in the garden of Flower Street Café we started speaking about contemporary artistic production. He had recently returned to Kabul after undertaking a four-year BA Fine Art in Lahore. He was excited to discuss the course and show his portfolio which had expanded, in terms of conceptual development, use of materials and technical skill since I had met him several years previously. But he was already worried about missing the stimulating conversations and collaborative encouragement he had experienced in Lahore, and did not know whether he would be equally stimulated now that he was back. He was uncertain about his own continued growth as an artist and that of contemporary art in the country.

Not an uncommon concern among artists in Afghanistan, it was still true that the possibilities and opportunities in contemporary artistic practice, development, and exhibition available today could not have been imagined a decade ago. The *Center for Contemporary Art of Afghanistan (CCAA)* founded by Rahraw Omarzad continues to run painting classes and hold exhibitions. The *Afghan Contemporary Art Prize (ACAP)* that provides workshops and exhibition opportunities to artists from across the country was resurrected in 2013 for its 4th edition, after a two-year hiatus. Young artist-run collectives such as *Taasha (Hidden)* and *Behrang (Colourless)* are becoming more active (with Behrang receiving a Prince Claus Fund grant in 2013 and two of its 'members' beginning work on *Black Shorwa*, an online arts magazine), and, the engagement for the best part of 2012 by *DOCUMENTA (13)'s Afghan Seminars* that brought together Afghan and international artists through workshops, seminars, and exhibitions in Kassel and Kabul.

However it is more complicated than that. Although I am as worried as my friend about the fate of artistic production here, the sources of my worry differ. For me, what links the above activities is that they were all born in the last decade within the context of conflict, including the invasion by, and nation building projects of, Western nations. Therefore it becomes a sticky endeavour trying to separate them from that experience, especially when the production of art is often so intricately tied to the environment within which it is produced.

Furthermore, although one cannot imagine that conflict is chic, the cultural commodification of Afghanistan's instability can be seen both in the country and abroad. Take a look at the West's film and television industry where any number of productions contain references to Afghanistan and its war (*Zero Dark Thirty* and *Homeland* being two of the most recent). Then jump to arts and culture in Afghanistan itself, where besides the above-mentioned initiatives, governments have been throwing money at a variety of contemporary art projects such as exhibitions, rock music festivals and filmmaking (led by the USA's public diplomacy budget that according to SIGAR - the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction, totaled \$148 million in 2010-11 alone). All these are within the scope of their propaganda (called "information campaigns" when undertaken by America) to show that more than a decade of economic and militaristic interventions have led to the creation of a contemporary culture that not only helps justify their initial invasion, but will also help validate their pending withdrawal from the country.

This exaggerated glamorisation of contemporary culture has, like carnival mirrors, created a distorted reflection of reality. But when 'reality' is in fact 'surreal,' how does one think that contemporary artists and their practice might grow? Especially when the hyper inundation and proliferation of contemporary culture and foreign funding, over the last decade, has rather than actually penetrated it, largely washed over the cultural psyche of Afghan society, like a bucket of water emptied over hard, dry earth rushing out to cover a large swath of land, evaporating before it can properly penetrate the ground to nourish the soil.

Is it therefore even possible to create art within such a context without feeling as though you are a part of that same process of cultural commodification? When artistic production is co-opted by foreign political interest that largely focuses itself around themes and subjects that serve the propagandist needs of donor nations rather than the creative potential of artists themselves? Organise an exhibition of twenty artists on September 21st, the International Day of Peace, and you get at least fifteen pieces that incorporate a white dove into the work somehow. Do the same on March 8th, International Women's Day and you will get a room full of blue burqas.

Contemporary art in Afghanistan is seen as an exotic anomaly, and so has become romanticised in ways that ignore depth of content and artistic freedom, but rather promote what others (whether a foreign donor nation or a gallery/museum curator or an international media outlet) want to see being produced in the country. In what could be deemed quintessential 'Saidian' Orientalism, Afghan artists are expected to be not only the voice of a culture and a nation, but to be a particular voice, one that is familiar enough, but still exotic enough; keeping the Afghan artist locked in replicating imagery or themes that serve as geopolitical scarlet letters, for the viewer to easily locate the artist.

But at an even deeper level, what happens when we 'Orientalise' ourselves, like Mustafa Sa'eed in the classic postcolonial novel *Season of Migration to the North* by Sudanese author Tayeb Saleh? What happens when we create work that only fits within expected caricatures of what Afghan artists (be they visual artists, writers, filmmakers, etc.) should produce? How about when the very production of work is directly tied to a foreign initiated project with a foreign-defined theme, leading us further down the path of creative dependency? Contemporary artistic production in Afghanistan is the messy offspring of Conflict and Development, and long will be the road traveled if the child wants to become something more than its parents.

Back in that café with my friend I ordered a fresh pomegranate juice, and thought about all these issues that can confuse one's mind. At least mine has been clouded already, and these 'big picture' debates have to some extent become the conceptual prison in which I find us incarcerated; where the depth of our work becomes reduced to mundane bumper sticker philosophy like 'Art for Peace' or 'Art Against War'. But I tried to settle into the moment and simply appreciate hanging out with a friend I had not seen in a while, speaking about art.

And then it occurred to me that perhaps this muddy beginning was simply a necessary phase through which contemporary artistic practice must pass in Afghanistan, before finding itself in a place where the question *What is Afghan about your art?* is no longer asked (or, at the very least, not systematically); a place where we as artists cease to make asking *ourselves* that question a mandatory precursor to our own practice, and feel free enough to pursue ideas and create works that are, perhaps, unexpected.

A place where we can drink whatever we want to drink.

“Mango people” are Looking for this Epoch’s Quamrul Hassan

Bangladesh Country Vignette by Naeem Mohaiemen

An apocryphal story circulates about a Dhaka group show. One of the mixed media pieces was of students being fed into a meat grinder (perhaps an homage to the film adaptation of Pink Floyd’s *The Wall*). The night after the opening, the piece was quietly removed. Someone had complained: too political. Was the story true? I still have not been able to trace a photo of the piece, or the name of the artist. Maybe we Dhaka people dreamed it all up, one feverish night. Truth or illusion, the moral of the story is clear: art galleries are leaning toward less friction; everyone seems to want to get along, go along.

Once, there were other frictions that concerned Bangladeshi artists— the challenge of bypassing gatekeepers. Entering the citadels of art institutions used to be an arduous task. However, Dhaka University’s Charukala (Fine Arts) department has several professors who still encourage students to color outside the lines. Three such rule-breakers are Shishir Bhattacharjee (member of the 1980s artist collective *Shomoy*, with Wakilur Rahman and others), Nisar Hossain (a crucial source of art scholarship in Bengali), and Lalarukh Selim (who has brought in artists from Slade in London to modernize curriculum). Other innovators include Nasimul Duke of the same faculty (encouraging cinema clubs on campus to make up for the curriculum gap) and Dhali Al Mamoon of Chittagong’s Charukala (along with his partner and fellow artist Dilara Begum Jolly)¹. Spain-based Monirul Islam and the late Aminul Islam have also taken pains to mentor the younger generation. However, outside of these few lonely figures, most doors do tend to stay closed. As a result, institutions such as the long-running Dhaka Biennial has been slow to recognize photography and film works—Yasmine Kabir and Ronni Ahmed’s collaborative project on shipbreaking yards was one of the rare exceptions.

Nothing stays still, and even this staid setup is starting to face challenges. Britto took up the earlier trajectory of the *Shomoy* art collective, and by now has international reach. On the documentary photography track, *Drik / Pathshala* has improved on earlier work by Bangladesh Photography Society and others. By now, younger artists may even consider these two organizations to be the new mainstream, with their own institutional gravity. Perhaps inspired to start again, even newer collectives continue to form, including *Porapara* and *Jog* in Chittagong, *Crac Art Camp* in Jessore, *OGCJM* (Only God Can Judge Me) and *Latitude Longitude* in Dhaka, etc. Thoroughly outside the mainstream was the artist-run free space of *Chobir Haat*, although the post-Shahbag CCTV mood may rob that space of its energy and spontaneity. Besides these artist-run initiatives, there are many new and large organizations: Dhaka Art Center, Bengal Lounge, and the *Samdani Art Foundation*. In a situation of rapid flux, many new movements are taking shape (self-published artist books, comic book publishing, cafes that double as temporary galleries, and anonymous graffiti collectives). For those at ease with a slower order of things, the new movements might be causing restlessness. But for anyone invested in an expanded role of the visual arts within hearts and minds, all such ruptures are welcome.

Something worries me though, and that is the absence of political friction within the work itself, and its seeming distance from the events turning the country upside down. Must we all get along, with all edges rubbed away? What happened to that student mincemeat mixed media piece? Did it exist, and if so, how could it vanish without protest? After all our protests against the destruction of baul statues in 2008², how did Dhaka get littered by corporate-sponsored statues? Why is Louis Kahn’s magnum opus *Shangshad Bhavan* now off limits to local artists and architects (neither Mahbubur Rahman’s performance project, nor Nathaniel Kahn’s *My Architect* would now be possible)³? Why did a fellow artist caution me to stay away from the *Musee Guimet* controversy of a few years back with this warning: “The deaf-mute has no enemies in this city.”⁴? Is that the paradigm for artists now in Bangladesh’s current moment? Stay in the studio and stay out of trouble? If artists cannot be the gadflies, provocateurs, truth-tellers, and political activists, they may lose a vital part of their heartbeat.

Before Bangladesh had a professionalized *shushil shomaj* (civil society), culture workers were a primary force of resistance to anti-democratic forces— from the 1952 language riots against the attempt to impose Urdu as the state

1 “Far from the madding crowd,” *New Age Xtra*, June 29, 2012. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/98624314/Far-from-the-madding-crowd>

2 “Smash Palace,” *Daily Star*, November 3, 2008. <http://archive.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=61520>

3 “Fortress of Solitude,” *Daily Star*, March 27, 2008. <http://archive.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=29386>

4 “Asterix and the Big Fight,” *Forum*, February 2011. <http://archive.thedailystar.net/forum/2011/February/asterix.htm>

language of Pakistan, and through the 1960s state attempts to erase the “Hindu” poet Rabindranath Tagore. By 1968, books and magazines were waging hidden sorties against the Pakistani military junta. This reached surreal heights when Shawkat Osman’s satirical novel *Kritodasher Hashi* (The Slave’s Laugh) received an award from the same military dictator who was the object of satire. After Bangladesh became independent from Pakistan in 1971, the cultural arena focused on building up “national identity.” This unfortunately meant the arrival of an unquestioning cultural politics, with a focus on institutionalization and material rewards for artists (chairmanship of institutions for the older guard, fame and money for the younger). Perhaps this demonstrated that alternative cultural spaces take on their sharpest political positions when placed in an oppositional role. Dissident cultural politics came back to the forefront during the pro-democracy movement of the late 1980s. By 1991, cultural activists (artists, theater actors, writers, poets) were at the frontlines of the demands to end the military regime. Veteran artist Quamrul Hassan’s most famous political intervention had been as designer of the “Annihilate these Demons” poster for the 1971 war effort, with his drawing of a vampiric Pakistani General Yahya Khan. This many years later, he scrawled another satirical drawing (“Country in grips of world shameless”) on his deathbed, signaling the role of the post-1947 generation (trained by, or compatriots of, Charukala founder Zainul Abedin)—until death, they spoke against the foibles of society and nation.

Quamrul Hassan’s generation was formed within the twin crucibles of 1947 and 1971. We cannot expect similar energies from a generation that came of age under the shadows of *Esho Gan Shikhi* (1980s), *Choli Ka Piche* (1990s), and now “Planet Doraemon.” The war is long over, but new struggles continue to vibrate through the body politic. With a few exceptions, artists are notably absent from these struggles. Of course, artists need to be able to make a living, and the surge of new opportunities may be healthy for the arts. At the same time, the art infrastructure also needs to reclaim its role of holding up a mirror to society, and speaking truth to power. The advertising world’s “D Juice” generation has evolved its own argot, and one of the most succinct ones is “Mango People”—a tongue-in-cheek literal translation of *aam janata* (common people). Who speaks for mango people? The visual arts should step in to take up that role, in the tradition of Quamrul Hassan and many others after him.

Air Conditioning

India Country Vignette by Nikhil Chopra

In January 2005, I moved from New York City to Mumbai after completing a Masters in Painting. I was full of anticipation and eager to plunge into the contemporary art scene. I had been away for 6 years and in that time artists had gone from their jhola-chappal image to swanky chauffer driven sedans. Art opening had gone from chai gatherings at Jehangir Art Gallery to posh parties in slick galleries, open bars, banquet buffet dinners catered from 5 star kitchens. To my surprise, I had stepped into a booming art scene.

The hype and excitement around art was for the picking. I was feeling impatient to put to the test ideas that I had developed in art school. In December 2005, without gallery support, I set up my own performance installation and photography exhibition in Kitab Mahal, Fort Mumbai. People gathered, the questions were interesting, my audience was intrigued and my critics were sceptical. But it was not until Khoj International Artists' Association in Delhi invited me for a performance art residency that I realized that India was ready to include performance art in its discourse around contemporary art. I was struck by Khoj's program and its attitude; studio and residence for artists to play with ideas, exclusive of market pressure. In contrast to the commercial gallery, Khoj was an oasis of grungy, edgy open studio days with rum and coke, a reminder that art is most exciting under the surface of the main stream.

Early on in our time in Mumbai, my wife Madhavi and I were making rounds of Colaba and stumbled upon a small gallery, Philips Contemporary, tucked behind Philips Antiques. We walked in and were thrilled to see a show by the Pakistani artist Rashid Rana. The person sitting at the desk was friendly, she smiled and welcomed us, handed us catalogs and had an insightful and long conversation about the show, the gallery and ourselves. She introduced her self as Tara Lal and proceeded to invite us to the opening of their next show, as she was very keen for us to meet her husband and partner, Mortimer Chatterjee. This would be the beginning of a long relationship. Mortimer and Tara soon set up Chatterjee and Lal and we embarked on a relationship as gallery and artist but first as friends. Mortimer and Tara were there to encourage my first steps, be excited about risqué ideas and since we were of the same generation coming back to a new India, we understood each other's language and shared our desire to challenge audiences. Our first solo together in November 2007 was a 72 hours live performance piece, that ran continuously in a space just above their new gallery in Colaba. The empty shell was converted into a drawing performance installation, hundreds of people came to witness the transformation. They watched for long periods of time, returned repeatedly, stayed all night, slept over and stayed till the end. The desire in the audience to see was deeply felt and gave me the desire to keep on pushing. The experience was new for all of us. Performance art was here to stake it claim.

Markets boom and markets fall. By the time 2009 came around, while giants like Bodhi Art Gallery caved in, Indian Contemporary Art was on a world tour. Major survey shows brought Indian artists to the Serpentine in London, to the Mori Museum in Tokyo, to the Centre Pompidou in Paris and many more major public institutions in first world nations. The interest in the Indian economy globally brought with it the opportunity for artists to act as cultural ambassadors and give insight into contemporary Indian culture. While it has its problems, like bottling artists based on their association with a nation-state, it was also the chance to take the dialogue from a small insular domestic art world to a global playing field. The stakes increased and while a lot of us wanted to give our very best we also felt responsible for breaking stereotypical assumptions about India and its socio-political landscape.

The move to Mumbai also came with the stress of surviving in a massive megalopolis. My early performances, residencies and experiments were not going to pay the bills. After a couple of failed graphic design jobs, I took on a teaching position in an art school that was at its inception phase. I was able to fall back on my teaching experience from Ohio State University (where part of my funding came from teaching undergrads). Together with my colleague and artist Shilpa Joglekar we set up the Department of Fine Arts and Craft at Rachana Sansad Academy in Prabhadevi, Mumbai. While looking back at the gaps in our own art education, we designed a syllabus and a methodology that was based on long studio hours, research, analysis and critiques. What was most exciting was that we were talking to young impressionable adults, who came to art school full of energy, ready to think and work. The interactions were intimate and we often addressed the disconnect between art education and the art world. I often wonder why not enough artists with active studio practices put time and thought into interacting with art students, in demystifying

the relationship artists have with their practice. How else will art education be current? The frustration is also at the level where the administrations of institutions lack the vision (or the education themselves) to imagine the potential for or the role of an art school in a neighbourhood, a city, a country and the world at large. It is probably why we still don't have a world-class museum for contemporary art in India.

I don't teach at Rachana Sansad any more. I, along with Madhavi, make short workshops for art students and professionals. We work independently though usually link ourselves to universities and institutions as a means to make an intervention. This way we get to our favourite part, the studio, quickly and effectively.

I also don't live in Mumbai anymore. I live in Goa. We live in a 4,000 square feet, 200-year-old Goan mansion with a garden. It is a studio and a home. Space and time are no more a luxury. The internet has allowed me to stay connected to the world. I appreciate the good air while on a skype chat, sitting under my mango tree. As we start to grow roots here in Goa, we are excited about the process of writing a grant to set up a performance space; a place to make and present live art and to house artist that travel from far to be residents here. Perhaps the bridge that art needs to make is through small, independent establishments, outside of Delhi and Mumbai, activating neighbourhoods and connecting communities.

No Longer/Not Yet

Myanmar Country Vignette By Moe Satt

After the Myanmar government shifted its foreign policy from that of a closed socialist society to a new era of “semi-disclosure” in 1990, contemporary artists within the country were finally given a glimpse into the shifting currents of the global art world. In this new era, artists were able to enjoy new exposure to previously unknown art forms such as installation, performance, video, and photography. Themes and movements that had been practiced by avant-gardes in the West since the 1960s were adopted by Myanmar artists and hotly debated in local magazines throughout the 1990s. After experimenting in the 90s, in the 2000s as global opportunities began to slowly trickle in, artists began to realize that they had to write artist statements and concept notes, and as there were no curators or gallerists to assist in this process, artists in Myanmar began to become serious about writing about their own work as a matter of necessity.

The first generation of contemporary artists practicing in Myanmar emerged from this ecosystem, but the number of artists in this experimental group was quite limited and could be counted on one hand. I can frankly say, however, that contemporary art and culture in the country began to mature after the year 2000 with a new generation of artists, the generation that was born in the 1980s. Key events occurred during this important decade such as major riots, uprisings, marches, demonstrations, and protests, and one memorable date is 8 August 1988, thereafter known as the 8888 Uprising.

As recent as 10 years ago, there are very few contemporary artists in Myanmar, and only a very select few get a chance to exhibit their work abroad. The world outside of Myanmar therefore only knows of a miniscule number of artists. What about the rest? I disagree that these artists are better than the rest due solely to their international exposure. Historically, Myanmar artists have received little attention and little recognition from the international art community. Previously, whenever/wherever institutions organized “Southeast Asia Contemporary Art events”, artists from Myanmar are not invited to take part in them. What does this mean?

It either means that Myanmar is marginalized in the region, or that the art community is unaware of the existence of contemporary artists in Myanmar. Do institutions in the region believe that art in Myanmar is limited to traditional forms? Fighting against this reality, artists are trying to build a bridge between the local art scene in Myanmar and the international art scene. In addition to working on their own practice, artists such as the senior artist Aye Ko runs a space called the New Zero art space and worked to organize an “International Multi-Media Art Festival.” One of the pioneering contemporary female artists, Phyu Mon, runs a program called the “Blue Wind Women’s Contemporary Art Festival,” and I run a program called ‘Beyond Pressure Festival of Contemporary Art’. Performance artist Nyan Lin Htet runs the ‘Theatre of the Disturbed’ and organized ‘i U i: Festival of Contemporary Theater and Performance Art’ and “street artist” Thu Myat created ‘Rendevous Southeast Asia Urban Art Event’. Artists are fervently trying to build infrastructure to share artistic practices from the country to larger audiences.

Censorship is a reality of Myanmar, but we always find that the problems of censorship can be dealt with through dialogue. Sometimes, we artists have to be quite creative and playful with the censorship board, but we have to be careful not to be “too clever” with them. A common joke is that artists from Myanmar work much harder than artists from other countries because we constantly have to have a double awareness when thinking about artistic creativity in the context of the external realities of the current social, economic, and political systems at work in the country.

In the senior generation of artists, the issues grappled with are more general. One example is the topic of war. Rather than dealing with the very real and very local issue of war (the civil war in Myanmar is one of the longest in the world and is still going on), they deal with the universal idea of war rather than getting into controversial local details. Due to the censorship under the military junta, artworks cannot directly critique society or deal with the civil war issues because direct critique can be punished by arrest. Understandably, this limited the subject matter that the older generation of artists could explore. Another common subject in their art is Buddhism. However, it is normally confirming the beliefs and teachings of the Buddha, not posing questions about the Buddha’s sayings or philosophy.

The new generation of artists (the one I belong to) has been dealing with the issue of the “other,” focusing on the marginal figures of society. Gay issues, the advocacy of women’s rights on the grounds of political, social, and economic equality to men, mocking of political icons (such as General Nay Win who has been ruling the country for 26 years); these are some of the topics that are currently being explored through contemporary art in Myanmar, and artists are trying to criticize the realities of the ground that they are walking on. The approach is not always direct, sometimes it is a more indirect and intellectual.

Myanmar needs to increase its art-educated audience. The current audience is limited, and part of the reason why artists are conducting workshops and seminars and putting on festivals with such fervour is because they see these activities as a means to increase awareness of art with the general public. It is rare that local people will enter the limited number of art galleries and the museum, and taking this into account, artists organize their events in public spaces such as parks and shopping malls. The slogan of my initiative, “Beyond Pressure” is “Art is not far from you (if you want), Art is at hand in daily life.”

As a consequence of the recent era of more lenient censorship rulings recently, especially with printed media, some artists can now address once untouchable political and social issues. Many artists in Myanmar have begun to introduce performance and installation into their practice, but without much knowledge of the history of these mediums. Many artists have never seen a work of “performance art” or “installation” before, and rather blindly experiment after hearing about these mediums’ possibilities. There is an insufficient amount of art literature in the country, and it is therefore imperative that the quantity and quality of workshops, seminars, and talks improve so that local artists are informed and inspired to create meaningful art. I think the artists in Myanmar can gain important and meaningful global status if they learn from the developments of other South Asian countries, and as latecomers, I think we have the most to gain.

Pushing Boundaries to Erase Boundaries

Nepal Country Vignette by Sujan Chitrakar

Call it cocooned or in its infancy, the reality is that contemporary art of Nepal has suffered long and fretful stagnation. Nominal state support, non-existent art policies, lack of opportunity, and only a handful of international outlets left Nepali art longing to mark its existence both locally and internationally. It was an uneasy situation for a field that is sustained through the occasional support of certain individuals and the eagerness of artists, without much prioritization from the state.

Recently, however, it seems that art in Nepal is taking a different wave. Suddenly, the artistic community has become very vibrant, uncompromisingly explorative and optimistic with the emergence of many young artists, artist-led organizations, and art events. Even the existing active and not-so-active stakeholders of art have realized and revamped their visions to move forward. And as a result of a long struggle of the art community, the state has finally established an art academy to prioritize the need of arts, reinstate art policies, and contribute toward its further development. There are many instances that could validate this new artistic shift, however few are worth mentioning here.

Blasphemy was a phenomenon that rarely took place even in the remotest parts of this secular country, but this wasn't a censorship issue per se. Censorship of artistic expression due to alleged profanity is a relatively new occurrence. In 2012, Siddhartha Art Gallery in Kathmandu presented an exhibition of paintings by Manish Harijan. The paintings, which were created during a residency at Kathmandu Contemporary Art Center (KCAC), highlighted the unwavering western influences into the socio-cultural domain and narrated the effects of globalization. The works meticulously rendered Hindu gods and goddesses into their new avatars of Hollywood superheroes. One of the works, "Super Kali," was a female figure in black with multiple hands and with snakes as hair, like Medusa. She wore a superwoman costume resembling the iconic Superman outfit. She was frontal, ferocious and blunt with her mischievous middle figure salute.

The exhibition ran smooth until it reached the eyes of some Hindu hardliners a few days before its closing. Some ardent followers of World Hindu Federation of Nepal visited the gallery on 11 September 2011 and issued the artist a death threat. They proclaimed the works as a mockery to their religion. With an order from District Administrative Officer, the police sealed the gallery and hauled the artist and Sangeeta Thapa, the gallery director, to the authorities for the alleged profanity in the work. The gallery was sealed and the paintings were banned from further display. Creative communities displayed their solidarity for freedom of expression. The issue ran through the headlines and editorial of many national dailies. Various international groups showed their concerns and demanded safety of the artist and reopening of the gallery. The DAO continued to threaten the gallery director and the artist, who as a result were in a dilemma from the conflicting pressure from both their supporters and antagonizers.

The show was forcefully concluded and the state silenced the case causing some distress in the artistic community. However this was an interesting case to contemplate. Contemporary art, previously overlooked by the state, exploded with its capacity to enter any social domain. In the world of the internet, threads of dialogue ran through various social media expressing peoples' views on blasphemy, freedom of expression and faith in Nepali art. The editorials of news dailies proclaimed freedom of expression as pivotal to a constructive democratic practice. The artistic community also realized the urgency to assure their existence in a yet-to-pen constitution. Their concern was also to galvanize the community's safety and to create art policies to secure freedom of expression. For the international art community, this incident propped their interest into looking into the new generation of Nepali artists.

Shortly after this incident in November 2012, the Kathmandu International Art Festival - KIAF 2012 created new opportunities by bringing 92 artists from 32 countries for a month long art event titled 'Earth | Body | Mind'. Under the leadership of Sangeeta Thapa, this second edition of KIAF was organized by Siddhartha Arts Foundation and dealt with issues on climatic change. With more than two hundred artworks strategically displayed in 16 venues around the valley, it provided a critical and creative platform for national and international artists to highlight their concerns about climate change and generate social awareness and contribute to constructive dialogues. The festival

also ventured to display some of the major works in the National Zoo. Most of the performances were staged in local neighbourhoods. This allowed the general public to directly participate with creative processes happening in the public domain, which encouraged them to visit the other venues. With the second edition of KIAF, Siddhartha Arts Foundation has institutionalized a threshold for international artistic communities to interact with Nepali art and vice versa, and the third edition of KIAF is scheduled for the Fall of 2015.

Apart from this major art event, different artist-led initiatives are working together to create new local art events. Artistic collectives such as Lasaana, Bindu, MCube, Sattya, Bikalpa, Alternative Art Space, Artudio, ArtLab have been continuously making efforts to explore possible ways to allow international artistic communities to collaborate with Nepali artists. Run by the practicing young artists, these initiatives have successfully created opportunities for up and coming artists. Lasaana and Mcube have created regular monthly discussions on relevant issues to provide a constructive platform for a collective discourse. Collectives such as Bikalpa and Bindu successfully run international residencies and workshops. KCAC and Marpha AIR offer residencies for local and international artists. Artudio, Sattya and Artlab are proactive with public art practices and have attracted many international street artists to Nepal. These creative initiatives convey hope for the new generation of artists who are striving to achieve despite local challenges.

This new wave is moving in the direction that this young generation has steered it in. With flourishing new art institutions that offer higher education, and various events that enable global interactions with enthusiastic artist-led initiatives, Nepali art has no turning back now. The energy is rebellious and young, daring to accept challenges and push and erase boundaries.

Unofficial

Pakistan Country Vignette by Risham Syed

Reviewing the contemporary art scene in Pakistan necessitates touching upon colonial history. During the 19th and early 20th centuries, artists from the traditional, newly rising classes, faced the choice of accepting colonial cultural hegemony or resisting it. The choice involved survival and growth. Resistance engaged the artists in recreating traditional forms as an indigenous alternative to colonial modernity. Acceptance posed the problem of avoiding imitation.

Those who took up art as life activity after independence in 1947 inherited the complexities faced by their predecessors. The old choice persisted because colonial inheritance persisted. Religious orthodoxy continued its assertion. Orthodox theories and practices, it was claimed, were the only effective counter to the threat of alienation inherent in socio-economic colonial arrangements. Artists critical towards orthodoxy risked a lot because representing the visual, actual or imaginary was acceptable, if at all, under drastic limitations. Art in Pakistan, utilized the traditionally allowed forms for its critique of neo-colonial strategies as well as of religious orthodoxies, bringing out the none-too-subtle cooperative relationship between them. Calligraphy edged aside its sacrosanct endowment to image the resisting upsurge of working people. Modernists like Zubeida Agha, Ahmed Parvez, A. J. Shemza, Sadequain, Bashir Mirza, Shakir Ali, and Ali Imam were influential in the 50's, 60's and 70's. These and others adopted Modernism not as perpetuation of the First World hegemony but as a metaphor for change and economic freedom.

National College of Arts (NCA, formerly Mayo School of Art) and the Punjab University Department of Fine Arts (founded in 1940) were two key educational institutions. Mayo School was originally built as a school of Industrial Art in 1875. Shakir Ali the Principal in 1960's, "embraced the revolutionary spirit of Cubism, which challenged academic representation, and linked it to progressive social and political ideas." Anna Molka Ahmed set up the Department of Fine Arts at the state-funded Punjab University in 1940 and held her ground when there were clashes over the teaching of life-drawing, but later the department succumbed to orthodox pressure.

Having attended NCA in early 1990s, I witnessed the Pakistani art scene burgeon and thrive. This period marked the end of the Zia ul Haq era when religious fundamentalism was nurtured. Zia encouraged calligraphy and landscape painting. Artists like Zahoor ul Akhlaq, Collin David, Salima Hashmi, and Lala Rukh, created public works and critical statements to create new audiences, subverting the parameters set by martial law. Zahoor looked at traditional miniature painting conceptually and formally on the one hand, and Western contemporary movements on the other. He epitomizes the transition of Modernism into Postmodernism in Pakistan and is a huge influence on my generation. Salima Hashmi (an artist, writer, curator, and teacher) was part of the feminist movement and mobilised female artists against Zia's oppressive policies in the 1980s. She continues to play a key role in promoting contemporary art in Pakistan. Having been taught directly by these artists, I belong to a generation of artists that was presented with the question of 'identity' and 'conceptualism'. This group also includes Quddus Mirza, Rashid Rana, Ali Raza, Nausheen Saeed, Faiza Butt, Farida Batool, Masooma Syed and Bani Abidi. Quddus Mirza and Anver Saeed's expressionism and Quddus's interest in magic realism of South American literature also influenced a host of artists like Hamra Abbas, Ayaz Jokhio, Mehboob Shah, Mohammad Ali Talpur, Amber Hammad, Saba Khan and Sana Arjumand amongst others.

The 'New Miniature' movement also appeared in the early 90s. Traditional miniature, taught for decades at the National College of Arts, Lahore in Persian, Mughal, Rajput and Pahari styles was reinvented under Zahoor's influence, as a reaction to the definition of 'tradition' of Zia's regime. Shahzia Sikander, Imran Qureshi, Talha Rathore and later Nusra Latif, Aisha Khalid, Saira Waseem, Hasnat Mehmood, Murad Khan Mumtaz, Ali Kazim, Mohammad Zeeshan have since critically interrogated social realities with this technique.

The Establishment of Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture (1989) in Karachi brought an emphasis on the 'popular'. The 1990s also saw the Karachi based artists Iftikhar Dadi and Elizabeth Dadi, Duriya Kazi and David Alesworth engaging with the 'popular'. They attempted to 'articulate a post-conceptual practice in dialogue with the vitality of popular urban visual ties to create photography, sculpture and installations commenting on the visual theatrics of violence, urban identity, and critique of nationalisms.' One sees the influence in the work of artists like

Huma Mulji, Asma Mundrawala, Adeela Suleman, Roohi Ahmed, Asim Butt and Abdullah Syed.

Alhamra Art Gallery, Lahore, a government organization, opened a new space in early 90s. Many private galleries like Rohtas1 in Islamabad, Chawkandi and V.M. Gallery in Karachi, established at the height of Zia's oppressive regime, continue to provide opportunities to young artists. Zahoor ul Akhlaq Gallery and NCA, since the early 90s has been showing contemporary art along with hosting degree shows. Canvas Gallery, Karachi was set up by Sameera Raja in 1999. Salima Hashmi, in order to provide an alternative space to young artists, opened Rohtas2 in 2001. Exchanges within the region are a significant development as well. Pooja Sood played a key role in supporting many such interactions within South Asia. Mappings: 'Shared Histories, A Fragile Self', 1997, brought together three artists from Pakistan, Iftikhar Dadi, Sylvat Aziz and myself, and from India, P.S. Ladi, Nalini Malani, and Sheeba Chhacchi.

Post 9/11 and globalization, with increasing international focus on Asia, one found Chinese, Indian and Pakistani art in upsurge. The arrival of Internet and new media provided inspiration and one saw new directions in works of Rashid Rana, Bani Abidi and Hamra Abbas. In 2001, VASAL, a part of the Triangle Arts Network was set up in Karachi to conduct international workshops, local and international residencies, outreach programmes, and talks and events. In 2003, the Beaconhouse National University (BNU) was founded in Lahore. The School of Visual Art and Design of BNU providing an alternative model for art education, produced successful artists like Ehsan Ul Haq, Iqra Tanveer, Mehreen Murtaza and Basir Mehmood who made a mark in international art scene.

The National Art Gallery in Islamabad opened with a monumental inaugural show in August 2007. This was the first national art gallery in the country. Foundation for Museum of Modern Art (FOMMA), Karachi, was set up in 2009 as a Non-Profit Organization with a mission to setup a Museum of Modern Art in Pakistan. Sanam Taseer, collector of contemporary art opened The Drawing Room Gallery in 2009, supporting young artists. Color Gallery, Lahore, is another of these new alternative spaces for young artists.

2010 was significant for contemporary art in Pakistan. Naiza Khan curated 'Rising Tide: New Directions in Art from Pakistan 1990-2010', at the Mohatta Palace Museum, Karachi, and this was the first major survey of contemporary Pakistani art. The first online monthly magazine of Pakistani art, "Art Now Pakistan" was launched a year later, and in 2013, monographs on Rashid Rana, Imran Qureshi and Naiza Khan were published.

In the absence of significant state support, academia plays an extraordinary role because a majority of practicing artists teach. This close working association of present and future practitioners will hopefully continue to contribute to producing exciting art from this part of the world.

Sri Lankan Contemporary Art: From Art of Resistance to Art of Today

Sri Lanka Country Vignette by Anoli Perera

Most visible and continuing contemporary trends in Sri Lankan visual art emerged during the 1990s as a reaction to the highly problematic socio-political situation the country was experiencing at the time. A society marred with large-scale violence, unsympathetic and brutal responses by the state to individual and collective fears and anxieties and mismanaged economic policies, the artists of the late 1980s and early 1990s were at the edge of an art discipline that failed to reconcile their lived realities, dilemmas, and their need to express. They were straddled with an art of yesterday that had residues of academic realism and romanticism borrowed from British colonial art and localized modernist trends introduced by the 43 Group that romanticised an utopian ideal of the village, the nation and the human body which dominated post independent art. Faced with this situation, the artists of the 90s decade needed an epistemic break in the historical evolution of art in order to usher in a change that would transform the way art is perceived and the way artists defined their professional personalities within society. Therefore, the '90s Art Trend' emerged challenging every aspect of art-making – the role of artists, the art methodologies and even the episteme of the field – which created a space for installation, performance, object art, collage and other variations of art-making to germinate and blossom. In this new creative space, artists were able to draw attention to – without shame and inhibitions – their personal experiences, identity crises, anxieties, sexual politics and private fantasies. Their art discussed social and political issues via personal experience. Within the 90s trend, the artist's persona was transformed from the reclusive, spiritually based, sedate, non-committal, temperamental genius to that of an anxiety ridden, restless, critical, and confrontational risk-taker. Therefore, the art that was produced during the decade of 1990s presented an intense socio-cultural critique of the dominant political process and its involvement with violence. Within this overall discourse, it also offered a relentless critique of the role of religious institutions and the consumer culture of the newly globalized society.

The decade that followed also saw the visual art field giving room to nurture the idea of the 'alternative' as the 'critical other' to the conventional and established art. During this period one could see progressive artists and individuals coming together to support the newly-emerging radicalism in art by establishing alternate art spaces and group efforts. Some of them became catalysts for the emergent new art. As an attempt to confront the archaic curriculum and insular methods of teaching in the government art school now known as University for Visual and Performing Arts, the Vibhavi Academy of Fine Arts (VAFA), was established by a group of artists. VAFA also became the rallying point for the radical artists in the initial stage of 90s Art Trend. The Heritage Gallery established by an art philanthropist Ajitha de Costa, showcased experimental art of the 90s during those early crucial years when art establishment shunned the explosive thematics and dark aesthetics of the new art. In 1997, the exhibition 'New Approaches' presenting a collection of 90s art held at the National Art Gallery of Colombo curated by Sharmini Pereira, then a young curator based in the United Kingdom, helped to endorse the emerging new trends in contemporary Sri Lankan art. In 1999, 'No Order Group' was formed by proponents and artists closely associated with the '90s Trend which issued a manifesto declaring their position on art during a seminal exhibition of their work organized at VAFA. The new art were patronized by art collectors such as Dominic and Nazreen Sansoni by presenting a number of innovative exhibitions of artists such as myself, Jagath Weerasinghe, Chandraguptha Thenuwara, Muhanned Cader, K. Pushpakumara, and Kingsley Goonatilake in their Gallery 706 (now known as Barefoot Gallery). The Sansonis who enthusiastically endorsed the 90s art were also the primary collectors of the new art during this initial period, and purchased most of the key artworks of '90s Trend for their private collection. The George Keyt Foundation, a private art foundation established in the name of well-known 43 Group artist, George Keyt, opened up a platform for emerging artists to show their work through their large scale annual exhibitions and art events such as 'Young Contemporaries' and 'Kala Pola'.

In a local context where gallery sponsorships were meagre, these events became much sought after opportunities for young artists, which in some cases helped launch their professional careers. International cultural institutions such as the British Council, the Goethe Institute and the Alliance Francaise supported the new experimental art. Significantly, their involvement in the art scene along with the George Keyt Foundation established the idea of international art exchanges through a series of international workshops called 'Art Link,' which were regularly held from 1999 for a number of years. International art workshops became a regular event in the Colombo art scene during the decade

of 2000, which generated considerable enthusiasm for international art exchanges. Such international art exchanges and networking beyond Sri Lanka was pursued intensely by the art initiative Theertha International Artists' Collective established in 2000 by a progressive group of artists. Theertha, through its regular art residencies and workshops supported by the South Asia Network of Artists (SANA), a regional art network established in collaboration with artists' groups in India (Khoj International), Nepal (Sutra), Bangladesh (Britto Art Trust) and Pakistan (Vasl) have managed to work intensely to connect with regional and international art communities. In many ways, artists' mobility within South Asia and beyond supported by SANA and others became one of the main conduits to connect with the exterior world for Sri Lankan artists. The camaraderie that was nurtured through these links with international artists, particularly with South Asian artists, kept the energies of radical local artists intact when endorsement for their art from the conservative local art establishment was absent.

The first decade of the new millennium saw further expansion in this emergent form of art. With the conclusion of the 30-year armed conflict in May 2009, Sri Lanka experienced a sigh of relief on the stoppage of the massive human and material destruction that had continued for so long which paralyzed as well as brutalized the entire society. This was a major situational change that allowed artists to connect and work together much easily with the North and North East which was relatively inaccessible during the war. At the same time, many members of Theertha, some of whom were instrumental in initiating the '90s Art Trend, have been active in sustaining the criticality and experimental nature of their art-making, presenting extremely innovative and seminal exhibitions. Jagath Weerasinghe's exhibition, 'Celestial Fervor' in 2009, presented a deeper and more sophisticated elaboration of societal violence, a thematic he has engaged with since his 1994 show, 'Anxiety' that essentially provided the parameters for '90s art. Similar attempts have been seen in recent exhibitions by other Theertha artists such as Sarath Kumarasiri ('Kovils Temples', 2009) and K. Pushpakumara ('Goodwill Hardware', 2009 & 2012) as well as the younger generation of artists, Anura Krishantha ('Chairs', 2007), Bandu Manamperi ('Numbed', 2009), Sanath Kalubadana ('My Friend the Soldier', 2007) and Pala Pothupitiya ('My Ancestral Dress and My ID', 2008).

In 2009, the same year the armed conflict ended in Sri Lanka also interestingly marked the 1st biennale in Colombo named 'Colombo Art Biennale' (CAB) with the theme 'Imagining Peace' followed by the 2nd Colombo Art Biennale in 2012 under the theme 'Being'. Much expanded from its initial attempt in 2009, the 2013 Colombo Art Biennale curated by Suresh Jayaram (India) and Roman Burka (Austria) brought in an impressive collection of established as well as young international artists to exhibit their works alongside Sri Lankan artists. Colombo Art Biennale, an idea formulated by the artist Jagath Weerasinghe along with Annoushka Hempel, both founding members of the biennale, have ensured the emergence of its own particularity and format. Held under much strained economic conditions due to unforthcoming local funding, a situation faced by many novice international art events, the Colombo Art Biennales immediately gave much needed international visibility to Sri Lankan contemporary art while creating an awareness within local audiences about its nature and form. Within this overall scenario, the Sri Lankan contemporary art scene continues to evolve and mature, retaining its own unique brands of radicalism and innovation.

Island Living

Maldives Country Vignette by Ahmed Shamin Nizam

Maldives is an island nation. Not many people may notice Maldives, as it only appears as tiny dots on the atlas. Many people get shocked when I say that my country consist of over 2,000 islands. They feel like it is a lot of islands, but they get even more shocked when I say that only 300,000 people live on these islands, and only 200 islands are inhabited. The others are left just as nature has intended them to be. People may imagine life on these islands as blissful and utopian, which may be true to some extent. We may have been labelled as “paradise on earth” however, as an artist, I feel like this is our blessing as well as our curse.

Keeping all the sandy beaches, the pleasant warm weather, and the underwater beauty aside, let’s talk about the art of Maldives. To be honest, there is not much of an “art culture” in the Maldives. I think this may be because we do not have a strong written history, or anything of that sort that has been passed down from our forefathers. They also say that we have been living on these islands for more than 2,000 years. We know so little about the history of our nation. I don’t want to blame it on our ancestors; I can imagine living on these islands, fishing and travelling about, there was little to be passed with so much focus on basic survival. Historically and culturally there are so few “artistic” traits that were passed down that I could list most of them down here. Some of them are: *Liyelaa jehun* (Lacquer decoration) *Boduberu* (Big drums) *Kissaru Vadaan* (Boat building).

I have to admit, if you get to take a look at these traditional artworks, they are awe-inspiring, I feel that there is an essence of who we are and where we belong embedded to these works, yet I wish we could do more to promote art in the Maldives today.

Today, we are a different kind of nation. The capital island is filled with tiny box-like apartments, shops and offices. The roads are filled with scooters and people rushing about. I feel like it would be accurate to say that we are losing the roots of our culture and tradition. Unfortunately, there is nothing much being done by any authority to promote art and culture in the Maldives. There has never been an art school. And for me, being a filmmaker, there is no local film production house that I could be proud of. The artists here are self taught, or educated from abroad. Even with proper training we cannot get a decent art related job here. We are literally at the mercy of the foreign countries for the development of the art in Maldives.

Personally speaking, I can only talk about the film industry of Maldives. The fact that it is even called an “industry” is very inaccurate. It is poorly funded, badly organized and it produces very low quality work. Since everyone knows that the standards are so low, only a very few dream about making films here. The government does not give much attention to this fact, as if they want the “industry” to die and slowly vanish away.

The Maldivian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale was a great example of the situation of art, culture, and the role of the government. I was shocked to find out that the government commissioned foreign artists to create films on behalf of the Maldives, as if they were saying that there are no good artists here. The whole event was very discreet and only a few local people knew that the event even took place. It was hidden from the media in Maldives. Due to the political situation that the Maldives is in, it is very easy to neglect art, and only a few people understand its importance or make any effort to cultivate it.

I am not the only person concerned about the state that the Maldives is in. There are a few people trying hard to expand creativity and encourage local talent. And I don’t want to blame anyone for the state we are in. Just try to imagine a nation separated into 2,000 islands with only 300,000 people. It is hard to sustain an art culture here; it is going to be hard to find a model that works for Maldives, until then we will just have to try.

On the other hand there are few artists creating art, even in these circumstances. They don’t make as much money as other artists around the world, nor do they get as much recognition or appreciation, but they are equally or even more passionate about art and continue to create, grabbing onto anything that comes along their way in the quest to spread public consciousness about art. I want to thank Dhaka Art Summit for creating this opportunity and letting me voice my views about Maldivian art and culture. With the democratization of art and the increased connections between people in the region, I think that festivals like the Dhaka Art Summit are the hope for nations like Maldives all over the world. I hope that there will be more festivals like these where we can discuss art at the societal level and help each other grow.

Solo Art Projects

curated by Diana Campbell Betancourt



Then | Why Not

The Dhaka Art Summit and the Samdani Art Foundation endeavor to transform the city of Dhaka into a hub for South Asian art and its excellence breaking conventional ideas about where the region's centre lies. It has been important to reject logistical restrictions and reasoning to present this free three day art festival, that spans not only the 120,000 square feet of the Shilpakala Academy, but also the entire city with New Delhi based Raqs Media Collective's 160 road-sign and billboard project, *Meanwhile | Elsewhere*. The lexical patterns produced by Raqs's ticking Bangla clocks registers a "deeply felt, subjective experience of time and duration" that gives people the freedom to escape from what they imagine "real time" to be.

One of the clocks strikes at **Then | Why Not?** It is possible that this exhibition was born at this "time" of openness to possibility. These Solo Projects are fourteen monographic exhibitions by South Asian artists from around the world, without a central unifying theme. One characteristic that all of these projects and artists have in common is that they demand the impossible. This is not in terms of the clichéd slogan for anarchism, but rather in their defiance of constraints that are imposed on creativity, their fearless approach to expressing themselves in the context of South Asia, and their daring acceptance of an unprecedented challenge of being part of a South Asia dedicated event within South Asia, in the midst of its current political realities.

It is important to note that the artistic infrastructure that is widely established in the West is not available in this part of the world, and the Pioneer Panel on the 8th of February will delve into the current realities for contemporary art making in the region. There is no representation concept in Bangladesh, where galleries can support artists to develop their careers and help artists realise their ambitious ideas. Bangladesh is a developing country, and most artists cannot afford to have studios in which to work. One cannot just take an artwork and ship it to Bangladesh for an exhibition. The import tax on art is prohibitively high, and the expertise to handle this art does not exist; we have had to train and develop this skill-set locally. The simplest materials such as helium, wall washers, and acrylic sheets cannot be sourced domestically. The situation is slightly better in India and Pakistan, however the movement of people and goods between these countries and Bangladesh, is extremely restricted, especially during the political events that plagued the country in 2012 and 2013 at a time when this exhibition was being organised. Given the circumstances, logic (and border politics) would suggest that this type of South Asia focused exhibition could not happen. We cannot paint on or drill into the walls of this government building, so even the walls you see here were specifically constructed for this exhibition.

The artists and organisers demanded the impossible, and this is what we now present to you. We all stepped up to take on the difficulties and the demands that were needed to put together what you see - yet fortuitous connections were forged across cultures and the projects evolved in ways that the artists might not have originally expected. There has been a steep learning curve for all involved, but sparks of creativity flew when the artists and production team found innovative solutions to present their works in this new context, embracing the local, even in terms of the Bangla language.

The mediums represented in these projects show the wide breadth of practices existing in the region, and performance, sculpture, painting, drawing, video, photography are all represented here. The work that the artists and I chose to exhibit all have subtle but direct connections to the context of Bangladesh, and it is our honour and pleasure to share them with local and international artists during the Dhaka Art Summit. This is just the start of a much longer journey, and several artists are among us now who are embarking on their research for the next Dhaka Art Summit in 2016.

--Diana Campbell Betancourt, Dhaka, 2014

Lida Abdul

"Why can't a ruin itself be transformed into a meditation on something other—a non-referential work of art—a visual or sculptural poem that one hopes will open up new spaces for rethinking about society, about ethics and identity itself?"

– Lida Abdul



Brick Sellers of Kabul, 2006, 16mm film transferred to DVD, 6 minutes, courtesy of the artist and Giorgio Persano Gallery, Turin

Afghanistan born, global nomad and world-renowned video artist, Lida Abdul transforms bleak realities of worlds destroyed, into monuments for hope. "In destroyed land, building materials are bought and sold like pieces of peoples' dreams," reflects Abdul, and this reality of Abdul's country has resonance in many countries in South Asia.¹ Born in Kabul, Afghanistan in 1973, Abdul was forced to flee her country in the late 1980s. She lived as a refugee in India and Germany before moving to the United States. It was not until 2001 that Abdul returned to Afghanistan, where she has since staged and made video-based works that explore the inter-connection between architecture and identity. The artist has exhibited all over the world in some of the most important exhibitions from the 51st Venice Biennale and the Sharjah Biennale to dOCUMENTA(13). Four of the artist's most iconic works are included in the Dhaka Art Summit: *White House* (2005), *What We Saw Upon Awakening* (2006), *Brick Sellers of Kabul* (2006), and *Clapping with Stones* (2005).

Like Afghanistan, Bangladesh has a painful recent past. It is haunted by tragedies from imperial crimes in its colonial past, a bloody war for independence to collapsed factory buildings and continued civil unrest. In an inspiring online interview, Abdul shared that "art can be a petition for another world... whatever transformation art has the potential to bring about, cannot be immediately seen. It's an invisible process simultaneously cathartic and active. I feel that only if people engage with one another through their art, culture and music, and genuinely resist trying to reduce the 'other' to what is familiar to themselves, a lot of change can come about."² This is the very spirit under which the Dhaka Art Summit is organised, celebrating the talent and resilience of Bangladesh's creative spark.

¹"Lida Abdul: Landscapes of Remembrance," *Art Asia Pacific* 57, 2008, pp 112-114.

²"Interview with Lida Abdul," *Art Vehicle* 65, <http://www.artvehicle.com/interview/1>.

Destruction is something that ties these four 16mm films (later transferred to DVD) together, and the subtlety in which the artist introduces the cruel reality of need is impactful and remarkable. The artist uses tiny gestures that become rituals in her work - from clapping with stones to re-imagining the world's largest carved Buddhas whole again, from meditatively whitewashing a bombed out ruin to conjuring ideas of justice and liberty in a space void of reason, from highlighting delicate sounds produced by the wind to elevating them into chants, prayers and dialogue that carry us back to the power of the human will to persevere.

Children and youth are prevalent in *Brick Sellers of Kabul* and *Clapping with Stones*. "Children are the most susceptible and the most resilient beings," says Lida Abdul. "Kabul is full of kids who run in the streets, but if you knew their lives you'd wonder how it is possible for them to keep going. When their laughter disappears—or even fades—then hope dies too." In this film, a seemingly endless row of children line up to sell bricks in the middle of a sand storm, selling bricks from a collapsed structure (now a ruin) to a man who piles the bricks up into a cubic form, almost as if he is trying to erect the same ruins that these bricks first came from. History repeats itself unless children learn from it and enact progress. Otherwise we will all be consistently rebuilding ruins.

In *Clapping with Stones* the camera pans down examining the full height of the recess that housed two giant Buddhas, formerly the largest examples of standing Buddha carvings in the world, until they were destroyed in 2001 by the Taliban. The camera rests upon a group of young men kneeling on the ground. Abdul recreates a prayer scene, not unconnected to a typical ritual in a



Clapping With Stones, 2005, 16mm film transferred to DVD, 5 minutes, Courtesy of the artist and Giorgio Persano Gallery, Turin

mosque where devotees are usually facing the Mihrab (a niche in the wall of a mosque that indicates the direction of the Kaaba that Muslims should face when praying). They stand up, and as they do so, they collect stones and begin clapping them together. The sound of rocks being banged together might sound like a construction site or one of destruction. The destruction of these monuments could be understood both as Islamic culture's rejection to the specification of form and imagery, however the accomplishment of creating these forms and the belief system they conveyed, is too strong for any regime to decimate by mere physical means.

Abdul's work does not point fingers of blame toward one political faction, but takes a more universal view at humanity's capability to simultaneously destroy on the one hand, and rebuild on the other. Where *Clapping with Stones* looks at voids left by the Taliban, *White House* looks at voids left by the United States. In her iconic 2005 film *White House*, Abdul attempted to paint the remnants of a government building that had been bombed during a US airstrike, painting the shards of a former neoclassical colonnade white and calling to mind American (and in the past, Roman) promises and ideals of liberty and justice. White is the colour of mourning for Muslims and the colour of peace for Christians. White is the colour that is used to erase something wrong or to conceal something that needs to be hidden. In this all of these works, Abdul reflects on the representation of ruin or the subsequent significance and fate of sites of catastrophe, death and memorial. In *White House*, bearing the same name as the monument of American power in Washington D.C., the depiction of the artist herself is not an attempt to reclaim the heroic position, but a more disturbing image of both the futility of violence and the double displacement of women in war. This work, which marked Afghanistan's debut at the Venice Biennale, is also in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Continuing with the idea of futility in violence and destruction and the power of groups to overcome this, in *What We Saw Upon Awakening* (2006), a dozen young men clad in black pull on the remains of a bombed-out structure in Kabul, the ruin a legacy of decades of war in the region. Ropes are fastened to the ruin at various points and the men strain to pull them as if, ambiguously, to tear down what remains of the building or to shore it up. The ropes create a complex and resonant image. They form a web, entangled in this web are memories of ruin, collapse and history.



White House, 2005, 16mm film transferred to DVD, 5 minutes, courtesy of the artist and Giorgio Persano Gallery, Turin



What We Saw Upon Awakening, 2006, 16mm film transferred to DVD, 6 minutes 50 seconds, courtesy of the artist and Giorgio Persano Gallery, Turin

Shilpa Gupta

Shilpa Gupta (b. 1976) is a Bombay based artist who uses facets of everyday life to create artworks that ask questions about methods of control and the ideas behind boundaries and borders that shape our perception of world order. While these works are deeply rooted in the Indian context where the artist lives and works, they grapple with universal issues such as freedom and security, and Gupta's work is enjoyed and exhibited all over the world, in important exhibitions such as the New Museum Triennial, Yokohama Triennale, Lyon Biennale, Sharjah Biennale, Gwangju Biennale, Shanghai Biennale, and Sydney Biennale. Her works are also part of prestigious institutional collections including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Copenhagen, and the Devi Art Foundation in Delhi.

Soap, microphones, sign hoardings, books – these are some of the familiar materials that the artist uses to engage audiences with wider and deeper issues. The artist studied sculpture and worked part time in graphic design and she has a remarkable ability to transform mundane imagery into something profound. In her 2009 work *Threat*, Gupta created a sculpture with 4,500 bars of soap, engraved with the word 'Threat.' The audience is invited to take a bar of soap away and use it if they wish, washing away any trace of any imagined threat by the end of the exhibition. Fear is a tool often used to manipulate groups of people in power struggles, and Gupta's works, often harnessing participation and interactivity, shake up our ideas about why we are asked to act the way we do.

Those in authority are able to control the media and what information gets disseminated to the public. What if the microphones that pundits speak into were able to speak truth and drone out lies? Gupta created a body of work of *'singing microphones'* which use Gupta's voice to amplify issues that are often silenced. In *5 Singing Microphones* from 2009, Gupta attempts to count the countless number of individuals who disappeared during times of political unrest such as Partition, creating a sense of urgency to remember those who transformed from people into mere numbers. In the same year, she also created a series of works using chalkboards, conventional tools to teach children about counting, and these chalkboards show the sign of countless markings, complete with accumulated chalk dust from writing and erasing, demonstrating the Sisyphean task of trying to count the people that governments want you to forget about. The phrase "Will we ever be able to mark enough?" leaves lingering questions in the minds of her audience. Stimulating memories, on both an individual and a collective basis, is an important part of Gupta's practice.

In her 2008-2009 work *100 Hand Drawn Maps of India*, Gupta asked a different person each day to draw a map of their country, and none of the drawings matched. Gupta's works shed light on the problem of imposing borders on groups of people whose history on the land is much older than that of new nation-states. In her 2011-2012 work *1:14.9* which is part of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum collection in New York, Gupta wound the idea of the 1188.5 meter long fence between India and Pakistan by manipulating thread into an elegant ball at a 14.9 to 1 ratio, nimbly caging this 1947 imposed border which symbol of violence and religious prejudice.

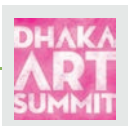
Interested in the formation of territories under the project of nationhood, the artist traveled to *chhitmahal*, Indo-Bangladeshi enclaves with a combined estimated population of 51,000 people who are technically foreigners in another country. In other words, there are landlocked islands of India within Bangladesh, and Bangladesh within India. In her poignant floor-based sculpture, Gupta describes the situation poignantly with the use of a mark on carved stone,

Depending on which side of this marking you may now be, you may or may not have an identity card, you may or may not need to take a fake name to enroll into a school, you may or may not be able to deliver your child with the real father's name in the neighborhood hospital, you may or may not still be able to have electricity this evening even though the cable passes through your house, irrespective of the fact that your family may have lived here before countries were formed one night

The people in these enclaves believe that they are there because their communities were part of valued kingdoms, making them special and unique from their neighbors who have access to national public services that are granted from having an identity card. People who live in the *chhitmahal* do not have identity cards, so in order to give birth to a child in a hospital, or to enroll their children in school, they have to use the identity of someone with an identity card as the father, so there are several children with false identities. One of the works in this solo project obscures the names of a mythical classroom, showing how a name in these regions may likely not be just what it seems. Most of the people in the *chhitmahal* have been living there for centuries, and can easily ask their close neighbors with identity cards to lend false names as "relatives." Gupta presents a work reflecting on the longstanding relationship between these "illegal" people and their ancestral land, showing images of feet firmly planted on the ground that they "belonged to" for centuries. Border markers can be anywhere, even floating in water as Gupta shares with us with her photographs. A painted photograph poignantly renders the situation that being born into an enclave makes a night and day difference: electrical lines may run through the enclave, but only certified areas on either side of the chit will have light when they turn on the switch.

I woke up one night and was duly informed that I now lived in a fragment of another
country inside a country

Untitled, 2014, 8.5X11 inches, print on paper, Curated and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for Dhaka Art Summit, Courtesy of the artist



'There lives a person who was picked up by the authorities when he was working in Delhi and deported to Bangladesh, and he had to bribe his way across, to return to his home here in the Bangladeshi enclave'

In September 1958, when Nehru met Noon, the two Prime Ministers agreed to an exchange of enclaves

Border post



Untitled, 2014
 21.5 x 13.5 inches, caption size is 8.2 x 11.6
 4 photographs with a framed caption (caption illustrated on previous page)
 Curated and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for Dhaka Art Summit
 Courtesy of the artist



Untitled (Dptych), 2014
 40x30 inches
 Photograph with scratch
 Curated and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for Dhaka Art Summit
 Courtesy of the artist



100 take names to connect children who belong to the neighborhood

Untitled, 2014, Digital Print, 39.5 x 55 inches, Curated and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for Dhaka Art Summit

Rana Begum



(Study for) *Untitled, 2014*, 1,006 Hand-woven baskets and string, Curated and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for Dhaka Art Summit with additional support from the British Council, Courtesy of the artist and Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai

Belonging to the second generation of artists who turned Minimalism into something completely theirs, Rana Begum claims Donald Judd, Agnes Martin, sacred geometry in Sufism, and Islamic art and architecture as her influences. To this, she adds cues gathered from built and urban environments – from noticing patterns of colour, line and form as they collide in a city. A relatively new influence to her work was visiting the Cathedral-Mosque in Cordoba, Spain in 2008/2009. The spiritual experience from the repetition of arches and domes has been an inspiration for her recent work.

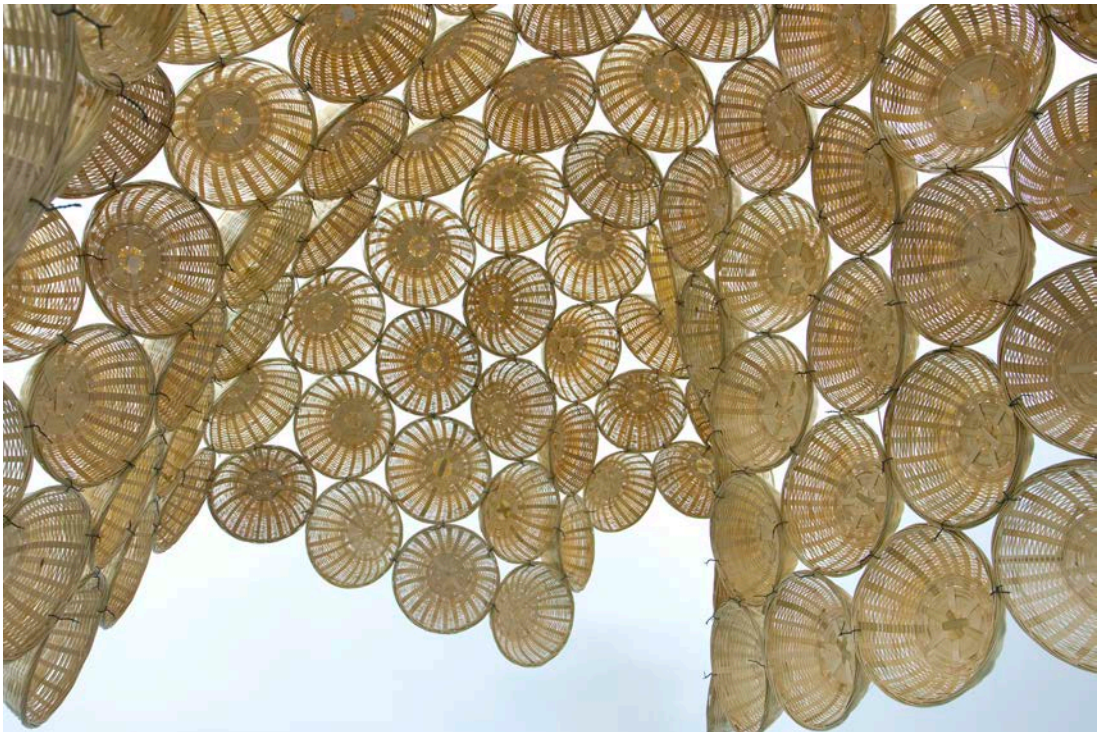
Begum's work becomes something new with every shift of light. Reflecting on the work, the artist shares that "My hope is that the work can almost be viewed as a lesson in seeing, because upon leaving the work, perhaps the viewer starts to see these moments around them, and notices anew the odd and often uncharacteristic glimpses of beauty that living in a city can provide." The bright colour palate that is characteristic of Begum's work reflects the rich visual culture of South Asia, and these colours blend into one another in unique ways through the folds and shadows that the artist creates with her sculptures. While many female artists in the region are known for their use of organic materials and feminine craft, Begum masters the "masculine art" of working with metal, defying the norms that her conservative Islamic background imparted on her. However, the geometric lines and repetition used in traditional Islamic arts have influenced the precision and purity of Begum's practice.

Folds and bending are important facets of Begum's works. She folds paper and even thin aluminium sheets into forms that are reminiscent of kites, with a sense of lightness that gives the feeling that a gust of wind could blow

the sculptures away. Her recent body of work blends into the wall with the new use of white as a base, with glowing colours in the background that seem to radiate in the space between the sculpture and the wall. The illusion that light can create is something Begum has mastered over the years with increasing sophistication. Elaborating on her current work, Begum shares that it "is mainly fabricated from powder-coated and painted metal extruded sections. The language these materials use is at first inspection one of mass production. But then as the complexity of pattern that flows across these linear hard-edged forms is made visible, something far subtler is revealed."

In her first major exhibition in Dhaka, Begum moves away from surface ideas of mass-production and brings focus to the handmade. Begum revisits her childhood fascination with basket weaving, an activity she enjoyed when growing up in Bangladesh, and which also uses a similar process of bending and folding that she is known for. For Begum, the idea of architecture evokes memories of reading the Koran in Bangladesh and watching simple streams of light seeping in through the windows of the mosque. Using these vivid childhood memories as inspiration, Begum transforms the Shilpakala Academy with over a thousand locally woven baskets, which she weaves together to create a monumental sculptural dome that references light in the Koran. The work immerses the viewer in an innovative play between light and shadow. The complex intricate pattern creates a weightless and contemplative space through repetition.

Begum was born in Sylhet, Bangladesh in 1977 and moved to England in 1985. The artist studied at the Slade School of Fine Art and the Chelsea College of Art and Design in London where she currently lives and works. She has exhibited extensively internationally including exhibitions in the UK, the USA, Mumbai, Beirut, and Dubai, and she was the recipient of the 2012 Jack Goldhill Award for Sculpture at the Royal Academy of Arts and nominated for the Jameel Prize at the V&A in 2010. She has created numerous public art interventions all over the globe, transforming cityscapes with her unique use of colour and light. She was also a past Delfina Foundation resident artist.



(Study for) *Untitled*, 2014, 1,006 Hand-woven baskets and string, Curated and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for Dhaka Art Summit with additional support from the British Council, Courtesy of the artist and Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai



(Study for) *Untitled, 2014*, 1,006 Hand-woven baskets and string, Curated and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for Dhaka Art Summit with additional support from the British Council, Courtesy of the artist and Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai

Runa Islam

"Filmic presence is always determined by an earlier presence which the viewer has experienced and then lost. That is why film provokes so many deep feelings. You retrieve what you have lost." Runa Islam (2002)



Untitled (After the Hunt) (still), 2008, 16 mm film, 7:28 minutes, Courtesy White Cube.

British artist Runa Islam (b. 1970 in Dhaka, Bangladesh) challenges and explores the structures, materiality, and histories of representation and visuality in her work, often in relation to cinematographic and architectural concerns. She has exhibited in important institutions globally such as MoMA, Museum of Contemporary Art Sydney, the Hammer Museum, Camden Arts Center, and the MIT List Visual Arts Center. She has participated in many group exhibitions including the Sharjah Biennale (2013), Sao Paulo Biennial (2011), Asia Pacific Triennale Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane (2009), the Turner Prize, Tate Britain (2008), and the 51st Venice Biennale (2005).

Made at the end of 2008, *Untitled (After the hunt)* has become a key work in Runa Islam's ongoing exploration of the camera's implication in the process of representation. It is a formative piece that pre-empts later works such as the 35mm film installation *Emergence* (2011) and her recent series *Anatomical Study* (2013).

Nearly half of the almost eight minute 16mm film loop of *Untitled (After the hunt)* is composed of what can best be described as abstract images. The images, similar in their tones and hues, rhythmically switch as if part of a lecture

presentation. However, it is a silent film and the various marks, shadows and vague shapes rely mainly on the viewers' associative and speculative impressions for further meaning or threads of narrative. This terrain of abstraction, association and fragmentation is key to understanding Islam's film. They are the products of a paradoxical set-up whereby Islam engaged her film camera with a macro lens to film an inherently out-of-focus photograph. The camera in its task to objectively scrutinise the surface of its subject creates a further paradox as it both deciphers and obscures.

Operating by several degrees of separation, the source photograph was a re-photographed picture mistakenly blurred when the camera auto-focus sensor struggled to train itself on the miniature original. Islam was particularly drawn to the re-photographed image for its out-of-focus quality, considering the effect akin to the camera trying to paint out details. The original image, taken mid-twentieth century somewhere in Bangladesh, was in an album belonging to the artist's grandfather in Dhaka, and had travelled with other family from there to Australia, where it was found and re-photographed by Islam's brother on a visit from the UK. These distancing effects of geography and temporality are themselves indistinct 'abstractions'. If the first section of the film, with its difficult to name content, can assume the 'Untitled' part of the title, the second section of the film can be ascribed the subtitle '(After the hunt)'.

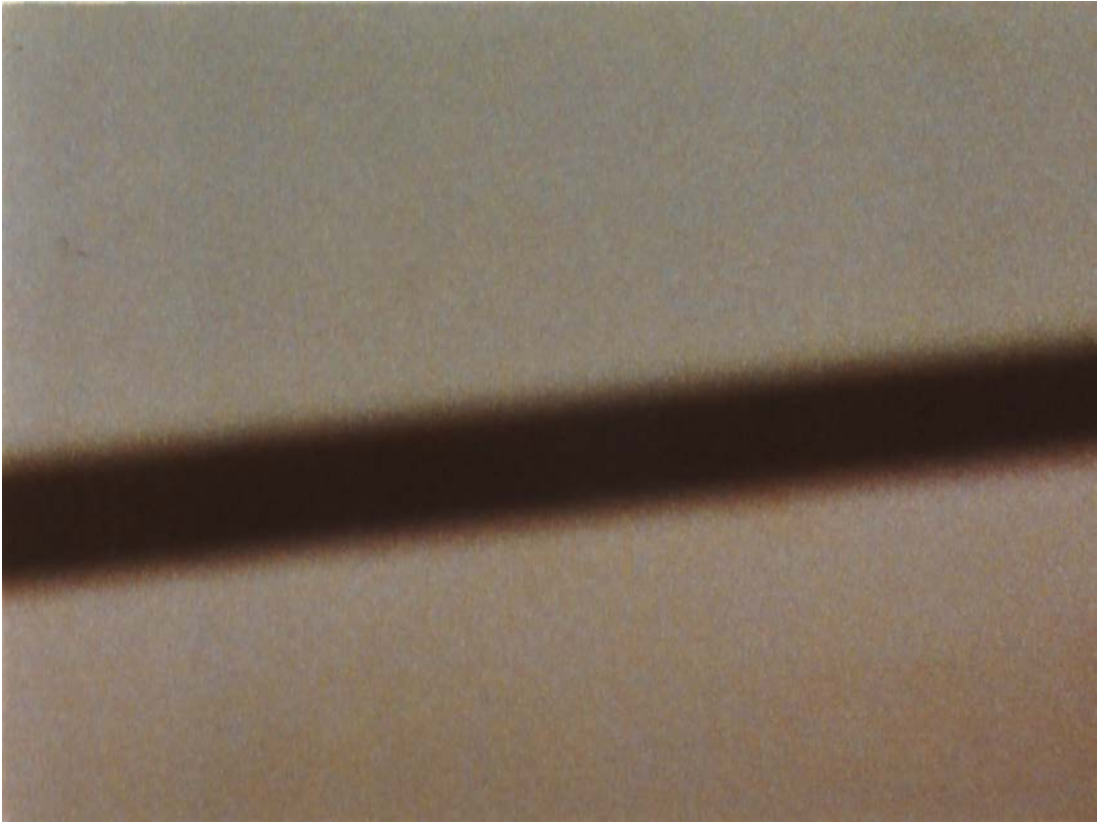
By using the camera as a device with which to 'hunt' the subject, the second part of the film gives over to glimpses of images that resemble the features of a face, drapes in clothing, and the limbs of an animal. Like in many instances, closeness does not preclude clarity and it is by taking a step back that the image and subjects in frame begin to reveal themselves. What comes to the fore are three women standing with an animal carcass at their feet and rifles in their hands. These apparent female hunters pose distinctively, inverting the gender roles of the time. Wearing a mixture of traditional clothing and men's felt hats, there is a certain ambiguity pertaining to the image's purpose and function. Does it simply document a trophy hunt, is it a holiday souvenir, and to what extent has it been staged? The obtuse and enigmatic quality of this photograph is further compounded for the artist by the subsequent discovery that one of the women in the photograph was her grandmother, who died long before she was born.

The paradoxes apparent in *Untitled (After the hunt)* highlight an element of irretrievability that characterise the mediums of photography and film. A photograph itself is a paradox, it seems to give a present tense to what has past. In each cut in the film edit the image shakes slightly with the camera's movement, as though in an attempt to re-animate the photograph and bring an earlier presence back to life. The film can be seen as performing a dissection of a corpus. As if each scene were morsels of the dead animal's body, which would have been torn into pieces and shared out.

As one of Islam's few works that relates directly to Bangladesh, *Untitled (After the hunt)* can be seen as an address to artist's protracted relationship to the place of her birth, Dhaka, which she left at the age of three. However, it remains a poetic gesture rather than an autobiographical or sociological document.



Untitled (After the hunt) (still), 2008, 16 mm film, 7:28 minutes, Courtesy White Cube.



Untitled (After the hunt) (stills), 2008, 16 mm film, 7:28 minutes, Courtesy White Cube



Untitled (After the hunt) (film frames), 2008, 16 mm film, 7:28 minutes, Courtesy White Cube

Rathin Barman

Indian artist Rathin Barman was born in 1981 surrounded by Bangladesh on three sides. Tripura, India's third smallest state, shares close historical ties with Bangladesh. These close ties cause strife between the regions, and trade was recently suspended due to protests against tariff hikes. Barman's parents, as well as many other people he grew up around, are originally from Bangladesh and fled the country post the riots of the 1950s and 1960s. When thinking about the relationship between India and Bangladesh, the artist reflects that "people in my village can speak several Bangladeshi languages. Apart from political issues things are almost same. So, I assume, it's the same land which is just politically divided."



(Study for) *Landscape from Memory (Situation 1)*, 2014, Iron Rebar, Found Rubble. Curated and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for Dhaka Art Summit, Courtesy of the artist and Experimenter, Kolkata

Tripura is geographically cut off from the rest of India, and due to the economic disadvantages of its isolation, many youth people from Tripura such as Barman have to migrate to cities like Kolkata to make their way in the world. The artist has experienced first hand the transforming effects of globalisation, and looks at it with a close lens in his work, which while seemingly contradictory is both site-specific and universal. Despite his young age, Barman likes to look deep into present realities, shifting his gaze to the foundations for the issues we experience today.

Rathin Barman had initially been trained to become mechanical engineer, but soon with the help of his brother, abandoned his courses to join the University's Fine Arts department. Barman has used his engineering knowledge how to create ambitious structures that break moulds and force the audience to look at the world in new ways. He creates new structures, but ones that are primarily based on structures that had been put together in different ways by someone else. His practice has focused on this fascination with old buildings, and their fate after their redevelopment,

in rapidly changing urban spaces in the subcontinent and other parts of the developing world. Similar to building new structures, Barman explores building a new mold out of a material that once had a different use, such as his corrugated paper works employing removal boxes, now re-assigned to creating entire living rooms to illustrate the ideas of quick and mobile living which forgets roots. This lifestyle often comes at the expense of historical buildings and Barman tasks himself with documenting the old buildings of Kolkata, imagining what will become of them after their scheduled demolition.

One body of work which has earned Barman international acclaim is his series of sculptures transforming iron reinforcement bars and found rubble into structures which comment on the constant pressure for urban development - rural areas are transforming into urban centres, much like his own. Barman made his international debut at the Frieze New York Sculpture Park in 2012, curated by Tom Eccles, with *Untitled*, currently on view at the DeCordova Sculpture Park, Massachusetts, USA, making Barman the first sculptor of Asian origin to exhibit at the park. DeCordova describes Barman's work as both universal and site specific. While the iron reinforcement bar structures travelled from India, the rubble that fills the sculpture must be collected from the local area where the work is being exhibited. When the work was shown at Frieze New York, the rubble came from New York City, when the work was shown again at DeCordova, the rubble was collected from Lincoln, MA. Urbanisation is a universal and increasingly homogeneous issue, but the crumbled residue beneath new developments shows the breadth of history that developers are paving over.

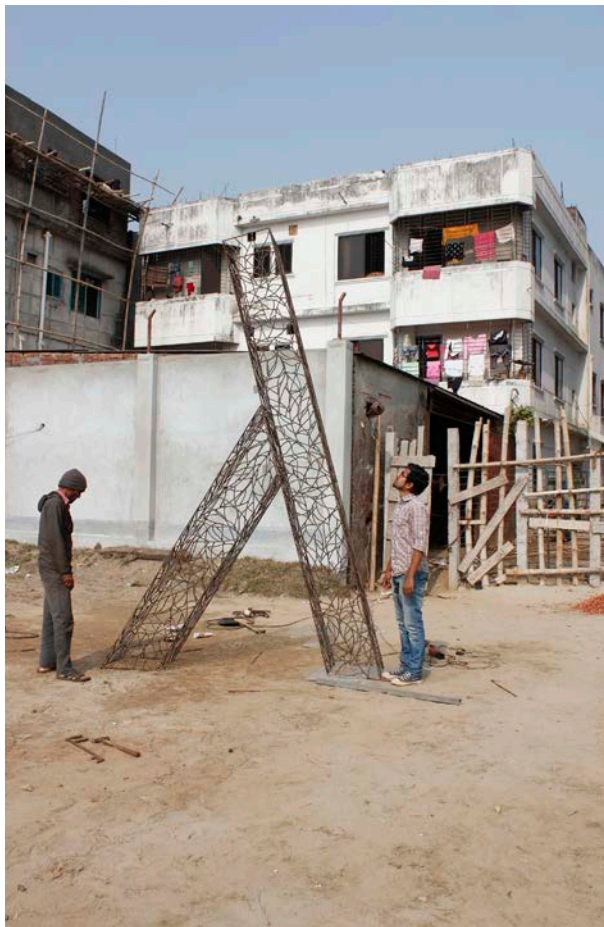
While previous works highlighted the distinctions between different urban centres through the physicality of the wreckage filling his structures, for his commission for the Dhaka Art Summit, Barman expects the rubble he finds in Dhaka to be strikingly similar to that which he finds around his studio in Kolkata, pointing to shared history between the two Bengals and paving over the differences in between, which become fewer and fewer through globalisation's effects on both urban India and Bangladesh.



(Installation of) *Untitled*, 2012 at Frieze New York Sculpture Park, Image courtesy of the artist, Experimenter, and Creative India Foundation

The form of this work draws the viewer into the sad reality of many cities in urban South Asia. The desire to expand and grow overrides the need for adequate urban planning and building codes; entire cities are being built in ways that defy any idea of a sustainable urban landscape. Recent disasters, such as the highly publicised Rana Plaza incident, as well as other incidents with less media attention in Mumbai, Kolkata and elsewhere, speak of the high human cost of industrialisation gone wrong. Methods and planning behind many new buildings in the region are questionable and Barman's work uses the language of development and the debris of its past, to raise these questions.

In *Landscape From Memory (Situation 1)*, the mammoth iron and rubble structure stands as a monument that bears the memories of several tragedies that are marked by architectural evidence of poor urban planning and civil negligence. It is a tragically ordinary urban visual of failed dreams of transforming space. While the way in which this work pierces space and calls to mind Chris Burden's *Beam Drop*, *Landscape from Memory (Situation 1)* critiques the liberties that builders subject the public to, rather than celebrating freedom from the modern urban grid. Many developers in South Asia want the look of the grid without properly planning for it, and this is where many of the region's problems arise. Like the work of Lida Abdul, Barman's work provides hope that we can rebuild from the crumbling ruins around us, and heal and progress without repeating history's tragic mistakes.



(Making Of) *Landscape from Memory (Situation 1)*, 2014, Iron Rebar, Found Rubble, Curated and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for Dhaka Art Summit
Courtesy of the artist and Experimenter, Kolkata

Tayeba Begum Lipi

Tayeba Begum Lipi (b. 1969) is one of the most recognized contemporary artists from Bangladesh, and a key figure in the development of support systems for artists in the country as a founding member and trustee of the Britto Arts Trust, along with her husband, Bangladeshi artist Mahbubur Rahman. Lipi was born in the north of Bangladesh in Gaibandha, a small village without significant access to medical resources, but with generally large family sizes (Lipi is one of 12 siblings). The only tool readily available to deliver a child in the villages is a sterilized surgical razor blade. Lipi's most iconic works are those that transform this tool of reproduction into seductive and reflective sculptures, playing with Bangladeshi cultural iconography of femininity. One example is *Love Bed* (2012), a larger than king-size sculpture of a marriage bed, created from these gleaming blades with the Bangladeshi brand Balaka printed on them. While steel normally has a masculine connotation as a medium, for Lipi steel describes the strength of women to keep families and communities together, despite all of the hardships they are faced with, especially in Bangladesh. This work, which is in the permanent collection of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and many others in the series such as *Bizarre and Beautiful* (2011) which was shown at the 54th Venice Biennale in the Bangladesh pavilion, are rife with contradictions between the warmth and appeal of the subject and cold and off-putting perceived threat of the medium.



Image courtesy of the artist's personal archive, 2009

While Lipi's works can be read as looking at the overall social fabric of Bangladesh and South Asia, they are actually born from a very personal space. Lipi's solo project for the Dhaka Art Summit, *A Room of My Own*, inspired by the texts of Virginia Woolf, provides context for the artist's previous body of work, sharing the artist's silent journey over the years, fighting her own body and soul in the wish to conceive a child. The work provides a deeper understanding to her practice as a sculptor and the richness of her life experience. Lipi's husband is also part of this story, and it is interesting to draw connections between their respective uses of sharp objects to depict resilience in the face of adverse circumstances.

Rahman and Lipi studied together since 1986, were married ten years later, and founded the Britto Art Trust in 2002 along with 4 other contemporary artists. Reflecting back on these days, Lipi shares that "As young artists, we usually thought about collective efforts and had always been surrounded by friends. We knew that we were taking a huge challenge by not going for any regular jobs that artists used to do to survive...so at that stage of

our very early conjugal life it was all about building ourselves as artists, because we knew it was not easy to be a full time unconventional art practitioner in this rather limited art scene." Being so focused on the birth of their careers as artists, they could not imagine having a child, and chose not to start a family.

Coming from such a large family, the artist was unaware of age limitations for pregnancy until 2007, and when she conceived for a second time in 2009, she was over the moon with happiness. Three months into the pregnancy, however, she lost the child and was hospitalized, and after many tests, pills, and other medications, Lipi realized the sad reality that she would not be able to have a child of her own. After the stress of the 2011 Venice Biennale and of purchasing a new space for Britto Arts Trust, the reality of her future fully weighed in on her, and realizing that she might not be the only person suffering in silence, she decided to disclose her journey through her work. Lipi's methods, however, are more subtle than other artists such as Tracey Emin or Sophie Calle who also publically explore personal pain.

In a *Room of My Own*, Lipi takes chronological steps into the special times of her life, sharing black and white photos taken at the time. The artist manipulates private items that women use as part of their bodies' cycles that show the potential for pregnancy, such as sanitary napkins, safety pins, and tampons, and small objects that allow the audience to visualize a born and un-born child. Low lights create a sense of intimacy in the space. Despite the deep pain reflected in this room and her wider body of work, the artist finds it important to share that this experience does not define her as a person or as an artist. "We are a happy couple as always. I am not at all frustrated but of course sometime it makes me sad to think about the reality that women do have a limitation that cannot be restrained by anyone. At some point they are limited to the reserve of their own eggs that make them unable to give birth."

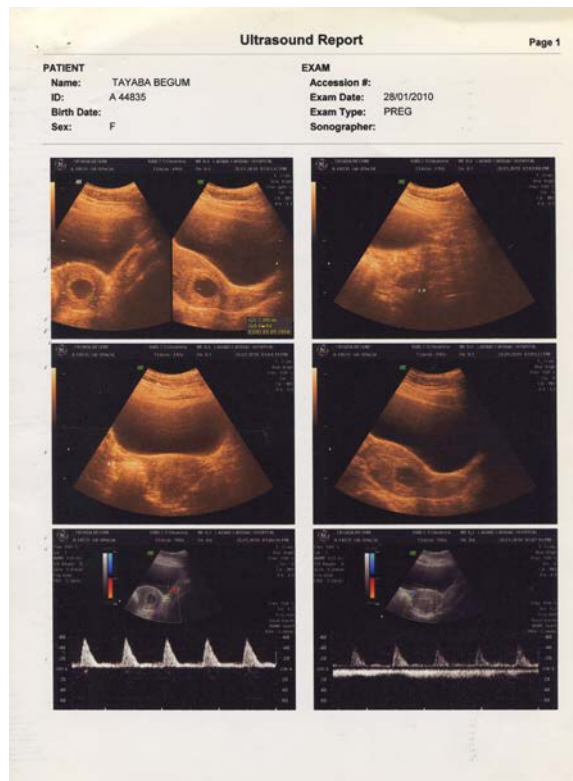


image courtesy of the artist's personal archive, 2009

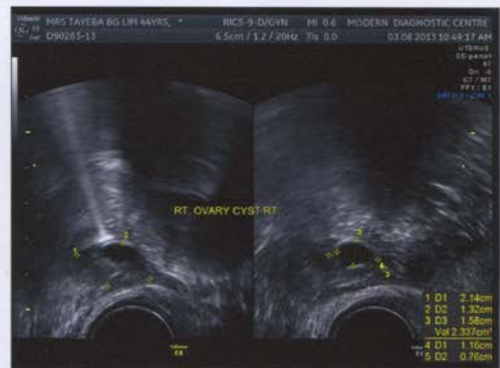
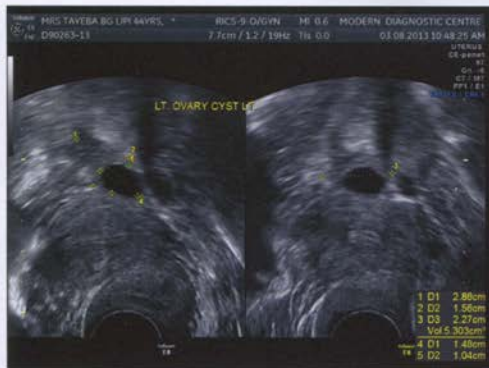
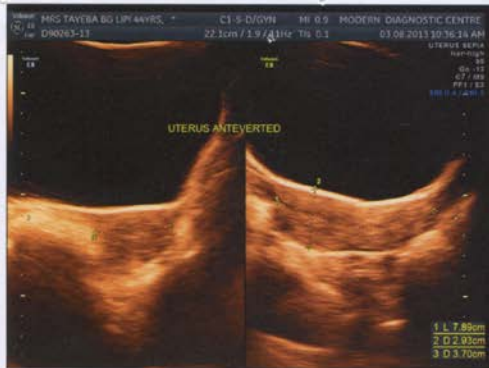


image courtesy of the artist's personal archive, 2009

Tsherin Sherpa

Historically, Tibetan art only existed in a religious context. *Lha dri ba* in Tibetan means to draw a deity, and it is the only expression available to describe “art,” as art was often used for meditation or paying tribute. Nepalese Painter Tsherin Sherpa extends this expression into a global contemporary art context, and created three new paintings that explore the relationship between Tibetan tradition and identity in the 21st century for the Dhaka Art Summit. The artist is based between Oakland and Kathmandu, and he created these works in his studio in Nepal. His work has been exhibited extensively internationally, including the landmark exhibition at the Rubin Museum in New York, “Tradition Transformed - Tibetan Artist’s Respond.”



54 views of Wisdom and Compassion, 2013, Acrylic and ink on canvas in 54 panels, 54 20 x 20 inch panels, Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation, Courtesy of the artist and Rossi & Rossi, Hong Kong

Born in Kathmandu to a Tibetan Buddhist family in 1968, Sherpa apprenticed with his father Master Urgen Dorje Sherpa in the thangka painting tradition. Sherpa’s practice has preserved the meticulous detail of the canonical thangka but his figures are distilled from the structured, underlying grid systems and symbols that bring the traditional deity’s form to life. In recent years his emphasis has shifted from traditional subjects to more contemporary concerns, including imagining what traditional Tibetan spirits would now look like if they too had left Tibet and journeyed with him to California (where he now lives). By exporting his figures out of their context Sherpa explains, “[t]hrough centuries of reproduction, the essences of many of these spiritual tools have been lost. Bits and pieces have been chopped away or forgotten to be included due to the patronage of a tourist class that doesn’t know the ritual usage of the painting. By consciously deconstructing and abstracting the deity, I’m interested to see what parts of its essence will be revealed and reinvigorated through the process of exploring meaning, form, and identity.”

Bangladesh shares a deep connection with the history of Sherpa's Tibetan Buddhist faith. The founder of the Kadampa school of Buddhism, Atisha (980-1054 CE) was born in East Bengal (in an area that is now in Bangladesh). Like the Buddha, Atisha is believed to have been born into a royal family and grew to espouse the ways of the cloth than that of the sword. Celebrated for the brilliance of his teachings and his unparalleled abilities in debate, Atisha was soon appointed abbot of Nalanda Monastery, the greatest of all Buddhist monasteries in India. So great was his reach that he was invited to teach in Tibet. There he composed the Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment, a text that distilled all of the Buddha's eighty four thousand teachings of Dharma into a clear simple guide for practice. Atisha stayed in Tibet for 17 years in total, and his teachings were passed down to subsequent generations, including to the great Je Tsongkhapa, whose Atisha inspired lam-rim texts remain the cornerstone of Tibetan Buddhist teachings to this day.

Atisha's teachings reached Sherpa's grandparents in Tibet, which were subsequently taught to Sherpa in Nepal, and now travel back to Bangladesh through Sherpa's technically fascinating and richly colored multi-paneled paintings. Atisha's legacy has been the driving force behind the three works presented here. As Sherpa points out, "as a person viewing him from a historical vantage point today, we glimpse at different perspectives of him depending on our cultural boundaries. Through globalization, these different boundaries come up next to each other physically and virtually to expose a form that is greater than its individual parts. Through time, countries are always reestablishing new geographic borders which in turn assist cultures to re-invent itself. By seeing the links and gaps between these forms, I hope one can contemplate the whole."



Multiple Protectors 1 (Blue), 2013, Gold leaf, acrylic and ink on paper, 60 x 48 inches, Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation, Courtesy of the artist and Rossi & Rossi, Hong Kong

The Fifty-four Views of Wisdom and Compassion (Untitled I) consists of separate pieces (20 x 20 inches each on canvas) that compose the whole. The central deity, Chakrasamvara, exists in fragments throughout the work. These pieces are depicted from different vantage points; some show portions from a zoomed-in perspective while others are from an eagle-eye view. Charkrasamvara, translated in the West as “Highest Bliss,” is one of the principles of istha-devatā, or meditational deities of the Sarma schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Typically depicted with a blue-coloured body, four faces, and twelve arms, the deity is represented embracing his consort Vajravarahi in the yab-yum position. Their divine embrace serves as a metaphor for the union of great bliss and emptiness, perceived as one and the same essence.

The other two works on paper are a continuation of Sherpa’s Protector series. As thangkas are either destroyed, lost, or moved away from their natural environment of monasteries and private altars, they begin to take on a new context. As a whole, this series explores how these abstractions of deities will function and be perceived by a new set of viewers in secular space. In the previous series, the individual deity recedes into an elegant swirling form. The familiar structure of a grid system is no longer used to stabilize and support it. At the same moment that the traditional is becoming ungrounded, something new is arising. This is the first time that Sherpa works with multiple intermingling deities, and he wanted to explore how “the energy changes from a single form to that of a space consisting of multiplicity and repetition.”



Multiple Protectors 2 (Red), 2013, Acrylic and ink on paper, 48 x 42 inches. Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation, Courtesy of the artist and Rossi & Rossi, Hong Kong

Mithu Sen

In addition to being internationally acclaimed as one of India's best visual artists, and winning the country's inaugural Skoda Prize in 2010, Mithu Sen (b. 1971) is also recognized among connoisseurs as one of the finest Bengali Poets. Sen's visual art practice stems from a strong drawing background that has extended into video, sculpture, installations, and sound works that further draw the viewer into her psyche. Sen has been invited for numerous international residencies and exhibitions, and as the artist travels, she attempts to draw in new publics to her work that often reflects how these new locations have affected her psyche.



(Study For) *Batil-Kobitaboli (Poems Declined)*, 2014, Curated and Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation, Courtesy of the artist.

Sen has been returning to poetry in her recent work. In 2013 she realized a project entitled *I am a Poet* at the Tate Modern project space and at Khoj, where she invited viewers "to embrace 'nonsense' as resistance and comb out utterances from [their] subconscious; thereby, giving voice to all those moments that exist but are not realised or lived." Many of Sen's works aim to give glimpses at secret psychological moments, and to debunk ideas about hierarchies that exist in the creative world. In one such project, *Free Mithu* (2007 onwards), the artist offered free artworks to

anyone who would write her a personal letter, making direct connection with the public without an intermediary such as a private dealer or an art gallery and using her artwork as an emotional response to correspondence from strangers. In another work, she took up a very prominent wall and filled it with the text that read "Artist – Unknown, Medium – Life," celebrating works of unsung creative individuals whose names might have never made it into the consciousness of the art world. This desire to give importance to marginalized people, emotions, and ideas is a common thread in her work.

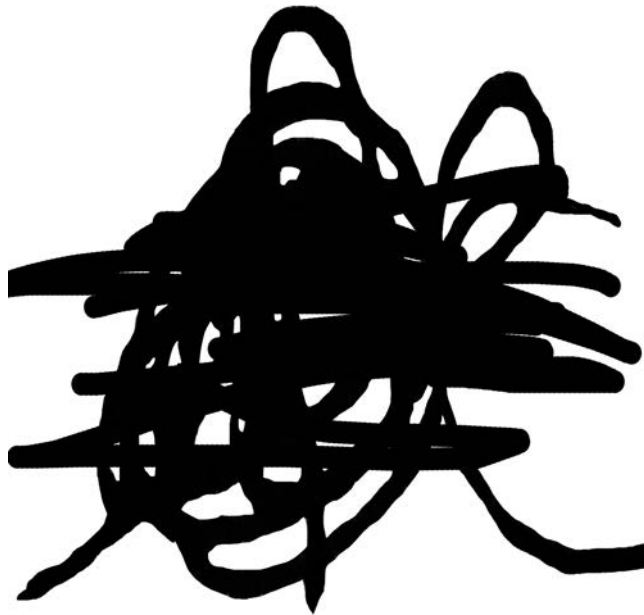
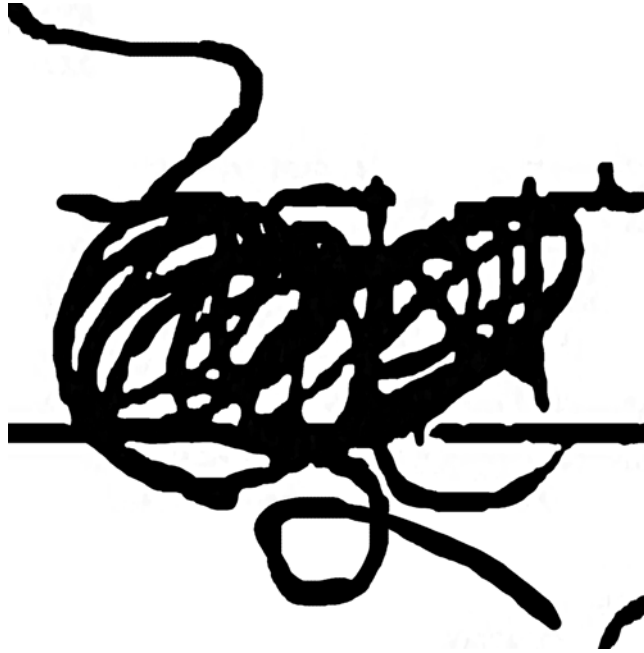
Rather than celebrate her success or importance as a South Asian artist, Mithu Sen created a project that celebrates the work and efforts of poets whose work was not previously given prominence or attention, to those whose work was actually declined or rejected. In her experience in Dhaka, Sen realized that poetry was not limited to poets, the Bangla language itself was poetry, and poetry itself is a language in Bangladesh, sharing that "In Bangladesh, the language is not Bengali but Poetry."

In the process of creating the multi-media installation *Batil-Kobitaboli (Poems Declined)*, Mithu Sen traveled to Dhaka to impulsively meet, collect, read, and study unpublished/rejected works by aspiring Bangladeshi poets, trying to recover the marginalized emotions of poets whose words could not cross institutional barriers. The artist personally met about 30-40 poets, but corresponded with over 100 poets who gave her more than 1,000 poems. Sharing rejection requires relinquishing one's ego, and through her research and communication and artistic prowess, Sen has smashed traditional psychological and systematic barriers to these poets' works and is presenting them in a prominent space in Dhaka in the Shilpakala Academy, and binding them in a nearly two foot thick book elevated on a golden pedestal.

Rather than keeping the marked up manuscripts tucked away in a drawer or closet, Sen treasured these self-edits and suggestions of inadequacy and struggles to find one's voice (which were given to her by the poets, even from their personal diaries), and elevated these corrective markings and psychological symbols of the creative process (doodles, etc.) into the realm of drawing. Placing a spotlight on these annotations, Sen projects their shadow into the space. Behind every successful project is another that failed, and we grow from these failures. These moments of feeling inadequate or grappling to find oneself fuel our growth, and at times, they may be something to celebrate. These self-corrections can also show a sense of self-reliance as they were corrected by the author, rather than by an institutional hierarchy. The sound element of this project is a poetic expression of Sen's, which invites anyone to stand on a dedicated pedestal and read their poetry aloud. Through this gesture, Sen is attempting to transform her project into a space where creative people are encouraged to think past fears of rejection.



(Study For) *Batil-Kobitaboli (Poems Declined)*, 2014, Image of Poetry Self-Corrections, Curated and Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation. Courtesy of the artist



(Study For) *Batil-Kobitaboli (Poems Declined)*, 2014, Image of Poetry Self-Corrections, Curated and Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation. Courtesy of the artist

Rashid Rana

Rashid Rana is one of the most important Pakistani artists of his generation. Rana's work deals with everyday images drawn from pop culture, art history and urban surroundings, as well as more abstract themes of faith and religion. He is known for his style of constructing large images out of "pixels" of other smaller images. In addition to his own work as a visual artist, he is the head of Fine Art Department and one of the founding faculty members of the School of Visual Arts and Design (SVAD) at the Beaconhouse National University, Lahore. His work is in the permanent collections of the Asia Society, Devi Art Foundation, the Queensland Art Museum, the Fukuoka Museum of Asian Art, and many other distinguished public and private collections around the world. He recently completed a mid-career retrospective at the Mohatta Palace Museum in Karachi, a ground-breaking exhibition in the history of contemporary art in Pakistan.

The artist contextualises his interest in Western art history by negotiating it with his time and location. Fellow artist and critic Quddus Mirza wrote, "Rana's work deals with globalisation, reflects on its impact, as well as serves as a critique of it. His use of digital media signifies the altered fabric of our societies, which function on the pattern and necessity of transnational operations. Here a work is conceived in Lahore, produced in Düsseldorf, displayed in Cairo and is collected in Chicago; spreading across four corners of the world"¹ One of Rana's most talked about recent works that speaks to the global nature of his practice is *A Plinth from a Gallery in Lahore* (2010-2011), a photo sculpture that he exhibited at his first solo exhibition at Lisson Gallery in London in 2011.



A Plinth from a Gallery in Lahore, 2010-11, UV print on aluminum, 36 x 36 x 100 cm
courtesy of the artist and Lisson Gallery, London



(detail)

·Rashid Rana: A World Apart, Rashid Rana, Chatterjee & Lal/Chemould Prescott Road.

The artist took photographs of a pedestal at a gallery in Lahore and transformed this documentation into an impactful sculpture. "I wanted to extend the historical journey of this object as a work of mine," reflects Rana, "historically a plinth has been used as an object to place figurative sculptures, until it became so close to becoming an art object itself as part of the minimalist movement of the 1960s and white cube gallery aesthetics. These aesthetics and their manifestations have travelled to other parts of the world...I wanted to photographically document a plinth from a gallery in Lahore and produce it as a three-dimensional object (print on aluminium) and take it back to the white cube gallery place to symbolise my own journey as an artist." *A Plinth from a Gallery in Lahore* can also be read as the rendering of a Western idea of an exhibition model placed in the context of South Asia, where it has not been fully downloaded and remains pixelated.

Another work which speaks to the artist's mental space, that is found between the hallowed halls of international museums and the local buzz of the rapidly developing city of Lahore, is the 2010-2011 photo sculpture *The Step*. The geometric arrangement of a group of bricks outside of a small village grocery shop (selling only five to six essential items) reminded the artist of Carl Andre's work, inspiring him to record and dislocate this experience in his work using the same photo sculpture technique as *A Plinth from a Gallery in Lahore*.

Rashid Rana's solo project *A Room from TATE Modern* (2013-2014) extends Rana's practice from three-dimensional photo sculptures into the scale of architecture, something that Rana had wanted to do for many years, and that



The Step, 2010-11, UV print on aluminum, 159.6 x 45.6 x 22.8 cm, courtesy of the artist and Lisson Gallery, London



(detail)

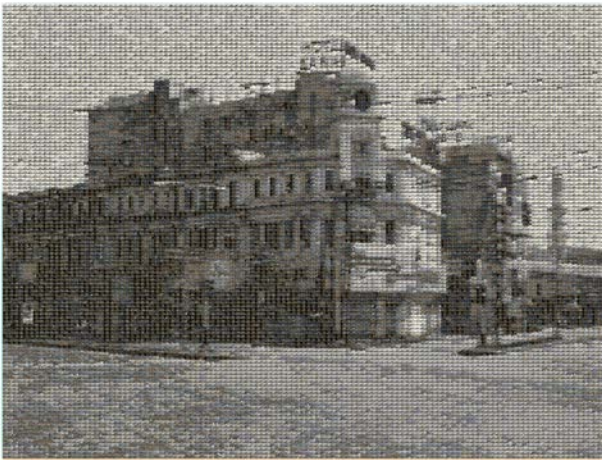
he mentioned in an interview with Hans-Ulrich Obrist. Resulting from a discussion with curator Diana Campbell Betancourt over a long distance call from rural Sweden to Lahore, the artist decided to realise this longstanding dream for his solo project at the Dhaka Art Summit. The work is based on photo documentation of a room at Tate Modern, made to look empty with the works of art eliminated, but with spotlight effects and remnants of labels and wall-texts of works that make the viewer imagine what could have previously hung there. Rana elaborates that, "essentially, the work is a portrait (always an illusion) of a place which itself is used for the exhibition of art."

"My work is often a three-way negotiation between myself, my immediate physical surroundings and what I receive – whether through the internet, books, history, or collective knowledge," Rashid Rana recently shared in an interview with Art Review. The artist exists in a current reality of being an artist from Pakistan, but integrated into the Western exhibition model of the white cube. As a teacher and as an artist, Rana is one of the pioneers in building artistic infrastructure in Pakistan. The fact that he is injecting a Western exhibition model into the central atrium of the

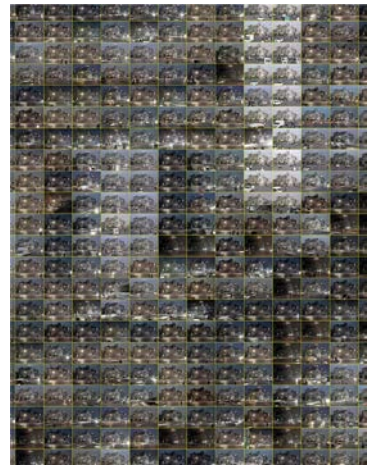
government property of the National Academy of Fine Arts of Bangladesh, while appropriating the model into his own work, speaks to the larger needs and potential for the region. The work also opens up interesting questions about experiencing art virtually.

In this project, viewers will be looking at a three-dimensional photograph of a room at Tate Modern. While looking straight at the blank wall (which contains an image of a wall), viewers won't necessarily question it as an illusion. When looking at the other walls, however, the view of doors that open into adjacent gallery spaces will create an illusion that the walls extend into new dimensions. At its formal core, this work is about the conflict between the two-dimensional and the three-dimensional. To enhance this "dimensional conflict" and heighten the sense of a space in between truth and fiction, the photos on the wall and ceiling (pasted onto the walls and ceiling) are pixelated; something that we normally associate with two-dimensionality.

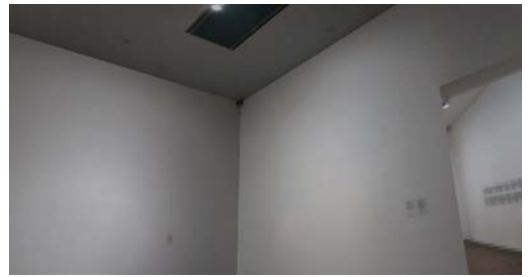
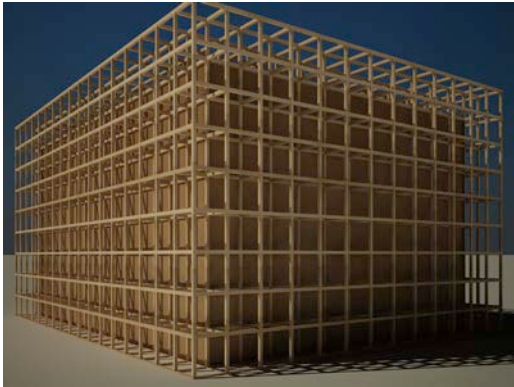
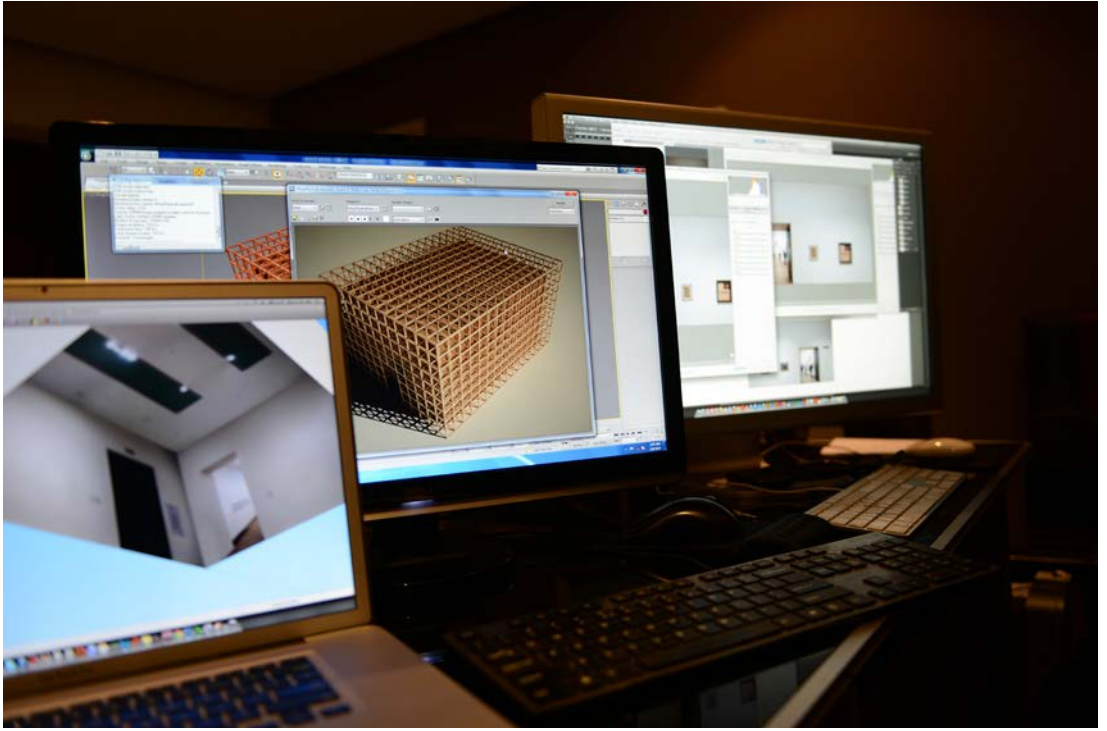
The exterior of this work is a temporary structure that reveals the methods of the project's construction: MDF joined with a wooden-frame to form a grid-like structure that references the work of Sol Lewitt. The grid has played an important part in Rana's larger body of work, which evolved from grid paintings to painting pixel and matrix-based digital prints. Reflecting on his earlier works, Rana shared with Obrist, "It's ironic though, that my fascination with formal concerns to do with two dimensionality are manifesting in three-dimensional works." The artist collaborated with Dhaka architects to create a photo sculpture of a room at Tate nearly to-scale. The artist dislocated his project from the grid of the South Plaza's geometric layout, tilting it in a manner that the audience must walk around the structure, to discover a hidden door at the back of the outer MDF structure. Rana draws viewers into his work, forcing them to look past the surface, and rewarding them if they take the time to fully take in and understand the rich illusions and allusions in his work.



Dislocation IV, 2007-2008, Disc Mount Print, Courtesy of the Samdani Art Foundation Collection



(detail)



A Room from *TATE Modern* (study for), 2013-2014, Inkjet print on photo paper, MDF, wood, 7.5 x 9.2 x 5.2 meters.
Curated and commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation for the Dhaka Art Summit 2014, Courtesy of the artist, Samdani Art Foundation, and Lisson Gallery, London

Mahbubur Rahman

The Bangladeshi artist Mahbubur Rahman (b. 1969) has been instrumental in the development of contemporary art in Bangladesh both through his personal experimental practice, his activism, and also his work developing the Britto Arts Trust, which he co-founded with his wife Tayeba Begum Lipi in 2002. Rahman's paintings and performances have been widely exhibited in solo and group shows in Bangladesh and internationally in several renowned institutions including the Bangladesh Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennale and the 14th Asian Art Biennale.

In many of his performance works, the body plays a key role in the artist's journey for knowledge. In his powerful and ongoing performance *Transformation*, Rahman wears a faceless hood with attached buffalo horns, and walks around the streets of Dhaka. The performance refers to local lore of the farmer Nuruldunner Sarajiban, whose resistance to British colonial forces ruined him and resulted in having to pull his own plough in the place of buffalo, crippling him to a point where he is left powerless and braying like a cow. The Triangle Arts Trust has remarked, "Rahman's performance plays with a sense of impotence, contrasting the symbolic value of the horns with his blind and helpless wanderings." Rahman is interested in how norms in society are created, and what forces cause certain acts to be forbidden. Rahman opines, "The norms in the diverse culture of societies are usually created according to the local atmosphere, weather and time. Many illogical norms coexist bringing about conflict and compelling us to decide how we ought to act. The larger part of the community chooses the social norms."



A Space for Rainbow, 2014, 4 Channel Video Installation with sound, replicated objects made of stainless steel scissors, Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation, Courtesy of the artist

Gender norms are something that have interested Rahman from a young age. The artist is one of 8 siblings, and the first male born after his 5 elder sisters. He was always curious why he was the one that was always doted upon even though he wasn't the youngest child. He grew up in old Dhaka, and in the early stages of his career, his early interest in gender politics extended to the lives of sex workers and cross-gendered people he encountered around the neighbourhood. The tragic rapes during the war in 1971 also keep popping to the forefront of his mind, and looking at how gender norms can lead to violence.

Rahman has recently become extremely interested in the treatment of the minority LGBT communities both at home, and abroad. The repeal of Section 377 in India in December 2013 repealed a 2009 ruling that decriminalized same-sex marriage in the country. This highly publicized ruling provided yet another example of the barriers to gay marriage and gender equality that are rampant in South Asia, and the rest of the world. In Bangladesh, LGBT people face extreme discrimination and verbal and physical abuse, and same-sex intimate relationships are illegal. People who support the change of these restrictive rules are battling a powerful system, and Rahman sees these peace lovers as a kind of warrior. In his solo project, *A Space for Rainbow*, the artist provides a space for warriors to become lovers, and to think about a covenant of peace and happiness, reflecting on the multiple meanings of the symbol of the rainbow from Christianity to gender equality. Rahman designed a common washroom on the third floor for warriors in which he projects videos depicting scenes of masculinity on urinals made of surgical scissors, a medium which has threatening undertones to virility. Washrooms are places where people are their most vulnerable, and by looking at this shared vulnerability, perhaps prejudices could be diminished.

Sounds of singing bowls and bells create a sense of calm and safety in this charged space. The artist shares that the "intention of this rainbow room is for the public to disconnect from their regular destructive life and rather give them a breathing space to convene and think about peace and happiness." The artist believes that people lose identity in a washroom because it is a space where one tries to become comfortable and cleanse them self. Common warriors can join forces here with peace lovers to fight for equality. The artist has also curated an exhibition around the same theme at Britto Arts Trust.



A Space for Rainbow, 2014, 4 Channel Video Installation with sound, replicated objects made of stainless steel scissors, Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation, Courtesy of the artist



Altering Gesture, 2011, Video installation, Courtesy of the artist

Naeem Mohaiemen

Since 2006, the London born, New York and Dhaka based Bangladeshi artist and writer Naeem Mohaiemen has worked on a series called *The Young Man Was*, a long-form project in multiple chapters that traces the history of the “ultra left,” and its complicated legacy of disappointment and failure in Bangladesh. Using a mixture of whimsy and actual events, he has also linked these histories to that of the radical left in other countries, especially Germany and Japan. Each chapter has been in a different medium, and published in heterogeneous platforms. Some of the chapters are *Guerillas in the Mist* [Maoist underground in Dhaka], *Sartre comes to Stammheim* [Andreas Baader meets Jean Paul Sartre], *Live True Life or Die Trying* [dueling leftist-Islamism rallies], and *War of 666 against six million* [kidnapping of Hanns Martin Schleyer]. The two latest chapters are the films *United Red Army (The Young Man Was, Part 1)* [hijack of Japan Airlines], which was recently acquired by the Tate Modern, and *Afsan's Long Day (The Young Man Was Part 2)*, which is scheduled to premiere in MoMA's New Directors New Films series in the Spring of 2014.

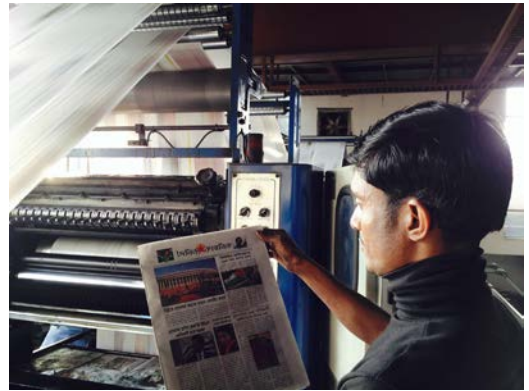
The language of these projects are somewhere between research, whimsy, and humour. Because of the ironic tone, the projects have sometimes been read in Bangladesh as “overly critical” of the left, including people Mohaiemen considers allies in the search for left alternatives. In discussions about the projects, Mohaiemen has stressed that he makes work as a believer in left futures, but with the understanding that tracing where things went wrong in the part of the process of building such futures. As he writes in the text for *Live True Life or Die Trying*: “A lover tries again, flower in hand.” Yet he also acknowledges that irony and distance are complicated devices to use in the context of Bangladesh, where history is never past and things continue to matter. The pressure for creating what Naeem has elsewhere called “shothik itihash (correct history)” is immense, and he considers the visual arts a space where ambiguous, open-ended conversations have more space.

Parallel to his interest in conducting research, Naeem has been investigating a minimal aesthetic that often veers towards the non-image. Thus *United Red Army* is a film where a majority of the story takes place in darkness, forcing the audience to replace the expected image with their own imaginary about what may be there. Sinking Polaroids into resin until they explode from heat, running VHS tapes through a VCR until on-screen snow appears, enlarging flip phone photos until the grain is the whole image (a project done before the advent of smart phone cameras)—all these techniques have produced works where the image refuses to give visual pleasure to the audience.

Since (or even before) the time of Duchamp's intervention, the idea of the “everyday” inside the gallery has blended with other ideas of *arte útil*. Many decades later, so much sediment has gathered over the original provocation, that bringing an everyday object into a gallery or a museum would have no transformative valence. The commoditization of this gesture can be seen in recent museum projects where the “R. Mutt” signature was attached to an actual museum urinal (instead of bringing it into the white box. Mohaiemen writes that “at a time when art education, international interest, and media linkages, are commodifying, commercializing, and flattening art practices in Bangladesh, there is a useful space for the idea that “everyone is an artist,” most importantly the audience in their reading (or rejection) of the object on the floor, wall, or atrium.”

The artist continues, stating, “The ultimate everyday object is the daily vernacular newspaper (not the English edition, within which my own writing has been trapped for many years), distributed, sold, shared, pasted, and finally recycled.” At the Dhaka Art Summit, Mohaiemen has married his writing and recent minimalist artistic leanings into a single-issue newspaper with the full title of “*Shokol Choritro Kalponik*,”— “*Jodi shone polao khai, tobe ghee diyei khabi*” (If I eat pulao in my dreams, I may as well eat it with ghee). This 8-page issue includes imagery reminiscent of the style of newsprint in the 1970s.

The newspaper presents fictional news items, along the lines of news that many people would wish to see: the news that would have been the everyday if the ultra left had come to power in the 1970s and built a different utopia. These stories are so far outside the realm of the possible that they fall into the category of “I wish, but I know this is not possible in this world.” A Sample Headline includes: *Indians Protest Smuggling of Cows from Bangladesh*.



Project in Process at Printing Press, 2014, image credits Arifur Rahman



কলকাতায় বাংলা ভাষার প্রচলন কমে আসছে

সাম্প্রতিককালে কলকাতায় বাংলা ভাষার প্রচলন আশঙ্কান্বিতভাবে কমে আসছে। বইপাঠায় হিমির নিতে বিভিন্ন জালা গেছে পথ ছয় মাসে মোট বিভিন্ন প্রায় ৯০% ইংরেজি বই। বাংলা বইয়ের মধ্যে ঢাকার, বাহা, রূপসী বিভিন্ন বইয়ের কটকটি বেশি। সাহিত্য বই প্রায় বিক্রি হয় না। এই বিখ্যে অস্বস্তি করে (নিয়ে প্রকাশ অনিচ্ছুক) এক লোকের জাতিবেদন, "বাংলাদেশের ভাষার আছে কোনই আনন্দ এখনও আছে।" সাহেলে আমাদের বাংলা আর আজকাল কেউ পড়ে না। সবাই চেনে বাংলা নিয়ে ব্যাধ। কম সেলাটো কাহিনী আবার সাহিত্যের উপলব্ধি করে বেবেক ফরাসি হাবিটারি ইংরেজি চর্চা।

কলকাতা ভারতের পূর্বকালীয় রাজ্য পশ্চিমবঙ্গের রাজধানী। প্রধান বিশ্ববাসিন্দা, হোমান্ড বস, সুভাষচন্দ্র বসু, মনোর ভেবেসা, সত্যজিৎ রায়, সত্যেন্দ্রনাথ বসু, সি ডি রামেন, অমর্ত সেন প্রমুখ বিশ্বব্যেণ্য ব্যক্তিত্বের কর্মস্থলি কলকাতা মহানগরী তার সমুদ্র-পূর্বকালীয় জাতিবেদন জন্ম আঙু বিবধানীয় চ্যেমে মর্শালার আসলে অধিকারি।

১৮৫০-এর দশক থেকে কলকাতা শহর বহুদেশ ও পাশ্চিমে বিশেষ সমুদ্র জি অর্জন করতে শুরু করে। ব্রিটিশ ও ভারতীয় সংস্কৃতির মিশ্রণে শহরে ব্যাপকভাবে বাংলা একমাত্র শ্রেণির উত্থাপিত। এই বাস্তু বিহীন সাধারণত উচ্চশিক্ষিত বিদ্যু, ইংরেজি শিক্ষার শিকড় ও সংবাদপত্রের পাঠক। পেশাগতভাবে এরা ছিলেন জাদিন, সরকারি কর্মচারী বা শিক্ষক। উর্বিংশ শতাব্দীতে বাংলায় নবজাগরণ নামে পরিচিত যে যুগান্তকারী সামাজিক ও সাংস্কৃতিক সংস্কার আন্দোলন ব্যক্তিগত মস্তকোয় চিন্তামারা ও রুচির আমূল পরিবর্তন ঘটাতো সম্ভব হয়েছিল তার পটভূমি ছিল এই কলকাতা শহর। বাংলায় নবজাগরণ শুধু বাংলা নয়, সমগ্র ভারতের পশ্চাত্পর্শক হয়েছিল। এই আন্দোলনের পুরোধাব্যক্তির অধিকারী রাজা রামমোহন রায়, বেঙ্গির দুই ভিত্তিমান ডিগ্রেজিও, রামচন্দ্র মাহিড়ী, বেবেত্রেনাথ ঠাকুর, ঈশ্বরচন্দ্র

বিদ্যাসাগর, বহুবিমস্ত চট্টোপাধ্যায়, রামকৃষ্ণ পরমহংস, কেশবচন্দ্র সেন, বাদী বিবেকানন্দ প্রমুখ ব্যক্তিব।

ব্যাপিগরা কলকাতার সংযোগাধিত জনসংখ্যা: মারোয়াজী ও বিহারি সম্প্রদায় শহরের উৎসেখসেখা জাতিগত সংখ্যাপ্রমুখ সম্প্রদায়। এছাড়াও কলকাতা প্রবাসী ঠীনা, রামিল, নেপালি, ওড়িয়া, তেলেগু, অহমীয়া, গুজরাতি, অ্যাংলো-ইন্ডিয়ান, অ্যাংলোন্যাশন, তিব্বতি, মহারাষ্ট্রীয়, প্যাণ্ডাবি, পারসি প্রকৃতি জাতিগত সম্প্রদায়ের বাসস্থানি। কলকাতার প্রধান ভাষা হল বাংলা ও ইংরেজি; এছাড়াও হিন্দি, উর্দু, ওড়িয়া ও ভোজ-পুরি ভাষাও শহরের একাংশের বাসিন্দাদের দ্বারা কথিত হয়ে থাকে।

বর্তমানে কলকাতায় বাংলায় প্রচলন কমে যাবার একটা বড় কারণ হচ্ছে টিভি নিরিয়াল, বিশেষ করে ডিভিডিটা পর্যয় হিদি ভাষার অ্যাংলন। আজকাল প্রায় সব জনশ্রুয় সিরিয়াল ইংরেজি বা হিদি তে হয়ে থাকে। অন্য দেশের অনুবাদন হিদিতে ডাব করা হয়। যার ফলে একটা নতুন জেনারেশন বড় হচ্ছে যাদের জন্য বাংলা এখন তৃতীয় ভাষা, এবং স্বাভাবিক ভাবেই এর উপর তাদের দখল দুর্বল হয়ে যাচ্ছে। এর পরিণতি লেখা যাচ্ছে বাংলা বইয়ের কাঠিট্রাসের মাধ্যমে।

আনন্দবাজার পত্রিকার এক সম্পাদক জাতিবেদন, "এক সমর সুদীর্ঘ না এসব ব্যাপারে বুর সোজার ছিলেন। উনি সবকমর কলকনে, বাংলাদেশের দিকে ঢাকাও ওখানে বাংলা চর্চা শুরু চলছে, সাং-চলতি প্রায় মিলিয়ে হলেও চলছে সুলীল বসু চলে যাবার পরে বাংলা ভাষা নিয়ে আন্দোলন করার মানুষ আর নাই।"

কলকাতায় চলতি একটা গল্প আছে যে অশুণ্য সেন প্রথম ঢাকার যাবার পরে লিখেছিলেন যে বাংলা ভাষায় ব্যক্তিগত লাইসেন্স গ্রেট সেনে হিদি অভিজ্ঞত হয়েছেন। গ্যাজিট ব্যাচি কবর সুযোগ হয় নাই, তবে এটা নিশ্চিত যে বাংলাদেশে ভাষা চর্চার মারা লেখে কলকাতার বিদ্যালয় বেঞ্চে যে বাংলা ভাষার কেসেবিন্দু এখন আর কলকাতা নাই।

সংযুক্ত আরব আমিরাতে নাগরিকত্বের নতুন নিয়ম

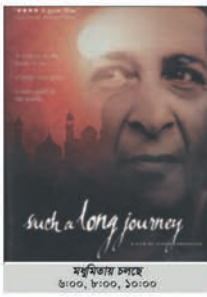
সংযুক্ত আরব আমিরাতে সংসদ নতুন নাগরিকত্ব আইন আয়োজন করেছে। সাতটি আনিরাবের মধ্যে সবচেয়ে ধনী ও শক্তিশালী। তেল শিল্পের কারণে এই দেশে কাজ করে, তবে তার সাক-রিকত্ব পাবার আবিষ্কার থাকবে। বর্তমানে আইনে গুণ্ডমার ২০ বছর থাকার পরে নাগরিকত্ব পাওয়া যায়। সমসীয়া ২০ বছর থেকে ১০ বছর নিয়ে আর অন্য কারণে বলা হয়েছে এই



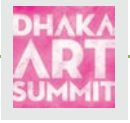
আইন পাশ হয়ে প্রায় আড়া কোটি ভারতীয়, পাকিস্তানি, বাংলাদেশি, নেপালি, শ্রী লঙ্কান ইত্যাদি দেশের মানুষ সংযুক্ত আরব আমিরাতে পাসপোর্ট পাাবে। আর দিক সেই কারণেই এই আইনের ব্যাপারে হুমুস আন্দোলন করছে এরাগতিতারা। তাদের আন্দোলনের ব্যানার হচ্ছে "এনিরাড এনিরাট্রিসের জা"। তবে দুইটি সরকারের ইচ্ছার কারণে এই আইনের ব্যাপারে বেশ কিছু পরিচ্ছেদ সনো হয়েছে। অন্দের দাবীনা এবার আই-নাই পাশ হয়ে যাবে।

সংযুক্ত আরব আমিরাতে অধ্যোগে অন্দের আরব উর্বিংশের স্কিগ-পূর্ব কনোয় অর্ধস্থিত সাতটি স্বাধীন রাষ্ট্রের একটি ফেডারেশন। ১৯৭১ সালে দেশভাঙ্গি স্বাধীনতা লাভ করে। সংযুক্ত আরব আমিরাতে সাতটি আমিরাবের নাম হল আবু ধাবি, দুবাই, ফুজাইরাহ, রাস আল খাইমাহ, আশ শারিকাহ এবং উম্ম আল কুইইয়াইম। আবু ধাবি দুবাই ফেডারেশনের রাজধানী এবং দুবাই দেশের বৃহত্তম শহর।

সংযুক্ত আরব আমিরাতে মস্তকম দেশ। এর উত্তরে পারস্য উপসাগর, দক্ষিণে ও পশ্চিমে সৌদি আরব, এবং



Shokol Chorito Kalponik (rendering of), 2014. Single-Issue Newspaper in utopian future of 2024. Curated and Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation



Jitish Kallat

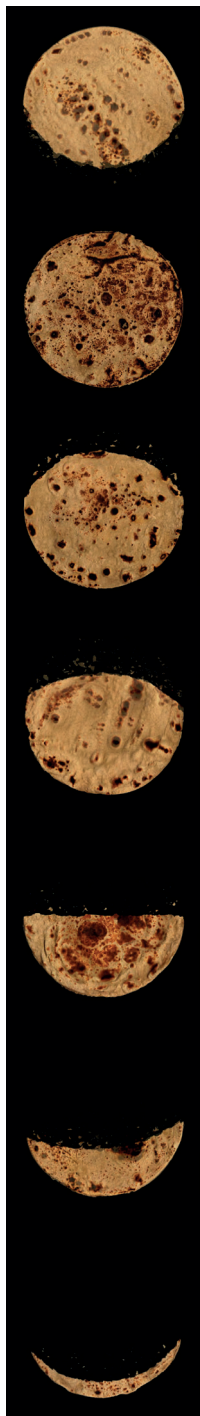
Jitish Kallat is one of the most exciting and dynamic Indian artists to have received international recognition in recent years. Kallat's works have often been described as distilled, poetic investigations of the cycle of life, interlacing several autobiographical, art-historical, political and celestial references. His work has been exhibited widely at museums and institutions including National Gallery of Modern Art (Mumbai), Tate Modern and Tate Britain (London), Martin Gropius Bau (Berlin), Serpentine Gallery (London), Mori Art Museum (Tokyo), Centre Pompidou (Paris), and the Art Institute of Chicago.

While most widely known for his paintings, Kallat's work extends far beyond this medium, and in recent years, he has been celebrated for the scale of his sculpture, installation and new media projects both in terms of their size, but also in terms of their research. Kallat hit a seminal point in his career with a solo exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago. It was here that he created the monumental installation *Public Notice 3*, a text-based work illuminated in the bright colors of US Homeland Security threat alert system, recalling Vivekananda's speech delivered on September 11th 1893 at the Art Institute of Chicago building. Text has a long history in Kallat's works, from the painted titles on his early paintings to his more recent installations that often use text as form. At the first Kiev Biennale in 2012, Kallat created another critically acclaimed work entitled *Covering Letter*, a freestanding fog screen projection that revisits a 1939 letter from Gandhi to Hitler, allowing viewers to physically traverse a piece of correspondence from one of the world's greatest advocates of peace, who addresses Hitler as a "friend" under the ideology of universal friendship.

Several of Kallat's recent works take on a more personal mode of address, and call upon viewers to find themselves in the work. In a haunting untitled work in Sculpture at Pilane, Sweden from 2010, Kallat created a 100 foot long sculpture of cast resin fossils that spell the phrase "When Will You Be Happy" in a historical burial ground in Sweden, putting desires that are often driven by consumerism into the important context of our human mortality.

Jitish Kallat's recent work has focused on the idea of time and life-cycles and at the Dhaka Art Summit, Kallat invites viewers to find themselves within the work, placing the viewer between night and day, and between immediate and eternal. His internationally acclaimed 2011 work *Epilogue* explores the 753 moon cycles that Kallat's father experienced in his lifetime using 22,500 photographs of moons that were made of roti (the most basic form of Indian bread) in various states of being eaten. Moon cycles are endless, and in the seven channel animated video *Breath*, presented here, the viewer can think of themselves within the infinite cycles that comprise the universe through the waxing and waning roti "moons." *Breath* contextualises viewers within the universe and compels them think about time, life, death, and the relationships forged during one's lifespan.

Turning the corner from *Breath*, the viewer is returned to the immediate demands of daily life routines in the seven-panel rainbow-hued lenticular photograph *Event Horizon (The Hour of the Day of the Month of the Season)* that was commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation for this exhibition. Kallat began using this medium around 2006 in a multi-part text based installation titled '*Death of Distance*' and photo-pieces such as '*Cenotaph (A Deed of Transfer)*'. Lenticular prints are a succession of images



within a single frame, and a change of the viewing angle creates the illusion of three-dimensionality with a heightened sense of animation. The timeless dilemma of the collective versus the individual manifests itself in Kallat's work, and leaves viewers with a sense of responsibility to instigate positive change before history repeats itself. In this work, several of the figures appear in multiple panels of the panorama (such as the nuns and the group of young men), invoking notions of recurrence and recursion, an experience that is often part of Kallat's oeuvre. We do not experience the universe alone. In this mysterious cycle of life, you never know who you may meet in the hour of the day of the month of the season from the moments just gone past. The past awaits our arrival in the future.



Event Horizon (The Hour of the Day of the Month of the Season), 2014 (Study for). Seven Lenticular Photographic Prints, 45 inches x 45 inches (each)
Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation, Courtesy of the artist





Epilogue, 2011, Pigment print on archival paper, 11.2 x 14.4 inches (x 753 prints), Installation view at Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai



Breath, 2013, Seven Channel Animated Video, Six Minutes, Courtesy of the artist

Asim Waqif (b. 1978)

Asim Waqif (b. 1978) has been interested in different forms of protest in his work, and he challenges the public to question the often-ridiculous rules imposed by societies and governments. For Waqif, how it is, is not how it has to be, and he is constantly challenging the ideas of the impossible, merging high-tech systems with the genius found in low-tech vernacular solutions. Waqif pushes the boundaries between humor and artistic practice with a uniquely critical edge and aims to bring art to the public in the widest sense of the word.

Hyderabad-born Waqif has exhibited extensively internationally, including a solo exhibition at the Palais de Tokyo and at Mumbai's Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum in their project space, and will be a part of the 5th Marrakech Biennale. He has been receiving international acclaim for his work that pushes materials past the surface potential they are thought to possess. Bamboo becomes a channel for sound, left-over exhibition materials en masse become material for an entirely new exhibition, decaying dog carcasses become muses, and crumpled water bottles and LED lights floated in water to become beacons for environmental awareness. These examples are but a few of the artist's fascinating choice and manipulation of materials that many people would simply overlook. Waqif is not interested in creating works that are technologically superior and immune to nature. His poetic work often documents the ways in which weather and time affect his work and almost collaborate with his sculptural structures. "Decay and destruction have an important role to play in adapting to the dynamism of society" shares Waqif.

Like his talent for finding potential in everyday materials, Waqif also finds humor in the serious. In his 2012 public intervention in New Delhi entitled *Lavaris Vastu*, Waqif subtly transformed a common police announcement (which droned fear of "the other" into public spaces) into a jest-filled instructional audio piece that prompted the public with alternative ways to deal with unattended objects and unknown people, using a voice that sounded exactly like one in the police announcement. This intervention cleverly encouraged healthy curiosity in "the other" rather than the usual paranoid suspicion, and the work suggested that the *Lavaris Vastu*, or unidentified object, had the potential to be a treasure to be discovered and cherished. Waqif collected objects and baggage from the community, and created a pile of them that evoked curiosity and welcomed the public to engage with the objects and even take them home if they wished. In this, and many of his works, the artist rebels against the thought of the commercial value of experience of art eclipsing experimentation.

Following the rabble-raising spirit of his previous works, Waqif decided to make his message fly in his new commission for the Dhaka Art Summit, *Control*, 2014. This work is inspired by the intense protests that have been happening all over the world for the last few years, and specifically those in Dhaka, which Waqif has been following closely, seeing them as almost a continuous series. Last year, there were limited protests in New Delhi (where Waqif lives), but the police and security apparatus managed to suppress them through strong-arm tactics like water-cannons and tear gas. Large parts of New Delhi were shut down and people were not allowed to go near the India Gate, and nine metro stations were temporarily shut down. This made the artist think about police tactics in crowd control, and their manipulation of infrastructure and public space.

Control is a continuation of Waqif's humorous finesse in questioning "systems." Using cane, rope, and thousands of helium-filled balloons, Waqif creates a levitating sculpture that upon closer view, reads "No Fly Zone." Waqif's choice of material, one of the most basic elements of furniture in South Asia (cane) and one of the most basic adornments to a child's birthday party (helium filled balloons), is interesting when juxtaposed with the charged phrase of "No Fly Zone," a phrase that carries serious mortal weight during displays of political might. Waqif reflects "It is indeed ironic that the public can not do much in a public space except leisure. In fact the really iconic public spaces are the most controlled. But what about the sky, does it belong to the public or the police-state? There are already a lot of controls

¹ As told to Gayatri Rangachari Shah in the New York Times:
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/06/arts/06iht-rartwaqif06.html>

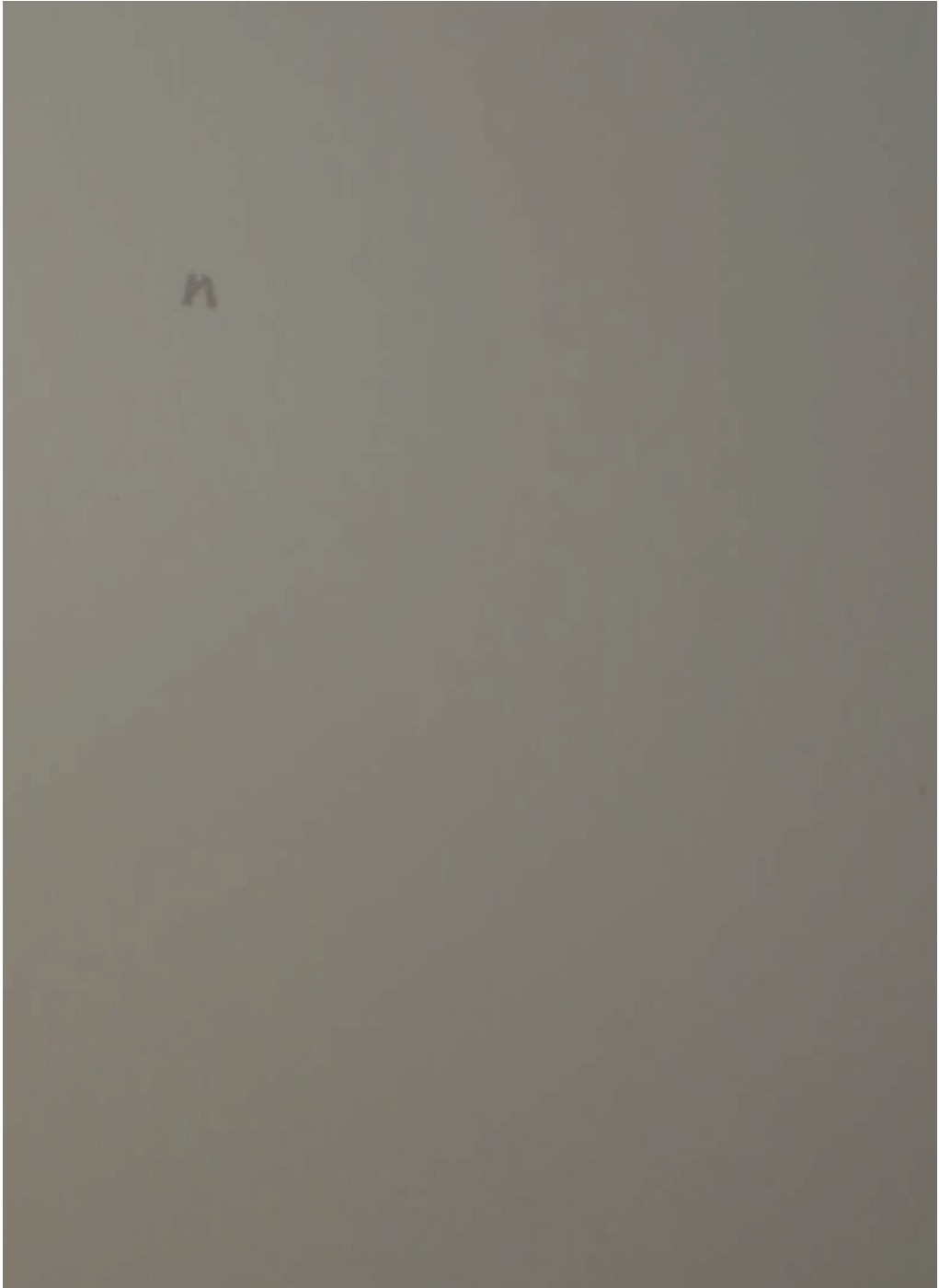
² The artist also points out that while he has worked with trash as a medium, the latex balloons are completely biodegradable and the frame is made of cane, and the artist is not launching rubbish into the atmosphere.

on private aerial vehicles in most cities in the world, but there seems to be ambiguity about flying balloons in the sky and this is what I am trying to exploit. The text itself is ironic, like pasting a 'Stick no Bills' sign on a wall."

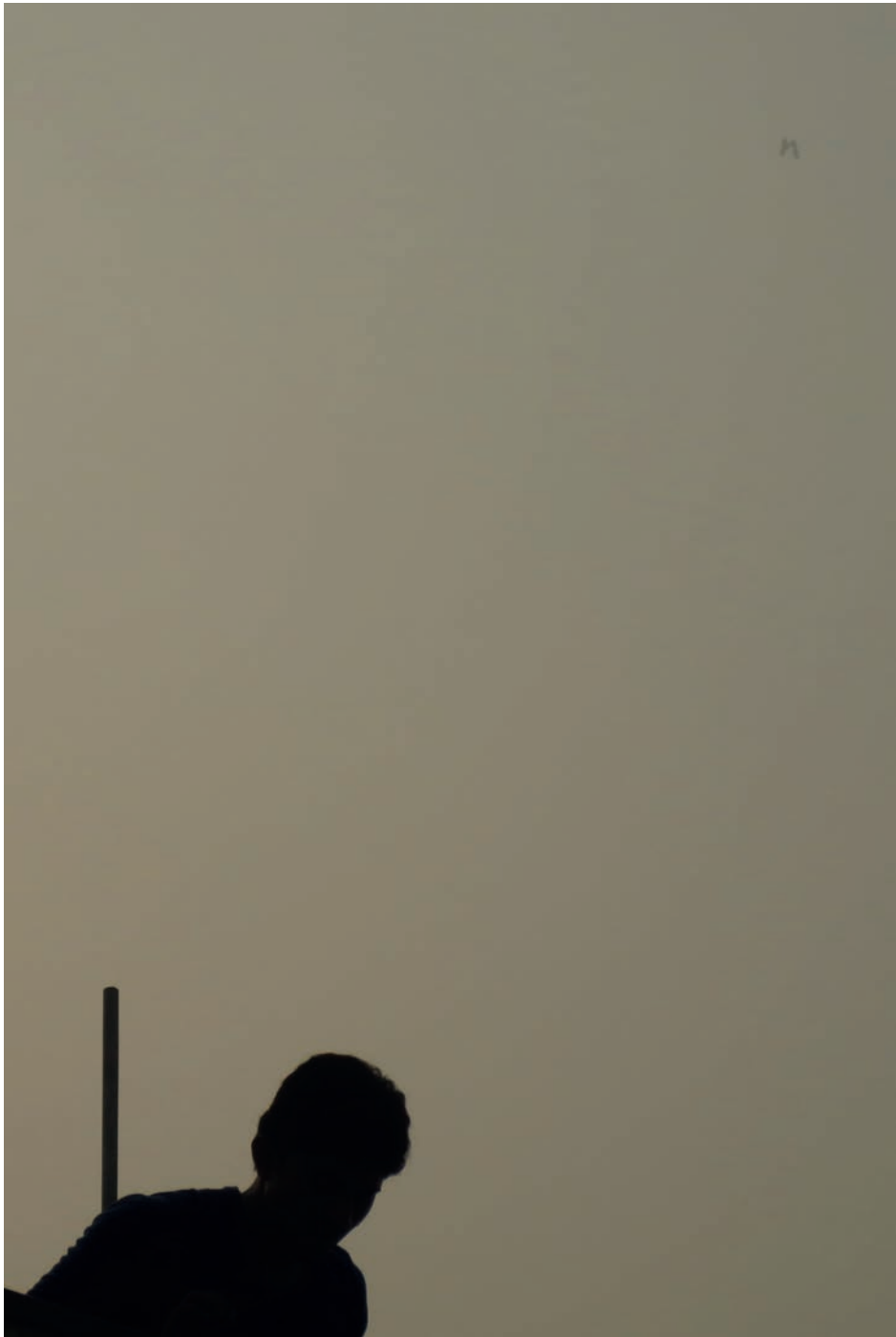
Waqif will set this work loose to fly across Dhaka on the first day of the Dhaka Art Summit (February 7th), subverting the control that the sculpture, and political forces, attempt to assert over the public. Adding more irony to the work, the artist and public will cease to have full "control" over the work once it is let loose in the sky. Volunteers and visitors who arrive to the venue on motor bikes will be instructed to draw attention to the floating installation by blowing their horns in unison, pointing toward the sky, an asking passer-bys to see what is in the sky. "It's a bird...it's a plane...no, it's an artwork!" Viewers will be requested to take photos and videos and to upload them online, extending the life of the work past the Shilpakala Academy and into the city of Dhaka and the global world of the Internet.



Prototype for *Control*, 2013-2014, Curated and Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation with additional support from Nature Morte, Courtesy of the artist



Prototype for *Control*, 2013-2014, Curated and Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation with additional support from Nature Morte, Courtesy of the artist



Prototype for Control, 2013-2014, Curated and Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation with additional support from Nature Morte, Courtesy of the artist

Announcing the Samdani Art Foundation's Next Commission by Shahzia Sikander

An essay and interview about Parallax, 2013



Shahzia Sikander: Parallax (2013)

The Samdani Art Foundation is honoured to be commissioning the next chapter to Parallax, and to be able to present Parallax to audiences in Dhaka, many of whom have family members in Sharjah. The following pages provide more context for this important work. The following essays are edited versions originally commissioned by Bildmuseet, Umeå Sweden for the Shahzia Sikander Exhibition opening 30 March, 2014.

Shahzia Sikander was the first artist from the Miniature Painting Department at the National College of Arts to challenge the medium's technical and aesthetic framework. Trained under Bashir Ahmed at the NCA (1987-1992), Sikander underwent a rigorous apprentice-style education and was subsequently the first student Ahmed invited to teach alongside him. Pakistani critic Quddus Mirza wrote in 2004, that Sikander's breakthrough thesis, The Scroll (1992), "carved a new way for generations of miniature artists to experiment in multiple directions." Sikander's pioneering and innovative work led to her meteoric rise internationally in the mid and late nineties, with survey shows at the Renaissance Society and the Kemper (1998), the Hirshhorn (1999), and solo at the Whitney (2000). Her work has fostered international interest in exhibiting the work of other miniature painters from Pakistan.

Shahzia Sikander is a Pakistani national, born in Lahore. Sikander lives and works in multiple locations across the US, Europe, and Asia. Working in drawing, painting, animation, installation, and video, Sikander's work employs ideas that are often subversive and polemical in nature. Her process-based work is concerned with examining the forces at stake in contested cultural and political histories. She served on the jury for the 2013 Aga Khan Award for Architecture and was appointed a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland in 2006. Her most recent work is for a commission sponsored by the Dhaka-based Samdani Foundation. The project deals with redaction and omission in the historical discourse of East-West Pakistan. Sikander will work with local poets, musicians, artists, historians, and writers in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Among her many honors and awards is the Medal of Art by the US Secretary of State, Hilary Rodham Clinton (2012), John D. and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation Achievement 'Genius' award, (2006) Tamgha-e-Imtiaz, the National Pride of Honor by the Pakistani Government (2005), Louis Comfort Tiffany award (1997) Shakir Ali award (1992) and Haji Sharif award (1992)



Parallax Painting, 2013 image courtesy of the artist

The exhibition of Parallax was realized with support from The Sharjah Art Foundation.

Quddus Mirza, The News on Sunday, (March 7, 2004): page 24.

Shahzia Sikander: A Parallax Gap

by John Zarobell

The parallax Real is, rather, that which accounts for the multiplicity of appearances of the same underlying real—it is not the hard core which persists as the same, but the hard bone of contention which pulverizes the sameness into the multitude of appearances.

- Slavoj Zizek

In 2001, Shahzia Sikander had a residency at Artpace in San Antonio, Texas. She had a novel idea—to record her usual painting technique of building up a series of layers on paper by scanning each stage of development. As part of her painting process, Sikander built up surfaces meticulously and slowly with water-based layers of pigment until the painting reached a fine level of luminosity and a resolute image. She then created an animation using the scanned images of the various stages.

Then she made a fateful decision: to exhibit the resulting film alongside the finished painting in a work titled *Intimacy*. *Intimacy* makes use of two mutually exclusive systems of representation—painting and animation—that nevertheless show the same formal content. The animation is a virtual presence, a digital code that unfolds over time to create a series of images, whereas the painting provides static visual information.

This is a parallax: two views of the same thing that are fundamentally incompatible and nevertheless real. The parallax gap is the space between these two forms, the very substance of their incommensurability. Zizek's assertion that the parallax Real "pulverizes the sameness into a multitude of appearances" is at the heart of Sikander's current practice, and her 2013 work *Parallax* demonstrates this dynamic brilliantly.

Created in 2013 for the Sharjah Biennial, *Parallax* is a multi-channel video work made primarily from her own paintings, with music and poetry that Sikander produced in collaboration with the composer Du Yun and the participation of three poets from Sharjah. This essay will endeavor to touch on some of the animation's most salient features by tracing the presence of several parallax gaps.

The essay will take four laps around parallaxes I perceive in the work in order to tease out the connections and gaps between the various layers of the formal and conceptual.

Context/Recontext

When Sikander began studying art at The National College of Art in 1987 in Lahore, Pakistan, she broke from the norm by pursuing studies in Indo-Persian miniature painting with Bashir Ahmed. Though she was interested in a critical approach to this material, the necessary precondition for developing her studies was to learn technique. She has commented: "My training with Ahmed was rigorous, something like 12 to 14 hours a day, but I was eager to learn the craft, while never losing sight of its potential for experimentation." Her decision to pursue miniature painting was an anomaly at the NCA in the late 1980's, setting her apart from contemporaries in Pakistan.

Sikander's encounter and ensuing experimentation with Indo-Persian miniature painting started in Pakistan and continued post-1994 outside of its borders as she relentlessly explored various formats and mediums as a means to intersect and expand on her evolving dialogue with miniature painting. One of her earliest engagements with the Gopis (female worshippers of Krishna) came about from her interest and fascination with Hindu mythology and Hindu religion. A stringent Islamicist culture characterized Pakistan in the late-1980's under the rule of Zia-ul-Haq's military regime. NCA was quite liberal in this context; however, engaging with Hindu mythology and religion was still considered blasphemous at the time. Sikander became fascinated with subverting elements from the Hindu illustrated tradition, such as the Gopis and the archetypal symbolism inherent in Radha and Krishna. The best example of this is her re-use of the Gopi hair silhouette. Sikander translated this hairstyle graphically and created a shape that could be detached from the figure to take on a life of its own.

By separating the hair from the female figures and by shedding its reference to gender and then recontextualizing and repeating the hair as building blocks of other shapes, Sikander's work explores the implications of shifting contexts. She has explained: "I'm interested conceptually in the distance between the translation and the original." What this has meant in Sikander's subsequent career as an artist is an extension of the Indo-Persian miniature form into other domains such as animation. Parallax employs hundreds of individual works drawn by Sikander to generate the overall digital effect. This recontextualization is a means of expanding miniature painting into contemporary lingua franca. Miniature painting functions as its own loaded language, and translation is at stake in Sikander's practice. In Sikander's digital alphabet, individual forms and motifs carry historical associations, while at the same time the format of drawing and digital animation provide a field for experimentation and new associations. Recontextualizing forms functions similarly to the interchangeability and mutability of language.

Translation is a kind of political act and so the nature of the translation and its implicit meanings is a highly charged topic, as recent histories of contemporary art in Pakistan by Iftikhar Dadi and Virginia Whiles have demonstrated. Whiles and Dadi do not include Sikander's work in their histories of contemporary miniature painting in Pakistan. Though these two authors have neglected Sikander's works, the artist negotiated these problematics through the domain of miniature while always seeking to address the medium with a self-critical eye. Since the artistic forms of the past are forever frozen in time, how an artist engages a tradition, and draws it into the present world, reveals the gap that exists between the context of miniature painting and its contemporary transformations. But the gap between traditional artistic forms and their contemporary translation introduces another parallax, between the form and its transformation.

Form/Transform

As Zizek suggests, "The parallax Real...pulverizes the sameness into a multitude of appearances."

Interpretation is the tool that one uses to conceptualize the various possible meanings in a form, as well as to derive our own. In *Parallax* the array of symbols in the animation puts their meaning under pressure because they transform, fade, and sometimes explode. The forms are in a process of continual metamorphosis.

Another way to explain the way meaning is formed from the visual language of the work is through semiotics. In linguistic theory, a word is a sign that signifies a meaning. When one sees the word "dog", one thinks of a domesticated furry animal with four legs. So it is with images. When one sees a flow of black liquid issuing from the earth, one thinks of crude oil. In one image that occurs early in the animation, the Gopi headdresses discussed above spurt forth from caverns as black waterfalls. To many, the first association with the UAE is their primary export, namely crude oil, so the image of flowing black rivers in *Parallax*, when shown in Sharjah, connects to an idea of a landscape full of potential for profitable exploitation and an economy driven by black gold.

Later in the film, the Gopi hair forms become even more copious, now orbiting in various spherical patterns. These flying Gopis are not the result of scanned drawings, but rather of specially-devised software that programs their movements in a refined but limited system. Such a use of digital modeling has been used by the artist in previous works, such as in *Pursuit Curve* (2004). In this animation, a series of forms that look like insects or butterflies break apart in a systematic fashion from a dense sphere-shaped mass into unregulated paths. The forms' movements build and recede to reveal their true identity as individual turbans dislodged from their wearers' heads. The turbans adhere to a mathematical principal called a "pursuit curve," in which an algorithm creates a path specifically designed to align two moving particles in a plane. Sikander employs a similar formal device in *Parallax*. However, unlike the turbans in *Pursuit Curve* that break apart from the sphere, the Gopi hair silhouettes in *Parallax* assemble in varying paths contained within the sphere. One could think of these images—both the broken and the contained circle—as composed of dislocated objects with transient meanings.

As viewers, we all stand in the space between subject and meaning—the parallax gap—in order to decipher the significance of the work and to come to terms with our own perspectives on it. Since *Parallax* transforms its visual imagery and puts visual meanings under pressure, it does not close the gaps outlined here, but allows us to shuttle between them and so it liberates us from a particular perspective.

Immersive/Limitless

Sikander has articulated another parallax dimension in a recent interview. Describing the work featured originally at Sharjah, she stated: "There is no fixed viewing point in the film. It is simultaneously aerial and internal...I see *Parallax* as immersive and limitless in scale."

To be both aerial and internal means that *Parallax* balances the viewer on the threshold of representation and experience. The aerial views provided in the film allow the viewer to possess the illusion of complete visibility, as in a map, where the representational mechanism illuminates the nature of the landscape. However, for the work to be internal means that some aspect of it is visible only in the mind of the viewer. So whatever it is that *Parallax* represents is both visible and invisible. If the real and the represented are on opposite sides of the parallax gap, it could be said that the work of art signifies, in reverse, an actual situation that is re-presented through it. Of course, the work of art also produces real effects in *Parallax*.

The immersive dimensions of *Parallax* are numerous. One would have to list: first, the hypnotic visuals; second, the musical score; third, the recitation of poetry. These three aspects demonstrate that *Parallax* operates as a mesmerizing portal into another domain, one parallel to the world in which we normally inhabit. Further, these three aspects of the work draw us in, not only to the work's presence, but also into our own minds that experience these phenomena as a means to detach from external realities and enter into our own subjective view of the work and the world it represents.

So much for immersive, but what to make of "limitless in scale"? *Parallax* is housed in a building, and bound by time in the sense that it lasts a certain interval before repeating. Yet *Parallax* cannot be contained metaphorically. It has both a real manifestation in the gallery and others in the minds of each viewer. The effects it produces create a feedback loop that expands the potential meanings the work contains. In this way, the art itself is commingled with its effects so the meaning of the work is not fixed. Rather, a multitude of perceptions become attached to the work and prevent anyone from finding a hard core of meaning there.

History/Memory

Here is a gap that is especially meaningful as the denizens of the twenty-first century attempt to make sense out of the twentieth. What is our shared history and how is that history experienced differentially by people in all corners of the world? If world powers and colonies, citizens and subjects, each contends with the historical narrative, it is memory that equalizes our understanding of the past, transforming personal experiences into collective ones. Memory then serves as an alternative to history.

There are two aspects of the history of the United Arab Emirates that Sikander sought to engage in this work. One is the colonial history of the British in this territory, including the seizure of the fort Rus ul Khyma in 1809 and the use of the port of Sharjah as a way station on the route to colonies further East, first as a shipping route and then as an airway stop on Imperial Airlines (which eventually became British Airlines). The other main historical reference in the work is the discovery of oil in the 1960's and the resulting transformation of the landscape and economy of the region. Neither of these histories is elucidated in *Parallax*, but references are made in both the film and the drawings that the artist has exhibited alongside the film.

Rus ul Khyma is woven into one of the largest preparatory drawings featured in the film, where it is interspersed with the map of the United States. The top of the drawing resembles a hanging garden and is composed of countless multicolored ovals made from thumbprints. As the eye scans to the bottom of the sheet, these dots yield to aqueous forms that coalesce into walls with turrets and the forms of recognizable states of the U.S. such as California and Texas. While the fort evokes nineteenth-century drawings of the British seizure of Rus ul Khyma, the juxtaposition of the fort imagery with the map of the US suggests a continuity of imperial domination in the wake of the British Empire after World War II. Despite world-wide decolonization, the discovery of oil in the Emirates in the 1960's led to other forms of exploitation involving another rising superpower in the global economy, the United States. This state of flux between both epochs and forms is emblematic of Sikander's work and introduces another question into this parallax gap: Is it possible to overcome the divide between history and memory?

If history is transcribed, printed, and distributed, then memory is immediate and personal. Yet the telling of memories is one of the strongest forces that bind individuals to communities. Poetry has long been the means through which individual memories become public rituals. In *Parallax*, the poets reciting Arabic verses were speaking in their native tongue, using both classical and colloquial Arabic. The poets introduce elements of chance as well as different voices into *Parallax*, suggesting that many alternating voices might be more illuminating than a particular, definitive, story.

The history of art continues to be characterized by these challenges of writing historical narratives. While recent histories of contemporary miniature painting in Pakistan have asserted otherwise, the essential point is that Sikander was instrumental in bringing visibility to the genre of Indo-Persian miniature painting and its potential as a mode of contemporary expression. She continues to produce a body of work that is relevant not just for Pakistan, New York, or Sharjah. Projects such as *Parallax* provide opportunities to reflect on the ways in which our multiple histories are formed.

Slavoj Žižek, *The Parallax View* (Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), 26.

"Intertwined Identities: Interview With Shahzia Sikander and Vishakha Desai" *Art Asia Pacific*, vol.85 (Sept./Oct. 2013), n.p. Accessed at: <http://artasiapacific.com/Magazine/85/IntertwinedIdentities>.

Hillary M. Sheets, "Shahzia Sikander: Maximalist Miniatures", *ARTnews* (April 15, 2013), n.p. Accessed at: <http://www.artnews.com/tag/shahzia-sikander/>.

Iftikhar Dadi, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia* (Durham, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 2010) and Virginia Whiles, *Art and Polemic in Pakistan: Cultural Politics and Tradition in Contemporary Miniature Painting* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010).

"Intertwined Identities", n.p.



Parallax, 2013, 3-Channel HD Animation with 5.1 surround sound, image courtesy of the artist and Pilar Corrias, installation view from the 11th Sharjah Biennale

Claire Brandon in conversation with Shahzia Sikander

2014 Dhaka Art Summit

This interview was compiled from a series of conversations following the installation of Parallax at the Sharjah Biennial in 2013. Claire Brandon is a doctoral candidate in the history of art and architecture at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. She is currently at work on her dissertation "Spaces of Art in the Exhibition Age: A Source of Urban Transformation in Italy, 1970-2010." She lives and works in New York.

Claire Brandon: *Parallax* is a three-channel single-image video animation comprised of many small drawings that you made for the 2013 Sharjah Biennial. It engages with several geographical, historical, and political aspects of the U.A.E. What were your initial visits to Sharjah like?

Shahzia Sikander: I have traveled to the U.A.E. many times since the Eighties because several members of my extended family from Pakistan have lived there over the years. However, engaging the city through the context of the Sharjah Art Foundation was a far more tactile experience, allowing me to dig a little deeper into the history of the place. It is not the easiest culture to access. It took time to establish some sort of chemistry with the place.

CB: How did you engage with the urban and natural context?

SS: Mostly by driving, but also by spontaneous discussions with other fellow South Asians, in which case speaking Urdu and Hindi immediately lifted barriers. A few times I hired Pakistani cab drivers between Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Sharjah who also arranged for me to visit their living spaces and interview many others. I also rented a car and drove across the west coast of the peninsula (facing the Persian Gulf) and then North along the tip of the Strait of Hormuz, to Ras al-Khaimah and the tip of Diba al-Fujaira. Then I drove south through Kalba, along the coast (on the side of the Gulf of Oman). Driving this route gave me a sense of the Strait of Hormuz to the North and the Gulf of Oman to the East. I drove across the desert from Sharjah to Khor Fakkan several times. In fact an additional work for the Biennial was created in an abandoned cinema in Khor Fakkan.

CB: Do you usually work in this manner? What was the experience of driving through the peninsula like?

I work intuitively and organically. The interviews with the workers did not surface directly in *Parallax*, but they made me reflect on the topic of conflict and control that is the main thrust of *Parallax*. The power tensions in the region date back centuries.

I was interested in condensing the thoughts and narration through drawing. I thought of drawing as libretto, and, in addition, driving as drawing. Driving for me was like navigating the terrain of a drawing. In this respect, driving was an intentional act to tease out the experience of the space while in motion akin to the experiential dimension of *Parallax*.

As I drove, I focused on the experience of the senses, the intense heat, the bright light, the proximity to water and sand, and often on the notion of the 'mirage.' Abstract as it may sound, there is method to my madness. I film, sketch, photograph and then draw from scratch. Even my most embellished miniature drawings and paintings have been built with 'motion' in mind, an open-ended, on-going sense of space and story. In the making of the animation itself, the drawings I created after my research visits were scanned to a much higher level. When an inch or two of a drawing is scaled up to 50+ feet, one discovers the topography of a drawing invisible to the naked eye. There are moments of surprise when pockets of dense pigment on paper transform into a site. This process was about the invisible becoming visible, perhaps a metaphor for the mirage too.

CB: So scanning allowed for an up-close and detailed knowledge of your own drawings, much in the way that driving allows one to experience a large scale in a compressed time span.

SS: Exactly. Driving is less about getting to know a place—it becomes another type of activity. It operates as a device to measure the displacement of scale. Now imagine traveling inside the infinite digital space. Drawing such parallels allowed me to engage with the notion of disorientation and dissonance both topics explored at length in *Parallax*.

CB: In what ways did this shift from sea to desert, water to sand, come through in the work?

SS: Long before my first official research trip to Sharjah, I was envisioning a work with sand. In fact my first proposal to Yuko Hasegawa was about making a sand sculpture. My second idea was about a public large-scale communal water-bed sofa. I wanted to explore the dynamic dimensions of water, sand, and oil as well as their proximity to each other in the region. Maritime trade in the region before and after the discovery of oil was another idea I was interested in.

CB: But animated drawing was your ultimate choice in medium.

SS: I work with drawing. There is a certain language, my signature vocabulary that has filtered through my work, that has emerged from my 27 years of examining Indo-Persian miniature painting. One specific signature image that re-surfaced in *Parallax* was the isolated and stylized Gopi hair silhouette but with a completely new twist. In the animation *Parallax*, the Gopi hair silhouette is ascribed to a cell in a particle system, modified to behave and simulate various states of both liquid and solid.

The millions of silhouettes of hair are seen transforming into large swaths of static noise that hover between multiple representations, ranging from oceans, water, and oil, to flocks of birds and patterns of human migration (Fig. 4.).

CB: Why did you choose the Gopi hair motif (e.g., the hair silhouette divorced from the rest of the figure) as the organizing unit for the fluid state?

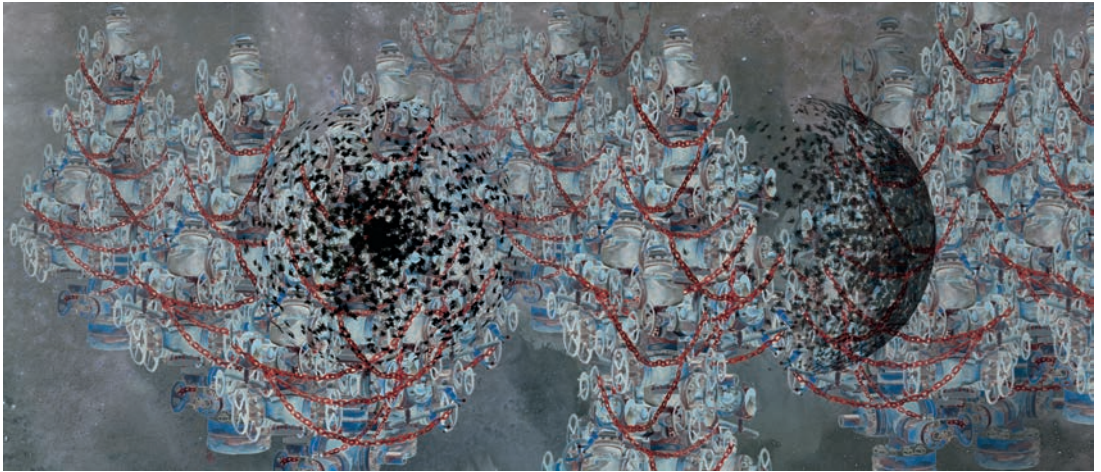
SS: Other than the fact that it is a familiar language in my work, I chose the hair motif in this instance to particularly highlight a paradox. The Gopi hair emblem is a very specific and rigid form. To see it visually transform into a fluid and shapeless form is confounding. My way of expressing that truth lies in the details. It is worth noting that the Gopi hair silhouette takes on the form of a liquid only when it accumulates in a mass state clearly refusing to lose its inherent identity at the particle level.

The second reason I chose to use it was because I am interested in SOC and how a particle system based on the sand-pile model has been reduced to study economies and societies. SOC, or “Self-Organized Criticality,” is a self-correcting system in nature that has been understood by scientists and developed as a scientific method to be utilized to study how systems adjust. I was substituting the grain that is part of that system by the Gopi particle. When you zoom in, it’s the Gopi hair, and when you zoom out, it’s just one of the parts of the liquid that moves.

CB: There are several other motifs, or “particle units,” that appear in the animation. A forearm and hand appears in *Parallax*, fragmented and multiplied.

SS: Many elements in the animation fragment to simulate new behavior and meaning. The floating hands and forearms appear in many combinations, initially in large amounts and tiny scale, indecipherable, almost like swarming locusts. Later they appear as various constellations amidst the implied spatial and oceanic depths. At times, the hand and arms orbit around each other, and at other times, they rotate in fixed locations as they move from left to right. A few times they have an aerial trajectory—the way bombs can descend in parachutes. Some of them burst in mid air. I see the fragmented hands and forearms as the hand dealt by fate. It’s not just a disembodied human part, but symbolic of the collective human struggle.

Fig. 4



CB: Why the forearm?

SS: I have used the fragmented forearm in another animation also, *The Last Post* (2010). The outcome in this animation is a result of the explosion of the protagonist, the East India Company Man, who is a metaphor for the end of the Anglo-Saxon hegemony over China. The fragmentation of the colonial figure results in the emergence of the swirling forearms, implying the figure's tenacious ability to reinvent itself. The forearms are thus much like the ghosts of the past operating like a Frankenstein, trickster, or a shape-shifter.

CB: *The Last Post* takes the "Exploding Company Man" as its subject, exploring the implications of the British East India Company in trade routes across Europe and Asia. In addition to shared iconography such as the colonial hand, what are some of the ways that Parallax relates to *The Last Post*?

SS: Both of the animations fundamentally deal with the maritime trade tensions triggered by the colonial interests in the region. In *Parallax*, the reference is more general: not only does it allude to the history of the East India Company, but also to the Portuguese and Dutch presence in the Gulf. *The Last Post* is linked to *Parallax* in the same way as the Strait of Hormuz is linked to the Ganges and the Pearl. To counter its trade deficit, the East India Company exported enormous amounts of illegal Indian grown opium into China. The subsequent Opium wars in the name of opening up trade in China also reflect on East India Company's imperious history.

CB: What aspect of Sharjah's history with the East India Company was most compelling?

SS: The history of East India Company is an intense tale of power and control. The company's ruthless quest to expand its trade and eliminate competition shaped the world as we understand it. While governing India, the Company sought to monopolize and dominate the trade routes by its colonial expansion into the Gulf. The expansion has often been justified in accounts as a means to suppress piracy, while the revisionist histories have proved otherwise. The Myth of Arab piracy in the Gulf was an interesting if somewhat dense read, especially as it generated its argument to 'de-bunk the myth of piracy' on the basis of British documents in the Bombay archives in India. The author of the book, Sultan Muhammad Al-Qasimi, the current ruler of Sharjah, is also descended from the Qawasim, who were the powerful shipping traders in the Gulf before losing their stronghold to the English in 1819.

CB: Your work deals with the vantage points from which histories are written and told. Did you imagine a fixed vantage point or multiple vantage points in the animations?

SS: There is no fixed viewing point in the film. It is simultaneously aerial and internal. My work often engages paradoxes, polarities, and open-ended narratives. *Parallax* deals with questions of translation and point of view with the recitation of Arabic poetry. Should the translation be provided or not? Is the emotional range in the recitation and its delivery vast and inclusive enough to defy the obligatory translation? Even if one were to understand Arabic, there is a play with the colloquial and the classical use of Arabic, making specific words hard to discern.

CB: There are several aerial views of topographic-like sketches of the Strait of Hormuz. How do maps function in the work?

SS: I see maps as indirect means of ownership. I also see maps as portraits. Maps can substitute a photograph and are often accepted as a 'given' similarly to how a portrait is accepted as the real. While maps may help identify a site, they also shed light on complex historical narratives of disputed territories and colonial rule.

CB: What are some of the ways that contested spaces, and the porosity and fluctuation of national borders, are at stake in these sketches?

SS: I'm interested in the arbitrary boundaries imposed by colonial rule. Boundaries have constantly been in flux, and working in ink allows me to challenge and explore the imposition of parameters. Much as how a riverbank is constantly shifting, there is no such thing as permanent borders, either geographically or politically imposed. In looking at historical maps of the peninsula, one can also see how differently the topography is illustrated. The borders are in flux. The research visit to the Center of Gulf Studies in Sharjah was instrumental in my choosing to focus on the various maps of the region. There were maps dating the 17th century of the Arabian Peninsula, and I was interested in looking at the way the region was depicted during the 17th and 18th century.

CB: Christmas trees appear in the landscape as trees made of many segments of the oil drill apparatus. The machinery is broken up and then re-contextualized in an arrangement suggesting the form of a Christmas tree, or fir tree. However, they still maintain the wheels, fixtures, and pipes of the oil drill. In one scene, the Christmas trees are multiplied, as if in a forest.

SS: I came across the image of a multi-valved oil well in a 1960's British Petroleum magazine and was surprised to see it called a Christmas tree. (fig. 2) To me it did not resemble a Christmas tree from anywhere, and I thought that its name was more a reference to its gift-bearing abilities. I decided to build on this idea and create a fully embellished tree from the valves and spools with the chains functioning as garlands. As the Christmas trees multiply in *Parallax*, they also transform into a mirage or a reflection of themselves, a mere copy of the original. The image freezes to further instill this realization and the frozen mirror or plane cracks and breaks into millions of pieces that are swept about into the infinite digital space where they re-assert their significance as shifting constellations.

CB: How do the spheres operate at the end of the animation?

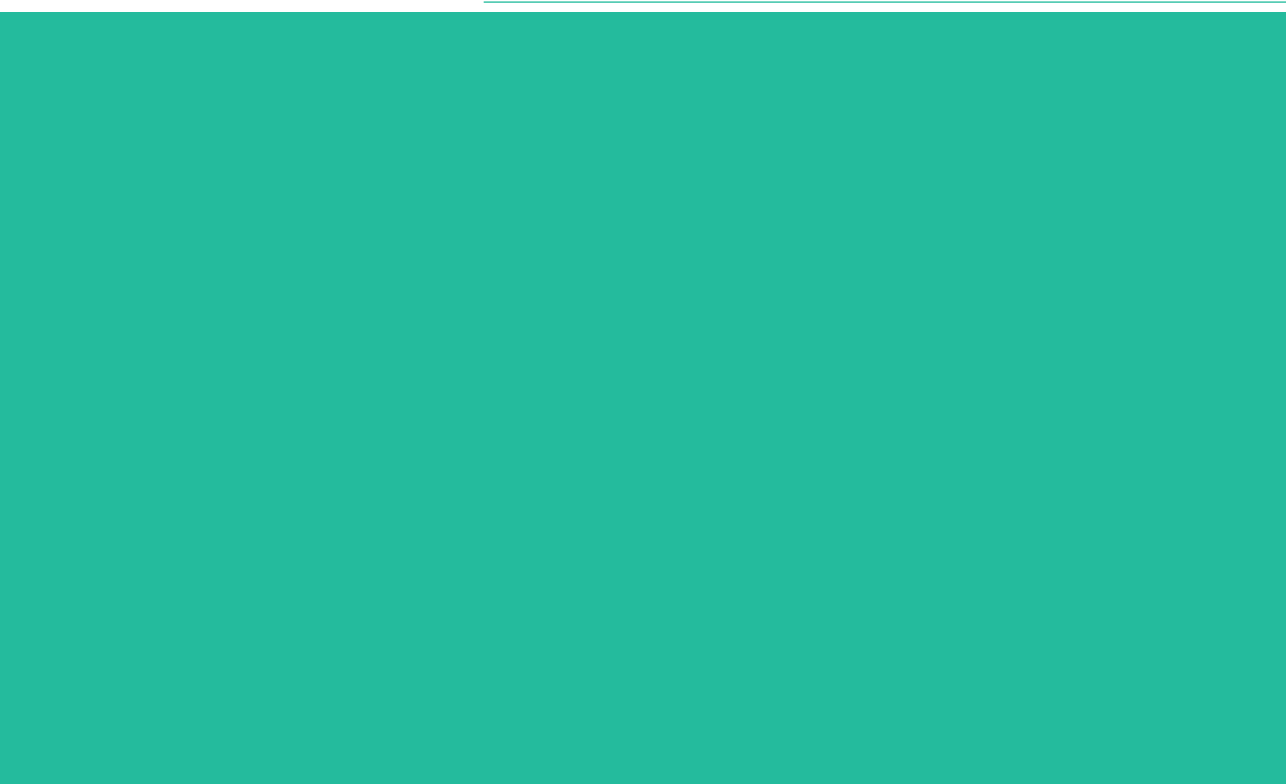
SS: The last section of the animation is about hope. "The Singing Spheres" as I call them are six spherical algorithmic movements that cast a buoyant interplay between the poets' recitation and the ensuing movement paths created from the Gopi particles. The spheres pulsate, gather momentum, increase and decrease speed all in response to the thrust of the human voices, thus the singing spheres.

CB: Just before "The Singing Spheres" appear, two skeletons emerge in the animation. Can you talk a little bit about these?

SS: The human figure and its skeletal counterpoint both appear horizontally across the entire width of the animation. They are interconnected and as they unravel, they slowly drift apart while fading under the surface of the water. They symbolize the obvious, death and life. But it is their disappearance under the simulated 'water' or 'white noise' that I was most interested in. That particular moment in the animation is a comment on the unbearable weight of history where the mysteries of human life and death lurk deep in the annals of time.

Public Art Project

Raqs Media Collective curated by Diana Campbell Betancourt



Public Art Project

Meanwhile | Elsewhere (ইতিমধ্যে অন্যত্র)

Billboards and Posters, Words in Bangla, Clock-face Designs (2014)

Curated by Diana Campbell Betancourt and Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation

Courtesy of Raqs Media Collective

What begins with our eyes, travels to the brain, courses to our heart, and then returns to our eyes. Reading a feeling or a moment is something that happens between different aspects of consciousness. Reading off the walls and billboards of cities, we become the words we think we feel, and yet, even as we look up or out to search for them, they always catch us unawares. We find ourselves, besides ourselves, meanwhile, elsewhere.

Meanwhile Elsewhere (ইতিমধ্যে অন্যত্র) is a commission for the DAS by the Raqs Media Collective, supported by the Samdani Art Foundation. Here; an array of billboards and posters is scattered across the urban landscape of Dhaka. Each billboard shows a clock-face that features words or phrases that relate to each other, possibly in counter-point. Taken together, the billboards produce a set of permutations and combinations of states of mind and being through an invocation of the actions of the hour and minute hands in a clock. Tracing the path of these word-pairs through the city of Dhaka will be like following a found poem on the streets. The completion of the thought set out in any one poster or billboard will require one to read its scattered shadows on other posters, other places.

The lexical patterns produced by this process register a deeply felt, subjective experience of time and duration. This work grows out of Raqs Media Collective's continued pre-occupation with time and with the metaphorical possibilities of horology.

-- Raqs Media Collective, New Delhi, 2013

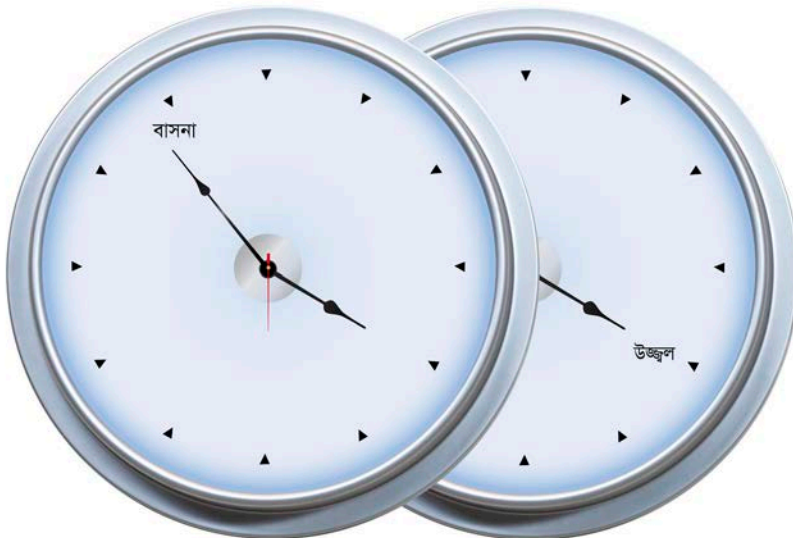


image courtesy of Raqs Media Collective

Luminous | Will
Hint | Taken
Crysanthemum | What Else
Thresh | Hold
Limestone | Passion
Wrong | Chair
Try | Me
Forage | Poison
Where Else | Disappear
Levitate | Simply
Fervid | Metric
Tight | Rope
Free | Fall
Horror | Concerto
Quantum | Apart
Blood | Noise
Light | Here
Humid | Reason
Potent | Debt
Bless | You
Why Else | Damage
Take | Melt
Now | Why
Electric | Orgasm
Market | Forces
Meanwhile | Elsewhere
Then | Why Not
How Come | Now

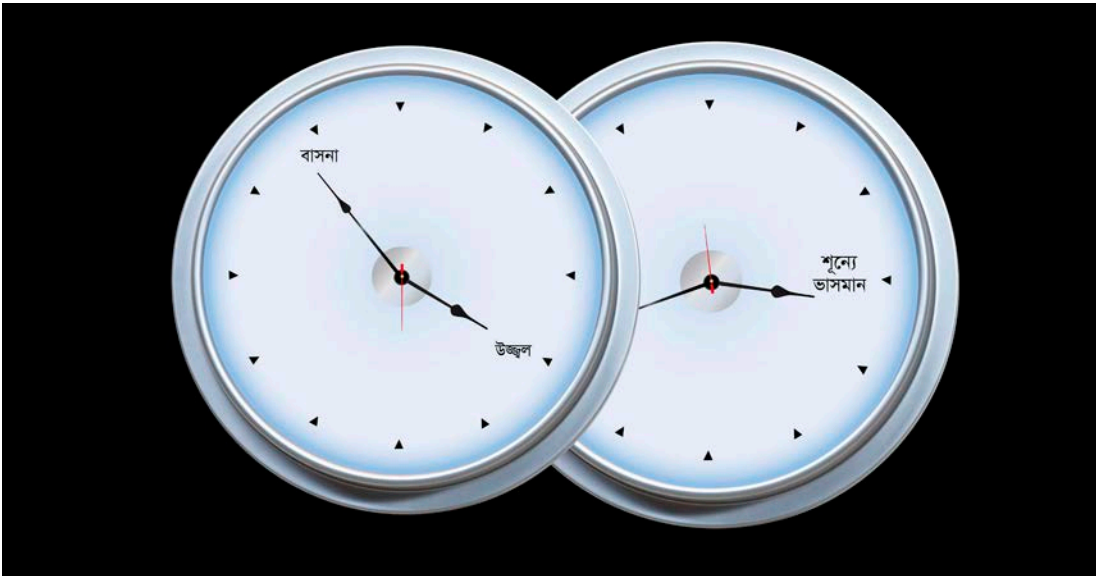


image courtesy of Raqs Media Collective



Image courtesy of Samdani Art Foundation
Photo Credit: Shumon Ahmed



Image courtesy of Samdani Art Foundation
Photo Credit: Shumon Ahmed



Image courtesy of Samdani Art Foundation
Photo Credit: Shumon Ahmed



Image courtesy of Samdani Art Foundation
Photo Credit: Shumon Ahmed

Performance Programme

curated by Mahbubur Rahman



Performance art is a relatively new art form when compared to other commonly used mediums. The entry of performance art in Bangladesh came in the early 1990s along with installation. Until now, galleries and mainstream organizations have not really welcomed this art form, although alternative platforms have tried to from time to time. Political suppression plays a vital role making a strong barrier to the natural growth of creativity: it controls interaction and exchange. Surprisingly the instability inspires the creation of artworks which might make new reference points possible for the future of art history. The Dhaka Art Summit has pledged its support to Performance Art and gave me an opportunity to invite artists from Sri-Lanka, India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Myanmar (Burma) to be a part of my exhibition.

Despite the fact that performance art is not very prevalent in her native Sri Lanka, Bandu Manamperi is one of the most important performance art practitioners who has been leading this art form since its early beginnings in the region. India is the most privileged country in the region and therefore shares closer ties with the global art scene, and Nikhil Chopra is one of the most celebrated performance artists from this country. Nepal is perhaps the most desirable country to practice in because of its energizing spirituality and natural beauty. The country has huge potential and the younger generation of artists have been challenging conventional notions of art over the last ten years. I am proud that Nepalese artist Sunil Sigdel will be performing at the Summit.

Over the last fifteen years, performance has become a popular and much appreciated art form in Bangladesh, largely because a few of the younger generation of artists started placing constant effort on it. At the beginning it was usually the practice of an individual but gradually a few artists started working on it collectively, further developing the art form. Rahul Anand is the one of the artists who has been involved with theatre and music since the beginning of his career. His performance is mainly based on creating sound that generates an intimate connection between his body and mind. Also part of this generation of artists, Reetu Sattar and Yasmin Jahan Nupur are the most vibrant Bangladeshi performance artists at this time. Also from Bangladeshi, Arko Sumon, mainly a composer and vocalist, also lends his wonderful skill to do a present a sound-based performance.

Myanmar (Burma) is sometimes included in the South Asian region, and culturally as neighbors we are somehow connected to each other. The international acclaimed Burmese artist Htein Lin continues his practice of engaging with political prisoners in his moving performance A Show of Hands which he has adapted for Bangladesh. Every artist has an individual character and every artwork has an individual expression. This individuality is the real beauty of Dhaka Art Summit's Performance Hub. Each artist from this wing comes from a different place and background with his/her personal experience and knowledge. We believe their dynamic ideas will engage you in this program.

– Mahbubur Rahman

Rahul Anand (b. 1976, Bangladesh)

"*Sound in Silence*", 2014, Performance (Live Sound with 10 performers), Duration: 40 Minutes, Performance Commissioned for Dhaka Art Summit

Rahul Anand is a Dhaka based Bangladeshi artist and has exhibited in India and Japan. In addition to being a performance artist, he is also an actor, musician and visual artist.

Rahul Anand's performance *Sound in Silence* explores the parallel existence between the concept of emptiness and fulfilment through sound and its absence, the reciprocity of continuity, and above all, the balance of these two concepts. In this sound work, the artist looks at man's unlimited expectations relative to philosophies of existing beyond the material.



Photo Credit: Rafi Hasan

Nilofar Akmut (b. 1956, Pakistan)

"*Amnesia*", 2014. Duration: 50 minutes, Performance Commissioned for Dhaka Art Summit

Nilofar Akmut is an UK based Pakistani performance artist whose practice involves collaborating with women's activist groups and social communities that the artist lives and works with. The artist has exhibited extensively both as a performance artist and as a photojournalist in Pakistan as well as the UK, France and Argentina.

East and West Pakistan still existed while Nilofar Akmut was a young artist growing up in Pakistan, and the events that happened during the Civil War made the artist think of the concept of a bird without a body and with two broken wings. The deaths, rapes, looting, and vandalism that happened in Dhaka were censored in West Pakistan, so the civil war is discussed there without reference to text or image. When the artist visited Bangladesh in 2005, she was able to feel the complex realities of a civil war. In her performance for the Dhaka Art Summit, the artist will conduct a performance that visually and aurally addresses the silences that have been erased as part of her "her-story."



Photo credit: Farida Batool

Sunil Sigdel (b. 1978, Nepal)

"My Blood, Your Script & Bull Tongue", 2014. Approximate duration: 20 minutes, Performance Commissioned for Dhaka Art Summit

Sunil Sigdel's works explore the socio-political crisis in Nepal as well as in other parts of the globe. He has exhibited extensively in Nepal and abroad and he has participated several workshops and residencies in Nepal, Scotland, India, Taiwan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Denmark and Pakistan. He was awarded the ROSL Annual scholarship Award in 2011 in the United Kingdom, and the Creative Young Artist Award 2007 by the Creative Artist Group in Nepal. He lives and works in Pokhara, Nepal.

Nepalese Gurkha soldiers have been an integral part of the British Army for the last 200 years. Their motto "Better to die than to be a coward" is ironic in the eyes of Sigdel because he feels that it actually reflects the hardest parts of the soldiers' lives before joining the British Army. The world knows only of the Gurkhas' brave stories, but no one has looked into the reality behind this bravery. During WW1 and WW2, more than 251,000 Nepalese Gurkhas fought and 60,000 lost their lives. Nepalese history lacks texts regarding Gurkhas, and the Nepalese government has not given attention to Gurkhas except when collecting remittances from them. The UK has yet to provide similar facilities to Gurkha soldiers as their own British soldiers. In this performance, Sigdel will explore how the Nepalese government and the British government are manipulating Gurkha soldiers as a "live product" and how illiteracy and unemployment force or blind young people into risking their lives in foreign lands.



Photo Credit: Amrit Karki

Bandu Manamperi (b. 1972, Sri Lanka)

"Iron Man", 2014 Performance formulated in discussion with Lalith Manage. Duration: 15 minutes (minimum), Performance commissioned for Dhaka Art Summit



Photo Credit: Moe Satt

Bandu Manamperi is a Sri Lankan performance artist and one of the first in his native country. He is a core member of Theertha Artists Collective and also works actively as a lecturer in universities. In addition to his performance practice, the artist is also known for his amalgamated sculpture, installations, drawings, and paintings.

This work intends to give the viewer an opportunity to re-appropriate the performance that the artist presents, rather than simply read the visual. This performance idea was incubated in the intense socio-political context of current day Sri Lanka, which the artist considers a unique breeding ground for these ideas. The artist will enter the performance space draped in white clothing and carry an electrical iron that he will use to iron and char these clothes (removing each layer piece by piece), leaving the garments to be explored by the audience as they lie hanging in the space.

Nikhil Chopra (b. 1974, Calcutta)

"Blackening VI", 2014. Duration: 8 hours, Performance Commissioned for Dhaka Art Summit

Nikhil Chopra's artistic practice ranges from live art, theatre, painting, photography, to sculpture and installations. His performances, in large part improvised, dwell on issues such as identity, the role of autobiography, the pose and self-portraiture, reflects on the process of transformation and the part played by the duration of performance. Taking autobiographical elements as his starting point, Chopra combines everyday life and collective history; daily acts such as eating, resting, washing and dressing, but also drawing and making clothes, acts which acquire the value of ritual, and become an essential part of the show. Chopra's performances on the international art scene began in 2008, when the artist was invited to contribute to Time Crevasse (Yokohama Triennale, Yokohama), Chalo India! (Mori Art Museum, Tokyo) and Indian Highway (Serpentine Gallery, London). In 2009 he showed his work at the Astrup Fearnley Museum Oslo, kunstenfestivaldesarts Brussels, and also took part in Making Worlds (53rd Venice Biennale) and Marina Abramovic Presents (Manchester International Festival, The Whitworth Gallery, Manchester).

Blackening VI is an act of transformation. Nikhil will present an 8-hour performance where he will use charcoal to transform himself and the space he occupies. The walls, the floor and his body will all become surfaces on which he will draw. The connotations of "Blackface" and its association with race, or simply, the association of "Black is bad and white is good," are challenged in this work.



Image courtesy of the artist and Chatterjee and Lal

Htein Lin (b. 1966, Myanmar)

"Show of Hands", 2013. Duration: 20 minutes, Performance Commissioned for Dhaka Art Summit

Prior to becoming internationally known as one of Myanmar's most important artists, Htein Lin studied law at university. He became involved in Anyeint (Burmese Popular Theatre), and led the 1988 student protests in favour of democracy. Before being jailed in 1998, he was a pioneer of performance art in Burma. During the six years he spent in prison, he developed printing and painting techniques that allowed him to secretly create hundreds of works on prison uniforms, using smuggled materials and objects he had in his cell, like plates and lighters. He continues to perform in prisons to this day.

After his release, he continued to paint using the techniques he had devised in jail and has also further developed his work as a performance artist. Htein Lin's work is based on his extraordinary life experiences, political events in Burma, and his profound Buddhist faith. He lived in the United Kingdom from 2006-2013 and currently lives and works in Rangoon (Yangon).

A Show of Hands is a multimedia community-based performance, archive and installation project intended to capture the experiences and lives of hundreds of former political prisoners in Myanmar. Through casting the arms of former prisoners in plaster of Paris, Htein Lin commemorates and shares their sacrifice and highlights their lives, before, during and after their incarceration, as well as bringing in his own experience of over six years' detention. Political prisoners are not unique to Myanmar, and Htein Lin hopes to take this project across borders for the Dhaka Art Summit, and strengthen the bonds between neighbours who have fought for human rights and freedom of expression.



Image courtesy of the artist

Arko Sumon (b. 1982, Bangladesh)

"Sound of/off Nature", 2014. Sound work. Duration: 5 minutes, Performance Commissioned for Dhaka Art Summit



Image Courtesy of the Artist

Arko is a music lover. In 2004 his musical engagement started with Bangla Folk and explored different genres with Gaaner Dol Samageet as a Vocalist & Guitar player. From 2008 he has been working with Krishnokoli as a Music Director. In 2010 he composed 'HAOWA' the first audio album of Samageet. He composed 'ALOR PITHE ADHAR' & 'BUNOFUL' in 2011 & 2012. He likes to play folk instruments like the Mandolin, Dotara and Banjo as well as Guitar and Bass Guitar. His current concentration is focused on the ambient sound of nature.

Artist's Statement about his Performance:

To make a Harmonic Chord requires at least three notes. We the people, this Planet, and Nature all are part of the journey of musical notes. People + Planet + Nature = Symphony OR Cacophony...???

Yasmin Jahan Nupur (b. 1979, Bangladesh)

"Sat on a Chair", 2014 . Duration: 3 hours. Performance Commissioned for Dhaka Art Summit

Yasmin Jahan Nupur is a Dhaka based artist whose work has been shown in countries around the world including the Netherlands, Italy, China, Pakistan, Mauritius, Egypt and Korea. The artist is a member of the Britto Arts Trust and her work has won her honourable mentions in the Asia Art Biennale. Her work was recently included in the 55th Venice Biennale as part of the Bangladesh Pavilion.

Nupur's performance piece emphasizes the direct unmediated relationship between artist and audience. Through her performance, Nupur wishes to explore the feeling of vertigo and engage the audience as she binds herself atop a tall pillar. Her work is about the silence of a meditative state of mind, which she tries to communicate through amplified levels of emotion achieved through the intense physical feats of her performance.



Image Courtesy of the Artist

Reetu Sattar (b. 1981, Bangladesh)

"Unknown", 2014. Sound and body performance. Duration: 20 minutes. Performance Commissioned for Dhaka Art Summit



Photo credit: Britto Arts Trust

Reetu Sattar is a Bangladesh based theatre actor and performance artist. Since 1999 she along with her theatre group Prachyanat, have played and directed in plays locally and internationally including the Japan Foundation and The Royal Danish Theatre. Sattar is trained in physical theatre and voice modulation and has participated in residency programs in India, Japan, Denmark, Egypt and Nepal. She has created films with Artificial Eyes London, National Geographic and BBC Worldwide.

Reetu Sattar's performance piece will explore the fear that consumes her daily life. Her piece will focus on the metaphysical confrontation with the sensory manifestations of fear. Through this performance she hopes to "overcome life's uncertainty" and pursue "the joy of uncertainties." The artist shares that "I want to face the real fear of my life. I want to see it visually. Want to touch [it]...I want to be alive chasing the joy of uncertainties. Love and smile."

Experimental Film Programme

curated by Mahbubur Rahman



The Dhaka Art Summit is an enormous parallel platform to the Asian Art Biennale (established in 1981) and the Short Film Festival (established in 1988), realizing a dynamic concept by connecting South Asia as well the globe under one umbrella, looking beyond the unstable political conflict and controversy in the region. In its 2nd edition, DAS was designed to bring all kind of art forms at one place. The experimental film-screening project of DAS has been presenting a number of Experimental Films from across South Asia, including and Myanmar (Burma), which has not had much exposure in the country.

It was a major challenge to arrange such a large event in a country like Bangladesh where the internal political situation has been worsening over the past few months. I think collecting experimental films from countries such as Afghanistan was one of the toughest jobs in the whole DAS. We went through tremendous difficulties to obtain DVDs from our neighboring countries as well, probably because we are in fact politically disconnected from each other and there is a lack of relationships between the South Asian countries, and an absence of interest to create them. Among all South Asian countries (Burma/Myanmar is often included as part of South Asia and has deep historical ties with Bangladesh), it was easiest to work with the Indian emerging filmmakers. This is understandable since politically, as well as economically, India is relatively stable, they are professional in their dealings with this field of work.

The films I have selected for DAS are mostly based on socio-political and personal issues, or about discrimination imposed by traditional politics and society. For example, India is such a diverse country with various layers of ethnicity, language and culture- and many people are underprivileged and ignored by the mainstream. This is clearly expressed in Kavita Joshi's film *My Body My Weapon*. Afghan filmmaker Mohammad Khadem Haidari speaks about his frustration that the world places constant and singular attention on the destruction and war of his motherland. He thinks that international communities can find many better things to talk about regarding Afghanistan, and his film *Life* shows his desire to give everyone to take a break from the destructive information and to rather speak about the positives of Afghanistan. Curating this program was quite interesting, and I got chance to learn more about the South Asian art scene and discovered the experimental filmmaker Shamin Nizam, the young talent from Maldives.

We are also showing experimental films by four Bangladeshi filmmakers who mostly look at the underprivileged and ignored communities from Bangladesh. Geographically the land of Bangladesh is attached to India from three sides and the rest is the Bay of Bengal. There is a small corner of the land that is attached to Myanmar, which for many years has been either overlooked or unnoticed by the general people as well as by the government. Before the partition in 1947, the scenario was completely different under British rule, and people from both parts of the border had frequent communication and attachment. According to the current political situation, the interaction between two countries is completely missing, and needless to say, so is the exchange of art and culture.

This process was one of 'Virtual Curating' as both Shimul Saha and I have started this journey with only gateway, a computer monitor in a closed-door room to find filmmakers and films from South Asia. It was time consuming as well as complicated and finally we were happy to include Afghanistan in the list. Yet NATO and the Taliban are occupying post-war Afghanistan, and the artists are somehow not permitted to send out any DVDs without special permission from the Government. We are thankful to our friends in Afghanistan who helped us out of this uncertain situation by supporting a hand to the hand-delivery process.

A thoughtful idea about including every sector of visual art, motivated us to screen a number of experimental films from all of the South Asian countries. We have tried to collect films on different issues, however many of the selected films somehow have inner links to obsession, faith, love, beauty, life, happiness and sorrow, things that we all face from time-to-time in this socio-political context of South Asia.

Mahbubur Rahman

Life, 2011 (14:55 minutes)

Directed by **Mohammad Khadem Haidari** (Afghanistan)



Image courtesy of the filmmaker

Mohammad Khadem Haidari is a Kabul based filmmaker. He studied film direction for two years at Bagh-e-Ferdows College (Mashhad, Iran) and he was one of the first film and documentary makers of Afghanistan. Khadem's film portrays Kabul not only as a place of war, suicide attacks or extremist parties, but also a beautiful and dramatic city with kind and diligent people.

The Third One, 2005 (13:50 minutes)

Directed by **Rahraw Omarzad** (Afghanistan)



Image courtesy of the filmmaker

Rahraw Omarzad is an Afghan filmmaker based in Kabul, who is also a curator, writer, and professor at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Kabul University. This film looks critically at the Afghan education system and its relationship with a new generation, and how it has failed to improve the importance of analysis and logic in its students.

Delete, 2012 (13 minutes)

Directed by **Shamin Nizam** (Maldives)



Image courtesy of the filmmaker

Based in the Maldives, Shamin Nizam started directing at the age of 22. *Delete* traces a series of events that haunt a young man, involving scenes that could unfold in a person's mind once an idea has been planted.

Anika's Home, 2010 (7:53 minutes)

Directed by **Saiful Wadud Helal** (Bangladesh)



Image courtesy of the filmmaker

Saiful Wadud Helal began his career as a journalist in Montreal and started working in the industry as a programme director and editor, and directing from 2005. This film is shot from the point of view of a young woman named Anika and explores the perception of political marriage and cultural marriage.

Siren, 2011 (20:51 minutes)

Directed by **Molla Sagar** (Bangladesh)



Image courtesy of the filmmaker

Based in Dhaka, Molla Sagar started his career as a filmmaker in 2001; he is also known as a photographer. *Siren* tells the story of the jute-farmers in Bangladesh, and plays witness to the uncertainty and struggle in the lives of jute mill-workers.

There is Something in the Air, 2011 (29 minutes)

Directed by **Iram Ghufra** (India)



Image courtesy of the filmmaker

Iram Ghufra is a filmmaker and artist based in New Delhi. Her practice emerges largely from writing, photography and video. This film offers a series of dream narratives and accounts of spiritual possession, as experienced by women 'petitioners' at the shrine of a Sufi saint in North India.

Unknown, 2010 (4:15 minutes)
Directed by **Akifa Mian** (Pakistan)



Image courtesy of the filmmaker

Akifa Mian is a filmmaker based in Pakistan. *Unknown* is a psychological thriller about Ayesha, a woman who lives with her mother and suffers from paranoid schizophrenia. She keeps herself locked up in her room and talks to her alter ego, Ali.

You Do Not Belong to This Land, 2011 (23:31 minutes)
Directed by **Mohammad Hassani** (Afghanistan)



Image courtesy of the filmmaker

Mohammad Hassani is a filmmaker based in Afghanistan, having studied acting and theatre directing with the Afghan Society of Artists in Tehran. This film is a story of a young Afghan refugee named Sardar in Iran who gets fired because he does not have legal resident documentation. The film deals with his struggles and how he reaches his fiancé who is waiting for him at the border.

My Body My Weapon, 2006 (9:58 minutes)
Directed by **Kavita Joshi** (India)



Image courtesy of the filmmaker

Independent filmmaker Kavita Joshi is based in New Delhi and also works as a media trainer, designer and educator, conducting workshops in filmmaking. This film forms part of a cross-media project on women presenting the story of Irom Sharmila, a woman who has been on 13-year hunger strike, fasting in a quest to demand justice for her people, and to promote the repeal of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act in India.

Ganadabi, 2013 (12 minutes)
Directed by **Saiful Islam Jarnal** (Bangladesh)



Image courtesy of the filmmaker

Saiful Islam Jarnal is based in Dhaka and also creates television dramas and ad films. *Ganadabi* looks at the after effects of the war in 1971, exploring those who were forgiven – those who were opposed to Bangladesh liberty and stood as a barrier to the ones fighting for it. Following forty two years post liberation, the public is demanding justice against war criminals.

How Can I Become Bangali! 2013 (10:57 minutes)
Directed by **Ittukgulo Changma** (Bangladesh)



Image courtesy of the filmmaker

Ittukgulo Changma is a tribal Bangladeshi filmmaker based in Khagrachori. This film presents a story of ethnic tribes in Bangladesh where people are divided into small communities and fight to retain their identity. This is a difficult task as government decreed in the 15th edition of the National Constitution that “as a nation all people of Bangladesh are Bangali”, negating the identity of many groups in the country.

On Hteedan Road, 2013 (18:18 minutes)
Directed by **Aung Min** (Myanmar)



Image courtesy of the filmmaker

Aung Min is a Myanmar based filmmaker, who is a well-known writer and an organiser of a group called ‘Ten Men’ that works to promote progress in film making. This documentary tells the story of a road in the Yangon Capital, that has existed for over 100 years since British colonial days, portraying the tragic existence of street-side dwellers living in a place that was taken over by U PAING TRADING LTD, dictator owned cooking oil tanks.

From Gulf to Gulf to Gulf, 2013 (83 minutes)

Directed by **CAMP** (India)

Original format(s): HDV, SDV, VHS, Cellphone videos (variable)



Image courtesy of the artists and Experimenter

CAMP is a collaborative studio founded in Bombay in 2007 by Shaina Anand, Ashok Sukumaran and Sanjay Bhangar. It works on inter-related concerns and possibilities of art, technology, archives and the public sphere. *From Gulf to Gulf to Gulf* is a result of four years of dialogue, friendship and exchange between CAMP and a group of sailors from the Gulf of Kutch. Their travels, and those of co-seafarers from Pakistan and Southern Iran through the Persian and Aden Gulfs, show us a world cut into many pieces, not easily bridged by nostalgics or nationalists. Instead, we follow the physical crossings made by these groups of people who make and sail boats. These people also make videos, sometimes with songs married to them. This is the film's Asian debut.

Samdani Art Award

10 short-listed artists selected by the Delfina Foundation



Letter from the Chairman of the Jury:

Delfina Foundation is honoured to partner with the Samdani Art Foundation on the Samdani Art Award being presented at the 2nd edition of the Dhaka Art Summit.

For the last six years, Delfina Foundation has been developing greater links with South Asia to widen opportunities for artists and curators from the region to participate in our renowned residency and public programmes. As we expand into London's largest international residency programme this year, we are happy to extend a new opportunity to artists from Bangladesh.

The Samdani Art Award has quickly become one of the prestigious accolades in Bangladesh for emerging and talented artists within the age range of 20-40. By now offering a three-month residency in London at Delfina Foundation, the biannual award will further increase the exposure and profile of Bangladeshi contemporary art at large, while also supporting the professional development of the individual recipient.

As we have experienced over the long history of Delfina, a residency can be a career-defining moment for an artist to develop their ideas, sharpen their practice and widen their networks. Previous residents have gone on to have significant critical and financial success. I am proud that just as these artists have been commissioned by major biennales, collected by international institutions and broken auction house records, they have also contributed to social change at home and defined what it means to be a global citizen. When Delfina Foundation reviewed the portfolios of the shortlisted Bangladeshi artists, we looked for this kind of potential and we considered how the Samdani Art Award at Delfina Foundation would benefit each of them.

After developing the group of ten finalists, I am honoured to chair an esteemed jury of curators who will select the recipient of the award at the Dhaka Art Summit. Our panel includes independent curator Eungie Joo (Brazil), Guggenheim adjunct curator Sandhini Poddar (India), Tate curator Jessica Morgan (UK), and Khoj Director Pooja Sood (India). Each member of the jury brings a wealth of experience in international art practices, and combined they have a strong knowledge of the wider Middle East, North Africa and South Asia regions. For Delfina Foundation and the Samdani Art Foundation, it was important to select jury members who have an understanding of the context in which Bangladeshi artists are working while also being able to locate their ideas and concepts in a global framework.

Although there can only be one recipient of the Samdani Art Award and the residency at Delfina Foundation, I hope that visitors to the Dhaka Art Summit are encouraged by exhibition of all ten of the finalists who represent the next generation of contemporary artists from Bangladesh.

Aaron Cezar
Director, Delfina Foundation

Shumon Ahmed

Shumon Ahmed's work explores the fusion between video, photography and text to tell vivid stories that are profoundly private as well as collective. Born in 1977 in Dhaka, the artist has taught at the Pathshala Academy and exhibited extensively in Bangladesh and abroad, including at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London and the Chobi Mela, Bangladesh's International Festival of Photography. In his photographic series I (2008 -), Ahmed creates a dual self-portrait depicting himself sitting cross-legged under a biblical tree, wrapped in a dirt coloured shawl. He repeats the posture in the ordered aisle of a hyper-modern supermarket, dressed in Panjabi and denim jeans; the shift from one image to another is quite startling and proves an engaging commentary on the glory and guilt of modernity.

In the *Land of the Free* (2009) Ahmed challenges our understanding (or lack of it) of America's holding pen for terrorist suspects at Guantanamo Bay. The artist befriended and subsequently photographed and filmed the only recorded Bangladeshi prisoner to have returned from Guantanamo Bay to date. Ahmed's photomontage vividly evokes something of the drama and devastation of wrongful imprisonment and through staged imagery, suggests the humiliation of having to endure episodes of torture. Recently introducing a greater level of personal intimacy into his works, Shumon Ahmed brings out the plight of his own mother's suffering through installations of photography, sound, and personal letters in *What I have Forgotten Could Fill an Ocean, What is Not Real Never Lived* (2011 -).



What I have Forgotten Could Fill an Ocean, What is Not Real Never Lived, 2011, image courtesy of the artist

Palash Bhattacharjee

Palash Bhattacharjee's artistic sensitivity and creative approach spans installation, performance and video. The artist was born in 1983 in Chittagong and his work follows the journey of human life, different phenomena affecting its surroundings as well as moments combed from his memories. In *An Essay*, 2012, the artist hung five hundred selected photographs documenting his everyday movements over a large net. In the video *Drop the Matter*, 2011, he recollects his childhood obsession with marbles and shares his pleasure at seeing them drop down stairs. In his exploration of time, space, human needs and human intention, the artist has developed a form of communication that does not employ language. His art is derived from life and the livelihood of common people that use familiar objects as their building blocks.

Performativity is common in Bhattacharjee's art, where artistic actions are recorded in photographs and videos. The techniques of painting, sculpture, graphics and electronic media are present in his art too; some of his artistic activity is inspired by popular media like film, music and theatrical performance. While in Korea the artist began reacting to unexpected events such as the sudden death and accidents of friends, relatives and well-wishers. In one performance *The Road*, 2011, the artist placed toy cars on the floor covered in shaving cream. He broke the cars one after another, laid flowers on them, and then held the flowers close to his chest while playing sound effects from the street. The work illustrated is documentation of that performance.

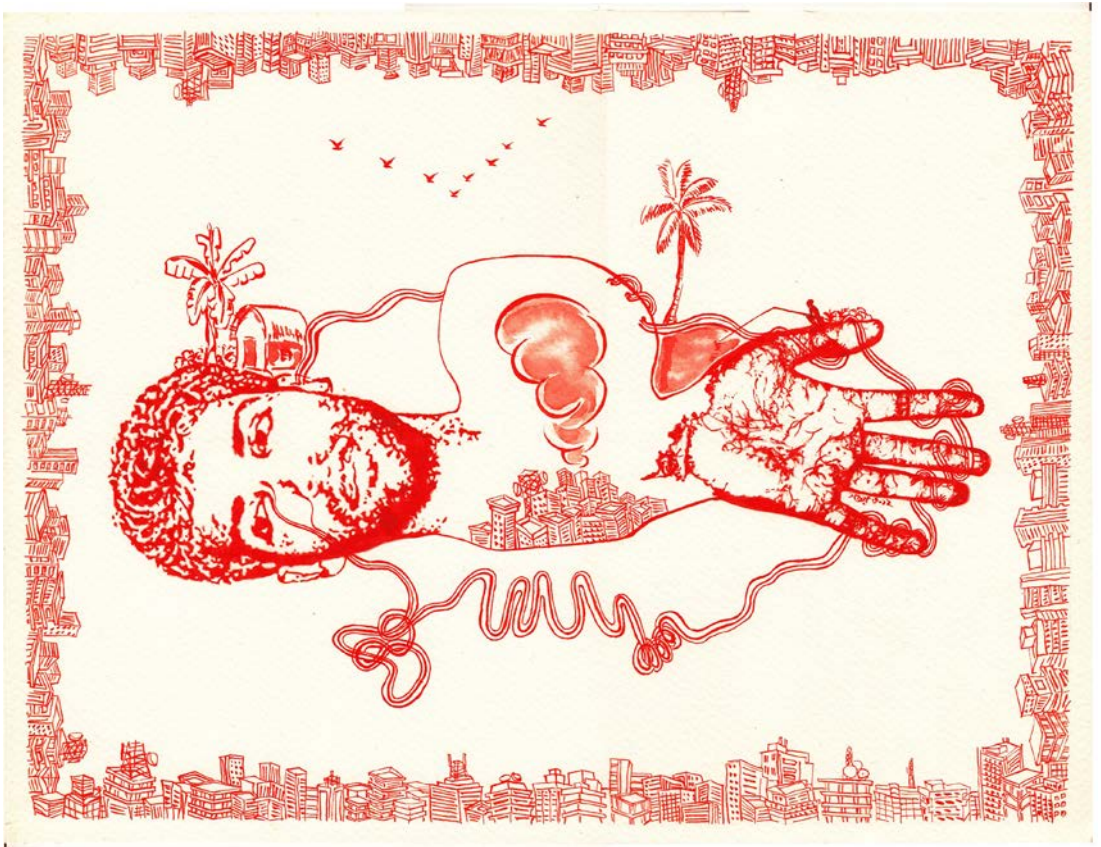


The Road, 2011, image courtesy of the artist

Sanjoy Chakraborty

Sanjoy Chakraborty, born in Chittagong in 1984, received his art education in India, studying for six years at Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata. During which time he closely observed Indian contemporary art and the country's history, tradition, culture, language and politics. These observations continue to have a profound impact on his artistic language. A unifying element in Chakraborty's art, which includes painting, installation, land art and performance is that all are created with one colour, red.

The artist first started using red in 2007 while he was attending an artist residency in Guwahati, the capital of the Indian province Assam. His work centered on political atrocities such as the Bombay Blasts of 2006, the ethnic riots of Guwahati, as well as the religious riots in his home country Bangladesh, and the colour red played a central role in these works. More recently he has been using red in his works as part of the universal language of art. The artist reflects that, "man's crisis in this world is the same for all; their clothing from person to person, their language varies, their food varies, even their skin colour differs; but the colour of our blood is universal. So I think that if I compose my art through this red, then it will become universal". Currently, Chakraborty is teaching at the University of Dhaka.



Untitled, 2012, image courtesy of the artist

Kabir Ahmed Masum Chisty

Hope and a heightened sensory appeal are integral to Masum Chisty's work, and these characteristics are common across his various art works, ranging from land art to sculpture and animation. The artist was born in 1976 in Narayanganj, Bangladesh and is a founding member and trustee of the Britto Art Trust, Dhaka's first non-profit artist led organisation. Rhythm and variegated expression is seen in his work *Rhymes of Sea*, 2009, a land art installation with sound inspired by Fibonacci which received great praise in Hong Kong. This work brings fresh perspective using hymns and rhythms, showcasing nature in its greatness. Further testament to his use of colour and identity can be seen in *Spring*, an ongoing series which began in 2010, where the arrival of spring is highlighted through a breathtaking array of colours.

In Masum Chisty's *Quandary*, 2011, we witness an inward struggle demonstrating that the pursuit of spiritual development remains possible through the balancing of personal conflicting urges and instincts with the pressures, temptations and opportunities presented by family, social and wider networks. Chisty's artistic journey has been connected to several deep-rooted ideals and the incessant questioning of those ideals, which are an integral part of the human psyche- its complex spirit and emotions. His work has been exhibited all over the world, including in the inaugural Bangladesh Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennale.



Quandary, 2011, image courtesy of the artist

Sarker Protick

Sarker Protick is a documentary photographer based in Dhaka. Born in 1986, the artist completed his Bachelor's Degree in marketing before studying photography at Pathshala, the South Asian Institute of Photography. He later participated in New Media Journalism at the University of Virginia and Documentary Photography at the University of Gloucestershire.

Sarker's subtle technique belies the strong underpinning of his documentary approach. Rather than taking us on a literal journey through a traditional narrative, his intimate images invite us to enter his personal space. Protick believes that in his photographs, the audience is as much a confidante as it is a viewer. In the work *Wind*, 2013, the artist wanted to depict the dancing motion of swaying trees. He sees this collection of images as one whole image, depicting rhythm within nature.

In 2012 Sarker won the Prix Mark Grosset pour es écoles internationales de photographie and the World Bank Art Program. He has exhibited widely around the globe including France, Russia, Croatia, the Netherlands, Japan, USA, England, Bangladesh and India. The British Journal of Photography has chosen him as one of the best Emerging Photographers to watch in 2014. Sarker now teaches at Pathshala.



Wind, 2013, image courtesy of the artist

Promotesh Das Pulak

Self-portraits are a key element in Sylhet born Promotesh Das Pulak's (b. 1980) practice. In his video works *Momentum*, 2008 and *Destination*, 2009, the artist incorporates himself within the frame. He also inserts himself into *Harano Sur*, 2010, a site-specific project representing the historically rich area of Panam Nagar. Through digital imaging, he re-imagines the private lives of anonymous people who are often the forgotten subjects of a specific place in history, by replacing their faces with his own. Similarly, in *Echoed Moments in Time*, 2011, he tries to recover a personal history, addressing the past and present, with image manipulation and mannered poses. He appropriates enigmatic 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War photographs of real soldiers and civilians alike. These works were shown in the Bangladesh Pavilion of the 54th Venice Biennale in 2011.

In his series *Encapsulated* (2008 -) and *Vindicate* (2012 -) the artist uses small flowers made from shola that are otherwise used to craft Hindu-wedding crowns for the bridegroom. The artist is interested in the duality that lies between the organic, natural elements of the flower in contrast to the manufactured, rigid structures of a gasmask, AK-47 or grenade. Continuing his use of shola, Pulak's *Familiarity* and *Twin*, both from 2013, develop into interactive installations that describe history, culture and identity.



Encapsulated, 2008, image courtesy of the artist

Ayesha Sultana

Ayesha Sultana's practice encompasses drawing, painting, object and sound. The work relies heavily on process as an attempt to translate notions of space, which is inseparably connected with perceptions of time as a way of looking. The artist was born in 1984 in Jessore, Bangladesh. Her drawing series often acts as an enquiry, through the building of spatial structures by tapping in repetition, variation and rhythm. It may appear dissimilar in technique but is essentially one and the same, permeating similar areas of transformation. For the past two years, drawing has often acted as a formal backbone to her practice. She uses it as a verb, of 'doing' whether it be cutting, folding, stitching, layering, recording, and tracing. This doing even extends to explorations with photocopier machines, allowing them to alter and distort other works that she experiments with. The illustrated image, *Cataract II*, 2011, is part of the artist's ongoing series of drawing with staples, piecing rice paper and creating new patterns and structures that highlight the tension between the strength of the industrial staple and the vulnerability of the translucent organic paper.

Sultana studied under Rashid Rana at Beaconhouse National University in Lahore, and later lectured there for two years. Sultana's work has been exhibited extensively in India, Italy, the Netherlands, Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates. She is an active member of the Britto Arts Trust and recently completed a residency at Gasworks, in London.



Cataract II, 2011, image courtesy of the artist

Afsana Sharmin Zhumpa

Afsana Sharmin Zhumpa is a performance artist and sculptor who was born in Chittagong in 1984. Her more recent practice comments on society's perception of women and the role of women in it; this body of work has won her much local acclaim. In 2011 she was invited to participate at the NIPAF (Nippon International Performance Art Festival) in Japan, where she created four performances in Tokyo, Osaka and Nagano City. Zhumpa's first solo performance entitled *To the Feminine* was held at the Shilpakala Academy in Chittagong in 2011. Her second show, an installation and performance *If Winter Comes, Can Spring be Far Behind* was held at the Bishawd Bangla, Chittagong in 2012.

Her latest work, *Where is the Artist*, an ongoing installation begun in 2013, revolves around Zhumpa's relationship with her surroundings. Using Indigo on dry leaves, branches and trees, these mundane organic forms are transformed in an arresting and almost Yves Klein *Nouveau Réalisme* manner. The artist grew up fascinated with the landscape around her and this is a continuation of her earthworks which transform the environment with indigo colours - colours which have deep resonance on the land of Bangladesh given its ties to the garment industry and the country's colonial past.



Where is the Artist (2013-), image courtesy of the artist

Yasmin Jahan Nupur

Born in 1977, Yasmin Jahan Nupur was inspired by the urgent ecological and community/public aspects of life and inclined to incorporate those elements in her work. She has worked closely with people from communities who were deprived from social benefits which lead her to explore prevailing social values of her region. Her video installation, *I Am Walking on Borderlines, Being Together*, at the Venice Biennale was a substantially deep political piece that generated a lot of interest. Although Nupur completed her MFA in paintings from Chittagong University, like many other contemporary artists, Nupur concentrates on installations. Nupur's work *Crossing Paths*, another politically charged work, received an Honourable Mention at the 15th Asian Art Biennale in December 2012 because of its portrayal of the lasting repercussions of the 1971 for the whole South Asian region, not just Bangladesh. The artist believes in the liberty and equal rights for all citizens regardless of gender, race, colour, creed or political belief. As recognition of her artistic endeavours, Yasmin Jahan Nupur has also been awarded the International Arts Residency by the Commonwealth Foundation of United Kingdom.

Many of her installations have been lauded because of their stark depictions of the discrimination of women as well. Her unique rope and string performance is another commendable endeavour where she invites the audience to share their feelings as she winds string around herself slowly but tightly, bits of her face forcefully protruding through the string, conveying to the viewers the strict binding, pain and helplessness border immigrants have to face through their movement.



I Can Take Your Pain, 2013, Courtesy of the artist

Sayed Tareq Rahman

A current student of MFA at the Faculty of Fine Arts in University of Dhaka, Sayed Tareq Rahman (b. 1988) has already been credited with four prestigious awards in sculpture, the latest being the Best Award in Sculpture at the 17th Young Artist Art Exhibition organised by Shilpakala Academy in 2010. For most of his sculptures, Tareq casts his work using metal, cement, and fiberglass, as well as using wood, brass, iron and stone. His works tend to encompass the complicated issues and behavioural patterns of contemporary urban society. The intricately chaotic formations and structures Tareq creates symbolize the perfunctory and near-robotic populace of the modern times and even though he solemnly wishes to return to a time of stability, harmony and ethereal beauty, away from the harshness and rigidity of human life, he is still engrossed in deciphering and unraveling the complex human equations that permeate everyone's daily lives. His work *Urban Beings-5*, made with iron wire, resin, iron and cement, signifies a construction pillar that is comparable to the strong yet distorted foundation of the urbanized civilization.



Urban Beings-5, 2013, image courtesy of the artist

Speakers Panel

curated by Diana Campbell Betancourt



Cross-Generational Panel:

Where Have We Come From and Where are We Headed? A Conversation Among Artists About Art and Art Making in Bangladesh.

Four generations of Bangladeshi artists reflect on the development of the Contemporary Art landscape in the country, and opine on the best next steps for its future growth. The artists will discuss key turning points in their work, and the moderator will draw connections across these generations and will historically contextualize their practices within the overall creative landscape of the country over the past century. The panel will also call upon the artists to think about the potential for cross-generational collaboration that could to a stronger support system for the next generation of Bangladeshi artists.

Moderator: Rosa Maria Falvo (b. 1964)

Speakers:

Syed Jahangir (b. 1935)

Wakilur Rahman (b. 1961)

Naeem Mohaiemen (b. 1969)

Ayesha Sultana (b. 1984)

Syed Jahangir

Syed Jahangir was born in Satkhira, Bangladesh in 1935, and institutions and individuals all over the world collect his paintings. Syed Jahangir has had 35 Solo exhibitions and numerous group shows both at home and abroad from 1956 to 2007. In 1985, Jahangir was awarded “Ekushe Padak” (one of the highest National Awards of Bangladesh) for his outstanding contribution in the field of Fine Arts in the country. He completed his graduation in Fine Arts from the Government Institute of Arts in 1955 (now known as the Institute of Fine Arts University of Dhaka).

Wakilur Rahman

Wakilur Rahman was born in 1961 in a village in North East Bangladesh, and since 1998 has been based between Dhaka and Berlin. Rahman has had several solo and group exhibitions locally and internationally in Germany, the UK, UAE, Japan, France, Poland, Norway, and Taiwan and received various honors for his prints and graphic media works. He completed his B.F.A. at Dhaka Art College, Dhaka, Bangladesh and M.F.A. at Central Academy of Fine Arts Peking, P.R. of China.

Naeem Mohaiemen

Naeem Mohaiemen is a writer and visual artist (shobak.org) working in Dhaka and New York. Since 2006, he has worked on *The Young Man Was*, a history of the 1970s ultra-left in Bangladesh, with linkages to other global movements. One chapter, the film *United Red Army*, was acquired by the Tate Modern, and the sequel, *Afsan's Long Day*, will premiere at MoMA this Spring. The project was described as "our history's alter ego" (Depart) and "engagements with a revolutionary past meaningful in the sudden eruption of a revolutionary present" (Bidoun). In Bangladesh, his work has shown at Charukala Lecture Theater, Drik Chobi Mela, Dhaka Art Summit, Gallery Chittrak, Chittagong Public Theater, Latitude Longitude, etc. His work is in various private collections, and the permanent collection of the British Museum. Naeem's work has been published in *Sound Unbound* (MIT Press), *Sun Never Sets* (NYU), *Lines of Control* (Cornell), *Visual Culture Reader*, 3rd ed. (Routledge), *Granta* (Pakistan Issue), *Pavillion* ("What was socialism and what comes next"), *Rethinking Marxism*, *New York Times*, etc.

Ayesha Sultana

Ayesha Sultana was born in 1985 in Jessore, Bangladesh, and currently lives and works in Dhaka. She received a BFA in Visual Arts (with Distinction) in 2007 and subsequently earned a Post-graduate Diploma in Art Education (2008) from Beaconhouse National University in Lahore, Pakistan. Her works span from drawing to installations, and she has participated in group exhibitions such as the India Art Fair 2013, New Delhi; Senses 7, Dhaka Art Center; Inexactly THIS Kunstvlaai : Festival of Independents, Amsterdam; Freefall, Bengal Art Lounge; Dhaka Art Summit 2012, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy; SPACE, BRITTO SPACE a contemporary art hub (2012); Longitude Latitude 4, Beauty Boarding, Dhaka and Hear me Roar! The Jamjar, Dubai (2011) among others. Sultana is also a member of the Britto Arts Trust.

Rosa Maria Falvo (Moderator)

Rosa Maria Falvo is a writer and independent curator specializing in Asian contemporary art and photography. Of Italian-Australian origin, she graduated with honours in English literature from Monash University in Melbourne and in Art History from Perugia University in Italy. Falvo is particularly interested in the power of art and photography as vehicles for cultural education. In Bangladesh, Falvo has regularly participated in the Chobi Mela International Photo Festival, and presented at the Pathshala South Asian Media Academy, the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, and the Dhaka Art Summit. She recently wrote the Skira-Bengal Foundation artists' monographs series: *Contemporary Masters of Bangladesh: Kazi Ghiyasuddin* (2011), *Great Masters of Bangladesh: Safiuddin Ahmed* (2011), *Zainul Abedin* (2012); and *Rafiq Azam: Architecture for Green Living* (2013).

Pioneer Panel:

Firsthand Perspectives on Developing Infrastructure for Contemporary Art in South Asia and its Challenges and Breakthroughs

Six visionaries who have established support systems for artists and curators in South Asia will talk about their journeys toward realizing their various missions, and the setbacks and successes they have met along the way. What do they see as key fundamentals to developing a significant arts institution in the region? How have their missions evolved over time, and how do they see the institutions they work with developing over the next ten years?

Moderator: Shreela Ghosh (British Council)

Speakers:

Pooja Sood (India, institution: Khoj)

Anoushka Hempel (Sri Lanka, institution: Colombo Biennale)

Shahidul Alam (Bangladesh, institution: Chobi Mela)

Rashid Rana (Pakistan, institution: Beaconhouse University, Mohatta Palace Museum)

Riyas Komu (India, Kochi Muziris Biennale)

Alessio Antonioli (UK, institution: Triangle Arts Network)

KHOJ, NEW DELHI, INDIA

Established in 1997, Khoj started as an annual workshop and has since grown to become an arts incubator of international repute that has supported over 200 Indian and 400 international artists. Its recently renovated space in New Delhi is a place for artists, run by artists that provides residency programs with various in-house facilities to emerging as well as established artist to develop their art practices. They encourage and actively support experimental art practice and constantly challenge conventional art discourse. With its active participation in helping artists and its innovative theme based residencies as well as exhibitions, Khoj is creating a legacy for the future. Khoj International Artists' Association is a member of the global Triangle Arts Trust.

COLOMBO ART BIENNALE (CAB), COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

CAB was established in 2009 and has since hosted over 90 local and international artists in its 2009 & 2012 & 2014 editions. Most of Sri Lanka's significant artists have showcased their works at CAB. CAB is an independent organization that functions as not-for-profit, supported by the CAB team and the artists that participate as well as international cultural bodies. The CAB mission is to consistently recreate life-changing events that affect the positive development and growth of the country and its people through the arts. The Biennale initiates various projects in support of Sri Lankan contemporary artists that include artist in residency programs, international exhibitions, art prize nominations and culminates in an event that showcases Exhibitions to include the works of 50 artists, Fringe Exhibitions, Art Talks, Screenings, Live Art, Performances, Curated Walks, Social Events and more.

CHOBİ MELA, DHAKA, BANGLADESH

Initiated by the Drik Picture Library Limited in 1999, Chobi Mela is the first photography festival in Asia and is held every two years in Dhaka. The festival examines the dramatic shifts in image production, ownership and distribution brought by new media landscape. The most established feature of this festival is that the exhibition is mobile and exhibited in non-conventional places in the city such as low cost motels in Old Dhaka. These programs have been extremely successful and the model has been replicated in Bolivia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka and Tanzania. Chobi Mela also offers scholarship to rural students to study at Pathshala: the South Asian Institute for Photography.

BEACONHOUSE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, LAHORE, PAKISTAN

Founded in 2003, Beaconhouse National University (BNU) Pakistan's first and a truly national Liberal Arts university, with a nearly even gender balance with its students. BNU's mission is a unique undertaking that stands undeterred in producing a respectful and tolerant generation of young people who possess the potential to create a positive impact in their communities within a relatively short period of time. BNU continues to offer modern curricula in a range of conventional and new disciplines while preserving the history and culture of Pakistani society. The School of Visual Arts and Design (SVAD) is internationally acclaimed for nurturing excellent artists, and several artists of international acclaim are on the faculty including Rashid Rana, Huma Mulji, and Risham Syed.

KOCHI MUZIRIS BIENNALE, FORT COCHIN, INDIA

Kochi Muziris Biennale is a project initiated by the Kochi Biennale Foundation, a not for profit Charitable trust established in 2010. Primarily funded by the Government of Kerala, the core aims of the foundation are to take contemporary art to the public and create new centers for artistic discourse and to educate upon and share new ideas. The first edition of KMB in 2012 was framed on the idea of cosmopolitanism and the Biennale strived to celebrate the multiculturalism and inclusiveness of the legendary port of Muziris and modern metropolis Kochi, and most of the works were site-specific and displayed in historical venues. In December 2013 KBF initiated "Pepper House Residency" as a centre for discourse and art production for all creative disciplines.

Institutional Panel: Sharing Art from South Asia With Global Audiences – Collection Building Strategies and Responsibilities of International Museums

Modern and Contemporary Art from South Asia has had an increased presence in international exhibition platforms over the last decade. Institutions such as the Guggenheim, the TATE Modern, the Centre Pompidou, the British Museum, and Parasol Unit, have made commitments to increasing their engagement with the region. What is the research process toward building an institutional collection of South Asian art, how are institutional wish lists for the region strategically built, and how are the acquired works contextualized within the existing collections of these Western institutions? How do these institutions familiarize their audiences with the practices from this region with their educational programming, and what kind of support can patrons in the region provide to improve the representation of South Asian art abroad?

Richard Blurton (Head of South Asian Section of the British Museum's Asia Department, London)

Sandhini Poddar (Adjunct Curator, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York)

Jessica Morgan (The Daskalopoulos Curator, International Art, Tate Modern, London)

Aurélien Lemonier (Curator, Centre Pompidou, Paris)

Moderator: Dr. Ziba Ardalán (Director and Curator, Parasol Unit, London)

A Summary of Each Institution's South Asian Focused Activities Over the Past Five Years:

BRITISH MUSEUM

Over the last two decades, the British Museum has displayed a series of exhibitions concerned with South Asia. One of the largest examples was the Bengal Season, in 2006. Three different exhibitions were held concurrently – a sculpture installation produced by craftsmen from Krishnagar, a display of paintings by Rabindranath Tagore as well as paintings and sculptures by other Bengali artists. In 2015, the museum will host an exhibition on the Indian state of Assam. And as part of the recent collection of South Asian art, the Museum has acquired works by Bangladeshi artists Faridah Urmi Rahman, and Naeem Mohaiemen, and paintings by Pakistani artists Waseem Ahmed, Ali Kazim and Anwar Jalal Shemza.

CENTRE POMPIDOU

The research, exhibition and acquisition of South-Asian art at the Centre Pompidou have been initiated with the occasion of the Paris-Delhi-Bombay exhibition curated by Sophie Duplaix in 2011. This event allowed the inclusion in our permanent collection of works by many artists amongst which Rina Banerjee, Atul Dodiya, Bhupen Khakhar, Pushpamala N. and Dayanita Singh. Following this exhibition, a multi-disciplinary research team was put in place focusing on continuing this work, connected to the Research and Globalization project that spawned the Plural Modernities rehanging of the permanent collection in late 2013, curated by Catherine Grenier. Thus, at the same time as the contemporary art department, the architecture and design units have also been mobilised in order to identify, research and acquire works of South Asian architects and designers. Following this endeavour, in 2012, Aurélien Lemonier secured an important donation of the personal archives by the Indian architect Raj Rewal for the Pompidou Center, a donation that is already exhibited within the halls of the museum. This scientific and cultural research project is accompanied by a voluntary endeavour in locating potential future donors in order to pursue the enriching our collection.

SOLOMON R GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum's global Asian Art Program has engaged with the study, exhibition, acquisition, and promotion of modern and contemporary art from South Asia since 2007. A leader in the field, its many celebrated projects include, Anish Kapoor: Memory, Being Singular Plural, and Zarina: Paper Like Skin. The upcoming retrospective, V.S. Gaitonde: Painting as Process, Painting as Life, will open in New York in late October 2014. Alongside promoting avant-garde research in the form of exhibitions, the museum has also been dedicated to transforming its permanent collection by supporting living artists and acquiring historically significant works through the UBS MAP Global Arts Initiative, and the ongoing activities of its acquisitions councils. In the past six years, works by both emerging and established artists and collectives such as Desire Machine Collective, Sheela Gowda, Subodh Gupta, Shilpa Gupta, Amar Kanwar, Kapoor, Bharti Kher, Susanta Mandal, and Zarina Hashmi, amongst others, have been co-commissioned, commissioned, or directly acquired for the Guggenheim's international network of museums.

PARASOL UNIT FOUNDATION FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

Founded in 2004, by Ziba Ardalan, London's Parasol Unit is an educational charity that operates purely for public benefit, with a special commitment towards South Asian Art. The exhibitions are supported by funding from private, public and charitable foundations. Owing to this innovative model between private funding and public support, Parasol unit has become one of London's most vibrant contemporary art spaces. In the nine years of its existence, the art space has hosted a solo exhibition by Bharti Kher, included Nasreen Mohamedi's and Hemali Bhuta's works in the group exhibition, Lines of Thought as well as awarded British- Indian artist Sonny Sanjay Vadgama the EXPOSURE 09 Award (2009). In April this year, they will be hosting a solo exhibition by British-Pakistani artist Shezad Dawood, followed by Pakistani-American artist Shahzia Sikander's show in November 2015.

THE TATE MODERN

The Tate Modern has increased its long-standing dedication to South Asia over the last five years, and launched its South Asian Acquisitions Committee in 2012, increasing its resources and commitment from patrons with ties to the region. Works by Pakistani artists Rasheed Araeen and Bani Abidi, Indian artists Zarina Hashmi, Mrinalini Mukherjee, Atul Dodiya, and Sheela Gowda, Sri Lankan artist Lionel Wendt, and Bangladeshi artist Naeem Mohaiemen have been added to the collection in this period, among others. The Tate regularly sends its curatorial staff to the region to conduct research on the ground. The museum recently collaborated with Khoj with the exhibition Word. Sound. Power (2013), which was presented in the Tate's Project Space and also at Khoj in New Delhi. The Tate displays the works from its South Asian collection in ways that it is integrated with works from other regions, creating connections across cultures, such as its recent display of Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian's and Zarina Hashmi's works in 2012 and 2013.

Curated Group Exhibitions



B/DESH

curated by Deepak Ananth

B/DESH is shorthand for Bangladesh, of course, but also, *bidesh*, the Bangla word for abroad, a foreign land, an extra-territorial elsewhere. Desh, on the other hand, designates a homeland, accompanied by a sense or semblance of a national identity however notional or real. So the home and the world are conjoined and separated by the most tenuous of lexical and phonetic expedients: the slender slash differentiating *desh* and *bidesh* that could also be seen as a marker of everything that lies between them. And 'in between-ness' is, if anything, a perennially shifting ground, a provisional state that might itself be an image of that potential undifferentiation of identity and alterity, 'self' and 'other' symptomatic of the globalised present. To have a sense of rootedness and yet not be insular, to acknowledge the feeling of homelessness (the spiritual malaise par excellence of the modern condition) and find new ways of negotiating it in the face of the neutralisation of difference that is the cultural logic of globalisation - these are some of the burdens faced by those once relegated to the margins and now deemed to be 'emerging' on the world scene. The tragically fraught history of Bangladesh's coming into being as a nation, the chronicle of political turmoil and violence that has marked its relatively short existence as an independent state, cannot but be salient in the consciousness of the country's intellectuals and artists and in their attempts to make sense of the vicissitudes of the present. To be a witness to their times is for many of them an ethical stance. For artists this imperative is doubled by another, namely, the need to find the form and medium most appropriate to their vision of the reality in which they find themselves.

For many years now documentary photography has proved to be particularly compelling for a range of practitioners in Bangladesh, and the subjects they have tended to focus upon would seem to demand such an approach. But often their eyes have been schooled in allegorical or conceptual ways of seeing, and questions of 'objectivity' that underlie the documentary stance are subtly calibrated to the degree of empathy or distance they bring to their approach, as in Shumon Ahmed's ongoing project within the ship graveyard on the Chittagong coast, reputedly the largest in the world.

For Gazi Nafis, on the other hand, the camera has been the instrument to capture intimate moments in the lives of a range of sexual minorities, in images that betoken an engaging complicity with these social outcasts. In contrast, the anthropological nature of some of the subjects explored by the Australian Bengali artist Omar Adnan Chowdhury (the juxtaposition of a Hindu and a Shia festival in old Dhaka, for example) in his large scale audio-visual installations becomes the occasion for a slow, immersive and contemplative sensory experience.

For some artists working in media that are not lens-based, the fix of the real is less than imperious. The peculiar assortment of creaturely forms that people the paintings of Ronnie Ahmed, for example, are the denizens of a parallel world that is gleefully awry and somewhat hallucinatory all at the same time. The oneirism of his work couldn't be further removed from the cool detachment that Ayesha Sultana brings to her pictorial representations of familiar urban spaces, their blank allure a façade for something verging on the uncanny. Another aspect of her work dispenses with representation altogether, the more to explore a poetics of graphic inscription and the material qualities of surface and texture. This interest in investigating the rudiments of form is shared by Rana Begum, who was born in Bangladesh but grew up in Britain. Her interest in the pristine geometry of sharply angled coloured planes (in paper or aluminium) and the ways in which these might become receptacles of light inform her sculptural practice; her rigorous and yet sensuous abstraction hints at the subtle coalescence of the Islamic architectural ideal of emptiness as a numinous space and the pared-down unitary forms of Minimalist sculpture.

The formal 'syncretism' of Begum's work could be contrasted with the exercises in cultural translation and critique undertaken by the conceptual artist and writer Naeem Mohaiemen, who divides his time between Dhaka and New York. Working with photography and film, he has sought to recover and critically reframe certain key emblematic moments and events (both private and public) in the tragic history that led to independence and the creation of a sovereign state. As a writer and as an artist, Mohaiemen's work has dwelt perceptively on the political, ideological and cultural implications of B/DESH and the complexities of its current trajectories.

Ayesha Sultana



Untitled, 2014, Oil on Linen, 37 x 58 cm

Gazi Nafis Ahmed



Image courtesy of the artist

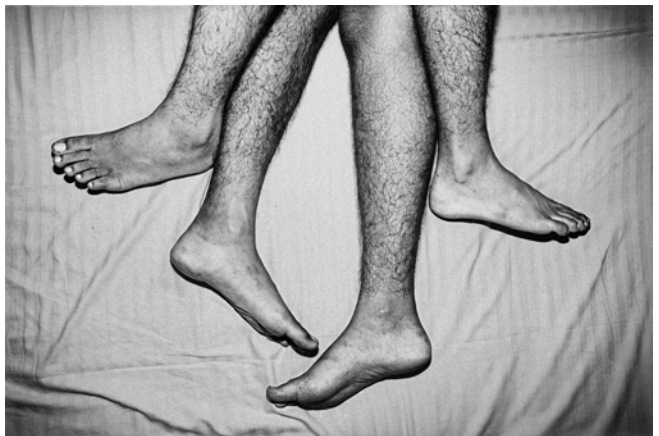


Image courtesy of the artist

Naeem Mohaiemen



Rankin Street, 1953

Rana Begum



Bench by Rana Begum, Image courtesy Samdani Art Foundation

Omar Adnan Chowdhury



Torsion I, 2013, 2.5K ProRes Video, 16:9, 26:23s, Colour, Stereo



Torsion II, 2014, 2.5K ProRes Video, 16:9, 48:23m, Colour, Stereo

Ronni Ahmed



The Eye Land, 2012, Acrylic on Paper



Primordial Teeth, 2013, Acrylic on Paper, 22 x 32 inch

Shumon Ahmed



From the Series Metal Graves

LIFEBLOOD

curated by Rosa Maria Falvo

Water is the lifeblood of all living things, of humanity itself, and the very lifeblood of our planet. Satellite images reveal its tireless circulation and intricate connectivity, unifying the earth's surface and sustaining its populations. Bangladesh is home to the largest delta in the world, and the single most important resource in the Subcontinent. Majestic rivers intersect across the entire country, at the confluence of the Ganges (Padma), Brahmaputra (Jamuna) and Meghna rivers, and their countless tributaries.

Travelling through this region you quickly become aware of the fluidity of nature and the comparatively contorted predicaments of human urbanisation. Dhaka's overpopulation, relentless traffic, open air burning, and industrial wastes are just some of the many, growing reminders of what it means to impose ourselves on our environments. And yet Mother Nature eventually self-corrects, like the homeostatic processes found in all living organisms. Across the Bay of Bengal, the wet season systematically washes away debris, and sometimes its people, powered by rain bearing winds from the Indian Ocean. Major flooding is a recurring reality. At the same time agriculture is heavily dependent on such rains and delays severely affect the surrounding economies, as evidenced in the numerous droughts over the ages.

Bangladeshis have a unique relationship with water. Their urban and rural sensibilities to its bounty and destruction are a tangible part of the national psyche, which is inevitably reflected in its artistic expressions. The Bangla axiom "*nodir opor nam jibon*" ('water is another name for life') aptly demonstrates the unique and determinative influences of the more than fifty transboundary rivers it shares between India and Myanmar, with all their hydrologic, cultural, social, economic, and political ramifications.

This new century has ushered in the kind of development that is literally choking waterways and wreaking havoc on Bangladesh's cultural patrimony and its people. Focusing on water as the ultimate protagonist, Bangladesh's native photographers are also its vital and most compelling storytellers. They too are the lifeblood of national and international perceptions about this country, its beauty, potential, and problems. Through their insiders' perspectives we can access more intimate sensations and insights than previously clichéd and foreign representations of local realities. These photographers speak the language of their subjects, share their culture and concerns, and even some of their experiences; frequently they are welcomed into homes and individual lives.

The photographic movement in Bangladesh began in the mid-1970s, largely as a camera club where professionals and amateurs shared ideas. Early pioneers such as Golam Kasem Daddy, Manzoor Alam Beg, and Anwar Hossain played an essential role in shaping a strong humanistic style of image-making. Documentary photography practice was later pioneered by Shahidul Alam, who went on to set up the Drik Picture Library, the Pathshala South Asian Media Institute, the Chobi Mela Photography Festival, and the Majority World Agency. The scene has since blossomed into some of the best photographic and multimedia practice found and taught in the world today.

This exhibition aims to present various angles on this nation's sensibilities to water, and the palpable and often precarious existence of living in and around the water's edge. It explores how that same water, in very specific and profound ways, determines our landscapes – physical, social, economic, political – and sculpts the very psycho-spiritual architecture of a people and a region. As if on a river boat through life, we are metaphorically subject to its rhythms and struggles, constantly at the central source of destruction and renewal. Offering a floating record of Bangladesh, these brave artists challenge our awareness of and empathy with the world around us.

Abir Abdullah

Abir Abdullah is a Dhaka-based photographer and a well-known figure in Bangladeshi photography. He is one of the most acclaimed graduates of the Pathshala South Asian Media Institute, where he now teaches. He is a photojournalist for the European Press Photo Agency (EPA) and its sole Bangladeshi correspondent. Abdullah's work has appeared in numerous publications worldwide, including *The New York Times*, *Asia Week*, *Der Spiegel*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Guardian* and a book entitled *New Stories*, published by World Press Photo. Among his many achievements are winning the 2001 Phaidon 55 photography competition, and the first prizes in the South Asian Journalists' Association Photo Award and the Asian Press Photo Contest.

Hinduism is the second largest religious affiliation in Bangladesh, with more than 8% of the population, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. Ritual bathing, vows, and pilgrimages to sacred rivers, mountains, and shrines are annual practice. In this series of images Abdullah looks at the Hindu festivals developed around the rivers of Bangladesh, such as Punnyosnan (holy bath) and Bishorjwan ('immersion'), as well as the vibrant cultures along the water's edge.



Abir Abdullah - from the 'Holy Bath' series, image courtesy of the artist

Shahidul Alam

An internationally renowned photographer, teacher, writer, curator and activist, Shahidul Alam obtained a PhD in chemistry at London University before switching to photography and returning to his hometown of Dhaka in 1984, where he made his base. He set up the Drik Picture Library (1989) and the Pathshala South Asian Institute of Photography (1998), and is also the founding director of Chobi Mela, the biggest photography festival in Asia. His work has been exhibited at various galleries and museums, including MoMA (New York), Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), and Royal Albert Hall (London). Alam is also an acclaimed public speaker, with frequent appointments throughout the world.

This series of images began as a creative longing to transcend boundaries, reaching beyond issues of time, political space, race, culture, and religion; to return to nature and retrace the ancient origins of the great Brahmaputra River (son of Brahma), the 'main artery' of the Bangladeshi way of life. Over a period of four years (2000-2004), Alam travelled to the source of this great river, from a small glacial trickle at Mt Kailash to Lhasa, through Assam, and down into the Bay of Bengal, and the warming seas of the Indian Ocean. He followed this mighty river through some of the most inhospitable regions in the world, witnessing its many incarnations and the myriad cultures and landscapes of Tibet, China, India, and Bangladesh.



Shahidul Alam – from the 'Brahmaputra Diary' series, image courtesy of the artist

Rasel Chowdhury

Rasel Chowdhury is a young documentary photographer represented by MoST Artists Agency in Bangkok, currently based in Dhaka. A graduate of the Pathshala South Asian Institute of Photography, he has gained important professional recognition, including the finalist for the Magnum Expression Photography Award (2010), nominations for the Joop Swart Masterclass (2011 and 2012), the Ian Parry Scholarship Award (2011), nominations for the Prix Pictet Award (2012 and 2013), and the Getty Image Emerging Talent Award (2012). Chowdhury is dedicated to representing changing landscapes and the chronic environmental issues affecting his generation. He has documented the dying city of Sonargaon and newly transformed spaces around the Bangladesh railway, exposing the increasing degradation of nature and human culture.

Chowdhury's work has been published in a book entitled *Under the Banyan Tree*, and in *The Sunday Times Magazine*, *Courier International*, *6Moies*, *Punctum Magazine*, *Business Times*, and *The Daily Star*. He has shown in Chobi Mela VII (Bangladesh, 2013), CACP Villa-Porochon (France, 2013), Photoquai Festival (France, 2013), Mother Gallery (UK, 2012), Dhaka Art Summit (Bangladesh, 2012), Photo Phnom Penh Festival (Cambodia, 2012 and 2013), Getty Image Gallery (UK, 2011), Noorderlicht Photo Festival (Netherlands, 2011), and Longitude Latitude (Bangladesh, 2011).

This series on the Buriganga River ('Old Ganges') in the southwest outskirts of Dhaka reveals a dying river; with his characteristically pallid and atmospheric imagery. The impact of tanneries, sewerage waste, industrial chemicals, dockyards, and brickfields portend the death of the natural world and the ultimate unraveling of communities.



Rasel Chowdhury— from the 'Desperate Urbanisation' series, image courtesy of the artist

Khaled Hasan

Khaled Hasan is a documentary photographer based in Dhaka. He received his Masters in Accounting from the National University of Bangladesh, and then graduated from the Pathshala South Asian Institute of Photography in 2009. He has worked as a freelancer for several daily newspapers in Bangladesh and international magazines and newspapers, including *The New York Times*, *The Sunday Times Magazine*, *American Photo*, *National Geographic Society*, *Al Jazeera*, *Better Photography*, *Saudi Aramco World Magazine*, *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph*, *The Independent*, *The New Internationalist*, *Himal Southern*, and the *Women's e-News*.

Hasan won the National Geographic Society All Roads Photography Award for this 'Living Stone' documentary project. He aims to cultivate a deep communication and trust with his subjects, and believes in the educational power of images to penetrate "the lives and experiences of others" in order to effect social change. Hasan is now also working as a filmmaker and artist in the residency programme of the Samdani Art Foundation in Bangladesh.

This series of poignant images documents the ravaging effects of the stone-crushing industry in Jaflong, north eastern Bangladesh, endangering the health of workers, causing sound and air pollution, and shrinking the biodiversity of the region. Hasan's direct relationship with his subjects and portrait style is a strong indictment of failing government interventions.



Khaled Hasan – from the 'Living Stone' series, image courtesy of the artist

Saiful Huq Omi

Saiful Huq Omi is a documentary photographer and activist based in Dhaka. He first studied telecoms engineering, before taking up photography in 2005 at the Pathshala South Asian Institute of Photography. His images have been published internationally, including *The Arab News*, *Asian Photography*, *Foto File USA*, *The Guardian*, *New Internationalist*, *Newsweek*, and *Time*. Omi's first book, *Heroes Never Die: Tales of Political Violence in Bangladesh, 1989–2005*, was published in 2006. Among others he has exhibited in Bangladesh, Germany, India, Nepal, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Russia, the USA, China, Norway and Japan, and received the National Geographic All Roads Photography Award (2006), the China International Press Photography Contest silver medal (2009), and the DAYS JAPAN International Photojournalism Award special jury prize (2010). Omi was selected for the World Press Photo's Joop Swart Masterclass (2010) and was a finalist for the Aftermath Project (2009) and the Alexia Grant (2009 and 2010). The Magnum Foundation Emergency Fund, European Union, Equal Rights Trust, Open Society Institute, and the Royal Dutch Embassy all support Omi's ongoing and much acclaimed work on Rohingya refugees. He set up an international photography school named Counter Foto in Bangladesh in 2013, which aspires to be a global platform for photographers and activists.

This series of evocative images documents life in a ship-breaking yard in Bangladesh, where whole stretches of beach turn into a hellish vision of human exploitation. Caught up in a veritable parable of the worst consequences of globalised industry, hundreds of young men brave extremely dangerous conditions, clambering off the hulk of a ship to cut and tear away at its carcass with their bare hands and oxyacetylene torches, feeding a world market for everything that can be retrieved.



Saiful Huq Omi – from the 'Breaking Ships' series, image courtesy of the artist

Manir Mrittik

Manir Mrittik is a Dhaka-based artist, who graduated with a Masters in Fine Arts (painting) from the University of Chittagong in 1996. He is a member of the Britto Arts Trust in Dhaka and has participated in various initiatives involving the representation of ethnic groups from Bangladesh. He uses photography to explore notions of hyper reality and utopian issues, and aims to dissolve the usual distinctions between art forms.

This series of images explores the theme of natural beauty through a dream-like state. The central focus is on the relationship between the human body and soul, and vis-à-vis with water bodies. Mrittik's fascination with 'unnatural' light photography (ultraviolet, infrared, and full spectrum) calls our attention to a myriad of details and Mother Nature's mutable contours, which together offer a more holistic and fluid representation of the physical world. His work aims to project and promote the beauty and symmetry both within and beyond ourselves.



Manir Mrittik – from the 'Soul Flow' series, image courtesy of the artist

Munem Wasif

Munem Wasif grew up in the small town of Comilla, but later moved to study photography in Dhaka where he has since been based. An acclaimed graduate of the Pathshala South Asian Institute of Photography, his work has been nothing short of life changing for him. Dedicated to telling stories as they evolve 'on the ground', he photographs his own culture and people with an intensely intimate and humanistic eye. Wasif won the 'City of Perpignan Young Reporter's Award' (2008) at Visa pour l'Image, the Prix Pictet commission (2009), the F25 award for Concerned Photography from Fabrica (2008), and participated in the Joop Swart Masterclass (2007). His images have appeared in various publications, including *Le Monde*, *The Sunday Times Magazine*, *Geo*, *The Guardian*, *Politiken*, *Mare, Du*, *Days Japan*, *L'Espresso*, *Libération*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. His work has been shown at the Musee de Elysee and Fotomuseum Winterthur (Switzerland), Kunsthal Museum and Noordlicht Festival (Netherlands), Angkor Photo Festival and Photo Phonm Phen (Cambodia), Whitechapel Gallery (England), Palais de Tokyo and Visa Pour l'Image (France), and Chobi Mela (Bangladesh). He is represented by Agence Vu in Paris and recently published his book *Belonging*, (Galerie Clémentine De La Féronnière, Paris, 2013).

This series explores Bangladesh's tragic paradox of abundance and scarcity: water is everywhere, but in several sub-districts in the southwest of the country there is not a drop to drink, with entire families having to walk miles for their daily supply of fresh water, as a result of the voracious shrimp farming industry. Having lived among these communities for substantial periods, Wasif's poetic images narrate their daily struggle and impossible environmental predicament.



Munem Wasif – from the 'Salt Water Tears' series, image courtesy of the artist

Citizens of Time

curated by Veeranganakumari Solanki

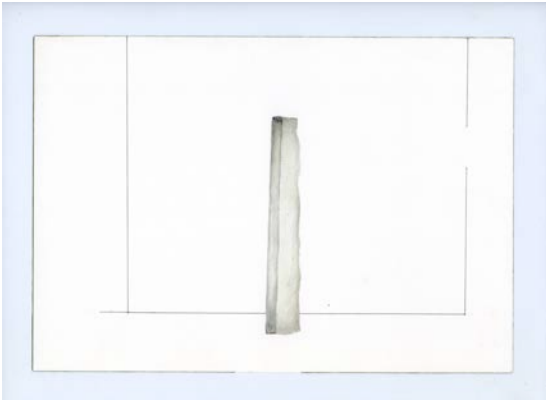
The future is yesterday's tomorrow. The ephemeral elements of time are permanent frames that layer perceptions, and everything that one refers to is in context with a time frame that determines the existence of a moment. Whether it be seconds, minutes, hours, centuries or light years, change is an inherent factor of time; nothing can be preserved forever. There is a desire to hold time, to let time go, to want time to stay or to disappear. 'Citizens of Time' are the keepers of these universal borders of time. They explore the variables in time folders while realising the crucial existence of an alternative presence and engagement within their time vaults of space and works. The impermanence of time filters in-and-out of landscapes, glass jars, homes, objects and the mind's perceptions.

The contemporary perception of telling time has been transformed from its history of division through sundials, shadow clocks and light. 'Citizens of Time' are divided into four time pockets – the residue of time through natural elements, memory traps from spaces and personal environments, translated time maps of imagination and mind-narratives of distorted time. Each of these edited spans of created moments is layered with elements of the artist's personal rendition of time. They exist as analogies of experience that differ from created utopias to documentations of timed reality. Stephen Hawking's book, "A Brief History of Time" renders time from the evolution of the Big Bang Theory into the futuristic possibility of time travel and alternative realities. He further explains Einstein's theory of time as the fourth dimension of our three-dimensional world. The artists of 'Citizens of Time' explore the minute details and texture which make up this fourth dimension. These are elements that build up relationships, societies, cities, countries and eventually the universe. Time goes beyond its metaphysical existence to translate into visual forms of a new aesthetic of time in fantasies, nostalgia and memories. These personal capsules of time plant themselves into a universe of subjective interpretations of history and the future.

Time, in the form of natural elements, parallels global warming to an unknown land; and bottled time with notes of precise minutes and thoughts captured, converse with an artist's rendition of personal notes in timeless frames of landscapes of a mountain and lake. The places and works, similar to the nature of time straddle between timelessness and the precision of moments. Taking time into personal spaces, the second pocket explores the location of the body and frozen time frames. Here one experiences a revision of working processes, frozen time and peeled memories from homes and histories. Time seeps in through wallpapers, refrigerators and windows. A visual distortion of created realities follows to change the tradition of the history of time. The third pocket sees time repeating itself in created environments which are subject to the viewer's imagination. History layers itself with contemporary happenings and loops into renditions of the artists' compositions. In the final section, there is a departure from the material into a distortion of the present, through the past in time frames of the mind. Here, the property of time and places are blurred to become the ownership of the mind's soul and time returns back into the personal universe. These time deposits carry forward into memories as experienced time frames, which pulse into the past, history, experienced present and travelled future.

Hemali Bhuta

Hemali Bhuta (b. 1978) is an internationally recognised artist whose works are closely related to architectural elements. Her interventions in a space research through ephemeral materials, time, into the history of sites, and, her minimal approach using imitation, deception, impermanence and concealment are seen in 'The Residual Diameter'. In this work, Bangladeshi muslin cloth is time-consumingly and painstakingly crafted into a wallpaper roll. Bhuta says, "It is a transformation that involves *Recycle* as a phenomenon... The manifestation enables one to measure time by mapping the history of itself. [Here, it is the] exclusivity of the weavers' craft, as [opposed to] the mass production of the roll!"



The Residual Diameter, 2013 -14
Handmade paper, muslin cloth waste, cloth residue
21.5 x 396 in.
image courtesy of the artist and Project88

Remen Chopra



Lives Within Time If Time Lives Within It, 2012
Mixed media on paper and single video channel projection
66 x1 x43 in.
image courtesy: of the artist

Remen Chopra (b. 1980) combines drawing, photography, painting, sculpture and installation to create works that are visually as layered as their conceptual depth. Elements of Renaissance art and architecture, central to Chopra's works, are further layered with references to historic time periods merging into contemporary ones, through composed collectives of her imagination, as seen in "*Lives Within Time If Time Lives Within It*". Through the reference of time as a moral concept, where past, present and future merge Chopra addresses "the New Renaissance", while drawing strongly from elements of history.

Kiran Subbaiah

Kiran Subbaiah (b. 1971) includes object assemblages, site/context-specific texts, short stories, videos, and proposals for utilitarian objects in his work. He has been working with digital art / media since 1999 and has constantly questioned the use of objects and their presence, while placing himself as a protagonist in most of his works. The process of the existence of the required object and fictitious realities in his series or videos and in 'Doing Without' deliberately places the artist in situations beyond the practical. His works raise existential questions of the necessary presence of another with relationship / relating to procrastination, convenience and time.



Doing Without, (detail – set of 6 images), 2003
Photographic print on paper
30 x 30 cms each
Image courtesy of Chatterjee & Lal and the artist

Baptist Coelho



Gurgaon to Panamik, 2008-09
Installation with 11 glass & plastic bottles with plastic & metal lids, containing leaves, stones and air along with notes on paper
80 x 40 x 80 x 16 in.
Image courtesy of the artist and Project88

Baptist Coelho (b. 1977) is a multi-media artist whose projects merge personal research with collaborations across cultures, geographies and histories. 'Gurgaon to Panamik, 2008-09' (a part of the multi-disciplinary project, "You can't afford to have emotions out there...") focuses on the life of the soldier; not as a machine of war but as a man coping with daily complexities of conflict. A collection of bottles and corresponding handwritten notes from soldiers and locals Coelho encountered on his research trip act as time capsules. The works become a testament to existence and the effect on people's lives due to the Siachen conflict, while also drawing together a strong connection between air, natural space and thoughts of common / ordinary people.

Vibha Galhotra

Vibha Galhotra (b. 1978) employs various media, from photography to installation and sculpture to create, conceptually and symbolically, experiential spaces. She has worked with dimensions of art, ecology, economy /economics, activism, surreal time and created utopias. '15 Days of May' was realised within a time-frame of 15 days. With a mundane act of leaving a clean white rope outside her studio, the artist documented the effect of the polluted air of her city as displayed on the rope. The harsh alterations of reality through the subtle passage of time are reflected along with the artist's primary concerns of global warming and its effect on ecology.



15 days of May, 2011
Cotton rope, dust and digital print on archival paper
Dimensions: variable
Image courtesy of the artist and Exhibit320
Photo credit Ram Rahman

Nandan Ghiya



The Peer Pressure Glitch, 2013. teak wood, paint
28 x 8 x 10 in. each
Image courtesy of the artist and Exhibit320

Nandan Ghiya, (b. 1980) in his practice builds upon his background in fashion, with antiques and new technology. Ghiya refers to the 21st century as one of emulation, competition and pressure. Here one is striving to address routine challenges and adversities, which the artist refers to as 'Glitches'. Ghiya's work reflects these 'glitches' through visual interventions, distortions and transformations of old photographs, sculptures and objects. The set of two wooden figurines in 'Peer- Pressure Glitch' is a distortion of ideal beauty, in a state of limbo, evolution, transformation and transition, from old to new or from physical to digital.

Sonia Jose

Sonia Jose (b. 1982) relates to the environment and personal/social history in her work, and this stems from a need to preserve and acknowledge lived experience that surrounds routine life practices. The 'Untitled' (Rug) with the screen-print of hand-written text – So Much to Say – was inspired at a time when the artist was looking for a solution to calm her mind. Jose chose the words 'so much to say' as a meditative repetition and response to eclipse her needs, desire or compulsion to have anything to say at that time.



Untitled (Rug), 2008
Screen print, non-woven fabric, cotton thread (hand woven),
84 x 56 in.
Image courtesy of the artist

Manjunath Kamath

Manjunath Kamath (b. 1972), a collector of images, draws his initial inspiration from Indian Nathdwara paintings and collages, juxtaposing them with a living room, animals and displaced imagery. He gathers images from various sources to create narrative panoramas that weave in-and-out of an amalgamation of history, experience and imagination, layered with constructed myth, fantasy and evidence of overlapped time. In 'Familiar Music from an Old Theatre' he plays with time and space to create a magical realism that is both subjective and unique in experience.



Familiar Music From The Old Theatre, 2010. digital print on archival paper
120 X 54 in.
Image courtesy of the artist

Riyas Komu

Riyas Komu (b. 1971) focuses upon the political and cultural history of Kerala; the artist is a co-founder of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale. 'The Last Wall' is a narrative of a man from the artist's neighbourhood, who lives within time frames of his mind, disconnected from the maze of a city. Working mainly at night, this man's mind time is seen through his graffiti which is more text based than visual. By documenting this through video, Komu creates a twelve-minute experience of a visually distorted perception of time narrated through sound.



The Last Wall, 2012-13
12 mins.
Single channel video with sound
image courtesy of the artist

Nandita Kumar



Tentacles of Dimensions, 2009
13.40 mins
Single channel video projection with sound
image courtesy of the artist

Nandita Kumar (b.1981) works with a range of media including new-media, technology, video and painting to create immersive environments. Through her artistic research and interactive works, she explores the elemental process through which human beings construct meaning. 'Birth of a Brainfly' is a surreal narrative dealing with the process of a person's individuation of a mental-scape. Similarly, 'Tentacles of Dimensions' is a journey of a brain that has unplugged its cultural programming and is indulging in the senses. Both these flights into self-constructed labyrinths of ego and creative utopias deny all construct of time.

Ritesh Meshram

Ritesh Meshram (b. 1975) is inspired by everyday objects which he explores through painting, sculpture, video, installed assemblage and kinetic work. The series of sculptures and prints are related to the detail of transitional spaces and time in a home, where the residue of time is seen through passages, window frames and photographs. This abstraction and fragility of time is carefully crafted in this series which the artist describes as a process against his temperament.



The Pupil, 2013
Archival print on paper
10.9 x 16.5 in.
image courtesy of the artist

Prajakta Potnis

Prajakta Potnis (b. 1980) enquires into the seepage of time, life-span and aura around mundane objects from daily life, through photography, painting and site-specific installations. While 'Still Life' explores the process of degeneration, 'Capsule' explores the idea of freezing time and age. Potnis uses the refrigerator as a connotation of controlled temperature, which enables one to create a sterile enclosed space similar to the one in a mall or an airport. She likens these capsuled, sometimes transit spaces to zones that are not affected by the outside. They appear to be cloned, sterile centres within a city.



Still Life, 2009
Digital print on archival paper
23.5 x 54 in.
image courtesy of the artist

Gigi Scaria

Gigi Scaria (b. 1973) works with painting, sculpture, photography and film to explore his interest in issues of urban and economic development, issues surrounding migration and urban architecture. The delusion and anonymity of the geographical locations he uses, makes the spaces he works with universal. Further incorporating objects that cannot be attributed to an identifiable time or space, the artist places his works within the frame of timelessness. In 'Camel and the Needle', and 'Clueless', barren landscapes of salt and sand, void of habitation are mirages of recognition. They go beyond any inclination of recognition of time and place. The large photographs leave the viewer to collect traces of memories in this 'Dust', which is the title of the recent series of the artist's works, to which these photographs belong.



Camel and the Needle, 2013
Ink-jet print on archival paper
60 x 40 ins.
image courtesy of the artist

Kartik Sood



Lake, (details from *Triptych*), 2013
hand coloured gauche images on high quality pigment on archival paper
27.5 x 40 in.
image courtesy of Latitude 28 & the artist

Kartik Sood (b. 1986) creates photographs, paintings and new-media installations that share autobiographical, invented and dislocated memories of a story-teller. The works are patterns of memories through photographs and personal notes, which work themselves into an idea of a timeless setting of space. Sood's images are constructed with the idea of time -- outside and inside. The artist describes the locations as "spaces of contemplation, where one often stops by to introspect. While the outer time goes on running at the usual speed, there are inner time transitions at such spaces. Is it really an illusion of time shifting, or does time really bend on our day to day lives?"

EX-iST

curated by Ambereen Karamant

Ex-ist¹ is the experience of following an unconscious road map of one's everyday life, enveloped in various images. Our gaze has to wander over the surface of the images, feeling its way, following the complex path of the image's structure on one hand and the observer's intention on the other. The journey of being charged with just glancing at an image casts a magic spell on our imagination - emotions are stirred that put us under a trance - and the nature of the still image transforms it from a single image into moving scenes in our minds. The ostensible function of an image is just to inform, the magic on the surface itself does not bring change, but it is the power inside us that influences us to imagine better. This practice can evoke both positive and negative experiences, and can have a mysterious quality of enchantment, through a series of episodic events of looking at an image that binds together vision, hearing and imagination.

Our lives are filtered through these magical images; they act as screens between man and the world, allowing human beings to *ex-ist*'. We are constantly living in the past which is documented on different electronic devices used in daily life, creating a visual assemblage of still and moving images; and the present is recorded and re-lived on screens. An abundance of these significant surfaces, images appearing on laptops, television, cellphones, and reflective surfaces helps us to construe the world "out there." These are meant to render the world imaginable for us, by abstracting it, by reducing its four dimensional space-plus-time to a two-dimensional plane. The specific capacity to abstract planes from the space-time 'out there' and to re-project these abstractions back 'out there' might be called 'imagination'. Aroosa Rana in her works explores this imaginative world of realities, which intentionally or unintentionally cross over readily on a regular basis in our daily lives.

The participating artists have learnt to manipulate metal, plastic and glass (the camera) in a way that expresses their ideas: Amber Hammad searches her own identity in observing the other; Wardah Shabbir works on old black-and-white European photographs, adorning them further with miniature style painting, creating a handmade visual statement which can be seen as miniatures of 'posed reality' of dispersed lives and preset perceptions. The picture may not be a whole reality, but there is always a presumption that something exists, or used to exist.

Other artists have used images that have dispersed into our stagnant lives by consciously breaking through them, playing with the programmes of the camera, and entering the photographic universe by creating an image of a magic state of things whose symbol informs its receivers how to act in an improbable fashion. We are living in a world where we are surrounded by redundant images that create a standstill situation in our ever-moving lives. Sajjad Ahmed uses imagery from mundane life, digitally fabricating and dividing the assemblage into geometric blocks which appear as a one-shot photograph, while Muhammad Zeeshan studies the imagery of faith, myths and transcendental narratives, producing them in a laser scouring technique that examines the power and longevity of a particular class on imagery.

These image-makers are asked to play against the camera and to place within the image something that is not in its programme. Farida Batool creates an illusion and three-dimensional depth in her lenticular print, photographing her walk in the city of Lahore that allows her to take a new walking partner each time the image is viewed. To understand a painting, the observer needs to understand the relation between the image and its transference by the painter. It is this process that needs to be decoded, and decoding process is the pass to the 'world of magic' one can experience through this exhibition.

¹ Ex-ist is a term used by Vilem Flusser in his book 'Towards a Philosophy of Photography', Reaktion Books Ltd, 1983, pp. 9.

Farida Batool

Farida Batool (b. 1970) a Lahore-based , internationally educated researcher, educationalist and established visual artist is best known for her lenticular prints, a process that gives her work a sense of dynamism, intrigue and metamorphosis through the three dimensional depth and illusion created. Her works are politically charged and are a representation of the socio-political climate of Pakistan. In the work exhibited at the Dhaka Art Summit 2014 she narrates 'the story by taking you on a tour of Lahore' by photographing herself walking in different parts of the city, capturing the expressions of strangers around her, the ever changing setting of the city influenced by political posters, walk-chalkings of religious rallies, providing a commentary to the once rich cultured, historical city engulfed by the menace of corruption and terrorism.

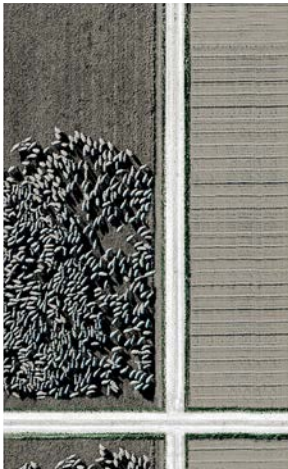


Kahani aik shehr ki _ Wall Walk 5, 2012
Lenticular print
169 x 8 inches
image courtesy of the artist, photo credit: Hassan Mujtaba + Raheem ul Haque



(detail)

Sajjad Ahmed



God of Small Things (IV), 2013
Archival inkjet print on photo-matt paper
30 x 48 inches
Image courtesy of the artist

Sajjad Ahmed (b. 1982) is a Lahore-based visual artist, exploring concerns such as holding abstraction and representation within the same surface, by using imagery from mundane parts of life that resemble the composition of paintings from art history. For the exhibition Ex-ist, one of the prints is digitally fabricated by two realistic images overlapping each other, forming in totality a geometric abstraction. The coalescence of western and eastern images is found in his works; the exhibition includes a print of Nato soldiers dominated by Mughal miniature war painting, creating a visual assembly of time, space and events. The other exhibited work, with an aerial looking view of a flock of sheep and precisely divided geometric patterned fields, is an assemblage from various sources appearing as a one shot photograph bearing a moment of mundane looking activity. The work addresses the broader system of multiplicities of power, economics, globalisation and individual identities.

Amber Hammad

Amber Hammad (b. 1981) Lahore-born and educated is best known for her works that are a commentary of her socio-cultural environment; this is brought into her work by appropriating images from art history and the personification of characters. The idea of self and the other, gender ideologies and dress, and their relationship to the formation of identity, have always been part of the visual content of her work. For the new body of works for *Ex-ist* she has chosen her contemporaries' works instead of images from art 'history'. The search for her own identity is deeply rooted in observing 'the other' which ironically can only be perceived in her new works through her bias and personal view.



After John Currin, 2013
Inkjet print on paper
34 x 44 inches
Image courtesy of the artist

Aroosa Rana



Instance Reflected - Suspended Disbelief Series #2, 2012-2013
Single channel video on loop, running on an android
7 x 10.4 inches (android size)
Image courtesy of the artist

Aroosa Rana (b. 1981) is a Lahore-based artist and educator trained as a painter is currently working in digital media, photography and video. Her art is a constant query about 'who is a viewer and who is being viewed' and the position of the viewer. Being surrounded by an abundance of still and moving images - captured by cameras, seen on television, laptops, cell phone screens as well as reflective surfaces of many other objects simulate visual experiences; the mirage of so many realities exists all at the same time. The exhibited works for *Ex-ist* document these realities which, intentionally or unintentionally, cross over readily and regularly basis in our daily lives.

Wardah Shabbir

Wardah Shabbir (b. 1987) Lahore-born and educated, absorbs and translates what she sees and experiences within her environment into her 'own language' mostly using a traditional miniature painting technique. Her works can be described as surreal; she successfully draws from her imagination to create fantastical beings that only exist in her mind. In her new works for Ex-ist, she has worked on the surfaces of 19th century European photographs, connecting them with miniatures being produced in the subcontinent simultaneously. These hand-made visual statements give a glimpse of the East's perception of the West, an attempt at reconciling the orient-occident polarities that exist in our minds.



Mehroz's memento mori, 2012
Gouache and gold on photograph
6 x 10 cm
Image courtesy of the artist

Muhammad Zeeshan



Buraq III, 2013
Laser scouring and gouache on paper
55 x 92 inches
Image courtesy of the artist, photo credit: Mirza Majid Baig

Muhammad Zeeshan (b. 1980) raised in Mirpurkhas, living in Karachi, worked as a cinema board painter before he was trained as a miniature painter in Lahore. Still developing his practice, he now employs found images and videos from popular culture (posters, cable TV and magazines) and iconic 'high' art. At times he re-photographs the images with different lenses to create various effects, drawing out physical and thematic aspects that interest him. For Ex-ist, he combines faith, myths and transcendental narratives with modern laser scouring techniques examining the power and longevity of a particular class of imagery.

Liberty

curated by Md. Muniruzzaman assisted by Takir Hossain

This exhibition articulates a wide range of emotions and helps visualise freedom, sovereignty and free thought. Liberty -- its analytical significance -- is very much connected to the political, social and economic context of Bangladesh. Since the birth of the country, the people of the state have experienced political turmoil, religious bigotry and natural catastrophe. The people of the country lost their freedom in different periods for varied reasons. Freedom is the birthright of a man. However, we had to suffer under the shackles of slavery for long 200 years under the British colonial rule and about 25 years under the savage domination of the Pakistani rulers. Pakistani rulers treated the Bangalees with very brutal and malicious attitude. An excessive inequality was created by them in the different spheres of national life. These were made simultaneously in political, economical, social and cultural spheres. This exploitation by the Pakistani rulers caused bitterness among the Bangalees. Consequently, at one time, Bangalees crossed the limits of their patience and revolted against the Pakistani rulers. At last, the nation got freedom and relished liberty. Afterwards, the state faced several dilemmas in different phases. Specially, the artists of the country engaged themselves when the country faced any crisis. Their canvases always liberally express their thoughts, common people's rights, and were in favour of establishing democracy and secularism in our society.

The exhibition provides a chronological feature of Bangladeshi contemporary art. The show highlights the wide range of subjects but the theme of the exhibition --- "Liberty" --- is the focal point. The exhibition features several styles of different generations of painters in the country. The styles can be categorised as realistic, semi-realistic, abstract expressionism, abstract impressionism, symbolism, figurative, neo-expressionism, photo realism and more. To maintain individual languages, the painters depict rustic scenic beauty and untainted river and pastoral life, river erosion, daily chores of varied occupations, surrounding atmospheres, social and political crises, folk tradition, urban and rural life and more. A number of painters have concentrated on pure form, composition and architectural lines and texture.

The exhibition includes the artworks of the first generation of artists in the country. A few of them were directly involved with the establishment of the first art college of the country in Dhaka in 1948. The exhibition also comprised of the artworks of the painters who first went abroad to take higher education on their preferred fields in the mid 1960s. During that time, these groups of painters were greatly influenced by abstract expressionism, lyrical abstraction, pure abstraction and non-figuration. This time, artists concentrated on textures, forms, tones, especially they concentrated more on technical aspects. Though the movement of the sixties was heavily influenced by internationally prominent Abstract Expressionists like Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, Franz Kline and Adolph Gottlieb, it paved the way towards liberalisation. Thus the present accomplishments of Bangladesh's art owes a lot to the liberalisation.

The exhibition also includes the artists of the '70s, '80s and early '90s generations. The 1970s and 1980s were very significant times for the painters of our country. These generations of painters went through political turmoil and most of them were regarded as socially aware painters. It is also very noticeable that after independence, another transformation happened in our art arena. Painters felt free and their artistic creativities flowered. During the time a number of painters went for higher training in different parts of the world. Some stayed there permanently and tried to establish themselves in the new horizon. Their works are also included in the exhibition and some of these paintings highlight the blending of West and East art. Most of these works are colour and composition based.

The exhibition also includes the artworks of leading painters of early '90s. Their works are experimental in terms of line, form and space. Textural intensity is also emphasised in several painters' works in the exhibition. Their working styles are bold, thought-provoking and their themes clearly reflect our political instability, religious intolerance, economic hardship and social discrimination.

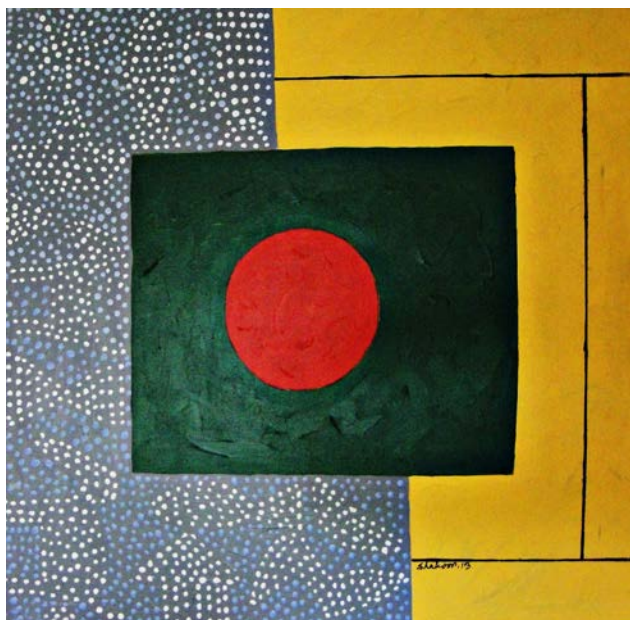
Text by Takir Hossain

Abdul Manan



Nature, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 60cm x 76cm

Abdus Shakoor Shah



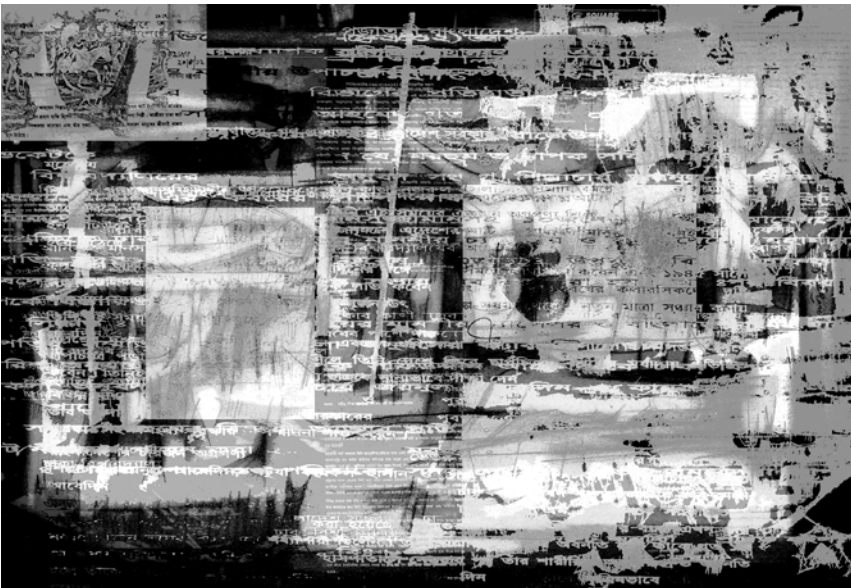
Flag, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 90cm x 90cm

Syed Abul Barq Alvi



From the nature, 2013, acrylic on Canvas 92cm x92cm

Ahmed Nazir



Journey of a Great Master, 2012, Digital Print 65x95 cm

Ahmed Shamsuddoha



Oil on Canvas, 2009, Freedom - 6, 153cm X 122 cm

Anisuzzaman



Kaleidoscopic Complexity-37, 2013, Woodcut on Paper, 180cm x 180cm

Atia islam Anne



Memory 1971, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 152.5 cm x 122 cm

Chandra Shekhar Dey



Freedom, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 102cm x 102cm

Farida Zaman



Marshy Land, 2012, Acrylic On Canvas, 152cm x 86cm

Golam Faruque Bebul



Fragmented Image-33, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 122x153 cm

Hamiduzzaman Khan



Progress, 2013, 18in x 12in x 5in

Hritendera Kumar Sharma



Picture-99, 2013, Acrylic on canvas, 122cm x 153cm

Jamal Ahmed



folk musicians, 2008, Charcol, 96cm x145cm

K. M. A. Quayyum



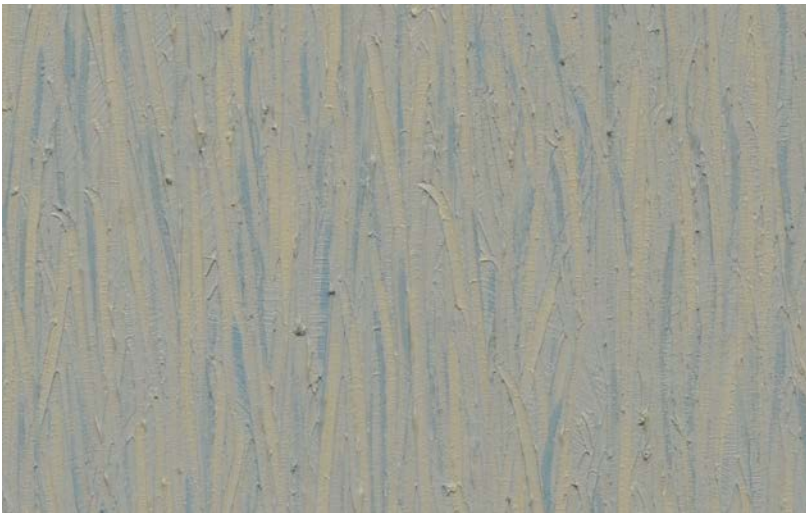
Untitled, 2012, Acrylic on Canvas, 107cm x 91cm

Kalidas Karmakar



Untitled – 2013 (Installation and Construction), 2013, Mixed Media on wood, Metal, Clay Etc. Appox. 60" x 72"

Maksuda Iqbal Nipa



Serenity of Life – 1, Oil on Canvas, 182cm x 227cm

Mohammad Eunus



Heritage-1, 2013, Oil on Canvas, 54cm x 54cm

Monsur Ul Karim



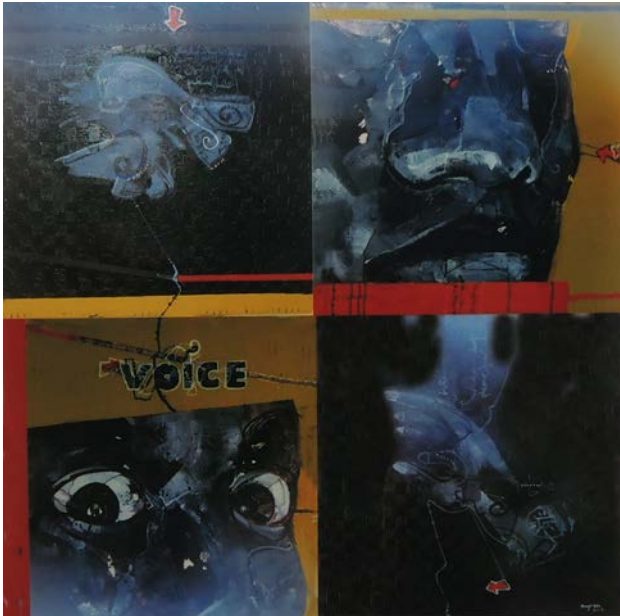
Peach and Harmony, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 90cm x 120cm

Nisar Hossain



ABSURD, 2011, Acrylic on Canvas, 33cm x 38cm

Ranjit Das



In Harmony- III, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 120cm x 120cm

Rashid Amin



Tree, Flower and Dream stair-2, 2007, Dry point print, 64x165 cm

Samarjit Roy Chowdhury



Life of Anoldcity, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 92cm x 92cm

Sheikh Afzal Hossain



Love, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 76cm x 76cm

Sawpan Chowdhury



Time and Nature, 2010, Oil on Canvas, 107cm x 152cm

Tasadduk Hossain Dulu



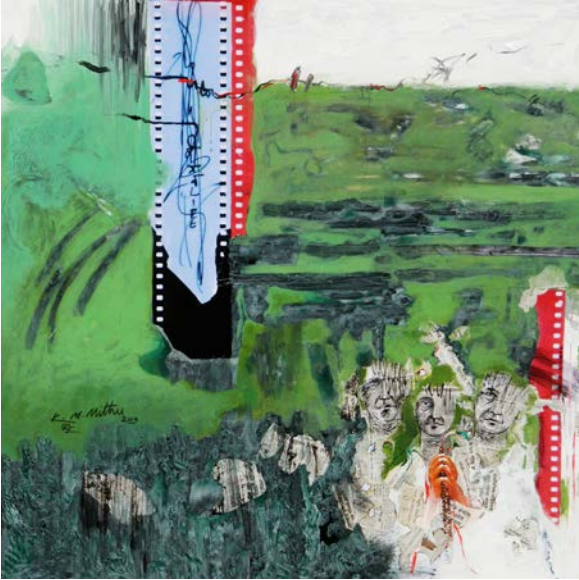
Surface and inside the surface-39, 2012, Acrylic on canvas, 150cmx165cm

Kanak Chanpa Chakma



Sound Of Serenity, 2013, Oil On Canvas, 57 x 57 ins.

Khalid Mahmood Mithu



Inner Burn - 14, 2013, Acrylic On Canvas, 57 x 57 ins

Nasreen Begum



Unkown Gloomy Teles 1971 to 13, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 92cm x 102cm

Syed Jahangir



Mid Night Sonata, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 92cm x 92cm

Monirul Islam



Land of Rain and Tears, 2013, Acrylic on canvas, 111x 149 cm

Sahid Kabir



Injured Peace, 2013, Mixed Media, 50cm x 54cm

Rokeya Sultana



Fata Morgan-4, 2013, Mixed Media (Hand touch), 89cm x 34cm

Abu Taher



O My Bangladesh, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 102cm x 152cm

Mohammad Iqbal



Language of Pain - 6, 2012., Oil on Canvas, 228 x 136cm

Biren Shome



Freedom-1, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 138cm x 138cm

Mostafizul Haque



Horse, 2013, Acrylic on Canvas, 91cm x 76cm

Saidul Haque Jaise



Rose-1, 2013, Pigment & Wire, 220 X 140 X 140 cm

Shahabuddin Ahmed



Freedom Fighter, 2013, Oil on Canvas, 120cm x 160cm

Zahura Sultana Hossain



Palimpsest, Encaustic oil and acrylic paint, 243.84 x 121.92 cm

Wakilur Rahman



image courtesy of the artist

Gallery Information



AKARA ART



Kerosene, 2013. Acrylic, Cement, Corrugated sheet, Rubber Pipe, Plastic Container, Paper Board and Cloth on Canvas, 36" X 36"

Booth: H3-02
Address: 9A Sind Chambers, 1st Floor, SBS Road, Colaba, Mumbai 400005, India
Phone: +91 9819171325
Email: akaraart@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.akaraart.net>
Contact Person: Puneet Shah
Artist(s) Exhibited: Sambaran Das



The full Moon, 2013. Mixed Media on Canvas, 48 x 72 inches

Booth: H3-17
Address: Madhuli Shivsagar Estate, Mumbai
Maharashtra, 400018, India
Phone: +91 9321033957
Email : galleryartnsoul@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.galleryartnsoul.com>
Contact Person: Rita Advani
Artist(s) Exhibited: Vinita Karim

ATHENA GALLERY OF FINE ARTS



Zainul Abedin, *Sitting*, (1971), Oil On Canvas, 50cm X 75cm

Booth: H3 – 15
Address: AJ Heights Cha-72/1/D UttorBadda, Progoti Soroni Road, Dhaka-1212
Phone: +88 02 8816599
Email: info@athenagalleryoffinearts.com.bd
Website: <http://www.athenagalleryoffinearts.com.bd>
Contact Person: Zeenat Ikramullah (Curator)
Md. Al Mamun
Artist(s) Exhibited: Kanak Chanpa Chakma
Jamal Ahmed
Rokeya Sultana
Md. Mainuddin
Md. Token
Sayeed Fida Hossain

BRITTO SPACE

a contemporary art hub



Image courtesy of Britto Arts Trust

Booth: H3- 08

Address: 33,33/1 BDDL Green Mart, Space no: 208-210
1st floor, Green Road, Dhaka-1205

Phone: +88 01716531887, +88 01711380159, +88 01915619969

Email: brittoarts@yahoo.com

Website: <http://www.brittoartstrust.org>

Contact People: Yasmin Jahan Nupur, Promotes Das Pulak, Ayesha Sultana

Artist(s) Exhibited: Mahbubur Rahman
Kabir Ahmed Masum Chisty
Yasmin Jahan Nupur
Shyamal Chandra Sarker
Mohammad Hasanur Rahman
Manir Mrittik
Nasir Ahammed
Shimul Saha
Tayeba Begum Lipi
Imran Hossain Piplu
Promotes Das Pulak
Maynul Islam Paul
Anisuzzaman Sohel
Shulekha Chaudhury
Ashim Halder Sagor



Godown - 1944, Brush and ink on paper, 9.7" x 7.5" (24.6 x 19.1 cm)

Booth: H3-01
Address: 11 Hauz Khas Village, New Delhi 110016, India
Phone: +91 11 4100 4150
Email: info@delhiartgallery.com
Website: <http://www.delhiartgallery.com>
Contact Person: Ashish Anand (Director)
Artist(s) Exhibited: Chitta Prosad
SH Raza
Sohan Qadri
MF Husain
Avinash Chandra
GR Santosh

DHAKA ART CENTER



Neural Correlates (series work), 2014, Etching on Metal plate and color, 50 cm x 76 cm

Booth: H3 - 12
Address: House 60, Road 7/A, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka - 1205
Phone: +88 01191776511
Email: dhaka.art.center@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.dhakaartcenter.org>
Contact Person: Md. Abu Soyeb
Artist(s) Exhibited: Anisuzzaman Sohel



Children, Contribution of Golam Kasem Daddy, (1894 – 1998), the earliest photographer of Bangladesh, who is also the first Bengali Muslim short story writer

Booth: H4 - 07
Address: House 58, Road 15A (New), Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka 1209
Phone: +880-2-9120125, 8123412, 8112954
Email: office@drik.net
Website: <http://www.drik.net>
Contact Person: ASM Rezaur Rahman (General Manager)

EXHIBIT 320



Chairman, 2012-14, Acrylic on photographs, wood & laminates, 88" X 49" approx (45" X 49 + 43" X 42")

Booth: H3-13
Address: F-320, LadoSarai, New Delhi-110030, India
Phone: +91 98 10138554, +91 11 46130637
Email: exhibit320@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.exhibit320.com>
Contact Person: Rasika Kajaria (Director)
Artist(s) Exhibited: Nandan Ghiya

EXPERIMENTER



At the end of the street is a Shiva temple.
Its massive Shivling towers above the
Le Corbusier vibe of this Asian city;
a black geo-oblong with three white stripes
on what I suddenly understand to be
a "forehead."

What is it? "It's the unseen face of god."

Sometimes the English I get back is crisp,
more accurate and emotional than
the English I would use.

I was conscious of having wasted my entire
summer on a boyfriend. My parents thought
I was interning as a trainee journalist
on a regional broadsheet. I'd told the KFC
manager my mother was dying and that I
had to take every weekend off to be with her
in the hospital.

On Saturday mornings, my boyfriend would
drive us to the sea in his refurbished Nash
Metropolitan.

Once he drove us to France.

Schizophrene, Archival print on paper



Booth: H3-04
Address: 2/1 Hindusthan Road, Gariahat, Kolkata
West Bengal 700029, India
Phone: +91 33 4001 2289
Email: info@experimenter.in
Website: <http://www.experimenter.in>
Contact Person: Prateek Raja (Director)
Artist(s) Exhibited: Naeem Mohaiemen

GALLERY 21



Nature

Booth: H4-08
Address: 751, Satmosjid Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka
Phone: +8801720132331
Email: gallery21dhaka@gmail.com
Contact Person: Ms. Shameem Subrana
Artist(s) Exhibited: Kanak Chapa Chakma
Shameem Subrana
Md. Iqbal
Maksuda Iqbal Nipa

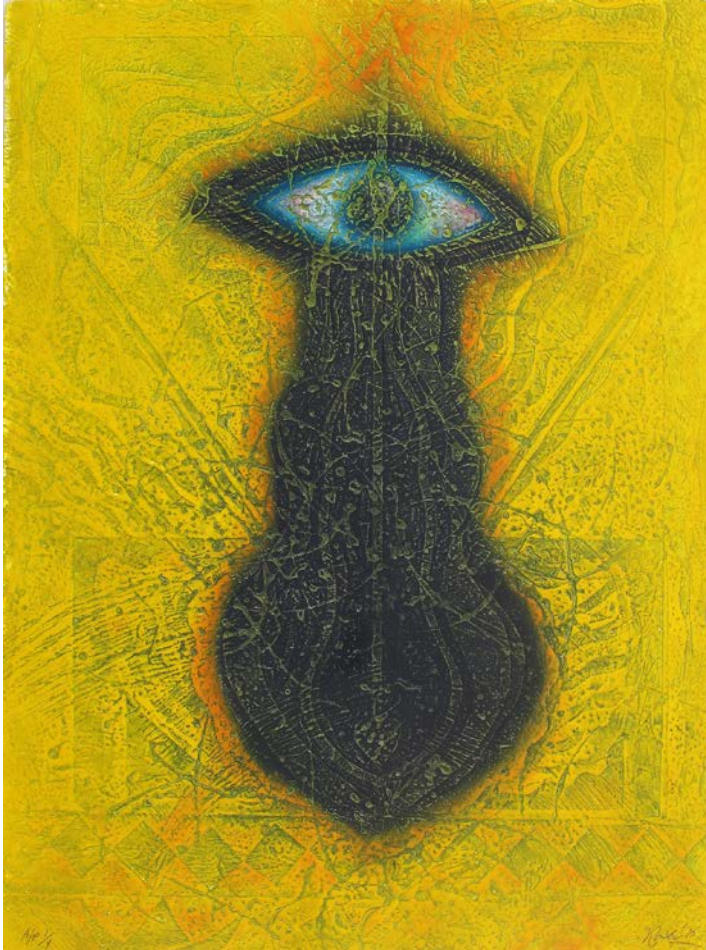
GALLERY CHITRAK



Shadhu, 2014, Acrylic on Canvas, 50 cm x 70 cm

Booth: H4 - 05
Address: Road No: 6, House No: 4
Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka - 1205
Phone: +88 01715026980; +88 01825028877
Email: chitrak@dhaka.net
Website: <http://www.gallerychitrak.org>
Contact People: Md. Muniruzzaman
Md. Zohir (will confirm full name)
Artist(s) Exhibited: Abdus Shakoor Shah
Md. Muniruzzaman
Ahmed Nazir
Md. Zohir Uddin
Tejosh Halder Josh

GALLERY COSMOS



Alluvial Eye-2, 2012. Collograph, 76x 56 cm

Booth: H3 - 21
Address: Cosmos Centre, 69/1, New Circular Road,
Malibag, Dhaka.
Phone: +88028312014
Email: gallerycosmos@yahoo.comv
Website: <http://www.gallerycosmos.org.bd>
Contact People: Kalidas Karmakar
Professor Md. Amirul Momanin Chowdhury
Afrozaa Jamil Konka
Ashit Mitra
Nazia Andaleb Preema
Sourav Chowdhury
Dilip Kumar Karmakar

Biren Shome
Md. Muniruzman
Anisuzzaman Anis
Nagarbasi Barman
Azmeer Hossain
Devdas Malakar
Forhad Hossain

GALLERY JOLRONG



Rickshaw Painting 18, Water Color on Paper, (56 x 36) cm

Booth: H4-03
Address: House 134, Road 3, Block A, Niketon, Ghulshan-1, Dhaka 1212
Phone: +88 01730372924
Email: galleryjolrong@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.gallery-jolrong.com>
Contact Person: Shakti Noman
Artists Exhibited: R.K. Das
Stikumer Paul
Nikhil Chandra Das
Raghunath Chakraborty
Mohammad Shoeb
Md. Hanif Pappu
Syed Ahmed Hossain

GALLERY KAYA



Red Ribbon-06, 2013. Acrylic on canvas, 91 x 76 cm.

Booth: H4-09
Address: House- 20; Road- 16; Sector- 4;
Uttara, Dhaka -1230.
Phone: +88 02-8959453
Email: gallkaya@gmail.com
Website: <http://gallerikaya.com>
Contact Person: Rajen Gain
Artist(s) Exhibited: Ashraful Hasan
Ranjit Das
Murtaja Baseer

GANGES ART GALLERY



Bangabandhu, Oil on Canvas, 47 x 63 lchs

Booth: H3-18
Address: 33A, Jatin Das Road
Kolkata 700029, India
Phone: +91 33 2465 3212
Email: gangesartmktg@bajoria.in
Website: <http://www.gangesart.com>
Contact Person: Ms. Subhra Chowdhuri
Artist(s) Exhibited: Lalu Prasad Shaw
Sunil Das
Jogen Chowdhury
Shahabuddin Ahmed
Gopal Ghose

HEMPEL GALLERIES



Protest

Booth: H3-10
Address: 30/3 Barnes Place, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka
Phone: +94 (0)774 282 067
Email: info@hempelgalleries.com
Website: <http://www.hempelgalleries.com>
Contact Person: Puja Srivastava
Artist(s) Exhibited: Pala Pothupitiya
Anoli Perera
Pradeep Thalawatta
Bandu Manamperi
Janananda Laksiri

INSTITUTE OF ASIAN CREATIVES (IAC)



Readymade, 2014, Artificial hair and resin casting, 4.5 x 3 feet

Booth: H4-02
Address: House-9, Road-36, Gulshan-2, Dhaka
Phone: +8801768032132
Email of Gallery: ishrat.akhond@gmail.com
Contact Person: Ishrat Akhond (Arts Provocateur and Trustee)
Artist(s) Exhibited: Mohammad Wahiduzzaman

JHAVERI CONTEMPORARY



No. 475, 2013, Paint Laquer on copper, 46 x 55 x 23 cm

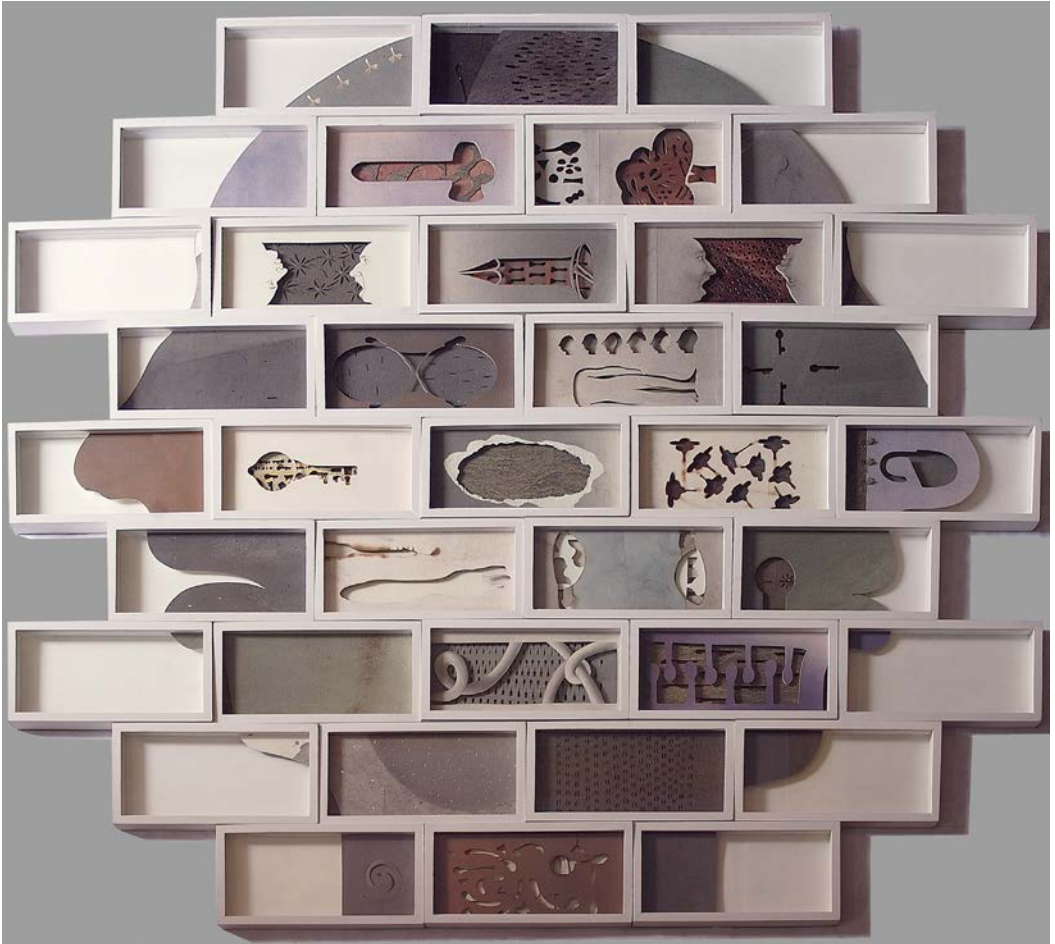
Booth: H3-06
Address of Gallery: 2 Krishna Niwas, 58A Walkeshwar Road
Mumbai 400 006, India
Phone: +91 22 23693639
Email: info@jhavericontemporary.com
Website: <http://www.jhavericontemporary.com>
Contact Person: Priya Jhaveri (Director)
Artist(s) Exhibited: Rasheed Araeen
Rana Begum

LAHORE ART GALLERY



Yet Again, Mixed Media on Canvas, 91 x 91 cm

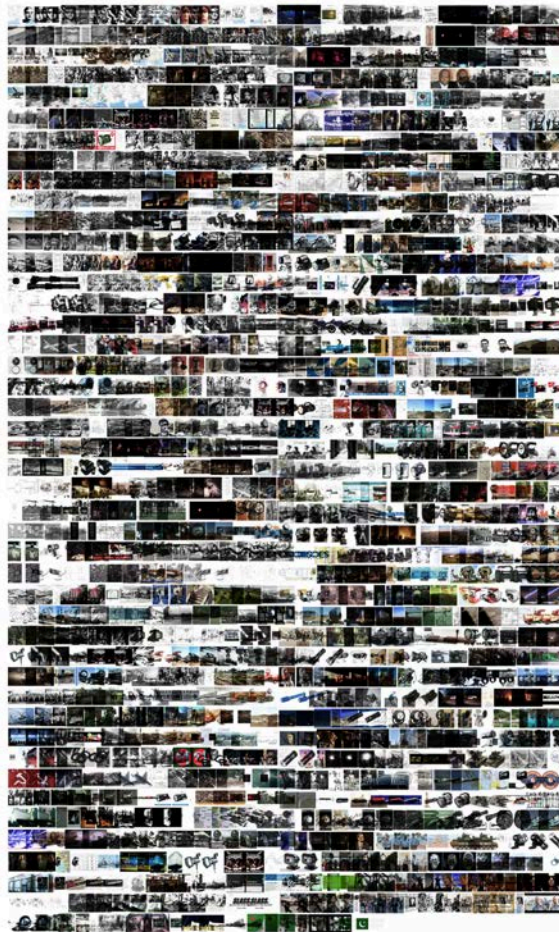
Booth: H3-11
Address: 42, Lawrence Road, Lahore, Pakistan
Phone: 00 300 847 8535
Email of Gallery: lahoreartgallery@gmail.com
Contact Person: Quddus Mirza
Artists Exhibited: Quddus Mirza
Nazia Andaleeb Prema



Untitled, 2014. Medium- Graphite and mixed media on paper, painted wooden frame and glass, 37 frames of 12 x 6 inch (over all size 5 x 4.5 feet)

Booth: H3-03
Address: F 208 GF, Lado Sarai, New Delhi 110030, India
Phone: +91 11 46791111, +91 9811805727
Email: latitude28@gmail.com
Website of Gallery: <http://www.latitude28.com>
Contact Person: Bhavna Kakar (Director and Founder)
Aditi Ghildiyal (Curator)
Artist(s) Exhibited: Anindita Dutta
Dilip Chobisa
Muhammad Zeeshan
Prajwal Chodhury
Deepjyoti Kalita
Mohammad Ali Talpur
Mohammad Wahiduzzaman
Shweta Bhattad

NATURE MORTE



Search (*Operation Searchlight*), 2013, Archival pigment print on Photo Rag paper 37.01 X 61.14 inches

Booth: H3-09
Address: A-1, NeetiBagh, New Delhi 11049, India
Phone: +91 1141740215, +91 9899353746
Email: info@naturemorte.com
Website: <http://www.naturemorte.com>
Contact Person: Jyotsna Sharma
Peter Nagy (Director)
Aparajita Jain (Director)
Artist(s) Exhibited: Suchitra Ghalot
Rajorshi Ghosh

OTA FINE ARTS



Traitor of Faith Plot2, 2010, Oil on Shaped canvas (stencil technique) 230 x 300 cm

Booth: H4-04
Address: 47 Malan Road, #01-23 Gillman Barracks
Singapore 109444
Phone: +65 6694 3071
Email: info@otafinearts.com
Website: www.otafinearts.com
Contact Person: Joy Chew
Artist(s) Exhibited: Firoz Mahmud
RinaBanerjee

PI ART WORKS



Let's Take a Break, 2013, Stainless steel made razor blades, stainless steel sheet and water, 162.56 x 71.12 x 45.72 cm



Comfy Bikinis, 2013, Brass made safety pins covered with electroless nickel immersion gold and stainless steel, 35.56 x 91.44 x 121.92 cm

Booth: H3- 07
Address: Istiqlal Cad, Misir Apt. No. 163/4 Galatasaray/ Beyoglu
ISTANBUL, Turkey
Phone: +90 212 293 71 03
Email: info@piartworks.com
Website: <http://www.piartworks.com>
Contact Person: Yesim Turanli
Artist(s) Exhibited: Tayeba Begum Lipi

PROJECT 88



Untitled Lahore Series # 5, 2010, Acrylic on board on canvas, 6 x 4 inches

Booth: H3-05
Address: BMP Building, Ground Floor, N.A. Sawant Marg
Colaba, Mumbai - 400 005, India
Phone: +91 22 2281 0066
Email: contact@project88.in
Website: <http://www.project88.in>
Contact Person: Zakia Basr
Artist(s) Exhibited: Risham Syed

RADIUS ART GALLERY



Female Hawker/Ferriwala, Junk metal, W45 cm, L47 cm, H 140 cm

Booth: H3-22
Address: Bay's Gallery, (5th Floor),
57 Gulshan Avenue, Gulshan-1 , Dhaka.
Phone: +88 02 883471-2
Email: radiuscentre@dhaka.net
Website: <http://www.radiuscentre.com.bd>
Contact Person: Gole Madina (Shiuly)
Artist(s) Exhibited: Uttam Kumar Roy
Saidul Haque Juise

SAJU ART GALLERY



From The Nature-1, 2012, Acrylic on Canvas, 77 X 92 cm

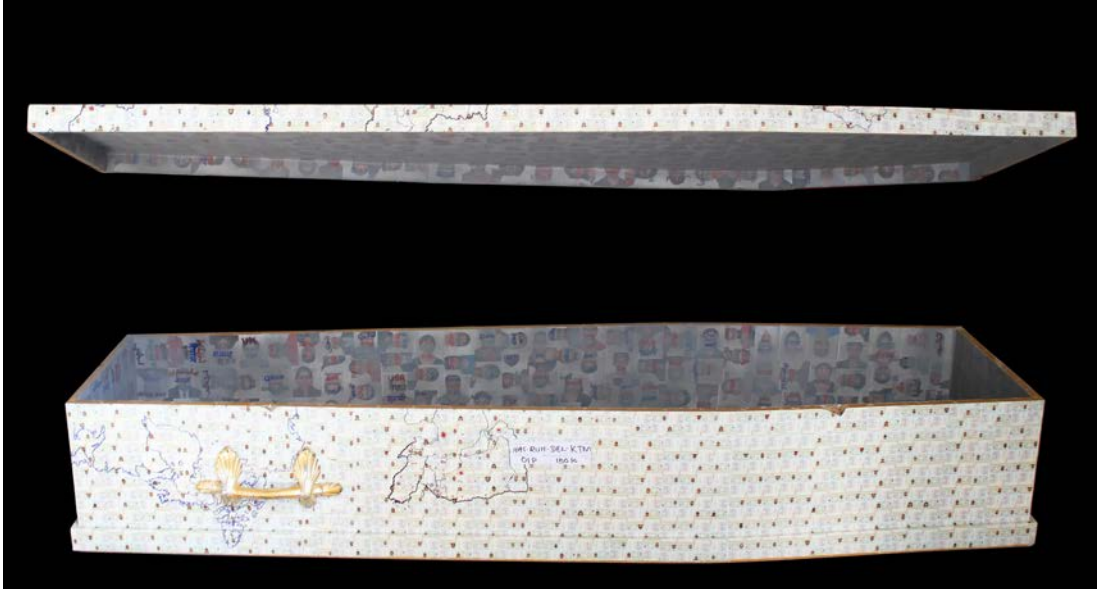
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Gulshan 2, Dhaka.
Phone: +8801711540831
Email: sajuart@yahoo.com
Contact Person: Ramiz Ahmed Chowdhury (Saju)
Artist(s) Exhibited: Abdus Shakoor Shah
Abul Barq Alvi
Farida Zaman
Kanak Chanpa Chakma
Mahmudul Huq
Mohammad Eunos



Political Teeth, 2013. Installation Art, Variable.

Booth: H4-01
Address: Ka 11/6, 2nd Floor, Bashundhara Road
Progoti Saroni, Dhaka – 1229
Phone: +88 01852367274, +8801726423942
Email: santaranartorg@gmail.com
Website of Gallery: <http://www.santaranart.org>
Contact Person: Monjur Ahmed
Artist(s) Exhibited: Monjur Ahmed
Bivol Saha
Noor –E-Elahi
Satabdi Shome
Tanjil Tushi

SIDDHARTHA ART GALLERY



I have to feed myself, my family and my country... , Wooden coffin with vinyl stickers and mix-media

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Babar Mahal, Kathmandu
Kathmandu, Nepal
Phone: +97714218048
Email: sthapa@mos.com.np
Website: <http://www.siddharthaartgallery.com>
Contact Person: Sangeeta Thapa (Director)
Ankit Joshi
Nischal Oli
Artist(s) Exhibited: Sunil Sigdel
Hitman Gurung
Nhooja Tuladhar

SHILPANGAN GALLERY



Sheer Chaos-65, Acrylic on Paper, 180 cm X 180 cm

Booth: H4 - 06
Address: House-7; Road- 13 (new), Dhanmondi, Dhaka -1209, Bangladesh.
Phone: +8801817041427
Email: rumi_noman@hotmail.com
Contact Person: Gias Uddin
Artist(s) Exhibited: Kazi Salahuddin Ahmed



Karachi ka Kauwa, 2014, 3d Composition on Mixed media, 25 x 24 x 10.5 inches

Booth: H3-14
Address: 76, old Clifton Karachi, Sind 75600, Pakistan
Phone: +922135836033
Email: spacesgalleryonline@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.spacesgalleryonline.com>
Contact Person: Zainab Jafri
Artist(s) Exhibited: Waseem Ahmed
Akram Dost Baloch
Sahid Zaki

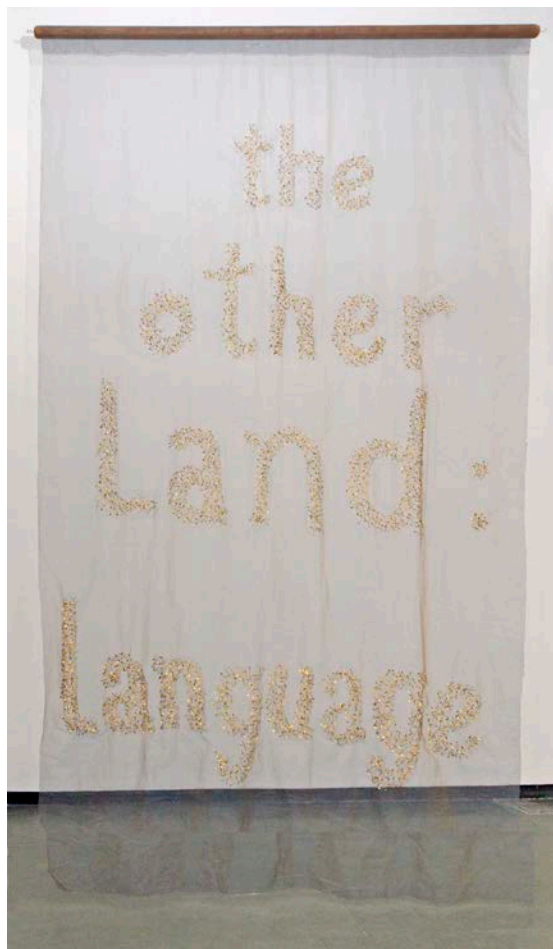
TASNEEM GALLERY



The Life of Buddha, 2009, Acrylic on cotton canvas, 802 x 530

Booth: H3-20
Address: Castellnou 51 Barcelona, 08017, Spain
Phone: +34 93 252 3378
Email: info@tasneemgallery.com
Website: <http://www.tasneemgallery.com>
Contact Person: Tasnem Salam
Artist(s) Exhibited: Htein Lin

THE GUILD



Reinforcement for the displaced vi

Booth: H3-19
Address: 02/32 Kamal Mansion, Arthur Bunder Road, Colaba Mumbai, Maharashtra 400005, India
Phone: +91 22 2288 0116/0195
Email: theguildart@yahoo.com
Website: <http://www.guildindia.com>
Contact Person: Shalini Sawhney
Artist(s) Exhibited: Iram Ghufra
T.V. Santhosh
Rakhi Peswani
K.G. Subramanyan
Amitabh Kumar

TIVOLI ART GALLERY

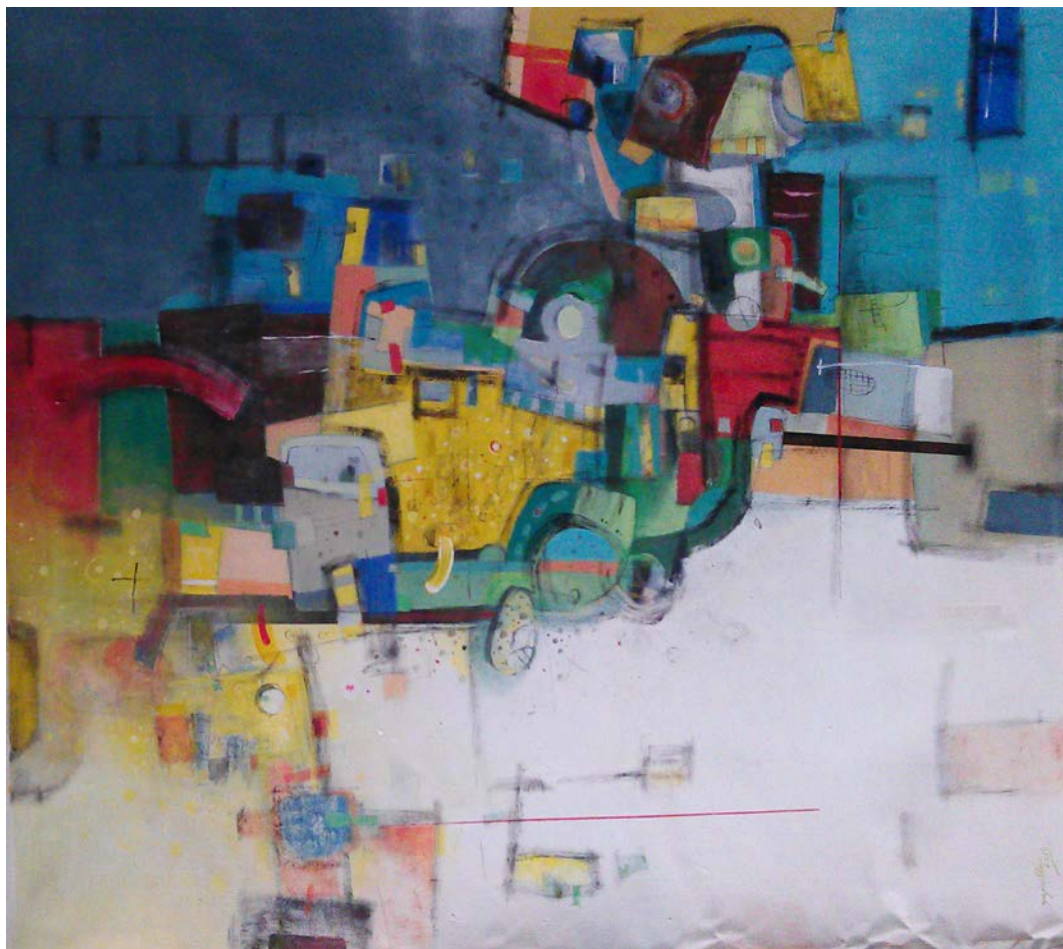


Image courtesy of the Artist

Booth: H4 - 10
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Phone: +88 02 9895903
Email: tivoli33@yahoo.com
Contact Person: Ikram Uddin
Artist(s) Exhibited: Tajuddin Ahmed
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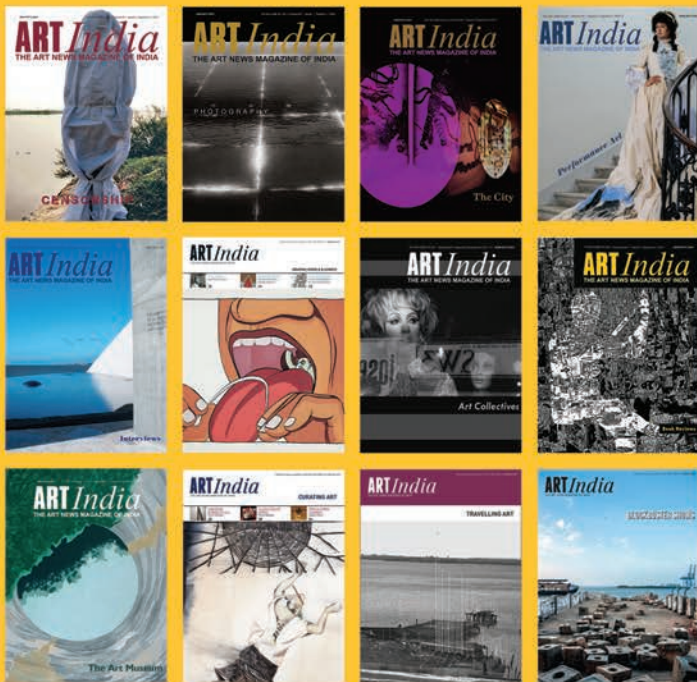
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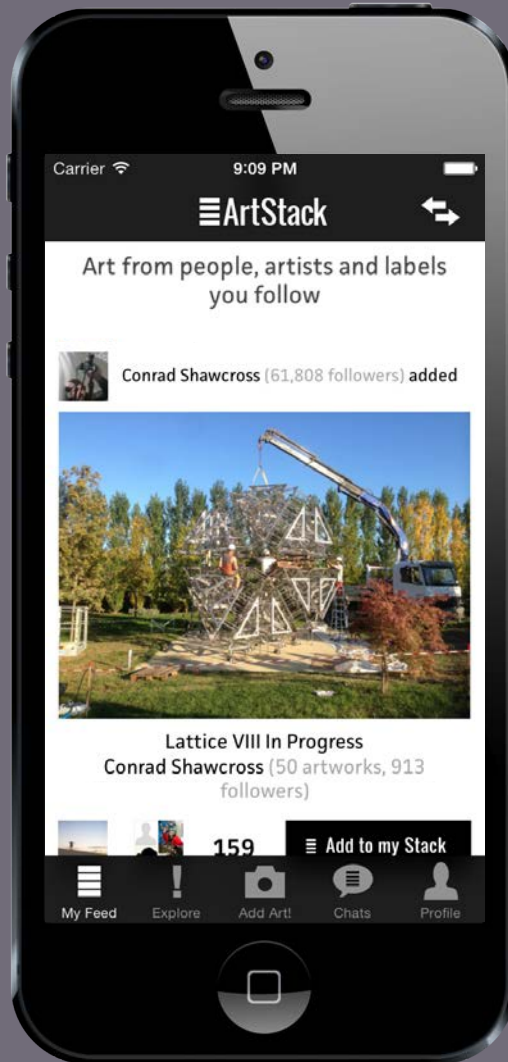


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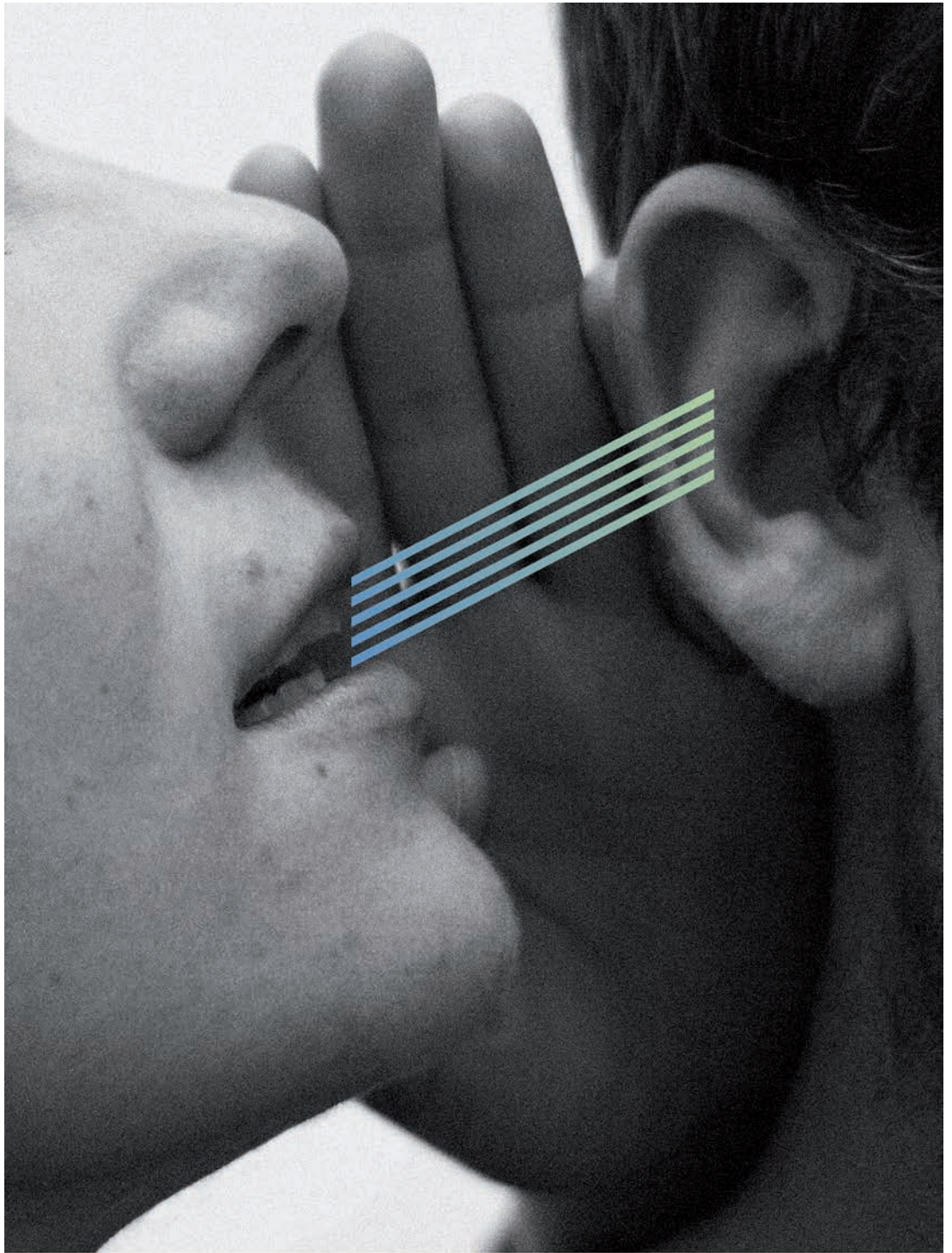


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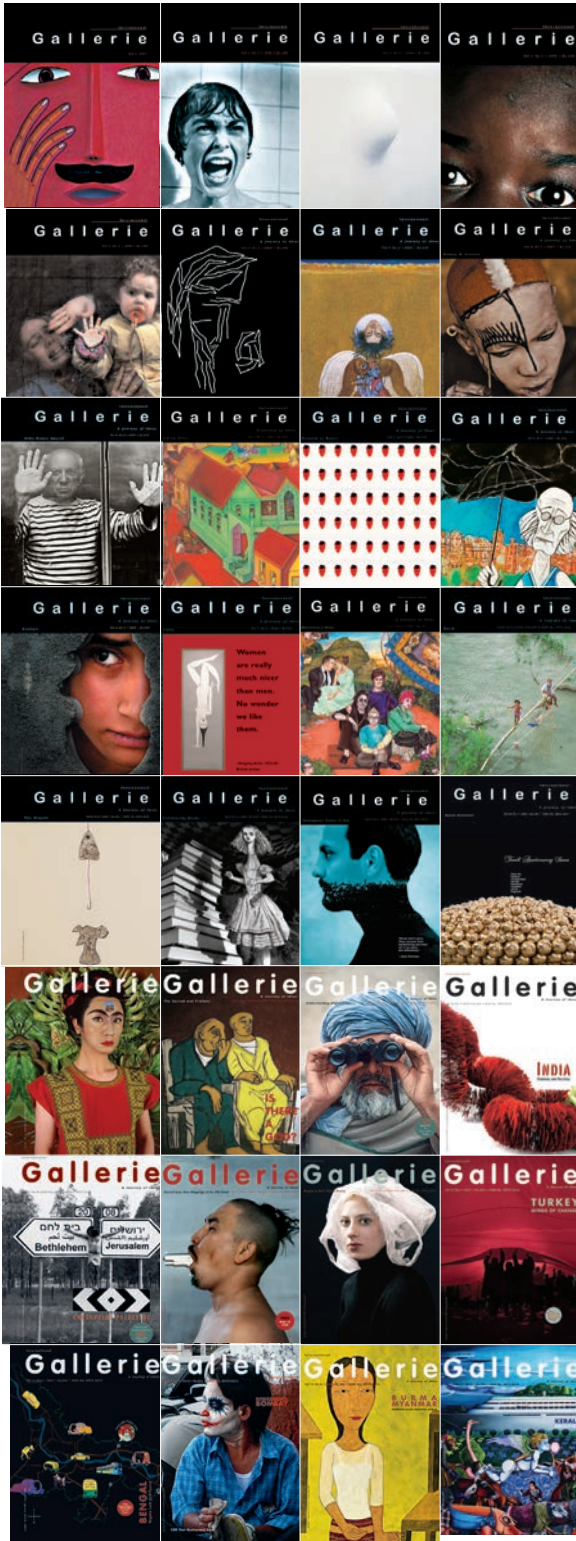
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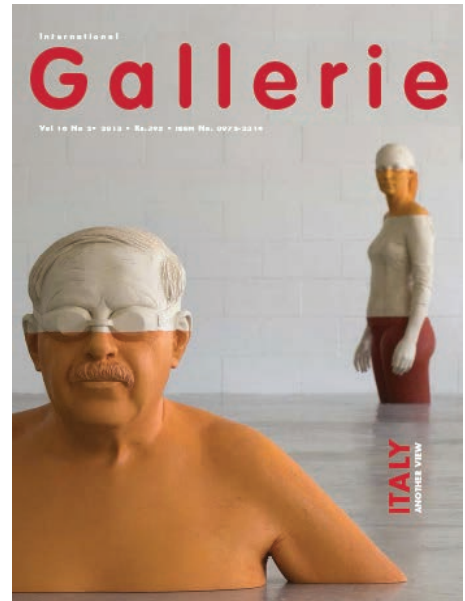
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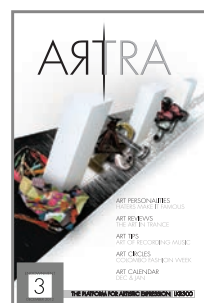
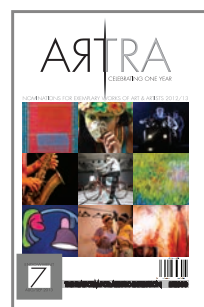
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