

**DHAKA ART
SUMMIT
2016
EXHIBITION
GUIDE**

**DHAKA
ART
SUMMIT**



DHAKA ART SUMMIT

**5-8
FEBRUARY
2016**

**BANGLADESH
SHILPAKALA ACADEMY**

EXHIBITION GUIDE

SHARE YOUR DAS EXPERIENCE



#das2016



@dhakaartsummit



*Front cover: Ayesha Sultana, Outside the Field of View - VI (detail), 2014, courtesy of the artist and Experimenter
Left page: Waqas Khan, In the Name of god (detail), 2015, ink on paper, metal, courtesy of the artist and Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna*

Editor

Diana Campbell Betancourt

Artist and Architect Entries

Thierry Betancourt
Diana Campbell Betancourt
Ruxmini Choudhury
Beth Citron
Aurélien Lemonier
Shabnam Lilani
Nivriti Roddam

Essays by Guest Curators

Amara Antilla
Daniel Baumann
Diana Campbell Betancourt
Katya Garcia Antón
Madhavi Gore, Nikhil Chopra, and Jana Prepeluh
Shanay Jhaveri
Aurélien Lemonier
Md. Muniruzzaman
Nada Raza

Translation

Thierry Betancourt
Tanvir Nahid Khan
Reid Masselink
Shahman Mohsin

Copyediting

Thierry Betancourt
Kathy Campbell
Emily Dolan
Amanda Kelly
Helen Pheby

Publisher

Samdani Art Foundation
Shanta Western Tower
Level 5
Suite 501 & 502
186 Gulshan, Tejgaon Link Road
Tejgaon 1/A, Dhaka 1208 Bangladesh
info@samdani.com.bd

Graphic Identity

Shruti Chamaria

Design

Thierry Betancourt
Nivriti Roddam

Distributor

Samdani Art Foundation

Coordination

Mohammad Sazzad Hossain

Printers and Binder

Sun Press
sunpress.s@gmail.com

ISBN 978-0-692-61881-3

Published on the occasion of the exhibition Dhaka Art Summit 2016 February 5-8 2016

Copyright 2016 by Samdani Art Foundation.

All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, or otherwise, without the written permission of the publisher and the editor. The Publisher has made every effort to contact the copyright holders of the materials included in this book. However, if there are omissions or mistakes in stating the correct name, please let us know (info@dhakaartsummit.org) and further editions will be amended.

Dhaka Art Summit Team

Nadia Samdani

President and Co-Founder

Diana Campbell Betancourt

Artistic Director and Chief Curator

Mohammad Sazzad Hossain

Head of Administration

Emily Dolan

Director of Operations and External Affairs

Eve Lemesle

Associate Producer

Tasmia Nehreen Ahmed

Manager of Communications

Ruxmini Rekhvana Q Choudhury

Curatorial Assistant

Shabnam Lilani

Curatorial Assistant and Assistant to Artistic Director

Nivriti Roddam

Curatorial Assistant and Institutional Relations Liaison

Rezaul Kabir Kochi

Architect and Project Manager for Architecture in Bangladesh

Safiqul Islam

Assistant Project Manager for Architecture in Bangladesh

Asifur Rahman

Assistant Project Manager for Architecture in Bangladesh

Khan Md. Mobinul Haque

Engineer

Aosafur Rahman Asad

Logistics

Mahbub Alam Nazrul

Accounts

Nippon Express

Official Logistics Partner

Dhaka Art Summit Organising Committee

Farooq Sohban (Chairman)

Rajeeb Samdani

Liaquat Ali Lucky

Mohius Samad Choudhury

Anita Gazi

Bruno Plasse

Eeshita Azad

Judith Mirschberger

Rashed Maqsood

Zakir Ibne Hai

Samdani Art Foundation Advisory Committee

Beatrix Ruf

Massimiliano Gioni

Shahzia Sikander

Monica Narula

PRODUCED BY



IN ASSOCIATION WITH



CONTENTS

Welcome	
Solo Projects.....	1
The Missing One	41
Mining Warm Data	61
Architecture in Bangladesh	91
Film Programme.....	141
Rewind	151
Performance Pavilion	191
Samdani Art Award.....	203
Soul Searching.....	221
Talks Programme.....	225
Critical Writing Ensemble.....	247
Supplementary Programmes And Workshops	255
Asia Art Archive.....	257
Safina Radio Project	258
Children's Programme	259
Bangladesh Art Spaces	260
Lenders	261
Acknowledgements	262
Maps.....	264
Dhaka Art Summit Schedule	268

Dear Guests,

Welcome to the third edition of the Dhaka Art Summit, the world's largest non-commercial research and exhibition platform for South Asian Art. We were thrilled with the positive local and international responses to the first and the second editions of Dhaka Art Summit. We welcomed 70,000 visitors in the course of three days, making it one of the most important events in the region. We are also happy to say that projects from the 2014 Dhaka Art Summit have since travelled to the Berlin Biennale, the Queens Museum, NYU Abu Dhabi, the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, the San Jose Museum of Art, and the Kunsthalle Basel. Encouraged by the last edition, we have decided to lengthen this year's event to four days with extended hours and while the summit remains free, we have now removed the idea of any form of ticket from the event.

For 2016, there will be seventeen solo projects curated by the Samdani Art Foundation's Artistic Director Diana Campbell Betancourt. Other content includes five curated exhibitions, eight durational performances, a film programme, panel discussions, and book launches. This year we are also collaborating with the Office of Contemporary Art Norway and Pro Helvetia - Swiss Arts Council to launch the Critical Writing Ensemble (CWE). CWE brings together writers, critics and curators from South Asia and across the globe to share writing histories and knowledge with each other, experiment together, and produce new critical impulses regarding art writing, which will be compiled for international publication. To grow Dhaka Art Summit as a research platform we invited curators from different institutions such as Tate Modern, Centre Pompidou, the Guggenheim and the Kunsthalle Zürich to extend their research deeper into South Asia. For the first time, Dhaka Art Summit 2016 is introducing a historical section, *Rewind*, which will highlight practices of South Asian artists active before 1980. Works from the National Gallery archive, National Museum of Bangladesh and various private collections will be shown in this exhibition, many stored behind closed doors for over thirty years. There will be over 300 artists, curators, architects and writers participating from Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Afghanistan and beyond, celebrating global links to South Asia. We believe this event will further increase the engagement of the region with the rest of the world.

To strengthen our research platform, this year we have partnered with academic institutions such as the Harvard South Asia Institute, Yale University, University of San Francisco and University of Maryland to facilitate their faculty to be a part of our program and to create further links across Bangladesh and South Asia.

Once again, we are partnering with the Delfina Foundation to award an outstanding young Bangladeshi artist the opportunity to attend a three-month residency at the Delfina Foundation in London as part of the bi-annual Samdani Art Award. This year 13 young artists were selected for the Art Award Show from an applicant pool of over 300 local artists.

Once more, keeping young audiences in mind we are excited to realise an interactive workshop for children conducted by VAST Bhutan (Voluntary Artists' Studio, Thimphu). The second edition of DAS welcomed 1,600 students who took guided tours of the summit. This year we are dedicating 2 days for local schools to visit and experience the event.

On behalf of the organisers, I would like to thank Mr. Liaquat Ali Lucky, Director General, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Mr. Akhtaruz Zaman Khan Kabir, CEO of the Bangladesh Tourism Board, Mr. Faizul Latif Chowdhury, Director General, Bangladesh national Museum, Mr. Farooq Shobhan, 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 two years to make this event a success. We look forward to see you again during the 4th edition of the Dhaka Art Summit in 2018.


Nadia Samdani,
President and Co-Founder

Greetings!

My team and I are delighted to welcome you to the third edition of the Dhaka Art Summit! We are pleased to witness the expanding regard for art from South Asia, especially the increased interest in looking beyond nationalism and to look instead at shared and cosmopolitan histories across the region, as culture knows no physical border. Collaborations outside of the region are quite easy to facilitate as Western museums have made strong commitments to exhibiting and acquiring works by artists from the region, however lateral collaborations across the region are nearly impossible in contemporary times due to visa restrictions and spiralling costs of moving artworks and people across the region. The art that we ship from India or Pakistan to Bangladesh cannot go directly from country to country, it must first stop in Dubai or Hong Kong. My deepest appreciation goes to Rajeeb and Nadia Samdani, who despite these rigid barriers to their South Asia mission, have continued full steam ahead for five years to create and evolve the Dhaka Art Summit into the celebrated platform that it is today. Cross-cultural collaborations of this scale have never happened in South Asia before the Samdanis took this initiative, and it is wonderful that this journey brings us all to Bangladesh. I would also like to thank the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, our advisory boards, and all of the galleries, institutions, and publications that have supported and encouraged us in our journey, which is still at its beginnings. If you have time, I encourage you to travel elsewhere in Bangladesh; some of my fondest travel memories are from visiting Gaibandha with Aurélien Lemonier researching inspirations for contemporary architecture in the country and visiting tea plantations with Pawel Althamer in Sylhet. Thank you to the Bangladeshi tourism board for joining us as a partner for the 2016 edition of the summit.

One of the facets that makes the Dhaka Art Summit unique from other survey exhibitions of Asian art in the region is that the Summit is not a collection-building vehicle for the Samdani Art Foundation. We rarely acquire work that we exhibit in the summit for our collection, and this spirit allows us to realise projects that could never be possible with an acquisitions mandate, such as Rashid Rana's *A Room from Tate Modern* in 2014, or Sandeep Mukherjee's beautiful immersive painting in the same space, *The Sky Remains* that you see in this edition. We commission with the hopes that the work travels elsewhere, and it is an honour that the first project we produced for this edition of the Summit - *VIP Project (Dhaka)* by Po Po- first travelled elsewhere before coming to us - it just debuted at the prestigious Asia Pacific Triennial in Brisbane, Australia. We look forward to co-commissioning projects with our many institutional partners in future editions of the summit.

Our advisory committee member Beatrix Ruf once passed on an incredible insight that I should surround myself with naturally collaborative people and that one could instantly tell who those people are. At the Samdani Art Foundation and the Dhaka Art Summit, we have been so fortunate to be working with some of the most incredible and forward thinking curators and artists who make our work possible. My deep appreciation goes out to the members of my artistic team, Nada Raza, Aurelien Lemonier, Shanay Jhaveri, Katya García-Antón, Daniel Baumann, Beth Citron, Sabih Ahmed, Amara Antilla, Nikhil Chopra, Madhavi Gore, and Jana Prepeluh. Their patience, tenacity, and commitment to sharing their vision with local audiences in Bangladesh inspire our work in Dhaka. I must also thank my incredible team in Dhaka and Mumbai, Mohammad Sazzad Hossain, Ruxmini Choudhury, Emily Dolan, Tasmia Nehreen Ahmed, Shabnam Lilani, Eve Lemesle, Nivriti Roddam, Rezaul Kabir, and Safiqul Islam - I can't wait to see what we accomplish together in 2018 with both the summit and our Art Centre in Sylhet.

Thank you to our advisors and all of the foundations, cultural councils, galleries and other sponsors who have supported the dreams of all of the artists and curators to be able to share their work with a dynamic group of visiting curators and writers from all over the world, complementing the experience we have with our passionate and engaged local audience. This guidebook is here to help you navigate the next four days in Dhaka, and we look forward to sharing a comprehensive publication with installation images, documentation of the talks, and the brilliance of the Critical Writing Ensemble with you in a few months, celebrating the 5th Anniversary of the Samdani Art Foundation. Welcome to DAS 2016.



Diana Campbell Betancourt

Artistic Director, Samdani Art Foundation; Chief Curator, Dhaka Art Summit

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

On behalf of the Dhaka Art Summit's Organising Committee, I welcome you to the third edition of the Dhaka Art Summit. After the success of the previous two Summits, we decided to organise the 3rd Summit on a much larger scale. The Dhaka Art Summit has already been acknowledged as the world's largest non-commercial research and exhibition platform for South Asian Art. The additional day which we have added to the Summit this year we hope will give art lovers in Bangladesh, both young and old, as well the eminent group of artists, art critics, gallery owners, museums and art lovers from all around the world who have graced us with their presence at DAS to not only view the exhibition in a relaxed way but also interact with our local artists and those from the region.

We are proud to say that curators and museums from all over the world are becoming more and more interested in Bangladesh since the inception of the Dhaka Art Summit. The Summit has become a research platform for the Museums and Institutions with interest in the South Asian art scene. This year, along with promoting contemporary artists from the region we are also highlighting modernism in South Asia, with a section called *Rewind* featuring works created before the late 1980s. We believe this exhibition will be a remarkable experience for the participating artists, art lovers and visitors from home and abroad.

In addition to the rich exhibition, we are welcoming over 50 speakers from all over the world for our panel discussions. We are also including a new section, Critical Writing Ensemble, where writers, critics and curators are gathering together from South Asia and across the globe to experiment the critical impulses in art writing. We believe this will help all our friends and participants at home and from abroad to appreciate the significant developments that have taken place in the domain of contemporary art South Asia.

I would like to thank our partners Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, the National Tourism Board, Bangladesh National Museum and all the valuable partners for their valuable support in making this event possible. I would also like to extend my very special thanks to all the members of our organising committee for the Dhaka Art Summit, in particular Nadia and Rajeeb and the Samdani Art Foundation and their energetic team, the participating curators and artists, without whose support this four-day event would not be able to take place. We are grateful to all the art lovers in Bangladesh and abroad whose presence here today has helped in making the Dhaka Art Summit a landmark event on the global art calendar.

We look forward to welcoming you again to the fourth Dhaka Art Summit in 2018 which we hope will break fresh ground and open new vistas in the field of contemporary art in the region; we will endeavour to make the next Dhaka Art Summit more exciting, interesting and innovative; our aim is cross new frontiers and reach for the sky. Our aim and ambition is to make the Dhaka Art Summit a must attend event for all the art lovers in Bangladesh and from around the world.



Farooq Sobhan
Chairman, Dhaka Art Summit Organising Committee

My heartiest welcome to all the guests of the Dhaka Art Summit!

It is my privilege to work alongside the Samdani Art Foundation to host the Dhaka Art Summit. Bangladesh has become an important destination for the art lovers, and this year we are bringing together the best of South Asian Art on a much larger scale.

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 training, providing scholarship/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 and the musical events involving different genres of folk art. We also arrange folk art and craft fair, photography and art exhibitions. We facilitate the drama groups for their theatre plays with auditoriums, seminar rooms, studios. The music department assists in preservation of classical, traditional and dying folk music of Bangladesh.

Arranging the Asian Art Biennale successfully every two years since 1981, the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has established a strong space to provide and promote the cultural aspect of Bangladesh and working with Dhaka Art Summit has given us the ability to further enrich the international channels of empowering cultural development.

For the third time, the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy is collaborating with the Samdani Art Foundation to present you the best art from the South Asia and beyond. This year there will be 17 Solo projects, 5 curated shows, 8 performances, film show and many other exciting events. We are excited to see the participation of the international institutions such as Tate Modern from London, Centre Pompidou from Paris, the Guggenheim Museum from New York and the academics such as Harvard University, University of San Francisco, University of Maryland and Yale University Law School to facilitate the curators and artists for their research works.

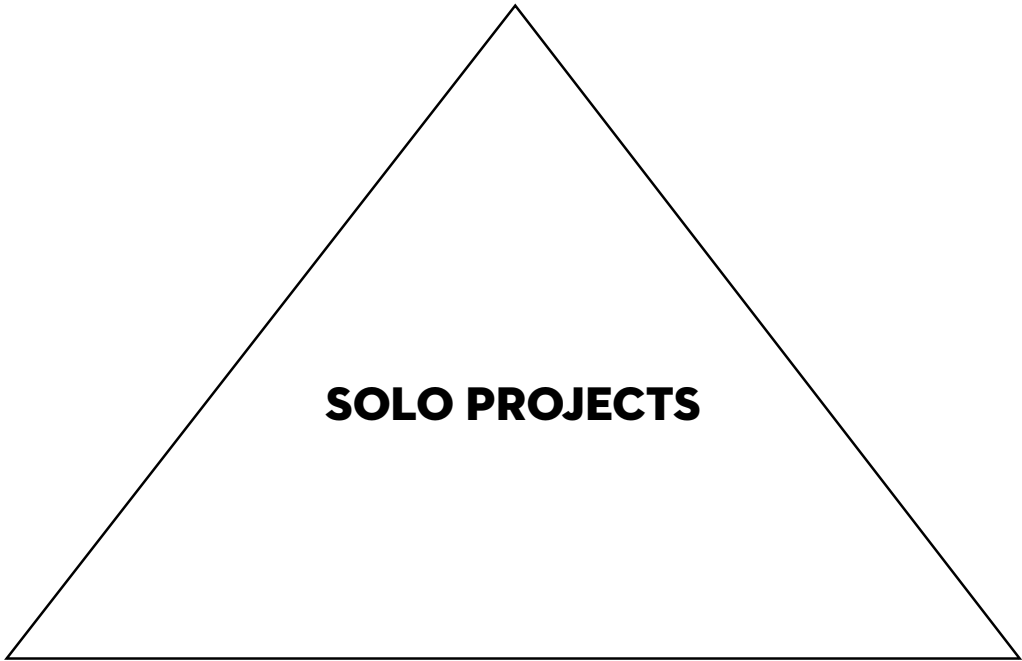
I would like to thank the Samdani Art Foundation and all the other partners and organizers who have worked very hard to make this a world class event.

Hope to see you in the Summit!



Liaquat Ali Lucky
Director General
Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy





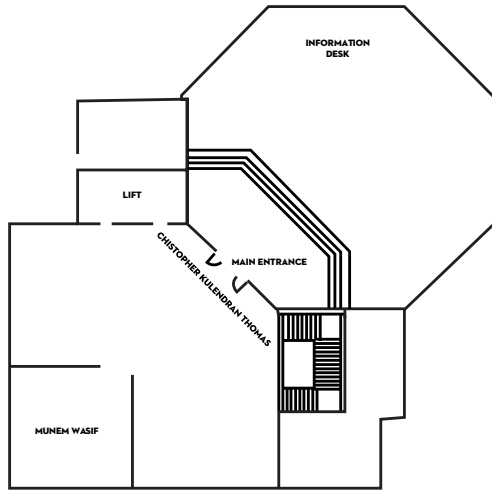
CURATED BY DIANA CAMPBELL BETANCOURT
Artistic Director Samdani Art Foundation, Chief Curator DAS

Shumon Ahmed
Tun Win Aung and Wah Nu
Lynda Benglis
Simryn Gill
Waqas Khan
Shakuntala Kulkarni
Prabhavathi Meppayil
Haroon Mirza
Amanullah Mojadidi

Sandeep Mukherjee
Po Po
Tino Sehgal
Dayanita Singh
Ayesha Sultana
Christopher Kulendran Thomas
Munem Wasif
Mustafa Zaman

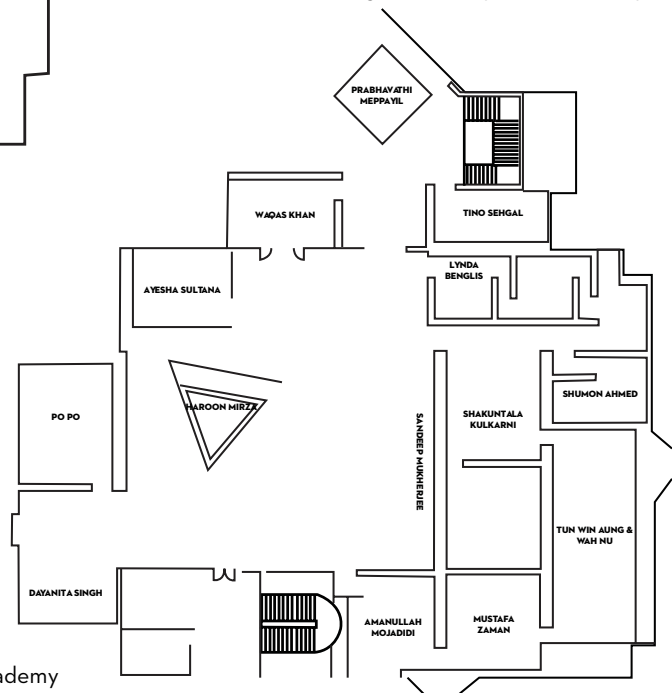
SOLO PROJECTS

Floor Plan
Ground floor, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy



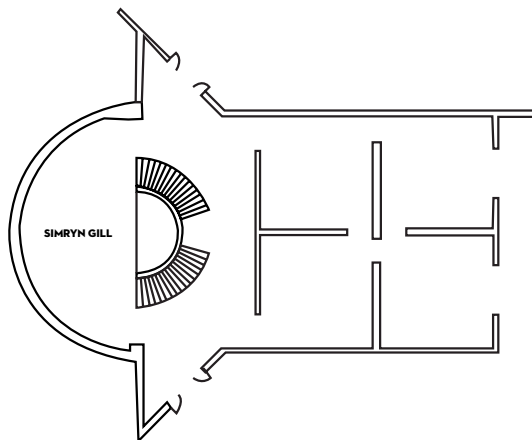
SOLO PROJECTS

Floor Plan
1st floor, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy



SOLO PROJECTS

Floor Plan
2nd floor, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy



PRASHNA (Question)

Rabindranath Tagore

The cloud of fire hurtles to the four corners of the empty space
At its centre revolve the cluster of stars and Great Time on their circular paths
Their speed, heat, weight, and dimensions
Are being calculated in fine mathematical measures
By scholars millions of miles away
In barely discernible light.
I look at myself,
And find no trace of identity
Is this some supersensory radiance -
What is that unknown around which this unknown [self] rotates in perpetual motion?
It's as if the expanse of and forgetting, down the ages and far away
Make up its atmosphere
And get accumulated in different forms of history.
The "I" takes shape in its midst in the course of countless years.
Joy and sorrow, good and ill, anger and envy, devotion, friendship, love -
With these are constituted the material body;
There are the ingredients - they are rotated, collected, danced.
The truth of their being
I myself haven't understood.

7 December, 1938

Rabindra Rachanabali, Visva-Bharati, Vol XII, p. 135¹

¹Taken from: Das, Samit, *Architecture of Santiniketan, Tagore's Concept of Space*. New Delhi: Nyogi Books, p. 28. Print.

“I came to understand place as a verb rather than a noun, which exists in our doings: walking, talking, living.”¹

Simryn Gill

The Dhaka Art Summit brings together art and ideas from South Asia, a physical place that spans landmasses currently known as Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar.² More than a fifth of the world's population lives on this terrain, and over the past 3,000 years culture has thrived as a result of exchange across the region (and the wider world), bringing together hundreds of languages and many religions. As Cultural Theorist Arjun Appadurai writes, “histories produce geographies and not vice versa,” and this is why to follow Gill's cue and look at South Asia in the verb sense of place is far more interesting than the land-bound noun approach.³ The approach I took as Artistic Director of the Summit has opened up new spatial constellations to break up an exhibition that might be dictated by geopolitical coordinates to instead allow for an emphasis on exchange - cultural, regional, trans-regional, national, intergenerational - in a serious and profound way that illuminates how South Asian visual culture and heritage and its makers are interacting with other (art)histories. The Dhaka Art Summit defines and then challenges the concept of the region itself, all from a place previously considered peripheral even within South Asia.

In the spirit of diversity of the region, seventeen solo projects explore the elements that shape human experience, going beyond self-fashioning to examine darker moments of trauma, barbarism and displacement. These, primarily new, works break away from literal definitions traditionally ascribed to “the region”, and take a humanistic approach, something that Edward Said cites as possibly the only “resistance we have against the inhuman practices and injustices that disfigure human history.”⁴ Curating exhibitions about identity is a minefield, and very few have been able to rise to the occasion without falling into traps of cliché. However, looking at the current context of Bangladesh, and indeed for South Asia and the rest of the world, how individuals see their place in the world, is exceptionally important. In the times we are in, who you are, or rather who the State recognises you to be, will determine what borders you can enter. Shilpa Gupta's 2014 solo project poetically addressed this concept, and while the *chhitmahal* issue has largely been solved over the last two years, the plight of the *rohingya* has worsened. The identity that we choose and that which can be imposed on us may not necessarily be in synch.

A common preferred, if possibly misguided, explanation offered for the recent civil unrest in the country is that the citizens are torn between whether to identify as Muslim, Bengali, or Bangladeshi. Interestingly, the poster that greets visitors to the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (sponsored by the Bangladesh Tourism Board) says “Welcome to Bangladesh, the Land of Buddhist Heritage.” If it is indeed an identity crisis threatening the peaceful and secular nature of this relatively new country, then it is important to step back and take a look at the factors that come together to shape a person, factors lying in the vast, fluid, and changeable space between birth, experience, and circumstance, whilst employing newer strategies of thinking broadly, expansively, laterally, and analogously. This study into selfhood to understand Bengal in turbulent times is not new; Rabindranath Tagore used a similar lens in a piece called “Self Identity” published in the journal *Tattvabodhini Patrika* in 1912.⁵

In this exhibition, Tino Sehgal's work *Ann Lee* sets an individual free into the universe - what tension is created once choice becomes part of the equation? Shakuntala Kulkarni looks at the armour needed to protect the body from being subjugated in order for this self to thrive and be able to exercise free will. Shumon Ahmed explores what happens when the self is forcibly dislodged from the body through trauma and torture in *Land of the Free* (2009-2016). We are all in a state of unrest, and our experience is fluid and changeable, beautifully referenced in the Tagore poem *Question* which is a lyrical primer for this exhibition.⁶ No matter how much empathy one has, the experience of another cannot be lived; many of the works in the solo projects are impossible to capture without physically experiencing them, such as the projects by Lynda Benglis, Dayanita Singh, Haroon Mirza, Sandeep Mukherjee, Simryn Gill, Prabhavathi Meppayil, and Ayesha Sultana.

In thinking of original ways to organise new forms of human and non-human existence, “progress” often goes hand in hand with disillusionment. Mustafa Zaman’s solo project encourages us to look at how individual desire, and resulting disillusionment, shape both individual and collective history. Waqas Khan, on the other hand, releases ego and desire in his mystical and spiritual drawings, which beautifully express love as a philosophical concept that cannot be ignored as one self-bonds to another.

“I understood the life around me better, not from love, which everybody acknowledges to be a great teacher, but from estrangement, to which nobody has attributed the power of reinforcing insight,” wrote Nirad Chaudhuri in *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*⁷ (which also features in Shanay Jhaveri’s Film Programme, *Passages*). How do people, and places, resonate with each other, and how do we listen to a locality that might not have physical space? Burmese conceptual artist Po Po, for example, looks at the resonances between Yangon and Dhaka in the terms of how citizens of this city see their place in the world, and how this mind-set can estrange a citizen from public space made to seem like hallowed ground. Aman Mojadidi’s solo project comes to life as a serene garden of misunderstanding centring around the idea of *Mu* – which could either mean the Zen idea of nothingness, or the pseudo-scientific theory of a lost civilization called Mu, which claims that most of the ancient great civilisations were created by a lost white tribe. This also shows the danger of forcing “resonances” in “exotic” contexts and how these mistranslations have shaped history.

With all of the references to place in this text, one cannot ignore the recurrence of “displace” in contemporary life, a concept trivialised when limited to the pain of the Partition of India. In the age of migration, places are overwritten by the desires for a peaceful and better life. It is not only political power that displaces people, people often displace themselves. On the other hand, we cannot disregard the idea of being “in place.” “The concept of multiculturalism tends to be dealt with through a focus on mobility and migration, with an emphasis on intellectuals, while ignoring forced or subordinate mobility (refugees, migrant workers, or returned emigrants) or those who have not moved but have been subjected to the effects and consequences of translocation cultural, economic, and political dynamics.”⁸

On the ground floor, Munem Wasif’s haunting video and photographs in *Land of the Unidentified Territory* (2015-2016) elucidate the dialectic relationship between a land and its identity, a grim view into how humans shape the landscape around them to fulfil their individual and collective desires. A landscape is not an ontological plane on which time can write its stories; it’s prefabricated by cultural dominance. Tun Win Aung and Wah Nu take this idea a step further with their project *Ipsa Facto* (2011-2013) which theatrically speaks to the displacement of nature in contemporary Myanmar (from the culture and mythology of Burma) due to the alarming environmental devastation little known to the outside world. On a philosophical level Burmese children have been displaced from their landscape due to violence against nature, while in Sri Lanka people of Tamil Origin have been displaced from their land as part of the bloody realities of their recent Civil War. Christopher Kulendran Thomas’ project that includes the brand New Eelam imagines the future of citizenship in an age of technologically accelerated globalisation, a citizenship not reliant on physical landmasses but rather ideology to create a new form of digital national identity.

Diana Campbell Betancourt

Artistic Director, Samdani Art Foundation

⁷Simryn Gill, “May 2006”, *Off the Edge*, Merdeka 50 Years Issue, No. 33, September 2007

⁸Myanmar is most often grouped as part of Southeast Asia, however it falls within the Harvard South Asia Institute and many other definitions of South Asia

⁹Appadurai, Arjun, “How Histories Make Geographies: Circulation and Context in a Global Perspective.” *Transcultural Studies*. Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, 2010. Web. 2015.

¹⁰Said, Edward, “Orientalism, 25 Years Later: Wordly Humanism v. the Empire-Builders.” *Counter Punch*, August 5th, 2003, Web.

¹¹For a beautiful passage on “selfhood” in the context of Bangladesh’s architecture please refer to Aurélien Lemonnier’s discussion with Kazi Khaleed Ashraf on pages 96

¹²Many thanks to Samit Das and his book *Architecture of Santiniketan: Tagore’s Concept of Space*, 2013.

¹³Chaudhuri, Nirad C., *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*. London: Macmillan, 1951. Print.

¹⁴Santos, Boaventura De Sousa, Nunes, João Arriscado, and Meneses, Maria Paula. “Opening Up the Canon of Knowledge and Recognition of Difference.” *Another Knowledge Is Possible: Beyond Northern Epistemologies*. London: Verso, 2008. 22. Print.



Shumon Ahmed, *Land of the Free*, 2009, courtesy of the artist and Project 88

SHUMON AHMED

(b. 1977, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Shumon Ahmed's newly commissioned solo project builds upon a prior body of work, *Land of the Free*, which immerses the viewer into the delicate continuum between sanity and madness that shapes an individual from within. "Reason, or the ratio of all that we have already known," wrote William Blake in 1788, "is not the same that it shall be when we know more." This ratio is delicate, and our minds naturally fight to keep an equilibrium that anchors us to a sense of reality.

Mubarak Hussain Bin Abul Hashem, or "enemy combatant number 151", was flown back home to Dhaka in 2006 after having endured five years of torture and imprisonment at Guantánamo Bay. He was eventually released, as there was no evidence tying him to terrorist activities. Through processes of humiliation, sensory overload and deprivation, Mubarak's sense of self was broken down in an attempt to harvest information against his will, to sever his mind from reason. Ahmed's project thrusts visitors into the grey spaces of the mind through harnessing torture techniques within the artworks, employing stereoscopic goggles, headphones, and powerful imagery and sound to transform his photographs into a physical experience for the viewer. This project investigates trauma that leads to insanity, and reveals processes designed to crack the human soul. It draws inspiration from W.J.T. Mitchell's work *Seeing Madness*, as Ahmed's images draw us into Mubarak's compromised senses. The idea of the "Land of the Free" takes on a new meaning as viewers confront an aged Mubarak whose physical body finally finds freedom, but not without permanent mental fog and a lingering sense of displacement resulting from five long years of trauma.

Ahmed's process is one of empathy. Trauma studies have long held that no representation can even begin to communicate the truth of traumatic experience, and Ahmed attempts to represent the unrepresentable. These studies also claim that as a defence mechanism, the mind blocks the traumatised subject from experiencing the traumatic event at the time it occurs. Instead, the trauma returns to the survivor at later points in time, denying them any control over their past or peace in their present. The therapeutic process for victims of trauma is to create a survivor-witness, one who can narrativise the past as an experience and be able to move on. It took Ahmed two years to build a relationship of trust with Mubarak, but slowly they were able to come to a place where Mubarak could open up and begin to have a social relationship.

Shumon Ahmed is a Bangladeshi artist who explores the fusion between video, photography and text, creating stories that while seemingly contradictory, are private yet collective. His work with the camera and film has also been likened to abstract painting due to his experimental processing techniques with unpredictable results that yield the melancholic, often-blurred images with multiple exposures. Ahmed studied photography at the South Asian Media Academy, the Dhaka & Danish School of Media and Journalism, Denmark, and participated in various exhibitions including the 2014 Kochi Muziris Biennale, the Whitechapel Gallery, Chobi Mela, Fotomuseum, Winterthur, and the Dhaka Art Summit 2012 and 2014.

¹Blake, William, *The Poetical Works of William Blake*. London: Oxford University Press, 1908. II. 10. Print.



Tun Win Aung and Wah Nu, *Ipsa Facto*, 2011-2013, 6 paintings (emulsion on linen, net, 275 x 580cm each) and video (colour, with sound, 20 min. 54 sec.), approximately 7 x 16 x 3m overall. Photo: Courtesy Atelier Hermès and nnncl workshop. Work realised within the framework of the exhibition at the Atelier Hermès thanks to the support of the Fondation d'entreprise Hermès.

TUN WIN AUNG AND WAH NU

(b. 1975, Ywalut, Myanmar, b. 1977, Yangon, Myanmar, live and work in Yangon, Myanmar)

In traditional theatre in Myanmar, a simple twig on stage signified a forest scene; this idea was so recognisable that it could not possibly suggest anything else. Myanmar is rich with natural resources, and as the country was closed off to the rest of the world for over fifty years, there is little documentation of the vast changes in the natural landscape that occurred during this time as different parties in favour with the government devastated the land and amassed great riches. In their solo project *Ipsa Facto*, Tun Win Aung and Wah Nu collaborated with traditional theatre backdrop makers (with Tun Win Aung as the painter) to set the stage to discuss the dramatic environmental changes that have dislocated national identity from the land. For example, the natural mud volcanoes that once existed both physically and as part of local myth are now almost entirely dry, and the next generation will no longer be able to relate their imaginations to the landscape. The UN has recognised Myanmar as one of the countries with the highest rate of forest loss on Earth (the total forest coverage area dropped from 51% in 2005 to 24% in 2008), and soon the next generation might not recognise the dramaturgical stick as the site of a lush forest.¹

In theatre and in domestic life, curtains suggest a portal to another space. The world of theatre uses artifice to show the real, and excess to accentuates parts of reality that might otherwise be overlooked. Here, the viewer walks through a jungle of six backdrop paintings while confronting a seven channel video work that accentuating the sense of loss of the thought of losing one's landscape.

In addition to working individually as visual artists, this Yangon-based husband and wife duo Tun Win Aung and Wah Nu work collaboratively in a range of media including painting, video, performance, and installation. In 2009, the artists began the multicomponent work *1000 Pieces (of White)*, gathering and producing objects and images to assemble a portrait of their shared life. Their work often reflects politically inflected experiences and through their *Museum Project*, they collaborate with artists all over Myanmar and exhibit their work in rural contexts, imagining possibilities of what a museum in Myanmar might be. While Tun Win Aung's practice frequently focuses on local histories and environments, Wah Nu is inspired by her interest in psychological states. They have showcased their work in international venues such as the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, the Singapore Art Museum and Guggenheim, as well as at art festivals including the Asia Pacific Triennial, the Asian Art Biennale, and the Guangzhou Triennial.

¹Myanmar Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation Committee's report in 2012 as cited in Mee, Kim Hyun. *NNCL Catalogue*. Korea: Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, 2013. Print.



Lynda Benglis, LUCCINELLI, 2012, Wire, Kozo paper, phosphorescent pigments and acrylic, 172 x 25 x 35cm, Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY © Lynda Benglis

LYNDA BENGLIS

(b. 1941, Lake Charles, USA, lives and works in Santa Fe, USA, New York, USA, Kastelorizo, Greece, and Ahmedabad, India)

Over the past fifty years, Lynda Benglis has divided her time between studios in New York and Santa Fe in the United States of America, Ahmedabad in India and Kastelorizo in Greece, with each diverse location having subtle, yet discernible, influences on her work. Reflecting on her over thirty year experience in India, Benglis shares that she was always exploring “how form is discovered through texture, through movement; form is movement... I felt very much at home [in India]... because there is a sense of the “spirit” of natural form and inspired texture, and it occurs in art, architecture, music and dance.” Benglis is known for her radical re-visioning of painting and sculpture in her innovative and prolific practice, seeking a more sensuous kind of surface.

Benglis explores how what we see influences our body, a concept known as “proprioception”. “We experience something in our bodies that is proprioceptive; we experience it in our whole body – you feel what you see and you are ‘charged.’ It’s an exchange of energy.”² Benglis presents seven new cast paper sculptures created especially for the Dhaka Art Summit, reference her wax and glitter works from the 1960s and 1970s. These handmade paper forms are sculpted over chicken wire, a common element in the visual landscape of South Asia, with glimpses of colour and sparkle that are informed by the artist’s formative years in Louisiana and her life in India: each with their rich festival cultures, such as Mardi Gras and Holi. Chicken wire has allowed Benglis to co-opt the grid harnessed by modernism and minimalism and transform it into a fluid and amorphous form that is fully her own.

Walking further into the project, seven similar forms emerge from the dark in a second room, glowing from Benglis’s painterly work with phosphorescent materials. Through these fourteen works, Benglis creates a physical moment in a space, and writer Marina Cashdan draws connections between the phosphorescent work and the colours that people often experience in deep meditation, connecting physical movements of breath that become visual forms inside the body.³

Lynda Benglis is recognised as one of the most important living North-American artists. A pioneer of a form of abstraction in which each work is the result of materials in action – poured latex and foam, cinched metal, dripped wax – Benglis has created sculptures that eschew minimalist reserve in favour of bold colours, sensual lines, and lyrical references to the human body. But her invention of new forms with unorthodox techniques also displays a reverence for cultural references tracing back to antiquity. Benglis has received numerous awards and her works are held in leading institutional collections such as the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Tate, London and the Guggenheim, New York and she has recently exhibited in major career survey exhibitions at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; the New Museum, New York; Storm King, New York and the Hepworth Wakefield, UK.

¹Jhaveri, Shanay. *Western Artists in India: Creative Inspirations in Art and Design*. Mumbai: Shoestring, 2013. pp. 194-199. Print.

²Cashdan, Marina, and Rehberg, Vivian. “Time and Tide.” *Frieze*. Frieze, Oct. 2010. Web. 26 Dec. 2015.

³Ibid.



Simryn Gill, *Study for Ground*, 2016, courtesy of the artist, Jhaveri Contemporary and the Samdani Art Foundation

SIMRYN GILL

(b. 1959, Singapore, lives and works in Sydney, Australia and Port Dickson, Malaysia)

Simryn Gill makes poetic links between art, paper, books, and nature in her work; all begin with seeds that grow roots. The idea of roots can be abstracted into square roots in mathematics, roots of language, roots of belonging, and seeds to seeding ideas and to the ability to traverse manmade ideas of border, which the natural world ignores. “For me, plants and the plant work offer a powerful way to think about where we find ourselves now and how we grow into and adapt to our sense of place. There is a line from one of [William] Blake’s poems in his *Songs of Innocence*, “and we are put on earth a little space.”¹ That little space is not a bit of geography anymore, but it seems to be literally the physical room we occupy with our bodies as we carry ourselves around trying to make sense of how to stake claims on constantly shifting grounds,” Gill shared in an interview with Suhanya Raffel in 1988, reflecting on the slippery concept of place.² Years later in 2006, Gill elaborated that “I came to understand place as a verb rather than a noun, which exists in our doings: walking, talking, living.”³

In an unpublished text in 2012, Gill considers that “working the world out through analogies and comparisons makes the most sense to me... And it comes from an understanding of knowing oneself as being nothing: empty and invisible like the wind, or water. With no ‘substance’ as it were, to claim any kind of certainty and truth. It’s my strength and it’s my weakness. If you think of yourself as not being substantial, then you will understand yourself and the world at large, through the things around you, by comparing, by holding them next to each other and yourself, above and below, besides, together, arranged and jumbled... If you are empty, nothing, you only exist through the things around you, and if these things shift in their qualities and values, in relation to you, each other and other things, then the sense of self is always moving too. And the other way around: when I am the vector that is moving, then the things around me change, and my relationship to them too, how I do or don’t connect, comprehend, sympathise. These are the un-static beacons we use to navigate through daily being.”⁴

Simryn Gill works with a range of media including photography, sculpture, making collections, writing and drawing. Her work could be described as a sorting of the residue of her immediate environments, making archives and records of the unstable meanings of things such as objects, images, language or actions. Working with simple materials, Gill translates and expands the elusive qualities of her local places and her habitation of them, and she currently works between Sydney, Australia, and Port Dickinson, Malaysia. Gill represented Australia at the 55th Venice Biennale, and her works have been exhibited by Museum of Contemporary Art and Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, QAGOMA in Brisbane, Tate Modern, the Sharjah Biennial, Documenta 12 and 13, the NTU Center for Contemporary Art in Singapore, and many other leading institutions.

¹Blake, William, “A Little Black Boy,” *Songs of Innocence*. 1789. Print.

²Gupta, Sunil, Ward, Edward, and Gill, Simryn. *Simryn Gill: An OVA Touring Exhibition*. London: London: Organisation for Visual Arts, 1999. Print.

³Gill, Simryn, “May 2006” in *Off the Edge*, Merdeka 50 Years Issue, No.33, September 2007, p.87.

⁴De Zegher, Catherine, *Here Art Grows on Trees*. Surry Hills: Australia Council for the Arts, 2013. 36. Print.



Waqas Khan, *In the Name of god*, 2015, ink on paper, metal, 239 x 270cm, courtesy of the artist and Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna

WAQAS KHAN

(b. 1982, lives and works in Lahore, Pakistan)

“Mysticism is a difficult path of approximation to reality understood as that which is most profound, most true, the mystery of the communion between the self and the whole,” writes curator Rosa Martínez. An exhibition can be a text in the air, and Waqas Khan’s newest work, *The Text in Continuum* presents four open books that transcend the exhibition space of the Summit and bring the viewer to a higher spiritual plane. Khan’s books lie open in the way one would display the Qur’an or other precious scripture, and the “text” that spills across the pages is contradictory in the sense that it is universally illegible but infinitely understandable. Through a meditative practice inspired by Sufism, a spiritual movement credited for the beginnings of Islam in Bangladesh, Khan’s works are created by the emotions that flow from his hand to traditional handmade *wasli* paper, historically used for painting miniatures.

A simple change in the artist’s breathing or the tension with which he holds the pen will completely transform the work. This ink is permanent, while emotions are ephemeral; Khan is able to abidingly chronicle passing feelings in his web-like drawings. Repetition is a key part of physical and spiritual training – by repeating motions continuously, one can achieve new heights. Khan describes himself as a changed person through the process of each work, which is a record of his body and emotion in space and time. One of the key tenets of Sufism is *wahdat al-wujud*, or “unity of being.” In a region where language has devastated communities over the past century (from the Language movement in Bangladesh to the Civil War in Sri Lanka), the Sufi spirit of synthesis and diversity opens up new potential for understanding. Oral tradition is what keeps this understanding alive in Bangladesh (as most of Sufi poetry and music were not written), and these “texts” will remain in continuum and cannot be suppressed through bans on books or languages. Khan’s work requires empathy from the viewer to access its emotional meaning and a release of ego to understand what is not explicitly spelled out.

Waqas Khan is an emerging Lahore-based artist who trained in printmaking at the National College of Arts, Lahore. His minimalist inspired ink drawings are made from extensive networks of dots and lines that measure less than a centimetre each. Khan’s primarily monochrome compositions resemble complex webs and celestial expanses that reference infinity, eternity, and other sublime, heterotopic spaces. His works are in the permanent collections of the British Museum, London; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi; the Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi; Deutsche Bank, Frankfurt and many others.

¹Martínez, Rosa, *Fear Nothing, she says*, Exhibition Catalogue. Acción Cultural Española (AC/E), Print.



Shakuntala Kulkarni, *Study for Julius* (detail), 2015, courtesy of the artist and Chemould Prescott Road

SHAKUNTALA KULKARNI

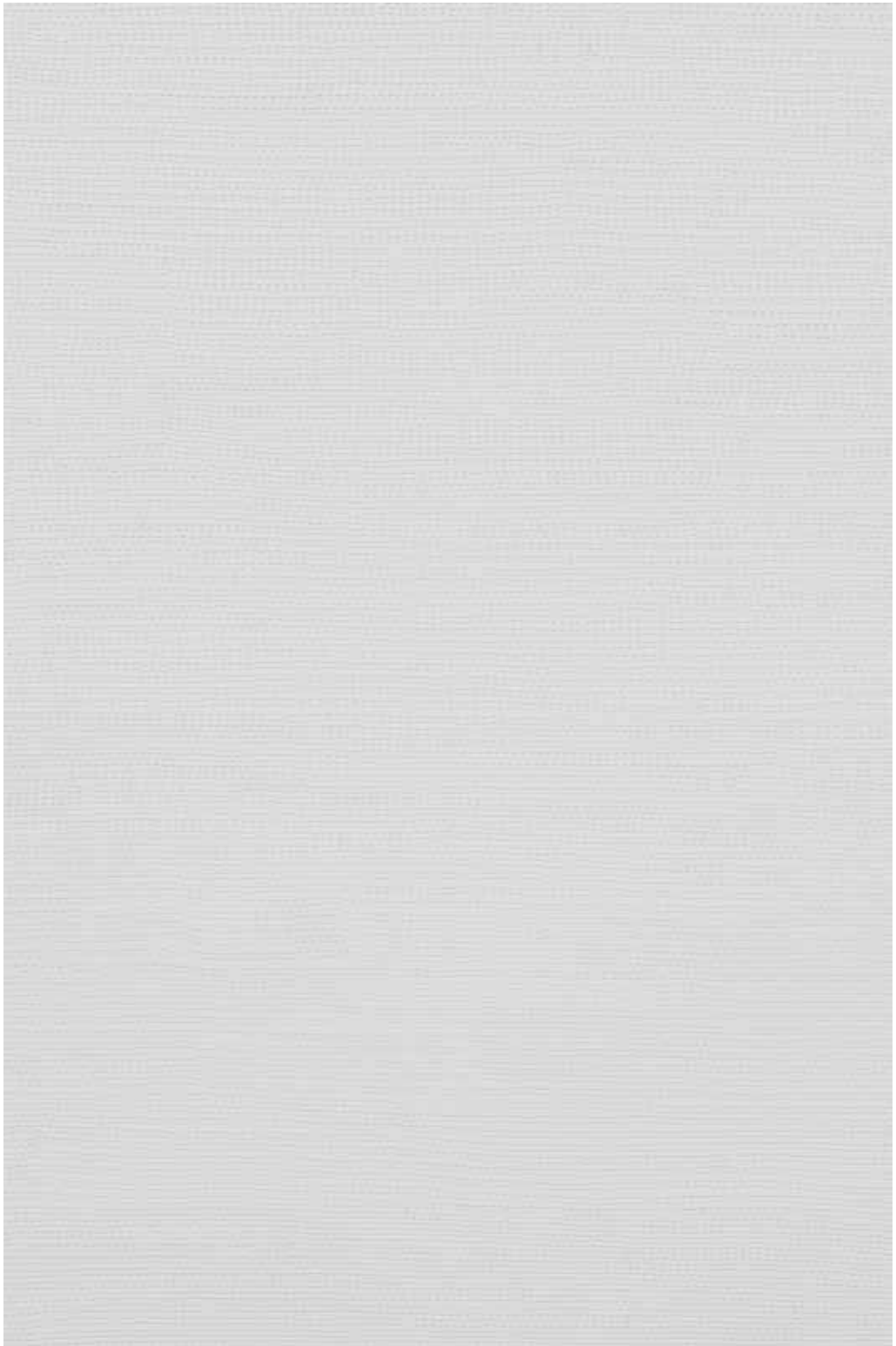
(b. 1950, Dharwad, India, lives and works in Mumbai, India)

Walking into Shakuntala Kulkarni's solo project, the viewer is confronted with an army of five figures sculpted from traditional cane weaving practices from the Eastern part of South Asia. On closer inspection, references of Xi An Terracotta Warriors, Bollywood superheroes played by Amitabh Bachchan, hairstyles from Roman and Hellenic times, and Viking warrior plaits harness the imagination away from any one particular time and place to address the timeless issue of how to exist as an individual in a world that encroaches on individual rights, especially the rights of women. This army of sculptures comes to life in Kulkarni's latest work, *Julus*, as a procession of the multiple selves of the artist storm the space and demand attention, freedom, and respect.

By placing her sculptures of armour over her body, the artist directs the viewer's gaze, reclaiming power away from the viewer and allowing herself to be looked at on her own terms. "The body of the citizen, especially the female citizen, faces pervasive threat as we negotiate an epoch of escalating terror and violence. No longer confined to declared warfronts and conflict zones, these forces have infiltrated both public and intimate spaces, civic and domestic contexts. The embodied self can be insulted, subjugated, incarcerated, curbed by religious decree, dictatorial whim or popular sentiment. It can be deprived of the rights of mobility and expression... An armoured body can extend its capabilities through the mailed fist, the spiked helmet, the radiation-proof bodysuit, or heightened fight/flight reflexes. But the body pays for this protection with its freedom. The armour becomes a cage. The self becomes prosthetic: protected by, yet trapped within, an exoskeleton," writes Ranjit Hoskote.¹ This tension between the power and the vulnerability of the body creates a poignant artistic statement, as does the social commentary when the artist takes her armour out into public space in India. If she can choose to wear a dress of velvet, why can she not choose to wear a dress of cane?

Shakuntala Kulkarni is a Bombay-based multidisciplinary artist and activist whose work is primarily concerned with the plights of urban women who are often held back due to patriarchal expectations. She collaborates regularly and over long periods of time with traditional craftsmen, theatre practitioners, and dancers in her practice, which radiates far out from the studio where her work originates as drawings. Shakuntala Kulkarni's work is also inspired by history and historical locations, and the role of her own body within these locations. For example, she often creates happenings around historical landmarks in Bombay that are in danger of being destroyed, wearing her armour of cane and claiming these places as her own. Kulkarni studied at MSU Baroda and at Santiniketan, and has exhibited at the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (formerly Prince of Wales) Museum, Art Unlimited at Art Basel, and the Museum of Contemporary Art and MMKA in the Netherlands. She has participated in many workshops across the region, including at Britto Arts Trust in 2003.

¹Hoskote, Ranjit. *Of Bodies, Armours and Cages*, Exhibition Catalogue. Mumbai: Chemould Prescott Road, 2013. Print.



©Prabhavathi Meppayil 2015, detail of: *untitled series-3*, 2010, drawing with thinnam on gesso panel, 123 x 183.5 x 4cm.
Photographer: Damian Griffiths. Courtesy PACE London.

PRABHAVATHI MEPPAYIL

(b. 1965, lives and works in Bangalore, India)

As the viewer enters the central hall of the Dhaka Art Summit, Prabhavathi Meppayil unsettles her audience by turning the room upside down, creating an immersive installation which displaces the negative space of the coffered ceiling outside the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and placing it inside the floor of the building. Coffered ceilings are an ancient and universal element of architecture. In her newly commissioned installation *dp sixteen* (2015-2016) Meppayil creates movement between the floor and ceiling, outside and inside. She creates a subtle phenomenological experience of an architecture connected to an infinite grid of cubes. In his analysis of Meppayil's work, Benjamin Buchloh points out that grids are possibly the most basic principal of modernist abstraction, and also panels for tantric meditation. He continues that "Meppayil's paintings seem to be driven by a latent desire to leave behind the parameters of pictorial space and its supporting surfaces, reaching for an ultimate sublation of the painterly rectangle in a numinous architectural space."¹

Meppayil transforms her "painterly rectangles" through meditatively applying white gesso, a material used in most of her work since 2009 that is traditionally used to prime wooden surfaces for later layers of paint. Through her choice of materials, the artist extends painting into the space of architecture, where wood, grids, layers, wiring, and primed surfaces create environments for us to inhabit. Her intervention simultaneously creates order and disorder in the exhibition space, and reminds the viewer to consider the seen and unseen elements creating our sense of being in the world. Shanay Jhaveri reflects that "at a moment when it seems that more and more art is being made for digital circulation and distribution, Meppayil's gesso panels, in all their quietness, enact a form of visual resistance that demands a physical encounter and a different temporality of experience."²

Prabhavathi Meppayil's art practice draws on traditional craft and values the truth of materials and tools as well as simple forms, colours and shapes. Lines are a leitmotif in Meppayil's *œuvre* and corresponding with Minimalist principles, she expresses the necessity of a work that comes back to the pureness and essence of the material. For example, she often uses copper allowing its oxidation to highlight the passing of time – an important element in her practice. Meppayil's pieces combine artisan practice stemming from her family's traditional goldsmith business in Bangalore, as well as modernist concerns using recurring features such as walls and floors on which she repeats lines and intermissions. She lives and works in Bangalore and recent exhibitions include *The Encyclopedic Palace*, 55th Venice Biennale, a solo exhibition at the American Academy in Rome, and group exhibitions at the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo and Asian Art Museum, San Francisco.

¹Buchloh, H.D., and Peter Benson. *Prabhavathi Meppayil: Nine Seventeen*. London: Pace, 2014. p. 38. Print.

²Jhaveri, Shanay. "Prabhavathi Meppayil." *Frieze*, Oct. 2014. p. 261. Print.



Haroon Mirza, *The National Pavilion of Then and Now*, 2011, photo, Omar Mirza, courtesy of Haroon Mirza and Lisson Gallery

HAROON MIRZA

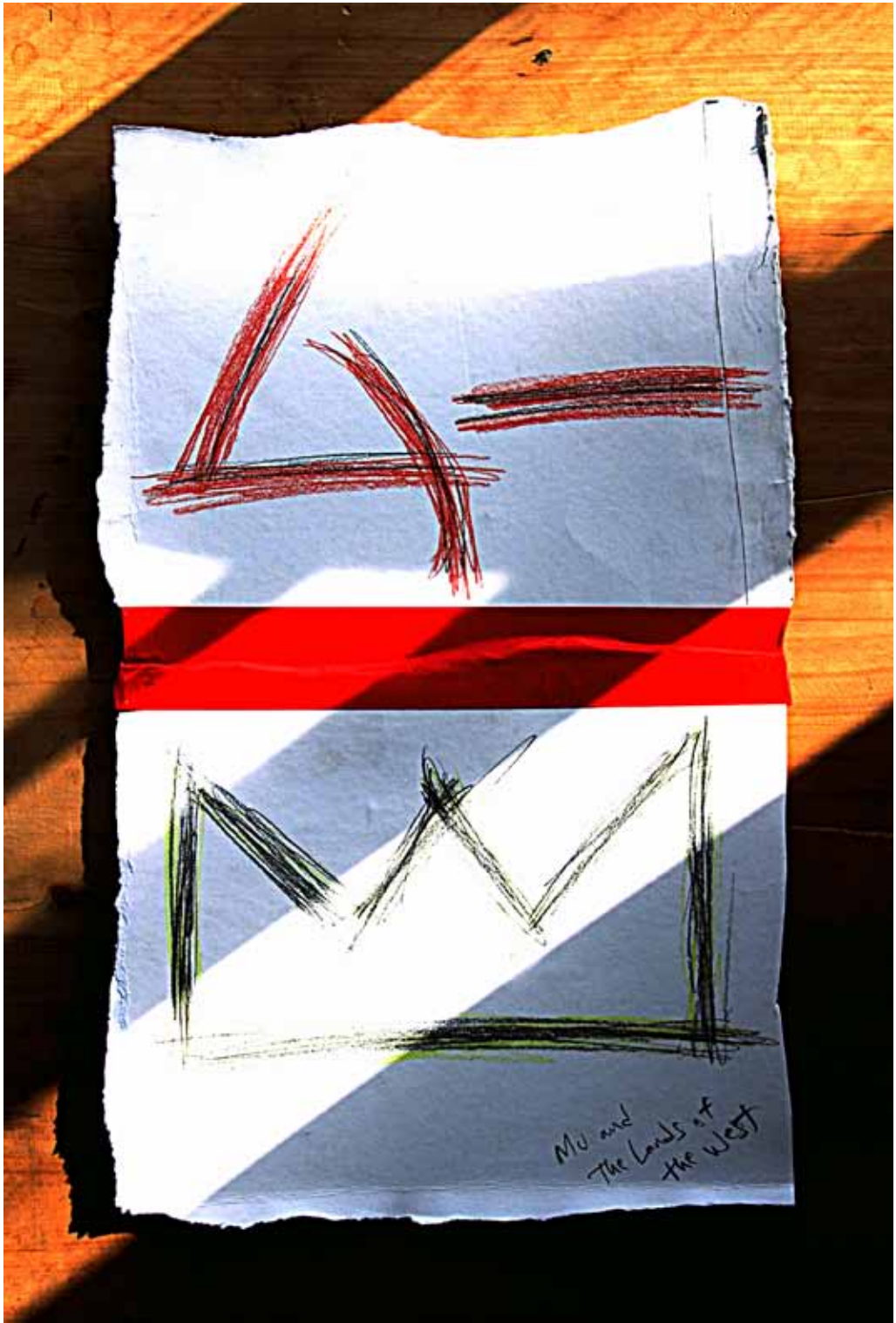
(b. 1977, lives and works in London, UK)

Haroon Mirza asks us to reconsider the perceptual distinctions between noise, sound and music, and draws into question the categorisation of cultural forms. *The National Pavilion of Then and Now*, lined with dark grey sound-insulating pyramidal foam, was first commissioned for the exhibition *ILLUMinations* at the 54th Venice Biennale, where artist Haroon Mirza won the Silver Lion award for the most promising young artist. It is an anechoic chamber in which neither light nor sound is reflected. At the centre, hanging from the ceiling, there is a ring of white LED lights, reminiscent of nimbus effects. After a period of total darkness, the LEDs get progressively brighter, accompanied by an ever more enhancing buzzing sound, to then abruptly stop, plunging the room in darkness once more, until the cycle starts again. The work evokes intense physical experiences of perception of sound, light, space and time that seem to echo across the past and future of the universe. The light in this work is reminiscent of a halo, a form used to connote being outside or above the physical human realm. Like many of the other works in the exhibition, Mirza's work rejects recording or representation that limits its complexity; it must be physically felt to be experienced.

Chus Martínez reflects that "Sound, on its side, is a temporal tool for tracing space and for understanding the very notion of presence, as well as a narrative aid for building up space. Mirza's work relates to sound in modes that signal a persistent interest in investigating the living body as the centre of the perceptual field."¹ Mirza's oeuvre draws parallels between the electrical wiring of circuits and the body; Mirza proposes a third space between seeing and hearing, where imperceptible waves of sound and light draw attention to the role of perception in shaping our view of reality and how we access knowledge.

Haroon Mirza is a London-based artist of Pakistani origin who has won international acclaim for installations that test the interplay and friction between sound and light waves and electric current. He devises kinetic sculptures, performances and immersive installations. An advocate of interference (in the sense of electro-acoustic or radio disruption), he creates situations that purposefully cross wires and harnesses chance as an accomplice. He manipulates electricity to make it dance to a different tune and calling on instruments as varied as household electronics, furniture, video footage and existing artworks to behave differently. In addition to the Silver Lion Award in 2011 for the most promising young artist at the 54th Venice Biennale *ILLUMinations*, Mirza received the DAIWA Art Prize in 2012 and the Zurich Art Prize and Nam June Paik Art Prize in 2014, and the Calder Art Prize in 2015. His works have been exhibited at many leading institutions including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Museum Tinguely, Basel and The Hepworth Wakefield, UK.

¹Martínez, Chus. *Haroon Mirza: Hrm 199 Ltd.* Basel: Museum Tinguely, 2015. 230. Print.



Amanullah Mojadidi, *Study for Untitled Garden #1*, 2015-2016, courtesy of the artist and the Samdani Art Foundation

AMANULLAH MOJADIDI

(b. 1971, Jacksonville, USA, lives and works in Paris, France)

Untitled Garden #1 (2015-2016) by Amanullah Mojadidi opens up a space to think about the role misunderstandings play in shaping history and the way we view our place in the world. The glowing neon Katakana Japanese characters in the garden spell the word *mu*, referring to a state of “nothingness” or “nonbeing” in Zen Buddhism. *Mu*, however, is also the name of what several pseudoscientists believed was the lost continent and civilization of Mu, a white-race civilisation that fell into the ocean but whose descendants became the great early cultures around the world including in India. This concept was popularised by James Churchward in the 19th century, who claimed he learned the secrets of this history from an Indian priest who spoke a language that only three other Indians spoke. It was impossible for the European to understand complex civilisations such as the Mayan, Persian, Indian, and the Egyptian as having been created by peoples of that land, and he came up with a hypothesis that a lost white population had in fact created these histories from a land that was originally also the home to the Garden of Eden. The neon crown in the garden refers to a sacred symbol of this lost kingdom of Mu that represents “The Lands of the West.”

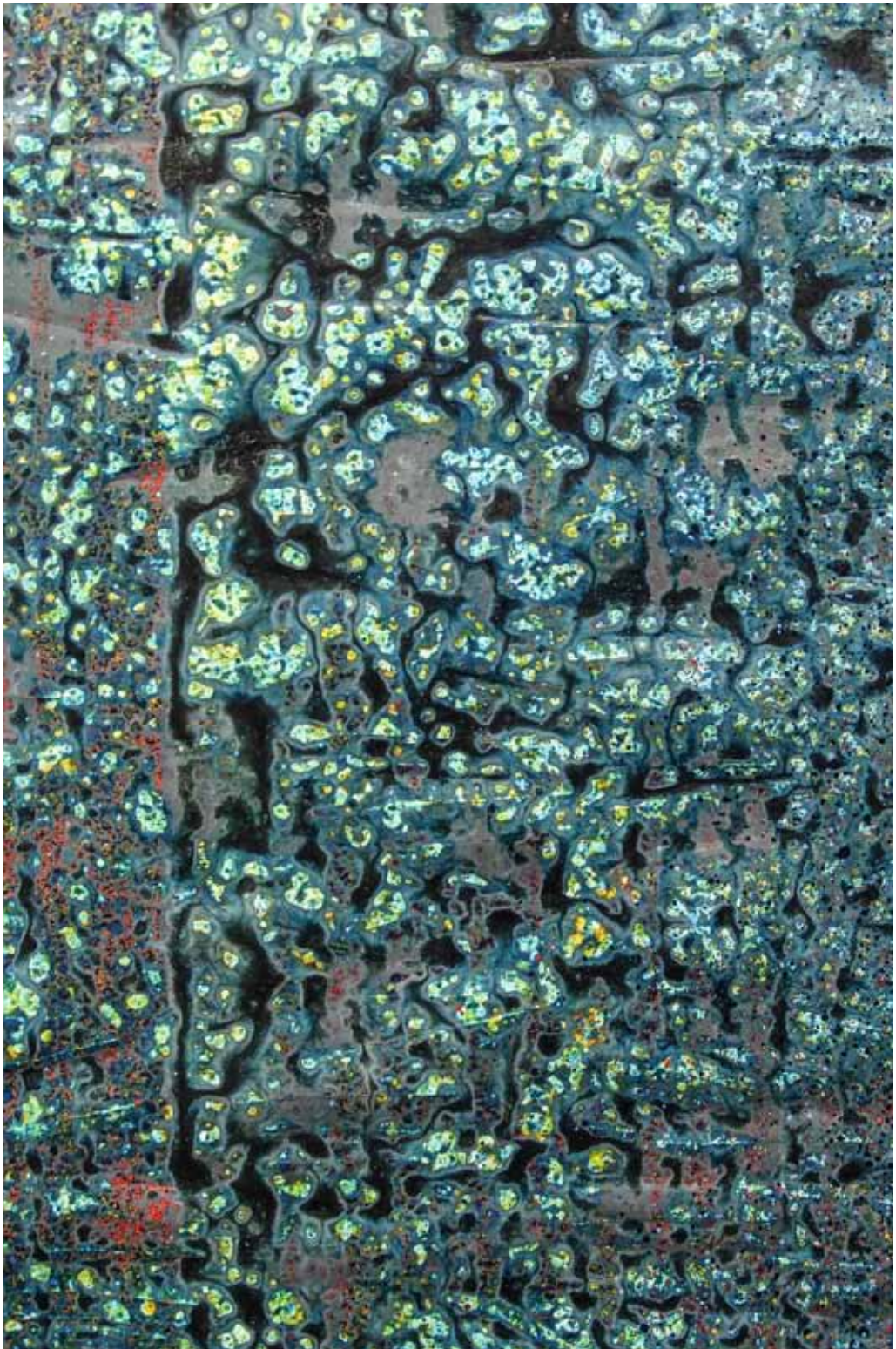
In this work, the Japanese definition of *Mu* is a place with an absence of desire, the second symbol of Mu illustrates what happens with the human desire to explain what cannot be understood.

“To the distant observer
They are chatting of blossoms
Yet in spite of appearances
Deep in their hearts
They are thinking very different thoughts,”¹

wrote Japanese poet Ki No Tsurayuki in the tenth century, and this poem remains equally relevant in the 21st century. Mojadidi’s garden explores the hidden dangers of how Eurocentric institutions present themselves as “discoverers” of art from conflicted/developing countries, and creates parallels between the colonial anthropologist discovering the noble savage in exotic lands and the Western curator discovering the noble artist in equally exotic locales.

Amanullah Mojadidi is a North-American artist of Afghan descent currently based in Paris. Mojadidi often uses contemporary, post-modern ideas of conflict and globalisation combined with traditional narratives rooted in culture, belonging, and identity in his work. The artist takes a sarcastic approach toward the Afghan and American culture and stereotypes surrounding identity and the capitalism around conflict. “We are all at conflict,” shares Mojadidi, “Whether with others or ourselves, with our own ideas, thoughts, desires, history, present, future. We are all at conflict as we try and navigate ourselves through a life we understand only through our experiences, through our confrontation both internal and external with social, political, cultural, and personal strife.” His works have been exhibited in many international exhibitions including the Havana Biennale, dOCUMENTA (13), the Asia Triennial in Manchester, and the Kochi-Muziris Biennale.

¹Raqs Media Collective. “Once Again, to the Distant Observer.” *SubContingent: The Indian Subcontinent in Contemporary Art, Exhibition Catalogue, Electa | Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo* (2006); Web. Dec. 2015.



Sandeep Mukherjee, *The Sky Remains* (detail), 2015-16, courtesy of the artist and Project 88 and Samdani Foundation

SANDEEP MUKHERJEE

(b. 1964, Pune, India, lives and works in Los Angeles, USA)

Sandeep Mukherjee has brushed with brooms, sprayed, stuttered, and stammered countless layers and colours of paint across mylar film and wooden tiles, creating a topological terrain that draws the relationship between painting and sculpture, as well as image and process, to the fore. This site-specific solo project *The Sky Remains* responds to the unique architecture of the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy with its grid-structure that anchors the building, but also takes inspiration from the skylight that brings blueness down to the floor and from the water, rivers, and delta region in Bangladesh that flows into the Bay of Bengal. The textural experiences of tributaries and alluvial soil in the geographic terrain of Bangladesh inspire the environment of imagination that Mukherjee has spread across the central open space of the South Plaza. His work binds together the sky and the floor; the smallest cells within us and the universe around us.

“Colour is an operation that hotlines the nervous system,” writes Simon O’Sullivan. Mukherjee invites viewers to experience the sensations that he creates in his paintings by walking barefoot over his floor-based work, which employ hand carved surfaces to transform the visual experience into a haptic one. The wooden floor panels correspond in size to the permanent tiles and are carved with a dash or hyphen mark and then layered with paint. The wall works are also embossed with the dash marks and then layered with paint so that the mark formed is a result of the paint interacting with the sculpted surface. The process is repeated so that, over time, the surface is marked much like tributaries carving out a delta. These embossed marks on the floor and wall draw connections across painting, drawing and sculpture, repelling conventional categorisation and celebrating contradiction. Hot, warm colours make the blue tones of the work sing, the surface is only a glimpse of the depths beneath.

Mukherjee’s work appears as a horizontal dash, a hyphen, a holding place: joining as well as separating. Although the wall based work appears as one continuous strip, it is comprised of square modular panels that will be subtly reconfigured and interchanged throughout the exhibition, poetically addressing the fluid nature of human identity as a continuum of birth and experience, and on a micro level, the genetic flow of life’s development as DNA is reconfigured within the gene pool. In chemistry labs, DNA passes through gel and liquids to become stripes ripe for analysis. And through experience, DNA can mutate. Mukherjee’s paintings, like the genetic history of the universe, thrive from the right mutations.

Sandeep Mukherjee is an Indian-born, Los Angeles-based artist who is globally renowned for his abstract paintings and installations that follow multiple paths through portraiture, the performing body, architecture as folding, and erasure as abstraction. Mukherjee’s multi-layered works explore the tension between process, image, emotion, meaning and its relationship to the body as an attempt to understand human experience. Improvisation is key to Mukherjee’s process that actively spatialises and temporalises the body through its movements, activities and gestures. The work considers material as a force with vitality, relationality or difference that renders it active, productive and unpredictable. Mukherjee’s works are in numerous public collections, including those of MoMA, New York; LACMA and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; the Jumex Collection, Mexico City; and the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi. He was recently awarded the prestigious 2016 City of Los Angeles (C.O.L.A.) fellowship from the Los Angeles Cultural Affairs department.

©Sullivan, Simon, *Science Fiction (or Painting: the Abstract Machine)*, Warwick: Mead Gallery, 2007. 82. Print.



Po Po, *VIP Project (Dhaka)*, 2015, photo courtesy of the artist and the Samdani Art Foundation, commissioned and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for the Dhaka Art Summit, 2016

PO PO

(b. 1957, Pathien, Myanmar, lives and works in Yangon, Myanmar)

With a long history of creating paintings, sculpture and land-based pieces, Po Po began working with photography in the 2000s, describing it not as a visual record, but as a means to reflect his thoughts on political, social and cultural concerns. In 2010, Po Po created his first *VIP Project* in Yangon, placing VIP signs in public bus stops across the city. South Asia, as well as many other parts of the world, has a deeply entrenched “VIP Culture” where certain individuals are given preferential treatment as “Very Important People” – even in the public sector with special entrances in airports, parking spaces, and other basic facets of daily civic life. Standing across the street from bus stops, Po Po took a series of photographs and videos documenting the reactions of people to the signs – from feelings of threat or oppression, to avoidance, or humour that the signs would be placed within the context of public transport. In nearly all cases, the commuters could not identify themselves with such a status, yielding their seats to the signs, demonstrating their thoughts of their place in society as not as important as anonymous and invisible others who may or may not arrive.

Po Po’s interest in how elitist, exclusionary signs operate in countries that have been under dictatorships or volatile political systems was not specific to Myanmar’s capital, Yangon. Politics play a key role in shaping one’s view of their place in the world. Five years after his first VIP project, the Samdani Art Foundation commissioned the second chapter of the VIP project in Dhaka, a capital city with a similar social VIP culture and which was historically under the same British rule as Yangon, but with a different political history of over four decades of democracy as opposed to Myanmar’s over five decades of military rule. While the reactions of the public seem very similar in the video and photographic documentation across Yangon and Dhaka, the Bangladesh political scenario opened up the possibility for a few members of the public to think of Po Po’s intervention as a joke. This reaction never occurred in the Myanmar intervention, where choice of interpretation of public signage had never previously been an option.

Po Po is a self-taught conceptual artist from Myanmar, truly visionary in his forms and execution in a country that was completely closed off to the rest of the world when he began practicing in the late 1970s. Pædagogy and enabling others to be autodidacts continues to inform the artist’s practice. In his over three-decade career, he has gone from painting to assemblage, from monotype to installation, and from design to architecture, often challenging audiences to experience ideas through five senses, willing a concept out of shape and following Buddhist traditions to make the viewer look inward. Trying to get around censorship, his works are provocative, humorous and playful, ironic, sociable and impulsive. He often presents regional and religious identities, and explores global issues through local problematics. The artist has exhibited in leading exhibitions such as the Asia Pacific Triennial, the Gwangju Biennial, Yokohama Triennale, and the Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale.

[No image]

Ann Lee (2011)

Loan courtesy of the François Pinault Collection

Tino Sehgal's work constructs situations that challenge the traditional context of museums and galleries, focusing more on ephemeral gestures and the subtleties of experience than on material objects. At the artist's request, documentation of his work is prohibited so as to ensure its ephemeral nature, so please refrain from taking any videos or photographs to protect the integrity of the artwork.

TINO SEHGAL

(b. 1976, London, UK, lives and works in Berlin, Germany)

This solo project presents Tino Sehgal's *Ann Lee* (2011). *Ann Lee* developed from a Japanese manga video game character who was purchased by French artists Philippe Parreno and Pierre Huyghe in their project *No Ghost Just a Shell* (1999). "Annlee" was a cheap model: the price of a Manga figure is based upon the complexity of its character traits and thus its ability to adapt to a story line and "survive" several episodes. "Annlee" had no particular qualities, and so she would have disappeared from the scene very quickly. "True heroes are rare and extremely expensive ..." (Parreno), and buying "Annlee" rescued her from an industry that had condemned her to death, and the artists freed her from the animation industry by allowing her to become "deviant sign," a shell, available to whomever wanted to give her a context and freedom, opening up questions about what it means to be a free individual.

Tino Sehgal is a Berlin-based artist who constructs situations that challenge and confront conventional art and spectator relationships, often exploring the subtleties in gestures and social constraints. His work is primarily focused on the experiential instead of material objects. Sehgal does not document his work with photographs, videos or film stating that it inadvertently creates material objects which could then be sold or bought. However, Sehgal does believe in financial exchanges and his works can be sold and bought and are infinitely reusable. Sehgal studied Economics and Dance in Berlin and Essen, and his work consistently challenges the function of art and its value. In 2013 he won the prestigious Golden Lion, at the 55th Venice Biennale. Sehgal's artworks have been exhibited at a number of institutions, museums and galleries including the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London (2006-07); MMK Frankfurt (2007); Stockholm Konsthall (2008); the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2010); the Tate Turbine Hall, London (2012); dOCUMENTA 13 (2012); the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (2014); and the Stedelijk Museum (2015).

¹Kunsthalle Zurich. *No Ghost Just a Shell*. *M/m (paris)*, *M/M (Paris)*, Web.



Dayanita Singh, *Museum of Chance*, 2014, courtesy of the artist

DAYANITA SINGH

(b. 1961, lives and works in New Delhi, India)

“While I was in London I dreamed that I was on a boat on the Thames, which took me to the Anandmayee Ma ashram in Varanasi. I climbed the stairs and found I had entered the hotel in Devigarh. At a certain time I tried to leave the fort but could not find a door. Finally I climbed out through a window and I was in the moss garden in Kyoto.”

Dayanita Singh

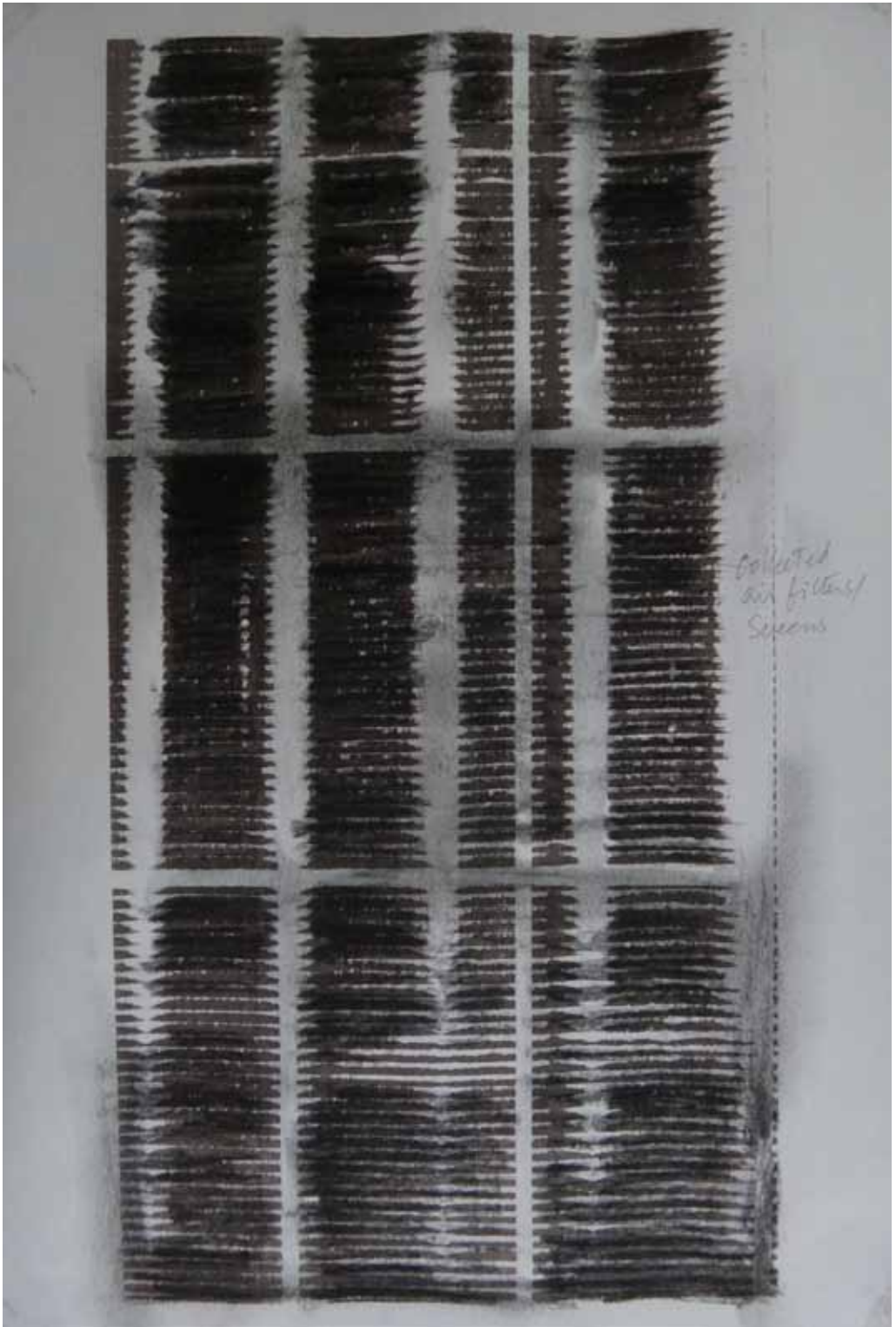
Dayanita Singh's *Museum of Chance* is a book about how life unfolds, and asks to be recorded and edited, along and off the axis of time. The inscrutably woven photographic sequence of Singh's *Go Away Closer* has now grown into a labyrinth of connections and correspondences. The thread through this novel-like web of happenings is that elusive entity called “Chance.” It is Chance that seems to disperse as well as gather fragments or clusters of experience, creating a form of simultaneity that is realised in the idea and matter of the book, with its interlaced or parallel timelines and patterns of recurrence and return.

The eighty-eight quadratone images in the book appear on the front and back covers in pairs, transforming each copy of the book into a distinct piece of work by the author. By adding a wooden frame that allows for the book to be placed on a wall, in the same way a photograph might be exhibited, Singh transforms these books into a work that is simultaneously book, art object, exhibition and catalogue. In doing so, she turns the book itself into the art object, creating the book object: a work to be valued, looked at and read as such, rather than being simply regarded as a gathering of photographic reproductions.

Singh offers visitors a chance to make these book objects extend outside of the exhibition space through a process of exchange. Forty-four of these book objects, part of a larger edition of 352, can be purchased in Dhaka from the artist herself. She will make each edition unique by stamping personalised inscriptions for each person she exchanges with. It is also possible to purchase more than one *Museum of Chance* book object. Doing so will allow the purchaser to create several installation combinations for their book objects, as it is possible to keep changing the front and back covers.

Through this process of exchange, the exhibition of the *Museum of Chance* will extend beyond the walls of the Dhaka Art Summit and into spaces across South Asia and the rest of the world when individuals put their book objects on display.

Dayanita Singh is an artist currently based in New Delhi. Her medium is photography and the book is her primary form. She has published eleven books: *Zakir Hussain* (1986), *Myself*, *Mona Ahmed* (2001), *Privacy* (2003), *Chairs* (2005), *Go Away Closer* (2007), *Sent A Letter* (2008), *Blue Book* (2009), *Dream Villa* (2010), *House of Love* (2011), *File Room* (2013), and *Museum of Chance* (2014). Singh's photographic work usually presents a curious view of the seemingly everyday, often presenting a landscape that exists as much in the artist's imagination as in the real world. Singh experiments with different ways of producing and viewing photographs, and she represented Germany in the 55th Venice Biennale and recent exhibitions include a solo exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, London; and the MMK Frankfurt, the Kochi Biennale, and Museum Bhavan at the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi.



Ayesha Sultana, *Study for A Space Between Things*, 2015-2016, courtesy of the artist, the Samdani Art Foundation and Experimenter

AYESHA SULTANA

(b. 1985, Jessore, Bangladesh lives and works in, Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Ayesha Sultana's newly commissioned solo project, *A Space Between Things*, is an ongoing exploration referencing the theme of landscape that threads much of her practice. Sultana works in intimate proximity to the material around her, sensitively reconfiguring it and adding to the potential energy that lies in the space between function and dysfunction. The artist playfully sculpts material culled from found and reclaimed objects, revealing the transitory and fragile nature of our natural and built surroundings, signifying and revealing distance, movement and space. She draws the viewer into the curiosity she has for the process of making and reconfiguring, and creates an enhanced sense of suspense relating to the possible changes the work could undergo over time through the hand of the artist or through the hands of time. Key ideas of transience, contact, balance, weight, and collapse manifest in gestural arrangements that Sultana creates with materials such as wood, metal, mylar, fabric, plaster, stone and glass.

Sultana is interested in the duality and coexistence of the material and the immaterial. She strives to free her work from its very rooted and specific Bangladeshi context into a fluid and wide-ranging space, where the work can be set loose within its own parameters. For example, a vertical metal form could vaguely refer to early inspiration of viewing classical architectural structures such as columns and ancient obelisks. The individual works can maintain an interest in a nondescript condition even as particular references are apparent. This is a project that needs to be navigated spatially, and experienced in relation to the scale of the body, a space where transformation and understanding happen not from the description, but rather from experience, which the artist creates through the convergence of will and chance as she intervenes with found and made objects using time as a malleable medium. It is a celebration of what is possible when you allow experience to draw your mind to conclusions, rather than relying the human tendency to come to a situation with preconceived definitions.

Through sound, drawing, sculpture and photography, Jessore-born and Dhaka-based artist Ayesha Sultana considers the poetics of space and the relationship between material and process in notions of making. Within the context of drawing, her practice in the recent past has been an investigation into the rudiments of form through architectural constructions, often derivative of the landscape and attempting to peer into what is out of view. Counter tendencies of movement and stability are also evident as an attempt to generate emptiness by filling up the surface. Through other elemental gestures and implications of plotting, measuring and erasure, merging and filling-in, Sultana makes whole an otherwise fractured image. Sultana was the winner of the 2014 Samdani Art Award and was featured as one of *ArtReview's* "Future Greats" in 2015. She is a member of the Britto Arts Trust and a graduate of Beaconhouse National University in Lahore.



Christopher Kulendran Thomas, New Eelam, 2016, courtesy of the artist

CHRISTOPHER KULENDRAN THOMAS

(b. 1979, London, UK, lives and works in London, UK)

Christopher Kulendran Thomas works through processes of exploitation to manipulate the global mechanics by which art is distributed. His ongoing enterprise *When Platitudes Become Form* takes as its materials some of the cultural consequences of the economic liberalisation that followed the brutal end of Sri Lanka's 25-year civil war in 2009. This war was waged between Tamil separatists who wanted to establish a homeland, called Eelam, in the Northeast of the island and the majority Sinhalese Sri Lankan government. Despite the war crimes that ended that war and have yet to be brought to account, "peacetime" nevertheless allows for tourism and aspirations of a comfortable future to flourish with art galleries and design shops opening over the past six years and the cultural industries growing with fashion weeks, biennials, and other festivals.

Thomas purchases artworks from the island's peacetime contemporary art scene and reconfigures or reframes them for international circulation. Incorporating these original artworks into his own compositions, Thomas exploits the gap between what is considered contemporary in two different art markets, as well as the gap between his family's own origins and his current context as a London-based artist with access to the global networks of the contemporary art world. The artist is extremely interested in how capital networks influence politics and particularly in contemporary art's quasi-diplomatic portfolio as an agent of globalisation.

The artist will be launching in Summer 2016 a venture called New Eelam that imagines the future of citizenship in an age of technologically accelerated globalisation. It is a speculative proposal based on an alternative to the political philosophies of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. In 2009 the former Tamil homeland of Eelam was wiped out with war crimes that have not been brought to justice. But how would history have unfolded if the Tamil struggle had pursued an economic rather than primarily military strategy. This proximal sci-fi proposition launching this Summer, some of the branding for which is introduced now at the Dhaka Art Summit, speculates on how a nation might be reimagined without a territory and on how a corporation might be constituted as a state.

Christopher Kulendran Thomas was born in London in 1979 after his parents left the beginnings of Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict. Since graduating from the MFA in Fine Art at Goldsmiths (University of London) in 2012, solo exhibitions of Thomas' work have been held at Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler (Berlin), the Centre for Contemporary Art (Tel Aviv) and Mercer Union (Toronto). Amongst numerous international exhibitions, his work has been included in Tate's historical survey *Art Turning Left: How Values Changed Making* and in *Co-Workers: Network As Artist* at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris.



Munem Wasif, *Land of Undefined Territory*, stills from film premiering at the Dhaka Art Summit 2016 with partial production support from the Samdani Art Foundation, courtesy of the artist

MUNEM WASIF

(b. 1983, Comilla lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

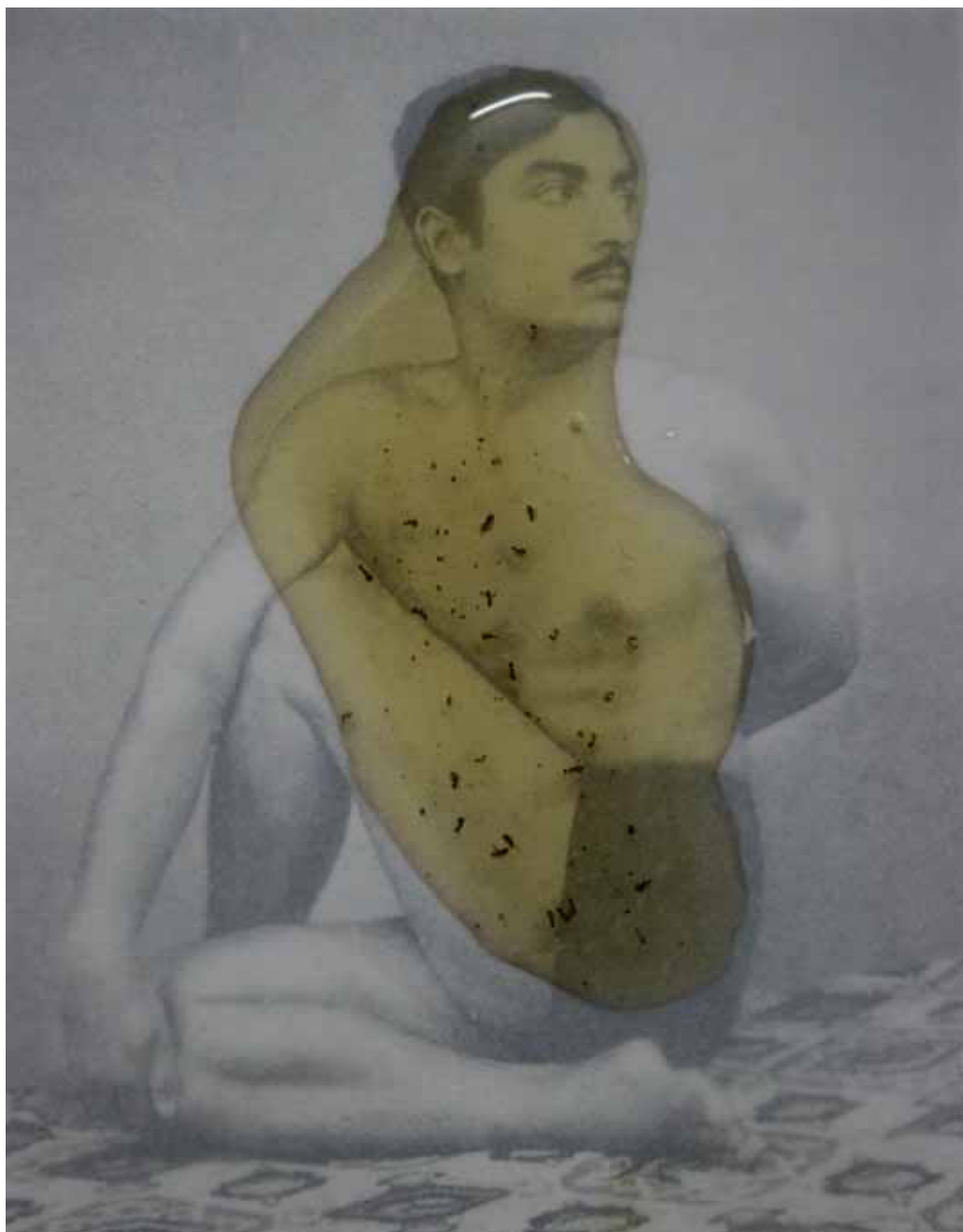
Munem Wasif's haunting series of photographs and three-channel video of an undefined land elucidates the dialectic relationship between a land and its identity, an identity at risk given the relatively new concept of the nation state and of the environmental effects of man's "progress" post the industrial revolution. Situated on the edge of a blurred boundary of Bangladesh and India, the mundane, almost extra-terrestrial land, conceals human interaction with its surface and exposes ever-changing curves with Wasif's repetitive frames. It seems that frames rarely move from each other, slowing down time and motion and blurring the character of a land, disassociating it from its political and geographical identity. This Solo Project questions the identity of a land that is tied to a specific political and geographic context, but which could also be anywhere, as Wasif displaces the viewer from space and time.

Wasif's dispassionate and systematic approach in this series mimics that of an investigation, a topographic study, a geological survey or aesthetic query. His meticulous method of observing a land over a long period of time, throughout different lights and seasons, seems similar to recording something, but not in a planned way with any specific purpose, rather it deliberately lacks vision and loses control, as opposed to carefully planned framing. The empty banal land remains almost the same and it carries very insignificant changes when a man or a vehicle intersects with the frames.

The chosen area of land in this series is a mere observer of nearly a hundred years of land disputes, which saw colonisation, 1947's divide of the Indian subcontinent and mass-migration with Partition, and 1971's liberation war of Bangladesh which created the current border tension with the neighbouring country, India. Absence of any profound identity for its existence never diminishes its presence, and its body carries the wound of aggressive industrial acts, such as stone collection and crushing. This land belongs to no one, and is thus exploitable by anyone motivated to avail of the land's unlikely riches. As hills and mountains are cut away to mine the material needed to build Bangladesh's roads, the communities who have lived on the land for thousands of years become alien to it, as they can no longer identify their homeland by natural markers. In his video, Wasif captures suspended motions by not moving the camera and by recording predominantly still objects, enhancing the sense of timeless limbo that has now come to define this land, and potentially elsewhere in the future.

Wasif's work is not a definitive act of understanding the totality of deeds, rather deliberately ignorant of them with the help of an unconscious camera, to merely show land's lone existence over a period of time. The vantage points of the frames only give a starting point, but don't provide any conclusion. Look-alike frames and ambient sounds once overcome the optical unconscious of the camera and bounce elusive feelings and absurd sensitivity.

Munem Wasif is a Dhaka-based artist who investigates complex social and political issues by getting close to people, both physically and psychologically, dealing with multiple questions and contradictions through his artistic language, which often employs stark black and white photography. Wasif often experiments beyond tradition and tests the possibilities of fiction, while still using familiar documentary language. His interests lie with the concept of "documents" and "archives" and their corresponding influence on politically and geographically complex issues. Teaching and collaborating with a new generation of artists is a part of his own practice. Wasif's work has been exhibited by Musée de l'Élysée, Lausanne; Fotomuseum Winterthur, Switzerland; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; Whitechapel Gallery, London; Chobi Mela, Dhaka; Dhaka Art Summit, and many other leading international institutions.



Mustafa Zaman, *The Tongue in Check*, from the series *Lost Memory Eternalised*, courtesy of the artist and the Samdani Art Foundation

MUSTAFA ZAMAN

(b. 1968, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Mustafa Zaman's newly commissioned solo project *Lost Memory Eternalised* is an unauthorised retelling of the past, revealed after readjusting the lens to the events in the lives of human beings on Earth – where the human condition(s) shaped by history leaves us in awe of the events that make up our experiential domains, giving rise to moments of epiphany and other forms of awakening, which cannot be explained away.

Zaman, who also works as editor of the biannual art magazine, *Depart*, has been collecting heavily charged images across his nearly two-decade long career – sourcing them from old books, magazines, and even medical journals. Layering found images has been an important anchor to his process which he extends across photography, collage, painting, and sculpture.

Images can be read in the context of their time and place and also in their relationship to eternity. The artist emphasises the latter relationship by overlaying found images with honey, enhancing the sense of transcendence/timelessness inherent in each image, but leaving a symbolic residue of dead ants that speaks to a collective disillusionment, citing a sense of loss which often colours our perception of time. With the intrusion of an additional substance (i.e. honey with dead ants), the historicity of the source images is destabilised. They now invite touching and enforce a renewal of vision.

By pushing the image to the limits of semantic structure, the artist re-engages the viewer on a hybrid plain where the sense of past, present and future are rendered irrelevant. This new frame provides us with the sense of the lost “whole”. Images, thus, become pregnant with the possibility of new interpretations. The incomplete action of poured honey stands for loss, trauma remembered, revisited with the hope of getting a glimpse of the elusive space where objects in relation to the body enter an indeterminate field accessible through emotion. Each image serves as a cue to a larger universe or existential realm, consistently changing under the forces of creation and destruction. Each image primes us to look at how individual desire, and resulting disillusionment, shape both individual and collective history.

Born in 1968, Dhaka-based artist Mustafa Zaman received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1989, from the Institute of Fine Arts (now, Faculty of Fine Arts), University of Dhaka. Trained as a printmaker, he soon moved into multidisciplinary practice, turning his attention to the contemporary human condition often observed in relation to the instruments of power, the medicalisation of the body being a major theme to determine the effect(s). Zaman had his first solo exhibition in 2002, where sourced images were placed alongside texts to interrogate the order of knowledge, an exhibition that set the tone of his current praxis. Zaman's works lie between the two interconnected, yet separate realms – the human body as a subject in flux and the representation/objectification of the body in both art and non-art context. Often working across media, Zaman unspools images, objects and texts from an interstice, the place between “now” and “nowhere”, utilising tools developed in his early years as a poet, journalist and tireless scavenger of media images. He has exhibited extensively across Bangladesh in both formal and informal venues including the Zainul Gallery, Dhaka; Faculty of Fine Arts, Dhaka University (2002). The Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Dhaka (2009); the Alliance Française de Dhaka (2010) and the Bengal Art Lounge, Dhaka (2014).



THE MISSING ONE

CURATED BY NADA RAZA Assistant Curator, Tate Modern

Ronni Ahmmed

David Alesworth

Shishir Bhattacharjee

Fahd Burki

Neha Choksi

Iftikhar Dadi and Elizabeth Dadi

Rohini Devasher

Marzia Farhana

Aamir Habib

Zihan Karim

Ali Kazim

Sanjeewa Kumara

Firoz Mahmud

Janet Meaney and Zoya Siddiqui

Mehreen Murtaza

Saskia Pintelon

Sahej Rahal

Tejal Shah

Himali Singh Soin

Mariam Suhail

Gaganendranath Tagore*

Hajra Waheed

Tours and lectures in the space:

Nada Raza, *The Missing One* tour, February 5th 2016, 12pm

Left page: National Assembly of Bangladesh, ©Kashef Chowdhury

*For notes on Gaganendranath Tagore and the Bengal School, see page 272

Prologue

“...the deeper we seek, the more is our wonder excited, the more is the dazzlement for our gaze”

Dr. Abdus Salam, Nobel Prize banquet speech, Stockholm 1979

Nirrudeshor Kahani or *The Story of The Missing One* – written in 1896 by Jagadish Chandra Bose (1858-1937) is thought to be one of the first tales of science or speculative fiction in Bangla. It was a tale of miracle; a cyclone quelled with physics, by pouring oil on water. Bose was a pioneering inventor of instruments for wireless technology and the study of nature, and a crater on the moon was named after the research scientist. The encounter with modernity and scientific progress at the turn of the twentieth century generated lively intellectual debate in South Asia. Its influence sparked radical ideas and encouraged fresh approaches to religion and culture, particularly in Bengal, even as the idea of freedom and self-governance took hold. Bose was close to the Tagore family who was central to the intellectual world of what is called the Bengal Renaissance, generative for art, music and literature; Gaganendranath Tagore (1867-1938) painted a portrait of him that now hangs at the Bose Institute in Calcutta. It would have been against this backdrop that the artist painted *Resurrection* around the early 1920s. It is an ethereal painting, with a circular vortex of clouds and rays of light circulating around a raised central formation, as if we are staring up at the heavens. And here is the enigma; at the centre of this futuristic work is a religious icon. A celestial cross is clearly visible within an arch, and a saintly glowing figure, refracting the light. Tagore's vision confronts us from almost a century ago and presents modern progress and religious faith in cerulean blue harmony. We time-travel a hundred or so years to the turn of the millennium in South Asia, from the late 1990s to the present, to see how the experiences of artists who benefited from the advancements of the modern age might respond to the themes of science and spirituality central to our genre. The exhibition is arranged in three broad movements, united by the visual metaphor of looking up at the sky. The first is enchantment, the second, alienation and the last, dystopia and the possibility of redemption. It follows, in some loose sense, the plot of a generic science fiction novel or film – a happy, innocent world, the hostile appearance of a foreign or extra-terrestrial being and finally, at the climax, apocalyptic threat with the potential for salvation via faith and human will.

Staring up at the sky

The first sequence in the exhibition takes the Tagore painting as a formal point of departure. Sahej Rahal's *Tandav III* (2012, printed 2015) is the documentation of a performance based on a retro-futuristic avatar wielding a light-saber of neon tube-lights. Caught in motion by the camera, the glowing angles and circular arcs echo the vortex at the center of the Tagore painting. Fahd Burki's futuristic, iconographic works on paper are presented as a trinity, with the abstract grey form evocatively titled *Saint* at its center. Rohini Devasher's *Helio Blue* 2015 reimagines the cyanometer, an 18th-century invention for measuring the blueness of the sky. Night skies were etched into the fragile inkiness of folded and creased carbon paper by Hajra Waheed, then transferred to plastic foil to form sculptural maps of the stars. Similarly unfolded, Neha Choksi's *Skyfold* 2013 series pick up the infinite variations of sky blue. These are cyanograms, referring to early scientific experiments with light and representation. Based on a photograph of the landing of a “space ball” or junk from decaying spacecraft and satellites, *Pressure Sphere Recovered* in South Africa 2001-2002 is a drawing from Choksi's series *Space Debris*. It stages an anachronistic confrontation between an essentialised human form, a dark skinned child, and a fossil from the future. Sharing the formal restraint evident in these very precisely rendered works, *Otherland* 2015 by Ali Kazim is a quiet painting of a lunar crater. Kazim's technique of working, of building the surface of a painting by layering and then washing pure pigment, is a variation of early 20th-century Bengal School methods. In Calcutta and Santiniketan, watercolour wash techniques were finessed by techniques learnt from travels east or from visiting Japanese artists. *Rift* 2015 by Himali Singh Sooin is a terracotta cast of a 3-D model based on data made publicly available by NASA, a scale model of the asteroid Eros, named for the god of love. Its two halves are placed at an awkward distance, creating a sense of estrangement. Mehreen Murtaza approaches the scattered legacy of the theoretical physicist Dr. Abdus Salam (1926-1996) who went into exile when faced with religious discrimination. *Comet Bennet Over Humayun's Tomb*, (March, 1970-2013) is based on an archival image of a comet streaking over the finial of an Islamic dome, here enshrined on a pedestal that inverts and mirrors its form, a made-up memorial for a spiritually inclined scientist.

Alienation

Sanjeeva Kumara produced the *Dots* portfolio during a residency in Amsterdam, explained as the tears of a sojourner who feels disoriented and looks for familiar forms within a strange new environment. The *Uncanny Personality* 1999 is a self-portrait, describing a state of profound alienation but also evoking the multiple limbs of a deity. Shishir Bhattacharjee's *Come and See the Game* 1995 is a large monochromatic diptych, a sardonic take on the preoccupations of modern life. Hybrid monsters appear, menacing, in a nightmarish scene. David Alesworth's series of metal sculptures, *Probes Intervention* 2002-3, were made in response to the nuclear escalation between India and Pakistan, where he was based. Their alien appearance in the city was documented, heralding the arrival of a new military-industrial age. They reappear in Mariam Suhail's *Untitled* 2007, documentation of a performance; a curious group of figures in chemical protection suits appeared at the new National Art Museum in Islamabad, uncertainly approaching strange new forms. Saskia Pintelon, based in Sri Lanka, makes collaged accordion books alongside her painting practice. Drawn portraits are obscured and transformed into freakish cyborgs and aliens, culling from the relentless image production that has accompanied technological advancement and voracious consumption. The residents of Ronni Ahmed's imaginative universe travel through space and time, sending us occasional signals. Combining classic sci-fi memes with myth and folk-lore, he creates what he calls a "parallel earth".

Light blindness

Aamir Habib's beguiling light sculptures play with the popular imagery associated with ideas of heaven and hell – lush valleys and exploding clouds. Layered with fine coloured LED drawings, these are shrines to more sinister wordly beliefs. Iftikhar Dadi and Elizabeth Dadi first presented *Magic Carpet* at the Queens Museum in 2005 where it hovered over a map of New York City. Here they revisit the work and its evocation of the flying carpet of orientalist fantasy in the form of an oversized fairground light sculpture of a floating prayer rug, updating the form to reflect the popular commercial aesthetics of much of contemporary South Asia. Zoya Siddiqui and Janet Anne Meaney build on a collaborative performance work begun in Sri Lanka, *Halos*, based on the LED halo that adorns popular shrines. Through a restrained, meditative performance they push at the conventional boundaries between the human and the venerated, the sacred and the spectacular. *Eye (1)* is a film installation by Zihan Karim, a 360 degree view projected onto a large convex surface, a giant eye. The film begins with bucolic scenes of nature that gradually begin to grey into a charred landscape. It may hint towards an omnipotent, all-seeing witness to environmental destruction, or simply point to the inevitability of decay and the cycle of life. Firoz Mahmud's *Soaked Dream* (2010 - ongoing) series are collaborative portraits of families. Together artist and subjects construct eyeglasses from everyday materials, painted acid green. The results are absurd yet hopeful as the subjects, like cyborgs, pose with their eyes directed toward the sky.

Ravaged, despoiled landscapes also feature in Tejal Shah's work *Landfill Dance* (Channel II) 2012 and print *Between the Waves – Inner*. Both are related to a wider investigation into identity, sexuality, agency, the body and its relationship to the world. In this sequence costumed dancers perform choreographed movements through a landfill, robotic or insect-like, never quite human. Marzia Farhana's *Connecting to Infinity* 2011 is a video installation with two screens, each with an unchanging image. One is of an orb suspended in a red sky, and the other of an empty grey landscape with the flat line of the horizon, a dual vision that heralds the possibility of an apocalyptic end, or perhaps a clean slate in preparation for a new dawn.

Epilogue: Prophecy

"Somehow, insanely, the world had caught itself once more – saved itself from the very brink of destruction. Of all the industrial economies left, only Pak-India, reunited, was capable of trying again."

John D. Macdonald, *Ballroom of the Skies*, 1952



Gaganendranath Tagore, *Resurrection*, c. 1922, gouache on paper, 33.37 x 27.9cm, courtesy the Samdani Art Foundation Collection



Shishir Bhattacharjee, *Come and See the Game*, 1995, ink on canvas, diptych, 183 x 183cm each, courtesy of the artist



Ronni Ahmed, *Planet of the Apes*, 2015, 53 x 80cm, acrylic on paper, courtesy of the artist

RONNI AHMMED

(b. 1975, Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Ronni Ahmmed gains his artistic language from a myth-based consciousness, which depicts a meta-physical futuristic ambiance through an energy of parallel earth. His language enables a transcendental journey into the mind and soul, through time and space. To him, space is a moving object, and colours are the vibration of this movement. From mundane to supra mundane, he intends to reconnect the relation of mega force in political world within myths, science, future visions, collected from tales of the vast human culture/history. His recent work, *Divinity from a Spiritual Realm*, directly meets with the reality of the world, undercurrents of philosophical perspective proposing a grand narration of old science/future science, masked in myth and religion. Ahmmed received his BFA at the Institute of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka, 2002. His works have been featured at a number of exhibitions including Asian Art Biennale, Dhaka (2008); 4th Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale (2009); *Seven Hundred Miles of Sleep Walking*, 9th Edition of the New Florence Biennale (2013); *Imago Mundi*, Venice Biennale (2013); *Emerging Bangladeshi Contemporary Art*, Dhaka Art Summit (2014).

DAVID CHALMERS ALESWORTH

(b. 1957, London, UK lives and works in Bristol, UK)

David Alesworth's work echoes his long engagement with Pakistan, as an art educator, horticultural consultant and visual artist. The idea of the garden as an archival formation across cultures has been central to his practice. This has encompassed the urban landscape aesthetic of Pakistan's mega-cities, nuclearisation, environmental degradation and more recently themes focusing on nature and culture. He has a BFA from Wimbledon College of Art, London, and an MFA from Transart Institute, Berlin. In the 1990s he was a pivotal member of "Karachi Pop" and he later moved to Lahore in 2006. Alesworth's work has been exhibited widely including the Asian Art Triennale, Fukuoka, (1996); The Third Asia Pacific Triennial, Brisbane, (1999); Mori Museum, Japan (2003); NGMA, Mumbai (2005); *Half-Life*, NCA Lahore (2009); *The Rising Tide*, Mohatta Palace, Karachi (2010); *Gardens of Babel*, Rohtas Gallery, Lahore (2011); The 8th Berlin Biennale (2014); *The Garden of Ideas*, AKM, Toronto (2014).

SHISHIR BHATTACHARJEE

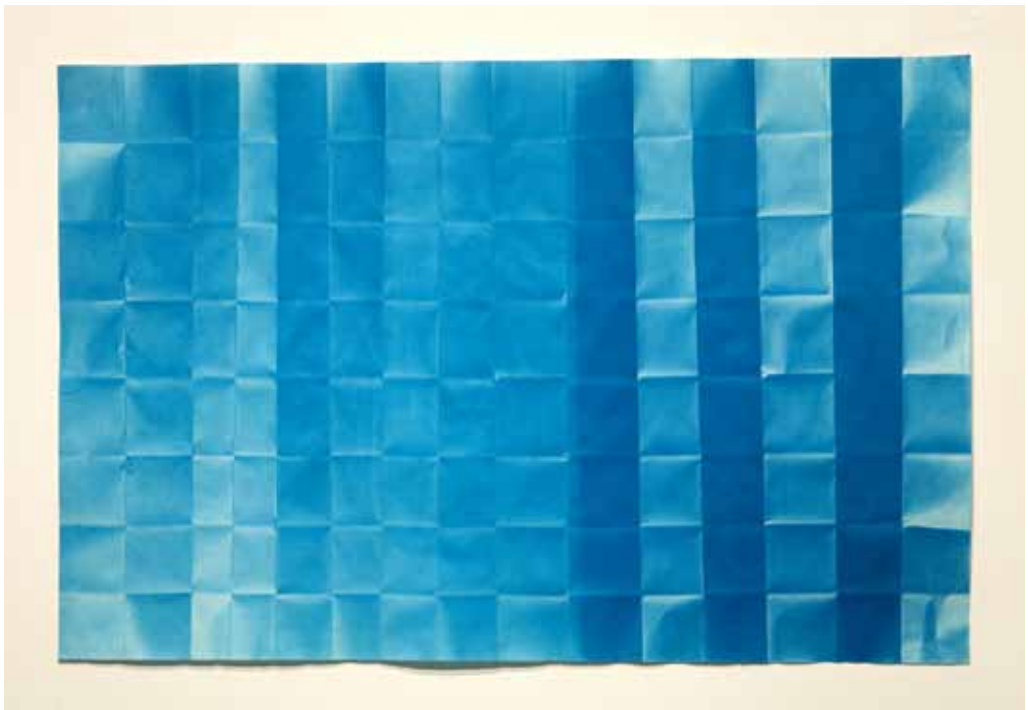
(b. 1960, Thakurgaon, Bangladesh lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Shishir Bhattacharjee is a painter and caricaturist based in Dhaka, where he is also professor of painting at the Faculty of Fine Art at Dhaka University. His satirical paintings were first seen in the 1980s when he was also associated with the influential Shomoy Group. His political cartoons appear regularly in daily newspapers in Bangladesh, including *Prothom Alo*. During the past couple of years, he has produced paintings that appropriate images from film posters, altered to serve his social and political messages. Shishir received a Bachelor of Fine Art from the Institute of Fine Art, Dhaka University, Bangladesh, in 1983. He received his Master's in Painting from the Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University of Baroda, India in 1987. He has published two volumes of his cartoons. Bhattacharjee has exhibited regularly in galleries and at the Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial (1989) in Japan, group exhibitions (1988, 2001), Kalantorer Roopakalpa in Denmark (2002), *Shikor o Phool* at the Gallery Oldham in Manchester, UK (2002), the Asian Art Biennial in Dhaka (2003), *Old Masters Young Voices* in Lahore (2004), *System Error: War Is A Force That Gives Us Meaning* in Siena, Italy (2007) and in the Dhaka Art Summit (2012).



Left: Fahd Burki, *Night Walk*, 2013, screen print on paper, 112.5 x 76.5cm, courtesy of the artist and Grey Noise

Right: Fahd Burki, *Believer*, 2012, acrylics and collage on paper, 152 x 122cm, courtesy of the artist and Grey Noise



Neha Choksi, *Skyfold 8*, 2013, folded paper and light cyanogram, 60.96 x 91.4cm, courtesy of the artist and the Samdani Art Foundation

FAHD BURKI

(b. 1981, Lahore, Pakistan)

Fahd Burki's work focuses on developing a lexicon of characters similar to ideograms or pictograms, but that retain an anthropomorphic quality. Emerging from his interest in ancient and contemporary sign systems such as religious iconography, way-finding signs and corporate logos, the recent work explores the notion of freeing sign systems from the context in which they are found in order to build a fictional narrative around them. Burki graduated from the National College of Arts, Lahore in 2003 and received a Postgraduate Diploma from the Royal Academy of Arts, London in 2010. Some recent exhibition history includes *The Rising Tide*, Mohatta Palace Museum, Karachi (2010); *Below Another Sky*, Edinburgh printmakers, (2014); Aberdeen Art Gallery; *The Importance of Staying Quiet*, Yallay Space, Hong Kong (2014).

NEHA CHOKSI

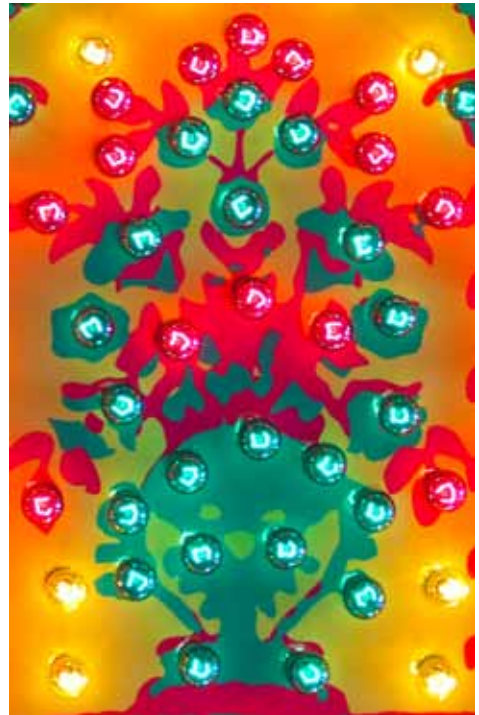
(b. 1973, Belleville, USA, lives and works in Mumbai and Los Angeles, USA)

Neha Choksi is a Bombay and Los Angeles-based artist whose oeuvre presents a materially bound search, and acceptance of, absences and emptyings. Whether sculpture, video, photography or performance, her art embraces emotion and process. She approaches absence through an excess of gesture and presence. Choksi was formally educated in Fine Arts and Indo-European philology, receiving a dual BA in Greek and in Art from the University of California, 1997, Los Angeles and an MA in Classics from Columbia University, 2000, New York. She has participated in a number of live performance, solo, and group exhibitions some of which include, *Minds to Lose*, Project 88, Mumbai and Khoj International Artists Association, New Delhi (2008/2009); *Quarantania*, 3-person show, John Hansard Gallery, Southampton (2012); *Energy Plus*, Shanghai Biennale, Mumbai City Pavilion (2012); Asia Pacific Triennale 7, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane (2012); Kochi Muziris Biennale (2014); *In Leaf (Primary Time)*, Hayward Gallery Project Space, London (2015).

IFTIKHAR DADI & ELIZABETH DADI

(b. 1961 Karachi, Pakistan & b. 1957 Seattle, Washington, lives and work in Ithaca, USA)

Iftikhar Dadi and Elizabeth Dadi have collaborated in their art practice for 20 years. Their work investigates the salience of popular media in the construction of memory, borders, and identity in contemporary globalisation, and the potential of creative resilience in urban informalities. Their work is frequently realised in large-scale installations and has been exhibited internationally, including in the 24th Bienal de São Paulo, Brazil; Third Asia-Pacific Triennial, Brisbane, Australia; Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan; Liverpool Biennial, Tate Liverpool; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Miami Art Museum; Queens Museum of Art, New York; and Whitechapel Gallery, London. Iftikhar Dadi received his PhD from Cornell University. He is an associate professor in Cornell's Department of History of Art, and also served as chair of the Department of Art (2010-14). Elizabeth Dadi received her B.F.A. from the San Francisco Art Institute.



Iftikhar Dadi and Elizabeth Dadi, *Magic Carpet II*, 2015, aluminium, digital print, LED lights, dimensions site specific, variable, courtesy of the artists and Jhaveri Contemporary



Rohini Devasher, *Helio Blue*, 2015, Single channel video, 21:00 minutes, sound, courtesy of the artist and Project 88

ROHINI DEVASHER

(b. 1978, New Delhi, India)

Rohini Devasher trained as a painter and printmaker, and works in a variety of media including sound, video, prints and large site-specific drawings. Her current body of work is a collection of “strange” terrains, constructed by observing, recording, fictionalising, and re-imagining objects and spaces that exist at the interface between science, nature and culture, perception and production. She has participated in a number of group exhibitions including *First Look*, Project 88, Mumbai (2007); *Generation in Transition. New Art From India*, Zacheta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw (2011); *Material Matters*, The Courtauld Institute of Fine Art’s East Wing X Exhibition, London (2012); *But a Pit Stop On a Long Journey*, The Wanås Foundation, Knislinge, Sweden (2012); *Rendez-vous 12*, IZIKO Museum, Cape Town (2012); Kochi Muziris Biennale (2012); 5th Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial, (2014).

MARZIA FARHANA

(b. 1985, Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Marzia Farhana is a visual artist based in Dhaka, Bangladesh. She studied at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka and completed her MA Fine Art from Central St Martins in 2014, where she was awarded a prize for Innovation in Fine Art. She has developed an individual idiom in different media including painting, assemblage and video installations. Her works have been featured at a number of group exhibitions including 15th Berger Young Painter Arts Competition Exhibition, Dhaka (2010); *Young Dhaka*, Zainul Gallery, Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka, Dhaka (2011); *Only God Can Judge Me (OGCJM)*, Dhaka (2012).

AAMIR HABIB

(b. 1976 in Kohat, Pakistan lives and works in Karachi, Pakistan)

Aamir Habib’s most recent works experiment with transparency and light. Having explored the possibilities of various mediums over the years including fibreglass, acrylic, wood and mixed mediums, his work is aimed to give expression to controversial socio-political themes including cultural misnomers, social contradictions, political chaos and violence. Habib studied at the Indus Valley School Of Art And Architecture in Karachi, graduating in the disciplines of Sculpture and Photography with Honours in 2003. His selected exhibition history includes *Anything Goes*, ArtChowk-The Gallery, Karachi (2010); *Division by Zero*, Carbon 12, Dubai (2011); *Mad in Karachi*, ArtChowk - The Gallery, (2011), Karachi; *Miniature Matters*, VM Art Gallery, Karachi (2013); *New Positions*, AB Gallery, Luzern (2013); *STOP-LOOK-LISTEN*, Canvas Gallery, Karachi (2013); 4th Moscow International Biennale for Young Art, Moscow (2014); *Dreamscape*, Amin Gulgee Gallery, Karachi (2014).

ZIHAN KARIM

(b. 1984, Chittagong, Bangladesh)

Zihan Karim hopes to create a dialogue between the real and the virtual. He stages interventions in the cityscape using film projections that complicate the nature of the site. Deploying the capacity of emotion, the sensible image-movement, and our ability to imagine, Karim tries to lead viewers to a perceptual world, to evoke meaning rather than just describe it. Karim is an audio-visual artist who works with a range of media including moving image, installation, sound and painting. Karim studied painting at University of Chittagong, continues to live and teach there and is working as a founder member of the Jog collective. He has participated in various exhibitions including Dhaka Art Summit (2012); International Short & Independent Film Festival (ISIFF), Dhaka (2012); Asian Art Biennale, Dhaka (2012, 2014); 5th Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale (2014); Itoshima Art Festival (2014) and Next Art Tainan (2015).



Ali Kazim, *Otherland*, 2015, watercolour pigments on paper, 56 x 76cm, courtesy of the artist and Jhaveri Contemporary



Firoz Mahmud, *Flight of the desire of castle in the air, a figment is not far that will be very near* (selection from *Soaked Dream and Future Families*), 2012 - present, photographs, mixed-media, sculpture, courtesy of the artist and Exhibit 320

ALI KAZIM

(b. 1979, Patoki, Pakistan lives and works in Lahore, Pakistan)

Ali Kazim develops multi-layered compositions to create uniquely textured realistic paintings that include elements of narrative and fantasy. He works meticulously in watercolour and graphite using techniques gleaned from studying watercolour wash and miniature painting techniques of the Bengal and Mughal schools. Kazim received his BFA degree from the National College of Arts, Lahore, Pakistan in 2002 and an earned an MFA from the Slade School of Fine Art, London, UK, in 2011. His work exhibited widely in solo and group shows internationally including the 12th and 13th Asian Art Biennale, Dhaka (2006/2008); Mid-career Survey at Cartwright Hall Gallery, Bradford (2007); *Beyond the Page*, Asia Pacific Museum, Pasadena (2010); *Creative Cities Collection*, Barbican Exhibition Hall, London (2012); Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai (2012); *Portraits* at Selma Feriani Gallery, Tunis and London (2013); and *Kurz/Dust*, The Centre for Contemporary Art, Ujazdowski Castle, Warsaw (2015). His work can be found in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum in New York; Asia Pacific Museum, USA; British Museum UK; Victoria and Albert Museum UK; Queensland Art Gallery Australia; Burger Collection Hong Kong; Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi, India; Devi Art Foundation, Delhi, India; and Samdani Art Foundation, Dhaka

SANJEEWA KUMARA

(b. 1971, Colombo, Sri Lanka)

Describing his practice as an art of surprises, Kumara's approach explores the surreal and the fantastic. He makes a distinction between his style of painting and the European academic tradition, rejecting established conventions such as pictorial balance, perspective and spatial depth. He earned his BFA in Fine Arts at the University of Kelaniya, 1999, Colombo and then pursued a diploma at the AKI Academy of Fine Arts and Master's at the Dutch Art Institute, 2003 in The Netherlands. Since graduating, he has exhibited largely in Sri Lanka and Europe and has returned to the University of Kelaniya in 2005 as a visiting lecturer. His works have been shown at a number of solo and group exhibitions including *Artful Resistance: Crisis and Creativity* in Sri Lanka, Museum of Ethnology Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (2008); and *Imaging Peace*, Colombo Art Biennale, (2009), and *Contemporary Art From Sri Lanka*, Asia House, London (2011).

FIROZ MAHMUD

(b. 1974, Khulna, Bangladesh, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Firoz Mahmud's is a considered and layered practice which experiments with a wide range of media and materials to address contemporary concerns. His roles shift and conspire between artist as activist engaging within the politics of a nation in flux through a distinct voice that is somewhere within the spectrum of "learned humour". In Mahmud's work there is no urgent need to differentiate between an art conceived as plain propaganda and an art that avoids any such instrumentalisation. Mahmud completed his PhD from Tokyo University of the Arts (Geidai/2011); MFA from Tama Art University (2007). His major Biennial/ Triennial exhibitions include Asian Biennale Bangladesh (2008, 2002, 2000); Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale (2006 & 2009/DAP); Cairo Biennale (2008); Sharjah Biennale, UAE (2009); Aichi Triennale (2010); Setouchi Triennale (2013); and Yokohama Triennial (2014). He has exhibited at Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, Japan; Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo/MOT & Geidai; Fuchu Art Museum; Ota Fine Arts, Japan; Mori Art Museum (Center Gallery), Japan; The University Art Museum, Geidai; Hiroshima Museum of Contemporary Art, Japan; Aichi Pref. Museum of Art and Ota Fine Arts; Japan and the Sharjah Museum, UAE.



Mehreen Murtaza, *Comet Bennet over Delhi, Humayun's Tomb March 1970*, 2013, inkjet with primer on annealed copper sheet, wood, 13.65 x 15.72 x 4.31cm, courtesy of the artist and Grey Noise



Saskia Pintelon, *Book 22 - 'etre'*, 2013, paper, accordion pleated book, 31.5 x 22.5 x 4.5cm, courtesy of the artist

MEHREEN MURTAZA

(b. 1986, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, lives and works in Lahore, Pakistan)

Mehreen Murtaza investigates concepts such as authenticity and objectivity, challenging the division between the realms of memory and experience. The work incorporates time as well as space, granting the viewer a fictional and experiential universe that emerges bit by bit. Her work speaks from a specific position that does not come with political or artistic manifestos. It is searching to find a transnational artistic position beyond Orientalism, consumerism and propaganda. She completed her BFA with honours and her post-graduate diploma in teaching from Beaconhouse National University, Lahore, 2008 and 2009. Her works have been exhibited widely the 3rd Moscow International Biennale for Young Art, (2012); The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York (2013); The Devi Art Foundation (2013); The 5th Moscow International Biennale for Young Art, (2014); 5th Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale, (2014); Askhal Alwan, Beirut (2014) and BALTIC Gateshead (2014). Mehreen was recently awarded a fellowship for the grant Follow Fluxus – After Fluxus 2015, at the Nassauischer Kunstverein Wiesbaden.

JANET MEANEY

(b. 1946, Adelaide, Australia)

International performance artist Janet Meaney is based in Canberra, Australia. Her practice has grown to include installation, video art and performance art. Educated in Adelaide, Janet moved to Europe in 1970 and travelled extensively, eventually settling in the US. She has a BFA (Sculpture) from CCS, Detroit, Michigan. Alongside her practice Janet has maintained an academic portfolio gaining a Graduate Diploma in Art History/Curatorship and a PhD in Performance Art from the ANU. She has been granted the Asialink residency in India and an artsACT travel grant to Finland and Estonia. In 2014 by proxy works were performed in The Netherlands and Germany and in 2015 Janet performed in Colombo, Sri Lanka and in India. Locally, Janet continues to perform in Canberra and travels monthly to perform with Sydney group Base-Metal. Meaney's work has been showcased at a number of shows including, *Your Name in Lights*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2011); *CRAWL*, Performance School of Art Gallery, Canberra (2011); *IRONING*, Gosford Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales (2012); *In the Midst 1*, Shanthiroad, Bengaluru (2012); *Puppeteer*, Ptarmigan, Tallinn (2013); *W.A.S.P.*, Oxford Art Space, Sydney (2013); *Great Australian Wave*, Festival of Unnoticed Art, Dordrecht (2014).

ZOYA SIDDIQUI

(b. 1990, Lahore, Pakistan)

Zoya Siddiqui is based in Lahore and her practice traverses varying media – she works in performance, videos, video-installations and digital photography. Each body of work stems from its own context and specificities – after spending extended time as participant observer within a chosen site, Siddiqui either captures naturally on-going “performances” or orchestrates “performative interventions” within the space, seeking responses from its natural inhabitants and creating momentary spectacles/stages within the mundane in process. Most works are an unwitting collaboration between artist and publics, make use of the social dynamics as raw material too and provide focused views into a momentary performance. Siddiqui completed an BFA at the Beaconhouse National University in Lahore, is an alum of the Triangle Arts Association, and has been part of residencies at the Vasl Artists' Collective Karachi, Theertha Performance Platform in Colombo and In-Situ, UK.



Sahej Rahal, *Tandav III*, 2015 (documentation of performance in 2012), photograph, digital print on paper, 40 x 60 cm, courtesy of the artist and Chatterjee and Lal



Tejal Shah, *Landfill Dance (Channel II)*, is part of the larger multi-channel video installation *Between the Waves*, 2012, Video, sound, 5:00 minutes, courtesy of the artist and Project 88

SASKIA PINTELON

(b. 1945, Kortrijk, Belgium, lives and works in Mirissa, Sri Lanka)

Pintelon was a professor at St. Lucas Art Academy in Ghent in the 1970s and has spent almost four decades living in Sri Lanka. Primarily a painter, Pintelon's work derives inspiration from personal experience and landscapes, combining figuration and abstraction with conceptual and textual references to produce large scale, heavily worked and textured surfaces as well as smaller works. Previous series responded to the absurdity of violence and aesthetics of destruction, the cycle of life and death, the civil war in Sri Lanka, revisited with the artist's poignant sense of humour. Recent work includes portraiture and collage, raising feminist concerns, the over-emphasis on physical beauty and reflecting on the changing social and cultural context of the world and her adopted home from her light filled studio on the south of the island. She exhibits in Sri Lanka, Belgium and Singapore. Recent solo exhibitions include *They Did Make A Monkey Curry*, curated by Joost Declerq, CAB Art Centre, Brussels, Belgium 2015. She participated in the 2009 Colombo Art Biennale in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

SAHEJ RAHAL

(b. 1988, Mumbai, lives and works in Mumbai, India)

Sahej Rahal's installations, films and performances are part of a constructed mythology that he creates by drawing characters from a range of sources, from local legends to science fiction. By bringing these into dialogue with each other, Rahal creates scenarios where indeterminate beings emerge into the everyday as if from the cracks of our civilization. Rahal's work has been exhibited at a number of group exhibitions including *Residencies Open Studio Weekend*, Gasworks, London (2013); *The Arena, the Imagination and the Body*, Khoj Studios, New Delhi (2013); *Residency Open Studios*, Macros Museum, Rome (2013); *Vancouver Biennale* (2014-15); *Kochi Muziris Biennale* (2014); *Sights and Sounds: Film and Video Programme*, Jewish Museum, New York (2015).

TEJAL SHAH

(b. 1979, Bhilai, lives and works in Goa, India)

Their* practice incorporates everything and anything, including video, photography, performance, food, drawing, sound, installation, and modes of sustainable living. Queering everything, they often unself-consciously manifest "the inappropriate/d other" – one whom you cannot appropriate and one who is inappropriate. Having recently come out as an ecosexual, they think of themselves as "some kind of artist working on some kind of nature". Tejal Shah graduated with a BA in photography from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, RMIT, spent a year as an exchange student at The Art Institute of Chicago and another summer trying to get an MFA from Bard College in upstate New York. *Between the Waves* (2012), a 5-channel video installation marks a turning point towards queer ecology in Shah's practice. It tells the viewers a grand narrative, figuratively and metaphorically, as if they have created a new story of the origin of species that has been forgotten for a long time, or has been found from the distant future, something that seems out of place everywhere. Their works have shown worldwide at museums, galleries and film festivals, including the Tate Modern (2006), Centre Pompidou (2011), Documenta 13 (2012) and The British Film Institute (2013).

* Tejal Shah has avoided using personal pronouns as an experiment and expression of retirement from gender conformity.



Janet Meaney and Zoya Siddiqui, *Halos*, Colombo 2015, 12 photographs, LED and plastic halo (documentation of performance in Colombo, 2015) courtesy of the artists



Hajra Waheed, *Still Against the Sky*, 2015, Metal Print, 59.7 x 47.2 cm, courtesy of the artist

HIMALI SINGH SOIN

(b. 1987, New Delhi, India, lives and works in London, UK)

Himali Singh Soin's art is inspired by the relationship between literature and the planet, exploring earthly desires as fantastical, extra-terrestrial, sub-oceanic, trans-continental, nephological, avian, bovine, ornithological, xeno-archeological, horological, toponomical, topological, tautological, botanical, and morphological. At the core her work explores alien distances and earthly intimacy, nativism, nationality and cultural flight. Soin recently completed the fine art MFA at Goldsmiths in London. Recent exhibitions include *An Avalanche of Subtlety*, Pi Artworks, London (2015); *Softly Overripe* at Ha Ha Gallery, Southampton, UK (2015); *Anti-Natural*, Apiary Studios, London (2015) and *Celestial Botany* which is forthcoming at Fabrika in Moscow. She writes poems and essays, published variously and worldwide.

MARIAM SUHAIL

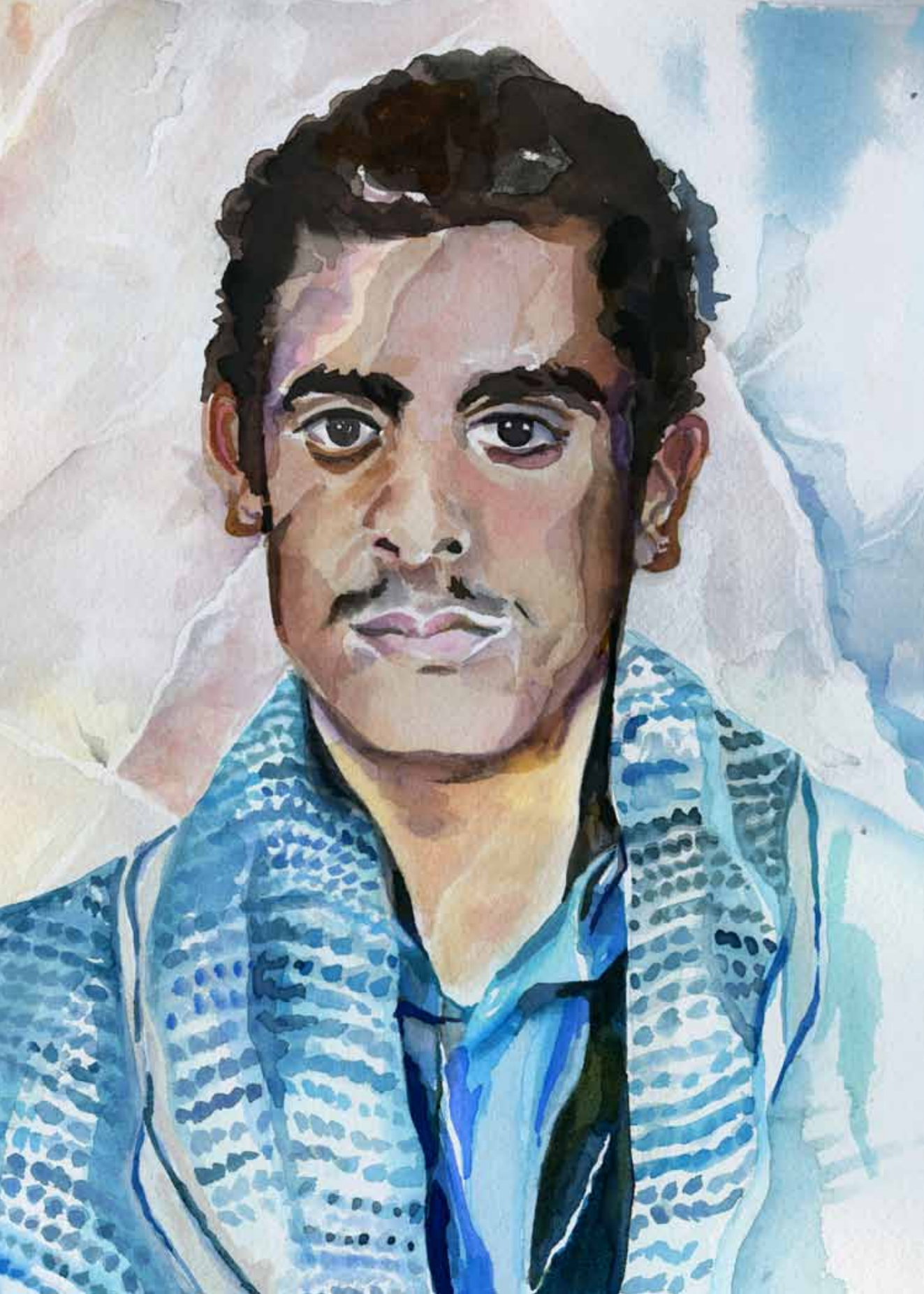
(b. 1979, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, lives and works in Bangalore, India)

Mariam Suhail's work stems from the incidental, undocumented minutiae of conversations, media, culture, and the everyday. She employs languages from within these sources to dissect and re-present what may exist in the spaces between exchanges and ideas, historical events and daily occurrences, resulting in works in the form of objects, texts, video, images, drawings and books. She completed her BFA from the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi in 2001, and is currently based in Bengaluru, India. Her works have been featured at a number of exhibitions including *Sites of Substance*, One of the twelve inaugural shows of the National Art Gallery, Islamabad (2007); The Skoda Prize 2012 Exhibition at the NGMA, New Delhi (2013); Triple Feature Tilton Gallery, New York (2013); 8th edition of the Berlin Biennale (2014); *Constructs/Constructions*, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi (2015); *Minimal Forms of Reality*, Bunkier Sztuki Gallery for Contemporary Art, Krakow (2015). More recently her works have been featured at *All the World's Futures*, 56th Venice Biennale (2015).

HAJRA WAHEED

(b. 1980, Calgary, lives and works in Montréal, Canada)

Hajra Waheed's work seeks to address personal, national and cultural identity formation in relation to political history, popular imagination and the broad impact of colonial power within a global context. Her mixed media practice, consists of ongoing bodies of work that continue to amass a growing personal archive, in response to all those seemingly lost amongst rapid regional development and/or political strife. Waheed has participated in a number of group exhibitions worldwide, some of which include, *(In) The First Circle*, Antoni Tàpies Foundation, Barcelona (2012); *Lines of Control*, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, New York (2012); *Collages: Gesture and Fragments*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Montreal, (2014). Hajra Waheed is the recipient of the prestigious 2014 Victor Martyn Lynch-Staunton Award for outstanding achievement as a Canadian mid-career visual artist and her works can be found in a number of permanent collections including the Museum of Modern Art, NY, the British Museum, London, the Burger Collection, Zurich and Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi.



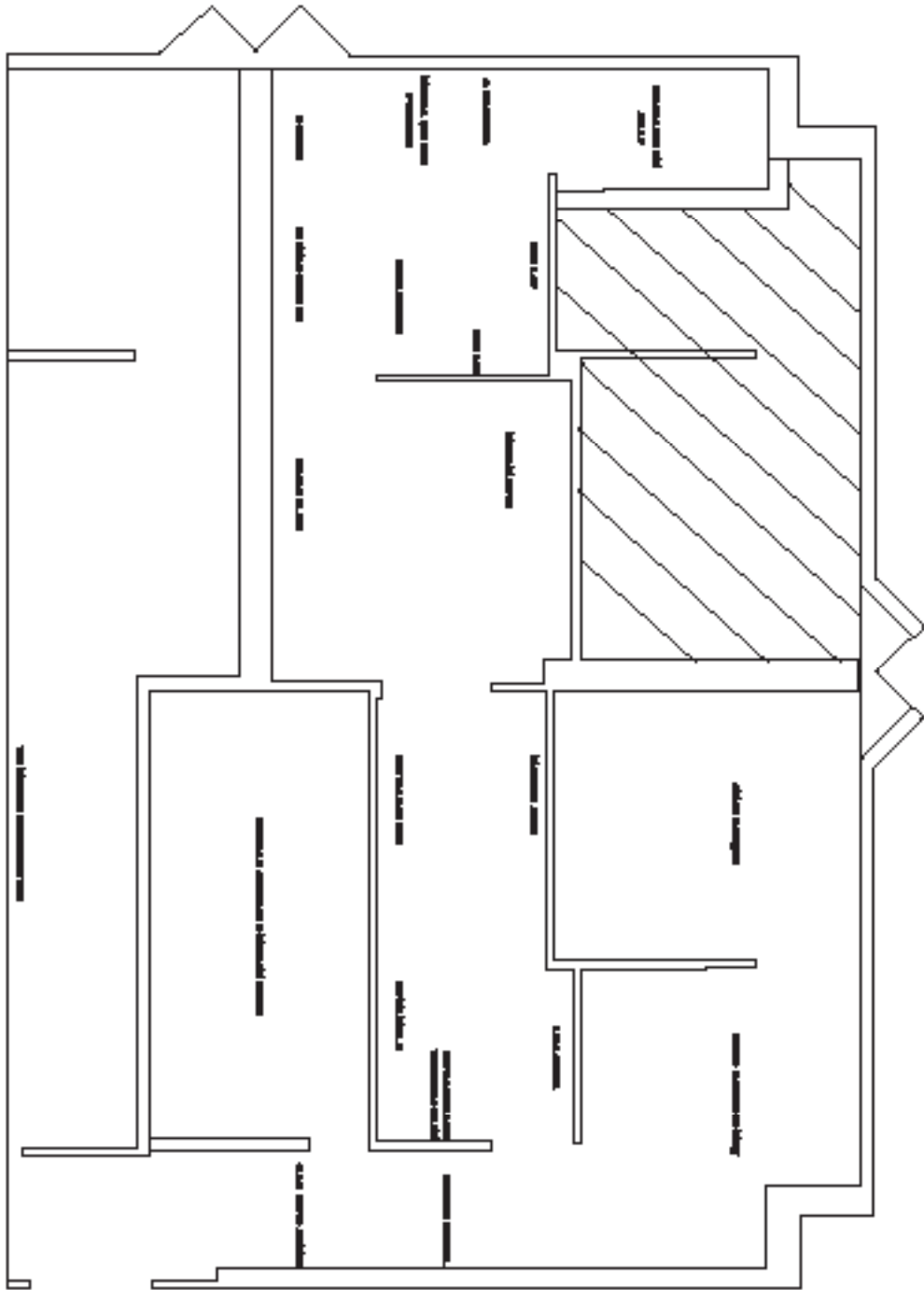


MINING WARM DATA

CURATED BY DIANA CAMPBELL BETANCOURT
Artistic Director, Samdani Art Foundation, Chief Curator DAS

Lida Abdul
Gazi Nafis Ahmed
Pablo Bartholomew
Neha Choksi
Hasan Elahi
Chitra Ganesh
Mariam Ghani
Hitman Gurung
S. Hanusha
Maryam Jafri
Dilara Begum Jolly
Amar Kanwar

Nge Lay
Huma Mulji
Nortse
Tenzing Rigdol
Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam
Menika van der Poorten



MINING WARM DATA

Floor Plan

1st floor, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

"A warm data body is a portrait, not a profile; when a warm data body is erased, the real body remains intact. Warm data is easiest to define in opposition to what it is not: warm data is the opposite of cold, hard facts. Warm data is subjective; it cannot be proved or disproved, and it can never be held against you in a court of law. Warm data is specific and personal, never abstract. Warm databases are public, not secret. However, warm data can only be collected voluntarily, not by force; the respondent always has a choice – whether to answer or not, which questions to answer, on what terms she will answer, and if her answers will be anonymous. A warm database is distinguished from a corporate or government database not primarily by its interface or its underlying structure, but by the way its data is collected."¹

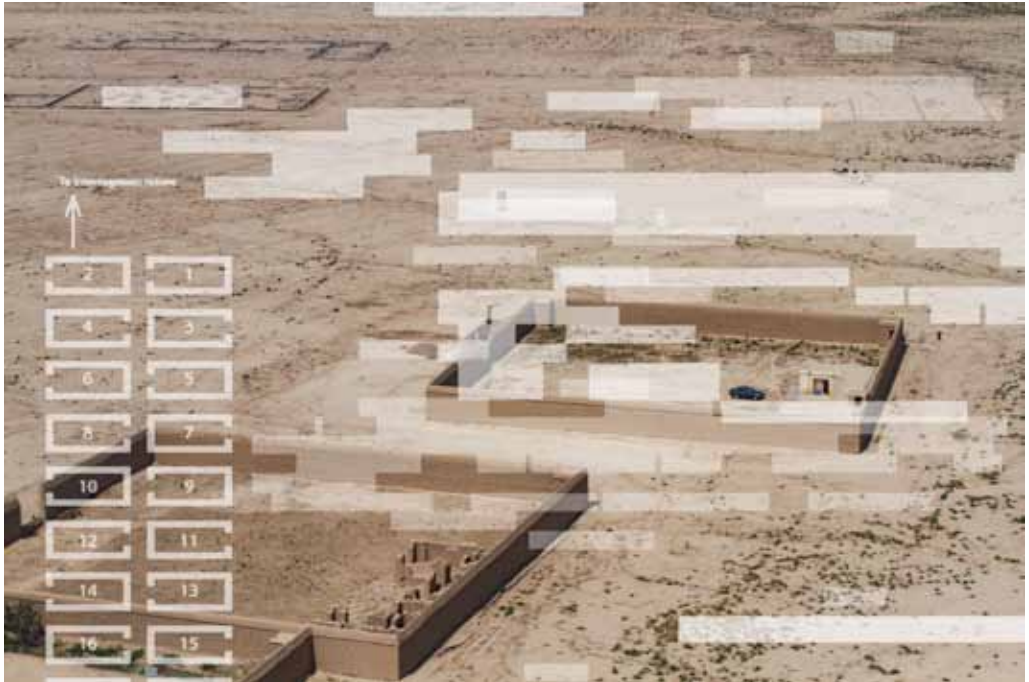
Mariam Ghani

Mining Warm Data is a group exhibition of sculpture, installation, film and photography with roots in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Tibet, Nepal and Bangladesh. Inspired by the eleven-year collaboration making up Mariam Ghani and Chitra Ganesh's *Index of the Disappeared*, whose newest chapter inhabits the central chamber, the show brings the *Index* to South Asia for the first time. The works in the exhibition variously consider how an individual's profile is defined through fantasy and subjectivity, beyond the traditional and clinical methods applied by statistical analyses, biometrics, government data agencies, the economic interests, community interests, or even dictatorial censorship – "Assessment Work" to use mining terminology. Mariam Ghani's definition of warm data is the central point on which these artworks revolve.

Warm bodies, cold bodies, and metamorphic bodies transitioning between these states confront the viewer of this exhibition, which seeks to give agency to the imagination rather than reduce the artworks to their often-disturbing political implications. Some of the imagery in the show is viscerally disturbing such as the decomposing "body" in Huma Mulji's *Lost and Found* (2012); Neha Choksi's removal of warm mind from cold body by means of anaesthetic in *Minds to Lose* (2008-2011); and the final writings of self-immolating monks in *Last Words* (2015) by Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam. The works, however, have not been selected for their shock value. Rather they raise the emotional temperature in the space and enable us to feel the pulse of warm data instead of being numbed by slickly packaged statistics. Except for deliberately suppressed material, such as that investigated by Amar Kanwar, shocking imagery circulates in the media to the point that it risks desensitising the viewer. How does this confrontation translate when this imagery meets us in the affective space that is art?

What is considered "true" often depends on the story told rather than the evidence available, and data can be manipulated to tell different or even contradictory versions of the same life. Statistical data can be corrupted and skewed and statistical arguments can be used to assert falsehoods, something that warm data does not seek to do. We cannot ignore power dynamics within systems and while in warm data we openly recognise subjective biases, datasets have biases too; statisticians work to remove the outliers (also known as bad actors, deviants, and contaminants) to prove their points. This statistical terminology also implies cold hostility to "points" that do not fit into the algorithm. Some statistical terms actually sound threatening: control group, finite population control, breakdown point, class boundary, rejection region... to name only a few. A person is more than the sum of the data points collected about them, although digital marketers trolling through the Internet might think otherwise.

¹Ghani, Mariam. "Divining the Question: An Unscientific Methodology for the Collection of Warm Data." *Viralnet.net*. Viralnet.net, Mar. 2006. Web. 6 Jan. 2016.



Chitra Ganesh and Mariam Ghani, *Just off the Road to Bagram, Afterlives of Black Sites*, courtesy of the artists



Chitra Ganesh and Mariam Ghani, *Person Under Control, Afterlives of Black Sites*, courtesy of the artists



Chitra Ganesh, *Mubarak Hussain*, 2016, gouache, watercolour and india ink on Arches paper, 30.5 x 40.7cm, courtesy of the artist and Gallery Espace*

*For more information about Mubarak Hussain, see page 7

CHITRA GANESH AND MARIAM GHANI

(b. 1975, lives and works in New York, USA) (b. 1978, lives and works in New York, USA)

Chitra Ganesh is a Brooklyn-based artist widely recognised for her experimental use of comic and large-scale narrative forms to excavate narratives typically absent from canons of history and art. Notable international exhibitions include the Asia Society (2005) New York Fondazione Sandretto (2006), Kunsthalle Exnergasse (2011) and the Queens Museum (2013), with solo presentations at PS1/MOMA (2009-10), The Andy Warhol Museum (2011), Gothenberg Kunsthalle (2012) and the Brooklyn Museum (2014). Her work can be found in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, San Jose Museum of Art, Baltimore Museum of Art, the Saatchi Collection, Burger Collection, & Devi Art Foundation.

Mariam Ghani is an artist, writer, and filmmaker. Her work looks at places and moments where social, political, and cultural structures take on visible forms, and has been presented internationally. Notable exhibitions and screenings include the Liverpool Biennial (2004), the Brooklyn Museum (2005), Tate Modern (2007), the National Gallery (2008), the Sharjah Biennial (2009), the Museum of Modern Art (2011), dOCUMENTA 13 (2012), the Rotterdam Film Festival (2013), the CCCB (2014), and the Saint Louis Art Museum (2015). Recent texts have been published in *Creative Time Reports*, *Foreign Policy*, *Ibraaz*, *Triple Canopy*, the *Manifesta Journal*, and the readers *Dissonant Archives* and *The Gulf: High Culture, Hard Labor*.

Black Sites I: The Seen Unseen

Index of the Disappeared is a collaboration between Chitra Ganesh and Mariam Ghani, ongoing since 2004. The Index is both a physical archive of the human costs of post-9/11 US policies, understood as a series of disappearances – detentions, deportations, renditions, redactions and a platform for public dialogue around related issues. *The Index* also produces visual and poetic interventions that circulate fragments of the archive into the wider world.

The Index's current research, supported by Creative Time Reports and the Juncture initiative at Yale Law School, is a legal, visual, and historical inquiry into the afterlives of former black site prisons. The term “black site” is currently understood to refer to a secret prison operated by the CIA as part of their extrajudicial rendition, interrogation, and torture program, active between 2001 and 2009. However, any place that has been temporarily made invisible by (tacit or explicit) agreement to not see something that is clearly there can also be understood as a black site. *Black Sites I: The Seen Unseen* (2015-16), the first phase of the Index's research into this phenomenon, is based on field research in Afghanistan into several types of black sites. The debut presentation of *The Seen Unseen* at the Dhaka Art Summit includes four parts: a series of watercolour portraits based on some of the most well-known witnesses of the black sites; a series of photographs pairing images of sites in Afghanistan with redaction* patterns from Index archive documents about events that took place in those places; a video exploring the circumlocutions through which information that which is widely known remains officially denied; and a neon sign that pairs a phrase from the description of the first prisoner waterboarded by the CIA with the Bangla idiom “covering a fish with greens,” signifying an attempt to cover up something that everyone already knows.

*redaction: the process of censoring or obscuring official texts, with black, or white, blocks of ink for legal or security purposes, withholding key bits of information thought the document is released.



Lida Abdul, *Speaking and Hearing*, (1999-2001) courtesy of the artist and Giorgio Persano Gallery

LIDA ABDUL

(b. 1973, lives and works in Kabul, Afghanistan)

As an artist who works both in performance and video art, Lida Abdul creates poetic spaces that allow the viewer to interrogate the familiar and the personal. Abdul lived in Germany and India as a refugee after she was forced to leave Afghanistan following the former-Soviet invasion in 1979, and was unable to return until the US invasion of 2001. Her work fuses the tropes of 'Western' formalism with the numerous aesthetic traditions - Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, pagan and nomadic - that collectively influenced Afghan art and culture. Her work is guided by a ritualised formalism that insinuates the immediacy of myth and the playfulness of a mind seeking to understand the surrounding world. She was the first artist to represent Afghanistan at the 51st Venice Biennale (2005) and won a Prince Claus Award soon after in 2006. Abdul has exhibited at the Gwangju Biennale (2006), MoMA (2007), Tate Modern (2007), Sharjah Biennial (2007) and dOCUMENTA (13) (2012) and many other leading institutions and her work can be found in the permanent collections of MoMA, GAM in Turin, the Sharjah Art Foundation, and the Louis Vuitton Foundation.

In *Speaking and Hearing* (1999-2001), the artist opens her mouth in the form of a silent scream, her tongue revealing images of her uncle killed in the conflict in Afghanistan and a neighbourhood building destroyed by bombs. This autobiographical work shows the social deformities affecting lives and the history of the region, far more real than any statistical analysis or documentary approach. The apparent slow movement of the video contrasts with the aggressive and fast invasion of the military troops.

GAZI NAFIS AHMED

(b. 1982, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Dhaka-based photographer Gazi Nafis Ahmed's artistic practice deals with his complex childhood memories and departs from moments that took place in the past. Born in 1982, the artist first pursued a degree in art and design, and then switched to photojournalism and he is currently studying photography at the Istituto Europeo de Design (IED) in Madrid. Along his artistic journey he realised the power of photography to enact social change; to impact on the group mind states of the audience. He is known for his work with ostracised drug-addicts and the LGBT communities, whose activism for equality continue across the world. Ahmed seeks to capture many things at the same time; things that are interconnected by nature, non-linear and intuitive, and not necessarily fitting into the context of one single project.

Inspired by the Bengali Baul poet Lalon Shah (1774-1890) and his exploration of soul relative to the body, Ahmed was moved by a drug addict he was working with in a Dhaka rehabilitation centre around 2006 that led him to create the *BARACA* series. While the artist was taking portraits of "the addict," the subject, named Raul, went to a corner underneath his bed and brought out a baby bird that had lost its mother. The artist instead turned to photographing the bird, creating a portrait of Raul more focused on the stigma of his addiction and liberating Raul from the single definition of "addict."



Gazi Nafis Ahmed, *Untitled Pigeon #1*, 2013, 152.4 x 101.6cm, courtesy of the artist

PABLO BARTHOLOMEW

(b. 1955, lives and works in New Delhi, India)

Pablo Bartholomew is an internationally-renowned photographer whose images have earned him the Indian government's Padma Shri Award in 2013, and the Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres on behalf of the French Republic in 2014. In 1975 he received his first World Press Photo award and in 1984 his work on the Bhopal gas tragedy won him the World Press Photo of the Year. Pablo Bartholomew's father, Richard Bartholomew, was a Delhi-based refugee from Burma who became one of India's leading art critics and photographers, and his mother, Rati, was an English professor and theatre activist - who exposed him to a cosmopolitan culture combining Indian and Western modernisms. This informed Bartholomew's visual style, modern and transcending their documentary nature. Whilst teaching himself photography, Bartholomew used his camera to uniquely document India's countercultures, not only revealing a world hidden in the margins, but also sharing his own process of self-making. The presence and charge of the images is largely due to the fact that we are seeing his lived reality; he is as much a part of the work as he is its author.

In 1987, Bartholomew was commissioned by *National Geographic* to photograph 15,000 Bangladeshi men who, in the absence of money and machinery, had to physically close the mouth of the Feni River to control flooding and create a freshwater reservoir for irrigating rice over a seven-hour intertidal marathon, thus building the largest dam in the South Asian country. Bartholomew had stored the negatives from the assignment in a box in the topmost shelf of one of the cupboards in his apartment. A little over a year ago, he detected the aftermath of a leak that had its source in the apartment upstairs that had rendered the area damp and humid. He climbed a ladder to investigate and was horrified to discover that these original negatives had been feasted on by termites that had colonised the cardboard box. The images they had borne had become irretrievable. Not a single one could be salvaged.

Memento Mori is Bartholomew's attempt at resurrecting their corpses, albeit fully conscious of their irreversible state of mutation. In photographing these ruins, he restores and reimagines the intimacy and immediacy of their contents. The photographic gesture becomes a mechanism for coping with the permanence of his loss and an exposure of the futility of the human attempt at preservation. Its display as an exhibition serves to remind us of the collective nature of the disappearance. It is our loss too that this slice of an immense archive is no longer accessible. Bartholomew extends the scope of the series to present visual meditations on the perils of maintaining archives and the fragility of material things, and in doing so, forewarns us of their eventual expiration despite every effort to resuscitate.

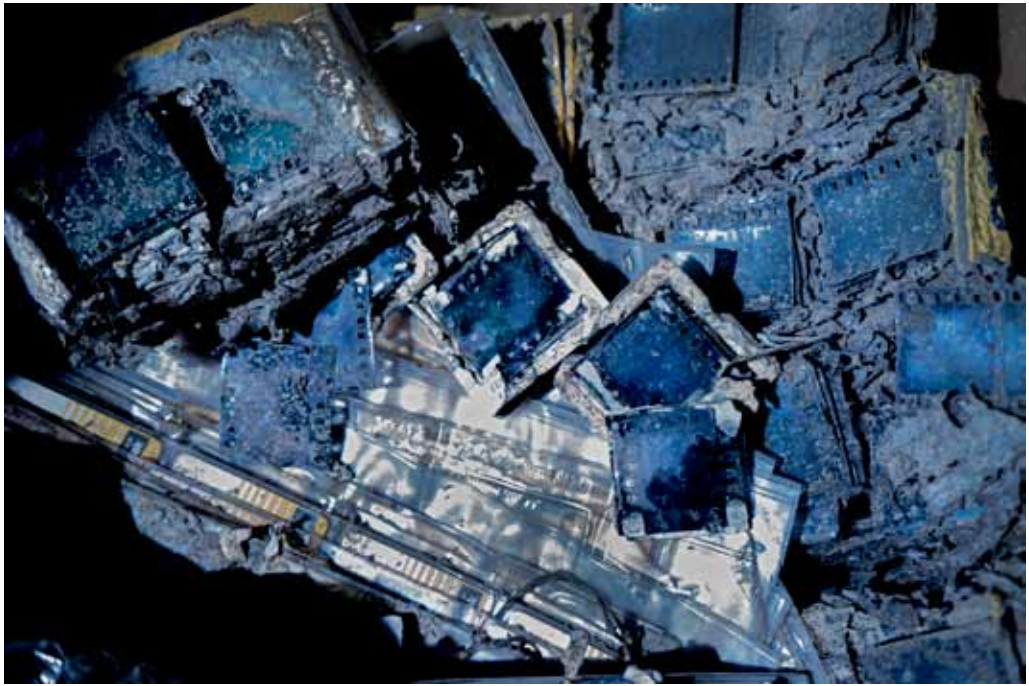
NEHA CHOKSI

(b. 1973, Belleville, USA, lives and works in Mumbai, India and Los Angeles, USA)

Neha Choksi's works present a materially-bound search for various forms of absences (and absencing and emptying). Whether sculpture, video, photography or performance, her art takes matter apart in substance and form, in metaphor and media. Her art focuses presence through reduction and erasure in order to lay bare the longing and liberation accompanying physical and temporal losses. Her works have been shown at the 10th Venice Architecture Biennale (2006), Khoj Performance Festival (2008), Kochi Muziris Biennale (2014) and the Hayward Gallery in London (2015) among others.

Minds to Lose (2008–2011) is based on a performance in which the artist anaesthetised herself and four farm animals while the public were encouraged to pet both sedated artist and creatures. The film looks at issues of presence and absence with humans and animals entering a subconscious state, becoming passive recipients of physical affection. There is a palpable tension between the cold body in the sedated state and the warm body through the desire and existential thought behind this daring intervention.*

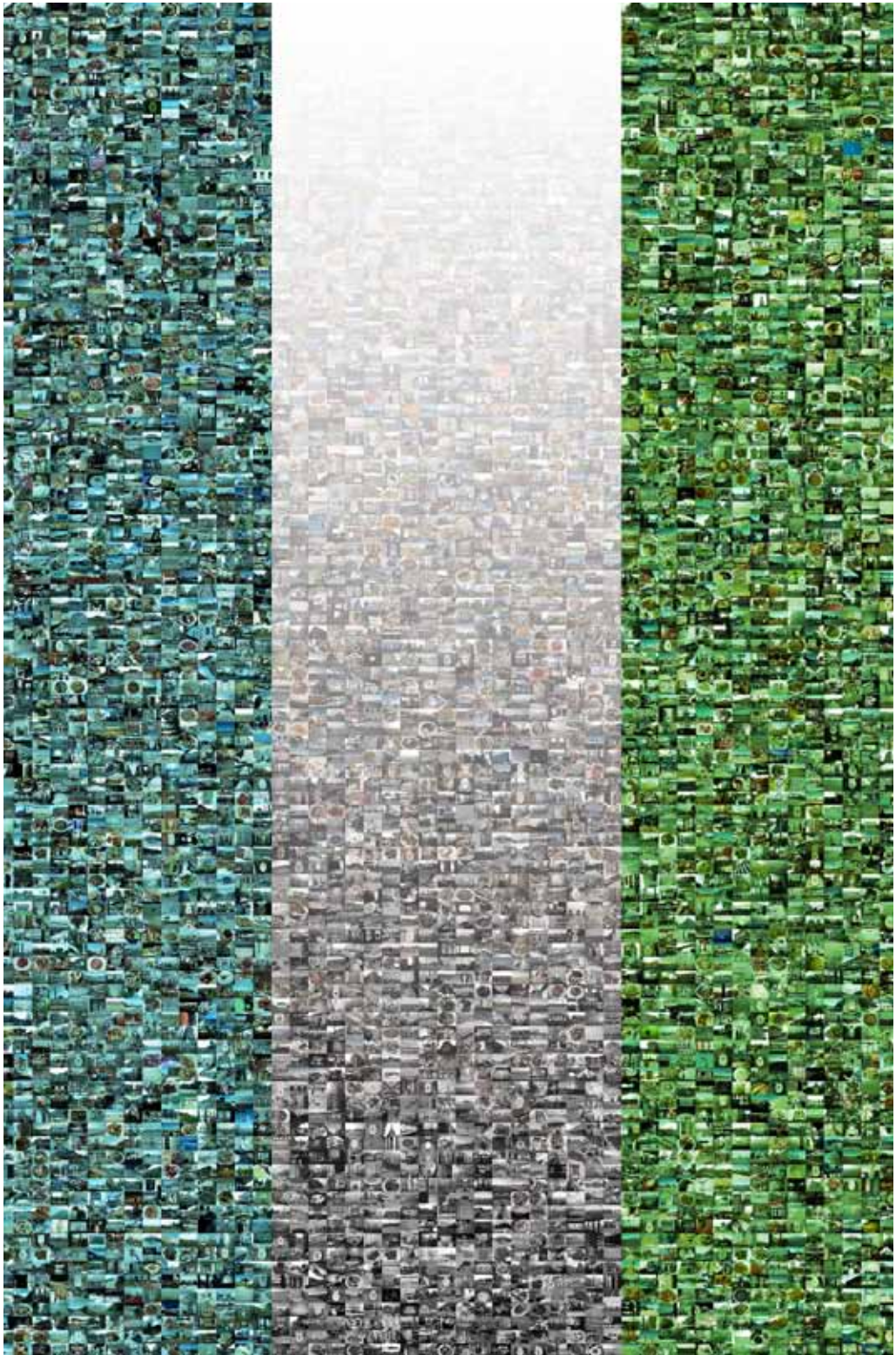
*Please note: no animals were harmed during the performance of *Minds to Lose*.



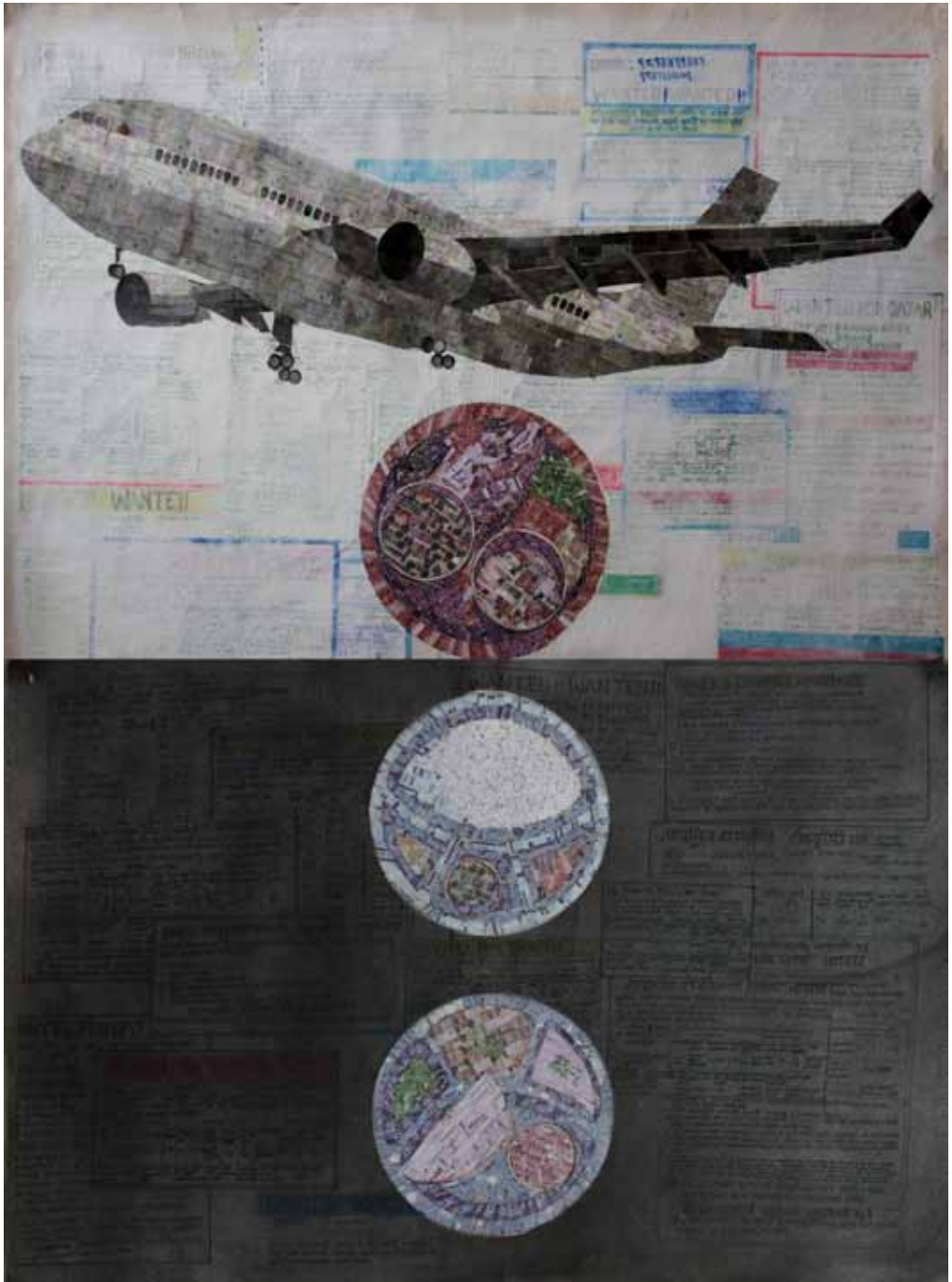
Pablo Bartholomew, *Termite eaten Kodachrome slides*, 2016, courtesy of the artist



Neha Choksi, *Minds to Lose*, 2008-2011, video still, HD, colour, widescreen, sound, 11'54", courtesy of the artist and Project 88



Hasan Elahi, *Thousand Little Brothers v3*, (detail), 2015, pigment print on vinyl, courtesy of the artist and the University of Maryland



Hitman Gurung, collage of printed currency, 2013, pen & ink and acrylic spray on handmade paper, 76.2 x 101.6cm, courtesy of the artist and private collection, Heidelberg

HASAN ELAHI

(b. 1972, Rangpur, Bangladesh, lives and works in Maryland, USA)

Hasan Elahi is an interdisciplinary artist whose work examines issues of surveillance, citizenship, migration, transport, and borders and frontiers. Elahi is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Maryland, and director of the Digital Cultures and Creativity Honors Program. His work has been presented in numerous exhibitions at venues such as Kassel Kulturbahnhof (2005), the Venice Biennale (2007), Centre Georges Pompidou (2007), Sundance Film Festival (2008) and The Hermitage (2008) and SITE Santa Fe (2010).

After an erroneous tip linking the artist to terrorist activities around 9/11 led to a six-month-long FBI investigation, Hasan Elahi began to voluntarily monitor himself by photographing mundane details from his daily life and sending these images—hundreds of them each week for over a dozen years—to the FBI - unusual in a pre-Facebook era. By flooding the US government with information, Elahi was able to create a sort of camouflage to exist in “peace”. This image is a detail from a composite image made up of approximately 32,000 images from that on-going project. The coloured panels refer to SMPTE (Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers) colour bars. This television test pattern has been used in the United States for Emergency Broadcast System tests, during which regular programming would be disrupted and this pattern would appear.

HITMAN GURUNG

(b.1986, lives and works in Kathmandu, Nepal)

Hitman Gurung infuses his paintings, documentary photographs, photo collage and installation artworks with political conviction and personal poetry. He is deeply concerned about the post-Maoist civil war and the current political and environmental instability in Nepal. His recent series of work talks about transitory Nepalese migrant labourers who leave their families and country behind to join the work forces of foreign countries. Thousands of workers leave Nepal every month to the Middle East, and many are injured or die away from home due to substandard working conditions. International migration has increased exponentially since the civil war, leaving a generational gap that affects a sense of community, the passing on of knowledge and economic wellbeing. Recently, Gurung’s work has been exhibited at the Culture and Development, Images Festival, Occupy Utopia in Denmark (2013), Dhaka Art Summit (2014), and The 8th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane (2015) among others. Gurung is co-founder of artist collective Artree Nepal.*

Hitman Gurung’s latest series *I Have to Feed Myself, my Family and my Country* presents the difficult reality that migrant labour is a main factor in sustaining Nepal’s economy. This beautiful collage from 2013 creates meals from currency, bringing a macro-problem to a more relatable micro-level; there are reasons why dreams of young Nepali men inspire them to fly abroad as modern-day indentured servants despite global news warning against answering the constant stream of employment advertisements for migrant workers.

*Gurung will speak about his work with Artree Nepal at the Can Culture Counter panel discussion, February 6th 2016, 3:30-4:30pm, VIP Lounge



S. Hanusha, *Stain V*, 2015, tea bags, glass beaker, strainer and ink, dimensions variable, courtesy the artist and Saskia Fernando Gallery



S. Hanusha, *Leeches*, 2015, Tea bags and ink, 36.5 x 21cm, courtesy the artist and Saskia Fernando Gallery

S. HANUSHA

(b. 1988, Nuwara Eliya, lives and works in Jaffna, Sri Lanka)

S. Hanusha, also known as Hanusha Somasunderam, studied Art and Design at the University of Jaffna. Her work revolves around the ongoing struggle of Sri Lankan upcountry plantation workers that has existed since colonial times, using hand-made strainers and teabags as material to address the exploitation of the labour used to create these materials. The artist employs a play on words, where the strainer embodies the strain suffered by the community, a strain that seeps into all facets of life across generations, leaving an indelible stain. Hanusha's works have been exhibited at Open Space, Colombo (2013), Bamiyan Cultural Center, Afghanistan (2015) and Saskia Fernando Gallery, Sri Lanka (2015).

MARYAM JAFRI

(b. 1972, Karachi, lives and works in New York, USA and Copenhagen, Denmark)

Maryam Jafri's multidisciplinary practice incorporating video, photography, text, sculpture, and performance has been described as a crossroads of cultural anthropology and conceptual art. Informed by a research-based process, her artworks are often marked by a visual language poised between film and theatre and a series of narrative experiments oscillating between script and document, fragment and whole. She has exhibited at the UCLA Hammer Museum of Art (2002) and Film Forum at the Egyptian Theatre (2002), Kunsthalle Basel (2015), the 56th Venice Biennale in the Belgian Pavilion (2015), Bétonsalon (2015) and many other leading international institutions.

Death With Friends (2010) is a single screen video inspired by the diary of Babur, founder of the Mughal Empire in India. *The Baburnama*, written between 1504-1529 represents the first known instance of autobiography in Islamic literature. Everything surrounding the diary remains unknown, such as Babur's motivation for writing an autobiography (a genre unknown at the time), why he chose to write in a vernacular Turkish dialect instead of courtly Persian (unheard of at the time), who the intended audience was, if any, and whether the diary now stands as a literary or historical text.

Journeying through what is now modern day Afghanistan, Pakistan and North India, Babur writes about his conquest of the region along with general observations on the everyday life of the inhabitants. In doing so he presents a portrait of a place that complicates contemporary understandings (and self understandings) of the region and its people. Jafri's film was studio-shot in Mumbai. The set design, conceived with attention to geometric motifs common in South Asian visual culture, is combined with carefully choreographed camera movements, creating a dynamic interplay between architectural and psychic space. A voice over, reading excerpts from *The Baburnama*, accompanies the filmed scenes, creating dramatic tension between history and fiction through the power of a first-hand account.

Getty vs. Ghana (2012) overlaps identical images sourced by the artist in the US stock photo agency Getty images and in the archives of the Ghana Ministry of Information - documenting the country's independence on March 6th 1957. Her investigations uncovered accidental, and possibly deliberate, errors such as wrong dates and captions and reveal that even cold data facts are open to interpretation and adjustment. Three related photo/text works are also shown here: *Corbis vs. Mozambique* (2012), *Getty vs. Kenya vs. Corbis* (2012), and *Musée Royal d'Afrique Centrale vs Getty vs DR Congo* (2015).



From left to right: Corbis vs Mozambique; Getty vs Kenya vs Corbis; Musee Royal d'Afrique Centrale vs Getty vs DR Congo; Getty vs Ghana
Installation View: Belgian Pavilion, Venice Biennale (05/2015), courtesy of the artist



Maryam Jafri, *Death with Friends*, 2010, video still, courtesy of the artist



Maryam Jafri, Getty vs Kenya vs Corbis, 2012, courtesy the artist



Dilara Begum Jolly, *Ditio Abaran*, 2013 courtesy of the artist



Amar Kanwar, *The Face* (from *The Torn First Pages*, 2004-08), digital colour video with sound, 4 minutes, 40 seconds, 2005, courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery

DILARA BEGUM JOLLY

(b. 1960, lives and works in Chittagong, Bangladesh)

Dilara Begum Jolly expresses the deformity and imbalance of society through her artwork with satire, ridicule and incisive irony. Trained in painting and printmaking, she now works in a variety of media including drawing, installation and performance. She has been included in exhibitions at the German Cultural Centre, Goethe-Institut, Dhaka, Bangladesh (1984), each edition of the Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh (of the last 20 years), Triennale Mandible d'Estampes Format, France (1994), and the National 4th Egyptian International Print Triennial (2003) among others.

Ditio Abaran (the 2nd veil) (2013), explores the condition of women working in garment industries of Bangladesh and relates to the burning down of Tazreen Fashion (2012) and the collapse of Rana Plaza (2013). Female workers, especially those in the garment industries, have been a core subject for Begum for several years. Her practice reveals the plight of those whose lives are spent sewing clothes for those with much more privilege, in dire and often dangerous circumstances, and whose loss impacts the entire family for whom she is often sole earner.

AMAR KANWAR

(b. 1964, lives and works in New Delhi, India)

Amar Kanwar's films and installations are complex, contemporary narratives that connect intimate personal spheres of existence to larger social political processes and draw attention to injustices that do not usually find a voice. Meticulously researched and presented, Kanwar's work has been judiciously exhibited in solo projects at the Art Institute of Chicago, USA (2013); Yorkshire Sculpture Park, UK (2013); Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (TBA 21), Vienna, Austria (2014) and the Assam State Museum, Guwahati (2015). Kanwar has participated in Documenta 11, 12 and 13, Kassel, Germany (2002, 2007, 2012). Kanwar has been the recipient of awards including the MacArthur Fellowship in India (2000); the Edvard Munch Award for Contemporary Art, Norway (2005); an Honorary Doctorate in Fine Arts, Maine College of Art, Portland, (2006); and the Leonore Annenberg Prize for Art and Social Change (2014).

Mining Warm Data presents the First Chapter of Amar Kanwar's iconic project, *The Torn First Pages* (2008), exhibited as three films on loop in a dedicated screening room.

In December 1994 the Burmese military dictatorship Intelligence Services and the Police accused Ko Than Htay, the owner of a popular bookshop in Mandalay in Burma of 'tearing out the first page' of the several of the books and journals he had sold. It was stated that during a raid of his home, several 'torn pages' were found in his possession. All these first pages had printed on them the slogan of the military regime and a denunciation of the democratic forces. By an order of the military government these slogans of the junta must be printed on the first page of all materials in Burma. This includes all books, magazines, and even daily newspapers.

"Ko Than Htay did tear out these first pages. Before he sold the books to customers and retailers, he tore out the first page of every single book as his own act of resistance against the military dictatorship so that people who bought books from his shop did not have to see the slogans of the military regime when they read the books.

What Ko Than Htay did was very simple but it was an act of great courage.

Ko Than Htay was arrested in December 1994 for tearing and possessing the torn first pages. He was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment and torture in the infamous Mandalay prison. He was not a member of any political party. He was a book shop owner and he opposed the military regime as an ordinary individual in his own unique way.

Every torn page by Ko Than Htay links him forever with the author of every book sold, with the spirit of every artist striving to work in freedom without restrictions and censorship."¹

¹Amar Kanwar will speak at the Art Initiatives off the Centre panel discussion, February 6th 2016, 5-6pm, 3rd floor auditorium

¹Kanwar, Amar. *The Torn First Pages*. New Delhi: Public Press, 2008. Print. pp 7-9



Nge Lay, *The Relevancy of Restricted Things*, 2010, courtesy of the artist and TS1



Huma Mulji, *Lost and Found*, photo Stefan Altenburger, courtesy of the artist and the Samdani Art Foundation

NGE LAY

(b. 1979 in Pyin Oo Lwin, Myanmar, lives and works in Yangon)

Nge Lay's haunting works vary from performance, sculpture and installation to photography. Most of Lay's works are reflections of her inner perception of the prevailing societies in Myanmar and include historical background and biographical references, often relating to the plight of women in her country. Together with her husband Aung Ko, Nge Lay has also been involved in a community project in his hometown Tuye'dan Village, an isolated place, 340km from Yangon next to an ammunitions factory. Her work has been included in several notable art projects in Singapore, Japan, France, Korea and Vietnam. In 2012 she was a finalist in the Sovereign Art Asia Prize and was a part of the Singapore Biennale (2013) and the most recent 8th Asia Pacific Triennale in Brisbane (2015).

The Relevancy of Restricted Things (2010) developed from a performative intervention as part of the *Thuye'dan Village Art Project*. The artist invited villagers to speak about the hole left in their families when their father, husband, brother or son abandoned them through death, military service or incarceration. The artist lost her father at fourteen, and wearing a mask and lit by fishing lamps, the artist assumed the role of the lost body of the patriarch through the imagination and memory of the villagers. This work comments on the lack of a strong and resilient political figure within Myanmar and the social isolation, rural hardship, and tense relationship with authority as the country opens up.

HUMA MULJI

(b. 1970, Karachi, lives and works in Bristol, UK, and Karachi, Pakistan)

Huma Mulji employs sculpture, photography, drawing, painting, and often taxidermy to create surreal juxtapositions with materials and objects, which are attentive to the absurd and the visual paradoxes of the tragic/comic, fact/fiction. The awkward and scruffy artworks imbue a deliberate anti-heroism, ironically, addressing perceptions of ageing and isolation, oppression, urban expansion and its related follies. Her participation in exhibitions includes *Hanging Fire: Contemporary Art from Pakistan*, at the Asia Society, New York (2009); *The Rising Tide*, Mohatta Palace Museum, Karachi (2010); *Where three Dreams Cross*, the Whitechapel Gallery, London (2010); *The Empire Strikes Back*, The Saatchi Gallery (2010); *Burning Down the House*, 10th Gwangju Biennale, South Korea (2014) and *The Great Game*, Iranian Pavilion, 56th Venice Biennale (2015). Mulji was a recipient of the Abraaj Group Art Prize 2013.

Lost and Found (2012) is a life-sized sculpture of a human figure made from animal hide, lying in a desolate and decomposing state. Whilst relevant to many places in the world it refers specifically to the missing people of Pakistan – a country eclipsed by recent conflict. For years bodies have turned up in the canals of the country, often in Lahore, bloated, and tortured, with missing finger nails, broken limbs, and unrecognisable features, which haunt the artist's imagination. The title not only refers to these missing people, but is in accord with the artist's ambivalent view of Pakistan as a country that simultaneously lives in the past and the future.



Nortse, *Prayer Wheel*, 2007, courtesy of the artist and Rossi and Rossi

NORTSE

(b. 1963, lives and works in Lhasa, Tibet)

Born Norbu Tsering, Nortse's amassed experience has resulted in his creation of striking mixed-media works that experiment with forms and imagery from traditional Tibetan art and culture. Nortse has studied at several schools across South and East Asia from 1980-1991, including the Tibet University in Lhasa, the Central Arts Academy in Beijing and art academies in Guangzhou and Tianjing. His practice addresses universal concerns: global warming, environmental degradation, over-population, alcoholism, the erosion of culture and tradition, and the desire to establish one's own identity in a world of mass media as well as the specific effects of the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) on Tibetan culture. Nortse's works have been exhibited in solo and group exhibitions at the Kathmandu International Festival (2012), Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2012), the Queens Museum, New York (2014) and Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (2015) among many others.

Prayer Wheel, *Big Brother*, and *Automan* (2007) allude to the personal struggles that Tibetans living in "Tibet face," where they are expected to be either the traditional pious Tibetan, the corrupt informer or even, perhaps, the superhero, all idealised imaginings of a Tibetan as seen through Western eyes. In each of these performative self-portraits, the artist dons material markers of his chosen identity, from the prayer-wheel, to the walkie-talkie, to a sci-fi inspired weapon. Stereotypes mask the warm body.

TENZING RIGDOL

(b. 1982, Kathmandu, Nepal, lives and works in New York, USA)

Tenzing Rigdol is a contemporary Tibetan artist whose work ranges from painting, sculpture, drawing and collage, to digital, video-installation, performance art and site specific pieces. His paintings are the products of collective influences and interpretations of age-old traditions, influenced by philosophy and often capture the on-going issues of human conflicts with strong political undertones. He studied traditional Thangka and Sand Painting in Nepal (1999-2003), and continued his painting studies at the University of Colorado (earning a BFA in 2005). His 2011 project, *Our Land, Our People*, involved the covert transportation of 20 tonnes of soil out of Tibet, through Nepal, to Dharamsala. There, displaced Tibetans were given the opportunity to walk on their home soil once again. He has exhibited at the Rubin Museum of Art (2007, 2010), Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv (2011), the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2014) and Queens Museum, New York (2014), 4th International Moscow Biennale for Young Art (2014), among many others.

Monologue and *Monologue 2* (2014) draw upon the traditional technique of gold painting using thin fluid gold lines called *ser ri*. A highly personal and meditative work, Rigdol has created both an anatomical self-portrait and profile where his poems flank the cranium like scientific annotations. Unlike their depiction, however, the melancholy of his verses with their multiple references to independence transcend the vermilion ground, which not only signifies passion, but also references the Buddhist colour upon which meditation transforms the delusion of attachment into the wisdom of discernment.

S.S. "Dahomey" 7 May
My dear Pameeka
I write this on board of a
ship which is taking me
to the country I was talking of
in my last letter. I shall not
be in that country called Congo
before the 23^d of June, but
I will write on the way so
that you might not be too long
without news. - I hope that the
case containing the dresses, hats
lace, ribbon and dolls shall
have reached you when this



Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam, video still: *The Self-immolations of Ngawang Norphel, 22, and Tenzin Khedup, 24. June 20, 2012, Trindu town, Eastern Tibet, courtesy of the artists*

MENIKA VAN DER POORTEN

(b. 1957, London, lives and works in Colombo, Sri Lanka)

Menika van der Poorten's photographic practice is informed by her experience of living between different cultures and communities. Identity, place and the "marking of presence" are recurring themes. Her current work focuses upon communities that experience displacement and are in a "state of flux," inspired by her own family history of mixed race descendants of European settlers who came to Sri Lanka during colonial times. The artist aims to contextualise the "presence and present" of the Eurasian community through their stories. Van der Poorten's works have been exhibited at the National Art Gallery of Colombo (2002), the Lionel Wendt Art Gallery (2006), the Red Dot Gallery (2009), and the Kochi Muziris Biennale (2016). She recently co-curated the Colomboscope Festival in 2015.

Intensely connected to the land yet not of the land, the Eurasian community of Sri Lanka appear like a futureless spectre in history. Big on photographs, letters and stories, her family memorialised and kept the past alive through ephemera (some dating back to the late 1800s). A collective memory is constructed providing the family with a comforting cloak of a collective history. In *The Real and the Imagined* (2015-2016), the artist attempts to make sense of, and unravel aspects of her family's troubled and troubling history through these images, letters and memorabilia, reimagining them into an album and a museum-style vitrine. This archival journey explores aspects of one colonial settler and his family, The European settler patriarch (her great grandfather) whose troubling history (from Sri Lanka to the Congo and the journey in-between) is counterpointed with the story of his troubled Eurasian grandsons (her father and uncle) who rejected their inheritance of wealth and privilege and left the country to follow the path of International Socialism.

RITU SARIN AND TENZING SONAM

(b. 1958, New Delhi, & b. 1959, Darjeeling, live and work in New Delhi and India)

Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam are artists and film directors based in Dharamshala, India, and have made films with Tibetan subject matter for over 20 years, exploring matters of exile, identity, culture and political motivation. Their medium constantly evolves through video installations, archive and architecture-related projects. Together they founded White Crane Films through which White Crane Arts & Media was born, a non-profit trust to promote contemporary art, cinema and independent media practices in the Himalayan regions. Their documentaries include *The Reincarnation on Khensur Rinpoche* (1991), *The Shadow Circus: The CIA in Tibet* (1998), and *The Sun Behind the Clouds* (2009). Their dramatic feature, *Dreaming Lhasa* (2005), premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival. Sarin and Sonam were commissioned by Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary to make a single channel video installation, *Some Questions on the Nature of Your Existence* (2007), which was featured in *The Kaleidoscopic Eye: Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Collection*, exhibition at the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo (2009), and the Busan Biennale (2010).

The work shown here, *Last Words* (2015), provides a sympathetic portrait of those who, through the act of self-immolation (setting oneself on fire), seek to combine political action with the Buddhist ideal of sacrificing the self for a larger goal that benefits many. It is part of a larger, multimedia work-in-progress *Burning Against the Dying of the Light*. In 1963, Vietnamese monk Thich Quang Due was the first documented person to die through this particular form of political protest. His compatriot, the well-known Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh wrote:

"The Vietnamese monk, by burning himself, says with all his strength and determination that he can endure the greatest of suffering to protect his people. What he really aims at is the expression of his will and determination, not death. To express will by burning oneself, therefore, is not to commit an act of destruction but to perform an act of construction, that is to suffer and to die for the sake of one's people."

Since February 2009, 142 Tibetans have self-immolated in their homeland, 120 dying from their actions.





ARCHITECTURE IN BANGLADESH

CURATED BY AURÉLIEN LEMONIER

Curator of Architecture at the Centre Pompidou, Paris

Bashirul Haq

Shamsul Wares

Raziul Ahsan

Saif Ul Haque

Jalal Ahmad

Uttam Kumar Saha

Nahas Ahmed Khalil

Chetana

Rafiq Azam

Ehsan Khan

Nurur Rahman Khan

Mustapha Khalid Palash

Enamul Karim Nirjhar

Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury

Urbana

Marina Tabassum

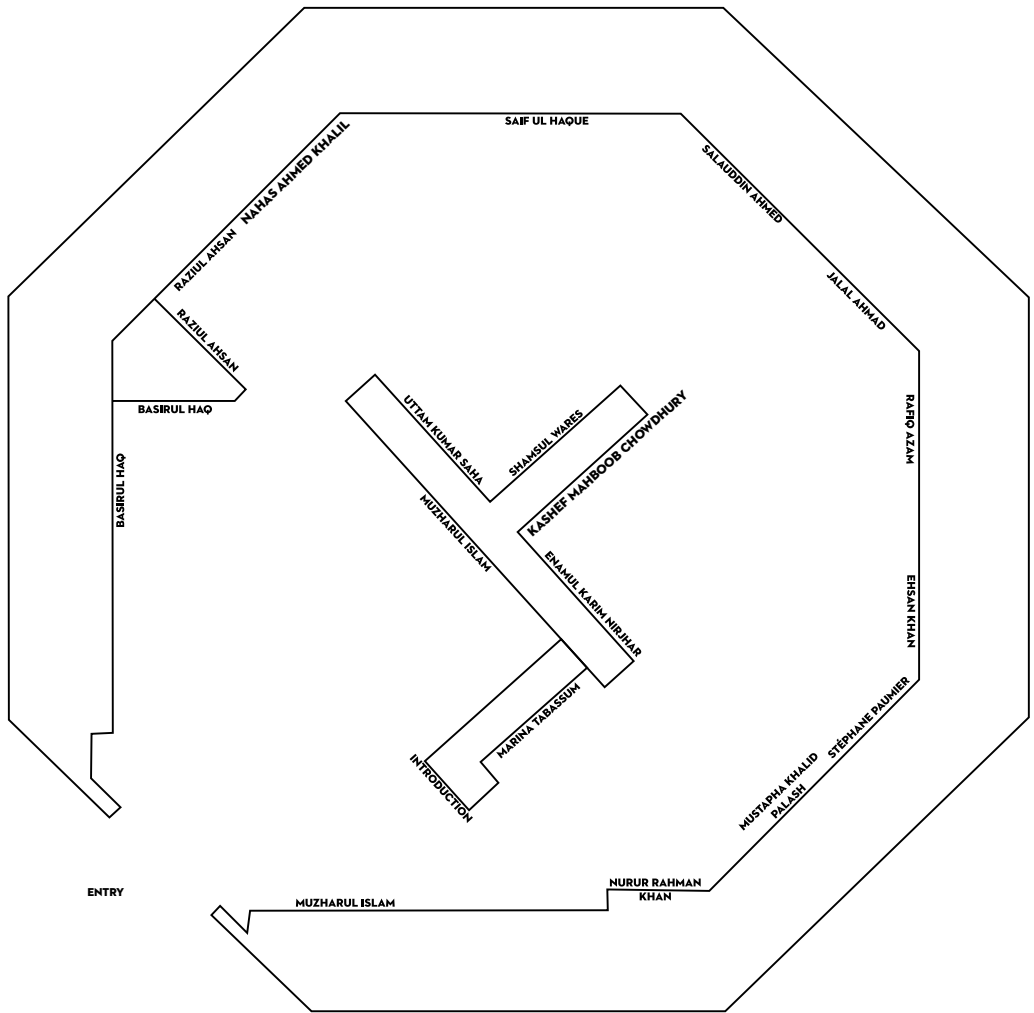
Salauddin Ahmed

Stéphane Paumier

Tours and lectures in the space:

Aurélien Lemonier, *Architecture in Bangladesh* tour, February 5th 2016, 4pm

Architecture in Bangladesh panel discussion, February 7th 2016, 4:30-5:30pm, 3rd floor auditorium



ARCHITECTURE IN BANGLADESH

Floor Plan
 2nd floor, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

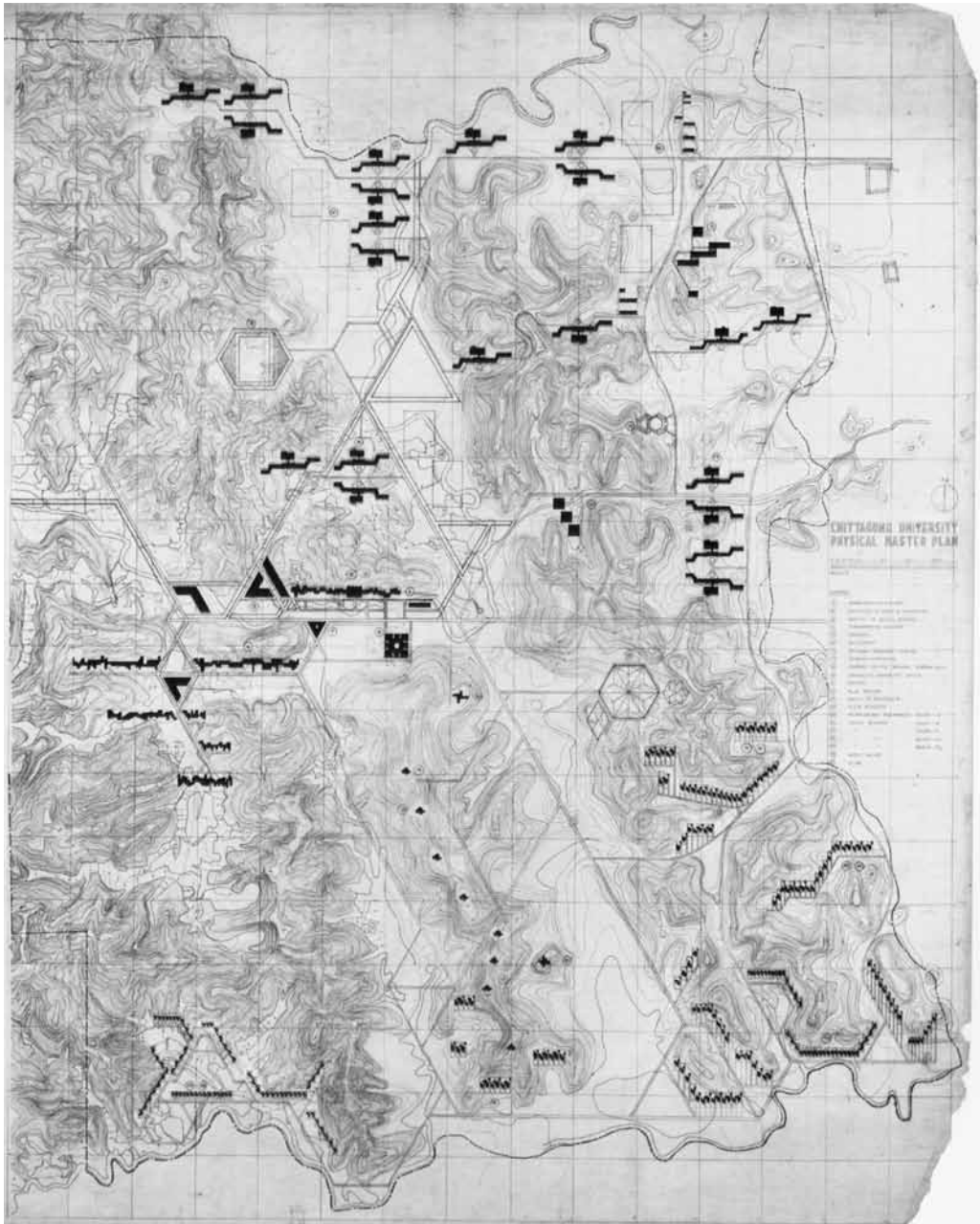
A JOURNEY THROUGH ARCHITECTURE IN BANGLADESH (1947-2017) THE LEGACY OF MUZHARUL ISLAM

Aurélien Lemonier

How to present the challenges that contemporary architecture faces in Bangladesh? The fluvial landscape of the Ganges Delta and the Brahmaputra could be a starting point. The incredible paradoxes of the country's economic development could be another. Bangladesh is just as much concerned by the climatic changes of today as it is by the consequences of globalisation that followed the decolonisation of the Indian sub-continent and the subsequent struggle to build an independent nation.

Muzharul Islam (1923-2012) was an architect who would pursue, from as early as the 1950s, a "humanist modernity" in Bangladesh's architecture. The producer of public edifices of great quality, his commitment made him a prominent cultural figure in the country. For instance, it was he who called upon Louis Kahn to construct the Dhaka parliament building, rather than accept the commission himself. However, Islam's achievements are not limited to simply enabling the construction of this masterpiece of modern architecture. A group of intellectuals emerged from Islam's initiative, bringing forth in the 1980s the millenary culture of Bengal in order to contribute to the emergence of a new architecture for the country. All creative fields were summoned to partake in the reconstruction of a continuous cultural consciousness that had been affected by Partition. The "archaeology" of Bengali monuments (Buddhist, Mughal and modern), undertaken by architects, is synchronous to the regionalist theories that develop in Europe, the United States and India.

For the last fifteen years, as Bangladesh has been taking part in the free market economy, a third generation of architects is now trying to redefine the terms of contemporaneity. As the urbanism of large cities demands new housing strategies, the concepts of sustainable and responsible development require the creation of new modes of action. An exhibition on the Bangladesh contemporary architecture scene would precisely respond to these ambitions: the identification and diffusion of architectural endeavours that are of great formal quality, as well as the work of the "Bengal school" which explores strategies of responsible development, through a social, economic and environmental scope.



Muzharul Islam, Chittagong University, master plan, 1968 - 1971, ©Muzharul Islam Archive

ARCHITECTURE IN BANGLADESH AND THE LEGACY OF MUZHARUL ISLAM, A DISCUSSION WITH KAZI KHALEED ASHRAF DHAKA, NOVEMBER 2015

If the present exhibition, taking place as part of the Dhaka Art Summit, is a journey through modern and contemporary Bangladeshi architecture, then the recurring task of this journey is the search for a “nation building architecture”. Although today the word of “identity” may seem difficult to use due to its loaded connotations, we see nevertheless, in Bangladesh, from modernism to regionalism, from independence and liberation, into the current era of globalisation, that the primary challenge of architecture here is one of finding a common cultural identity.

When and how do you identify the origin of modernity in Bangladeshi architecture?

The question of modernity, modernism and identity depends on what time frame we are talking about. Should we start in the 1950s when architectural modernism arrived here? I tend not to identify “modernity/modernism” with that time right away. The original time frame, as far as political and cultural practices are concerned, is older, rooted in the colonial presence here in Bengal and in India. As you know, the British enterprise largely took place in Bengal: it is here that the British landed first and where they began their operations that started with commerce leading to establishing an imperial power. Afterwards, the English went to Delhi and ruled the rest of India. The idea of modernity has to be seen in the light of colonial history, different than the practice of modernity seen through the lens of globalisation now.

We can highlight three phases if you like: modernity as part of a colonial history, modernity as emerging in the field of architecture beginning in the 1950s, and modernity refracted through globalisation. Each phase has its own complexity. Even now, we really have to rethink the relationship with the colonial West, which ironically brought the culture and practice of modernity in terms of rationalism, individualism, education, laws and institutions. I say ironically because colonialism enabled Bengal to adopt those institutions and practices, and begin the question of “who are we”? The question of identity didn't emerge before this. It arose when major transformations were taking place culturally, individually, and existentially within the period of colonial turmoil.

I would describe the whole experience as a very complex relationship between acceptance and resistance. Some people accepted the British, working with them, some people resisted, struggled strongly; it's a complex interplay between acceptance and resistance. On the one hand, accepting the major transformation caused by the colonial power led to a lot of enlightening things as well as disruptions. On the other hand, the colonial period led to looking at things broadly, globally. The nineteenth century was the time when an international and world civilisation was strongly introduced. And we felt this world civilisation in every aspect of Bengali culture, such as literature, paintings, and later on architecture. Here lay the foundations of Bengali modern culture. Fantastic events came about from that situation. A key one was the founding of the Bengal School of Art that broadly became the foundation of modern art in India, one of the main streams of what some people call the “Bengal Renaissance”. In a certain way, being aware about ourselves, asking the question of identity... nobody attended to this question two hundred years ago. But this happened in the complex interaction with the British and the West. Because of their presence, we were beginning to look at ourselves, at how we were constituted. That led to a productive output, a worldly openness...

The Bengal Renaissance is often critiqued because it was led by a Hindu elite in Calcutta. Nevertheless, it had a strong impact on an overall Bengali culture. It was led by Raja Ram Mohan Roy the reformer. The movement can still be considered the basis of the modern formation of Bengali identity, all of which may also explain a lot of things about Muzharul Islam in the 1950s. I would like to argue that Muzharul Islam is the architectural representation of the “Bengal Renaissance”, though he figures certainly quite late in the time span. In cinema, it is the same with a major figure like Satyajit Ray...

Let me tell you a story that will highlight what I am talking about. If I remember well, when Simón Bolívar liberated what became Bolivia, Raja Ram Mohan Roy arranged a big feast in the streets of Calcutta. Just think about that: we are in the nineteenth century, and a remote country, which became Bolivia, liberated from its colonial rulers, and that was being celebrated in Calcutta. This is what we mean when we say being part of a world civilisation. This also illustrates Muzharul Islam's ideology: being part of the world as well as being Bengali. Each architect has to figure out how to play this double obligation: acceptance and resistance. That is how I would describe the road to modernity.

Is modernity a construction of the self?

If I have to understand modernity, I would say it starts when you become conscious of yourself ... which is not necessarily a wonderful thing... We could describe it as looking at yourself in a mirror, like the story of Narcissus: he sees himself in the reflection of the water and he falls in love with himself. But he cannot touch his reflection, make it palpable... That could be about identity: once you become conscious of yourself, you have to face a split, the distance between yourself and the reflection you have of yourself. If I use that imagery in our discussion, modernity may suggest we will never get back to tradition reflected over there, we can never retrieve the past, we can never get our "fantastic" golden age in history because a rupture has happened... And if modernity produces this rupture, it allows you to accept it and as well to claim it. But you can't claim it in copying things from the past, or by adopting things from outside. The solution is to reconstruct. This is the condition from where Muzharul Islam started. He did not copy any kind of elements from tradition. If he allowed himself to be called a regionalist, it is because he was strongly devoted to the spirit of the place, its political history, and its cultural legacy. So there is an awareness of identity, but an identity that needed to be constructed. And that is the struggle.

This struggle, which Muzharul Islam began in the field of architecture, was carried out in a new architectural language, the language of abstraction, which had nothing to do with symbolism, iconic reference, or even figuration. Was abstraction, as an architectural language, a strategy to deal with this struggle?

Absolutely. That is a very important point. There were various streams among the artists of the Bengal Renaissance; one was literally and directly inspired by folk art, pre-modern traditional art, another experiment was what we could call abstraction adopted from European modernity. Muzharul Islam was very clear about architecture. Even until the 1950s, the main reference in architecture was the language of colonial architecture, especially those of neoclassical imperial buildings. One other option would be deriving a language free of European references, one that may have been available from buildings in rural areas or monuments of the past. The third option was to adopt a modernist language. In the 1950s, nobody would, nobody could adopt a colonial language for obvious reasons - we threw them out! Certainly, it was the same with traditional architecture, much of it was a thing of a stilled past. Muzharul Islam was sceptical about tradition, because some of it contained a history of repression and tyranny. That is why Muzharul Islam chose abstraction as a language. It was not adopted for stylistic reasons but from an ethical and political viewpoint. It was also climactically very viable. That was a second reason. Modern architecture works well in tropical climates.

How would you describe the situation of Bangladesh at the beginning of the 1950s and its link with other countries of the subcontinent?

As you know, during the 1950s, Bangladesh was part of Pakistan. It was a new country, a new nation with its own agenda and plans for new institutions and buildings. It was the same for India, which commissioned the plan for Chandigarh. New institutions had to be made. In India, they were supposed to express a socialist, secular, and industrial world-view. A little bit of that circulated in Pakistan, but in a subdued way. Pakistan was established as an Islamic state on a religious line. This became more and more problematic moving from the 50s toward the 60s. At the beginning, Bengalis were accepting of the state of Pakistan, but by the mid-1950s, they realised that they may have struck a bad deal. Being part of this religious state would mean suppressing the pluri-secular culture of Bengal. Muzharul Islam was part of this political consciousness and became more and more involved politically.

This was basically part of the larger political and cultural movement of the 1960s in Bangladesh against the increasing oppression by West Pakistani authorities, resulting in the Liberation War and Independence in 1971.

Going back to the question of architectural expression, the West Pakistan commissions for public buildings were asking for motifs recognised as “Islamic”: domes, arches, whatever. Neither Muzharul Islam nor Louis Kahn would have anything to do with those demands. For instance, when Louis Kahn was asked to design the Presidential residence in Islamabad, he declined to use Islamic-Persian motifs, and at the end lost the commission. In Bangladesh, things were different.

We are talking about the social involvement of architecture. It is not only about constructing buildings, it is about how to build a society. Muzharul Islam understood this. How then did the idea to organise the Chetana Society come about?

From independence, Muzharul Islam single-handedly innovated a modernist language in his buildings. We must recognise that he tried to establish, to the largest degree, a norm for a modern culture in architecture, which is about discourse, investigation, rational practices and finally about being aware of the contribution of architects in society. Architecture is not only about corporate or commercial buildings. Muzharul Islam was able to bring about the notion of self-critique to the role of the architect. He was president of Institute of Architects of Bangladesh, and by his activist work he transformed the culture of being an architect. Maybe Bangladesh is a small country, and probably, even today, people only see the disasters. But Bangladesh was also a theatre for important events in South Asian modernism. During the 1960s, Bangladesh played a significant role, notable because of Louis Kahn obviously. Kahn brought up so many questions, including the question of spirituality. This was perhaps too problematic to put forward in the US at that time, but in India and in Bangladesh, it did make a lot of sense. At the same time, Muzharul Islam brought Paul Rudolph and Stanley Tigerman. Constantin Dioxidis came as well because he was commissioned by Pakistan to establish the master plan of Islamabad. Richard Neutra came on his own and built a couple of buildings... So in the 1960s, there was a fantastic group of architects working in Bangladesh who made exemplary buildings, which we might call “tropical architecture”.

By the 70s and the beginning of the 80s, the track of the architectural journey seemed to have been lost. For the young architects - we had just graduated - the question was what to do now? The old debate on, if you call it “identity” - I don’t use that word anymore, but in the 80s, yes, we did use this word and we questioned its consequences or lack thereof. What about appropriateness? What about culture? Globalisation had not yet come but architects seemed to have already lost the authentic sense of responsibility to culture and community that fundamentally led us to a different kind of wondering. First, how would we be able to build a new kind of consciousness about the obligation of the architects toward society? Secondly, how could we rethink history and tradition? Those questions came in order to establish a new “conversation” between architecture and the other cultural disciplines like literature, poetry, archaeology, history... Muzharul Islam was able to reconnect the younger generation of architects with major intellectuals in those cultural fields, because he knew most of them. For us, it was a fantastic opportunity to share a platform of debate and discussion. Before that - if I can say so- most of us would have asked why should we be listening to Bengali music to do architecture? We were able in a way to reintegrate all that in a kind of new “renaissance” if you want. Chetana could literally translate as “consciousness”. It brought a new consciousness for re-integrating all these areas that perhaps can have a huge impact how you think and do architecture. And I do personally believe that Chetana did have a huge impact in terms of developing a new sensibility and awareness of place, geography, and culture.

What happened after the fall of the Soviet Union, regarding the spread of globalisation and the liberalisation of the economy? In just a few decades in a city like Dhaka there seems to me to have been a huge impact. How would you explain this new challenge over the last twenty years?

That is a huge question.... there are two issues here, first is about contemporary challenges, second is how Dhaka has transformed.



Muzharul Islam, Stanley Tigerman, Polytechnic institutes, Sylhet, 1966 - 1978, ©Muzharul Islam Archive/photography Nurur Rhaman Khan

The German sociologist Ulrich Beck has described the contemporary phenomenon as a “second modernity,” and as a new paradigm compared to what we call the first or European modernity, which was an ideology for transforming society into a better world. Architecture, and more generally modern culture, was looking for a universal language that could be understood and adopted by anyone; roughly speaking, it was a kind of salvation for humanity. The second modernity does not particularly care about a societally better world. It is really about, as Beck describes, risks and speculations, based on monetary flow, new technology and information systems. We can’t focus on culture anymore rooted only into geography and history; it has to be rephrased from the condition of transnational exchanges. Yes, boundaries do still exist, yes nations are still there, but porosity is shaping our societies more than ever. Look for instance what is happening in Europe with Middle Eastern refugees... The transnational flow became the term of reference. Historians used to describe migration from rural countryside to cities during the first Industrial Revolution as a major historical event, but for the last thirty years, people have been moving from country to country in an intense way; this is unprecedented. You can find large communities of Bengalis in London, New York, and San Francisco for instance. And there are Bengalis living inside Bangladesh. Identity is no longer defined by the country from where you are, it is also about where you will be heading.

In this situation, people have new desires, new requirements. Architects are also in this game and their obligations have changed. This is a long discussion, but I will make it simple. I would say that the dark side of the current transformation is in the widening of inequality, which we see especially in more explosive ways in cities like Cairo, Mumbai, Karachi or Dhaka, for instance. So, risk and speculation, the globalised economy, transnational migration, these are all triggered by a consumerist culture and wealth formation. Some will reach it, some will not, and that will compound problems.

Radical transformation of the landscape, of cities like Dhaka or Chittagong, is happening not only because of things inside Bangladesh but also because of a global chain of forces. We are part of the global network. And transformations are happening in such an accelerated way that you can’t even follow what is going on. Thirty or forty years ago, we had policy makers, planners, industrialists, to organise our state of affairs, but today we cannot figure out how to deal with the complex transformation that is going on.



Muzharul Islam, Institute of Fine arts, Dhaka, 1953 - 1955. ©Muzharul Islam Archive / photography Nurur Rhaman Khan

In a way, it is out of control and you cannot even conceive it properly. Beck has provided one idea. In a way, challenges for the city were much easier in the 1950s than today. We need to have a new kind of intelligence to handle contemporary evolutions. We are still thinking about a much more fixed, manageable kind of destiny, but Dhaka is moving on to new fluctuating terrains. I am not going to make a list, but Dhaka faces challenges. Having looked at many cities, I describe Dhaka as the toughest city in the world. Still devoted to this topic, some of us feel obligated to do something. The challenge is huge and eventually traditional intelligence will not help us. To handle a situation like Dhaka, we need to reposition our understandings, what we know and what can be done.

What do you mean when you are talking about a new kind of intelligence? According to you, what kind of shift do you think needs to be made to deal with the complexity of contemporary life?

From my point of view, it is not enough to note what is wrong in our city, the traffic, social inequality, lack of public facilities. We know these. The challenge is elsewhere. To me it is how a city like Dhaka is going to be reorganised with the landscape. It could sound like a nice phrase around a picturesque condition, but working with the landscape involves new political, ethical, and environmental agendas.

First of all, I think that the European idea of the city will not completely work here. Everybody is talking about organisation and urbanisation in a very negative way. But we must describe the growth of the city in a much more positive manner. We don't have a proper translation of the beautiful French concept of *urbanisme*. To think about the city in a positive and dynamic way, we should look at the new pulse and tempo of the city. The city can be an economic generator, and actually it is, but if I talk about a new intelligence that means a new way of thinking about the inner dynamic of the city. It is not only a new language, but rather a new set of concepts. And this must engage the landscape - the aquatic, wet landscape. Dhaka has decent regulations. But a typical way of thinking through these regulations is to push the water away and make a big division between "dry" and "wet": the city and society is dry, while the countryside, the farms are wet... such conceptual division cannot work in Bangladesh. Wetness and dryness should be interactive in a new urban dynamic. Urbanism should include this condition of intertwining; it could bring about a new kind of morphology that has not been thought of yet.

As architects, we have to produce new ways of thinking. We cannot give up and hand over this responsibility to engineer or planners or policy-makers. It is the job of the architects to do that. We know that in the past many architects did just that. Look at Le Corbusier who articulated the image of the modern city.

My point is architecture is bigger than architecture. By that I mean that, architecture is not about single buildings, it has to go beyond that to a larger sphere. To rethink the morphology of the city, the landscape orientation has to engage with water instead of pushing it away. That is the next frontier and that is what I am devoted to. I think, yes, that is the continuation of the legacy of Muzharul Islam.

Kazi Khaleed Ashraf is a Bangladeshi architect, urbanist and architectural critic, and currently Director-General of Bengal Institute of Architecture, Landscapes and Settlements in Dhaka. Ashraf received his Bachelor of Architecture from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Master's from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and PhD from the University of Pennsylvania. He is also Professor of Architecture at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Ashraf has also taught at the University of Pennsylvania, Temple University and Pratt Institute.

Ashraf has authored a number of publications including, with Saif Ul Haque and Raziul Ahsan, *Pundranagar to Sherebanglanagar: Architecture in Bangladesh*, (Chetana, Dhaka, 1997); with James Bellurdo, *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia - Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde* (New York, The Architectural League of New York, 1998); *Designing Dhaka, A Manifesto for a Better City* (Loka Press, Dhaka, 2012); *An Architect in Bangladesh: Conversations with Muzharul Islam* (Loka Press, Dhaka, 2014); *The Hermit's Hut: Architecture and Asceticism in India* (University of Hawaii Press, 2013); with Richard Saul Wurman and Grischa Ruschendorf, *Louis Kahn: House of the Nation* (ORO Editions 2014). Ashraf received the Pierre Vago Journalism Award from the International Committee of Architectural Critics for the Architectural Design publication *Made in India*.



Muzharul Islam, Jahangir Nagar University, Savar, 1967 - 1970.
©Nurur Rhaman Kahn



Marina Tabassum, Baitur Rauf Jame Mosque, 2010, ©MTA/Hassan Mohammad Rakib



Dhanshiri Housing, Dhaka, 1992 - 1995, ©Bashirul Haq



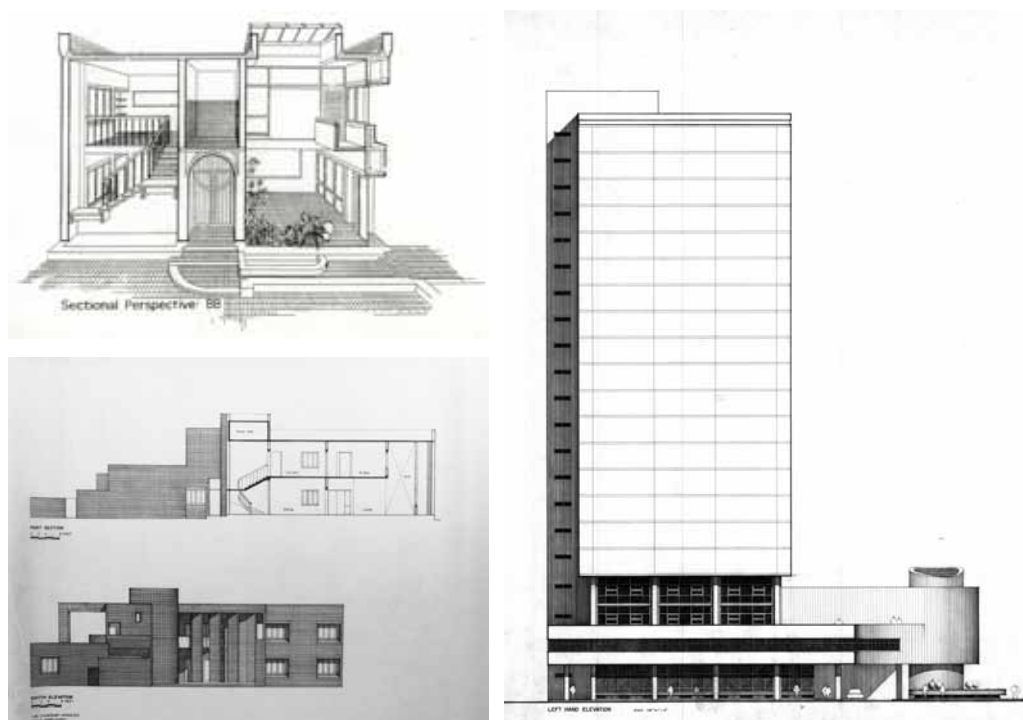
PRISM, Cyclon shelter, 1992, ©Bashirul Haq

BASHIRUL HAQ

Bashirul Haq embarked on his academic career from 1959 to 1964 in the National College of Arts, Lahore, Pakistan before pursuing it in the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, USA from 1971 to 1974. He completed several works during the 1970s in New Mexico as a junior architect, such as the Master Plan of the University of New Mexico, the scope of his work was to incorporate changes to the Design of new parking areas and update the Master Plan.

He then returned to his homeland to build one of his most famous works: the Chowdhury Residence realised for former President of Bangladesh, Abu Sayeed Chowdhury, in 1978. This Dhaka residence was nominated for the Aga Khan Award of architecture and was followed by other projects in the city such as the Century Apartment Complex and Kalindi Apartment Complex, both nominated for the Aga Khan Award.

Bashirul Haq has been active as an architect for more than 45 years now, has completed as much as 250 buildings, and also teaches in the department of architecture of the Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology in Dhaka. His involvement and awareness about environment and climatic issues is largely cited and his Community Based Multipurpose Cyclone Shelters at Tolatoli, Kachubunia and Khandkar Para, Teknaf and Cox's Bazar, commissioned by the German Red Cross, were shortlisted for the Aga Khan Award for architecture.



Top left: Basirul Haq Residence, Dhaka, sectional perspective, 1981, architect archive

Bottom left: Chowdhury Residence, Dhaka, elevation, 1978, architect archive

Right: BCIC Bhaban, Dhaka, side elevation, 1979 - 1987, architect archive



Vacation house, Gazipur, 2009, ©Shamsul Wares



Vacation house, Gazipur, 2009, ©Shamsul Wares

SHAMSUL WARES

Shamsul Wares worked under Louis I. Kahn, and his associate, Muzharul Islam during the construction of the Parliament of Dhaka. He is the Dean of the School of Environment and Design at the University of Asia Pacific, and an Architectural consultant at Shisrikkhu Sthapati in Dhaka. He was a professor in the Architecture Department of the Bangladesh University of Engineering Technology (BUET) and attended as juror and speaker in many seminars, art and architecture exhibitions, competitions, architecture biennials and triennials in Bangladesh and abroad.

Wares has designed many residential, institutional and public buildings. He has served as president of The Institute of Architects, Bangladesh (IAB) for two terms and has led the Bangladesh delegation at five ARCASIA meetings. He was awarded the Life Time Achievement Award for Architectural Education by the institute in 2009. He also serves as a technical advisor to a number of Bangladesh Government Organisations. Wares has been a member of international design competition juries including Architect of the Year Award (AYA) in New Delhi (1997 and 1999), ARCASIA Award for Architecture, CAA 7th International Student Design Competition (2006).

The architecture of Shamsul Wares has a constructivist rationalism that combines the skill of the project manager with the mastery of a pædagogogue: "I found that I'm more Vitruvian. I adhere to the principle that was devised by Vitruvius 1800 years ago: *utilitas, formitas, vetustas*. Whenever I look to these three words, I found they are really relevant even today. But the meaning of the words has to vary from time to time and as well from country to country. What does *utilitas* mean? You may go as far as sustainability but remain very careful. Sticking to these three ideas gives you the basic quality of a building: you have to have a utilitarian building, a good-looking building and to be honest with your structural system. Soon arises the question of economy, the conception of society and culture...

In addition to that, designing architecture creates some drama in the space. The drama with space can be transmitted into the drama of life. If you have a dramatic space, maybe you can also inspire the people who live inside... what else can be better? On one hand, buildings are manmade... squares, rectangles are very much the domain of human being. It comes from their intellectual understanding of form. So, in using geometry, automatically you are in contrast with nature. This contrasting situation is part of the drama, this kind of dialogue is the way a good architecture can be successful. On the other hand, I always try to avoid the sentimental understanding of the culture - "the architecture of the past." I do not like to use some element of the past, but try always to question what is appropriate for my time...

All these questions have to be answered logically. So the basic idea of architecture, in my case, is a rational approach to the design. But this rationalism doesn't mean a mathematical approach. It must be filtered through humanism, through a sensorial understanding of space and form. This can make our architecture timeless."

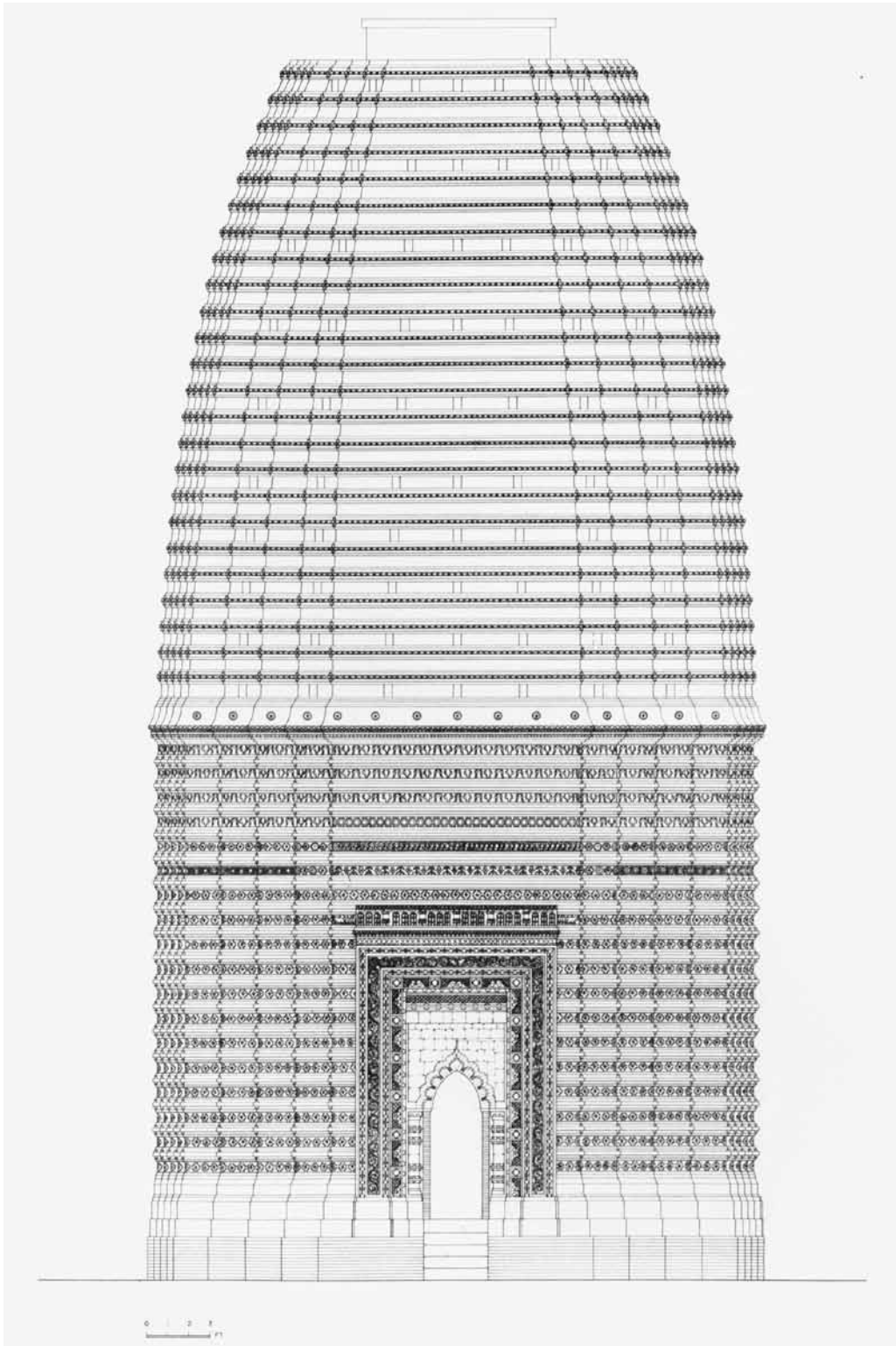
Interview with Shamsul Wares, Dhaka October 2015



Kamaluddin House, Dhaka, c.1982, architect archive



Bangladesh livestock research institute, c.1995, ©Shamsul Wares



Kodla Math, Bagerhat, 17th century, east elevation, from Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, Saif Ul Haque and Raziul Ahsan, *Pundranagar to Shere-banglanagar: Architecture in Bangladesh*, Chetana, Dhaka, 1997, p.87

CHETANA SOCIETY

In the early 1980s, a circle of young architects gravitated around Muzharul Islam. As Saif Ul Haque recalls, “the idea of Chetana came from the need from some architects to establish a communication with Muzharul Islam. Even if he was the most well known architect in Bangladesh, there was no link between him and the young architects. We are in the late 70s. After having completed our studies, we felt the need to learn from him. Out of that, he was approached to start a kind of a study circle... Initially he was reluctant, but afterwards he agreed and we started to have two meetings a week and a lecture programme to talk about the process of doing architecture... amazing... twice a week to listen to him talking about how an architectural design is prepared, how it could lead to a final product, material, proportion, everything...”

The group quickly transformed into a workshop where the objective was to reconnect the links between the different aspects of Bangladeshi culture: “gradually we moved to the exact place where our seminar started: Bangladesh. One of the main questions was how much we really know about the place where we are working. What is our cultural entity? And we invited well-known painters, historian, writers; etc., ... because we thought that architecture had to be strongly connected to the place, to the culture and it went on for almost two decades... *Chetana* in Bengali means ‘consciousness’...”

This project received regular support from the Aga Khan foundation, which in 1987 would organise, together with MIT, a series of conferences and workshops in Dhaka. It would take more than fifteen years to produce a homogenous body of work that lies both in the identification of the architectural heritage of Bangladesh as well as the formation of a regionalist philosophy. It was in this context that was done the meticulous documentation of the architectural heritage in Bangladesh and organised in 1997 the exhibition *Pundranagar to Sherebanglanagar: Architecture in Bangladesh* (National Museum, Dhaka). The Project committee of the exhibition was composed of: Muzharul Islam (president), Raziul Ahsan (general secretary), Rabiul Husain, Shamsul Wares, Badrul Haider, Rashidul Hasan, Uttam Kumar Saha, Saif Ul Haque (project coordinator), Jalal Ahmed, Saiful Hafiz, Haroon Sattar.

Interview with Saif Ul Haque, Dhaka October 2015



Poster of the workshop on Bangladeshi Architecture, Dhaka, 1987, Saif Ul Haque Archive



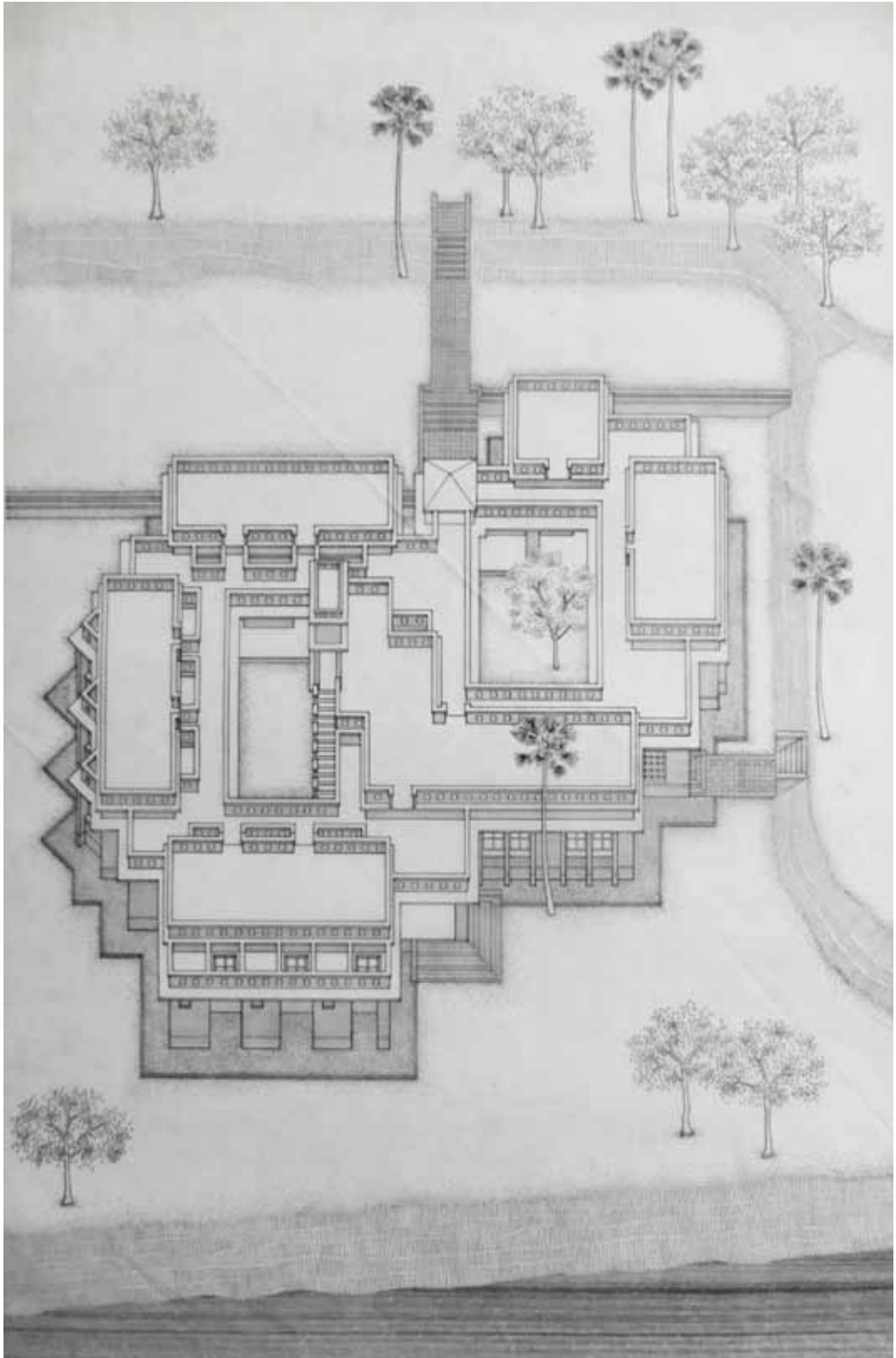
View of the exhibition *Pundranagar to Sherebanglanagar*, National Museum, Shahbagh, Dhaka, 20 -30 December 1997 (Muzharul Islam)



View of the exhibition *Pundranagar to Sherebanglanagar*, National Museum, Shahbagh, Dhaka, 20 -30 December 1997 (Raziul Ahsan)



View of the exhibition *Pundranagar to Sherebanglanagar*, National Museum, Shahbagh, Dhaka, 20 -30 December 1997



House of Orient, Mahastangarh, Bogra 1996, architect archive

SAIF UL HAQUE

Saif Ul Haque (b. 1958) is an architect practicing in Dhaka. He was a partner at Diagram Architects from 1984 until 1997, when he established his own practice. His erected works include the BRAC Training Centre at Faridpur (1992), Banchte Shekha Training Centre at Jessore (1994), Camp House for an architectural team at Bogra (1996) and Govindo Gunalanker Hostel in Chittagong (1999), all in Bangladesh. He is also involved in research related to architecture, and directed the documentation Bangladesh's architectural heritage for the Chetena Research Society, which led to the exhibition *Pundranagar to Sherebanglanagar* (Dhaka 1997). He co-curated the exhibition *Sherebanglanagar: Louis I. Khan and the Making of a Capital Complex*, and co-authored a book on the subject in 2002. From the middle of the eighties, Saif Ul Haque has actively contributed to the elaboration of an architectural theory that encompasses history, culture and the geography of Bangladesh. He returns here on the evolution of "critical regionalism" which he largely developed.

"We try to acknowledge the fact that the world is a very diverse place. Every place on earth has something particular and that can be celebrated. It doesn't have to be a homogenised world. Even in the machine lies diversity... At the same time, we have to insure that the architecture is not creating a situation where someone feels poor and someone feels rich. [In the present day] there is a danger to increase disparities but art doesn't have to reproduce it...

In a country which has been colonised for a long time, there was a disconnection to the place, [the land and its culture] and a dependency on models from outside, something like the idea that everything coming from outside was better... I think that critical regionalism, in a way, installs a kind of pride in the world where it was acting, not in a narrow way but in the sense that we could look on craft or vernacular... and indeed we took a look to our tradition ...

At the same time, I believe that it should involve how one can engage the changing in future, and its relevance in the 80s led to new issues... We started with cultural inquiry and moved to geographical inquiry. We were talking about history and culture, but what about the land, the atmosphere and the climate, which are as well very much about place. There is one particular place where islands or riverbanks are literally transforming from the dry season to the monsoon. I really wanted to study this kind of place. When I first visited the site for the *Arcadia Education Project*, it was under water and the client was saying: "that is my land. - Where is the land, there is no land" I said - ... The land will emerge... 'This is a complete shift of design. Why not indeed to create a flexible building: when the water comes, it goes up, floating, and when the water leaves, it goes down to the ground.'

In Bangladesh, one of the challenges is how to inhabit with water? How could we create a balance between land and water? *The Arcadia Education Project* is a small project but it gave me the opportunity to explore the idea of living in a deltaic landscape."

Interview with Saif Ul Haque, Dhaka, October 2015



Arcadia education project, 2014, ©Saif Ul Haque





"Disapearing Lands", Cluster for Houses, Belka, c.2015, ©Jalal Ahmad



"Disapearing Lands", Community hall, Sripur, c.2015, ©Jalal Ahmad

JALAL AHMAD

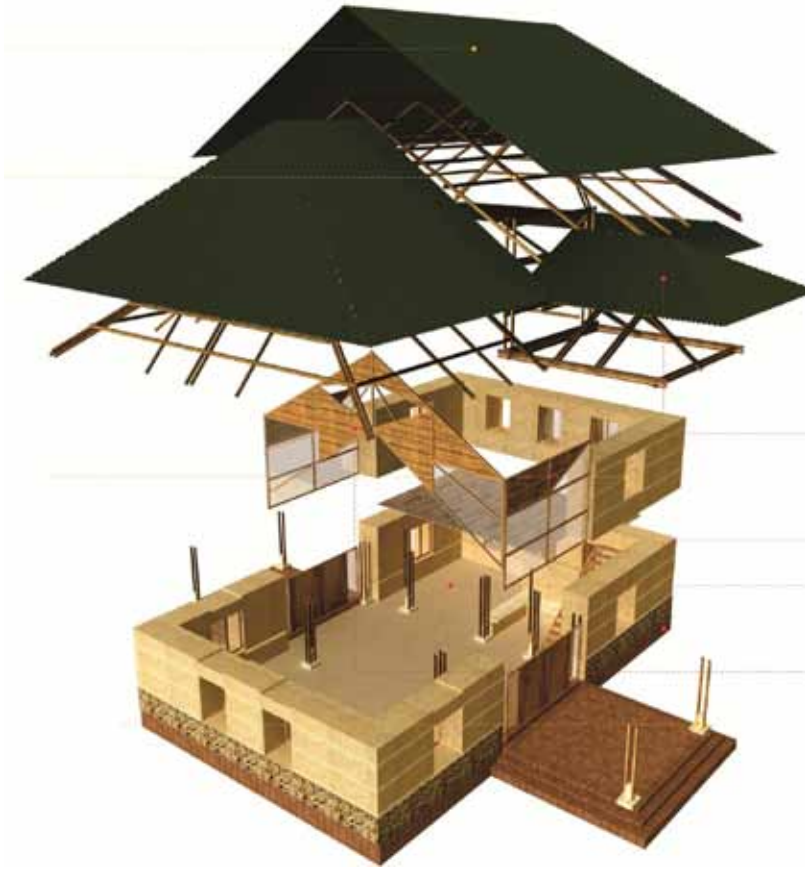
Jalal Ahmad was born in Sylhet, Bangladesh in 1959 and graduated from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) in Dhaka in 1983. He started his professional career that year as a partner in Diagram Architects (1983). Since 1997, he has been the principal of the firm J. A. Architects. For his designs, he often draws inspiration from elements of traditional architecture. He has won awards in a number of prestigious architectural competitions, including the North South University Campus International Design Competition (2004), and the Mujib Nagar Memorial Open Design Competition (1984). He is a founding member of the architectural research group Chetana, established in 1983. Jalal Ahmad is a part-time faculty member at the Architecture Department of the University of Asia Pacific, Dhaka. He is also serving as an executive committee member of the Institute of Architects Bangladesh.

It is with the NGO Practical Action Bangladesh that Jalal Ahmad developed the programme *Disappearing lands supporting communities affected by River Erosion*. The programme was developed to help the communities, which are affected by flood and river erosion in the district of Gaibandha. This region of Bangladesh is located in north-western Bangladesh at the confluence of the two major rivers: the Tista and the Brahmaputra. Because of the geographical location this area is vulnerable to highly disaster-prone district riverbank erosion, which leads to permanent loss of agricultural lands and as well homesteads. The affected communities often take refuge on nearby embankments or migrate to urban slums where basic services such as safe water, sanitation, health and education are minimal or non-existent. Two major components of the project were developing cluster villages and some multipurpose shelters for the vulnerable communities in the region.

The project was developed from a number of initial consultations with the local communities and the stakeholders to develop a model to address the issues of the displaced communities with a holistic approach. The lands for the proposed villages were selected by the NGO with the support of the local administration and local elected representative. The layout of the village was based on local tradition of clustering of houses around courtyards. Traditionally, courtyards are extensively used by the villagers for different activities like drying food grains, cooking and vegetable gardening as well asocial activities. In fact each of the clusters recreates the traditional centre of all daily communal social activities.



Utsho Bidyaniketon, (permanent school campus), Sreepur, Gazipur, 2011-2013, ©Jalal Ahmad



Matir Bari, Surabo Savar, sd, architect archive



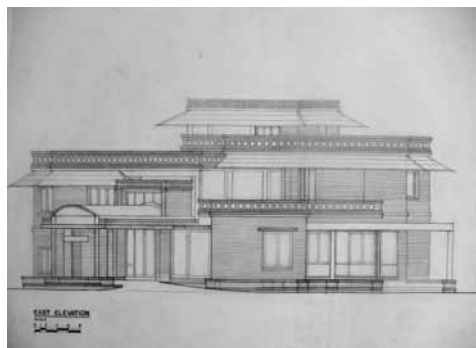
Nandina Residence, sd, ©Nahas Ahmed Khalil

NAHAS AHMED KHALIL

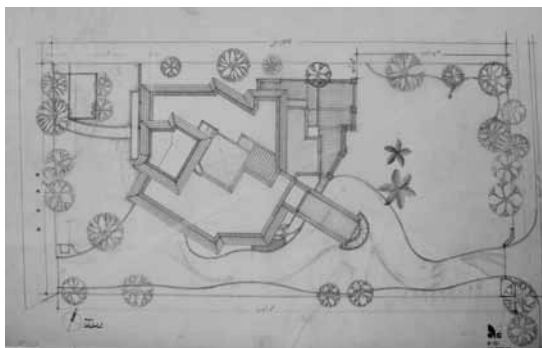
Nahas Khalil was born in 1958 and graduated from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) in 1982. Close to the Chetana research group, Nahas Khalil focused his practice in the early 1980s on the study of rural architecture. The observation of vernacular habitat refined his knowledge of brick, adobe and bamboo construction, which he often uses in his architectural projects. He also contributed to the reintroduction of traditional techniques of construction in contemporary architecture. “For instance, Mud architecture,” recalls Nahas Khalil, “has the quality of controlling the humidity during the wet season. In winter, mud retains heat. So the inherent quality of mud architecture is very relevant in terms of economy as well as sustainability. But, what happens is that mud architecture is associated in our country with poverty. Beside the question of maintenance, the challenge is to bring pride to this material.”

His architectural practice can be understood by a formal approach whose principles he summarises as: “In my architecture, the formal strategy is to break the volume of the building. The reason is to increase the surface contact of the façade as much as possible. The idea is to always provide an intermediate outdoor space, and to develop, in a contemporary manner, the concept of a pavilion. This keeps the inhabitant out of the sun, in a open space, which ensures the air flow and natural cooling.”

Nahas Khalil has built numerous private homes as well as institutional homes in Dhaka and the rest of the country. He is currently building the Bengal Museum of Contemporary Craft.
Interview with Nahas Ahmed Khalil, Dhaka October 2015



Aziz Khan's Residence, main elevation, Dhaka, 1992, architect archive



Aziz Khan's Residence, master plan, Dhaka, 1992, architect archive



Aziz Khan's Residence, Dhaka, 1992, ©Nahas Ahmed Khalil



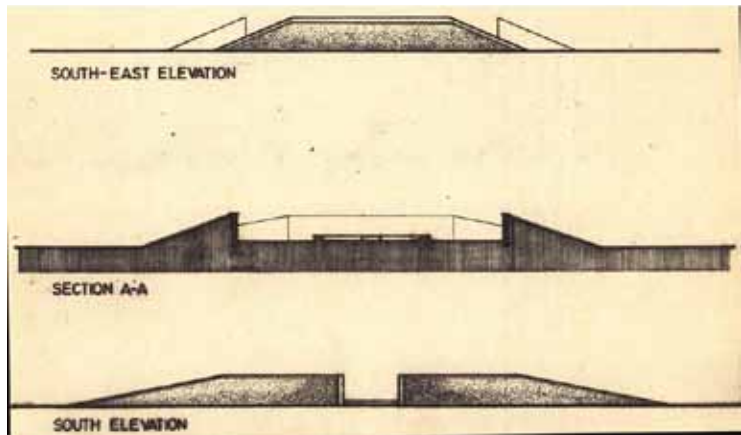
Top: SOS Youth Village, Dhaka, 1985, ©Raziul Ahsan
Bottom: SOS Youth Village, Dhaka, 1985, ©Raziul Ahsan

RAZIUL AHSAN

Born in 1954, Ahsan earned his B. Arch. from the Bangladesh Engineering University, Dhaka, 1979. He was partner and later principal of the architectural firm C.A.P.E. (Consulting Architects Planners and Engineers), 1980-1997 and member of the Executive Committee of Institute of Architects Bangladesh, 1993-95, and 1997. He was a key founder member of Chetena Architecture Research Society (1983). Selected architectural works include: Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman's Mausoleum at Sherebanglanagar, Dhaka; Manarat International School, Dhaka; S.O.S. Youth Village at Mirpur, Dhaka; Hermann Gmeiner School at Mirpur, Dhaka; S.O.S. Children's Village and College at Bogra. In 1996 the Drik Gallery in Dhaka hosted "Borderline," a solo exhibition of Raziul Ahsan's artworks, and in 1997 he was co-author of *Pundranagar to Sherebanglanagr: Architecture in Bangladesh*, 1997. Raziul Ahsan died in a car accident in December 1997.

Right: Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman's Mausoleum at Sherebanglanagar, elevation, Dhaka, ©Raziul Ahsan

Bottom: Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman's Mausoleum at Sherebanglanagar, Dhaka, ©Raziul Ahsan





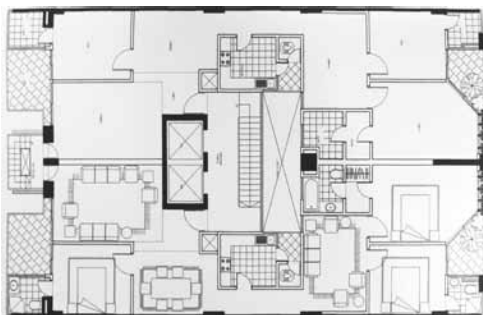
Deep Shikha Primary School, 1990 - 1998, © Aga Khan Trust for Culture - Aga Khan Award for Architecture / photography A.S. Kashef



Rahman Residence, 1992 - 1994, © Aga Khan Trust for Culture - Aga Khan Award for Architecture / photography A.S. Kashef



SOS Hermann Gmeiner Social Center, Khulna, 1986 - 1992, ©Aga Khan Trust for Culture - Aga Khan Award for Architecture / photography A.S. Kashef



Priyo Pragan, Banani, floor plan, Dhaka, 1993 - 1996, photo AL



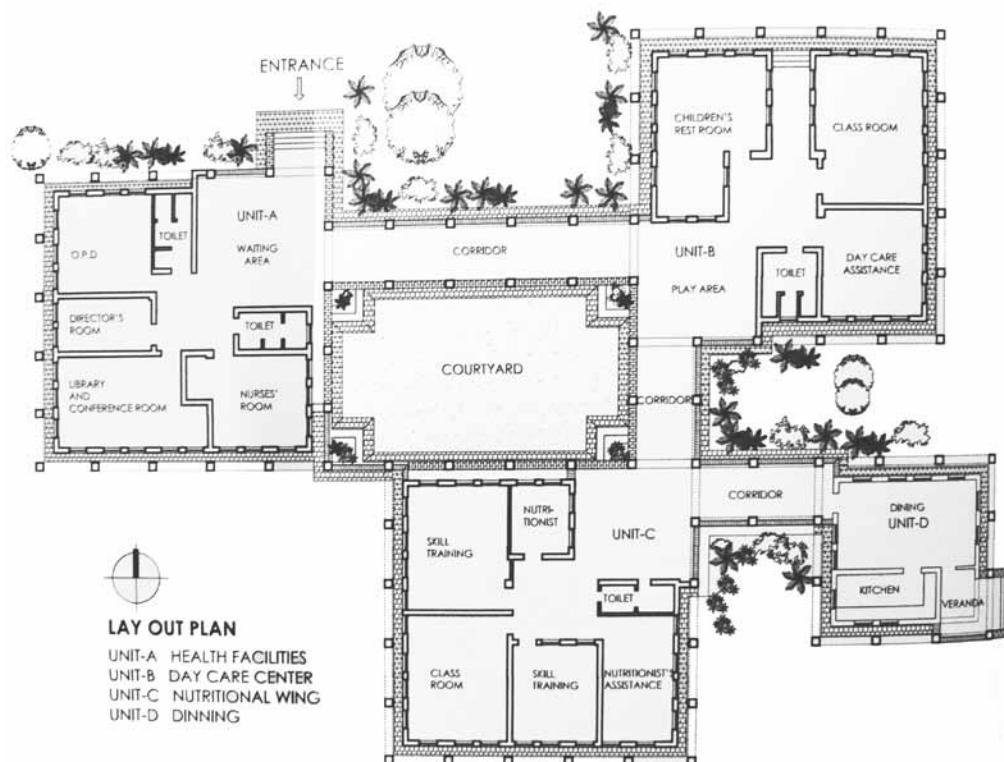
Priyo Pragan, Banani, Dhaka, 1993 - 1996, photo AL

UTTAM KUMAR SAHA

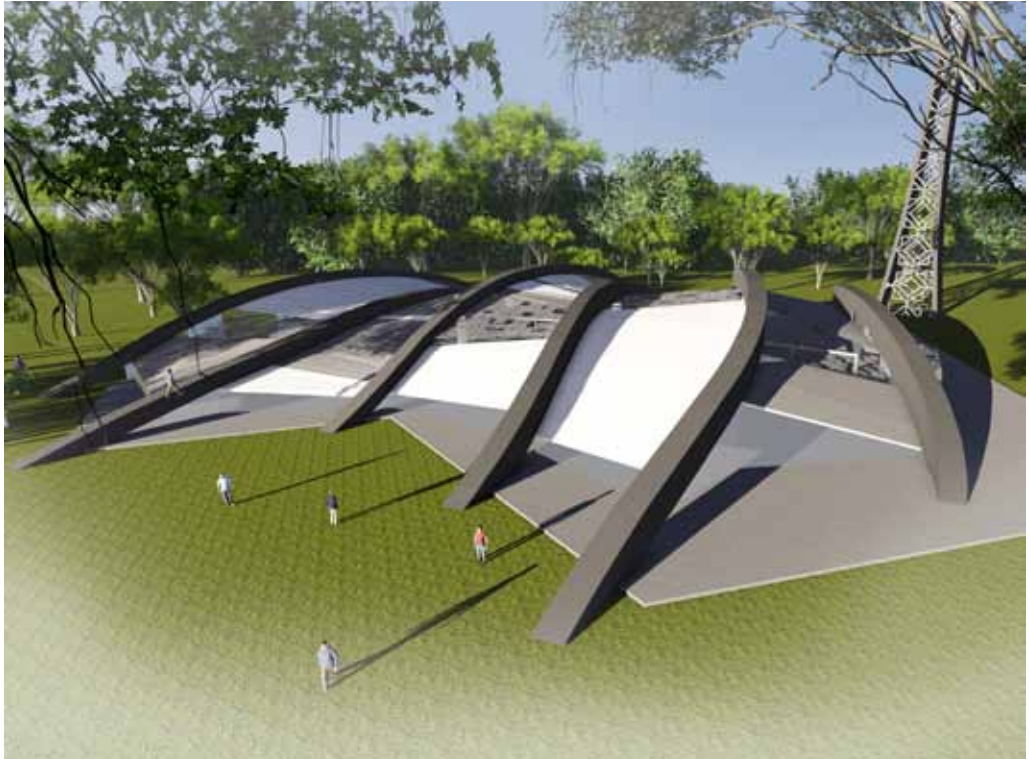
In addition to his training as an architect at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Uttam Kumar Saha (born 1957) has a background in photography and singing. Uttam Kumar Saha worked with Bashirul Haque and Associates Ltd., until he started his own practice in 1988 as Nandan Architects, Engineers and Planners. He is a founding member of the Chetana Study Group, a member of the Executive Committee of the Institute of Architects Bangladesh (1990-93, 1993-95), and has participated in a number of architectural juries and seminars. Saha's work has appeared in a number of publications including *A+D Magazine*, *A+D SAARC Architecture Issue*, *Mimar*, and *Marg Publication*. The SOS Social Centre in Khulna (1992), Bishwa Shahitya Kendra in Dhak (1998), the DeepShikha Primary and Vocational Training Centre (Dhaka, 1998), the architect's Living Terrace (Dhaka, 1998) and the Rahman's Residence (Dhaka, 1998) have all been nominated for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture.

He cites the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the architect Muzharul Islam, Louis I. Kahn's work in Dhaka and, above all, Rabindranath Tagore, as inspirations in his work. He credits Rabindranath Tagore especially for having sown a sense of beauty and truth in him: "My search, in architecture, content, simple/complex, nature/built environment, humane/monumental, contemporary/traditional, urban/rural, dream/reality, folk/classical, and so on, is explored through my designs. My architecture, to me, is not my creation, rather I, myself, am one of its ingredients. My belief is in the truth, the simple, the warm, reflecting the nature of the country's people."

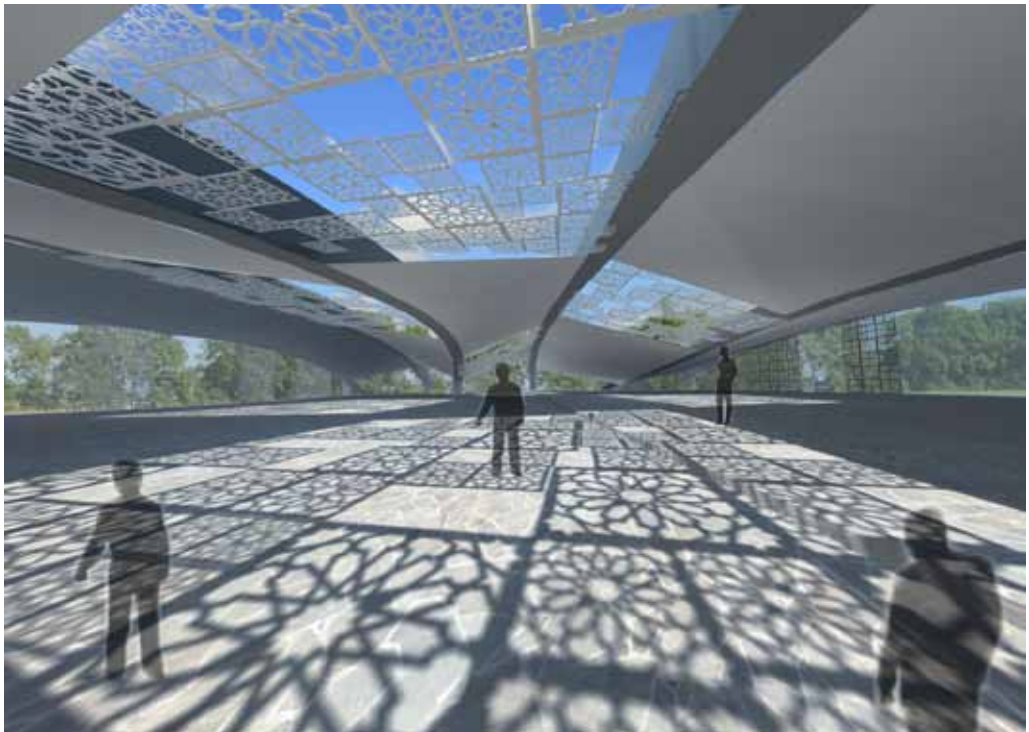
Interview with Uttam Kumar Saha, Dhaka October 2015



SOS Hermann Gmeiner Social Center, floor plan, Khulna, 1986 - 1992



Preliminary study for a mosque, 2015, architect archive



Preliminary study for a mosque, 2015, architect archive

NURUR RAHMAN KHAN

Born in 1965, Nurur Rahman Khan graduated with the Habibur Rahman Award from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET). He completed his Master's degree from the same university with the Ahsanur Rahman Gold Medal in 1990.

Khan started his teaching career at BUET before founding the practice Tanya Karim N. R. Khan & Associates with his partner Tanya Karim. The firm has won prestigious prizes such as the IAB Awards and has been nominated multiple times for The Aga Khan Awards and ARCASIA Awards. Their work has been published both at home and abroad.

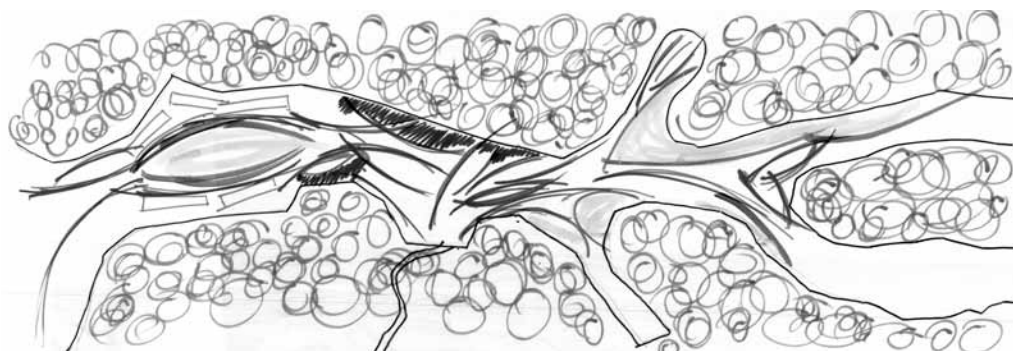
Nurur Kahn is also a recognised academic who has taught at BUET, Asia Pacific University, BRAC University, North South University, Stamford University, Bangladesh University and the Università Iuav di Venezia (IUAV) in Venice and has spoken widely in renowned universities in India, USA and Europe. He is the author of *The Assembly Building*, University of Asia Pacific, Dhaka, 2001, published to celebrate Kahn's 100th birthday and *Muzharul Islam, Selected Drawings*, Sthapattya o Nirman, Dhaka, 2010, the first book on Muzharul Islam. He is also the founder and head of The Muzharul Islam Archives.

Tanya Karim and Nurur Rahman Khan's architectural approach takes a global understanding of the landscape, the city and the larger territory. "I think," recalls Nurur Khan, "our work is a result of multiple influences that have shaped our ideas of time. We started to learn architecture from the great modern masters. The next step was our fascination with Mughal architecture, which brought us to look at the architecture of our region as the wonderful interplay between building and landscape, monumentality and personal experience and expression of thoughts through spaces and forms..."

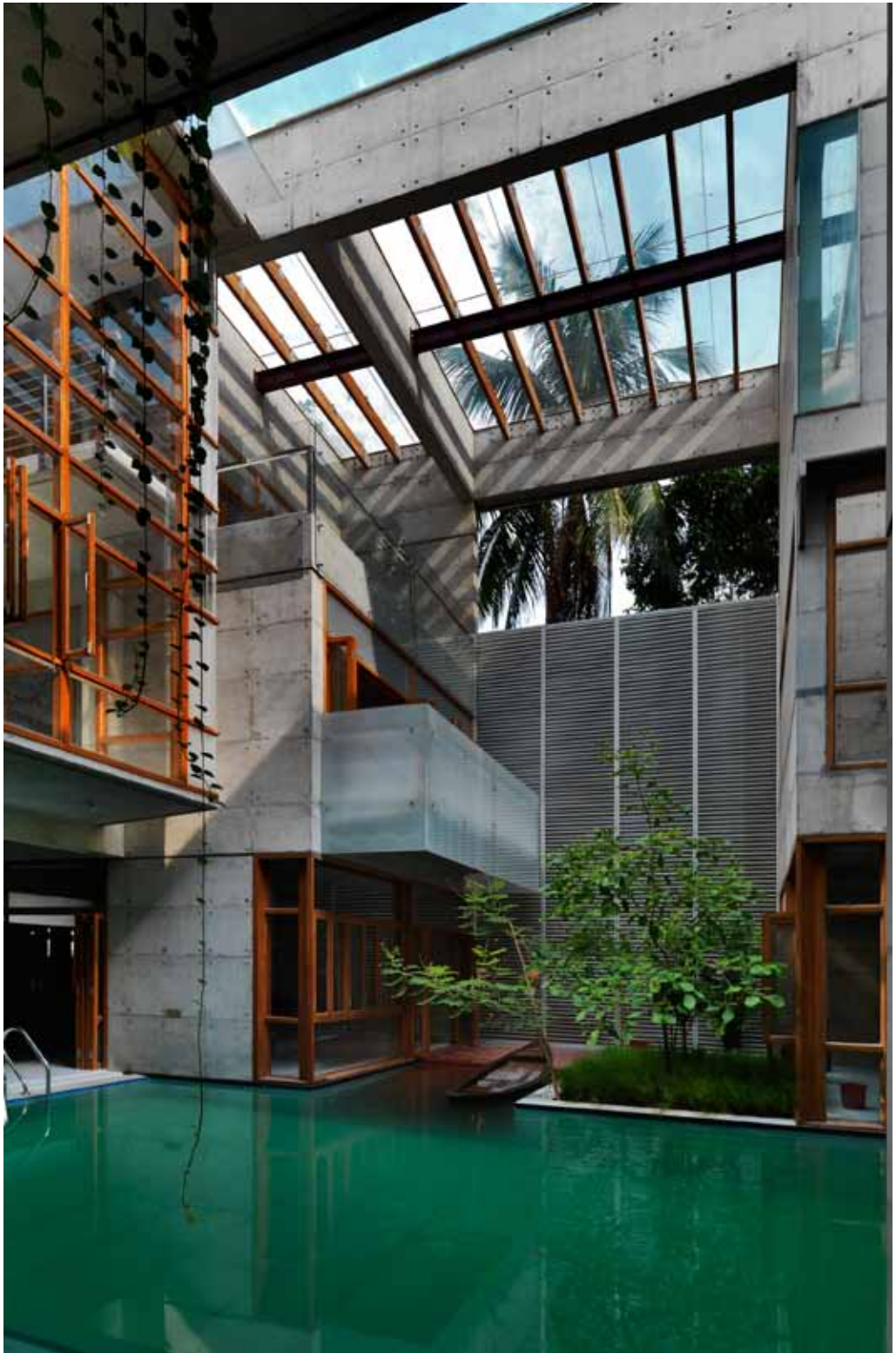
When we started our practice (beginning of the 90s), for Tanya and me, one of the most important events was the *Deconstructivist Exhibition* (Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1988). At that time, in this part of the world, the strongest influence came from the Aga Khan and Mimar in terms of regionalism. What we found in the poststructuralist debate in architecture was the awareness to be in a very particular part of time and space, not beyond, not after. None of us could work beyond our time, and the *Deconstructivist Exhibition* brought us a mental freedom, in a way to escape the impression of post-modernism and to enlarge the debate on regionalism.

So, on one hand you have this question of architecture of the present time strongly addressed, and on the other hand the sensitivity of landscape, of the country and its socio-economical condition. You know, we try to create this tension and are questioning it. The challenge for us is to create this debate, and our work is always creating that tension between time, experience and context. I'm talking about a thought structure, which allows us to get beyond set rules of styles, which allows us to address our own situation in our own way. We exist in a very particular part of time and space, not beyond, not after with of course the past as reference and future as goal. The more honest we are to that influence, the more creative will be our expression."

Interview with Nurur Rahman Khan, Dhaka October 2015



Preliminary sketch for a resort, 2015, architect archive



SA Residence, Gulshan, Dhaka, 2005 - 2011, ©Rafiq Azam

RAFIQ AZAM

Rafiq Azam graduated in 1989 from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) and is the principal architect of Shattoto (Dhaka), with a focus on “architecture for green living”. Formed in 1995, Shattoto intends to unearth the lost history and heritage of Bengal, to recreate the missing link of its urban and rural culture and to bridge the gaps between architectural values and the current crisis of responsible architecture.

His many awards in both art and architectural work include: the J.K. Cement International Award, the Institute of Architects Bangladesh Design Award, first prize in the Mimar International Design Competition, and the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Gold Medal. Azam is also a visiting faculty member of Architecture at Universities in Singapore, Pakistan and the University of Asia Pacific and BRAC University in Dhaka. In 2013 his prolific corpus of work has been published in a monograph: *Rafiq Azam, Architecture for Green Living*, Bengal Foundation, Skira, Dhaka, 2013).

Azam’s work focuses on collective housing and individual residences and explores the dialogue between architecture, geography and the natural elements surrounding their environment. The creative process that permeates through the work of Rafiq Azam has its origins in his regular practice of drawing and painting. “Architecture came later in my life,” recalls Azam as he invites us to browse through his personal archives including the numerous scrapbooks in his collection. “When I started to study paintings, watercolours and sketches since childhood, I used to go outdoors and tried to catch the beauty of the sky, the monsoon, the plants. Watercolour has this quality: you put one colour on top of the other, and another on top, still you see the based layer, even the paper. This is why I’m so interested in watercolour; it allows you to see beyond. My drawings are about the understanding of the surroundings, the environment, the people, the movement, the landscape...”

I think architecture has an ego issue, because it is about creation. You build something on the ground, as the ground is absolutely organic. The question of architecture starts in the joinery. How do you connect with the land, with the wind, the sunlight... all the joineries are the challenge, not only visible joineries but as well invisible...

You have to understand the balance: from which point nature is going to destroy humanity, from which point humanity is going to destroy nature. That is the soul of architecture, and it is when you lose this soul that you can cause serious damage. We can produce urbanity, we can produce cities, and it is not something like a crime. Landscape starts to exist as soon as human being intervenes...”

Interview with Rafiq Azam, Dhaka, October 2015



Rafiq Azam sketchbook, c.2003, architect archive



Rafiq Azam sketchbook, c.2003, architect archive



Nishorgo Oirabot Nature Interpretation Centre, Teknaf, conceptual drawing, c.2008



Nishorgo Oirabot Nature Interpretation Centre, Teknaf, 2008, ©Ehsan Khan

EHSAN KHAN

Ehsan Khan graduated from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) in 1991. He was originally a member of Vitti Sthapati Brinda Ltd. and operates now in his own office as principal architect of EK Architects. His teaching positions include being a visiting faculty member at the University of Asia Pacific and BRAC University, participating in a *Muzharul Islam Masterclass* workshop, and lecturing at the Institute of Architects Bangladesh as a member of its executive committee. He was also a juror for IAB design competitions. He had shortlisted projects for several awards and nominated for the 2010 Aga Khan Award for architecture for the Nishorgo Visitor Centre in Teknaf, (2006-2008), and received the IAB award for the Dhanmondi Lake Development, Dhaka (1998-2000). Khan was also in charge of the renovation project of the Hateerijhil quarter in Dhaka.

Ehsan Khan takes a macro approach to sustainable development by looking at urban renovation, infrastructure programmes and the overall landscape. The restoration project of the Hateerijhil Lake in the centre of Dhaka - a popular recreational spot for residents and a transportation hub to minimise traffic congestion - exemplifies the change from a regionalist perspective towards a process of urban transformation. Ehsan Khan describes these issues: "For urban design projects, we have many challenges... too many. Some people haven't even heard about this way of practicing architecture. So when you are doing an urban design project, you have to establish what urban design means and what you have to incorporate in it. Over here, most people think when architects work for a city, they are providing infrastructure and technical facilities which will solve the problem. But beyond that, we have to think about public life for citizens, we need to connect many social and environmental issues. We have to perceive how the city will grow in the future... If you want to be a person of the soil you have to understand the nature of the region and you have to, as an architect, understand the location. It doesn't mean only the site. Actually the word 'place' would be appropriate: the understanding of the place will tell you what and how to act accordingly to the existing forces: the climate and the landscape, the social needs, the technical norms and the cultural values... that could define sustainability. Nowadays in a capitalist society, people have money: they can create an artificial environment, they can bring anything from anywhere in the world but to be sustainable you have to think about the whole process and at the same time to think local. You can think globally to understand the global issues, but when you are acting, you are acting locally, wherever you are... You can be a modern man, but you have to be a regional person."

Interview with Ehsan Khan, Dhaka October 2015

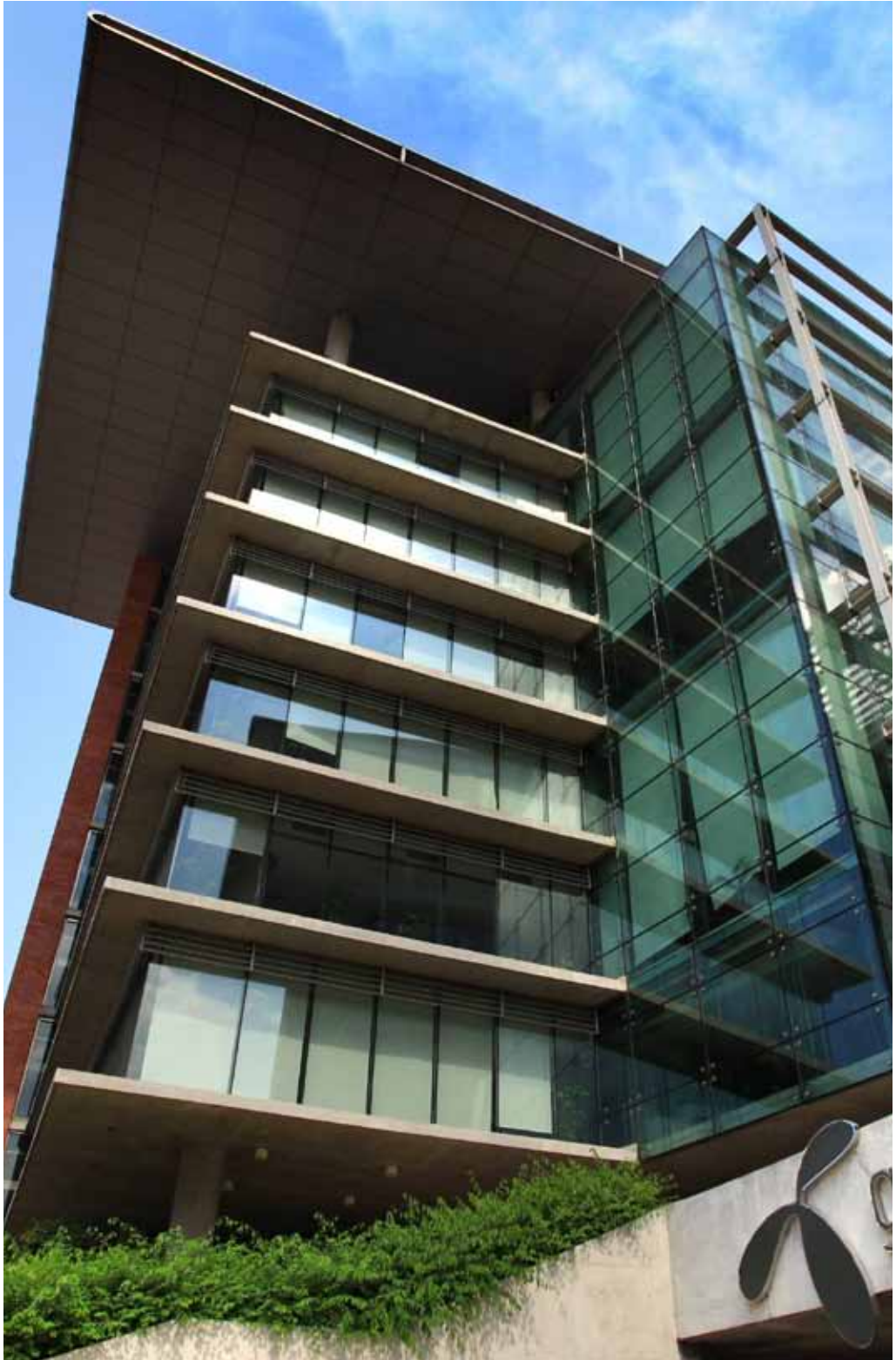


Top: Institute of Architects Bangladesh Center, Agargaon, Dhaka, CAD model, c.2007

Bottom left: Institute of Architects Bangladesh Center, Agargaon, Dhaka, study model, c.2007

Bottom right: Institute of Architects Bangladesh Center, Agargaon, Dhaka, drawing, c.2007





Grameenphone Corporate Head Quarter, Dhaka, 2007 - 2010, ©Visataara

MUSTAPHA KHALID PALASH

Vistaara Architects is one of Dhaka's busiest architectural firms. Founded in 1994 by Mustapha Khalid Palash, Mohammed Foyez Ullah, and Shahzia Islam, graduates of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) in Dhaka, the firm typically provides full architectural services, including contract administration. Khalid and Foyez were assistant professors of Architecture at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology until 1998, when they left acadæmia to concentrate on practice. Vistaara's work includes a wide variety of residential projects, offices, hotel and commercial facilities, and various scales of industrial and institutional projects. In 2015 Mustapha Khalid Palash together with the Delvista Foundation published the magazine *DOT*, the first architectural review of Bangladesh.

Besides the ultimate output of architectural pieces, Vistaara has established itself as one the most advanced architectural enterprise in Bangladesh with expertise in computer modelling, drawing and simulation. The digital creations have compelled Vistaara not only to be one of the most technically sound organizations but also to become a prompt and enduring service provider in the country. Vistaara is a combination of architects with varied experiences, a group of architects reputed in their respective fields.

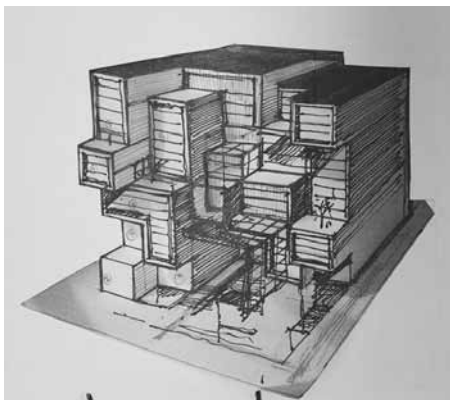
Authors of numerous projects, of particular note are Bashundhara City, a shopping/entertainment centre, which is the is the largest built structure in the country; the five-star Westin Hotel in Dhaka; and PICL Bhaban, a twenty-story office building at the heart of downtown Dhaka, as well as the Graemenphone building. They are currently finishing the five-star Radisson Hotel in Chittagong and the Ranks office building in Dhaka.

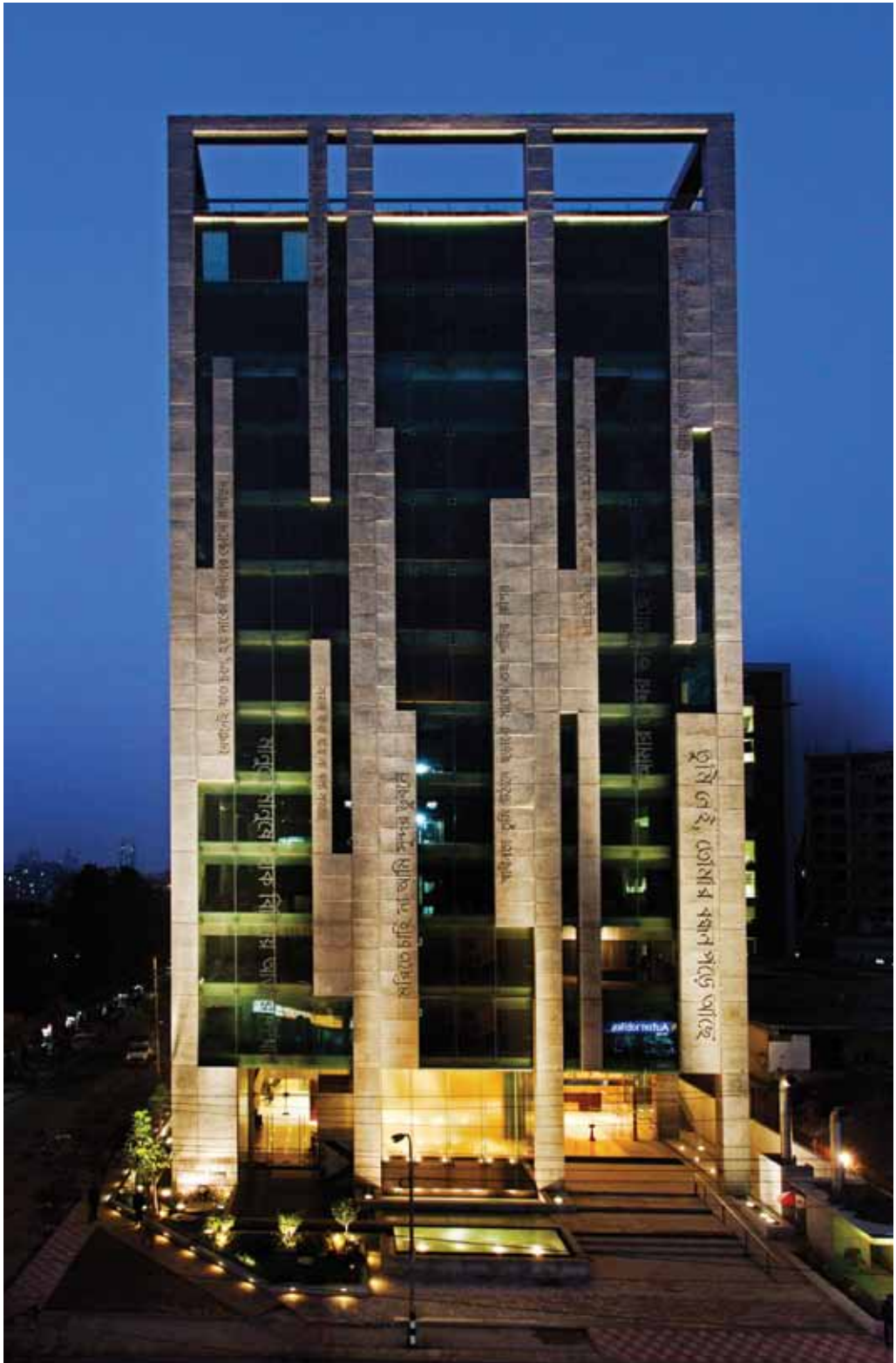


Top: Rangs Babilonia (under construction), CAD study, 2008

Bottom left: Rangs Babilonia (under construction), sketch, 2008

Bottom right: Rangs Babilonia (under construction), CAD study, 2008





ninaKABBO office building, 2013, ©Enamul Karim Nirjhar

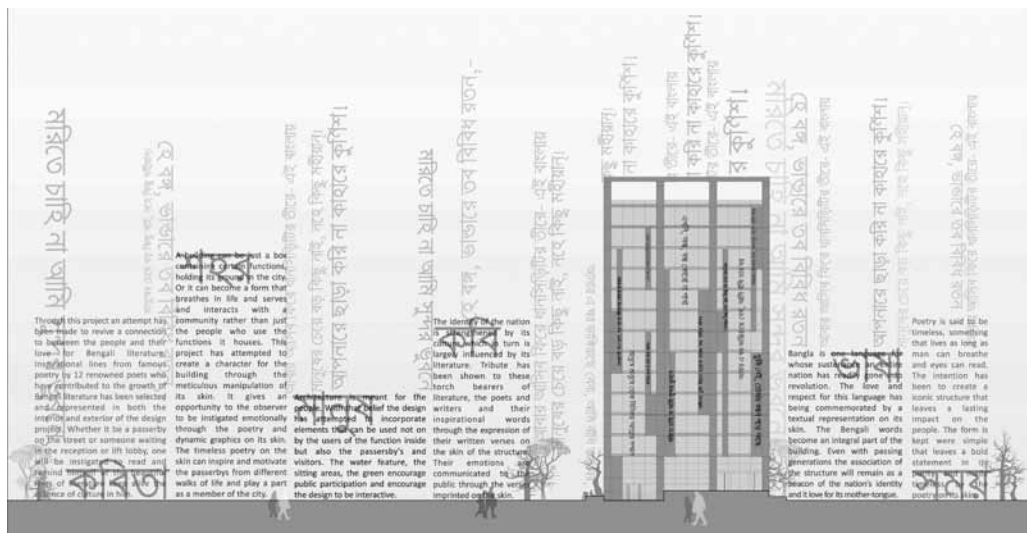
ENAMUL KARIM NIRJHAR

Enamul Karim Nirjhar was born in 1961 and began his career as a graphic designer with the establishment of his firm System in Dhaka in 1986. After a long practice with graphic design, painting, photography, lyrics writing, music, literature and interior design, he stepped into architecture. After graduating from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology in 1995, he founded System Architects and his projects include residences, corporate houses and a group of restaurants.

In his work, Nirjhar tries to break out of stereotypical concepts. He considers himself as a creative organiser, trying to maintain networks of young creative individuals. His work is led by a strong belief in the collaboration of multiple professions in order to create a more integrated architectural philosophy. In spite of such achievements, his struggle to establish his belief in a healthy collaborative professional hub remains a continuous process. His last publications include *A Collection of 101 Storious Songs* (Gaan-shala, 2015), and *The Architect - Muzharul Islam* (48 min., Laser Vision, IAB, Dhaka, 2012).

He has won numerous national and international awards for his works in architecture: in 2007 Architect of the Year Award (AYA) for British American Tobacco headquarters in Dhaka, in 2013 for ninaKABBO the 6th Berger Award for Excellence in Architecture. The latter symbolically marks the recent development of the city of Dhaka. "Our intention behind the project of ninaKABBO," recalls Nirjhar, "is to propagate a sense of association with culture through architecture. For any Bangladeshi, their true identity is the Bengali language, which is best expressed through literature. I have approached the design with the aim of incorporating literature in the architecture of the building. Significant and inspirational lines from the poems of 12 prominent Bengali poets have been selected to be engraved on the skin of the building ... like some drops of poetry..."

Interview with Enamul Karim Nirjhar, Dhaka December 2015



Conceptual sketches for the ninaKABBO, architect archive



Friendship Centre, Gaibandha, 2008 - 2011, ©Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury / H  l  ne Binet



Friendship Centre, Gaibandha, 2008 - 2011, ©Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury / H  l  ne Binet

KASHEF MAHBOOB CHOWDHURY

Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury graduated in architecture from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) in 1995. After working with architect Uttam Kumar Saha, he established the practice URBANA in partnership in 1995 and from 2004 continued as the sole Principal of the firm. Chowdhury has been a visiting faculty member at the North South University and BRAC University, both in Bangladesh and has been a juror of final year critiques in universities in Dhaka. He was twice finalist in the Aga Khan Award for Architecture and has won first prize in Architectural Review's AR+D Emerging Architecture Award 2012.

Kashef Chowdhury has a studio-based practice whose works find root in history with strong emphasis on climate, materials and context - both natural and human. Projects in the studio are given extended time for research so as to realise a level of innovation and original expression. Works range from conversion of ships and low-cost raised settlements in "chars" to training centre, mosque, art gallery, museum, residences and multifamily housing to corporate head offices.

Each project by Kashef Chowdhury is an opportunity for the architect to question the concept of "new ruralism", which he summarises as: "Le Corbusier's *Towards a New Architecture and a New Urbanisme* has been taught a lot; but can't we think about a 'new ruralism?' Most of the people in Bangladesh live in rural areas and do not need to migrate to urban areas to find work: rural areas are very rich, nature is flourishing, water is pure... excepting facilities like medical care and schools. Here is my point, how to come to a point where urban facilities and rural settlement can merge? How can we live in a modern condition without migrating to cities? In my own experience, it was always very important to be in, and practice in, a rural landscape as an architect, where you can find space, openings, water, and at the end public common spaces. The rural situation is very interesting in a sense to try to understand how society can move very slowly, very carefully, and be transformed in a kind of settlement which is neither rural nor urban... what I would like to call a new ruralism. This is the challenge for instance of the Friendship Centre. This should obviously lead us toward the question of sustainability. Too often, sustainability is a kind of fashionable password. Across the world, in all societies, people lived in a sustainable way, farming and deforesting in a sustainable way. The global crisis which we are facing takes root in the fact that it seems not be happening anymore... Yes we need more production, but sustainability should have to be considered with economics. If you bring economics into sustainability, the making of an expensive building is the wrongest thing to do. How to optimise building costs? How to optimise running and maintenance costs, those questions are all about sustainability. Those are very basic notions, and it brings me to say that sustainability is broadly about common sense... all of us should know what sustainability is...." *Interview with Kashef Chowdhury, Dhaka, November 2015*



Left and right: Chandgaon mosque, Chittagong, 2005 - 2007, ©Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury



Independence Monument of Bangladesh and Museum of Independence, Dhaka (1996-2013), ©URBANA/Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury



Independence Monument of Bangladesh and Museum of Independence, Dhaka (1996-2013), ©URBANA/Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury

URBANA

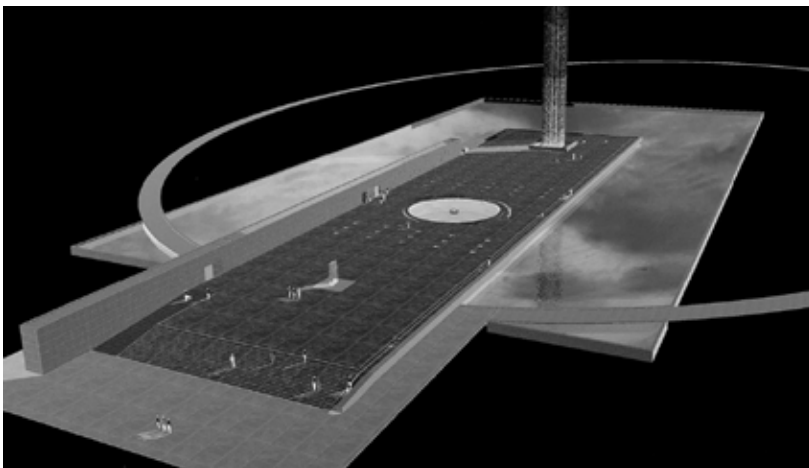
Marina Tabassum and Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury both graduated from the Department of Architecture at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dhaka and established URBANA in 1995. In 1997 URBANA won the national competition for the design of the Independence Monument in Dhaka, and was subsequently commissioned for the project, which incorporates a museum, multimedia theatre and other ancillary facilities. The Museum was inaugurated in 2013.

As one of Dhaka's major green areas, and the centre of a contemporary cultural sphere, the Suhrawardy Udyan occupies a significant position in the urban context of the city. It is also the site from where Sheikh Mujibur Rahman gave his historic speech declaring the struggle for independence, and where the Pakistani forces surrendered after the War of Independence in 1971. URBANA won the competition for the project in 1997. The space includes a master plan and designs for a museum, multi-media projection theatre, amphitheatre and other ancillary facilities in addition to the main focus of the project, the monument itself. The focal point in the experience of the space is the monument: a tower of light made of stacked glass sheets. The residential complex "A5" won international acclaim, including being a finalist for the Aga Khan award for Architecture, for its respectful approach to the environment and its innovative use of recycled materials.



Left: Independence Monument of Bangladesh and Museum of Independence, Dhaka (1996-2013), model, ©URBANA

Bottom: Independence Monument of Bangladesh and Museum of Independence, Dhaka (1996-2013), CAD drawing, ©URBANA





Appartment building, Dhaka, 2011, ©Marina Tabassum



Baitur Rauf Jame Mosque, 2010, ©Marina Tabassum/Sandro di Carlo Darsa

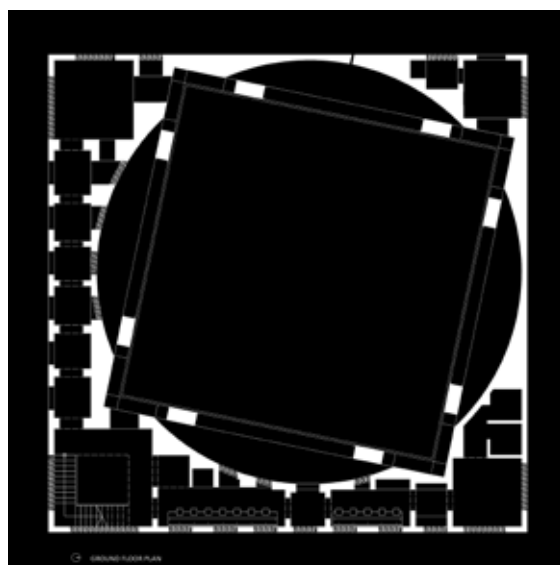
MARINA TABASSUM

Marina Tabassum graduated from the Department of Architecture at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dhaka. In 1995, she co-founded with Kashef Chowdhury URBANA, An Architectural Practice agency in Dhaka. In 1997, URBANA won first prize for the Independence Monument of Bangladesh and the Museum of War and Liberation. She started her own practice - Marina Tabassum Architects - in 2005. She was a visiting professor at the BRAC University and nowadays a faculty member at the University of Texas Arlington, college of architecture.

The architectural firm MTA seeks to forge an architectural language that responds to the needs of the contemporary world while interpreting local traditions: "The fact I decided to base my practice in Bangladesh and not anywhere else was important from the very beginning to find a language for architecture. I'm talking about the need to carry a common language on different projects, even if each project is, in a sense, unique. Here lies an inherent understanding of the land, of the climate we are wearing. I'm quite aware and conscious about the position where I am, the location where I'm practicing. Bangladesh, as you know, is a delta in the tropics, and in a certain way the climate behaves in a soft and fluid manner. I'm aware of the materials available, and I always try to use local materials as most of my projects are very strictly budgeted. All these things are dealing with consciousness, rooting my work to the site, the place, its geography as well as its history. It is not as if I was bringing something from somewhere else and put on it the plot...I strongly believe that architecture has to grow from the site, like a piece of land.

In every case, what is important for me is to see the "tropicality" of the building. Most of us, as architects, are aware about sustainability, and every building has to be ventilated and correctly cooled... In my project there is this idea to turn everything into a breathing mechanism. I'm not talking about windows and walls, but about how the overall space is something that breathes. I don't think I have a pre-conceived idea of what kind of material I have to use for a building. Everything is based on the resources of the site and of the programme in most of the cases; the question of material comes out of that. The material is probably a secondary decision. The primary decision is how I want to approach the concept of the building. Bricks, for instance, could provide a solid façade turning into one element or bricks could be an assemblage of small elements coming together in a sense of living patterns. But whatever it is, the building has to work on its own."

Interview with Marina Tabassum, Dhaka, October 2015



Baitur Rauf Jame Mosque, floor plan, 2010, ©Marina Tabassum



Karim Residence, Dhaka, sd, ©Mahfuzul Hasan Rana



Karim Residence, Dhaka, sd, ©Mahfuzul Hasan Rana

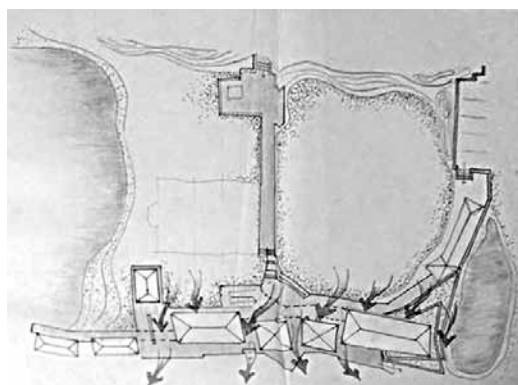
SALAUDDIN AHMED

Born in 1967 in Dhaka, Salauddin Ahmed Potash lived in the city until the age of 18, when he moved to the United States for higher education. He received his Bachelors in Fine Arts and Architecture from Portland State University (Portland, Oregon) and his M.Arch from the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia). While in Graduate School, Ahmed won several travelling scholarships, and travelled through Japan, India and Nepal. From his journey in Japan, he published *Water, Ink, Paper* (Loka press, Dhaka, 2013). In the United States, he has worked in the office of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, as well as the Urban Planning Department of the City of Portland Oregon. Ahmed currently works with an architectural practice in Dhaka and teaches in the Architecture Department of the University of Asia Pacific.

The Café Mango is one the first projects that brought Saluddin Ahmed Potash to prominence. The space brings together architecture and interior design, giving an important place to artisanal craft. This sensibility transcends Saladdun Ahmed's practice who describes it in ethical terms: "As an architect, I believe in the collective force. It is the responsibility which is given to me and my practice to follow that guideline. I'm almost working as a "chef" and pay attention to things around me and to those who are bringing out an idea through reality, working together in a collective manner... It is not like I am in control of it. For me everything has a hidden energy, and every project gives me the opportunity to scope or to bring up the principle or the "essence" of the material because it comes from the collective force..."

Change is inevitable. Change is constant and that is what progress means. But I think there is also a sense of rupture... As an architect I strongly feel the need to go forward, but to ensure that we have some understanding where we are coming from. We can't go back twenty years, there is no point, but we could have a positive feeling of what we have learnt twenty years ago, bring it in a new form into today's living and push it into the future. We are moving so fast, almost like a racecourse and many things are pushing forward, primarily economic and capital forces. I think, nevertheless, we should slow down a little bit if you ask me, and in my own practice, I'm much slower than many others colleague... If you look at a new language in let's say domestic living facilities, people are wishing for it and the developers are paying attention to that. Probably, we need some kind of leader or a policy maker who would understand this. I do see a little bit of light. First of all, architecture, or the idea of architecture in this country has to be beyond the buildings, beyond the product to understand the land, the weather, the air, within the soil and the water..."

Interview with Salauddin Ahmed Potash, Dhaka October 2015



Olive Grove Children Home, Chokoria, master plan,
©Salauddin Ahmed



Olive Grove Children Home, Chokoria, view of the
construction, ©Salauddin Ahmed



Franco-German embassy, Dhaka, model of the project, 2012, ©SPA architect



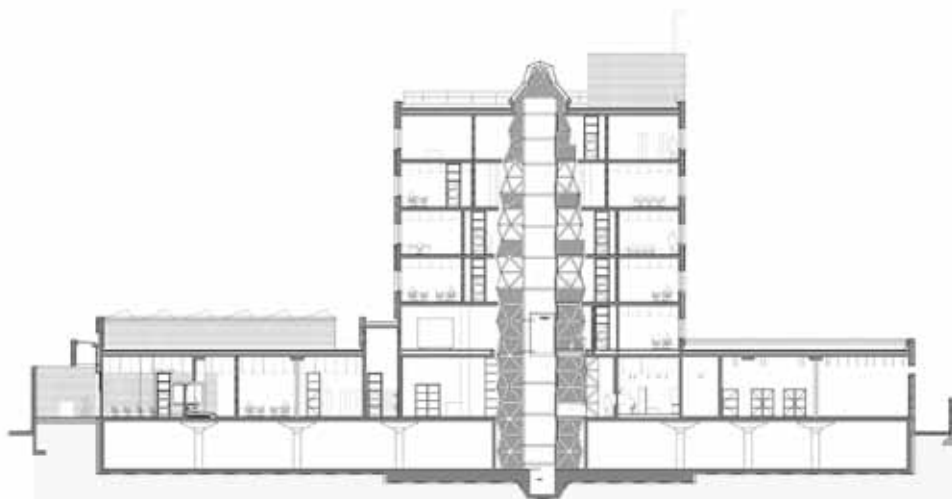
Franco-German embassy, Dhaka, detail during the construction, 2015, © AL

STÉPHANE PAUMIER

Stéphane Paumier was born in 1971, in Versailles, France. After completing his Baccalaureat at the Ecole Estienne in Applied Arts, he studied industrial design at the National School of Applied Arts and Crafts (Olivier de Serres) and Architecture, at the School of Architecture of Paris-Belleville, under Professor and architect Henri Ciriani. He came to India in 1996 under the French civil service programme to work as an architect for the French Embassy in Delhi, India. He stayed further on and won the competition for the Alliance Française in Delhi, in 2001 in collaboration with Architects Anupam Bansal and Rajesh Dongre (ABRD Architects). This was the beginning of a long-standing association, which helped realise several projects. In 2005 Paumier founded SPA Design Pvt. Ltd. as a principal, with Anupam Bansal and Krishnachandran Balakrishnan as co directors, both graduates from the School of Planning and Architecture Delhi and Master's from the University of Kansas and the University of California, Berkeley.

The practice focuses on developing contextual skills for each project. Since 2005, the firm has conceived and realised many notable projects including the Tarun Tahiliani headquarters (nominated for the AGA Khan Awards 2010), the Triburg headquarters and the O.P. Jindal Global University.

Stéphane Paumier is currently building the Franco-German Embassy in Dhaka. He describes the concept behind the project as: “the Franco Germany embassy in Dhaka is the first localisation of the two institutions in the world. The project carries a high symbolic and historic value. It embodies a strong image of the two countries coming together in a dual identity building. The common ambition of the Franco-German embassy is a strong opportunity for the architect to display the theme of duality and unity in a single building. At the origin of the construction of the European Union, France and Germany are still today perceived as the origin and the engine of Europe, its *raison d'être*. This synergy between the two nations led Stéphane Paumier to propose a formal concept of permanent growth. The two parallel spirals made architecture demonstrate that relationship in which both need the other to grow, generating life around them.”



Franco-German embassy, Dhaka, section on the atrium, architect archive

Selected Bibliography

Powell, Robert (ed.), *Regionalism in Architecture*, Singapore, Concept Media/Aga Khan Award for Architecture, 1985

Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, "Muzharuk Islam, Kahn and architecture in Bangladesh", *Mimar 31, Architecture in Development*, edited by Hasan-Uddin Khan. London, Concept Media Ltd. 1989

"The Grameen bank housing loan project", *Mimar 34 Architecture in Development*, edited by Hasan-Uddin Khan. London, Concept Media Ltd., 1990

Duby, Peter "Flood Adaptive Housing in Bangladesh", *Mimar 37: Architecture in Development*, edited by Hasan-Uddin Khan. London, Concept Media Ltd., 1990.

Shah Alam Zahiruddin, Abu H. Imamuddin, M. Mohiuddin Khan, *Contemporary Architecture in Bangladesh*, Institute of Architects Bangladesh, Dhaka, 1990

Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, Saif Ul Haque and Raziul Ahsan, *Pundranagar to Sherebanglanagar: Architecture in Bangladesh*, Chetana, Dhaka, 1997

Kazi Khaleed Ashraf (ed.), *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia-Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*, New York, The Architectural League of New York, 1998

Nurur Rahman Khan, *The Assembly Building*, Department of Architecture, the University of Asia Pacific, Dhaka, 2001

ABM Husain, *Architecture a History through the Ages*, from Sirajul Islam, Sajahan Miah (ed.) Cultural Survey of Bangladesh, volume 2, Asiatic society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 2007

Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury, *Plot Number Fifty Six*, Imageworks, Dhaka, 2008

Zainab Faruqui Ali, Fuad H Mallick, *Muzharul Islam Architect*, BRAC University press, Dhaka, 2011

Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury, *The Night of Fifteen November Two Thousand Seven*, Kashef Mahboob Chowdhury edition, Dhaka, 2011

Kazi Khaleed Ashraf (ed.), *Designing Dhaka, A Manifesto for a Better City*, Loka Press, Dhaka, 2012

Enamul Karim Nirjhar, *The Architect - Muzharul Islam*, 48 min., Laser Vision, IAB, Dhaka, 2012

Salauddin Ahmed, *Water, Ink, Paper*, Loka press, Dhaka, 2013

Rosa Maria Falvo, (ed.), Rafiq Azam, *Architecture for Green Living*, Bengal Foundation, Skira, Dhaka, 2013

Kazi Khaleed Ashraf (ed.), *An architect in Bangladesh Conversation with Muzharul Islam*, Loka Press, Dhaka, 2014

Richard Saul Wurman, Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, Grischa Ruschendorf, *Louis Kahn: House of the Nation*, ORO Editions 2014

Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, Saif Ul Haque (ed.) *Dhaka Unconcealed*, the Architectural League of New York, <http://www.worldviewcities.org>



©Kashef Chowdhury

Exhibition

Curator: Aurélien Lemonier
Project Manager: Rezaul Kabir with the collaboration of Safiqul Islam and Asifur Rahman
Scenography: Safiqul Islam
Research and documentation: Lorraine Capelli, Safiqul Islam

Video Interview

Project Manager: Kim Levy (Centre Pompidou, Paris, France), with the collaboration of Safiqul Islam and Rezaul Kabir
Shooting: Aurélien Lemonier, Safiqul Islam and Rezaul Kabir
Editing: Bernard Lévêque (Centre Pompidou, Paris, France)
Mixing: Ivan Gariel (Centre Pompidou, Paris, France)

Acknowledgements

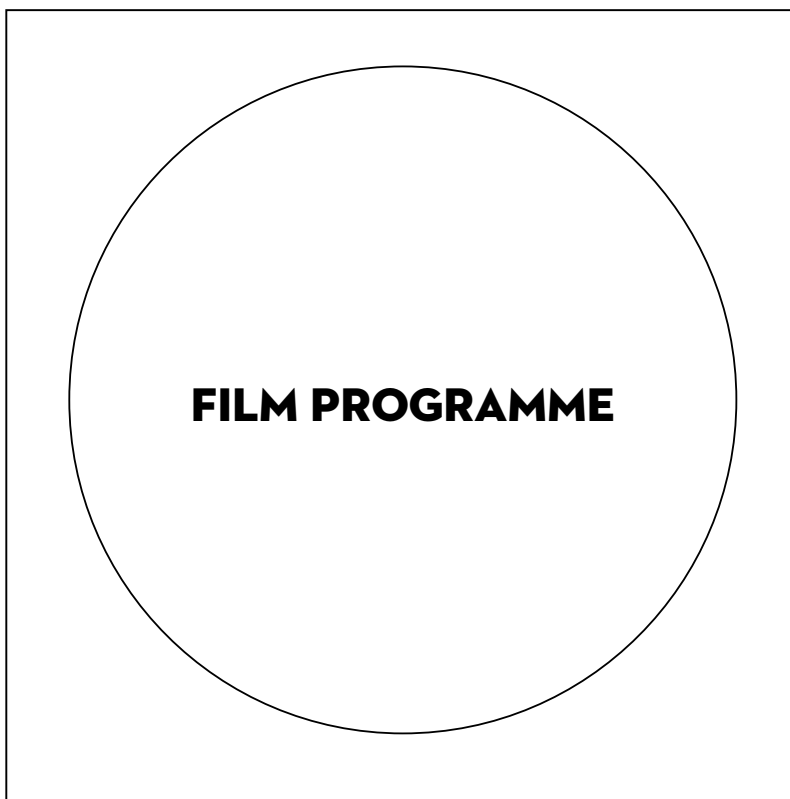
We would like to thank all of the architects who have kindly given access to their archives and who have allowed us to borrow a selection of documents and archives of Muzharul Islam and his family.

Raman Nurur Khan for his assistance in the realisation of the interviews presented in the exhibition.

We would also like to thank: Eliza Culea (Paris), Reid Masselink (Bourron-Marlotte, France), Tafiqur Rahman Khan (Dhaka), Selim Biblop (Dhaka), Catherine Grenier (Paris), Thierry Betancourt (Mumbai), Jean-François Salles (Paris), Nadia Siméon (Geneva), Farrokh Derakhshani (Geneva), Lobna Montasser (Geneva), and Bernard Blistène (Centre Pompidou, Paris).

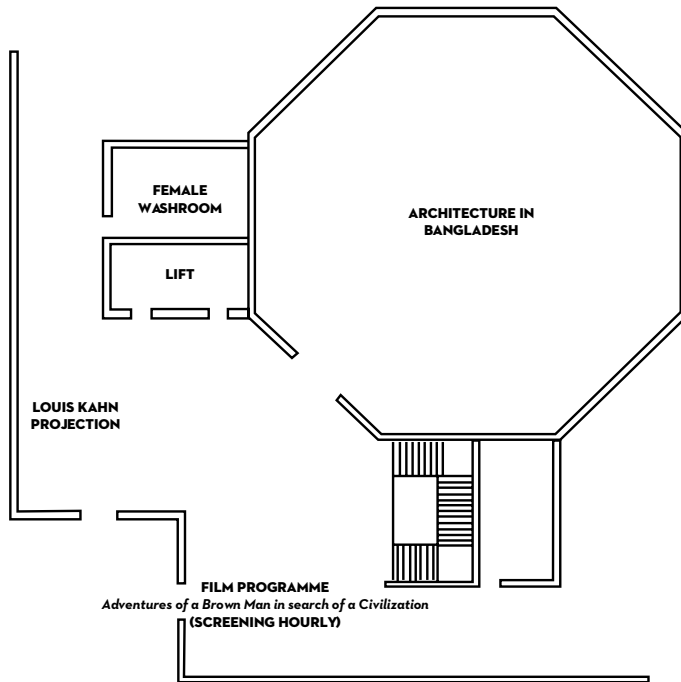


RAJA
KING



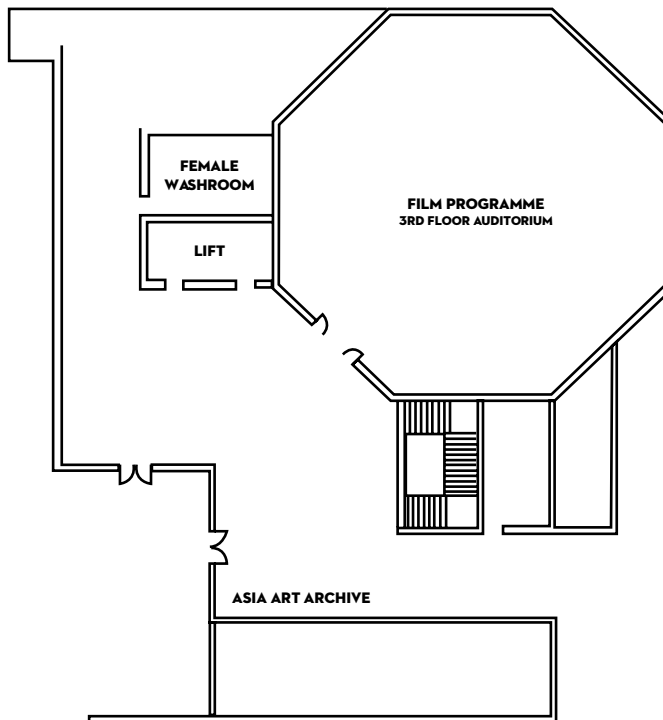
PASSAGES, CURATED BY SHANAY JHAVERI
Assistant Curator, South Asia, Modern and Contemporary Art,
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Ayisha Abraham	Bahman Kiarostami
Ashim Ahluwalia and Akbar Padamsee	Alexandre Larose
Basma Alsharif	Jodie Mack
Kohei Ando	Chris Marker and Alain Resnais
Kader Attia	Lois Patiño
Yto Barrada	Lisl Ponger
Jean-Pierre Bekolo	Freddy Nadolny Poustochkine and
Frances Bodomo	Truong Minh Quy
Claudio Caldini	Jennifer Reeves
Mati Diop	Ben Rivers
Anita Fernandez	Aykan Safoğlu
Anna Bella Geiger	Taiki Sakpisit
Kiluanji Kia Hende	Sylvia Schedelbauer
Narcisa Hirsch	Nguyen Trinh Thi
Lamia Joreige	Leslie Thornton
Mani Kaul	Ana Vaz
Bouchra Khalili	Soon-Mi Yoo



FILM PROGRAMME

Floor Plan
2nd floor, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy



FILM PROGRAMME

Floor Plan
3rd floor, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

PASSAGES

Shanay Jhaveri

Nirad C. Chaudhuri was born in 1897 in the small town of Kishoreganj in the district of Mymensing, now a part of Bangladesh. A tiny and frail man, standing at five feet and weighing just about 43 kilograms, Chaudhuri was a writer and scholar, who took himself and his experience of life as his primary subject. Chaudhuri died in 1999 three months before his 102nd birthday. He published his first book *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* in 1951 at almost precisely the halfway point of his life. Chaudhuri witnessed a flourishing empire, its decline, the birth of a “new” modern nation, its initial socialist incarnation and then its eventual transition into a capitalist behemoth. Very productive, he penned several polemical books, and moved to Oxford in 1970 and never returned to India. He was 57 years old when he made that journey, one that he had prepared for his entire life.

The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian is a ground-zero account, apparent almost from the very first pages, of how an ordinary citizen of India interfaced with the British Empire, physically, emotionally, as well as intellectually. Chaudhuri, when writing the book, was literally the unknown man of his title, living modestly in Delhi, writing scripts for All India Radio. What makes the book so distinctive is that Chaudhuri wrote with no literary model or precedent. The life of the common Indian, unacknowledged in any sphere, had not until the middle of the twentieth century been scripted on a page. Not being born to privilege, or granted its advantages, Chaudhuri assembled his knowledge of all things European at Calcutta’s Imperial College and by purchasing books at tremendous personal cost. Committed to cultivating his intellect, Chaudhuri consciously shed certain traits and habits. For instance, once he began to live in Delhi he gave up writing in Bengali (it is completely absent from *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*) and, for the first time in his life, started wearing Western clothes and eating non-Indian food.

Chaudhuri’s book leads with a dedication to the British Empire, which occasioned much controversy on publication, but he was no apologist for the British, frustrated as he was by their resistance to Westernised Indians. On the other hand, he shared with the British little enthusiasm for nationalist leaders and Indian nationalism. His views on India were often unpleasant, and at times unjustified. Clearly, Chaudhuri was not writing for the fallen Empire, nor was he addressing the new nation: neither he nor his prose fell into a particular political or national regime. It would seem that Chaudhuri is a fitful example of Edward Said’s assertion of “gone are the binary oppositions dear to the nationalist and imperialist enterprise... new alignments are rapidly coming into view, and it is those new alignments that now provoke and challenge the fundamentally static notion of identity that has been the core of cultural thought during the era of imperialism.”¹

¹Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York: Random House, 1993, xxiv-xxv



Ayisha Abraham, *I Saw A God Dance*, India, 2011, video still, 19 minutes, courtesy the artist, ©Ayisha Abraham



Ismail Merchant and James Ivory, *Adventures of a Brown Man in search of a Civilization*, 1972, production still

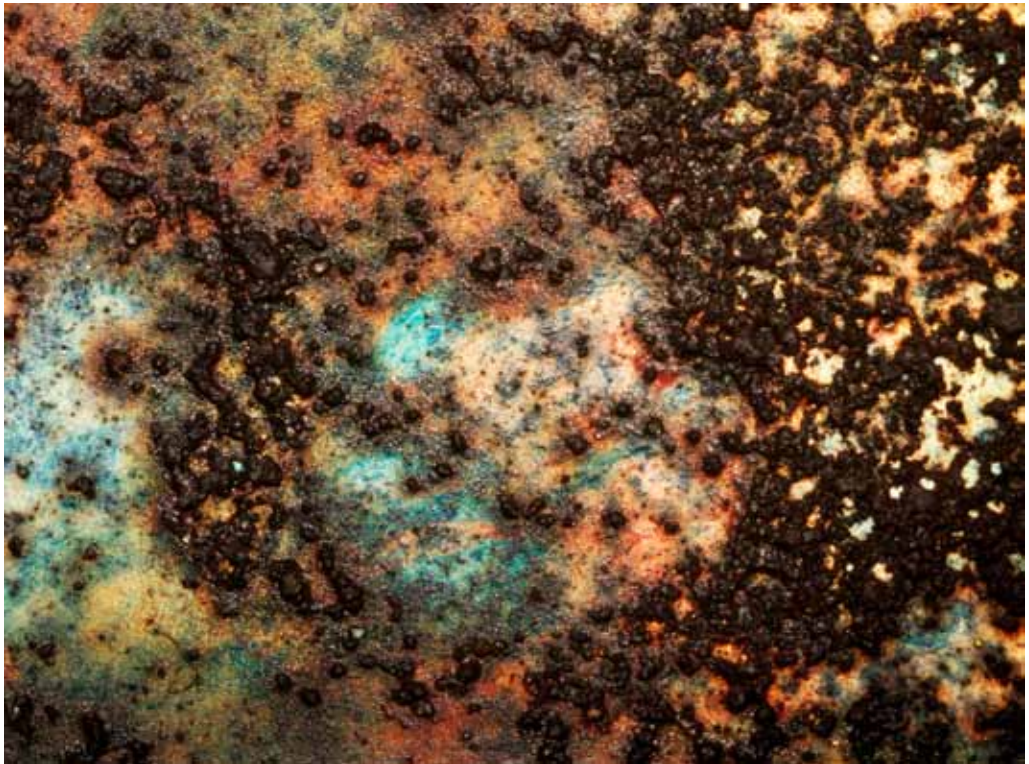
The 1972 documentary by Ismail Merchant and James Ivory *Adventures of a Brown Man in Search of a Civilization* commissioned by BBC, vividly and unapologetically captures Chaudhuri in England, living out his western affectations. The film is a captivating portrayal of a postcolonial intellectual and forms the primary point of orientation for my film programme *Passages* for the 3rd Edition of the Dhaka Art Summit, which will play across two spaces in the Shilpakala Academy. *Adventures of a Brown Man in Search of a Civilization* will show on the hour every hour in an independent ancillary space to the Academy's auditorium where rest of the programme, organised into thematic group screenings will be projected at scheduled times.

The thematic screenings build off concerns that come to bear in *Adventures of a Brown Man in Search of a Civilization*. The most direct association can be made to those films in the programme that preoccupy themselves with the lives of individuals who have lived between various geographical contexts, and like Chaudhuri "challenge the fundamentally static notion of identity."

These include Ayisha Abraham's *I Saw A God Dance* (2011) about the self exoticizing, transracial gay dancer Ram Gopal who popularised Indian classical dance in the West during early half of the twentieth century, an extract from Leslie Thornton's *The Great Invisible* (ongoing) which focuses on Isabelle Eberhardt, a Victorian woman who dressed up as a man to travel freely in North Africa during the late nineteenth century, or Aykan Safoğlu's *Off White Tulips* (2013) a semi personalised account of the queer American writer James Baldwin's time in Istanbul in the 1960s. The trips made by the filmmakers themselves are also integrated, as in Anita Fernandez's *Un Balcon En Afrique* (1980) where Fernandez is seen living in a tree house somewhere in Bissau, observing the city from above, but not physically interacting with it and conversely Narcisa Hirsch's dreamlike *Patagonia* (1976) that centers itself on a corporeal engagement with the plains and mountains of Patagonia.

Alongside, these films is Mati Diop's *A Thousand Sun's* (2013) set in contemporary Dakar, which follows the cattle herder Magaye Niang who was the star of one of the most iconic films of African cinema *Touki-Bouki* (1973) made by Djibril Diop Mambety, who happens to be Mati Diop's uncle. In *Touki-Bouki* Niang along with his then companion Mory conspired to find ways to migrate to France, but *A Thousand Sun's* finds them 40 years later still in Dakar, no closer to Paris. The film is a heartbreaking reflection on the notion of self-exile and failed aspirations. Djibril Diop Mamberty himself makes an appearance in 'Passages' in Jean-Pierre Bekolo's short filmic portrait *Grandma's Grammar* (1996) in which the legendary filmmaker ruminates on filmmaking and the potential the cinematic holds in telling stories of an emotional and affective nature. The subjective and intimate condition of being in exile, and the complexity in expressing these circumstances is further explored in Bouchra Khalili's *Chapter 1: Mother Tongues* (2012) from her *Speeches Series* in which Khalili collaborated with five exiled people based in Paris and its outskirts, inviting them to translate, memorise, and relay fragments of texts from political thought and contemporary culture written by Malcom X, Abdelkrim El Khattabi, Édouard Glissant, Aimé Césaire, and Mahmoud Darwish.

The film programme seeks to move beyond a literal understanding and consideration of travel - one that might focus exclusively on, say, works made by traveling artists - and consequently devotes a section to those films that relate the journeys made by objects across differing contexts and scenarios. It pairs Chris Marker and Alain Resnais's *Statues Also Die* (1953) that reflects on African tribal objects that have been gathered by ethnographic museums in the West, with Bahman Giarostami's *The Treasure Cave* (2009) where the story of the The Museum of Contemporary Art in Tehran and its comprehensive collection of modern western art is told. Yto Barrada's *False Start* (2015) is an observation on Moroccan fossils and the counterfeiting industry that has sprung up around them, while Lois Patiño's hallucinatory *Night Without Distance* (2015) is a portrait of border smuggling between Portugal and Galicia. Objects like LP covers of jazz, blues and salsa in Kader Attia's *Silence Injuries* (2013), the pieces of fabrics that Jodie Mack's delightful animates in her films, kitschy dinnerwear sets in Ana Vaz's *Occidente* (2014), a roll of film itself in Jennifer Reeves *Landfill 16* (2011) or the collections of objects gathered by artists in their homes or studios as witnessed in Ben Rivers *Things* (2014) Narcisa Hirsch's *Taller (Workshop)* (1975), and Kohei Ando *My Collections* (1988) are regarded as having expressive potential, and able to convey particular cultural and personal histories.



Jennifer Reeves, *Landfill 16*, United States of America, 2011, 16mm, shown digitally, film stills, 9 minutes, courtesy of the artist, ©Jennifer Reeves



Mani Kaul, *Before My Eyes*, India, 1989, video still, 26 minutes, courtesy of the artist, ©Mani Kaul

A broader inquiry into other kinds of voyages, is part of the programmes itinerary, and while some of the aforementioned films recount literal acts of travel across territories by people and objects, it also makes room for work like Lisl Ponger's *Phantom Foreign Vienna* (2004) in which Ponger does not leave Vienna, but films over seventy different cultures and nations, simply by visiting different neighbourhoods in the city. In Ponger's film Vienna becomes "global", so to speak. She is constructing her own world map, reinforcing that map making itself is an ideological act, something which is further underscored by Anna Bella Geiger in her *Elementary Maps No. 3* (1976), where Geiger dwells on the shifting cartographic lines that depict Latin America, and the numerous stereotypes and myths that are projected onto it. Place as an abstraction, the way it resides in memory, but also the more phenomenological and emotional experience of geography is a distinct strand of the programme, most forcibly felt in Claudio Caldini's pulsating *Vadi Samvadi* (1981), Sylvia Schedelbauer's overwhelming *Sea of Vapors* (2014), Ashim Ahluwalia's subtle *Events in a Cloud Chamber* (2016) and Alexandre Larose's mesmerizing *Brouillard - Passage # 15* (2014) in which a single unedited roll of 35mm is exposed 39 times as the filmmaker walks along the same forest path to a water body.

Landscapes themselves hold emotions, those particularly that are scarred by violence, and this is suggested in a cluster of films that comprises Mani Kaul's rarely seen but stunning film on Kashmir *Before My Eyes* (1989), Soon Mi Yoo's *Dangerous Supplement* (2005) assembled from found footage shot by American soldiers during the Korean war, Nguyen Trinh Thi's *Landscape Series # 1* (2013) in which anonymous people are pointing to landscapes across Vietnam, Lamia Joreige's *Untitled: 1997-2003* (1997 - 2003) filmed in Beirut after the Lebanese war officially ended and Basma Alsharif's *Deep Sleep* (2014) that alludes to the situation in Gaza, but by filming ancient ruins in Athens and Malta. The trauma, terror, fear, discomfort and threat that lurks in urban cities like Bangkok and Luanda is compellingly communicated in Taiki Sakpisi's *A Ripe Volcano* (2011) and Kiluanji Kia Henda's *Concrete Affection - Zopo Lady* (2014) respectively. There is also the unknown, the landscapes of outer space in Frances Bodomo's *Afronauts* (2014), and of future Vietnam submerged underwater in Freddy Nadolny Poustochkine and Minh Quy Tru'o'ng's *Mars in the Well* (2014).

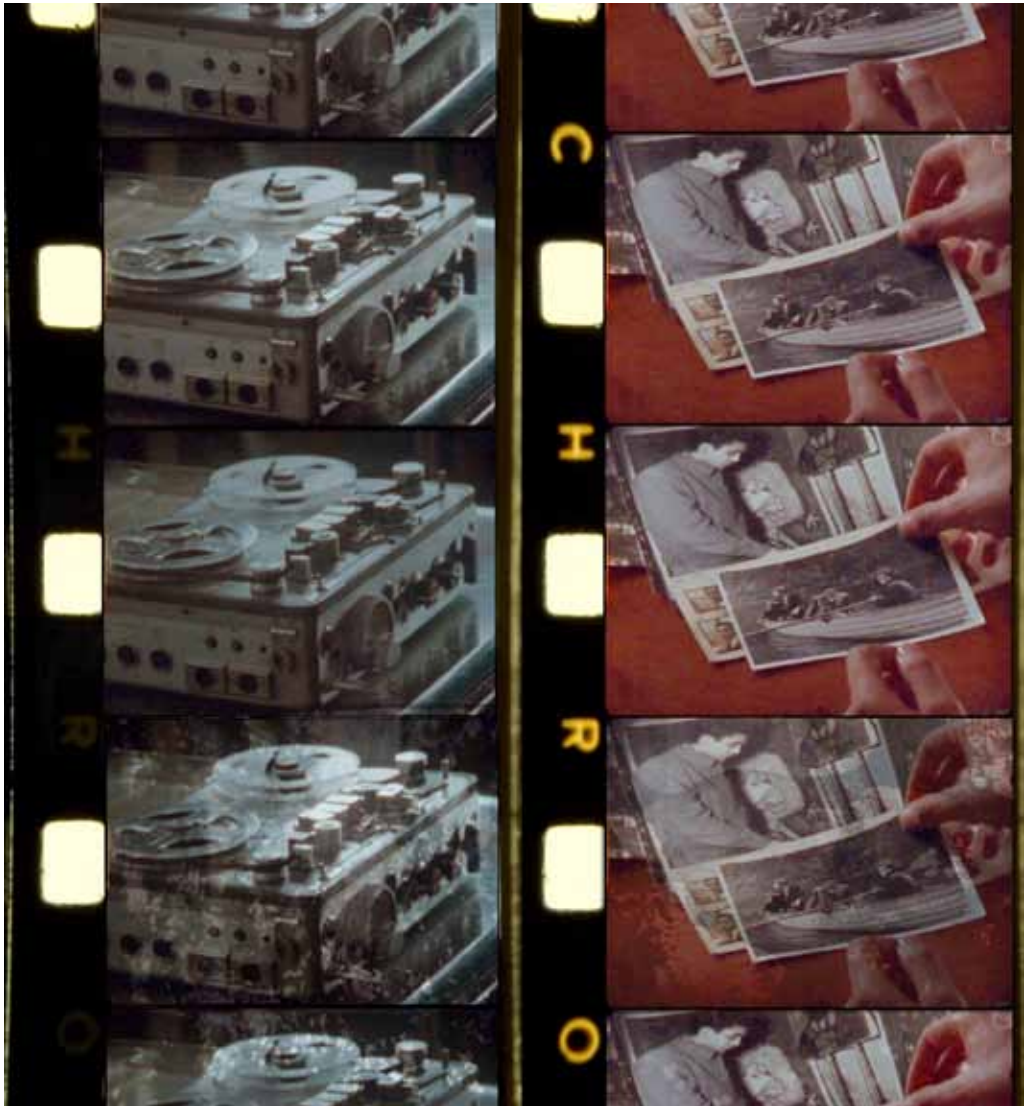
As is evident, this film programme is committed to exploring certain colonial and postcolonial conditions - belonging, difference, exile, displacement - that are part of the regions history and present day reality, but with a resolutely transnational perspective. It consciously eschews a regional focus, and presents films from across the world, hoping to manifest as an expansive constellation of shared affinities and empathies, but one where each work still retains its own specificity. Perhaps, *Passages* itself can be regarded as a veritable travelogue, snippets and fragments, of images and sounds, gathered together, to evoke, provoke and trigger emotional responses and memories, and by doing so initiate a set of reflections as to why, when and how do we travel? The experience of any place, here, there, elsewhere, is never static or fixed. It is informed and charged by our interior state of being, by a brew of reminiscences and past resonances that constantly shift, oscillate, and change, as we keep moving. Claude Lévi-Strauss has written in his masterpiece *Tristes Tropiques*:

"the accident of travel often produces ambiguities such as these. Because I spent my first weeks on United States soil in Puerto Rico, I was in future able to find America in Spain. Just, as several years later, through visiting my first English University with a campus surrounded by Neo-Gothic buildings at Dacca in Western Bengal, I now look upon Oxford as a kind of India that has succeeded in controlling the mud, the mildew and the ever encroaching vegetation."²

Maybe, like Lévi-Strauss, Chaudhuri found Dhaka in Oxford?

Will we find Oxford in Dhaka?

²Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques*, Penguin, 1974, 35.



Ashim Ahluwalia & Akbar Padamsee, *Events In A Cloud Chamber*, 2016, Super 8mm/16mm/HD, courtesy of Future East Film & Jhaveri Contemporary

FILM PROGRAMME SCREENING SESSIONS

I

- *I Saw A God Dance*, Ayisha Abraham, India, 2011, **19 minutes**

- *Off White Tulips*, Aykan Safoğlu, Turkey, 2013, **24 minutes**

- *The Great Invisible (Excerpt)*, Leslie Thornton, United States of America, ongoing, **20 minutes**

Total Running Time: 63 minutes

II

- *Mapas Elementares No. 3 (Elementary Maps No. 3)*, Anna Bella Geiger, Brazil, 1976, **10 minutes**

- *Speeches: Chapter 1 - Mother Tongues*, Bouchra Khalili, France, 2012, **23 minutes**

- *Mille Soleils (A Thousand Suns)*, Mati Diop, Senegal/France, 2013, **45 minutes**

Total Running Time: 78 minutes

III

- *Un Balcon En Afrique*, Anita Fernandez, Guinea-Bissau, 1980, **17 minutes**

- *Patagonia*, Narcisa Hirsch, Argentina, 1970, **10 minutes**

- *Phantom Foreign Vienna*, Lisl Ponger, Austria, 1991-2004, **27 minutes**

Total Running Time: 54 minutes

IV

- *Les Statues Meurent Aussi (Statues Also Die)*, Chris Marker and Alain Resnais, France, 1952-53, **30 minutes**

- *The Treasure Cave*, Bahman Ghobadi, Iran, 2009, **43 minutes**

Total Running Time: 73 minutes

V

- *La Grammaire De Ma Grand'mère (Grandma's Grammar)*, Jean Pierre Bekolo, Cameroon, 1996, **9 minutes**

- *Silence's Injuries*, Kader Attia, Germany, 2014, **13 minutes**

- *Occidente*, Ana Vaz, France/Portugal, 2014, **15 minutes**

- *Faux Départ (False Start)*, Yto Barrada, Morocco, 2015, **23 minutes**

- *Noite Sem Distância (Night Without Distance)*, Lois Patiño, Portugal, 2015, **23 minutes**

Total Running Time: 83 minutes

VI

- *Persian Pickles*, Jodie Mack, United States of America, 2012, **3 minutes**

- *My Collections*, Kohei Ando, Japan, 1988, **10 minutes**

- *Blanket Statement # 1 - Home is Where the Heart Is*, Jodie Mack, United States of America, 2012, **3 minutes**

- *Taller (Workshop)*, Narcisa Hirsch, Argentina, 1975, **11 minutes**

- *Razzle Dazzle*, Jodie Mack, United States of America, 2014, **5 minutes**

- *Things*, Ben Rivers, United Kingdom, 2014, **20 minutes**

- *Undertone Overture*, Jodie Mack, United States of America, 2013, **10 minutes**

Total Running Time: 61 minutes

VII

- *Before My Eyes*, Mani Kaul, India, 1989, **26 minutes**

- *Landscape Series # 1*, Nguyen Trinh Thi, Vietnam, 2013, **5 minutes**

- *Dangerous Supplement*, Soon-Mi Yoo, South Korea/United States of America, 2005, **14 minutes**

- *Deep Sleep*, Basma Alsharif, Greece/Malta/Palestinian Territory, 2014, **12 minutes**

- *Untitled 1997-2003*, Lamia Joreige, Lebanon, 1997-2003, **8 minutes**

Total Running Time: 65 minutes

VIII

- *A Ripe Volcano*, Taiki Sakpisit, Thailand, 2011, **15 minutes**

- *Concrete Affection*, Zopo Lady - Kiluanji Kia Henda, Angola, 2014, **12 minutes**

- *Afronauts*, Frances Bodomo, United States of America, 2014, **13 minutes**

- *Sao Hoa Noi Day Gieng (Mars in the Well)*, Freddy Nadolny Poustochkine and Truong Minh Quy, Vietnam, 2014, **19 minutes**

Total Running Time: 59 minutes

IX

- *Vadi Samvadi*, Claudio Caldini, Argentina, 1981, **6 minutes**

- *Brouillard - Passage # 15*, Alexandre Larose, Canada, 2014, **10 minutes**

- *Events in a Cloud Chamber (2016)*, Ashim Ahluwalia and Akbar Padamsee, India, 2016, **15 minutes**

- *Landfill 16*, Jennifer Reeves, United States of America, 2011, **9 minutes**

- *Meer der Dünste (Sea of Vapors)*, Sylvia Schedelbauer, Germany, 2014, **15 minutes**

Total Running Time: 55 minutes



REWIND

ADVISED BY SABIH AHMED
Senior Researcher, Asia Art Archive

AMARA ANTILLA
Assistant Curator, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

DIANA CAMPBELL BETANCOURT
Artistic Director, Samdani Art Foundation

BETH CITRON
Curator, Modern and Contemporary Art, Rubin Museum

REWIND IS GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY AMRITA JHAVERI

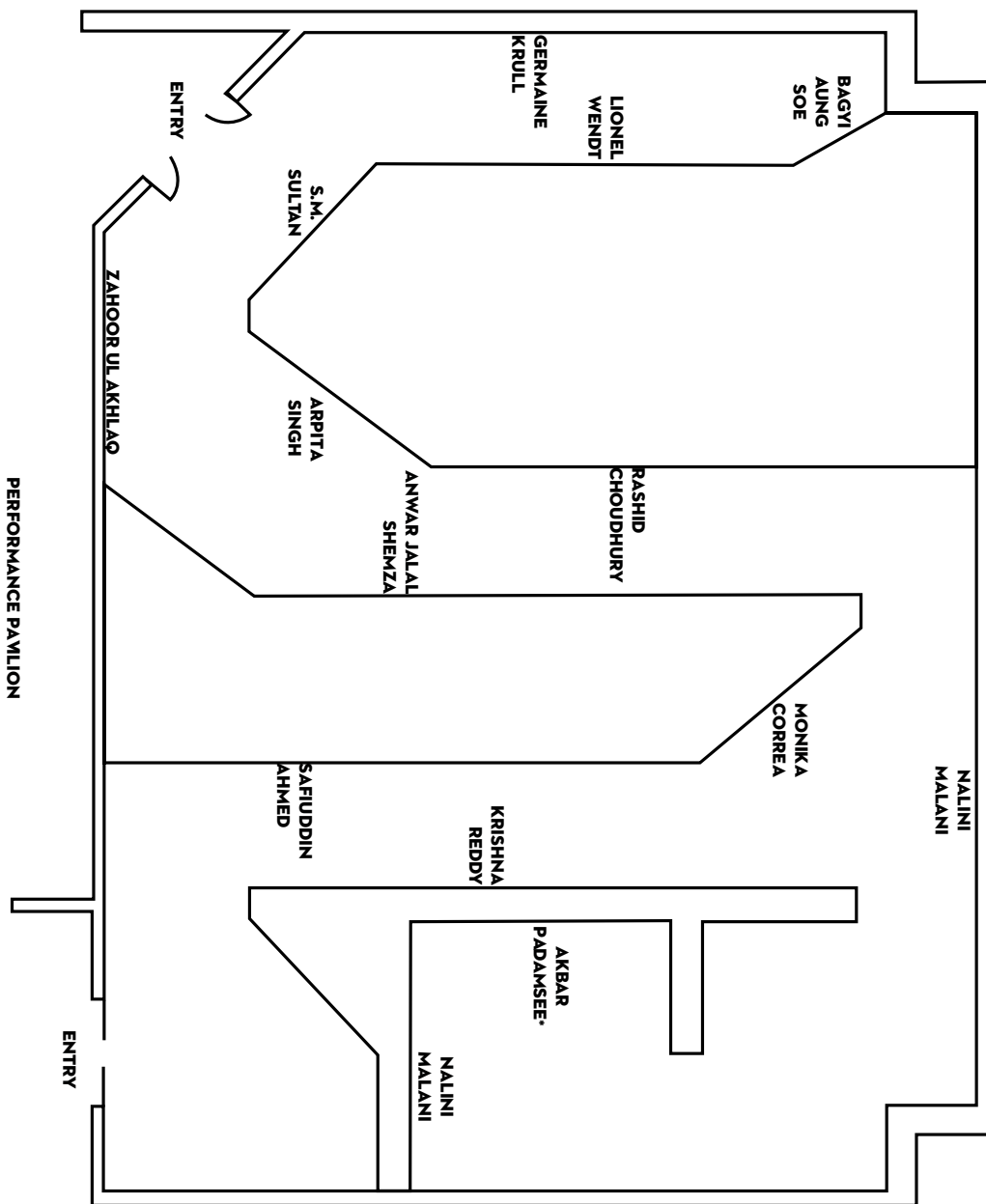
Safiuddin Ahmed
Zahoor ul Akhlaq
Rashid Choudhury
Monika Correa
Germaine Krull
Nalini Malani
Akbar Padamsee

Krishna Reddy
Anwar Jalal Shemza
Arpita Singh
Bagyi Aung Soe
S.M. Sultan
Lionel Wendt

Tours and lectures:

Amara Antilla, *Rewind* tour, February 5th 2016, 11am
Kerstin Meincke, Lecture on Germaine Krull in Asia, February 5th 2016, 3pm
Anwar Jalal Shemza book launch, February 5th 2016, 12:30-1:30pm, VIP Lounge
Arpita Singh book launch, February 6th 2016, 6-6:30pm, VIP Lounge

Left page: Nalini Malani, *Untitled II* (detail), 1970, courtesy of the artist



REWIND

Floor Plan

2nd floor, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

*Akbar Padamsee, *Events in a Cloud Chamber*, in collaboration with Ashim Ahluwalia, 1973 - 2016. This collaboration also features in *Passages*, see page 149

Rewind builds on the Dhaka Art Summit's mandate as a research platform by assembling works from public and private collections in Europe, South and Southeast Asia, and the United States that chart the diverse manifestations of abstraction in pre-1980s South Asia. *Rewind* features more than 90 works by 13 artists associated with Bangladesh (Safiuddin Ahmed, Rashid Choudhury, S.M. Sultan), Burma (Germaine Krull, Bagyi Aung Soe), India (Monika Correa, Nalini Malani, Akbar Padamsee, Krishna Reddy, Arpita Singh), Pakistan (Zahoor ul Akhlaq, Anwar Jalal Shemza), and Sri Lanka (Lionel Wendt). The exhibition explores how three generations of artists have responded to shifting cultural, political, and social contexts with experiments in abstraction, or the relationship between representation and abstraction—even when some of their primary practices are or were firmly rooted in figuration.

The majority of the works on view were produced between the late 1940s and the late 1970s, a period that witnessed the Independence of India and Pakistan from Britain and the devastating Partition of the subcontinent, followed by several major conflicts including the 1971 Liberation of Bangladesh. Transnational modernism provided fertile ground for many artists in the face of unstable borders. From the pared-down calligraphic scrawls of Aung Soe, Shemza, and Singh, and the distillations of natural and human form undertaken by Reddy, Ahmed, Sultan, and Krull to the experiments with light, pattern, and flatness of Choudhury, Malani, Padamsee, the works in *Rewind* embody some of the ways in which modernism has played out within and beyond the region.

For some of these artists, abstraction signified participation in an increasingly international, even global, modernism that developed in the wake of World War II. Gestural abstraction, most often related to expressionist movements, enabled artists to adapt or even discard figural iconography. Others turned to folk motifs linked with traditional practices and materials to explore how modernism and national independence might coexist. Yet others, inspired by achievements such as Le Corbusier's design for the city of Chandigarh, turned to geometry and the visual logic of industrialisation or, in defiance of a universal rhetoric of progress and modernisation, revived elements of the pre-modern.

Acknowledging the focusing of, art and ideas on cosmopolitan sites in South Asia; the growth of exchange between Europe, Latin America, and the United States; and the concomitant rise of cultural and political isolationism, *Rewind* seeks to create new affinities between artists and artworks that transcend temporal and national affiliation, while dislodging the West as the central point of reference. The Bangladesh, Burma, East and West Bengal, Ceylon, India, Pakistan, and East Pakistan, where these works were made have solidified into new geopolitical formations with some of the tightest and longest borders in the world today. These realities have prevented many of the works shown from travelling freely; in many cases, they are being shown publicly here for the first time. The exhibition thus offers conceptual and formal perspectives that challenge the way we define South Asian abstraction and the larger history of mid-century modernism.

The Samdani Art Foundation gratefully acknowledges the support of Amrita Jhaveri and the various lenders to the exhibition including:

Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka	Ahmed Nazir, Dhaka
Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka	Bhanu and Akbar Padamsee, Mumbai
The Estate of Zahoor ul Akhlaq, Lahore and Toronto	Pakistan High Commission, Dhaka
Enam A. Chaudhury Collection, Dhaka	Krishna and Judith Reddy, New York
Monika Correa, Mumbai	Collection of the Samdani Art Foundation, Dhaka
The Museum Folkwang, Essen	The Estate of Anwar Jalal Shemza, Eastbourne, UK
Inayat Ismail Collection, Karachi	Mahijit Singh and Nalin Tomar, New Delhi
Amrita Jhaveri, Mumbai	Farooq Sohban Collection, Dhaka
Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai	Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi
Yin Ker, Singapore	Bagyi Lynn Wunna, Yangon
Anwar Hossain Manju, Dhaka	and those who wish to remain anonymous.
Nalini Malani and Johan Pijnappel, Mumbai	



Safiuddin Ahmed, *In Memory of 71*, 1988, copper engraving, 32x20cm, courtesy of the Ahmed Nazir Collection, Dhaka

SAFIUDDIN AHMED

(b. 1922, Calcutta - d. 2012, Dhaka)

While lesser known than his colleague Zainul Abedin, Safiuddin Ahmed is considered a pioneer of modern printmaking in Bangladesh and worked alongside Abedin to found the Dhaka Art College in the aftermath of Partition in 1948 (now the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka) and served as the Head of the Printmaking Department until 1979. A printmaking studio in his name remains an important part of the Dhaka artistic landscape. Not one to seek the spotlight, he rarely sold work and seldom exhibited, as his process was very much one for his own individual satisfaction. His son therefore owns most of Ahmed's work, a suite of which are presented in *Rewind* along with two rare oil paintings from the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy collection and a print from the Samdani Art Foundation collection.

Ahmed was born in what is now Kolkata, and studied painting at the Government School of Arts, Calcutta, at a time when it was rare for Muslim students to be admitted, graduated with top marks in 1942. He won the President's Medal for a painting submitted to the Annual Exhibition of the Academy of Fine Arts in Calcutta in 1944, and soon after in 1945 his paintings were selected for exhibition in the Exposition Internationale d'Art Moderne in Paris and exhibited alongside the Tagores and Amrita Sher-Gil. While studying in Calcutta, he often travelled to Dumka - in modern day Jarkhand, India - a place populated by the Santhal tribe, and like many modernists before and after him, he was taken with their way of life. Ahmed's work of the 1940s and 1950s are inspired by these trips and by the folk art of Bengal (specifically dolls), and *Rewind* presents three works *Towing Rope* (1950), *Towing Rope* (1951), and *Image of Life* (1955), which break forms of folk art apart, creating unique forms and motifs in the process with cubist elements in them, specifically in the rendering of swirling water bodies and the ropes used in fishing.

Ahmed participated in the contemporary Indian art exhibition held at India House in London, *Art of India and Pakistan*, organised by the Royal Academy of Art, London in 1947-1948. These were tumultuous times and Ahmed arrived in Dhaka in the aftermath of Partition nearly empty-handed. While he was able to work out an agreement to get a house in Dhaka in 1948, times did not markedly improve and in 1954 Bengal was affected by some of the worst floods in history, an event that would shift the focus of his work for the rest of his life. Ahmed was finally able to return to Calcutta to retrieve his printing press, which was kept with a relative and transported back to Dhaka with much effort, enabling him to make experiments and earn renown with his copper etchings. Nearly a decade after his work was first exhibited in London, Ahmed travelled to London for advanced training in printmaking, enrolling at the Central School of Arts (now Central St. Martins) in 1956. He graduated with distinction in 1958, and was the only artist to earn this honour from etching and engraving. He extended his trip for a year, returning to Bangladesh in 1959 and elevating printmaking from a lesser art to one that could be appreciated in its own right. *Rewind* presents several works that were created during Ahmed's London period such as *Fishing Time* (1957), *Yellow Net* (1957), *Fisherman's Dream* (1957), *Flooded Village* (1958), *In the Grip of Floods* (1959), and *Receding Flood* (1959). In these works, Ahmed weaves the "thrilling rhythms from rivers in spate or a stormy sea... stylised but... close to our perception of water in motion."¹ His use of line and colour powerfully convey the idea of gushing motion. Ahmed's lines are abstract extensions of fishing nets and sails disrupted by these turbulent waters. He exhibited his works from London at the New Vision Centre Gallery at Marble Arch in April 1959 to much acclaim, his only solo exhibition in the twentieth century and one of only two in his lifetime.²

¹Hassan, Ijaz ul, "Myths and Motifs," *Painting in Pakistan*. Lahore: Ferozsons, 1996. p. 89. Print.

²The 2002 monograph published on the artist by the Bangladeshi Shilpakala Academy cites positive reviews from Sir William Coldstream, the Principal of the Slade School as well as a booklet published by the British Information Service praising the show.

From the 1960s onwards, Ahmed's practice evolved into a semi-abstract style exploring elements of geometric and traditional Bengali motifs. When observing works such as *Fishing Time* (1962) and *Blue Water* (1964) and in particular when comparing the latter to the artist's proof, it is evident that as an artist Ahmed was highly committed to process.³ *Angry Fish* (1964) and *Floating Net* (1966) show the increased use of colour during this decade, and "the languorous quality of these sodden forms and network of spidery strings evoke the luscious environment of Bengal,"⁴ but the former allegorically relates to the tensions of Bengal in the aftermath of the language movement and the build up to the fight for Independence. The political upheaval of Bengal left the artist heartbroken, and in his works and the lines of Bengal's fishing nets transformed from forms of fish to eyes, bearing tearful witness to the violence and anguish around them. Later engravings, *The Cry* (1980) and *The Memory of '71* (1988) take a more direct approach to this topic, recalling the terror that Ahmed and his family endured hiding from the Pakistani army as they had no village home to retreat to for safety.

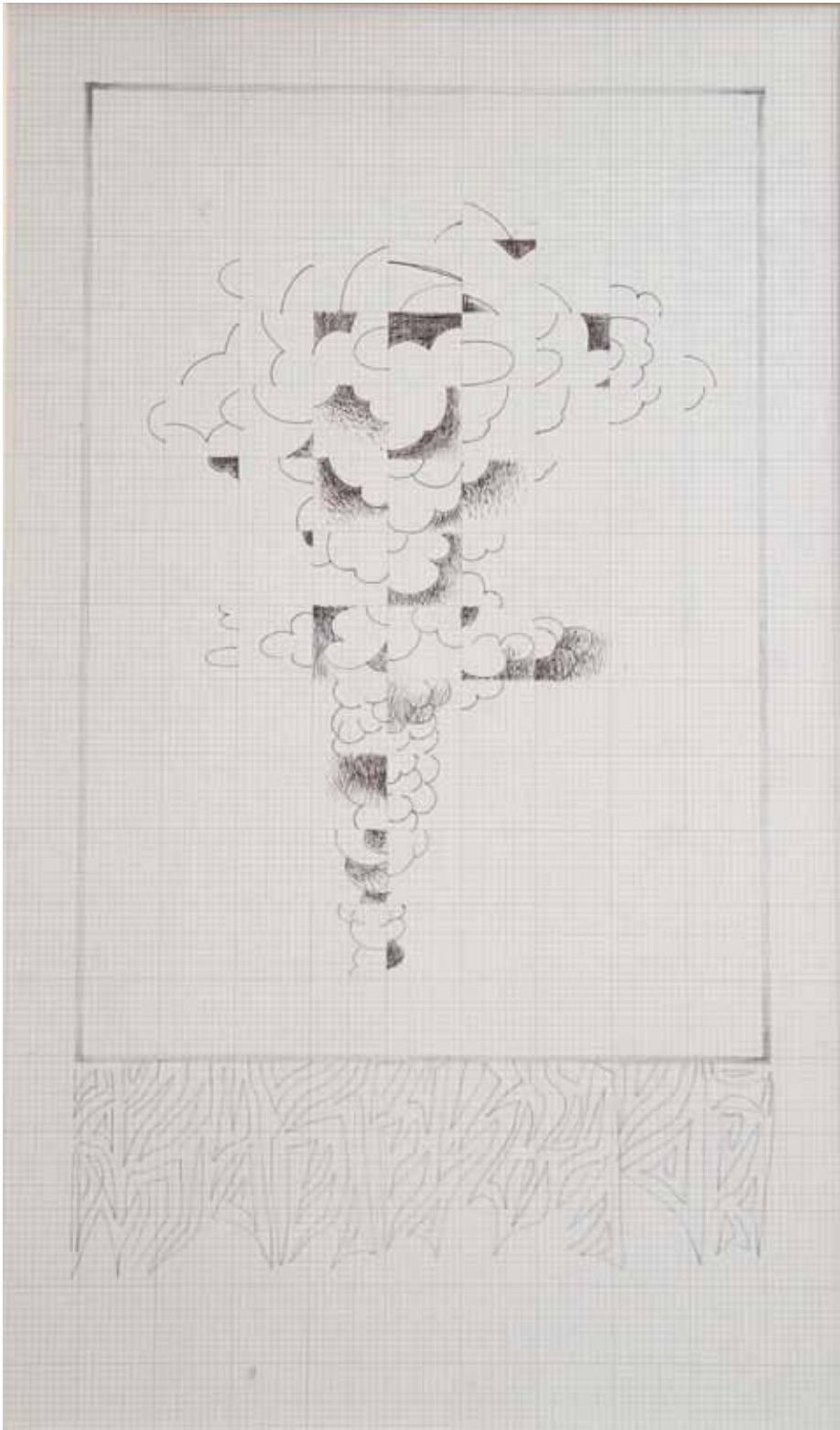
In addition to those previously mentioned in this text, Ahmed participated in many important group exhibitions including the International Triennale of Original Colour Graphics, Switzerland, (1958); *The Royal Society of Painters, Etchers, and Engravers*, RWS Galleries, London (1959); *One Hundred and Ninety First Exhibition*, the Royal Academy of Arts, London (1959); the International Biennale Exhibition of Prints, Tokyo (1962 - 1964 and 1966); the Fifth Tehran Biennale, Iran (1966); the Third Triennale of India, New Delhi (1975); *Contemporary Graphic Arts of Bangladesh* which exhibited in Poland, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria in 1977-1978; *Arts of Bengal - the Heritage of Bangladesh and Eastern India*, Whitechapel Gallery, London (1979); *Contemporary Asian Art*, Fukuoka Art Museum, Japan (1980). His work can be found in the collection of the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, the Bangladesh National Museum, the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, and several private collections in the region.

³Zaman, Mahmud Al, *Safuddin Ahmed*, Dhaka: Dept. of Fine Arts, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 2002. Print.

⁴Hassan, Ijaz ul, "Myths and Motifs," *Painting in Pakistan*. Lahore: Ferozsons, 1996. p. 89. Print



Safiuddin Ahmed, *Receding Flood*, 1959, soft ground etching, aquatint, 37x50cm, courtesy of the Ahmed Nazir Collection, Dhaka



Zahoor ul Akhlaq, *Untitled*, 1968, work on paper, courtesy of the Inayat Ismail Collection, Karachi

ZAHOOR UL AKHLAQ

(b. 1941, New Delhi - d. 1999, Lahore)

Zahoor ul Akhlaq was a late-modernist conceptual artist from Pakistan widely credited as the architect behind the revival of miniature painting as a springboard for contemporary Pakistani art. He applied a pioneering approach to painting, sculpture, printmaking, design, and architecture.¹ Uprooted from his childhood in Delhi by Partition, Akhlaq and his family relocated to Karachi and later to Lahore to study and later to teach. Akhlaq's work straddled the modernist abstraction that he was exposed to through his education in Pakistan under renowned teacher Shakir Ali and visiting Bengali artist Hamidur Rahman² and in London at the Hornsey College of Art and Royal College of Arts (1966-1969), as well as traditional arts of South Asia. The calligraphic line, for example, became extremely important to his work, and the artist had a close relationship with the famous calligrapher Yousaf Dehlvi.

During his time in London, Akhlaq was fascinated and inspired by the Mughal miniature folios that he saw at the British Museum, understanding that these were created at the same time as masterpieces by Rembrandt (who incidentally was also inspired by Mughal miniatures). Travelling back to Pakistan from the UK by road, Akhlaq began a lifetime of work that created new forms through the exploration of both modern and traditional art forms of South Asia. Like Paul Klee, one of the artists he cites as an influence, Akhlaq was also fascinated by writing and music within the visual arts, and later pursued higher education at the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, Religion, and the Arts and at the Yale School of Arts and Architecture (1987-1989).

"In music," shared Akhlaq in an interview, "musicians can have a different style and there can be a different presentation – an individual can retain his individuality while at the same time being part of a system, a grammar." The grid became the system and the grammar for which Akhlaq is most remembered, and he didn't want the grid to be read, he wanted a rhythm to come through it. Akhlaq's grammar followed that of miniature painting, where the border creates a grid with the page, and garden and courtyard layouts create grids within the border. While Akhlaq did not study miniature painting, he was inspired by their visual structure and excellence and used this language in his modern painterly large canvases. *Landscape to Landscape* (1981) appears as an abstract composition inspired by a cloudy landscape when viewed from a distance. Upon closer inspection, features such as toddlers, a young man (likely a self portrait of the artist as a younger man – a motif he took from Renaissance painting), and many other details appear in a painterly rendition of an inner and outer landscape across space and time, emerging from his quintessential grid. The artist was interested in the potential interaction between painting and viewer made possible by opening up different vantage points at different proximities to the paintings, creating his own form of perspective.

The grid is one of the central motifs of modern abstraction, however Akhlaq abhorred being likened to an "abstract artist." The two-dimensionality of painting from "The Orient" inspired the imagination of the artist and it is in this two-dimensional plane that the artist constructed unique spatial schemes.³ Akhlaq's work, however, cannot be constrained to two-dimensional plains – he often experimented with sculpture of various scales and had several successful sculpture exhibitions. His interest in sculpture also relates to architecture, "that influenced spatial relationships lying underneath 'the imagery'."⁴ The cloud motifs seen in the works in the drawing *Untitled* (1968), *Radio Photo of Objects Unidentified* (1983), a print created in commemoration of the Nobel Prize⁵ and the painting on board *Landscape to Landscape* (1981) also appear in the 1970s Plexiglas maquette exhibited here, where clouds pierce through the transparent grid-like base.

Akhlaq is widely referred to as the "father of Pakistani contemporary art," and his legacy lives on through the collections of the National Museum Amman, Jordan; Bibliotheque National, Paris; Hiroshima Museum, Japan; National Museum Islamabad, Pakistan; The Pakistan High Commissions of Kuala Lumpur, London and Dhaka; and the Tate Modern, London.

¹Zahoor ul Akhlaq also designed the logos for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture (present at DAS on the Architecture Panel) and the National College of Arts, Lahore.

²Hamidur Rahman (b. 1928-1988) was a Bangladeshi modernist artist best remembered as the architect for the iconic Shaheed Minar, or monument to the martyrs of the Language Movement in Bangladesh. The porous role of education across East and West Pakistan will be discussed in Panel 1: *Cross - Border Art Histories - Bangladesh and Pakistan*, Friday, February 5th 2016, 3:30pm-4:30pm, 3rd floor auditorium at the Dhaka Art Summit. See page 228

³Akhlaq references the aesthetic experience of the Orient in many interviews, likening his work to Japanese, Chinese, and Mughal painting techniques.

⁴Minneapolis, Gregory, "Black is the Beginning", *The Herald*, Pakistan, May, 1991, Print.

⁵Radio Photo of Objects Unidentified (1983) was commissioned by Galerie Borjeson which asked artists from countries that had Nobel Prize Laureates to create prints. Dr. Abdus Salam was awarded this prize in 1979, and Nada Raza's exhibition "The Missing One" cites this in his prize acceptance speech. See page 43



Rashid Choudhury, *Adam*, 1982, 142 x 110cm, courtesy of the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

RASHID CHOUDHURY

(b. 1932, Faridpur District - d. 1986, Dhaka)

“Rashid Choudhury’s work, in a sense, is unique among his contemporaries as the source of his inspiration is not folk art but folk-lore.¹ His paintings aim to capture the aura of myth, magic, and superstitions that prevails in rural Bengal,” references that span several religions and many sub-cultures.² Choudhury was born into an Zamindar aristocratic family in a village called Haroa in what is now called Bangladesh.* Rural life in Bengal at that time thrived under a rich synthesis of Muslim and Hindu culture, and the young Choudhury’s imagination was captivated by the colourful mythology that wasn’t bound by religion. He was most attracted to the myths with intense movement in them, and he naturally gravitated toward goddesses such as Durga, whose ten hands swirled in different directions and celebrated annually in the Autumn Bengali Durga Pooja, as well as her Kali avatar and the Radha-Krishna archetype. While he also painted with oil and gouache, Choudhury is best known for his tapestries. Hassan ul Ijaz describes... “the structure of his basic form takes shape following the archetype of these icons. The base is horizontal and stable, and the upward movement is transformed into an abstract and rhythmic pattern.”³ While many of his most celebrated works are tied to Hindu mythology, Choudhury was a Muslim and his later works incorporate Arabic calligraphy, such as his iconic tapestries in the Louis Kahn National Assembly building, the only work of art in the complex.

Just as the plurality of culture he was exposed to in his childhood inspired the subject matter in his work, his diverse education inspired his technique. Choudhury completed a five-year course in fine arts from the Dacca Art College (now Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka) in 1954 and subsequently completed a teachers’ training certificate course at Asutosh Museum of the Calcutta University that same year. The Spanish government awarded him a scholarship to study sculpture at the Central Escuela des Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid from 1956 to 1957. The turning point in his career, however, was his time in Paris from 1960 to 1964 studying sculpture, fresco and tapestry at the Academy Julian and Beaux Arts in Paris, where he was awarded first prize for his frescoes. Choudhury was taken with the work of Marc Chagall and his transformation of myth into stained glass and other traditional forms of art. His teacher, the famed tapestry artist Jean Lurçat, inspired the artist to work with tapestries despite the incredible expense at the time, which caused Choudhury intense financial difficulties up until his death.

Choudhury returned to Dhaka in 1964 and soon after founded the first single loom tapestry factory in Bangladesh (which used indigenous materials such as jute, vegetable dyes, silk, and wool) and joined the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology as a temporary lecturer. Inspired by the poets he met in France, he also played the role of “Chief Inspirer” of the new-stream poetry group *Naa*.³ He was appointed the first teacher of the department of Oriental Arts at the Government college of Arts and Crafts in Dhaka 1965, but since he returned to Dhaka with a French wife, he was soon dismissed from this post as government employees were forbidden to have foreign spouses according to the law of the Pakistan government. This marked an important shift for Choudhury, who moved to Chittagong, a place with virtually no “art scene” at the time, and established the Fine Art Department at the University of Chittagong and Charukala (the government art college) in Chittagong. The latter institution has a gallery in his name and a tapestry graces the Dean’s Office to this day. Inspired by the Bauhaus, Choudhury dreamed of forming the institution into a similarly interdisciplinary haven across art forms, and also conceptualised a weaving village in the Chittagong Hills called *Tapisree Palli* (which was not realised).

*The Zamindars were the landed-gentry of the feudal system of Bengal, and at this time their wealth and power were in decline.

¹Some texts list his birthdate as 1930, but the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy stands by the 1932 date.

²Hassan, Ijaz Ul. “Myths and Motifs.” *Painting in Pakistan*. Lahore: Ferozsons, 1996. 89. Print.

³Mansur, Abul. *Rashid Choudhury*. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 2003. 19. Print.

⁴Mansur, Abul. *Rashid Choudhury*. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 2003. 102. Print.

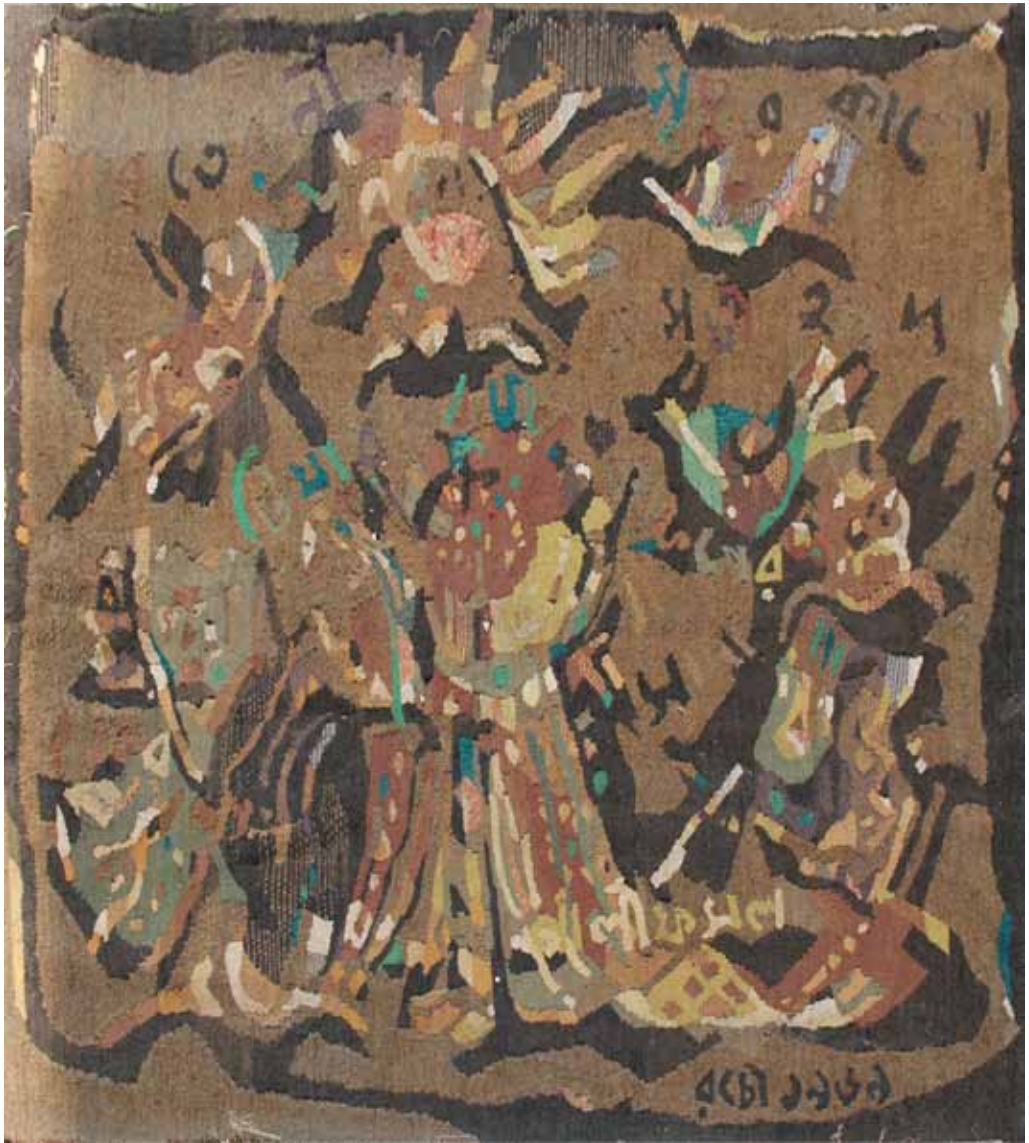
Chittagong has a rich folk and tribal undertone in its visual culture, which can be seen not only in Rashid Choudhury's works from the late 1960s onward, but also in the work of other modern and contemporary Bangladeshi artists based there. "Choudhury felt interested in the more non-visual and indirect aspects [of folk art] – storytelling, rituals, and the world of their memories and dreams. Notwithstanding the fact that he has taken the visual images of the deities as his principal form and inspirations from the folk colours, he [...] transformed and abstracted them to such extent that one could only feel the essence of them, they did not confine themselves to the limits of their visual references."⁵ Many of Choudhury's tapestries began as paintings and watercolours, and once woven, the stories interlaced into tapestry form seem to burst from the fibre. *Rewind* presents seven tapestries and two paintings spanning from the late 1960s to 1985, on loan from the National Museum, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, and several noted private collections in Dhaka. Tapestry was not considered Fine Art at the time, and therefore most of his works were commissioned given the high costs of production, which were difficult for an artist to bear without knowing for sure that the work would be purchased later. The scale of the tapestries was generally large and catered to specific architectural spaces, and *Rewind* presents works on the smaller end of the spectrum of his practice; works that span Hindu, Christian, Muslim, and even Mesopotamian and Buddhist iconography.

While Choudhury died nearly penniless given that he was not paid for the tapestries commissioned for the Parliament building in 1985,⁶ he received much praise for his artworks during his lifetime, one achievement was winning First Prize at the RCD Biennale in Tehran in 1967, and the highest civilian awards from the Bangladesh government and other cultural bodies in 1977, 1980, and 1986. His works can be found in many private collections in Chittagong, as well as the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Government of France; the National Museum, New Delhi, India; Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka; the Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Head Quarters, New York; collections of Former Presidents and Prime Ministers of India, Egypt, Yugoslavia, Myanmar, Australia, and many other banks and corporate commissions across Bangladesh and even the Philippines.⁷

⁵Mansur, Abul. *Rashid Choudhury*. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 2003. 19. Print.

⁶From a letter by Rashid Choudhury addressed to his countrymen – Mansur, Abul. *Rashid Choudhury*. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 2003. 16. Print.

⁷Mansur, Abul. *Rashid Choudhury*. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 2003. 102. Print.



Rashid Choudhury, *Harvesting*, 1969, 290 x 290 cm, courtesy of the Bangladesh National Museum. SN: 01-03-101-1997-00417



Monika Correa, *Roots II*, (detail), 1985, 101.6 x 88.9cm, courtesy of the artist and Jhaveri Contemporary

MONIKA CORREA

(b. 1938, lives and works in Mumbai)

Monika Correa's unique and fascinating body of work spans five decades and she is recognised as one of the earliest artists in India to position weaving within the realm of fine art. Correa trained under the distinguished North-American weaver Marianne Strengell of the Cranbrook Academy in Michigan in 1962. On her return to India that year, she continued her training at the Weaver's Service Centre in Bombay. Having received the working drawings of a loom Strengell had designed, Correa set out to create her own loom in Mumbai, which was installed in her living room where she still operates to this day.¹

Correa's work explores the underlying relationship between weaving and the diverse patterns and textures of nature. Over the course of the 1970s and 1980s Monika Correa's work evolved into more experimental and abstract versions of nature. As the wife of renowned architect Charles Correa, Monika has worked closely with leading architects around the world. *The Quartet of Tapestries* was commissioned by Philip Johnson for the Four Seasons Restaurant in Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building in New York. Correa also presented the Constitutional Court of South Africa with one of her Banyan Tree tapestries. An apt offering, for the symbol of the Constitutional Court is a large tree, one that provides shelter and protects the people.²

Rewind presents six early tapestries that are emblematic of Correa's abstract explorations of nature: *Mecca* (1967), *Roots 1 and Roots 2* (1984), *Lego* (1967), *Original Sin* (1972) and *Area of Darkness* (1969). In *Mecca*, Correa shifted from the traditional patterns of the dhurrie, a style she initially worked with, and sought to "abstract" the traditional patterns to "an unconventional scale - thus imparting a sensuous, floating quality to the colours."³ Correa took the theme of abstraction further by adapting and transforming weaving techniques themselves. Whether abstraction was a conscious decision or the result of changing methods, the result of *Original Sin*, using only a vertical loom and no reed as "the thick handspun Panipat wool pushes aside the cotton warp - giving a wonderfully expressionistic feeling to the piece..."⁴ The same technique was used on her two works *Roots*, in which a solid rectangle gradually "dissolves" into a web of lines. Jyotindra Jain explains, "[t]he technical ingenuity that Monika began to experiment with, i.e. removing the reed during the process of weaving, enabled her to switch, within the body of the piece itself, from the structured order of conventional weaving to the relative chaos of the unreeled areas."⁵ Like *Roots*, *Lego* demonstrates a sense of abstraction "full of an emotive potential that comes from a more sensate way of handling, interplaying the controlled and the unrestrained."⁶

Monika Correa has rarely exhibited and has worked primarily on private commissions, however she has had a few solo exhibitions at institutions including Pundole Art Gallery, Bombay (1972); Triveni Art Gallery, New Delhi (1972, 1986); USIS, Bombay (1986); Gallery Chemould, Mumbai (2013) as well as exhibitions at the World Crafts Council Exhibition, Toronto (1974); University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (1999); WRAP exhibition, London (2000); RMIT Gallery, Melbourne (2001); Australia Indo Cultural Exchange, Delhi/Sydney (2011). Her work is in a number of prestigious public collections including, the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, the Buckminster Fuller Institute, New York and the Constitutional Court of South Africa, Johannesburg.

¹Correa, Monika, "A Personal Journey," *Monika Correa*. Monika Correa. Web.

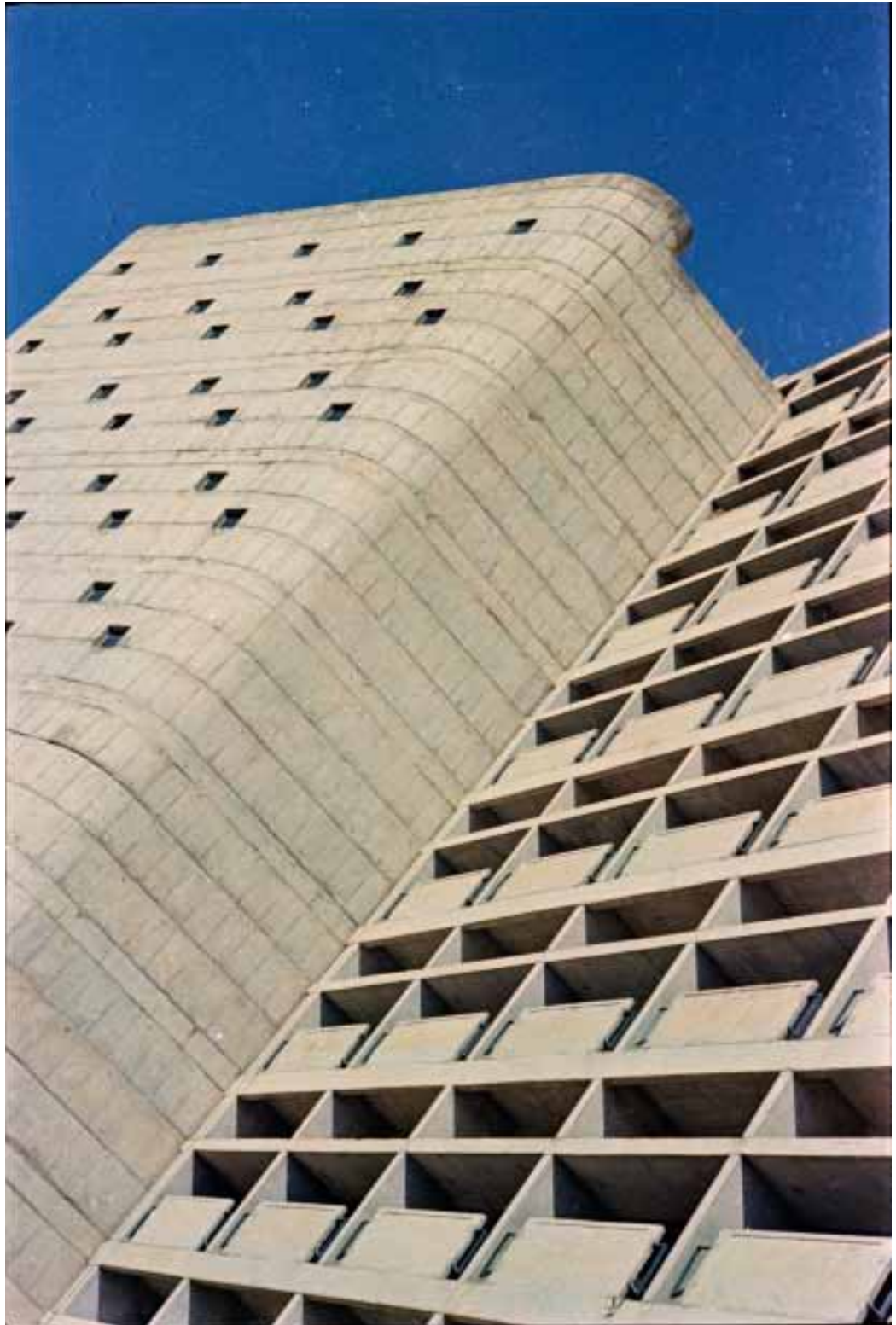
²Sachs, Albie, *The Strange Alchemy of Life and Law*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2009, pp. 89-90. Print.

³Correa, Monika, "A Personal Journey," *Monika Correa*. Monika Correa. Web.

⁴Correa, Monika, "A Personal Journey," *Monika Correa*. Monika Correa. Web.

⁵Jain, Jyotindra "WARP AND WEFT New Works of Monika Correa." *Monika Correa*. Monika Correa. Web.

⁶Jhaveri, Shanay, "Stalking Chandigarh and All its Reflections." *Chandigarh is in India*, The Shoestring Publisher, 2016, p. 165. Print.



Germaine Krull, *Chandigarh, India*, April 1972, 8.5 x 6cm, colour print, Germaine Krull Estate, Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany

GERMAINE KRULL

(b. 1897, Wilda - d. 1985, Wetzlar)

“Germaine, you and I are the greatest photographers of our time, I in the old sense you in the modern one,” wrote Man Ray in 1920.¹ A pioneering modern photographer whose nationality has been considered as Polish, German, French, and Dutch, Krull spent nearly as much time living outside of Europe as she did within it. The artist’s political activism and passion for travel took her across four continents – Brazil and Africa in 1940-1944 where she sought to set up a propaganda service for the French Resistance, and finally South and South East Asia, where she spent the last forty years of her life converting to Buddhism and devoting her life to living with Tibetan monks in Dehradun (1968-1983).² This spirit of nomadism is present across her life, from her earliest days in 1929 her commercial work for Peugeot’s 201 model that inspired a love for the open road, to the 1946-1966 period when she moved to Thailand to take up work as a photojournalist and become the proprietor of the Oriental Hotel in Bangkok (now known as the Mandarin Oriental). Her autobiographical papers show a lifelong “search for something valid in the sense of life as a total artwork.”³ Fittingly, her nickname as a teenager translates to “Mad Dog”.

“Krull practiced de-ideologisation on all levels: she wouldn’t play Bauhaus, conspire with the Surrealists or rhapsodise about industrial progress. She took a little from each, turned the results over like a leaf, and discovered, on the reverse, a synthesis,” writes Ulf Erdmann Ziegler.⁴ She was innovative and prolific, playing with new vantage points, extreme angles, and multiple exposure and photomontage techniques. She also had a talent for working with the angles of modernist architecture, and she has been credited as being the first artist of her generation to publish single-author photography book publications such as *Metal* (1928), *100 x Paris* (1929) and *Etudes de Nu* (1930). She continued to publish originally designed books, including *Ballets de Monte-Carlo* (1937), *Uma Cidade Antiga do Brasil* (1943), *Chiang Mai* (c. 1960) and *Tibetans in India* (1968).

Jean Cocteau is quoted as saying that she and her camera have “uncovered a new world, fusing technology with soul.”⁵ Most presentations of Krull’s work have minimised their focus on the non-Western subjects, dismissing them as ethnographic. Furthermore, much of this work is lost due to war, or even a plane crash, which claimed much of what she shot in Burma (now Myanmar). *Rewind* presents a selection of works inspired by sacred spaces, from Buddhist temples in Burma taken from 1959 to 1960 in Mandalay, Rangoon, and Bagan, or to a spiritual idea of Modern India, with images taken in Chandigarh in 1971 which will be exhibited for the first time.

One cannot help but infer Krull’s own early interest and later conversion to Buddhism when looking at the Burmese subjects. Far from ethnographic, one can ascertain a spiritual element to these works, particularly poignant are *Pagan Ananda Temple 1091*, whose angle and reflection of light relate to the great cathedrals of the occident and *Bouddha couché, Temple Chinbintalyang*, where the angle and light suggest a homey almost intimate scene, in significant contrast to the enormous size of the sleeping Buddha. These haunting images are both familiarly close as in *Teakwood door*, and also monumental, juxtaposing the dualities of Buddhist ideology. The angles and detail of the Chandigarh images evoke the “flickering effect” celebrated in Western bodies of work such as *Metal* (1928), conjuring the modernist desires of urban planning in Chandigarh that had a similar sentiment to the Paris she shot nearly five decades earlier.

Since 1996, the Germaine Krull Estate has been housed at Museum Folkwang, Essen. The artist’s photographs are held in numerous important public and private collection worldwide, including; the Tate, London; Amsab, Institute for Social History, Ghent; the Ann and Jürgen Wilde Foundation, Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich; The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Centre Pompidou, Musée National d’Art Moderne, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris; and the Art Institute of Chicago.

¹Frizot, Michel. *Germaine Krull, A Photographer’s Journey*. Paris: Jeu De Paume/Hazan/Hatje Cantz, 2015. Print.

²Frizot, Michel. *Germaine Krull, A Photographer’s Journey*. Paris: Jeu De Paume/Hazan/Hatje Cantz, 2015. Print.

³Ziegler, Ulf Erdmann. “Underexposed.” *Frieze* 22 (2015). Print.

⁴Ziegler, Ulf Erdmann. “Underexposed.” *Frieze* 22 (2015). Print.

⁵“Germaine Krull - Photographs.” *Berliner Festspiele/Martin-Gropius-Bau*, Dec. 2015. Web.



Nalini Malani, *Untitled III*, 1970, courtesy of the artist

NALINI MALANI

(b. 1946, Karachi, lives and works in Mumbai)

Nalini Malani was born in Karachi, though her family was forced to migrate to Bombay during the partition of India and Pakistan the next year. Malani studied painting at the Sir J.J. School of Art in Bombay from 1964-1969, and she was a pioneering artist in India at a time when the field was almost exclusively men devoted to painting and sculpture. She introduced feminism into her art early in her career, and she has critically addressed themes of domesticity, femininity, and community alongside explorations of violence, history, and contemporary social and political issues in her wide-ranging body of work.

In the late 1960s, Malani participated in the experimental Vision Exchange Workshop initiated in Bombay by Akbar Padamsee. Malani's interest in photography and film led her to develop a series of abstract, camera-less photograms at the Workshop. These works are an important contribution to the dialogue around abstraction that was developing in India at the time, and formally there are strong resonances among Malani's photograms and the language of V.S. Gaitonde's non-objective landscapes as well as with Nasreen Mohamedi's minimalist lines, with whom she worked side by side at the Bhulabhai Memorial Institute and the Vision Exchange Workshop (VIEW).

Malani developed five films at VIEW being *Dream Houses* (1969), *Still Life* (1969), *Onanism* (1969), *Taboo* (1973) and she began work on a fifth, *Utopia* (1969/76). With psychoanalytic overtones, *Still Life* and *Onanism* are principally concerned with female pain, angst, and intimacy, themes that also surfaced in Malani's paintings. *Utopia* is a diptych that simultaneously considers urbanism and the female subject, two themes that recur in Malani's work. *Utopia* resulted from her intensive study of colour theory in 1969. For *Dream Houses*, she created pop up houses from black carton paper and filmed them with different colour filters. Later for the second part of the project, Malani had a woman perform for her and she superimposed diapositives from the shooting of *Dream Houses* over her, connecting the two segments. The two parts of *Utopia*, developed seven years apart, reflect - on the one hand - Malani's initial hopes for a new India instilled by Prime Minister Nehru in the years after Independence, and - on the other - her disillusionment with the nation as the Emergency took hold in 1975.

From 1970-1972, Malani lived in Paris and further developed her work in film, conceiving an interactive film sculpture and writing several storyboards during this period. Malani's years in Paris also cemented her commitment to social issues and broadly leftist politics, and led her to question whether painting was the right medium to express her political concerns. Back in Bombay due to financial constraints for making films and photographs, she returned to painting for a period in the 1970s and 1980s - and, in fact, was one of the leading artists who developed narrative figuration as a leading movement of the time.

In the early 1990s Malani, along with several other leading artists, turned to installation and new media art to respond to India's changing cultural imperatives and recent cataclysms, especially the sectarian violence surrounding the destruction of Babri Masjid at Ayodhya. Among Malani's first major video works in that period was *Medea Project* (1994), which integrated images of contemporary violence, powerful reflections on Partition, and universal mythologies. Over the past twenty years Malani's work has been shown extensively around the globe, including solo museum exhibitions at the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi (2014); the Asia Society Museum, New York (2014); the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Japan (2013); Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2007); and New Museum, New York (2002). Her work has been included in twenty biennials such as the dOCUMENTA 13 (2012); Prospect 1, New Orleans (2008); the 51st and 52nd Venice Biennale (2005 and 2007); and the 4th Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (2002). Her work can be found in the permanent collections of the Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts and the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

AKBAR PADAMSEE

(b. 1928, lives and works in Mumbai, India)

Akbar Padamsee was born and raised in Bombay, where he attended the Sir J.J. School of Art. He matured as an artist in conversation with the Progressive Artist's Group, the first modernist community and movement formed in Bombay in the wake of Independence and Partition in 1947. Padamsee took his first trip abroad to Paris from 1951-1953, and he was largely based in Paris again from 1955-1963 (though he spent 1959-1960 in Bombay). In 1964, he travelled to the United States on a Rockefeller Fellowship, and then returned to permanently live in India in 1968.

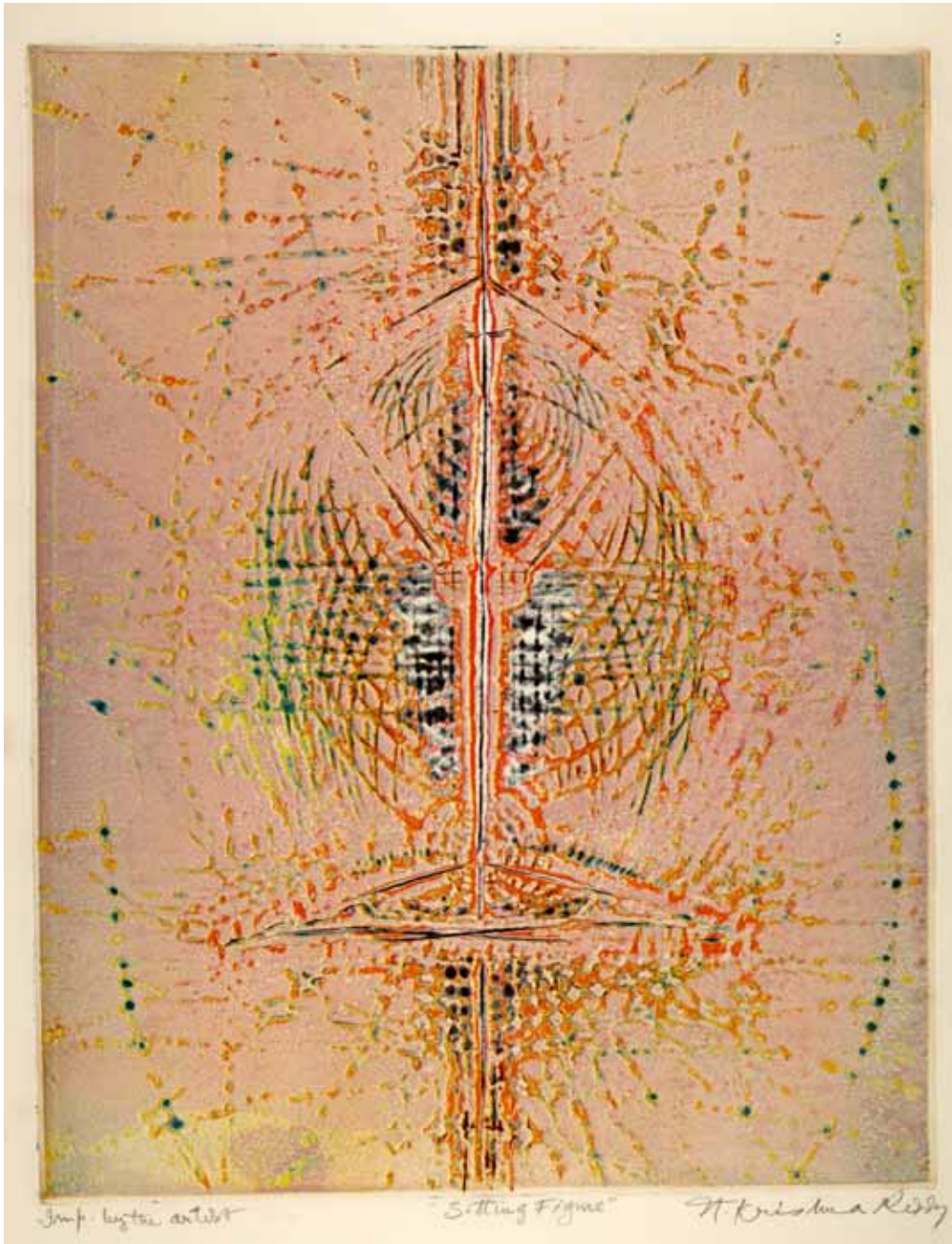
Considering himself to be primarily a painter, Padamsee's artistic concerns lay in the relationship of figuration to abstraction and, beginning in the late 1960s, in idealised landscapes that he called *Metascapes*. Intellectually he remained interested in existentialism, which manifests in his paintings through the representation of de-contextualised individual figures. Throughout his career, Padamsee cultivated wide-ranging, interdisciplinary interests including film, philosophy, and language – especially the study of Sanskrit in the late 1960s and early 1970s; these studies enabled him to develop interpretations of his and his contemporaries' work, earning him a reputation as a critic and theorist within India's art community.

Padamsee created his first film, *Syzygy*, through the Vision Exchange Workshop that he founded in 1969 after receiving an unsolicited Nehru Fellowship from the Indian government. Padamsee furnished the workshop with facilities for etching, a 16mm camera, a darkroom, and an editing room, enabling young painters and filmmakers including Nalini Malani, Gieve Patel, Kumar Shahani, and others to experiment with new mediums. Padamsee conceived *Syzygy* to consider, in his words, "celestial alignment and existential order."¹ The eleven-minute black and white animation film explores these subjects through mathematical equations, reflecting Padamsee's thought that "you need the mind of a mathematician and poet put together to be a painter."² The film is divided into two parts: the first uses a series of letters and numbers at the interval of 0-2-5-9 to demonstrate the sequence of Padamsee's drawings, and the second is an animation of abstracted geometrical line drawings that explore the relationships and formulas Padamsee sets out in the first part.

In 1973, Padamsee developed the film *Events in a Cloud Chamber*. It was screened at the opening of Padamsee's solo exhibition at Pundole Gallery in Bombay on February 1, 1974, and was subsequently lost until its re-creation in collaboration with filmmaker Ashim Ahluwalia this past year. The original film was six minutes long, shot on a 16mm Bolex camera, and featured a single image of dreamlike terrain, inspired by one of Padamsee's *Metascape* paintings. For the film, Padamsee experimented with a new technique of superimposing shapes formed through stencils and a carousel projector.

A prolific artist, Padamsee has exhibited his paintings extensively in India and abroad. His work received international recognition early in his career, including at the Venice Biennale three times (1953, 1955, 1963), the Tokyo Biennale (1959), and the São Paulo Biennale (1959). More recently, his paintings have been included in exhibitions at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2008-2009); the Rubin Museum of Art, New York (2012); and *Syzygy* was shown at the 2nd Kochi Biennale (2014).

¹Padamsee, Akbar, *Programme for a Film, Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship Project, 1969-70*. The Shoestring Publisher: Mumbai, 1969. Print.
²de Souza, Eunice, "Talking to Padamsee," *Times of India*, April 30, 1972.



Krishna Reddy, *Sitting Figure*, 1971, colour viscosity intaglio print, 44.5 x 35cm, courtesy of the artist and the Samdani Art Foundation

KRISHNA REDDY

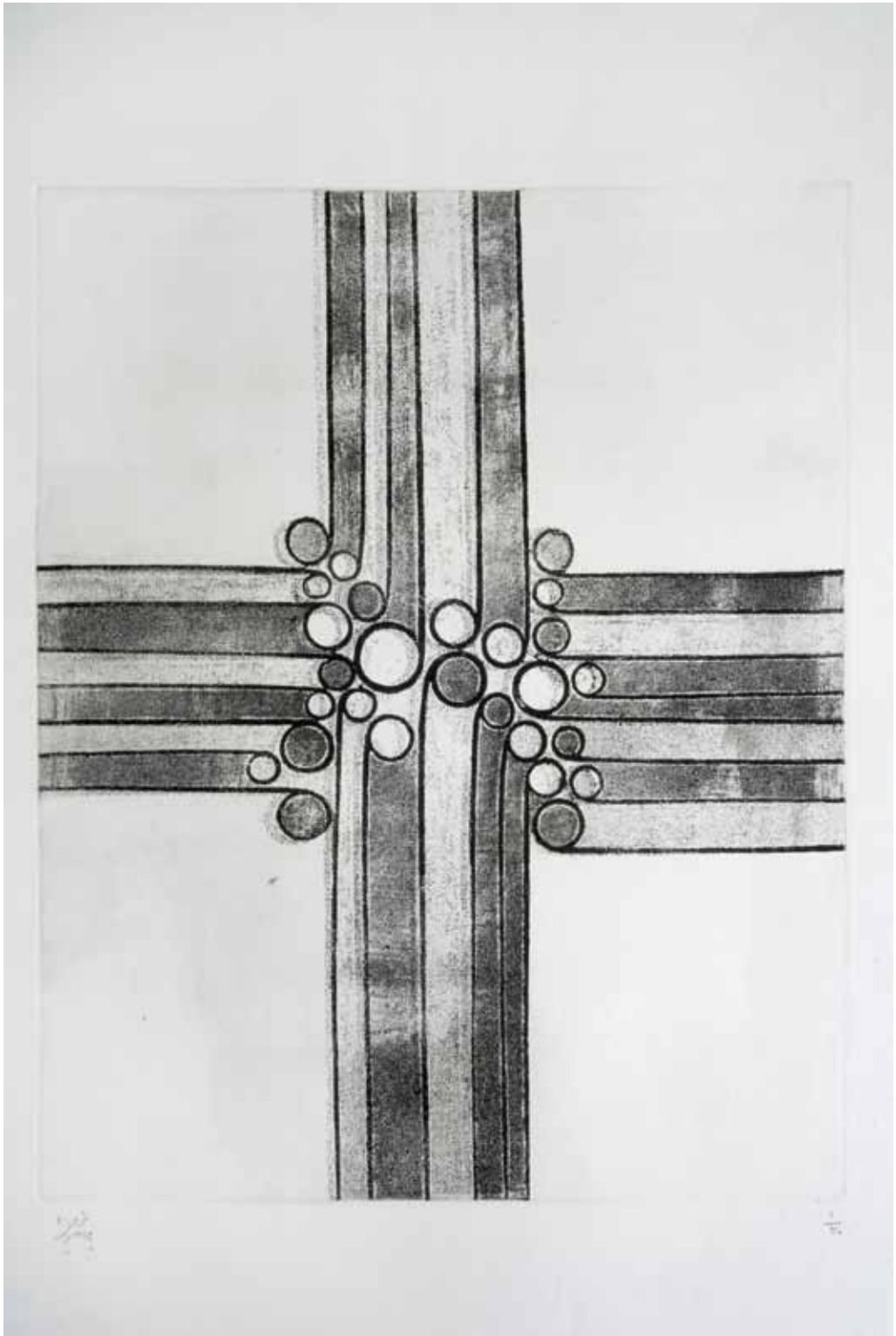
(b. 1925, Andhra Pradesh, lives and works in New York)

Krishna Reddy was born in rural Andhra Pradesh, India and educated at the idyllic Kala Bhavan at Santiniketan. As a student of pioneering artist Nandalal Bose at Santiniketan in the mid 1940s, Reddy absorbed India's great heritage of figuration by travelling to historical sites including Ajanta and drawing the goddesses represented at the caves. After graduating, he spent two years as Head of the Department of the College of Fine Arts at Kalakshetra, where he developed and launched a progressive visual arts program.

In 1949, Reddy departed for London to continue his studies. He studied sculpture at the Slade School of Art under famed British artist Henry Moore, whose work shaped Reddy's abstracted figurative sculptures. Reddy then moved to Paris where he continued to develop his work in several mediums, and he joined Stanley William Hayter's intaglio printmaking studio, Atelier 17. He approached the intaglio plate from the perspective of a sculptor, lending a sculptural quality to his printmaking throughout his career. At Atelier 17, Reddy invented the technique of simultaneous colour printmaking by experimenting with the use of several colours of different viscosities on a single plate. Reddy is best known for this innovation, and it can be seen in the fluid layering of colours in the works on view here, especially from the 1960s onwards.

Reddy's prints consider elements of nature and his life experiences. Early representational works including *Insect* (1952) and *Fish* (1952) explore the physical structure of those animals. Through the 1950s, his works become progressively more abstract, and *River* (1959) refers to the movement of its subject but avoids direct representation. Reddy's prints of the 1960s reflect a strong sense of dynamism, as *Wave* (1963) and *Whirlpool* (1963) each reveal the immediacy of water in motion, and through colour variation and modulation of line show the fleeting collision of water with air and light. Several important series of the late 1960s and 1970s refer to specific events or figures. *Demonstrators* (1968), for example, is Reddy's abstracted observation of the social revolution that began in Paris in May of that year, when students and workers protested against the various institutions of capitalism. *Apu in Space* (1975) and *Child Descending* (1976) were inspired by Reddy's then-young daughter, and they play with the relationship of figure and ground in their energetic considerations of the print field.

Reddy is also a renowned educator. He taught printmaking to fellow artists including Zarina Hashmi at Atelier 17 in Paris in the 1960s, and spent much of his career teaching across the world. Through visiting artist and artist in residence appointments, Reddy has shared his work at over 250 universities and arts centres. In 1977, Reddy moved to New York to teach at New York University, directing the school's printmaking department over the next generation. Exhibitions of his work have also been held internationally. A major retrospective of Reddy's work was held at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Delhi in 2014, and his work has also been shown at the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, Delhi (2014); the University of Hawaii, Hilo (2007); and the Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York (1995). Reddy's prints are held by institutions including the National Gallery of Modern Art, Delhi; the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Anwar Jalal Shemza, *Meem*, 1964, aquatint, courtesy of Jhaveri Contemporary

ANWAR JALAL SHEMZA

(b. 1928, Shimla - d. 1985, London)

Born in 1928 in Shimla, India, to a Kashmiri family, Anwar Jalal Shemza was an artist and writer who was active in both Pakistan and England. He received his BFA from the Mayo School of Art (now National College of Arts) in Lahore before enrolling at Slade School of Art, London in the 1950s. Shemza was an innovative master in the use of muslin and ink to create abstract representations in his work. Shemza's work was heavily influenced by a range of experimental printmaking techniques, including relief printing. Shemza often combined both forms to create bold textures. He was often inspired by elements of Islamic architecture, scripture and geometric shapes, as well as carpets, as his grandfather owned a carpet business in Lahore.

Shemza would often tell people that he was born on a carpet, and after studying and later permanently settling in England, he transformed the language of carpets and of South Asian visual culture into modernist abstract compositions born from traditional motifs, breaking away from the lyrical figurative work he was known for as a founding member of the Lahore Art Circle. In the 1960s, Shemza began the *Meem* series that was based on the first letter of the prophet Mohammed's name, a series that can be celebrated for both its Eastern (abstraction in Arabic calligraphy and religious iconography) and Western (Paul Klee and his challenging the separation of writing and visual art inspired Shemza) influences. The circles in the *Meem* series reappear in the artist's beautiful *Square Compositions* from 1963, which show western constructivist influences and whose forms create an almost mystical puzzle (which tie back into the *Meem* series). Reflecting on this series, the artist wrote, "A circle - a square - a puzzle - for which a lifetime is not enough."¹

Shemza wrote poetry to earn pocket money as a school boy, and his work retains that early play with language that continues into his later works such as the *Roots* series from the last eight years of his life, where nature grows from "roots" lyrically painted as abstracted Arabic calligraphy. Interestingly, the roots and the landscapes above them are divided into two sections of canvas, perhaps speaking to the artist's diasporic experience and that of Post-Partition South Asia, where roots no longer simply tied one to the place where a person first sprouted life. Individual experience, abstraction, and the landscape also come together in Shemza's beautiful *Fingerprint* series that began in 1963. Fingerprints are an organic and abstract composition of individual identity, comprised of lines that create the feel of a topographic map. Shemza was obsessed with horizontal lines as the simplest rendition of a landscape, and the lines that he drew in the *Fingerprint* series that map the architecture of a body also relate to the manmade landscape of domes and arches in the architecture of his homeland (a visual language which can also be seen in Shemza's *Chessmen* and *City Walls* series).

During his lifetime, Shemza exhibited at many institutions including the 6th Triennial of World Art, New Delhi, (1956); Pakistan National Council of the Arts, Karachi, Rawalpindi, Lahore, (1960-62); 5th Exhibition of International Prints, Ljubljana, (1963); Treasures from the Commonwealth, Royal Academy of Arts, London, (1965) and 6th International Print Biennial, Tokyo, (1968). More recently, the artist featured in *The Other Story*, Hayward Gallery, London (1989-90); the Tate Britain, London, (2012 and 2015); 5th Gwangju Biennale, (2014). His work can be found in the permanent collections of the Tate, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, the Lahore Museum in Pakistan and the British Museum.

¹From text in Urdu by the artist in the work *One to Nine and One to Seven*, 1962



Arpita Singh, *Untitled*, 1980, 27.94 x 19.05cm, courtesy of the artist and Vadehra Art Gallery

ARPITA SINGH

(b. 1937, Barangar, lives and works in New Delhi)

Arpita Singh (néé Datta) was born in Barangar, an industrial town in West Bengal. She was educated in Delhi, earning her diploma in 1959 from the Polytechnic Department of Fine Arts. In 1960 she became a founding member of the group *The Unknown*, which also included her future husband Paramjit. Following the group's first exhibition at the All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society in 1960, Arpita began to participate in exhibitions around the city.

Singh's early figurative paintings were narrative and inspired to an extent by the expressionist painters Marc Chagall and Paul Klee, both in their playfulness, spatial ambiguity, and Klee's scale. In the 1960s, she worked at the Weaver's Service Centre, a design resource formed by the Handloom Board of India. From this experience, she assimilated an understanding of patterns, embroidery, and colourful fabrics into her paintings, and several of the works exhibited in *Rewind* contain elements inspired by kantha embroidery from rural Bengal. Following her first solo exhibition at Kunika Chemould Art Centre in Delhi in 1972, Singh's work took a different tack in the mid 1970s, as she began to develop a series of small-scale abstract drawings and watercolours, first in black and white and then in colour.

Rewind presents eight works on paper from 1980. The black and white drawings are characterised by play with depth of line, and variations between minimalist reduction and fully worked surfaces. The watercolours reveal variegated forms and exploration with layering of translucent paint. Art Historian Deepak Ananth praises the artist for, "the variety of marks that pencil, crayon, and brush can be made to yield: a continually renewed pleasure in surface and texture, in the unctuousness of oil paint or the translucency of watercolour; a delight in the touch, in experimenting with the most varied notions, their lightness, their density; and the sheer bliss of colour." Describing this body of work in his monograph on the artist, Ananth continues, "a multitude of cross-hatchings, smears, and rubbings in black ink or pigment usurp the smooth and immaculate expanse of the paper, bestowing the surface with textures that range from the bristling to the friable. The disparate markings with their varied tonal gradation coalesce in dense clusters, even as the whiteness of the ground glimmers through the interstices of the graphic camouflage."¹

In the mid 1980s, Singh returned to narrative figuration, working in both watercolour and oil on canvas. She began to focus on portraying the lives of women, especially in relation to the ambivalence of aging, and to the experience of injustice and violence in society, such as the communal riots that ravaged the state of Gujarat in 1992 from which India has never recovered. She has continued to explore these themes with unparalleled depth and emotional clarity over the past generation. Art Critic Gayatri Sinha posits that "Arpita Singh has pushed the visual lexicon of the middle-aged woman further than almost any other woman artist. The anomaly between the aging body and the residue of desire, between the ordinary and the divine and the threat of the violent fluxes of the impinging external world gives her work its piquancy and edge. At the same time she critiques the miasma of urban Indian life with suggestive symbols of violence that impinge on the sphere of the private, creating an edgy uncertainty."²

During the 1986 Festival of India, Singh had her first major museum exhibition outside India, at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. Since then, her work has been exhibited widely in India and globally, including at the 2nd Havana Biennale (1987); the Asia Society, New York (1996); Kunstmuseum, Bern (2007); the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2009); the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum (2011); the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem (2013) and the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (2014). In 2011 she received a Padma Bhushan Award from the Government of India.

¹Ananth, Deepak, *Arpita Singh*, Gurgaon: Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd. pp. 16-20. Print.
²"Singh, Arpita - Artist Profile," Grosvenor Gallery, Grosvenor Gallery. Web.



Bagyi Aung Soe, *Untitled*, c. 1985, felt-tip pen on paper, inscription in Burmese "All the eight Paths to Nirvana [the Noble Eightfold Path] are right passages. Take the right path, and you will attain Nirvana", courtesy of the Samdani Art Foundation

BAGYI AUNG SOE

(b. 1924, Rangoon - d. 1990, Yangon)

Bagyi Aung Soe is largely considered the leader of Burmese modern art. While his education and wanderlust took him to India, Russia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and he wrote about Western artists that he encountered in the libraries of Rangoon (now Yangon), his work is little known outside of Myanmar. One exception is Singapore – the country that has the largest collection of his work through private collectors and the National Gallery of Singapore, (derived from the Singapore Art Museum’s Aung Soe collection). Inspired by his mentor, visionary Indian artist Nandalal Bose, Aung Soe wanted to create a new movement in art in Burma.¹ As part of this desire, he eschewed painting on canvas* and primarily used illustration as his form of expression, often using felt tip pens and actively working against the idea of an artist as a professional. To this end, his work was rarely exhibited in the few existing galleries during his lifetime, or even after his lifetime because his work is difficult to fit into a chronology of South Asian modernism. Elaborating on this, leading Aung Soe scholar Yin Ker writes, “Aung Soe drew on the spiritual strategies and instruments of Zen, Tantra, and Burmese esoteric paths alike, and did not confine himself to any single doctrine. Even scientific formulæ and mathematical equations were employed to articulate the ultimate realities expounded in Buddhist teachings. It is clear that [his] painting cannot be pigeonholed into any single category of the modern, the traditional, the Burmese, the Indian, or the Southeast Asian.”² It is important to note that when Aung Soe was born, Burma and India shared colonial histories as part of the British Empire, so the connections between South and South East Asia were more fluid than they are today.

As a young man, Aung Soe was known within Burma’s literary circles, and through their encouragement he received a scholarship from the Indian government in 1951 to study at the Visva-Bharati University founded by Rabindranath Tagore in Santiniketan. He only stayed for a year, but this experience reflects across his entire philosophy as a thinker and writer, and he continued to sign Santiniketan on his works throughout his life, even in the late 1980s. “Nature will choose the good traditions out of the old, and sincerity and truth out of the new [modern]. Not everything old is decadent, not everything new [modern] is revolutionary..We have to search for the soul in the old, and foster the progress of the new [modern],” wrote Aung Soe in 1978, and this modern thinking clearly shows the influence of the teachings of Nandalal Bose, Ramkinkar Baij, and the other masters Aung Soe encountered in rural Bengal.³ Like many other artists in Rewind, Aung Soe was inspired by the Santhal community, and folk elements remain in his work long after he left India. Aung Soe began to use a sun symbol in his signature, one remarkably similar to that of Jamini Roy, an artist who greatly inspired Aung Soe and about whom Aung Soe also wrote. Soon after his return to Rangoon in 1952, Aung Soe published abstract illustrations in *Shumawa Magazine* in January and February 1953, creating a scandal in the art community of Burma and earning his work the moniker of *seik-ta-za-pangyi* – which means psychotic or mad painting – a label that would follow him the rest of his life. In a grand modern gesture, Aung Soe added the preface “*Bagyi*” to his name in 1955, his own way of spelling *pangyi*, the Burmese word for painting/painter, spelling the way it is verbally pronounced. Bagyi Aung Soe was also an actor and this drama permeated into his daily life where he suffered from alcoholism and fits of rage that landed him in psychiatric hospitals more than once.

Under the oppressive military junta which began in 1962, there were intense restrictions on freedom of speech⁴ which also extended to the arts (nudes, for example, were not permitted, and the use of colours like red could often be sensitive in the socialist era). However, by working intelligently, and even playing into the role of the “mad man”, with poets, writers and editors in the space of illustration, Bagyi Aung Soe was able to create with relative freedom for over forty years, and in some publications he completed as many as eighty illustrations per month.⁵

*Oil on canvas was seen as a Western medium and therefore rejected by many South Asian artists at the time.

¹Aung Soe worked independently, however his words, teachings, and writings suggest a desire to impart this philosophy on others.

²Ker, Yin, *Field Notes 03: A Short Story of Bagyi Aung Soe* in 5 images p.44

³Ker, Yin, *Strategies for an Autonomous Artistic Modernity*, Taipei: Taipei Arts Museum, 2005 cite Yin Ker Lecture in Taiwan

⁴For more information, see Amar Kanwar’s work in *Mining Warm Data* on see page 61

⁵Ranard, Andrew, *Burmese Painting: A Linear and Lateral History, The Modernist Movement - the Outsiders*, Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2009, p.240 . While this text implies a prolific body work, sourcing the works for *Rewind* was one of the most difficult tasks of the Dhaka Art Summit.

In a letter, Myay Chit Thu recalls Aung Soe's, words that "Contemporary art understands that space is a continuous existence, in which an object changes, warps, twists but cannot interrupt. . . .This is the concept that cubism handed down to abstract art" (Aung Soe 1978 b:20-23 cite Yin Ker).⁶ The female figure is present across his practice, often in erotic forms that likely could not squeeze by censors were it not for their masquerade as geography (like his female geography series) or coded numbers (like his *I Draw Solar Energy* series). Bagyi Aung Soe's approaches prioritised the subject matter's energy and spirit over its literal form, and therefore allowed him relative freedom within a restricted political context. The background of many of his works include psychedelic numbers and Burmese letters, sometimes overlaid with English writings, creating a colourful mosaics of cabalistic symbols. The military dictator at the time, Ne Win, relied on numerology and cabalistic spells and rituals for his political decision making, and his regime was strict on any external use of "wizardry," which could explain the following clarifying description on the back of a Bagyi Aung Soe work, "it is only painting. But I apply in modern painting basic knowledge on cabalistic diagrams, amulets and *Pali* protective verses, which have existed since a long time."⁷ Similar to the "[automatic writing] of surrealism (a style that fascinated Aung Soe, as can be seen in his illustrations), whereby one wrote or painted spontaneously without preconception as if in a trance,"⁸ Aung Soe explored the "Dionysian aspects of Burmese art, a world of turbulence, upheaval and demons" a space shunned by most Burmese artists at the time.⁹

⁶The *Journal of Burma Studies*, Vol.10, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, DeKalb: Northern Illinois University, 2005-06, p.99. Print

⁷Ibid. p.103

⁸Ranard, Andrew, *Burmese Painting: A Linear and Lateral History, The Modernist Movement - the Outsiders*, Silkworm Books, 2009, p.240



Bagyi Aung Soe, *Untitled*, c. early 1970s, reverse glass painting, courtesy private collection Singapore



S.M. Sultan, *Untitled*, 1952, watercolour on card, 35.2 x 50.5cm, courtesy of the Samdani Art Foundation



S.M. Sultan, *Landscape with Tree*, watercolour on paper, 25.5 x 35.5cm, courtesy of the Bangladesh National Museum. SN: 01-03-101-1997-00423

S.M. SULTAN

(b. 1923, Narail District - d. 1994, Jessore)

Sheikh Mohammed Sultan was a Bangladeshi avant-garde artist celebrated for his drawings and paintings. Born in the Narail, Jessore, S.M. Sultan was the son of a mason, and only received formal primary schooling until the fifth grade. His father's employer took notice of Sultan's artistic talent, and supported and coached him through the immense hurdle of gaining admission to higher education without a secondary school degree. The cosmopolitan Professor of Vageshvari Comparative Art at the University of Calcutta, Saheed Suhrawardy, was impressed by the young Sultan and not only gave him admission, but also financial support. Sultan left in 1944 without completing his degree and headed to Kashmir, a place that inspired many of his landscapes.

Violence in Kashmir forced Sultan to flee to what is now Pakistan in 1946, where he soon found favour with collectors including a future Prime Minister of Pakistan, Firoze Khan Noon, and Mohammad Ali Jinnah's sister. From 1951-1952, Sultan represented Pakistan in a programme organised by the Institute of International Education in New York and the artist travelled to Chicago, Vermont, Michigan, Boston, and Washington for workshops and exhibitions.¹ The Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has published that the artist held 17 one-man shows in different cities of the United States and held several one-man shows in London and also participated in a Group Exhibition along with works of Picasso, Matisse, and Dali at Leicester Gallery.² Sultan travelled back to Karachi in 1952, where he had developed close friendships with Shakir Ali and Abdur Rahman Chughtai, who were instrumental to the development of modernism in South Asia.³ Sultan returned home to Bengal in 1953, settling back into village life in Narail.

Much of what is known about Sultan in Bangladesh centres around local legend pertaining to his bohemian biography, and the work he created post 1976 where he glorified the Bengali peasant with large-scale, muscular figurative paintings using natural pigments on jute canvases, many of which no longer exist as the artist painted without conservation in mind. This type of work, which debuted at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, earned him the status of permanent artist in residence of the institution. *Rewind* aims to show a different side of S.M. Sultan, beyond the gripping biography and the power of knotted muscles.

Sultan's work is vastly different from decade to decade. He periodically disappeared from the art scene, once in the late 1950s, where he retreated for nearly a decade before debuting a new body of work in the village area of Khulna in 1969, and again soon after for nearly seven years, reappearing with his first major exhibition in Dhaka (at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy) in 1975. In art historical texts of the 1950s and 1960s (such as *Pakistan Quarterly* and *Art in Pakistan*), Sultan was known as a landscape painter inspired by impressionism, and *Rewind* will present works that earned Sultan acclaim as one of the most important South Asian artists during his lifetime before he became a legend in Bangladesh. In the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy monograph published in 2003, Sadeq Khan reflects on the artist's work from the early 1950s by writing "I was struck by his mental exercise of geometrical abstraction in the natural fluency of landscapes that he painted, oblivious of visual reality... his moods found spontaneous expression by blythe brush movements in circles and semi-circles forming chains of foliage. Avoiding right angles, acute angles, and obtuse angles alike, he rhythmically bound his imagery in breaking waves of bow forms."⁴

This exhibition includes work from the early 1950s that was exhibited in the United States, works from his seminal 1969 show in Khulna, and also the 1975 work, the *First Plantation*, that is on display for the first time in over twenty years - his debut in the new country of Bangladesh. Syed Amjad Ali wrote an important descriptive text in *Pakistan Quarterly* in January 1952 describing Sultan's dreamy landscapes.

¹"8 Foreigners Named to '52 Arts Program." *New York Times*. 20 December, 1951, p.6

²Sirajul, Muhammad, Ed., *S.M. Sultan*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 1976. Print; We have yet to find primary sources documenting these exhibitions and the location of the show with Picasso is sometimes stated as Victoria Embankment Gardens, Hampstead. A Goethe Institute Exhibition in Dhaka lists 5 Exhibitions in the USA and 4 exhibitions in London: *S.M. Sultan and His Paintings*. Dhaka: German Cultural Institute, Dhaka, 1987. Print.

³For more information, see Ifrikhar Dad's publication: *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, 1st ed., Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2010. Print.

⁴Khan, Sadeq. *S.M. Sultan*. Dhaka: Dept. of Fine Arts, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 2003. Print page 15

“There are first the soft subdued tones of panoramas of Bengal done in water-colour, depicting wide expanses of water and sky, the melting horizons, palm trees and boats, fisher-men and dainty huts, in charmed atmosphere of rustic serenity. watery, flat!” He continued, “Then there are the panoramas of Kashmir, mostly in oils, all richly colourful, almost flamboyant - the deep purple mountains, the variegated shrubbery and trees, the lakes and rivers, which make up a scene very unlike the unrelieved monotony of Bengal...”⁵ *Rewind* presents sixteen of these seductive landscapes, some of which have never been publically exhibited in Bangladesh.

In 1969, the Jessore District Council, once led by eminent collector and *Rewind* lender Enam Choudhury, presented a one night exhibition of SM Sultan in the Khulna Club. The artist finished many of the works on site the day of the exhibition. Many were haunting and figurative views of village life and everyday men and women. The colour selection and pattern of brushstrokes show the influence of Van Gogh's impasto technique (whose work he was aware of from reproductions). The powerful oil painting from this exhibition, *Nayar* (1969) shows the pain of losing a daughter/sister through traditional marriage customs. This show was a sold-out success, however the Bangladesh Liberation war and its aftermath destroyed many of the works from this period and few survive.

S.M. Sultan reappeared in Dhaka in 1975 and exhibited in the first National Art Exhibition organised by the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. His fame in the 1950s was nearly forgotten by most visitors (as he was better known in Pakistan) - and the style of his work changed dramatically when he presented *The First Plantation* (1975), which is accompanied by a charcoal sketch tied to this painting on loan from a private Dhaka collection. In *First Plantation*, Sultan creates a mythical environment; the overwhelming figure shows power yet his face is humble and the protective gesture of his hands could be cherishing all of humanity or just a simple seed: the combination of inner strength and the modesty of the peasants of Bengal is striking.

In 1976 the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy organised a solo exhibition with over 75 paintings exploring the struggle for existence - and this show marks a transition to a period when the landscape became secondary to the figure in Sultan's work. The Fukuoka Museum of Fine Art in Japan presented a solo exhibition of his work in 1980, and in 1987 the Goethe Institute also presented a mini-retrospective in Dhaka. While the artist achieved much international acclaim for someone at the time, in Bangladesh Sultan was often dismissed as a bohemian and not taken seriously by many in the artistic community, even to this day. However, he won the prestigious Ekushey Padak award in 1982, the Bangladesh Charu Shilpi Sangsad Award 1986 and the Independence Day Award in 1993. The government established a museum in his name, the S.M. Sultan Memorial Gallery in his former residence in Kurigram, Narail in 2000.

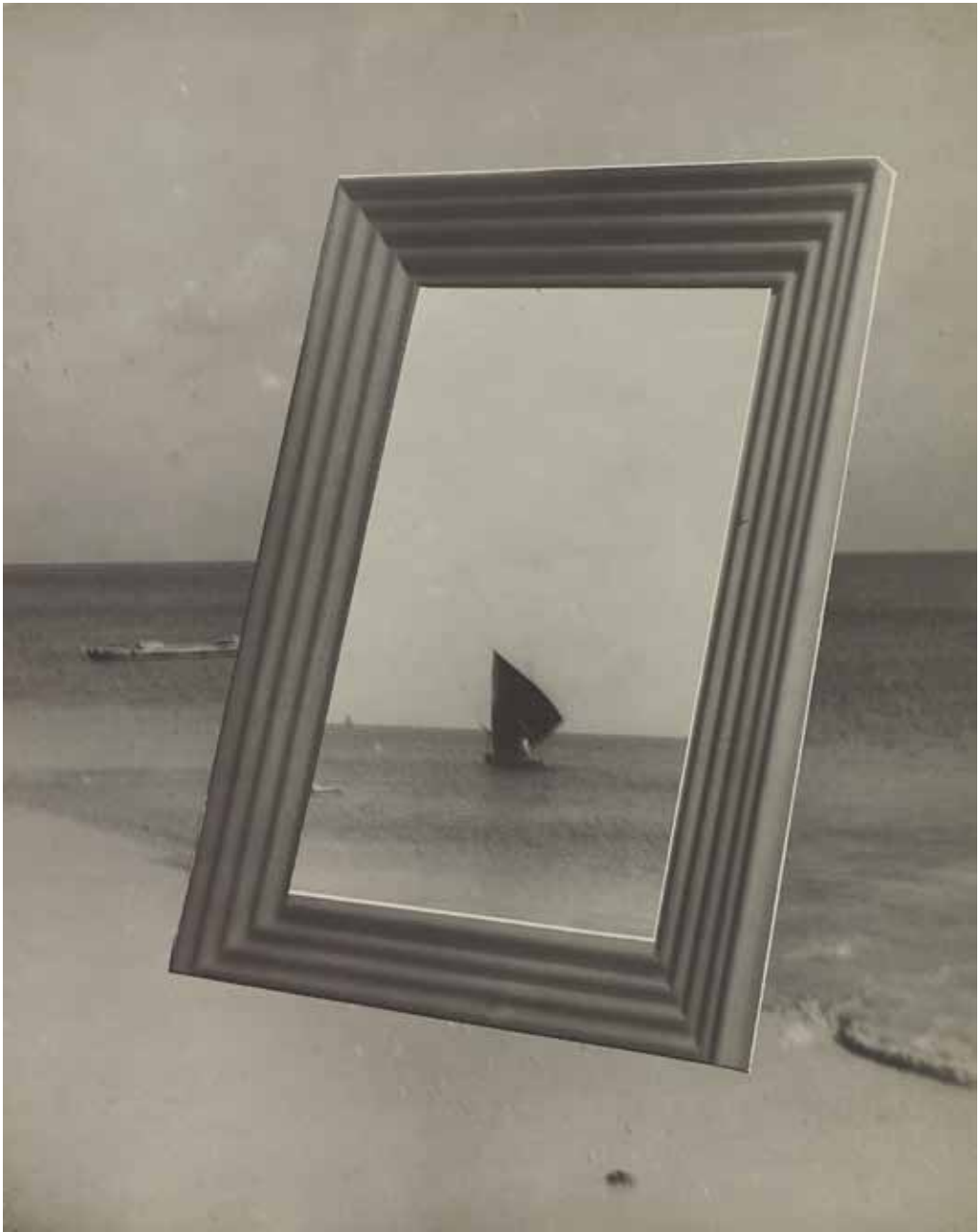
⁵Khan, Sadeq. *S.M. Sultan*, Dhaka: Dept. of Fine Arts, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 2003, p. 15. Print.



S.M. Sultan, *Landscape (Hill)*, 1958, watercolour on paper, 38 x 28cm, courtesy of the Bangladesh National Museum. SN: 01-03-101-1997-00414



S.M. Sultan, *Landscape*, undated, mixed media on paper, 53.5 x 71cm, courtesy of the Bangladesh National Museum. SN: 01-03-101-1997-00417



Lionel Wendt, *Portrait of a Sailing Boat*, c. 1900, gelatin silver print and photo montage, 38 x 30.4cm, courtesy of Jhaveri Contemporary

LIONEL WENDT

(b. 1900, Colombo - d. 1944, Colombo)

Lionel Wendt is considered to be one of the earliest modernist photographers and a pioneer in the development of modernism in Sri Lanka as one of the founders of the '43 group (an independent movement that reacted against the Victorian naturalism that dominated the state-supported Ceylon Society of Arts). Wendt was of Dutch and Sinhalese origin, and trained to be a classical pianist at the Royal Academy of Music in London and later studied Law, although he dedicated himself entirely to his talents as a musician before transitioning fully into the visual arts in the mid-1930s.

The layering found in musical compositions, as well as his cosmopolitan existence, is beautifully represented in one of his experimental works after "retiring" from his musical life and starting the Photographic Society of Ceylon in 1935: *Untitled (Piano, Water, Sea)* (c. 1935), where he appropriated techniques that he had been exposed to in Europe to convey the beauty of his native Sri Lanka. Chilean Poet Pablo Neruda, who was posted in Sri Lanka, wrote in his memoirs that Wendt "was the central figure of a cultural life torn between the death rattles of the Empire and a human appraisal of the untapped values of Ceylon,"¹ Wendt challenged colonial views of his native land and reimagined its landscape and potential from a local vantage point. Fittingly, Wendt served as the narrator (and was also described as a mentor) for the cinematic masterpiece of documentary film, *Song of Ceylon*, from 1935, which celebrated the idea that native traditions could coexist harmoniously with modernity.

Rewind presents thirteen vintage silver gelatine prints that show the vast range of Wendt's lyrical photographic work and includes experiments with photomontage, solarisation, copper-toning, printing techniques, and even crayon. Wendt's practice was heavily inspired by painting, and paintings often became the subject matter of his work, as in *Photograph of a Painting* (c. 1930) and a painterly mode of image production, as in the work *Portrait of Sailing Boat* (c. 1930) and *Sailing Boats* (c. 1942), can be seen across his work. Figurative studies of nude and semi-nude villagers, such as *Farmer in the Field* (c. 1930), still lifes such as *Object Study* (c. 1942), abstract compositions such as *Edges* (c. 1930), *Diminishing Rectangles* (c. 1942), and surrealist compositions such as *Monogram* (c. 1930) and *Untitled (Headless Nude, Woman's Torso)* (c. 1932), show the wide range of his painterly treatment of photography. Wendt's poetic works open up a dialogue between tradition, modernity, politics, and the self. There are surrealist elements in the work as well as in the way that the artist presents common imagery to prompt the viewer to reconfigure perceptions and values through the flight of imagination.

Between the years 1934-1944 Lionel Wendt exhibited his work extensively in Ceylon both as an individual artist and as part of the '43 group. The Camera Club, London presented a solo exhibition of his work in 1938, sponsored by Leica. Wendt met an untimely death from a heart attack in 1944, and all of the negatives of his works were destroyed. An Art Centre and Theatre bearing his name was set up in Colombo (which held an exhibition of 150 original photographs in 2000 to mark the Centenary of the artist's birth), and his work is permanently installed in the Sapumal Foundation in Colombo. While Wendt died a famous man, there was a long gap before his work was "rediscovered" in the late 1990s by new generations in Sri Lanka and abroad. Since the Centenary Exhibition and a major retrospective of his work at the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum in 2003, Wendt's works have been collected by the Tate, National Gallery of Australia, and were recently included in the 10th Gwangju Biennale, *Burning Down the House*.

¹Neruda, Pablo, *Memoirs*, Trans. Hardie St. Martin. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977: 93. Print.

Selected Bibliography

A

- Akhlaq, Zahoor Ul, *Rumours of Spring (Eight Contemporary Artists from Pakistan)*, Lionel Wendt Gallery, Colombo, Sri Lanka: Printing Professionals, 1997. Print.
- Amjad Ali, S., "A Young Artist from East Bengal," *Pakistan Quarterly* 2(1), 1952. Print.
- Ananth, Deepak, *Arpita Singh*. Gurgaon: Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd. Print.
- Asian Art Biennale, Bangladesh*, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka: Padma Printers and Colour Limited, 1981. Print.
- 2nd Asian Art Biennale, Bangladesh*, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka: Pioneering Printing Press Limited, 1983. Print.

C

- Claffin, Muriel, "Pakistani Artist Visits Graduate Student at 'U'," *The Michigan Daily* 4 Jan. 1952. Print.
- Correa, Monika, "A Personal Journey," *Monika Correa*, Monika Correa. Web.

D

- Dadi, Iftikhar, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, 1st ed., Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2010. Print.
- de Souza, Eunice, "Talking to Padamsee," *Times of India*, April 30, 1972. Print.

F

- Falvo, Rosa Maria, *Safuddin Ahmed: Great Masters of Bangladesh*, New York: Skira, 2012. Print.
- "8 Foreigners Named to '52 Arts Program," *New York Times* 20 Dec. 1951. Print.
- "Frank Robbins to Hassan Habib," *Harlan Henthorne Hatcher Papers*, Box 2(8), Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan. 24 June 1952. Print.
- Frizot, Michel, *Germaine Krull, A Photographer's Journey*, Paris: Jeu De Paume/Hazan/Hatje Cantz, 2015. Print.

G

- "Germaine Krull - Photographs," *Berliner Festspiele/Martin-Gropius-Bau*, Dec. 2015. Web.

H

- Hassan, Ijaz ul, "Myths and Motifs," *Painting in Pakistan*. Lahore: Ferozsons, 1996. Print.
- Holland, Kenneth, "Art and Exchange of Persons," *College Art Journal*, 15.3, 1956. Web.

J

- Jain, Jyotindra. "WARP AND WEFT New Works of Monika Correa," *Monika Correa*. Web.
- Jhaveri, Shanay, "Relating Amrita Sher-Gil and Lionel Wendt," *In Dialogue: Amrita Sher-Gil and Lionel Wendt*, Jhaveri Contemporary, 2014. Print.
- Jhaveri, Shanay, "Stalking Chandigarh and All its Reflections," *Chandigarh is in India*, The Shoestring Publisher, 2016. Print.

K

- Kapur, Geeta, *When Was Modernism: Essays on Contemporary Cultural Practice in India*, New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 2003. Print.
- Ker, Yin, *Strategies for an Autonomous Artistic Modernity*, Taipei Fine Art Museum, 2015. Print.
- Ker, Yin, *plAy: Art from Myanmar Today*, Singapore: Osage, 2010. Print.
- Ker, Yin, *Field Notes 03: A Short Story of Bagyi Aung Soe in Five Images*, Print.
- Ker, Yin, *The Journal of Burma Studies*, Vol.10, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, DeKalb: Northern Illinois University, 2005-06. Print.
- Khan, Sadeq, S.M. Sultan, Dhaka: Dept. of Fine Arts, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 2003. Print.
- Krull, Germaine, *Tibetans in India*, The University of Michigan: Allied Publishers, 1968. Print.
- Kuroda, Raiji, *Modern Artists III: The Gaze of Modernity: Photographs by Lionel Wendt*, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, 2003. Print.

M

- Mansur, Abul, *Rashid Choudhury*, Dhaka: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 2003. Print.
- Mapping Asia*, Hong Kong: Asia Art Archive, 2014. Print.
- Masud, Tareque, *Adam Surot (The inner strength)*, Dhaka: Bengal Foundation, 2014. Print.
- Mattison, Frances C., *A Survey of American Interests in the Middle East, Covering Business, Philanthropic, Welfare, Educational and Cultural, Governmental, and International Organizations with Major Interests in the Middle East*. Washington: Middle East Institute, 1953. Print.
- Minnisale, Gregory, "Black is the Beginning," *The Herald*, Pakistan, May, 1991. Print
- Modern Art No.173*, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, 2014.

N

- 4th *National Exhibition*, Pakistan National Council of the Arts, Rawalpindi: Hafeez Printing Corporation, 1982. Print.
- 5th *National Exhibition*, Dr. Khalid Said Butt, Ed. Idara Saqafat-E-Pakistan, Islamabad, Rawalpindi: Hafeez Printing Corporation, 1984. Print.
- Neruda, Pablo. *Memoirs*. Trans. Hardie St. Martin. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977. Print
- "News Reports," *College Art Journal*, 11.3, 1952. Web

P

- Padamsee, Akbar, *Work in language*, Mumbai: Marg Publications in association with Pundole Art Gallery, 2010. Print.
- Padamsee, Akbar, *Programme for a Film, Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship Project, 1969-70*. Mumbai: Shoe-string Publisher, 1969. Print.
- The Selected Paintings: Bangladesh*, External Publicity Wing, Government of People's Republic of Dhaka: Fine Art Press, Dhaka, 1988. Print.

S

- Sachs, Albie, *The Strange Alchemy of Life and Law*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Print.
- Sichel, Kim, "Contortions of Technique: Germaine Krull's Experimental Photography," In Mitra Abbaspour, Lee Ann Daffner, and Maria Morris Hambourg, eds., *Object: Photo. Modern Photographs: The Thomas Walther Collection 1909-1949. An Online Project of The Museum of Modern Art*, New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2014. Web.
- Sichel, Kim (ed.), *Germaine Krull: Photographer of Modernity*, Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1999. Print.
- "Singh, Arpita - Artist Profile." *Grosvenor Gallery*. Grosvenor Gallery. Web.
- Sirajul, Muhammad, Ed., *S.M. Sultan*, Dacca: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 1976. Print.
- Skelton, R. and Mark Francis, *Arts of Bengal: Heritage of Bangladesh and Eastern India*, Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1979. Print.
- S.M. Sultan and His Paintings*. Dhaka: German Cultural Institute, Dhaka, 1987. Print.

T

- Third Triennale – India, the Secretary*, Lalit Kala Akademy, New Delhi: the Indraprastha Press, Nehru House, 1975. Print.
- Wendt, Lionel, ed., *Ceylon*, London: Lincolns-Prager, 1950. Print.

Z

- Zaman, Mahmud Al, *Safiuddin Ahmed*. Dhaka: Dept. of Fine Arts, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 2002. Print.
- Ziegler, Ulf Erdmann. "Underexposed." *Frieze*, 22 (2015). Print.

The advisors of Rewind are indebted to the original research of Yin Ker, NTU Singapore and Lisa Campbell, Digital Learning Services Librarian, University of Michigan Library for their work on Bagyi Aung Soe and S.M. Sultan.





**PERFORMANCE PAVILION
SHIFTING SANDS, SIFTING HANDS**

**CURATED BY NIKHIL CHOPRA, MADHAVI GORE AND
JANA PREPELUH**

Ali Asgar
Sanad Kumar Biswas
Kabir Ahmed Masum Chisty
Manmeet Devgun
Sajan Mani
Yasmin Jahan Nupur
Venuri Perera
Atish Saha

Left page: Venuri Perera, Traitriot (detail), ongoing, courtesy of the artist, photo credit: Magicbox Photography

SHIFTING SANDS, SIFTING HANDS

“Now, as I do this; now, as the light here goes out, for instance. What is the now? Is the now at my disposal? Am I the now? Is every other person the now? Then time would indeed be I myself, And every other person would be time. And in our being with one another we would be time -- everyone and no one. Am I the now? Or only the one who is saying this?”

Heidegger¹

The notion of the now in the discussion of time and duration (that it takes to create a work of art) can be formulated as the work being in the constant state of becoming. This idea, of *the Becoming*, where the work of art emerges in the *Live* and lived moment, and not as an object transported in the artist's studio or on the gallery walls (or on pedestals), handled such that its aura is kept intact. Here-in lies the potential of an intense energy exchange between the viewer and the performer. The idea is delivered and communicated as a sensory effect, a feeling, a mark made, all lending to the aura of the work and the lingering feeling that the spectator is left with. While the reigns of time are pulled by the performer, the audience willingly participates in its completion, suspended in the spectacle of disbelief, seeing it through to its finale. Theatre has already broken the fourth-wall for visual artists working with performance and has entered the arena of multidisciplinary with the visual arts. Anxious scripts and disjointed texts express the schizophrenia and absurdity of rituals and banalities of contemporary life. For an artist working with performance or live art practices, time and duration become the central material engagement. The title of this program, *Shifting Sands, Sifting Hands*, relates to the above idea of everything being in a constant state of becoming, in the slippage(s) of time through movement or stillness, of the body in the recognition of death present in every moment as it passes. The second parallel material engagement of performance art is the body. Performance art is of the body and from the body. The body is always dealt with in a performance, even in the absence of the artist, or in the absence of a watching viewer. Performance art is transformative; it evokes, or wants to represent a state of flux, conflict, catharsis, within the arrangements of time and space. It is ephemeral, transient, and at times transcendental. One deals at times with the residue of the performance as a composition; the residual effects that in the end hold the visual *gestalt* of the work together even after the event. Thirdly, the relationship of performance to aesthetics can be established, as it questions notions of beauty - a key entry into the language of live art. Here we can begin to bring the visual aesthetic of a performance and its residue into the framework of visual art practices, and relate it to the histories of painting and photography or sculpture and installation, and hold on to the viewing models of art ascribed to rarified white cube gallery spaces. While engagement with performance art can be entered from the academy by drawing relationships to tribal ritual, cultural practices and identity debates, performance art is an integral part of visual art. Performance work from the 1960s- 1980s has etched itself into art history. Major museums present retrospectives of the life's work of pioneers of performance, while discussing how performance can be part of permanent collections.

We want to rethink the critique of the institution and of an object oriented art world that practitioners of performance art have engaged with.

¹Heathfield, Adrian. "Impress of Time". *Out Of Now: The Life Works of Tehching Hsieh*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, The MIT Press and London, Live Art Development Agency, 2009. Print.



Image: Yasmin Jahan Nupur at *Body Work*, Samdani Seminars, 2015, photo credit: Noor Photoface, courtesy of the artist, the Samdani Art Foundation and Exhibit 320



ALI ASGAR

(b. 1991, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Ali Asgar is a Dhaka-based artist who focuses primarily on printmaking and Live Art. Asgar's work engages with issues such as gender, sexuality and social taboos, often referring back to his personal conflict with the stereotypical Bangladeshi mindset concerning members of minority communities. In his work he regularly uses his own body and self-imagery as a rudimentary element to walk the line between the reality and the artifice of self-analysis. Asgar earned a BFA in Printmaking from the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka in 2015 and has participated in exhibitions including the Asian Art Biennale, group exhibitions at the Dhaka Art Centre, and many others.

Inside the Zone, Outside your Conscience

12 hours, 4 hours each day

5th, 6th and 7th February, 2016

Asgar will create a "non-gender biased area /gender free zone" to help people understand their assumptions of gender stereotyping based on social codes of dress and attire, and challenge them to explore and perform a non-gender/gender free behavior. Ali's performance is interactive, where-in audiences can transform the artist's appearance using the installed gender-objectified props or by sending him instant text messages (+880 1912774051) with recommendations.

SANAD KUMAR BISWAS

(b. 1986, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Sanad Kumar Biswas is an artist based in Dhaka with a keen interest in sculpture, installation and performance, experimenting in the space between them. Biswas's work explores existentialism and his own personal relevance on a global scale, analysing one's momentary existence changing with the constraints of space and time. He completed his MFA in sculpture from the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka in 2011. His participation in major group exhibitions include *Parables: A three days site specific art project - NATIVE MYTH*, 2015; National Art Exhibition, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 2009, 2013, 2015; *DOWNRIVER*, Institute of Asian Creatives, 2014 as well as annual exhibitions at Dhaka University.

me & ME

12 Hours, 6 hours each day

5th and 6th February, 2016

Biswas will encase himself in a plastic bag with his own breath as the air to live with. He will begin by inflating the large bag with his mouth. Using the translucent walls of the ballooned bag as a surface, he will make notations and records using a marker to write/draw his visceral experience of being/existing in the bag.

"This is an un-deciphered endless poem... made of taste, smell, touch and feelings.. Within the controversy of trembling obscurities, I am seeking for an another me, who is gradually metamorphosing in endless ways..."

KABIR AHMED MASUM CHISTY

(b. 1976, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Kabir Ahmed Masum Chisty works in the field of fine art, poetry, performance and animation. Based in Dhaka, he uses a variety of media to create his work including drawing, colour, photography, sound, text, light, readymade or found objects. His work poses a deep concern for the human psyche; the crises of duality that leads mankind into controversial life cycles by dealing with odium, love and desire. He completed his MFA in Sculpture from the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka in 1998, and is a founding trustee of Britto Art Trust. Chisty recently attended a residency at Skowhegan and his work has featured in the 54th Venice Biennale in the Bangladesh Pavilion, the 5th Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale, the Asian Art Biennale, Dhaka Art Summit, and many other important exhibitions in the region.

Dialogue Negotiation

Each day 1 - 3 hours, until exhausted

5th, 6th, 7th and 8th February, 2016

"I will play tennis with my reflection in the mirror."

In the persona of a sportsman, Chisty will appear everyday at the exhibition and challenge himself to a game of tennis. He uses the sport and the idea of playing with his own reflection as a metaphor for the alienation postmodern technologies have created. Our interactions with the world have been reduced to binary codes and hours spent in front of a screen.

"Technology cannot exist without the biological body, why then are we competing with our virtual body?"

MANMEET DEVGUN

(b. 1974, lives and works in New Delhi, India)

Manmeet Devgun is an artist based in New Delhi, India, where she studied at the Jamia Millia Islamia School of Fine Art. She began with an interest in painting but eventually veered away from that to begin work in the space of performance. Devgun's work is an evaluation of her life as an artist and as a mother. She explores the duality and interplay of these roles in her life in a comical light. Her use of performance draws her audience into her everyday experiences. For example, in her performance *Situation 01*, 2013 she is seen nailing the clothes she is wearing to a board, however, upon receiving a phone call from her daughter she cuts herself free to help her daughter.

TIME HAS A START AND AN END-DO I BELIEVE THAT NOTION?

12 hours, 6 hours each day

7th and 8th February, 2016

Devgun will use matchsticks to construct words and words to construct sentences. Her sentences will sit on the floor and will snake through the various spaces of the Dhaka Art Summit. Devgun's work has consistently questioned her identity and the role imposed on women in a predominantly patriarchal world.

"I will devise a note on 'time' in relation to experiencing time, to understand time/duration/memories with certain situations and incidents in my life."

SAJAN MANI

(b. 1982, lives and works in Kochi, India)

Sajan Mani is an artist from Kerala, India. His art challenges the plight of marginalised societies in Kerala including the political and economic struggles and the rapidly growing ecological issues that are affecting the backwaters. His work revels in the space of public intervention and confronts colonial influence in the region, and examining the current political, economic and spatial circumstances. Mani has performed in the Project 560-Found Space Festival initiated by the India Foundation for the Arts in Bangalore. The festival's main aim was to get artists to interact with found spaces in Bangalore and bring new dimension to them via performance and engagement. Mani continues to engage and interact with other artists in India exploring the point between history and present.

#MakeinIndia

8 hours, 4 hours each day

5th and 6th February, 2016

Mani will perform an “act of resistance through a black Dalit body to draw attention to historical and current injustice.” He adds, “My body is a site for the powerless, the untouchable and the unspeakable. My performance will attempt to evoke pain, shame, power and fear. I carry the bodies of Dalit grandfathers who were used as cows/beasts of burden in the fields and killed. I question collective memory and knowledge systems.”

The performance is part of a larger body of work where Mani is looking at the cow and its various aspects, and its relationship to food, religion and politics.

YASMIN JAHAN NUPUR

(b. 1979, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Yasmin Jahan Nupur is a visual and performance artist based in Dhaka whose work is influenced by the ecological and community/public driven aspects of life. She often explores class distinctions and the social discrepancies people face, particularly women and migrants of South Asia. Her recent work has engaged deeply with architecture, and the idea of physical and social constructs affecting her psyche. She is a member of Britto Arts Trust in Bangladesh. Her work has featured in the Bangladesh Pavilion of the 54th Venice Biennale, the Asian Art Biennale, the Dhaka Art Summit, and she recently attended a performance residency at the Delfina Foundation in London. She has been awarded two honourable mention awards at the Asian Art Biennale in 2008 and 2013.

Another Crazy Thing I can Do; Dance!

12 hours, 6 hours each day

7th and 8th February, 2016

“The idea of my work isn't only about establishing relations, it is a relationship in-and-of-itself. There's a sort of willingness to review the body, in the joy of creating, and not being afraid of creating, the willingness to do something, having an idea, and doing it, without being overly analytical.”

Nupur will move in “dance”: in non-dance motions and movements imitating dance. In doing so, she will deal with the body, the mind and the various emotional states that she will pass through in the duration of her performance. With the dance she will be slowly moving in various positions, investigating space in relation to her own body, the walls and floor, and memory. The dancing body will occupy the space, occupy the place and expand time through motion.

VENURI PERERA

(b. 1981, lives and works in Colombo, Sri Lanka)

Venuri Perera is a performer and performance maker from Sri Lanka. She has trained in Kandyan Dance and was a member of the Chittrasena Dance Company from 1994-2007. In 2008 she received a Post Graduation Certificate in Dance from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in London. Perera is known for challenging political and social issues but key to her performances are her personal associations with aspects of gender and stereotypes and being a female dancer in Sri Lanka. Her performance piece *Thalattu* (Lullaby) addresses the plight that women face due to war and displacement, and this work has travelled to India, Sri Lanka, Singapore, and Myanmar. She was awarded the Michelle Simone Prize for Outstanding Achievement in Choreography (2008).

Entry/No Entry 1.2

4 hours each day

5th, 6th, 7th and 8th February, 2016

“As stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ‘all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.... All humans are entitled to all rights, without distinction of any kind, such as national and social origin, sex, race, or religion’. The right to leave any country, including his/her own, is one such right. A passport is an official document, issued by a government identifying a citizen, certifying his or her nationality, and formally requesting admittance and safe passage through a foreign country. But passports have varying degrees of power. The inequality and undignified processes and rituals many have to face before and during entering another country, are addressed in this durational performance installation consisting of a series of short, individual intimate encounters.” Perera’s training as a classical Sri Lankan dancer brings an awareness of movement to her politics.

ATISH SAHA

(b. 1990, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Atish Saha (AKA. Ayon Rehal) works in the field of photography and performance art and is based in Dhaka. He has an advanced diploma in photography from Pathshala, South Asian Media Institute, Dhaka, where he joined in 2011. More recently he has been awarded the Overseas Press Club of America Award and the VQR Prize for Photography. His work explores and exposes a deep understanding of people’s individuality, the private space that is violated by society, his motherland’s independence, the struggle of being a minority, identity crisis, and religious extremism, which he often relates to his own personal experiences.

Memories of my Mother’s Womb

53 Hours continuously

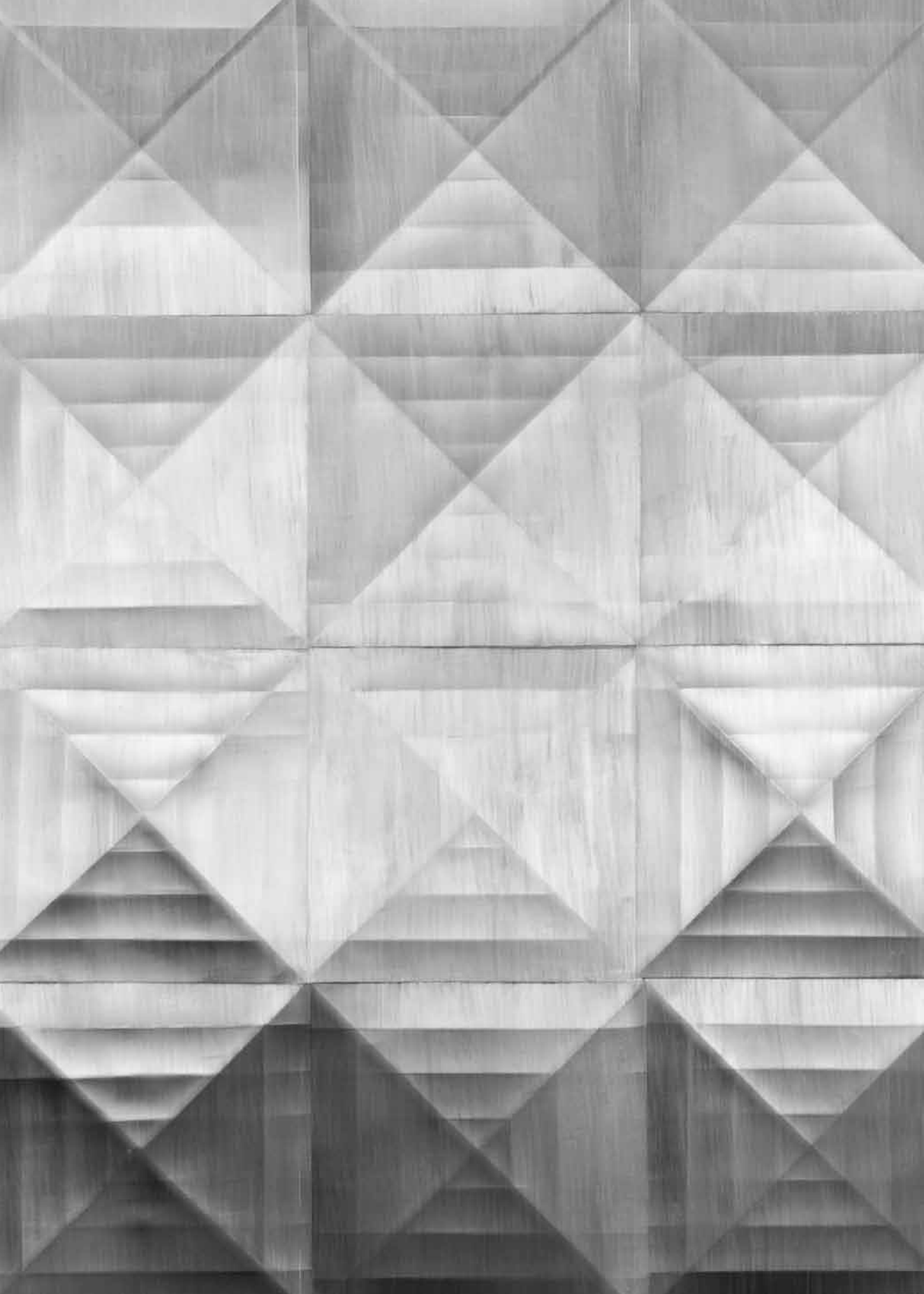
6th, 7th and 8th February, 2016

Saha will spend 53 hours confined to an 8x8 feet box. For the entire duration...*“I will wait and wait in different corners of the box; I will be sitting, lying, staring at the ceiling.”* Saha is a maker of images, working between photography and performance. He challenges our ways of seeing by posing questions about his identity in a world that is becoming increasingly paranoid about difference and diversity.



Image: Ali Asgar at *Body Work*, Samdani Seminars, 2015, photo credit: Noor Photoface, courtesy of the Samdani Art Foundation







SAMDANI ART AWARD

CURATED BY DANIEL BAUMANN
Director, Kunsthalle Zurich

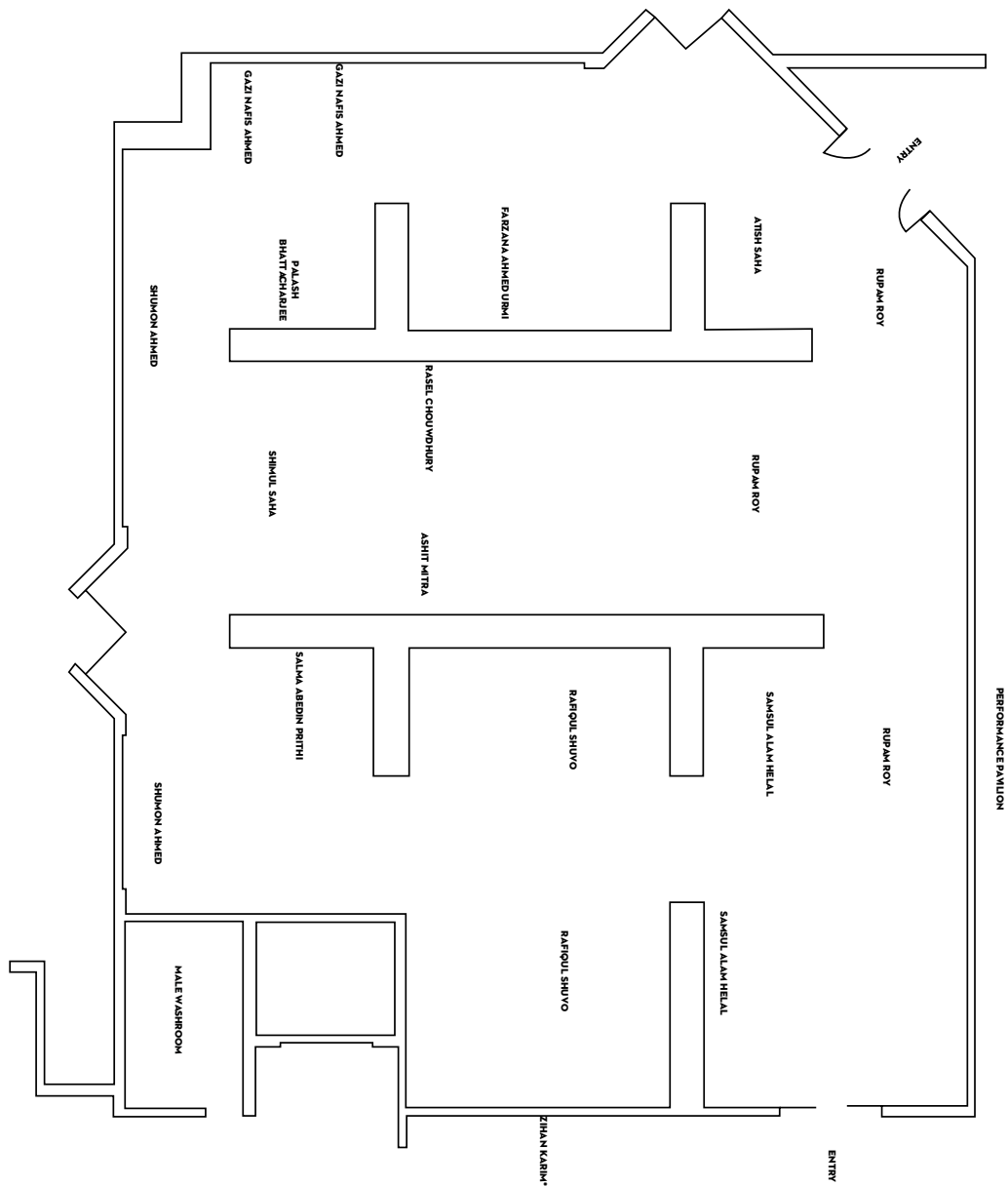
ASSISTED BY RUXMINI CHOUDHURY AND AYESHA SULTANA

Ashit Mitra
Atish Saha
Farzana Ahmed Urmi
Gazi Nafis Ahmed
Palash Battacharjee
Rafiqul Shuvo
Rasel Chowdhury
Rupam Roy
Salma Abedin Prithi
Samsul Alam Helal
Shimul Saha
Shumon Ahmed
Zihan Karim

Tours and lectures in the space:

Daniel Baumann, *Samdani Art Award* tour, February 5th 2016, 12:45pm

Left page: Ayesha Sultana, *Outside the Field of View - I* (detail), 2014, Samdani Art Award 2014 winner, courtesy of the artist and Experimenter



SAMDANI ART AWARD

Floor Plan

2nd floor, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

*Zihan Karim, *Habitat*, 2013, co-created by Korean artist Chang Wan Wee

2016 SAMDANI ART AWARD

I arrived in Dhaka early in the morning of October 22, 2015. The same day, on a Thursday afternoon, I started to meet the twenty artists who had been shortlisted for the upcoming Samdani Art Award by Aaron Cezar of the London based Delfina Foundation. I knew the candidates' works through 4GB of files that previously had been wetransferred to me—it was a screen-based knowledge and therefore not worth much. From the first discussion on, I could sense that an interesting week had just started. Not only did I learn a lot about Dhaka, Chittagong and Bangladesh, about the local scene, art education and religion, but I had the impression that “something was going on here.” The hours flew by, Friday came, Saturday left, Sunday was filled and then I took off to Chittagong to meet more artists. I was greatly supported by Diana Campbell Betancourt, Artistic Director, by its curatorial assistant Ruxmini Choudhury and by the artist Ayesha Sultana. To all the information provided by the artists, they helped me with important insights, they contextualised facts and impressions and provided straightforward explanations.

What made me think that “something was going on here?” First of all the quality of works by these twenty artists. To my surprise, there was no advancing of pretentious discourse of the kind one often meets in similar situations in Europe or North America. No talks about the post-Fordist situation, the need for deconstruction, the era of post-Internet or that thing called anthropocene—just to name a few. The artists obviously knew the language of art (thanks to education and the Internet), but they firmly and proudly applied it to their current context. This was best visible for the numerous photographic positions, many of them coming out of the Pathshala South Asian Media Institute: a strong documentary approach is transformed by the urge to go beyond reportage to introduce a distance to and inflict a rupture into to a well established genre. Albeit in very different ways, this is true for the work of Rasel Chowdhury, Salma Abedin Prithi, Atish Saha, Shumon Ahmed, Samsul Alam Helal (all of Pathshala South Asian Media Institute) as well as for Gazi Nafis Ahmed, or, in a more open-ended way for Zihan Karim. Their works and approaches seem to form a strong current at the moment, a current that I tried to understand as an urge to build up a visual memory and culture for a very young country at the brink of maybe a new era. All of their work pick up important issues of the moment such as the menacing destruction of places and subcultures such as Old Dhaka, the highly problematic, nevertheless fascinating dismantling of ghost ships, the huge social differences Bangladesh is built on, and the potentially taboo-laden relationships between the sexes and religion.

Beside this large group of photographic works, the selection for the 2016 Samdani Art Award and its exhibition emphasise on singular positions in painting (Farzana Ahmed Urmi), sculpture (Rupam Roy and Shimul Shaha), film and photography (Rafiqul Shuvo), film and performance (Palash Bhattacharjee) and printmaking (Ashit Mitra). Farzana Ahmed Urmi offers light and deep variations of portraits, Rupam Roy and Shimul Shaha venture into alternative forms of sculpture, Ashit Mitra transforms printmaking into an art of time and beauty, Palash Bhattacharjee virtuously combines film, performance and memory while Rafiqul Shuvo sets film and photography free from their duty to document. Initially, I was asked to choose ten artists for the final list. However, the quality was such that I could only narrow it down to thirteen. What more of a compliment is there to the thriving Bangladeshi art scene? Something is definitely going on there.

Daniel Baumann

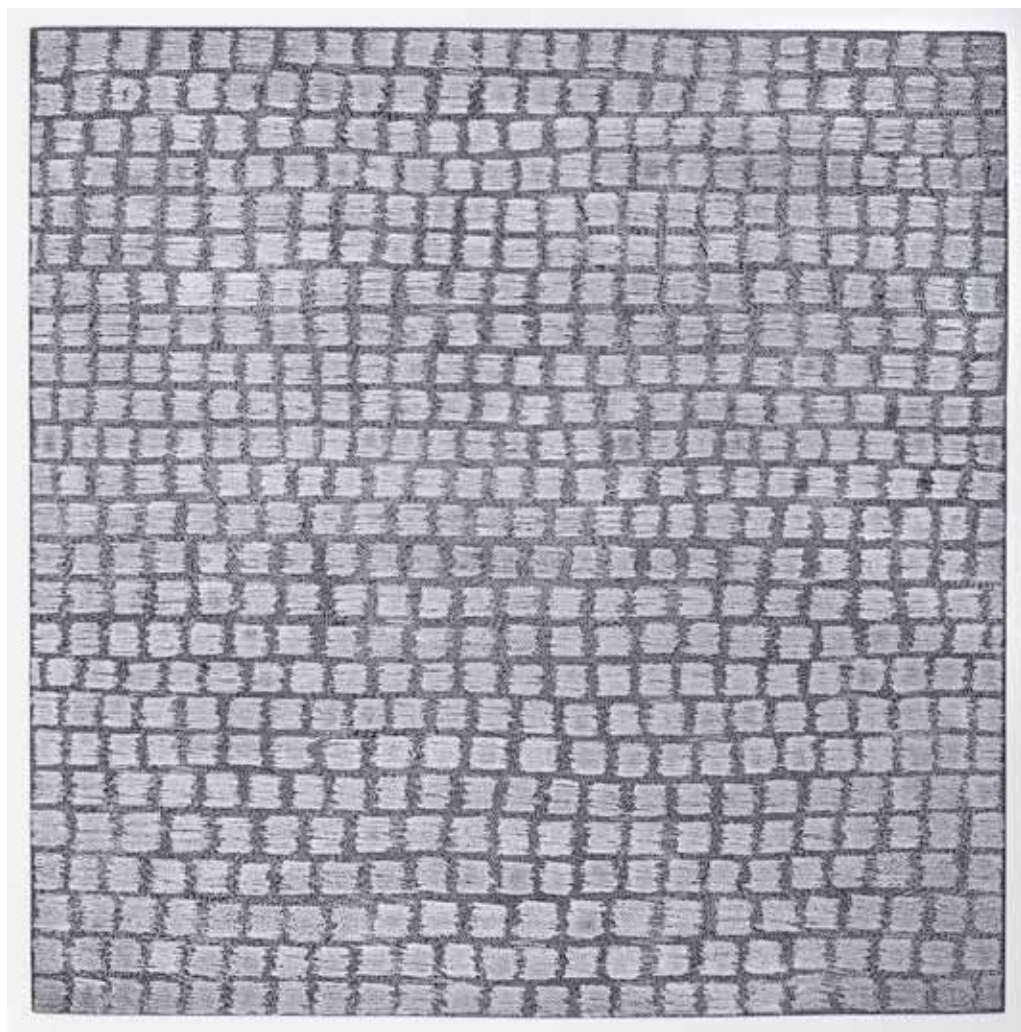
Director, Kunsthalle Zürich

ASHIT MITRA

(b. 1975, Dhaka, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Ashit Mitra's artistic approach is predominantly based on printmaking. Born in 1975, the artist is inspired by human life in the face of the relativity of time. The sorrow, happiness, simplicity, complexity, struggle, force, and speed of life challenge his process of his work. As a result the composition at first seems simple, but, on closer inspection is full of intricate detail, just as life often appears. His early works had prominence of nature that gradually turned toward conceptual abstraction. He completed his MFA and BFA in printmaking from Institute of Fine Arts, Dhaka (currently Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka). Ashit has participated in artist residencies at Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop in New York and at Visva Bharati, India.

The Samdani Art Award exhibition will present his work *Where There is No Title*, 2015. This series of etchings depicts intricate details that express the hidden resilience of the spirit of life, creating a glimpse into the artist's inner world.



Ashit Mitra, *Where there is No Title*, 2015, etching on paper, 50 x 50 cm, courtesy of the artist.

ATISH SAHA

(b. 1990, Dhaka, Bangladesh, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Atish Saha (AKA. Ayon Rehal) works in the field of photography and performance art and is based in Dhaka. He has an advanced diploma in photography from Pathshala, South Asian Media Institute, where he joined in 2011. More recently he has been awarded the Overseas Press Club of America Award and the VQR Prize for Photography. His work explores and exposes a deep understanding of people's individuality, the private space that is violated by society, his motherland's independence, the struggle of being a minority, identity crises, and religious extremism, which he often relates to his own personal experiences.

The Samdani Art Award exhibition will present his ongoing photographic series *Water* where he took portraiture of people in the water of River Buriganga. The river water has blackened due to the industrial waste discharge but the community around the river still baths in the dirty water in daily life.



Atish Saha, *Water*, 2015, courtesy of the artist.

FARZANA AHMED URMI

(b. 1980, Khulna, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Dhaka-based artist Farzana Ahmed Urmi's practice focuses on printmaking and painting. The artist was born in Khulna and her work is heavily influenced by the people she encounters in her daily life. Her canvases are full of human stories, some from people that she only knows from a glimpse on the street or from television, and others are from people close to her, but personal contact in variable proximity is important to her work. She completed her MFA and BFA in printmaking from the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka. She participated in several art camps and residencies in Bangladesh, Spain, and Japan.

The Samdani Art Award exhibition will present work from *Known-Unknown*, and *Lines in Mood* series, both from 2014. The *Known-Unknown* series portrays the psychological condition of subjects that range from a man on the street, a child suffering in Gaza, or even herself. These figurative works are complimented by abstraction in her *Lines in Mood* series that shows mental dysphoria and self-denial.



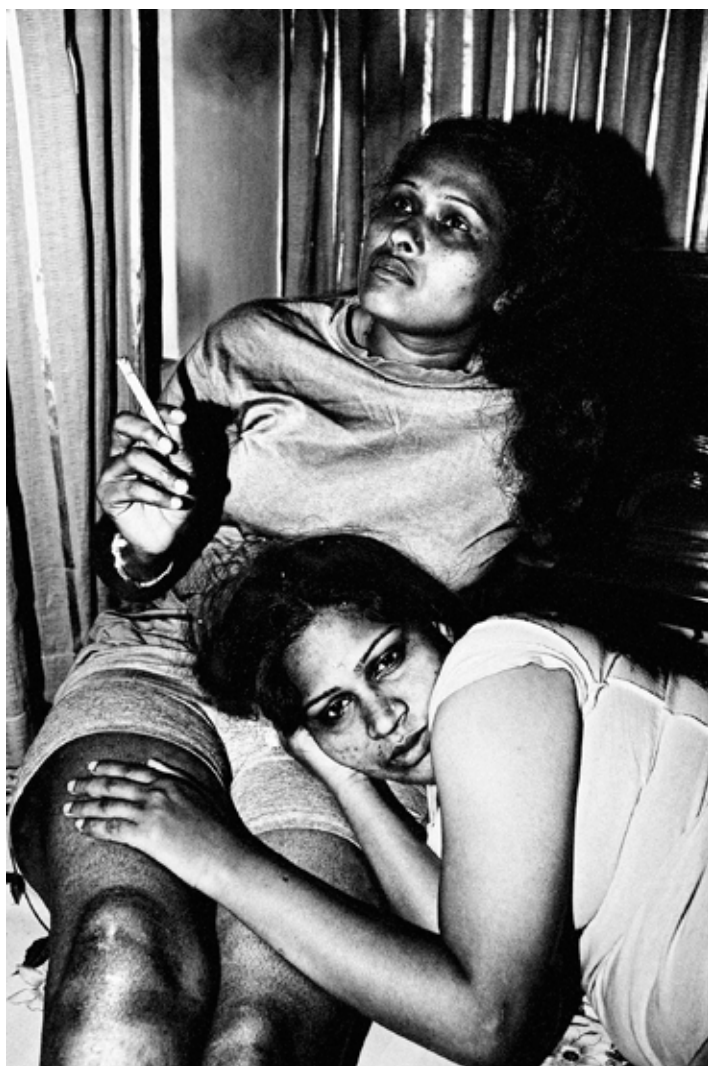
Farzana Ahmed Urmi, *Known Unknown*, 2014, courtesy of the artist

GAZI NAFIS AHMED

(b. 1982, Dhaka, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Dhaka-based photographer Gazi Nafis Ahmed's artistic practice deals with his complex childhood memories and departs from moments that took place in the past. The artist first pursued degree in art and design, and then switched to photojournalism and he is currently studying Photography at Istituto Europeo de Design (IED) in Madrid. In his artistic journey he realised the power of photography and its role in the changing society, to impact collective mind states of the audience. He is known for his work with drug-addicts and the LGBT community who are collectively denied by the society. He attempts to take photographs of many things at the same time; things that are interconnected by nature, non-linear and intuitive, and not necessarily fitting into the context of one single "project".

The Samdani Art Award exhibition will present *Inner Face* 2009-2014. The series is based on the collective denial about sexual diversity in Bangladesh. He believes these individuals need to have the freedom to be who they are, and his work plays a social role to give them their voice.



Gazi Nafis Ahmed, *Inner Face*, 2009 - 2014, courtesy of the artist

RAFIQUL ISLAM SHUVO

(b. 1982, Dhaka, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Dhaka-based artist Rafiqul Shuvo thrusts his artistic sensitivity through illustration, video art, collages, photography and installation. His work mainly focuses on the ontological influence of time and the evolution of human behavior, looking with concern on the policies and the politics of art's language. He studied sculpture at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka but broke through academic barriers creating his own artistic language. His video works represent unspoken or non-communicative thoughts and theories through sudden cuts, pauses and juxtaposed editing. His drawings and collages have the identical effect on the viewers. He is the founder of the alternative artist initiative OGCJM.

The Samdani Art Award exhibition will present his photographic works *Communal Aliention - 4*, 2015, *Communal Aliention - 9*, 2015, *Communal Aliention - 17*, 2014, and his video *Faster Satiation, but Only for Nevertheless Behavior*, 2014 shows an apparent mundane, random situation with dramatic sound and pauses, creating a curious aftermath. These photographs are the archives of his confrontation of reality, depicting the significant pixels of daily life extracted from the surroundings of Dhaka city that are ordinarily being overlooked due to the rising of a never ending rush of material objectivity.



Rafiqul Islam Shuvo, *Communal Aliention - 17*, 2014, courtesy of the artist

PALASH BHATTACHARJEE

(b. 1983, Chittagong, lives and works in Chittagong, Bangladesh)

Palash Bhattacharjee's artistic sensitivity and creative approach spans installation, performance and video. The artist was born 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 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 in Bangladesh like film, music and theatrical performance.

The Samdani Art Award exhibition will present his video installation work *Filter*, 2015. The videos are inspired by daily life events which are used in a repetitive way to re-emphasise the meaning of our mundane acts.



Palash Bhattacharjee, *Filter*, 2015, two channel video installation with sound, 02:29 minutes, courtesy of the artist

RASEL CHOWDHURY

(b. 1988, Jamalpur, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Rasel Chowdhury is a Dhaka-based artist whose passion lies in documenting environmental issues using camera. Born in Jamalpur, he started working in photography without a conscious plan, and eventually became addicted and decided to document spaces in and around Bangladesh. He obtained a degree from Pathshala, South Asian Media Institute in 2012. His body of work deals with unplanned desperate urbanization, the dying River Buriganga, the lost city of Sonargaon, the Mega City of Dhaka, and newly transformed spaces around Bangladesh railroads to explore the change of the environment, unplanned urban structures and new form of landscapes.

The Samdani Art Award exhibition will include his photography series *Railway Longings*. The series shows his contemplative approach to the railroad which once upon a time the only way to reach his birthplace of Jamalpur from Dhaka. He walked from one station to another covering 181 km long journey along the railway to photograph the experience filled with nostalgia and also the change of landscapes and rail structures ranging from villages to towns.



Rasel Chowdhury, *Railway Longings*, 2015, courtesy of the artist

RUPAM ROY

(b. 1983, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Dhaka-based sculptor Rupam Roy and his sculptural interest relies on the physical nature of sound. Sounds that surround him in nature, reminiscent of the small village where he was born eventually become part of his artistic experiment. Conceptually categorizing the sources of sound, he creates visual images of direct and indirect sound and echoes. Roy is currently completing his MFA in sculpture at Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka.

The Samdani Art Award exhibition presents his work *Inner Nature of Sound*, 2012 and *Liquidity of Sound-6*, 2013. These are somehow vague or somehow exaggerated depictions to the inner strengths of sound and relate to the physicality of the inner ear. These referenced strengths depend on sounds' sources or applications, from which sounds get different characteristics to either dominate or to be dominated.



Rupam Roy, *Inner Nature of Sound-11*, 2012, courtesy of the artist

SALMA ABEDIN PRITHI

(b. 1985, Dhaka, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Salma Abedin Prithi is a Dhaka-based photographer who works with visual language using text and performance to overcome social limitations. The artist started her career as a news anchor, and she discovered photography during her studies at Pathshala, South Asian Media Institute. Her work based on intimate portraits of ordinary people opens up a portal into their inner struggles and shares the affection that people have towards one another. Her early work with burn patients in a hospital in Nepal focused mainly on psychological rather than physical trauma. Her series of portraits creates psychological fantasies of nostalgia and the inner ordeal of the female experience.

The Samdani Art Award exhibition presents her ongoing series *Dear Love* which is a monologue of ordinary people who express thoughts about their intimate relationships with families and loved ones in front of the camera. The texts are written forms of their expression of love towards one another.



স্বামী আমার সন্তান
আমি তোমার সন্তান
তোমার সন্তান
আমি তোমার সন্তান

Salma Abedin Prithi, *Dear Love*, 2015, courtesy of the artist

SAMSUL ALAM HELAL

(b. 1985, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Based in the old part of Dhaka City, Samsul Alam Helal's photography pushes the boundaries of rigid, stereotypical thoughts about people their identity. Helal's passion for photography started when his older brother became a professional photographer. To enhance his artistic approach, he studied photography at Pathshala, South Asian Media Institute. He photographs Hijra (transgendered people) and working-class people in a traditional, vernacular studio. He has chosen interpretive, dramatic stage portraits to ensure the visibility of his subjects beyond the documentary photography. By creating a space where people can freely perform their dreams for daily life, Helal aims to bring up the extremely important social issues found in the realm of reality and fantasy. Ordinary working-class people's dreams, hopes and desires are beautifully represented in his photography.

The Samdani Art Award exhibition will present his ongoing series *Open Stage*. The work engages the people from the "Sweeper Colony" from Old Dhaka who are neglected because of their status of their work as cleaners. The open stage is a temporary moving studio where the families from the colony are invited to have their photo taken.



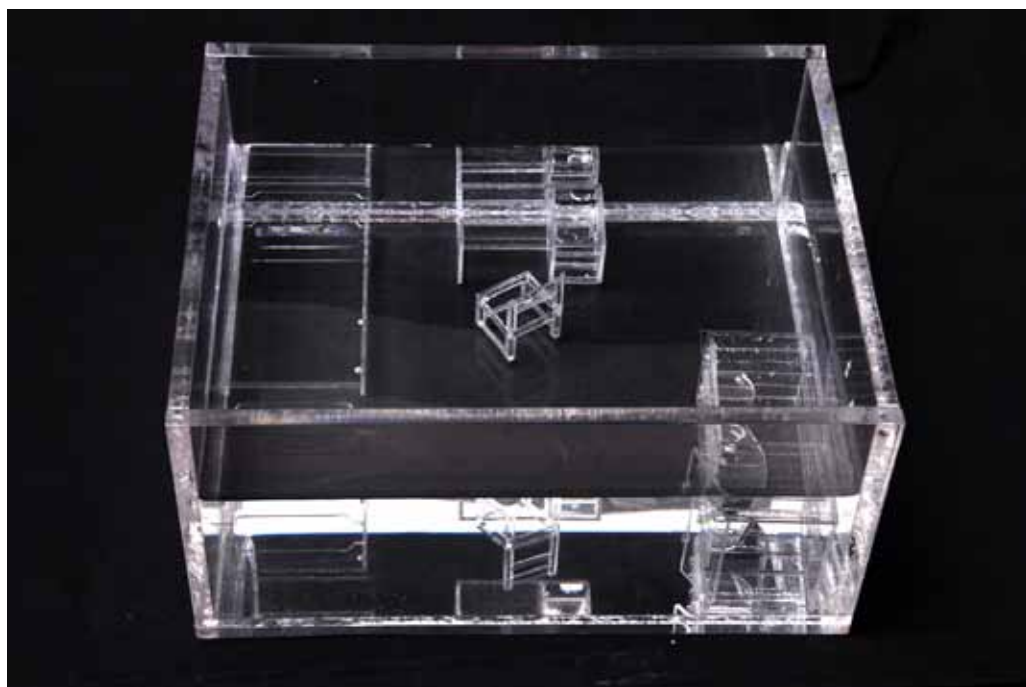
Samsul Alam Helal, *Open Stage*, ongoing, courtesy of the artist

SHIMUL SAHA

(b. 1983, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Dhaka-based Shimul Shaha's work spans installation, video, sound and drawings. His art practice is constructed around experimentation and deep material research to create his work. He completed his MFA from Beaconhouse National University in Lahore and his BFA in sculpture from Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka. Illustrations, videos, ready-made objects, acrylic sheets, lights, digital manipulation as well as X-ray prints are part of the visual language of his recent body of work. He explores psychological questions such as the creation of gender roles, lucid dream theory, and existential moments found in last stages of the human life.

This Samdani Art Award exhibition will present his work *Rebirth*, 2012. The work is a metaphor for the two lives the artist lived, in this world and in his mother's womb. The transparent drawers and water within symbolise the female body and the overall object represents a dream within a dream.



Shimul Saha, *Rebirth*, 2012, courtesy of the artist

SHUMON AHMED

(b. 1977, lives and works in Dhaka, Bangladesh)

Shumon Ahmed is a Bangladeshi artist who explores the fusion between video, photography and text, creating stories that while seemingly contradictory, are private yet collective. Ahmed studied photography at the Pathshala Academy and participated in various exhibitions including the 2014 Kochi Muziris Biennale, Whitechapel Art Gallery, Chobi Mela, Fotomuseum, Winterthur, and Dhaka Art Summit 2012 and 2014.

The Samdani Art Award exhibition will present his series *When Dead Ships Travel*, 2015. The works are from his ongoing *Metal Graves* photographic series where Ahmed takes us on a journey through one of the world's largest ship graveyards in Chittagong, Bangladesh. Shumon's multiple toned and frequently nostalgic depictions of this coastal belt capture the passage of time and the fleeting visions of a world at the mercy of relentless modernisation.



Shumon Ahmed, *When Dead Ships Travel*, 2015, courtesy of the artist and Project 88

ZIHAN KARIM

(b. 1986, Chittagong, lives and works in Chittagong Bangladesh)

Zihan Karim hopes to create a dialogue between the real and the virtual. He stages interventions in the cityscape using film projections that complicate the nature of the site. Deploying the capacity of emotion, the sensible image-movement, and our ability to imagine, Karim tries to lead viewers to a perceptual world, to evoke meaning rather than just describe it. Karim is an audio-visual artist who works with a range of media including moving image, installation, sound and painting. Karim studied painting at University of Chittagong, continues to live and teach there and is working as a founder member of the Jog collective. He has participated in various exhibitions including Dhaka Art Summit (2012); International Short & Independent Film Festival (ISIFF), Dhaka (2012); Asian Art Biennale, Dhaka (2012, 2014); 5th Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale (2014); Itoshima Art Festival (2014) and Next Art Tainan (2015).

This Samdani Art Award exhibition is presenting Zihan Karim's video project *Habitat*, 2013, co-created by Korean artist Chang Wan Wee. The video takes us to the life and struggle of the under-privileged community who lost their land to the Chittagong air-port, in exchange they were washed away to Guchagram area where they cannot claim any property of their own. The story of these floating people reflect the harsh truth of the unplanned urbanisation which almost always affects the poor.



Zihan Karim and Chang Wan Wee, *Habitat*, video, 05:55 minutes, 2015, courtesy of the artists



SAMDANI ART AWARD JURY

Chaired by Aaron Cezar

Caroline Bourgeois

Cosmin Costinas

Catherine David

Beatrix Ruf





SOUL SEARCHING

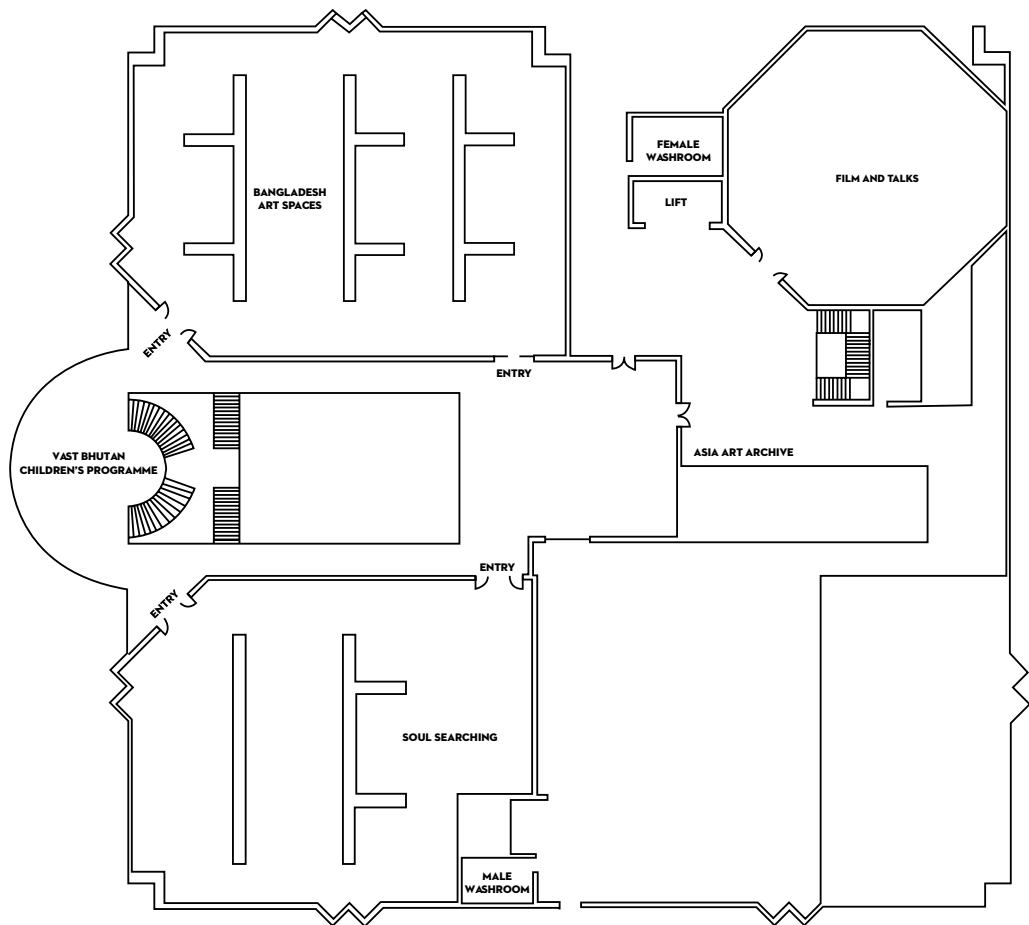
আত্ম-অন্বেষণ

CURATED BY MD. MUNIRUZZAMAN

Sheikh Afzal
Jamal Ahmed
Kazi Salahuddin Ahmed
Shahabuddin Ahmed
Najma Akhter
Abul Barq Alvi
Rashid Amin
Anisuzzaman
Atia Islam Anne
Murtaja Baseer
Golam Faruque Bebul
Kanak Chanpa Chakma
Samarjit Roy Chowdhury
Ranjit Das
Chandra Shekhar Dey
Mohammad Eunos
Tarun Ghosh
Bishwajit Goswami
Mahmudul Haque
Mustafizul Haque
Naima Haque
Gulshan Hossain
Nisar Hossain
Mohammad Iqbal
Monirul Islam

Syed Jahangir
Fareha Jeba
Tejosh Halder Josh
Saidul Haque Juis
Shahid Kabir
Kalidas Karmakar
Hashem Khan
Hamiduzzaman Khan
Hasan Mahmud
Dhali Al Mamoon
Nazlee Laila Mansur
Khalid Mahmud Mithu
Rafiqun Nabi
Ahmed Nazir
Maksuda Iqbal Nipa
Imran Hossain Piplu
K.M.A Quayyum
Wakilur Rahman
Dilruba Latif Rosy
Shyamal Chandra Sarkar
Abdus Shakoor Shah
Ahmed Shamsuddoha
Biren Shome
Rokeya Sultana
Farida Zaman

Left page: (top left), Safiuddin Ahmed, *In the Grip of Flood* (detail), 1959, woodcut print, AP; (top right), Quamrul Hassan, *Untitled* (detail), 1985, ink on paper; (bottom left), Zainul Abedin, *Untitled (landscape with Hut)* (detail), 1955, watercolor on paper laid on card; (bottom right), S.M. Sultan, *Three Men* (detail), 1987, oil on jute canvas. All images courtesy of the Samdani Art Foundation



আত্ম-অন্বেষণ; **SOUL SEARCHING**

Floor Plan

3rd floor, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

আত্ম-অন্বেষণ; SOUL SEARCHING

“In my youth, I went around the entire (British) India driven by curiosity of imagination and drawn by various attractions and sentiments. I was not contented. So I crossed ‘seven seas and thirteen rivers’, and went around the world led by my whims. Then suddenly on the screen of my mind the beauty and the nature of lovely Chitra (the river) was flashed. ... I was nostalgic. I came back to her.”¹

SM Sultan

To find the artistic sources of the Bangladeshi Modernists one need look no further than the folk life for their inspiration. Even as the urban entity grew prominent in contemporary Bangladesh, the artists of that generation sought their own identity through the vernacular, be it urban or rural.

In his quote “The River is my Master”- Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin always identified the river of Brahmaputra as the muse of his artistic exploration.² After many experimentations and explorations across South Asia and the globe, he mastered his artistic identity by returning to nature – back to the riverbank where he was born. His painterly lines contain an indirect similarity to the linear characteristics of the common people of Bengal. We can identify two aspects of Abedin’s works that subconsciously draw from the environment around him.

These are:

1. Natural surroundings have inspired his work, such as the Brahmaputra River.
2. Folk-art and craft from the region.

These two are the common features of other Bangladeshi artists of that time. They were inspired by nature and the simple ways of the common people. The language of Bangladeshi modernism begins with the combination of these two subconscious psychological identities. Needless to say, Zainul Abedin catalysed a modernism inspired by the land, river and the culture of Bengal for generations after him.

Another legendary contemporary artist of Abedin’s time, himself a reflection of these two identities, was S.M. Sultan.³ For him, his creation and his identity were intertwined. Sultan travelled around the world, yet settled in the remote village of Narail, where he developed his artistic practice in the midst of folk life which he adapted as his own after traveling the world on various scholarships.

Quamrul Hassan, on the other hand, created another visual language where he adopted folk into urban entity. The aesthetics of his works came mainly from Potuas (folk artists) as well as cubism. Folk art, Batta-la prints and Kalighat patas were the strength of his works. As a result, he himself is referred as a Potua. Brought up in a city, Safiuddin Ahmed explored folk entity through his urban experience.⁴ As a result of his urban upbringing, Ahmed sought to transform the descriptive language of folk art into a more abstract form. This practice was followed by the next generation of artists who helped develop and mature the movement. These characteristics were the direct or indirect aspiration for the next generation of artists.

Considering the factors that define the Bangladeshi art, fifty-two artists of Bangladesh are presenting their works in the exhibition *Soul Searching* to re-discover their artistic sources. The selection consists of prominent artists who were directly involved with developing the described characteristics of Bangladeshi art as well as the subsequent generation of artists who learned from them.

¹Khan, Sadeq, S.M. Sultan. Dhaka: Dept. of Fine Arts, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, 2003. Print

²Islam, Nazrul. Zainul Abedin (his works and quotes). Dhaka: Shamabesh, 2002, 34. Print

³For more on S.M. Sultan, see Rewind page 183

⁴For more on Safiuddin Ahmed, see Rewind page 155



TALKS PROGRAMME

Amar Kanwar

Amrita Jhaveri

Beth Citron

Cosmin Costinas

Desire Machine Collective

Farrokh Derrakhshani

Faizul Latif Chowdhury

Hitman Gurung

Iftikhar Dadi

Kashef Chowdhury

Kazi Khaled Ashraf

Mainul Abedin

Marianne Burki

Nida Ghouse

Pablo Bartholomew

Rina Igarashi

Sabih Ahmed

Shawon Akand

Stuart Comer

Salima Hashmi

Shanay Jhaveri

Ayesha Sultana

Aung Ko

Beatrix Ruf

Daniella Zyman

Farooq Sohban

Hammad Nasar

Joanna Warsza

John Zarobell

Kerstin Meincke

Nurur Rahman Khan

Roobina Karode

Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam

Sharmini Pereira

Sheika Hoor Al Qasimi

Suhanya Raffel

Sheelasha Rajbhandari

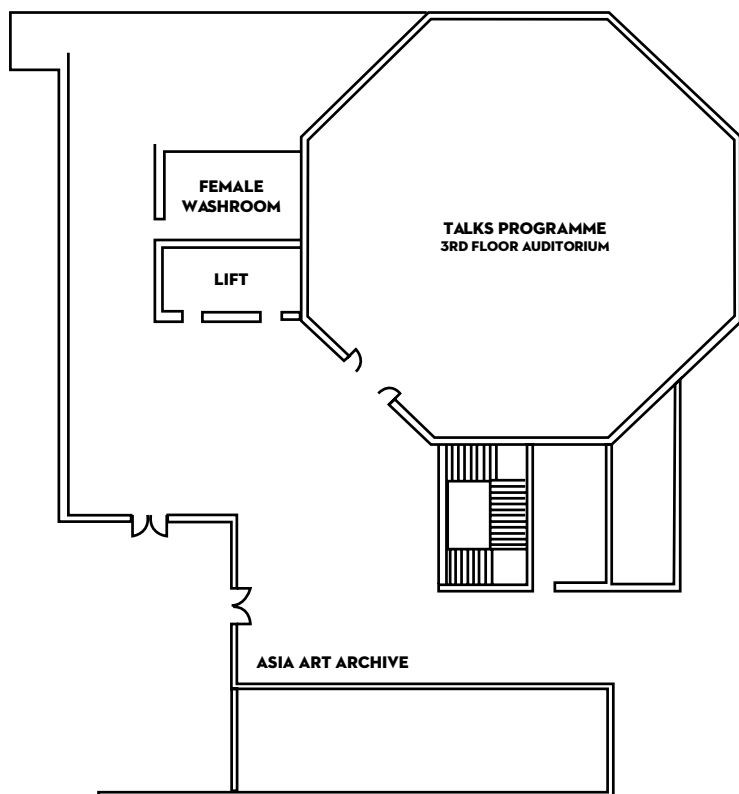
Shimul Saha

Shaela Sharmin

Tentative Collective

Vivan Sundaram

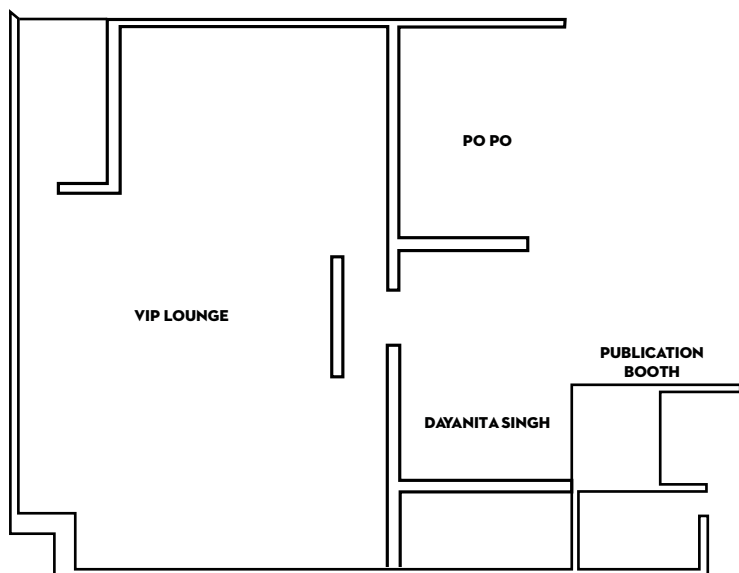
Yin Ker



TALKS PROGRAMME

Floor Plan

3rd floor, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy



TALKS PROGRAMME

Floor Plan

1st floor, VIP Lounge, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

TALKS PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

Cross - Border Art Histories - Bangladesh and Pakistan

Friday, February 5th 2016, 3:30pm-4:30pm, 3rd floor auditorium

Art Initiatives off the Centre

Friday, February 5th 2016, 5pm - 6pm, 3rd floor auditorium

Protecting the Past and Building the Future: Legacy and Estate Building in South Asia

Saturday, February 6th 2016, 11:30am - 12:30pm, VIP Lounge

Collecting South Asian Art in a Non-Western Institutional Context

Saturday, February 6th 2016, 2:30pm - 4pm, 3rd floor auditorium

Navigating the Uneven Terrain of Regional Group Shows: A Field Guide

Saturday, February 6th 2016, 4:30pm - 6pm, 3rd floor auditorium

Architecture in Bangladesh

Sunday, February 7th 2016, 4:30pm - 5:30pm, 3rd floor auditorium

Can Culture Counter?

Saturday, February 6th 2016, 3:30pm - 4:30pm, VIP Lounge

Please see page 257 for book launches and presentations

CROSS - BORDER ART HISTORIES - BANGLADESH AND PAKISTAN

Friday, February 5th 2016, 3:30pm - 4:30pm, 3rd floor auditorium

Cross-border exhibitions and symposia focusing on the relationship between India and Pakistan have proliferated in the Subcontinent, and also around the world over the past five years, fuelled by dedicated commercial galleries hosting these exhibitions in India, and private patrons hoping to ease political tensions through soft-power channels. Bangladesh is notably absent in this “cross-border movement,” often used as subject matter for research, rather than being included through critical engagement the country’s artists or local art scene.

Most people know the relationship of Bangladesh and Pakistan as one of animosity given the bloody history of the country’s path to independence in 1971, breaking away from being the East Pakistan that was created in 1947. In his book *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, **Iftikhar Dadi** elaborates that “according to [Akbar] Naqvi, a common West Pakistani perception maintained that ‘the Bengali artists were born with artistic taste, while we in the West [Pakistan] had to acquire it through hard work.’” When it comes to the arts, “it is worth noting that despite political tensions there was lively exchange in the art world between the East and West Pakistan, with numerous exhibitions and artists traveling back and forth frequently.”²

Zainul Abedin (b. 1914-1976) is considered the founding father of Bangladeshi modern art, establishing the Government Institute of Arts in 1949 and the Sonargaon Folk Art Museum and Zainul Museum in Mymensingh in 1975, as well as widely exhibiting internationally as a critically acclaimed artist in his own right. However, Abedin was also a bureaucrat for the Pakistani government, and while he renounced his ties during the War for Independence, the fact that he set up the Department of Fine Arts in Peshawar, Pakistan (which still has an annual prize bearing the artist’s name) and travelled as part of Pakistani delegations internationally cannot be ignored, and he was very close with the artistic community in what was West Pakistan.

Moving forward to the 21st century, Pakistan continues to play an important role in the education of some of Bangladesh’s leading contemporary artists. **Ayesha Sultana** (b. 1985) and **Shimul Saha** (b. 1983) both studied at Lahore’s Beaconhouse University, Bangladeshi art patron **Farooq Sobhan** has supported cross-cultural exchange across the two countries, and Associate Professor of the History of Art and Visual Studies at Cornell University, **Iftikhar Dadi** examined this exchange in his book *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, and they will be in conversation with Founding Dean of Beaconhouse University and leading Pakistani Art Historian **Salima Hashmi**, who will speak about the porous role of education and exchange across the two countries.

¹Dadi, Iftikhar, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, 1st ed., Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2010. Print.

²Dadi, Iftikhar, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, 1st ed., Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2010. pp 98-99. Print.

SALIMA HASHMI (Moderator)

Salima Hashmi is a Pakistani visual artist, writer, and activist. She has contributed a large part of her life teaching and promoting young artists in the region. She spent over thirty years teaching at the National College of Arts and was Dean there for four years and soon after she served as the Founding Dean of the School of Visual Art and Design at the Beaconhouse National University in Lahore. She has been active in the human rights movement since the early 80s when she was one of the founding members Women’s Action Forum, and a Council member of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. She also served as Minister of Health, Population Welfare, Women Development, Youth Affairs, Sports, Archaeology & Tourism Department during the interim Government of Punjab in 2013. Hashmi has also authored and edited a number of publications which include *Unveiling the Visible: Lives and Works of Women Artists of Pakistan* (2001); co-authored a book along side Yashodhara Dalima, *Memory, Metaphor, Mutations: Contemporary Art of India and Pakistan*, published by Oxford University Press (2007); and *Hanging Fire: Contemporary Art from Pakistan*, published by Asia Society (2009), and *The Eye Still Seeks*, published by Penguin Books India (2015). She is the recipient of the President’s Award for Pride of Performance, Pakistan.

IFTIKHAR DADI

Iftikhar Dadi is an artist and art historian who explores the relation between art practice and globalisation, urbanisation and the media. He is currently an Associate Professor at Cornell University. His research examines art as a global and networked practice from the late nineteenth century to the present. He has authored a number of books which include *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia*, University of North Carolina Press, 2010; *Lines of Control: Partition as a Productive Space*, Ithaca: Herbert F Johnson Museum of Art; *Tarjama/ Translation: Contemporary Art from the Middle East, Central Asia, and its Diasporas*, ArteEast, 2009. *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia* received the 2010 Junior Book Prize from the American Institute of Pakistan Studies.

SHIMUL SAHA

Shimul Saha received his BDA degree in Sculpture from Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka in 2005, and a Master's degree in Art and Design Studies from Beaconhouse National University, Lahore in 2013. His work is based extensively on research and experimenting, with investigation as a pivotal part of his process, inspiring his use of a wide range of materials in his practice. Saha's first solo exhibition *Tangible & Intangible*, Britto Art Trust, 2013, responded to notions of dreams and the subconscious mind. His work has been featured in a number of group exhibitions including the 2016 Samdani Art Award Exhibition, 21st *Young Artists' Art Exhibition*, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka, 2014; 15th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka, 2012; *Across the Road*, Open Studio of Video Art Workshop, and the Britto Art Trust, Dhaka, 2009.

FAROOQ SOBHAN

Former Ambassador Farooq Sobhan is the President and CEO of the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI), an independent research institute in Bangladesh and the Chairman of the Board of the Samdani Art Foundation. Mr. Sobhan was Executive Chairman, Board of Investment (BOI) and Special Envoy to the Prime Minister 1997-1999 and Foreign Secretary 1995-1997. He served as Ambassador and High Commissioner to India, China, Malaysia and the United Nations and also served as Chairman of the Group of 77 at the UN in New York (1982-1983), and was Chairman, UN Commission on TNCs (1991-1992). He was a visiting professor at the Elliott School for International Affairs at George Washington University in the US in 2003. He is also on the Board of the Center for Global Counter Terrorism Cooperation in the US. His publications include a book entitled, *Opportunities for South-South Co-operation and Shaping South Asia's Future: Role of Regional Co-operation*. Mr. Sobhan has edited several BEI publications.

AYESHA SULTANA

Through sound, drawing, object, painting and photography, Jessore born and Dhaka based artist Ayesha Sultana is interested in the poetics of space and the relationship between material and process in notions of making. Within the context of drawing, her recent body of work is an investigation into the rudiments of form through architectural constructions, often derivative of the landscape. Counter tendencies of movement and stability are also evident as an attempt to generate emptiness by filling up the surface. Through other elemental gestures and implications of plotting, measuring and erasure, merging and filling in, Sultana makes whole, an otherwise fractured image. Sultana was the winner of the 2014 Samdani Art Award and was featured as one of *ArtReview's* "Future Greats" in 2015. She is a member of the Britto Arts Trust and a graduate of Beaconhouse National University in Lahore, where she also briefly taught.

ART INITIATIVES OFF THE CENTRE

Friday, February 5th 2016, 5pm - 6pm, 3rd floor auditorium

While many people with an interest in South Asian art may be familiar with well-marketed arts programming in major cities like Dhaka, New Delhi, Lahore, Kochi, Colombo, or even Yangon, there are many dynamic initiatives happening on the periphery of the art world that address captive and active audiences in more remote contexts, also further removed from censorship (both commercially or politically driven). Many artists in the Dhaka Art Summit 2016 – from **Simryn Gill** who spends a large amount of time in Port Dickinson, Malaysia, to **Lynda Benglis** in Santa Fe, New Mexico, Ahmedabad, India, and even Kastellorizo, Greece, find their creative process fuelled through their existence off the centre. What role does the journey play in the creative process, how do these unique locations incubate new thinking and artistic production, and what possibilities do these contexts provide in developing art initiatives? This panel brings together artists and curators working in Jaffna, Kustia, Chittagong, Odisha, Guwahati, Thuyé'dan, out in the streets of Karachi, and Dharamshala, moderated by TBA21 Chief Curator **Daniela Zyman**, and will speak to the impact that these individuals are creating within the region and the various paths that were taken to make these initiatives sustainable in despite-the-odds contexts and the importance of working outside of more traditional network models.

DANIELA ZYMAN (Moderator)

Daniela Zyman is the chief curator of the Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary Foundation in Vienna. She joined the foundation in 2003 and has been instrumental in shaping TBA21's exhibition and commissions programs. In the past she was the chief curator at the MAK, Austrian Museum of Applied Arts/Contemporary Art in Vienna and was a founding member of the MAK Center for Art and Architecture at the Schindler House in Los Angeles. Soon after she became artistic director of Kunstlerhaus, Wien and A9-Forum Transeuropa. Zyman visits South Asia regularly and has helped commission several projects within the region, following the wide geographic scope of the foundation's mission and collection. Some of these works include Amar Kanwar's, *The Lighting Testimonies* (2007), *The Sovereign Forest* (2010-2012), *The Scene of Crime* (part of *The Sovereign Forest*); Desire Machine Collective, *Nishan I* (2007-2012); Nikolaus Hirsch and Michel Müller, *Cybermohalla Hub* (2012-2013); Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam, *Some Questions on the Nature of Your Existence* (2007), *Middle Way or Independence?* (2008) and the Dharamshala International Film Festival.

SHAWON AKAND

Shawon Akand is an artist, researcher, and curator in Dhaka. Akand is the co-founder of Crack International Art Camp, which launched in 2007 and is held in Kushtia (rural Bangladesh). The purpose of Crack is to help young artists and researchers preview and build their work in a non-commercial environment with international exposure. Crack tries to blur the lines between creative disciplines and therefore engages people from various disciplines, including but not limited to theatre activists, photographers, filmmakers, musicians, psychologists, singers, poets, writers, journalists, actors, anthropologists, folklorists, historians, and art critics. As an artist, Akand's body of work questions cultural norms with a critical perspective on social and political structures through printmaking, painting, photography, and video. He also contributed to a number of research publications about folk art and culture in Bangladesh.

DESIRE MACHINE COLLECTIVE

Desire Machine Collective are media practitioners who are based in Guwahati. The group came together in 2004 and consist of Sonal Jain and Mriganka Mashukaillya. Their body of work usually consists of film, video, photography and multimedia installation. Desire Machine Collective experiment with media techniques to further explore narratives, forms of representation and political circumstances. Some of their most revered work includes *Periferry* an ongoing project which functions as a sort of laboratory which brings together artistic, scientific and technological practices. The aim of this ongoing project is to encourage experimentation and exploring new forms of public space. It is located on a ferry on the river Bhramaputra docked in Guwahati. Other works include *Being Singular Plural* (2012) at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, *Walking Drifting, Draging* (2013) at the New Museum and the 8th Asia Pacific Triennial in Brisbane (2015).

TENTATIVE COLLECTIVE

The Tentative Collective founded in 2011, is a collective of people who share resources to create art in “public” spaces. Our projects are lived engagements with the sensory and social architectures of the city. *Mera Karachi Mobile Cinema* (2012-15) worked with communities across Karachi to create urban projections of everyday narratives told via cell phones. *Projections* (2015) was a further enactment of ephemeral projections in the city made in collaboration with artists, curators and cultural producers. Our most recent project in Lahore, *The Gandhi Engine Commission* (2015), was an experimental site-specific workshop, navigating through the Ravi to explore themes of development, destruction, waste and toxicity. Activating the river as a site of storytelling, the project re-framed narratives of multiple wreckages and ruinations from colonial histories to the neo-colonial present. The Tentative Collective’s work has been presented at: Sarai, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies; Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore; International Institute for Asian Studies & Hong Kong Baptist University and as part of the Ancestors: Architecture of Memory program hosted by the Lahore Biennale Foundation.

AMAR KANWAR

Amar Kanwar makes films and installations that address trauma, history, and conditions of conflict through experimental, often poetic, narration and documentary forms. Many of his works deal explicitly with the Indian subcontinent, while others address zones of conflict and violence in neighbouring countries, mixing historical footage, personal testimony, and lyrical cinematography. Kanwar has received numerous awards, including the Leonore Annenberg Prize for Art and Social Change (2014), Edvard Munch Award for Contemporary Art (2005) and a MacArthur Fellowship (2000). The subject of numerous retrospectives at international film festivals, Kanwar has also participated in many exhibitions including Documenta 11, 12, and 13 and exhibited at institutions such as Yorkshire Sculpture Park, the Centre Pompidou, the Tate Modern, TBA21, and the Stedelijk Museum. He also exhibits his work outside of this circuit; *The Sovereign Forest* is permanently installed at the Samadrusti Campus in Bhubaneswar, Odisha and open to the public at any time, every day, *The Lightning Testimonies* recently exhibited in collaboration with a womens’ activist group at the Assam State Museum, and he has also exhibited at large religious festivals such as the Kumbh Mela in Allahabad.

AUNG KO

Aung Ko is a contemporary artist from Myanmar. Ko works with painting, film, installation and performance. As an artist, Aung Ko's work is an ongoing commentary on political and social contexts in a modern Myanmar. Censorship, injustice and power are themes he often explores. He has participated in the Singapore Biennale in 2008 and the 4th Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale and was recently a resident of the Pavillon at Palais de Tokyo. In 2007 he started an ongoing art project in his village titled *Thuye'dan Village Art Project*. The village's main source of income is charcoal production. The village is isolated and because of the nearby ammunition factory nearby, the inhabitants live in constant fear and visitors and publicity are generally forbidden. Aung Ko along with his wife Nge Lay have been inviting artists to create performances, mobile sculptures, and other artworks collaborating with the village and its inhabitants. An example of this is the village Library. The executive committee of the village library had come together to invite Myanmar artist Po Po to redesign the space.

SHARMINI PEREIRA

Sharmini Pereira is a curator and publisher based in Sri Lanka and the UK. She is the director and founder of Raking Leaves, a leading nonprofit independent publishing organization. In 2014 she founded the Sri Lanka Archive of Contemporary Art, Architecture and Design in Jafna. The archive grew from a prior project, Asia Art Archive's Mobile Library hosted by Raking Leaves. The archive's aim is to collect a vast amount of material and host talks, seminars and screenings related to its content. She has worked with institutions such as the Queensland Art Gallery, The Royal Academy, The Hayward Gallery and the British Council. She co-curated the Singapore Biennale (2006), was the international guest curator of the Abraaj Capital Art Prize (2011), and more recently she curated the *Garden of Ideas: Contemporary Art from Pakistan* at the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto (2014).

RITU SARIN AND TENZING SONAM

Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam are film directors based in Dharamshala, India. The duo have been making films about Tibetan subjects for over 20 years. The content of their films explore matters of exile, identity, culture and political motivation in the Tibetan region. Together they founded White Crane Films through which White Crane Arts & Media was born, a non-profit trust to promote contemporary art, cinema and independent media practices. In 2012 White Crane Arts & Media Trust created the Dharamshala International Film Festival. The aim of the film festival is to bring high quality, independent films and filmmakers from around the world to expose the local population to social and cultural contexts from a global perspective. The idea of the film festival is to also promote and foster local filmmaking talent by organizing special screenings, master-classes and workshops and finally bring together the entire community of people who inhabit the region (Indians, Tibetan refugees and expatriates).

SHAELA SHARMIN

Shaela Sharmin is an artist and curator based in Chittagong, Bangladesh. Sharmin is also a part of Jog Alternative Art Space, founded in 2012, an artist run platform dedicated to visual artists. She has worked on projects such as *Bakshir Haat*, an old market place that was facing the consequences of rapid urbanization. She was part of a collective of artists from Jog Alternative Art Space that came together to document and preserve the true identity of the market and monitor its change. She has also curated shows such as the site-specific exhibition *Cheragi Art Show-2*. The show examined the history of Cheragi and explored social, cultural and political constraints relevant to the region. Sharmin is also a professor at the University of Chittagong, Department of Fine Arts.

PROTECTING THE PAST AND BUILDING THE FUTURE: LEGACY AND ESTATE BUILDING IN SOUTH ASIA

Saturday, February 6th 2016, 11:30am - 12:30pm, VIP Lounge

While resources that help understand and preserve South Asia's rich legacy of modern art remain scarce; recent years have seen a surge of artist estates, art archives, and private museums. This panel focuses on the role Artist Estates play in shaping the field of art and enhancing its wider circulation. Moderated by **Sabih Ahmed**, Senior Researcher at the Asia Art Archive, the panel brings together artists **Vivan Sundaram**, **Pablo Bartholomew**, and **Mainul Abedin**, art historians **Yin Ker** and **Kerstin Meincke**, and art collector **Amrita Jhaveri**, all of whom have been invested in preserving the legacies of important artists from/working in South Asia by way of building estates and by consolidating artist archives. What are the ways in which these estates and collections contribute to the field; what are the challenges of building accessible and multivalent legacies of art for the future; and, what roles family members, collectors, scholars and institutions play in preserving orphaned estates, are some of the questions that will be discussed while touching upon figures including **Amrita Sher-Gil**, **Umrao Singh**, **Richard Bartholomew**, **Baggi Aung Soe**, **Lionel Wendt**, **Mrinalini Mukherjee**, **Germaine Krull**, **Raghubir Singh**, **Zahoor ul Akhlaq** and **Anwar Jalal Shemza**.

Keeping in mind the increasing amount of interest and curiosity around how artist estates are built today, this panel will take place in the **DAS VIP Lounge** where other artists' families have also been invited to contribute to the discussions.

SABIH AHMED (Moderator)

Sabih Mohd Ahmed is a Senior Researcher at Asian Art Archive and has been a member of the research team since 2009. Based in New Delhi, he has overseen the Archive's digitisation projects in the country alongside other research initiatives. Ahmed completed Bachelors in Visual Arts with specialisation in Art History from the M.S. University of Baroda, following which completed the interdisciplinary MA programme at the School of Arts & Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University in 2009 and has organised and participated in numerous conferences and workshops internationally. He has been involved in doing research and archiving with art-critics and artists over the years and his area of interest is in investigating the infrastructure and institution of Art in the country.

MAINUL ABEDIN

Mainul Abedin is the youngest son of the late Modern Bangladeshi artist Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin. Mainul was born in Dhaka and completed his graduation from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, BUET. Abedin has been working as a civil engineer in Dhaka for over 30 years. Despite having no academic training in Fine Art, he is a passionate painter and has participated in various exhibitions across Dhaka, many related to the legacy of his father. A recent exhibition, *Shilpacharya and his Outer World of Art* was recently held at the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts to celebrate Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin's birth centenary in 2015.

AMRITA JHAVERI

Amrita Jhaveri has been working in the field of Modern and Contemporary Indian art since 1993. She established Christie's presence in India in the mid-1990s before moving to London in 2000. As an independent advisor, Amrita has created and managed private and corporate art collections; ambitious artist projects and large-scale commissions. In 2010 Amrita established Jhaveri Contemporary in Mumbai. The gallery programme is both Intergenerational and transnational. Jhaveri is the Author of *101: A Guide to 101 Modern and Contemporary Indian Artists* (India Book House, 2005).

YIN KER

Yin Ker owes her training to the University of Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV), INALCO (Paris) and the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University (Yangon). Since 2000, she has been researching on Bagyi Aung Soe from Myanmar. Her research interests include “art” and “art history” as variable constructs, the intersections of ancient and modern methods of knowledge- and image-making, and ways of telling (hi)stories of Buddhist art. She also paints in parallel to theoretical research within and beyond the discipline of art history. She previously taught art history at Nalanda University (Rajgir) and modern and contemporary Southeast Asian art history at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (Singapore), and curated the Burmese collection at the Singapore Art Museum (National Gallery Singapore). Currently, she teaches (hi)stories of arts from Southeast Asia, aesthetic manifestations of Buddhist devotion and practice, and ways of seeing and thinking about pictorial strategies at Nanyang Technological University (Singapore). As an independent curator, writer and translator, she worked on *Video, an Art, a History, 1965–2010*. A Selection from the Centre Pompidou and Singapore Art Museum Collections, *pAy: Art from Myanmar Today and From Callot to Greuze: French Drawings from Weimar*. Her publications include “Kin Maung (Bank) and Bagyi Aung Soe: Two Models of ‘Modern’ Burmese Art and the Question of its Emergence” (2014), “A Short Story of Bagyi Aung Soe in Five Images” (2013), “L’ « art fou » ou l’art moderne birman selon les illustrations de Bagyi Aung Soe” (2008) and “Modern Art According to Bagyi Aung Soe” (2006).

KERSTIN MEINCKE

Kerstin Meincke is a curator, researcher and lecturer focusing on photography and media arts in a transnational context. She is a PhD candidate in the field of Art History at the University of Duisburg-Essen and the Folkwang University of the Arts with the project “Object Politics: Negotiating Cultural Heritage through Media Arts within the Process of Decolonisation”. From 2004 – 10, Kerstin Meincke studied design and photography in Essen and San José, Costa Rica. Her Diploma focused on Germaine Krull’s work for the French Resistance in Africa during World War II. She works internationally and has conducted several research trips to France and Nigeria. She has conceived various workshops and conferences, such as “Spaces of Displacement. Negotiations of Migration and Refugeism in Mass Media and Visual Arts”, international workshop in Lagos, Nigeria, conceived with Florian Ebner and Marc-André Schmachtel, and “Crossing Archives”, international symposium (2013, in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut Lagos, Nigeria). Selected curatorial projects include the collaboration to the German Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale and *Voyage Retour*, a photography exhibition conceived for Museum Folkwang, Essen in Lagos, Nigeria (2013).

VIVAN SUNDARAM

Vivan Sundaram studied at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Baroda, and the Slade School of Art in London. Though trained in painting, since 1990 he has moved to only making artworks that build upon collaborative modes of sculpture-making, photography, video, and installation art. His works address contemporary social issues and the fraught relationship between perception, memory and history. Over the years, Sundaram has combined the work of being an artist, writer, activist and archivist. Committed to creative possibilities that archives offer, Sundaram himself amassed a massive archive of documents and records over the years. Along with his partner Geeta Kapur, they opened their personal archive to Asia Art Archive for a digitisation project in 2010, which has allowed their collection to be freely accessible online and has come to stand as a valuable resource for researchers and artists from around the world. In 2015, Vivan along with his sister Navina Sundaram, a documentary filmmaker and television journalist, founded The Sher-Gil Sundaram Arts Foundation (SSAF) to carry forward the legacy of their grandfather Umrao Singh Sher-Gil (1870–1954), a scholar and photographer; and their aunt, a pioneering figure of modern Indian art, Amrita Sher-Gil (1913–1941). In the course of 2015–2016, the Foundation will be announcing its various initiatives that will include supporting photography grants, cross-disciplinary practices, and the re-invention of the Kasauli Art Centre, an artist run space that was founded in 1976.

COLLECTING SOUTH ASIAN ART IN A NON-WESTERN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Saturday, February 6th 2016, 2:30pm - 4pm, 3rd floor auditorium

The 2014 Dhaka Art Summit invited panelists from the Tate Modern, the British Museum, the Guggenheim, and the Centre Pompidou to speak about the proposed plans and resulting responsibilities as these Western institutions have been increasing their collections of Art from South Asia. Following this panel, the 2016 Dhaka Art Summit invites panelists from both private and public institutions to discuss the challenges and possibilities of collecting art and archives from South Asia in a non-Western context.

Suhanya Raffell, Deputy Director and Director of Collections at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, will speak about her current role as well as the instrumental work she did to set up the Asia Pacific Triennial, one of the most important events for the South Asia region which also builds the collection of the Queensland Art Gallery in Brisbane. **Roobina Karode**, Director and Chief Curator at the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA) in New Delhi, will discuss her work developing India's largest private museum, which is currently housed in a shopping mall and free to the public. **Hammad Nasar**, Head of Research and Programmes at the Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong, will speak about AAA's work collecting archives in the region and making them accessible digitally as well as in Hong Kong. **Rina Igarashi** from the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum in Japan will discuss her over two decades long experience conducting research and collecting art from Bangladesh and her work developing the Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale, an exhibition that helps build the museum's extensive collection of South Asian art. Many of the most celebrated works at the 2014 Dhaka Art Summit were commissioned by the Sharjah Art Foundation, and **Sheikha Hoor al Qasimi** will discuss the history of the collection and the commissioning process for the Sharjah Biennial as well as the Sharjah Art Foundation collections. **Faizul Latif Chowdhury**, Director General of the Bangladesh National Museum, will discuss the foundation's history as a collecting institution and the new turns the institution is taking under his leadership. This conversation will be moderated by **Beatrix Ruf**, the Director of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, who is responsible for the development of some of the leading collections in the world.

BEATRIX RUF (Moderator)

Beatrix Ruf is the Director of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam which was founded in 1874. She joined the Stedelijk Museum in November 2014. Ruf and her team are staging a year long survey of artist Tino Sehgal's live artworks, with one work performed each month in a different room, forcing the team to keep generating new ways to display this impeccable collection of modern and contemporary art. Prior to leading the Stedelijk, Ruf was responsible for making Kunsthalle Zurich one of the most influential exhibition spaces in Europe. Each of her projects have collaborated in some way with institutions like the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Tate Liverpool, the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin, the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, MCA Chicago, and many others. Ruf was the Curator of the third edition of the Tate Triennial in London (2006), Co-Curator of the Yokohama Triennale (2008) and has been a member since 2010 of the think tank core group of the LUMA foundation. She has been instrumental as art expert to the Zurich based collection of the Ringier AG. In 2013 she co-founded POOL in Zurich, a new institution and programme drawing on a "pool" of works from private collections in order to grow and foster emerging curatorial talent.

FAIZUL LATIF CHOWDHURY

Faizul Latif Chowdhury (b. 1959) is an economist, writer and literary critic by training and has served as Director General of the Bangladesh National Museum since 2014. He has re-orientated the approach to museum management and display of objects with a view to making it a place for public education for a widening audience. He takes interest in art and has written on paintings of Rabindranath Tagore, Zainul Abedin, sculptor Novera Ahmed and artist Kalidasa Karmakar. Chowdhury is acclaimed as a translator and biographer of poet Jibanananda Das, among others. A civil servant by profession, he has also worked as consultant in World Bank and UNCTAD projects. Also, he served as a diplomat for the Bangladeshi government from 2003 to 2009, based in Brussels. He studied at Dhaka University (1977-1982), London School of Economics (LSE) (1996-97), Deakin University (1990) and Monash University (1991-92). His latest publication is a collection of 100 letters of poet Jibanananda Das (2015). Currently, he is compiling a dictionary of one thousand uncollected Bengali words and working on a book to be titled *Markets in Corruption*.

RINA IGARASHI

Rina Igarashi is a curator at the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum in Japan and has been instrumental in developing the Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale, one of the leading platforms for South Asian art which also has one of the comprehensive regionally focused collections in the world. The Fukuoka Asian Art Museum was founded in 1999 as a part of the city's progressive strategy for interaction with different Asian cultures. Igarashi has been conducting research in Bangladesh since 1994, and Bangladeshi artists such as Kabir Ahmed Masum Chisty, Zihan Karim, Yasmine Kabir and Ronni Ahmed, Nazlee Laila Mansur and Abdus Salam have showed their work at the Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale. Other artists include Rashid Rana, Shilpa Gupta, Shahzia Sikander, Subodh Gupta and Aung Ko. She has spent time in Bangladesh for FAAM's exchange program and curated *Contemporary Art of Bangladesh: A Differentiation in Styles and Trends* focusing on the uniqueness of art in Chittagong relative to the overall Bangladesh artistic landscape.

ROOBINA KARODE

Roobina Karode is the Director and Chief Curator at the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA) in New Delhi. The Kiran Nadar Museum was established by the avid art collector Kiran Nadar in January 2010. Roobina Karode has been with the Museum from the very beginning. The museum is the first private museum of art exhibiting Modern and Contemporary art from India and South Asia. Karode is an art historian, educator and curator with a specialization in Art History and Education. She has taught Western and Indian Art History at a number of institutions, including the Jawaharlal Nehru University, The School of Art and Aesthetics, and The National Museum Institute. Karode co-curated the first Indian edition on Contemporary Art at the First Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial (1998) in Japan and most recently was curator of the Nasreen Mohamedi retrospective co-organised by the Museo Nacional Central de Arte Reina Sofia in Madrid and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, in collaboration with KNMA.

HAMMAD NASAR

Hammad Nasar serves as Head of Research and Programmes at the Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong. The Asia Art Archive was founded in 2000 in response to the urgent need to document and secure the multiple recent histories of contemporary art in the region. Hammad Nasar joined the Asia Art Archive in September 2012. Nasar has worked on developing the Archive's collection and building up its own platform for research and increasing collaborations across the region, including at the Dhaka Art Summit. Nasar has worked on a number of projects in India which include the digitisation of Geeta Kapur and Vivan Sundaram's personal archives (2010), and the personal archives of four important scholars of Baroda - Professors K G Subramanyan (2013), Gulammohammed Sheikh (2013), Ratan Parimoo (2013), and Jyoti Bhatt (2013).

SHEIKHA HOOR AL QASIMI

Sheikha Hoor Al Qasimi is Chairperson of the Sharjah Art Foundation (SAF). The Sharjah Art Foundation was founded in 2009. She has contributed to the growth of the renowned Sharjah Biennial and has helped expand the region's art and culture through her work at the Sharjah Art Foundation. She had curated the Sharjah Biennial 6 and has continued as the Biennial's Director since. SAF has produced some of the most important works of South Asian art (many of which have shown at the Dhaka Art Summit) such as *Parallax* by Shahzia Sikander, *Gulf to Gulf to Gulf* by CAMP, *Brick Sellers of Kabul* by Lida Abdul, *The Sovereign Forest* by Amar Kanwar, and *Power Station* by Simryn Gill. Every year the foundation holds The March Meeting where global art professionals and institutions concerned with the production and circulation of art in the region. They additionally have a production and residency program. She is the Chair and Advisory Board for the College of Art and Design, University of Sharjah; Member of the Advisory Board, Khoj International Artists' Association, India; Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing; and serves on the Board of Directors for MoMA PS1, New York; KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; the International Biennial Association, Gwangju; and Ashkal Alwan, Beirut.

SUHANYA RAFFEL

Suhanya Raffel is the Deputy Director and Director of Collections at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia. The Museum was established in 1871 and the collection consists of Australian, European, and Asian art. In 2003 the museum opened an Asian Gallery. Suhanya Raffel joined the museum in 2013. Previously she had worked with the Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, where she had held numerous senior curatorial positions. During her time at QAGOMA (joined in 1994), Raffel was key in building its contemporary Asia Pacific collection that eventually led to the creation of its signature Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Arts that began in 2002, working closely with artists such as Simryn Gill, Imran Mohammad Qureshi, Shahzia Sikander and Jagath Weerasinghe early on in their careers. She was a member of the Asian Art Council at the Guggenheim Museum (2009-2014), and currently serves on the boards of the Australia-China Council, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra and Griffith University Asia Institute, Brisbane.

NAVIGATING THE UNEVEN TERRAIN OF REGIONAL GROUP SHOWS: A FIELD GUIDE

Saturday, February 6th 2016, 4:30pm - 6pm, 3rd floor auditorium

This panel discussion will include moderated dialogues between paired speakers, and culminate with a group discussion drawing connections across these discussions moderated by **John Zarobell**, (Assistant Professor and Undergraduate Director of International Studies at the University of San Francisco). The conversation opens with a discussion between **Kate Fowle** (Chief Curator for the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art in Moscow and Director-at-Large at Independent Curators International, New York) and **Catherine David** (Deputy Director of the Centre Pompidou and Curator of Documenta X), who will historicise the challenges around curating regional group exhibitions abroad. **Hans Ulrich Obrist** (Co-Director of Exhibitions and Programmes and Director of International Projects at Serpentine Galleries, London and Curator of Indian Highway) and **Omar Kholeif** (Manilow Senior Curator at Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago) will speak about their experiences and research in developing large-scale regional exhibitions of Indian (Obrist) and Arab (Kholeif) art, and the role of the regional exhibition or its expanded form informs their current curatorial practice. This will be followed by a discussion **Beth Citron** (Curator, Modern and Contemporary Art at the Rubin Museum) and **Stuart Comer** (Chief Curator of the Department of Media and Performance Art) who will speak about western institutions (including their own) and new initiatives and remits within them that expand the curatorial framework for “the regional” in terms of research and resources. Artists **Dayanita Singh** and **Amanullah Mojadidi** will address how they navigate growing interest in their art based on gender, nationality, or medium, and how to draw curators back into the work. Finally, art historians and curators, **Anshuman Das Gupta** (Shantiniketan) and **Shanay Jhaveri** (Metropolitan Museum of Art) and **Sharmini Pereira** (Co-Founder and Director of the Sri Lanka Archive of Contemporary Art, Architecture & Design). will speak about their experience drawing substantive ideas out of a region and their recent work with transnational and trans-generational shows that are regional in their approach but nevertheless radiate beyond it - and how they challenge traditional exhibition formats with their individual practices.

JOHN ZAROBELL (Moderator)

John Zarobell is Assistant Professor and Undergraduate Director of International Studies at the University of San Francisco. Formerly, he held the positions of Assistant Curator at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and Associate Curator at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. He is a regular contributor to the San Francisco Art Quarterly (SFAQ) and the online journal Art Practical, where he has focused on the new geography of contemporary art including *San Francisco's Indian Autumn* (2011), *Pacific Limn* (2013) and *She Who Tells a Story: Women Photographers from Iran and the Arab World* (2105). He has written for numerous exhibition catalogues and has curated exhibitions of modern and contemporary art, including, *African Art, African Voices* (2004), *Frida Kahlo* (2008), *New Work: Ranjani Shettar* (2009), *Art in the Atrium: Kerry James Marshall* (2009) and *Indigenous Contemporary* (2015). His first book, *Empire of Landscape*, was published in 2010 and his next, *Art and the Global Economy*, will be published by University of California Press in 2017. He also serves as the Associate Producer of *Flying Under the Radar/Voando sob o radar*, a cross-cultural, biennial festival of contemporary art that will be inaugurated in San Francisco in 2017.

BETH CITRON

Beth Citron is the Curator for Modern and Contemporary Art at the Rubin Museum in New York. In 2014 she organised *Francesco Clemente: Inspired by India* and *Witness at a Crossroads: Photographer Marc Riboud in Asia*. For the museum, she also organised a three-part exhibition series *Modernist Art from India* (2011-13) and with Rahaab Allana of the Alkazi Foundation *Allegory and Illusion: Early Portrait Photography from South Asia* (2013). She has contributed to *Artforum*, *ArtIndia*, and other publications, and published *Bhupen Khakhar's 'Pop' in India, 1970-72* in the “Summer 2012” issue of *ArtJournal*. She completed a PhD on Contemporary Art in Bombay, 1965-1995 in the History of Art Department at the

University of Pennsylvania in 2009 and has taught in the Art History Department at New York University, from which she also earned a Bachelor's in Fine Arts.

STUART COMER

Stuart Comer is the Chief Curator of the Department of Media and Performance Art at The Museum of Modern Art, New York. He oversees the department's program of special exhibitions, installations from the collection, and acquisitions and also works closely with the museum's Contemporary and Modern Art Perspectives (C-MAP) programme, an internal research and exchange initiative devoted to art in a global context. Comer previously served as the curator of Film at Tate Modern, London, UK where he oversaw film and video work for the Tate Collection and Displays and was co-curator for the opening program of The Tanks at Tate Modern. He was editor of *Film and Video Art* (Tate Publishing, 2009) and has contributed to several publications and numerous periodicals including *Artforum*, *Frieze*, *Afterall*, *Mousse*, *Parkett*, and *Art Review*.

CATHERINE DAVID

Catherine David is a curator and art historian, whose research is also focused on contemporary art from the Middle East. Currently, David is the deputy director of the Musée National d'Art Moderne at the Centre Pompidou and has been working extensively on the museum's collaborations in Asia and the Middle East. Previously, she has served as curator at the National Gallery at the Jeu de Paume in Paris, chief curator of the Musées de France, and the artistic director of Documenta X, Kassel (1994-97, the first non-german speaking and first female to hold that post. After her time at dOCUMENTA X she handled the film programme at the XXIV Biennial of São Paulo. She previously served as Director of the Witte de With Centre of Contemporary Art in Rotterdam. Turning her focus to the Middle East, David became Director of the long-term project *Contemporary Arab Representations (Représentations Arabes Contemporaines)* in 1998, an initiative presenting contemporary Middle East and Arab artists, first shown at the Fundació Antoni Tàpies in Barcelona. In 2006, she staged the exhibition *The Iraqi Equation* in Berlin and Barcelona. In 2014 David curated *UNEDITED HISTORY, Iran 1960-2014* at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris to much critical acclaim.

KATE FOWLE

Kate Fowle is the chief curator for the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art in Moscow and Director-at-Large at Independent Curators International (ICI) in New York, where she was Executive Director from 2009-13. Prior to this she was the inaugural International Curator at Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing. From 2002-2007 Fowle was Chair of the Master's Program in Curatorial Practice at California College of the Arts in San Francisco, which she co-founded in 2001. Before moving to the United States she was Co-Director of Smith + Fowle in London (1996-2001) and Curator at the Towner Art Gallery in Eastbourne (1993-6).

ANSHUMAN DAS GUPTA

Anshuman Das Gupta is an art historian, critic and curator, who has been teaching at the department of Art History in Santiniketan since 1997, where he also earned his undergraduate degree. He is currently a PhD Candidate at Goldsmiths, London University. His focus is in the space of cinema and visual cultures. His essays and papers have been published in several journals and publications such as *Marg*, *MuHKA*, *de Appel*, *Verlag Berlin*, *Nandan Lalit Kala Contemporary* and *ArtIndia*. Das Gupta has been a part of many curatorial projects which include an exhibition organised by the French Embassy in Delhi of Antonin Artaud in 1996; Khoj International Artists' Workshop events, Bengal, 2006; *Ramkinker Baij Centenary* exhibition, Santiniketan, 2007; *Santhal Family; positions around an Indian sculpture* for the Museum of Contemporary Art, MuKHA, Antwerp, 2008.

SHANAY JHAVERI

Shanay Jhaveri is Assistant Curator, South Asian art, within the Department of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. A graduate of Brown University, with a BA in Art-Semiotics and the History of Art and Architecture, Shanay has a PhD in Curatorial and Critical Studies from the Royal College of Art, where his dissertation addresses the topic of self-identity in South Asian art: *The Journey in my Head: Cosmopolitanism and Indian Male Self-Portraiture in 20th Century India - Umrao Singh Sher-Gil, Bhupen Khakhar and Raghbir Singh* (2015). His recent exhibitions include *In Dialogue: Amrita Sher-Gil and Lionel Wendt* (Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai, 2014); *Raghbir Singh and William Gedney* (Esther Schipper Gallery, Berlin, 2013); *Companionable Silences* (Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2013); and *India: Visions from the Outside* (Cultuurcentrum Brugge, Bruges, 2012). Shanay has also curated film programmes for Light Industry, New York, Cambridge University, - and in London the LUX/ICA Biennial of Moving Images, the East London Gay Film Festival, Iniva, Frieze Art Fair, Tate Modern and the forthcoming 3rd Edition of the Dhaka Art Summit. Shanay's books include: *Western Artists and India: Creative Inspirations in Art and Design* (Thames & Hudson and The Shoestring Publisher, 2013); *Outsider Films on India: 1950-1990* (The Shoestring Publisher, 2010); and *Chandigarh is in India* (forthcoming Feb. 2016, The Shoestring Publisher). He has published widely in various art journals and is a contributing editor to Frieze Magazine. He is a trustee of the non-profit public space Mumbai Art Room, Mumbai, and a member of the Chinati Contemporary Council, Marfa Texas.

OMAR KHOLEIF

Omar Kholeif is a writer, curator and editor. He is the Manilow Senior Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Most recently he was the Curator at the Whitechapel Gallery (London). He was also formerly Senior Curator at Cornerhouse and HOME (Manchester) as well as Senior Editor of Ibraaz Publishing. Prior to this, he headed up Art and Technology at SPACE (London) where he was director of The White Building, London's centre for art and technology, and was Curator at FACT, Foundation for Art and Creative Technology (Liverpool). Kholeif has also been Artistic Director at the Arab British Centre, London and was founding director of the UK's Arab Film Festival. Recent exhibitions include, the Cyprus Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale, the Abraaj Group Art Prize at Art Dubai, UAE and Focus: Middle East, North Africa, Middle East and Mediterranean at the Armory Show, New York.

AMANULLAH MOJADIDI

Amanullah Mojadidi is an American artist of Afghan descent, currently based in Paris. Known for his public art projects, he explores Afghan politics and cross-cultural identity through various media. His practice is based on his personal experiences and academic research in cultural studies. He received his degrees in Cultural Anthropology and his work uses experimental, ethnographic approaches and combines qualitative research, traditional tales in a modern context to dissect themes of belonging, identity, politics, conflict and a resistance against modernisation, often blurring the lines between fact and fiction. Many of his artworks, are representations of himself as a *Jihadi Gangster*, a sarcastic approach toward Afghan and American culture. His works have been featured in many international exhibitions including; dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel and Kabul, 2012; the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Kerala, 2012; Asia Triennial Manchester, The Imperial War Museum-North, Manchester, UK, 2014, and the Havana Biennale, Cuba, 2015. Mojadidi has also worked in a curatorial capacity and was a Co-curator at dOCUMENTA (13), Afghanistan Seminars & Exhibition in 2012 and was Curator at 10x12 Project Afghanistan, Fabrica/The Luciano Benetton Collection; Italy/Afghanistan, 2013.

HANS ULRICH OBRIST

Hans Ulrich Obrist is a Swiss curator who serves as the Co-Director of Exhibitions and Programmes and the Director of International Projects at the Serpentine Gallery, London. He was the Curator of the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris from 2000-2006 and curator of Museums in Progress, Vienna, 1993 to 2000. Obrist is very prolific and has curated over 150 exhibitions internationally in his career. He has always believed that art needs to grow beyond the space of galleries and museums; in this very spirit Obrist has held his very first exhibition in a Kitchen, *The Kitchen Show*, Schwalbenstrasse, St. Gallen, 1991. Since then he has curated exhibitions in airplanes, power stations, monasteries, and even at Friedrich Nietzsche's home in Sils-Maria. He was one of the five curators selected for Manifesta 1 which in many ways encompassed the very boundaries Obrist discusses breaking and involved inter-disciplinary and cross cultural practices. At the Serpentine Gallery he initiated the annual Serpentine Marathon where he invites 50 artists, philosophers, architects and more to present their work on a given theme. For example in 2009 the theme was the Poetry Marathon, where the aim was to bring to light the lost relationship between art and poetry. He has worked on a number of exhibitions some of which include *The Broken Mirror*, co-curated with K. Koenig, Vienna Festival, 1993; *Cities on the Move*, with Ho Hanru, Secession Vienna and CAPC Bordeaux 1997, and the Hayward Gallery, London and Klasma, Helsinki and Bangkok, 1999; *Traversés*, ARC, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, with L. Bossé, 2001; The second Guangzhou Triennial, with Hou Hanru and Guo Xiaoyan, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, 2006; Philippe Parreno, with Julia Peyton Jones, Serpentine Gallery, London, 2011. In South Asia, he is known for the Khoj Marathon he organised in 2011, following the monumental group show he co-curated, *Indian Highway*, which travelled to six locations including the Serpentine, the Ullens Center in Beijing, and the Astrup Fearnley Museum in Oslo.

SHARMINI PEREIRA

Sharmini Pereira is a curator and publisher based in Sri Lanka and New York. She is the director and founder of Raking Leaves, a leading non-profit independent publishing organisation. In 2014 she founded the Sri Lanka Archive of Contemporary Art, Architecture and Design in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. The archive grew from a prior project, Asia Art Archive's Mobile Library hosted by Raking Leaves. The archive's aim is to collect a vast amount of material and host talks, seminars and screenings related to its content. She has worked with institutions such as the Queensland Art Gallery, The Royal Academy, The Hayward Gallery and the British Council. She co-curated the Singapore Biennale (2006), was the international guest curator of the Abraaj Capital Art Prize (2011), and more recently she curated the *Garden of Ideas: Contemporary Art from Pakistan* at the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto (2014).

DAYANITA SINGH

Dayanita Singh is an artist currently based in New Delhi and Goa. Her medium is photography and the book is her primary form. She has published twelve books: *Zakir Hussain* (1986), *Myself*, *Mona Ahmed* (2001), *Privacy* (2003), *Chairs* (2005), *Go Away Closer* (2007), *Sent A Letter* (2008), *Blue Book* (2009), *Dream Villa* (2010), *Dayanita Singh* (2010), *House of Love* (2011), *File Room* (2013), and *Museum of Chance* (2014). Singh's photographic work often presents a curious view of the seemingly everyday, often presenting a landscape that exists as much in the artist's imagination as in the real world. Singh experiments with different ways of producing and viewing photographs, and she represented Germany in the 55th Venice Biennale and recent exhibitions include a solo exhibition at the Hayward Gallery and the MMK Frankfurt, the Kochi Biennale, and she will soon be a part of the 20th Sydney Biennale.

ARCHITECTURE IN BANGLADESH

Sunday, February 7th 2016, 4:30pm - 5:30pm, 3rd floor auditorium

How to present the challenges that contemporary architecture faces in Bangladesh? The “liquid landscape” of its deltas could be a starting point. For the last fifteen years, as Bangladesh has been taking part in the free market economy, a new generation of architects tries to redefine the terms of contemporaneity in the country. As the urbanism of large cities demands new housing strategies, the concepts of sustainable and responsible development require the creation of new modes of response. This panel discussion relates to Aurélien Lemonier’s architecture exhibition at the Dhaka Art Summit and draws together Bangladeshi architects and critics **Kashef Chowdhury**, **Kazi Khaled Ashraaf**, and **Nurur Rahman Khan** along with **Farrokh Derakhshani**, Director of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, who will highlight strategies of responsible development from social, economic and environmental lenses.

FARROKH DERAKHSHANI (Moderator)

Farrokh Derakhshani is Director of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture. He has been associated with the Award since 1982, where his work has brought him into contact with architects, builders, and planners throughout the world. He travels extensively in Muslim countries, and has organised and participated in numerous international seminars and colloquia dealing with contemporary built environments. He has collaborated on a large variety of publications and exhibitions on architecture, and has been involved in organising professional workshops and international architectural competitions. He lectures widely and has served as a jury member at schools of architecture in Europe, Africa and Asia. Mr. Derakhshani’s main field of specialisation is the contemporary architecture of Muslim societies, and his professional work has included the design and construction management of large-scale public works and infrastructure projects in Iran, as well as architectural design in Paris and Geneva. He is trained as an architect at the National University of Iran and later continued his studies at the School of Architecture in Paris (Paris I).

KAZI KHALED ASHRAF

Kazi Khaleed Ashraf is a Bangladeshi architect, urbanist and architectural critic. Ashraf received his Bachelor of Architecture from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, BUET, his Master’s from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MIT, and his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania. He is also Professor of Architecture at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Ashraf has also taught at the University of Pennsylvania, Temple University and Pratt Institute. Ashraf has authored a number of publications including, with Saif Ul Haque and Raziul Ahsan, *Pundranagar to Sherebanglanagar: Architecture in Bangladesh*, (Chetana, Dhaka, 1997); with James Belluardo, *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia -- Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde* (New York, The Architectural League of New York, 1998); *Designing Dhaka, A Manifesto for a Better City* (Loka Press, Dhaka, 2012); *An Architect in Bangladesh: Conversations with Muzharul Islam* (Loka Press, Dhaka, 2014); *The Hermit’s Hut: Architecture and Asceticism in India* (University of Hawaii Press, 2013); with Richard Saul Wurman and Grischa Ruschendorf, *Louis Kahn: House of the Nation* (ORO Editions 2014). Ashraf received the Pierre Vago Journalism Award from the International Committee of Architectural Critics for the Architectural Design publication *Made in India*.

KASHEF CHOWDHURY

Kashef Chowdhury has a studio-based practice whose works find root in history with strong emphasis on climate, materials and context – both natural and human. In design, projects are given extended time for research to reach a level of innovation and original expression. Recent and current commissions range from conversion of ship and low cost settlements to a training centre, art gallery, museum, hospital, residences and multi-family housing to hotels and corporate head offices. Chowdhury has been a visiting faculty various Universities in Bangladesh and has been a juror for the Advanced Studios (Master's Degree) at Yale University. He was a finalist twice in the Aga Khan Award for Architecture and has won first prize in *Architectural Review's* AR+D Award 2012. Kashef Chowdhury takes an active interest in art and has worked as a professional photographer, having held seven solo exhibitions. He has designed and published three books: *Around Dhaka*, 2004; *Plot Number Fifty Six*, 2009 and *The Night of Fifteen November*, 2011 – a photographic and recorded account of some survivors of the cyclone SIDR in the coastal areas of Bangladesh.

NURUR RAHMAN KHAN

Nurur Rahman Khan spent some of his childhood years in Liverpool and graduated from the department of Architecture of the Bangladeshi University of Engineering and Technology, BUET in 1990 and completed his Master's in 1991, receiving prestigious awards for both. Before founding his own practice with Tanya Karim he taught in BUET full time. He also gave numerous lectures about the National Assembly Building by Louis I. Kahn in renowned universities around the world such as Yale, Columbia, Harvard, Center for Environmental Planning and Technology University, and currently teaches as a guest faculty at BRAC University and North South University, Bangladesh. Aside from his teaching practice, Nurur Rahman Khan is a photographer, member of Chetana Architecture Research Society and director of the Muzharul Islam Archives. His architectural practice is varied as he takes on residential projects such as the Haque Residence (2001), but also offices and diplomatic buildings: he performed the renovation of the American embassy in Dhaka.

VIP LOUNGE DISCUSSION:

CAN CULTURE COUNTER?

Saturday, February 6th 2016, 3:30pm - 4:30pm, VIP Lounge

This panel will explore what a contemporary art exhibition (space) can do/be in times when the structures for independent and creative thought are shrinking across the world. Can non-oppositional resistance, a method well-known in South Asia, still play a role in furthering creative expression in times of conflict and crisis? This discussion brings together artists and curators who have worked on exhibitions or have run spaces in Nepal, Russia, India, Bangladesh, and Hong Kong in times of increased scrutiny into what private citizens say or do in the cultural sphere. These professionals present their work and discuss “best practices” in places where not practicing might be the easier choice, as well as the community impact of these practices. The panel will also consider the possibilities for creating new forms of public spheres.

MARIANNE BURKI (Moderator)

Marianne Burki has been the Head of Visual Arts of Pro Helvetia - Swiss Arts Council since 2005, and has led the Swiss Pavilion at the Art and the Architecture Biennale in Venice since 2012. She is also responsible for the specific funding system for photography, including photobooks, collaborating with magazines and supporting the launch of a new project for young photographers, and also works with design. Prior to her work with Pro Helvetia, Burki worked as a freelance journalist, lectured on the History of Art and Architecture, worked as the Project Leader of the catalogue raisonné of Paul Klee, and served as the director and curator of Kunsthau Langenthal.

JOANNA WARSZA

Joanna Warsza is curator in the fields of visual and performing arts and architecture and a head of CuratorLab at Konstfack in Stockholm. Warsza works mostly in the public realm, examining social and political agendas, such as the invisibility of the Vietnamese community in Warsaw, the phenomenon of the Israeli Youth Delegations to Poland (with Public Movement), or the legacy of post-Soviet architecture in Caucasus. She worked as head of Public Programmes for Manifesta 10 in St. Petersburg in 2014. In 2013, she was curator of the Georgian Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale, and in 2012 associate curator of the 7th Berlin Biennale. Warsza lives and works in Berlin and Warsaw.

HITMAN GURUNG

Hitman Gurung infuses his paintings, documentary photographs, photo collage and installation artworks with political conviction and personal poetry. He is deeply concerned about the post-Maoist civil war and the current political and environmental instability in Nepal. His recent series of work talks about transitory Nepalese migrant labourers who leave their families and country behind to join the work forces of foreign countries. Thousands of workers leave Nepal every month to the Middle East, and many are injured or die away from home due to substandard working conditions. International migration has increased exponentially since the civil war, leaving a generational gap that affects a sense of community, the passing on of knowledge and economic wellbeing. Recently, Gurung's work has been exhibited at the Culture and Development, Images Festival, Occupy Utopia in Denmark (2013), Dhaka Art Summit (2014), and The 8th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane (2015) among others. Gurung is co-founder of artist collective Artree Nepal.

SHEELASHA RAJBHANDARI

Sheelasha Rajbhandari is a Kathmandu-based visual artist. Her multimedia installations explore Nepal's socio-cultural history, contradictions in contemporary and traditional lifestyle, personal-collective memory. Her art works are based on research, tangible and intangible skills & practices and oral history. In her current series of ethnographic art works, she has worked together with specific groups and communities researching forgotten histories, understanding traditional methods and techniques to realise new ideas. In 2014, she was Nominated for the Signature Art Prize 2014, Asia Pacific Breweries Foundation, Singapore in the same year Rajbhandari was selected for Abhisaran, Vijaynagar Art Residency, organised by JSW Foundation, India. She has exhibited with Asian Art Biennale (Bangladesh, 2010). In 2013 she was invited by (CKU) The Center for culture and Development, Denmark in Images Festival, Occupy Utopia 2013. She was selected for the 2nd Kathmandu International Art Festival. Her solo show *In-Between Uncommon Factors* was held at the Nepal Arts Council in 2010. She is a Co-Founder of Ar-Tree Nepal.

COSMIN COSTINAS

Cosmin Costinas lives in Hong Kong and is Executive Director/Curator of Para Site, Hong Kong. He was Curator at BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht (2008-2011) and co-curator of the 1st Ural Industrial Biennial: *Shockworkers of the Mobile Image*, Ekaterinburg (with Ekaterina Degot, David Riff, 2010). Current projects are *Ten Million Rooms of Yearning*, *Sex in Hong Kong* (with Chantal Wong, 2014) and the conference *Is the Living Body the Last Thing Left Alive?* The new performance turn, its histories and its institutions (with Ana Janevski, 2014). Curated exhibitions include: *Great Crescent: Art and Agitation in the 1960s—Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan* (with Doryun Chong, Lesley Ma, Para Site, 2013/14) and *Spacecraft Icarus 13. Narratives of Progress from Elsewhere* (2011) and 1st Former West Congress (with Maria Hlavajova, 2009) at BAK.

NIDA GHOUSE

Nida Ghouse is a writer and curator and the director of Mumbai Art Room. She was assistant curator of the 10th Sharjah Biennial, and has worked as co-curator for the Jehangir Nicholson Art Foundation at the Prince of Wales Museum in Mumbai. Her curatorial projects include *Kharita Symposium on Urban Trajectories* with Pericentre Projects in Cairo, *Untitled Exhibition #1* with Padmini Chettur and the Clark House Initiative in Bombay, *14 Proper Nouns* with Hassan Khan at the Delfina Foundation in London, *In the Desert of Images* with Melik Ohanian at the Mumbai Art Room, and *La presencia del sonido* at the Botín Foundation in Santander. Her ongoing projects include *Take to the Sea* and *Acoustic Matters*. She was the first recipient of the FICA-Delfina Research Fellowship in partnership with Iniva and Goldsmith's Curatorial/Knowledge PhD programme in London in 2011.

Act Two, Scene One

37 46 45

Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible

To feeling, as to sight? or art thou but

A dagger of the mind, a false creation,

Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?

I see thee yet, in form as palpable,

As this which now I draw.

Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going,

And such an instrument I was to use.

Mine eyes are made the fools of th' other senses,

Or else worth all the rest: I see thee still,

And on thy blade, and dudgeon, gouts of blood,

Which was not so before: There's no such thing:

It is the bloody business, which informs

Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world

Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse

The curtain of sleep: witchcraft celebrates

Pale Hecat's offerings: and wither'd Murder,

Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,

Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,

With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design

Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set Earth

Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for hear

Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,

And take the present horror from the time,

Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives:

Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.

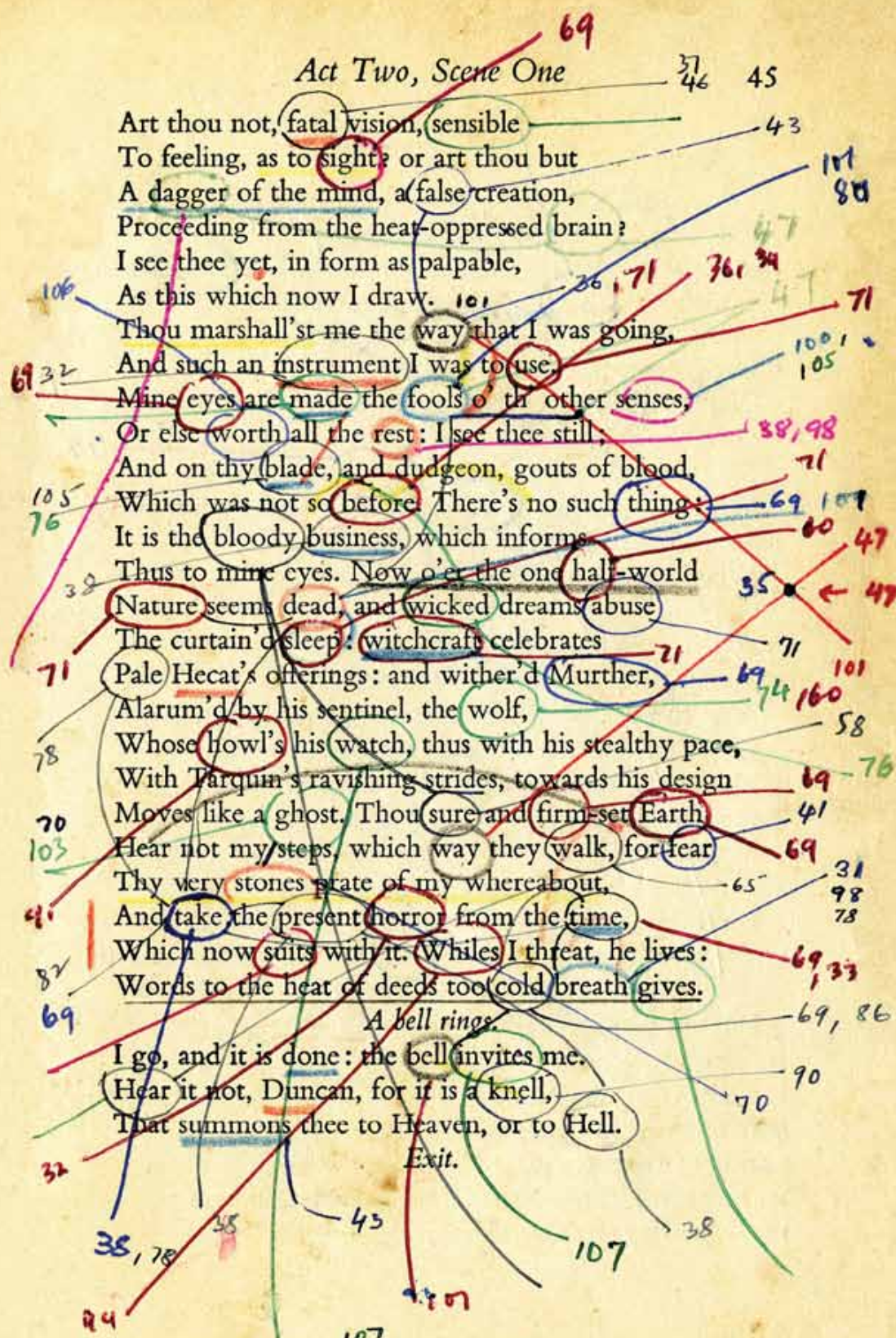
A bell rings.

I go, and it is done: the bell invites me.

Hear it not, Duncan, for it is a knell,

That summons thee to Heaven, or to Hell.

Exit.



take-present-Hell-business 38

CRITICAL WRITING ENSEMBLE

CURATED BY KATYA GARCÍA-ANTÓN
Office for Contemporary Art Norway

with
ANTONIO CATALDO

from a collaboration led by

CHANDRIKA GROVER RALLEIGH **DIANA CAMPBELL BETANCOURT**
Pro Helvetia - Swiss Arts Council Samdani Art Foundation

KATYA GARCÍA-ANTÓN
(OCA)

BHAVNA KAKAR
Take on Art

Nabil Ahmed
Belinder Dhanoa
Rosalyn D'Mello
Mariam Ghani
Nida Ghouse
Anshuman Das Gupta
Salima Hashmi
Geeta Kapur
Yin Ker
Quinn Latimer
Maria Lind
Chus Martinez
Rosa Martinez
Aunohita Mojumdar

Victoria Noorthoorn
Chantal Pontbriand
Sharmini Pereira
Paul Preciado
Filipa Ramos
Dorothee Richter
Shukla Sawant
Devika Singh
Mike Sperlinger
Mustafa Zaman
Mirjan Fischer (Publication Coordinator)

1. Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda

2. DAS

Preface

“to reshape some histories, to bring back the forgotten others, to reassess and alter the already hazily known, to redefine some standards of writing and our understanding, thoughts and feelings of an era lost. More importantly, to allow this man to breathe his words [...] Memory, collectively lost, can now be somewhat regained.”

These thoughts are taken from the last pages of the publication *The Art Critic* dedicated to the Burmese-born, India-based critic and artist Richard Bartholomew. The words come from Bartholomew's son Pablo, and they eloquently comment on the power of his fathers archive, in particular his writing, to critically build different pasts. Bartholomew's thoughts do more than address the urgent need to fortify the interlinking of art historical narratives – many forgotten or simply unknown – within the South Asia region, but they inspire us to consider their impact beyond it. And they do more, since they demand that we persevere in new ways of nurturing critique that will strengthen regional histories of immense richness to the world.

To do so we must nurture structures of empowerment, knowledge sharing and production, within which diverse histories will connect and converse as well as contribute to each others revitalisation.

It is on the wings of this impulse that **Diana Campbell Betancourt**, Artistic Director of the **Dhaka Art Summit**, together with **Katya García-Antón**, Director and Curator of **OCA, Office of Contemporary Art Norway**, an **Chandrika Grover Ralleigh**, Head of Liaison Office India of the **Swiss Arts Council – Pro Helvetia**, and **Bhavna Kakar**, are launching the **Critical writing Ensemble** as part of the Dhaka Art Summit 2016. The project is curated by **Katya García-Antón**, Director and Curator of OCA, with the collaboration of **Antonio Cataldo**, Senior Programmer of OCA. Research into the processes and structures that could help to empower writers today has been a part of the curatorial practice of Katya García-Antón in recent years. She was commissioned by Pro Helvetia – Swiss Arts Council in 2012-13 to devise a programme for the discussion and activation of critical art writing in Switzerland involving cross-generation peers across the linguistic regions and traditions of the country. CWE has drawn from this valuable experience, repositioning previous thoughts and posing new questions within the context of the Dhaka Art Summit, as well as the histories and currencies of the South Asia region. CWE takes a cross-regional approach and has been developed in collaboration with Bhavna Kakar, Director of **Take on Art** in India who in addition to convening with the peers in Dhaka, also developed CWE I: The Baroda Chapter, an official partnership with **Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda**, by organising a series of discussions and workshops amongst regional peers during the month of December 2015 in the lead-up to CWE II at DAS. Finally, in 2017, CWE will be developed as a further iteration within the context of Nordic Europe through a programme held in OCA, Oslo.

CWE therefore brings together peers from the South Asia region and across the globe, into different working constellations to share writing histories and knowledge with each other, experiment together, and produce new critical impulses regarding art writing, which will be compiled in a specially dedicated publication with wide international distribution.

Such an endeavour is positioned within a local therefore as much as a global framework, in more ways than one, for not only is this a project of some urgency regionally, it reminds us of the fact the crisis is a global one. Art writing has for some time endured challenges which vary in nature across the world. In some parts there are less places in which to write critically and experimentally about art and art history, there is less and less financing for this, there is less and less time; in others whilst platforms for writing may actually be on the rise, their value and impact has declined.

Writing is by nature a lonely endeavour, but under these conditions, art writing is being pushed to the margins and alienated from the central and critical position it should have in our societies, as will the immediate contact it should have with our audiences. If this decline continues, art histories around the world will homogenise and the immense richness and diversity of our cultures, essential to rewrite and reimagine present and past histories, will lose their critical edge as the very voices that should build it, which should experiment it and reinvent it, disappear over time.

Structural Summary

CWE seeks to foster a community of art writing peers working together. Breaking the isolation that characterises much writing practice, the platform hopes to create a lively environment for intellectual exchange.

CWE seeks to connect art writers experience and knowledge of regional and national writing histories, across the South Asian region and other regions globally.

CWE II seeks to develop these relations through a four-day platform of presentations, panel discussions, lecture performances, group debates and readings, within the context of the Dhaka Art Summit, its exhibitions and talks programmes.

Calendar: 3-4th February, CWE Sessions I & II
5-7th February, Dhaka Art Summit
7-8th February, CWE Sessions III & IV

Daily Schedule: 10:30am-1pm: Morning Session
1pm-2pm: Lunch Break
2pm-4pm: Afternoon Session

Locations: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy's Dance Auditorium
Dhaka Art Summit's VIP Lounge

CWE views art writing as a practice in its own right. Writing in general is strongly shaped by the contexts in which it is practiced and where it appears, and so the platform will consider discussing writing in a variety of historical and formal contexts.

CWE will count on access to the Asia Art Archive that will be on site in Dhaka.

CWE will publish the material presented during, and derived from these sessions and distribute it internationally by Mousse Publishing. The publication will include a variety of contributions from all peers.

Programme

Wednesday, February 3rd 2016

Welcome and Introduction

The Ensemble will be launched on Wednesday, 3rd of February with a welcome speech and introduction by **Katya García-Antón** together with **Diana Campbell Betancourt** and **Bhavna Kakar**.

Session I: Al Fresco – Writing within and against the Art School

The Al Fresco session focuses on the relationship between textual practice and paedagogical histories.

In the morning of Wednesday, 3rd February, CWE will embark on its first session with an experimental classroom – inspired section, by **Anshuman Das Gupta**. Das Gupta, faculty member of the Art History department in Kalabhavan, Santiniketan (Visva Bharati University) will discuss the singular approach of art pedagogy and its relation to text, at Santiniketan as envisioned through its founder Rabindranath Tagore. Fostered through a pedagogical programme devised by Tagore's right-hand man Nandalal Bose (1882-1966), Santiniketan represented the sum of ancient Indian theories of aesthetics, Tagore's humanist and universalist ideals transcending demarcations of national borders, and the debates on nationalist and Pan-Asianist ideologies initiated by many a luminary in the orbit of the ashram: Okakura Kakuzō (1862-1913), Sister Nivedita (1867-1911), and Ananda Coomaraswamy (1877-1947).

Chus Martínez, Head of the Institute of Art at the FHNW Academy of Art and Design in Basel, will discuss a series of recent texts in which she has reflected upon the relation between art practice, institutions and education in the years to come.

In the afternoon Jawaharlal Nehru University Professor **Shukla Sawant**, based in Delhi, will present her recent work on art writing in Bombay in the early 20th century by looking at the JJ School of Art in Mumbai and artists/writers associated with it (some who were colonial functionaries but had a dual address in English and Marathi to cater to two different language publics). Writer and Curator **Filipa Ramos** (currently editor of Art Agenda, London) will re-imagine traditional pedagogic formats, and standard exhibition review analysis, with a reading relating to an imaginary visit through an exhibition we haven't seen, but which we can experience through the eyes of an absent spectator.

Yin Ker, an educator and researcher on Southeast Asian and Buddhist art based in Singapore, will explore the legacy of Santiniketan pedagogy in the work of Burma's most important exponent of modernist practice, painter Bagyi Aung Soe. Following his return to Yangon in 1952 and over the next three decades, through illustration, which, in place of the virtually inexistent gallery and museum, served as the site of avant-garde artistic experimentations, he examined the linguistic rationale of a plethora of pictorial idioms, ranging from the *ukiyo-e* to cubism. In innovating new idioms, his non-figurative illustrations published in Shumawa Magazine in January and February 1953 provoked a furore which saw traditionalists branding his art as "*seik-ta-za-pangyi*," meaning psychotic or mad painting – an epithet that would become synonymous with Aung Soe's works as well as modern art in general in Burma. Ker's presentation will share the challenges of developing an adapted narrative of his art which defies the conventions of art and art history.

Q&A and closing notes for the first session will follow.

Location: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy's Dance Auditorium

Thursday, February 4th 2016

Session II: Staging Words and Flowing Letters

This session examines the various literary forms of art writing and the archival relevance of more informal accounts within art criticism. A welcome note will be delivered by Marianne Burki.

The Staging Words and Flowing Letters session will commence with **Belinder Dhanoa**. Dhanoa is a writer and an artist, and currently teaches Creative Writing at the School of Culture and Creative Expression at the Ambedkar University, New Delhi. Dhanoa will read excerpts from the script she wrote for artist Vivan Sundaram's exhibition-as-play *409 Ramkinkars* that opened in Delhi in the spring of 2015. The performative exhibition paid homage to one of India's most charismatic artist, Ramkinkar Baij, and his work as innovator of sculptural form in the space, re-visiting the creative milieu of sculptor-painter-scenographer-theatre artist Baij.

Quinn Latimer is an American poet and writer based in Basel and Athens, and currently editor-in-chief of publications for *documenta 14*. Her work pays special attention to the literary format of the letter as a space of criticality and community occasioned by the intimacies of its address. In this session she will read from and discuss the work that comprises *Anthology*, a forthcoming collection of critical prose, poetry, and more hybrid texts that move between genre, and pull from history letters and fiction. She will specifically explore the form and function of the refrain, its serial ecstasies and political possibilities.

Delhi-based artist and writer **Rosalyn D'Mello** was a central part of the research that enabled the publication in 2012 of *The Art Critic* - a historic selection of the art writings of art critic, poet, writer, painter and photographer Richard Bartholomew (b. Tavoy, British Burma, 1926, d. Delhi, India, 1985). D'Mello will present a lecture performance addressing significant points in Bartholomew's poetic and literary legacy, from the period of the 1950s up to the 1980s which offered an insider's account of the little known story of Modern Indian Art.

In the afternoon artist, cultural writer, activist and Dean of School of Visual Arts at the Beaconhouse National University at Lahore **Salima Hashmi**, will read and comment on letters of her father Faiz Ahmed Faiz to address the power of the epistolary form as a critical tool for resistance.

Curator, critic and CEO of the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto, **Chantal Pontbriand** will discuss the book *Performance & Performativity*, which she recently edited. This is the second of four anthologised volumes dedicated to the artistically unconventional and theoretically cutting-edge *Parachute*, a magazine that Pontbriand launched and founded in 1975. *Performance & Performativity* brings together seminal texts written throughout the first twenty-five years of the magazine which sought to develop new critical language that could deal with performance.

Writer **Nida Ghose** has been conducting research on the Soviet funded multi-lingual Afro-Asian magazine *Lotus*, a forum for short-stories, poetry, review of books and literary essays. *Lotus* was a quarterly magazine which for its time was a ground-breaking literary/artistic cum political expression. The writers of the journal placed themselves in relationship to the broader social and political mechanism of imperial powers. Youssef el Sebai, was the journal's first editor, and the journal came out of the Afro-Asian Writer's Association, a group of African and Asian writers who spoke a multitude of languages and met in Tashkent in 1958. Ten years later this organisation would launch a journal called *Afro-Asian Writings*, which would go on to become *Lotus*. *Lotus* was published from Cairo and Beirut and was produced trilingually in Arabic, English and French.

Q&A and closing notes for the four sessions will follow.

Location: *Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy's Dance Auditorium*

Sunday, February 7th 2016

Session III: The Political Unconsciousness of Art Writing

This session addresses the various political concerns of art writing while looking at the art practices that have informed them.

In the morning of Sunday, 7th February, CWE will open its third session with NY based artist **Mariam Ghani**, who will activate the session with a performative, part text-based presentation of the audiovisual material of *What We Left Unfinished* - a long-term research, film, and dialogue project centered around five unfinished Afghan feature films shot, but never edited, between 1978 and 1992.

Victoria Noorthoorn, Director of the Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires, Argentina will present ideas around the explosive and experimental moment in the Argentine art scene of the 1960s, and its influence on the current scene following the extreme crises of Argentina during the subsequent decades.

Artist, writer, curator, and team member of the Forensic Architecture research project based at Goldsmiths, University of London, **Nabil Ahmed** will hold a lecture which combines video, performance and sound art to address the writing of the world as an accumulation of catastrophic events.

The afternoon will restart with art historian, curator, and critic **Geeta Kapur**, an expert on contemporary art and theory and noted for her many accomplishments in curating and art criticism who will lecture on the importance of texts and documentation in witnessing and testimonials of the paradigmatic of the historical, political and ethical dilemmas of our times. Starting from her manuscript *Public Address: Citing Installation and Performance Art* she will question the readability of texts in enhancing historical and political consciousness, and the fragility of such instances when annotating trauma, loss, and mourning.

Drawing from her curatorial research on abstraction, and from a number of texts by various intellectuals and artists, **Maria Lind**, Director of Tensta Konsthall, Stockholm, and Artistic Director of the 2016 Gwangju Biennale, will consider how in the past few decades economic abstraction was primarily dealt with by art as a subject matter or theme which increasingly mirrored the economic, social and political condition of the world. She will analyse how this system affects spatial and temporal concepts, and the writing of a future within it.

Artistic director of the international biennials of Venice and Istanbul **Rosa Martínez**, based in Barcelona, will follow up by discussing her recently curated exhibition *Fear Nothing, She Says. When Art Reveals Mystic Truths*, which revises the verse by Teresa of Jesus, transforming "Let nothing perturb you, nothing frighten you" into the simpler "fear nothing," which it then relates to the novel *Détruire, dit-elle (Destroy, She Said)* by Marguerite Duras. The exhibition is an invitation to overcome obstacles and fears by opening up to the new developments of global ethical and aesthetic awareness and, in the work of historians and curators, to critically analysing the changes produced over the course of time by understanding how images condense fears, hopes and beliefs, and undermine the ideological codes of an epoch. In the words of Martínez, "Art is a kind of knowledge, a form of wisdom and an exercise of power. In art we must seek the presence and the meaning that transcend the visual."

Q&A and closing notes will follow

Location: Dhaka Art Summit VIP Lounge

Monday, February 8th 2016

Session IV: Entangling and Disentangling Printed Matter

This sessions discusses the diversity of writing histories developed through art publishing platforms and their contribution to the construction of criticality within the South Asia region and beyond.

On Monday, 8th February **Aunohita Mojumdar**, editor of Himal Magazine, Kathmandu, will commence the morning and CWE's very last session by speaking about the responsibility of the writer and the theatre of war by bringing to light stories of everyday reality in territories of conflict and violence.

Paris-based writer and philosopher **Paul B. Preciado** (curator of public programmes for documenta 14) will intervene in the programme ex-situ with a specially recorded presentation of *Testo Junkie*, a book addressing what he coined as "pharmacopornographic" that affects the politics of the body and of sexuality. *Testo Junkie* was conceived with writing in itself as a performative device and using activism as a research methodology to move beyond academic writing.

Drawing from recent research and from her work as an editor of the independent international journal *OnCurating*, **Dorothee Richter**, Head of Postgraduate Programme in Curating at the Zurich University of the Arts, Zurich, Switzerland, will discuss hybrid curatorial models to address experiences of working across online and offline platforms.

In discussing art reviews from India's post-independence period, Paris-based art historian and curator **Devika Singh** (who is currently writing a book on artistic practices in India between 1947 and 1991) will highlight the importance in locating Indian art within a transnational history of modernism.

Sharmini Pereira will discuss her project *Raking Leaves*, a complex cosmogony of forms of commissioning, writing, publishing rooted in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Sharmini will discuss the critical writing options this project has catalysed in relation to the socio-political and art historical context of Sri Lanka.

During the afternoon, **Mike Sperlinger**, Professor of Theory and Writing at The Academy of Fine Art, KHiO (Oslo, Norway) will focus on the forgotten history of *Tracks*, a magazine edited by artists and consisting artist's writings, in the 1970s in New York. His presentation will consider the forms of criticality that place when the practitioner places him/herself at the heart of discursive creation.

Conceiving it as a site for raising and debating issues, *Depart* magazine's editor **Mustafa Zaman** will offer the *raison d'être* behind the art quarterly published from Dhaka, Bangladesh, whose principal aim is providing critical reinforcement to the burgeoning art scene of the country.

Q&A and closing notes will follow

Location: Dhaka Art Summit VIP Lounge

Please note this programme may be subject to change.





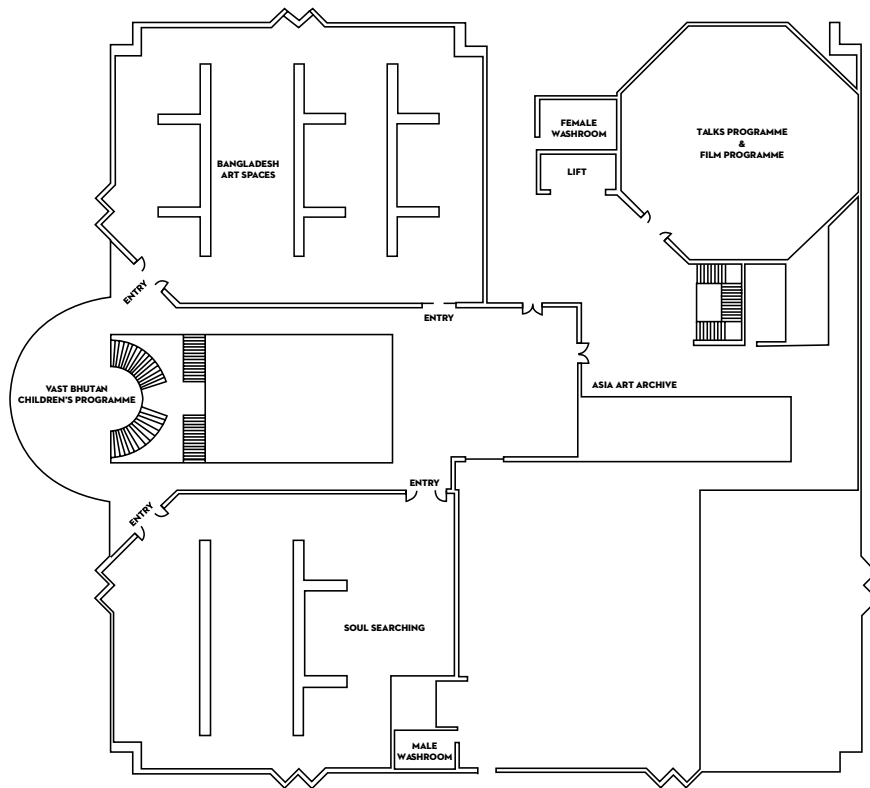
**SUPPLEMENTARY PROGRAMMES
AND WORKSHOPS**

ASIA ART ARCHIVE

SAFINA RADIO PROJECT

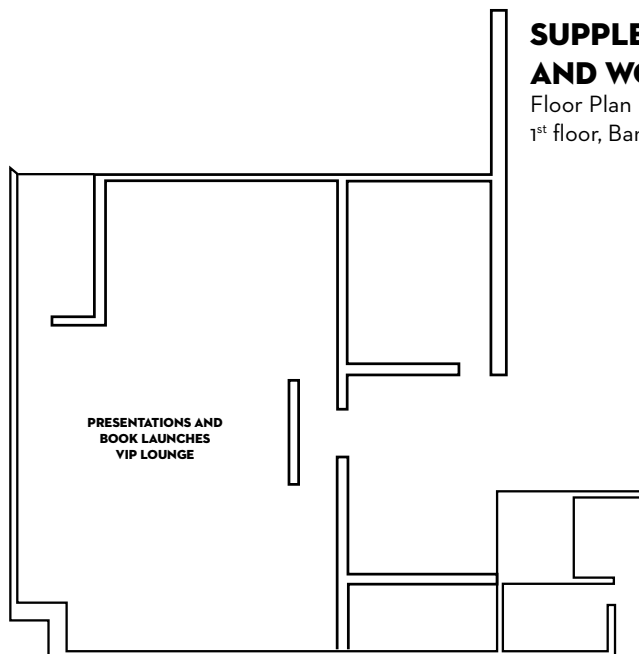
CHILDREN'S PROGRAMME - VAST BHUTAN

BANGLADESH ART SPACES



SUPPLEMENTARY PROGRAMMES AND WORKSHOPS

Floor Plan
3rd floor, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy



SUPPLEMENTARY PROGRAMMES AND WORKSHOPS

Floor Plan
1st floor, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

ASIA ART ARCHIVE

Asia Art Archive in its ongoing effort to map and present the many histories of 20th century art writing in different languages of South Asia, Asia Art Archive will present its first Live Feed Station at Dhaka Art Summit 2016. The Live Feed Station will be an on-site junction for viewing an array of some of the most interesting publications, art magazines, books and catalogues that have been published in the past century, and also an opportunity for visitors to explore the database and bring their own references to contribute to this expanding platform of shared knowledge. The Live Feed Station is part of Asia Art Archive's ongoing Bibliography of Modern and Contemporary Art Writing project and is hosted by the Samdani Art Foundation at the Dhaka Art Summit.

BOOK LAUNCHES AND PRESENTATIONS

Anwar Jalal Shemza

Friday, February 5th 2016, 12:30pm - 1:30pm, VIP Lounge, 1st floor

Chandigarh is in India and Western Artists in India

Friday, February 5th 2016, 1:30pm - 2:30pm, VIP Lounge, 1st floor

Art Connections: Facilitating Partnerships between Harvard and South Asia, presentation

Saturday, February 5th 2016, 2:30pm - 3:30pm, VIP Lounge, 1st floor

Documenta 14 Reading of South

Saturday, February 6th 2016, 12:30pm - 1:30pm, VIP Lounge, 1st floor

TAKE on Art Magazine Photography - The Dematerialising Arc, magazine launch

Saturday, February 6th 2016, 1:30pm - 2pm, VIP Lounge, 1st floor

Arpita Singh

Saturday, February 6th 2016, 6pm - 6:30pm, VIP Lounge, 1st floor

Artist as Activist by Shakuntala Kulkarni in association with the World Bank, presentation

Sunday, February 7th 2016, 12:30pm - 1:30pm, VIP Lounge, 1st floor

Vasudeo Gaitonde, book launch

Sunday, February 7th 2016, 5:30pm - 6:30pm, VIP Lounge, 1st floor

SAFINA RADIO PROJECT

With the subtitle *Not as Far as it Seems*, the Dhaka edition of Safina Radio Project takes questions of belonging and home as its departure point. Responding to the practices, curatorial premises and work on show at the Dhaka Art Summit 2016, Safina will explore common grounds within historical contexts, providing a cross section of origins and their interpretations.

Preprogrammed and commissioned pieces will open up a broad cultural context for Dhaka; literature, architecture, art and music content will bring to the fore the rich cultural undercurrents of one of Asia's most complex cities, drawing listeners closer to Dhaka as a centre for cultural discourse.

From 5-8 February, Safina Radio Project will be broadcasting conversations and performative pieces created with artists, writers and curators during their time at the summit, drawing on their encounters with the city.

Tune in here in advance and during: safinaradioproject.org

Contributors include:

Shumon Ahmed

Nabil Rahman

Ronni Ahmmed

Mustafa Zaman

Ayesha Sultana

Yasmin Jahan Nupur

Sarker Protick

Munem Wasif

Reetu Sattar

Mehreen Murtaza

Rahel Aima

Kashef Chowdhury

Mariam Ghani

Chitra Ganesh

Sharmini Pereira

Belinder Dhanoa

Quinn Latimer

Salima Hashmi

Paul B. Preciado

Katya García-Antón

Firoz Mahmud

Lynda Benglis

Keep an eye on the website for updated programming.

Director: Anabelle de Gersigny

Commissioned by Alserkal Avenue



Shumon Ahmed, *Untitled*, 2016 for Safina Radio Project
Instagram: [@safinaradioproject](https://www.instagram.com/safinaradioproject)



Sarker Protick, *Work in Progress*, 2015 - 2016 for Safina Radio Project, Instagram: [@safinaradioproject](https://www.instagram.com/safinaradioproject)

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMME

The Children's Programme is one of the local highlights of the Dhaka Art Summit. In 2014, 1,600 children from both village NGO run and international schools visited the Summit and took guided tours with their teachers, and many participated in a special project called *Visas to Happiness* created especially for Bangladeshi school children by Mumbai based artist Reena Kallat.

In the two month lead up to the Dhaka Art Summit, the Samdani Art Foundation team has worked intensely with over a hundred ten to fourteen year old girls from three local Dhaka schools who auditioned to be a part of Tino Sehgal's Solo Project in the Dhaka Art Summit. Initial group auditions for between 10 and 20 girls at a time were conducted over Skype with a member of the Tino Sehgal studio, with each audition lasting between 1 and 2 hours. 15 Potential Ann Lee's were selected from this initial call out to come back for more intensive "call back" auditions. The five selected girls underwent 24 hours of intensive training in January with regular assessments from the Studio and Tino Sehgal. We are delighted to present this behind-the-scenes work with children at the Dhaka Art Summit which manifests in Tino Sehgal's work.

During the Dhaka Art Summit, **VAST Bhutan** will stage a children's workshop on the last two days of the Summit, working together with the youth of Dhaka to make an immersive installation from local waste products. These creative workshops will engage a new generation with the important topic of Climate Change, connecting it specifically to aquatic life and fish, a dietary staple that is central to Bengali identity. The workshops will happen from 10am-9pm from February 7-8, 2016.



©Vast Bhutan

BANGLADESH ART SPACES

The Dhaka Art Summit invites eleven art spaces from Dhaka and Chittagong, three non-commercial and eight commercial, to exhibit within the confines of the Dhaka Art Summit without any participation fee. Dhaka is notorious for its traffic, and by convening these spaces at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, we hope to provide an outlet for all of our visitors to get to know some of the most important players in the Bangladeshi art scene and their respective programmes.

The Samdani Art Foundation does not financially benefit from any transactions that may occur with these art spaces, and participation is free of cost. The Samdani Art Foundation is unique in Bangladesh in that it derives no income from commercial activities relating to art. If you are interested in acquiring Bangladeshi artworks - please contact these galleries directly.

Non-Profit Spaces

JOG

Zahed Ali Chowdhury
Shohrab Jahan
Shaela Sharmin

Longitude Latitude

Sohel Solieman
Safder Hosain
Ariyan Arin Khan

Santaran Art Organisation

Bivol Saha
Tanjil Tushi
Sanjoy Chakraborty

Commercial Galleries

Athena Gallery of Fine Arts

Rokeya Sultana

Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts

Omar Chowdhury

Sunflower Gallery

Bipasha Hayat

Drik

Rashid Talukder

Gallery 21

Nisar Hossain
Shameem Subrana
Mohammed Iqbal

Gallery Chittrak

Muniruzzaman
Ahmed Nazir
Mohammad Zahiruddin
Rukhsana Saida Poppy

Gallery Cosmos

Nazia Andaleeb Preema
Kalidas Karmaker

Gallery Kaya

Murtaja Baseer
Ranjit Das
Mohammad Kamaluddin

LENDERS

The Dhaka Art Summit is not a collection building strategy for the Samdani Art Foundation and we are grateful to all of the artists, gallerists and the following lenders for making this exhibition possible.*

Bangladesh National Museum, Dhaka

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka

The Estate of Zahoor ul Akhlaq, Lahore and Toronto

Dr. Christiane Brosius, Heidelberg, Germany

Enam Choudhury Collection, Dhaka

Monika Correa, Mumbai

The Museum Folkwang, Essen

Inayat Ismail Collection, Karachi

Amrita Jhaveri, Mumbai

Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai

Yin Ker, Singapore

Anwar Hossain Manju, Dhaka

Ahmed Nazir, Dhaka

Bhanu and Akbar Padamsee, Mumbai

Nalini Malani and Johan Pijnappel, Mumbai

Pinault Collection, Paris

Pakistan High Commission, Dhaka

Krishna and Judith Reddy, New York

Collection of the Samdani Art Foundation, Dhaka

The Estate of Anwar Jalal Shemza, Eastbourne, UK

Mahijit Singh and Nalin Tomar, New Delhi

Maung Maung Soe, Yangon

Farooq Sohban Collection, Dhaka

Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi

and those who wish to remain anonymous.

*Twenty-four works created by nine different artists in Dhaka Art Summit have been lent by the Samdani Art Foundation, primarily in the Rewind section where import of historical works into Bangladesh is limited by laws in the region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To acknowledge people who helped in making of the Dhaka Art Summit 2016 directly or indirectly.

MK Aaref	Utpol Kumar Das	Rasika Kajaria
The Aga Khan Award for Architecture	Karina Daskalov	Bhavna Kakar
Salma Adil	Florence Derieux	Jitish Kallat
Ziauddin Adil	Jyoti Dhar	Yin Ker
Gazi Nafis Ahmed	Sarita Dubin	Sandra Khare
Sabih Ahmed	Simrat Dugal	Gargi Khot
Nurjahan Akhlaq	Delfina Entrecanales	David Kim
Fiza Akram	Milovan Farronato	Deepanjana Klein
Sabrina Amrani	Saskia Fernando	Albertine Kopp
Dr. Ziba Ardalan	Lisa Le Feuvre	Ursula Krinzinger
Art Gallery of New South Wales	Nicoletta Fiorucci	Lahore Literary Festival
Aurora Aspen	FRAC Champagne Ardenne	Ambassador Eduardo de Laiglesia
HE Mrs. Sophie Aubert	Fukuoka Asian Art Museum	Firoz Lilani
Harpreet Aurora	Henriette Gallus	Julie Lomax
Juan Antonio de Avila	Shireen Gandhi	Olivier Loreaux
Eeshita Azad	Garage Museum of Contemporary Art	Manuela Lucadazio
Emdadul Babar	Paul Richert Garcia	Florian Ludde
Zakia Basrai	Anne Hukelaas Gaustad	Zaireen Sultana Lupa
Tairone Bastien	Madhulika Ghosh	Amita Malkani
Bentley Historical Library	Sophie Goltz	Antoine Marchand
Thierry Betancourt	Vincent Gonzalvez	Judith Mirschberger
The Benetton Foundation for Study and Research	Marian Goodman	Tate Modern
Yalda Bidshahri	Sree Banerjee Goswami	Renu Modi
Adeline Blanchard	Judith Greer	Jessica Morgan
Bernard Blistène	Rumana Habib	Frances Morris
Stella Bottai	Alice Hackney	Saba Moyeen
Caroline Bourgeois	Susan Hapgood	Tarun Nagesh
James Brett	Faatin Haque	Peter Nagy
Anna Tryc Bromley	Ellie Harrison-Read	Nicolas Nahab
Marianne Burki	Tara Ishizuka Hassel	Ashwani Nayar
Marie-Cécile Burnichon	Martin Hatebur	Deputy Ambassador Patrick - Sandoval Nichols
Umer Butt	Anne Charlotte Hauen	U Sonny Nyein
The staff of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy	Calvin Hayes	Anette Østerby
Lisa Campbell	Louise Hayward	Benoit Parayre
Kathy Campbell	Henry Moore Institute	Bruno Passe
Darpana Capoor	Meena Hewitt	Hetal Pawani
Antonio Cataldo	Greg Hilty	Nicholas Pearce
Aaron Cezar	Louise Hojer	Giorgio Persano
Bunty Chand	Clark Riley Hollenberg	Helen Pheby
Kriz Channyein	Jim Hollington	Johan Pijnappel
Ambassador Pema Choden	Anwar Hossain	Pinault Collection
Sunita and Vijay Choraria	Abha Housego	Sandhini Poddar
Mohsin Habib Chowdhury	Mubarak Hussain	Lekha and Anupam Poddar
Rupali Chowdhury	Toril Fjelde Høye	Jêrome Poggi
Clark House Initiative	Mina Hülsmeier	Karen Pollak
Beth Citron	Institute of International Education	Chantal Pontbriand
Zasha Colah	Amin Jaffer	Menika Van der Poorten
Taber Colletti	Aparajita Jain	Mark Prime
James Conlin	Amrita Jhaveri	Prince Claus Fund
Cecily Cook	Priya Jhaveri	Ivan Pun
Tamara Corm	Tushar Jivarajka, Volte	Md. Rab
Samit Das	Nathalie Johnston	Nabil Rahman
	Selina Jones	Sabah Rahman
	Rehan Kabir	Prateek and Priyanka Raja

Anushka Rajendran
Uthra Rajgopal
Chandrika Grover Ralleigh
Nikhil Raunak
Asad Raza
Sadaf Raza
Judith Blum Reddy
Ahmed Reza
Marta Rincon
Claus Robenhagen
Aparna Roddam
Beatrix Ruf
Moe Satt
Dylan Sauer
Adam Scheffer
Esther Schipper
Dorine Schreurs
Astrid Schumacher

Aaron Schwarz
Richard Scott
Aaron Seeto
Aphra Shemza
Azad Shivdasani
Shahzia Sikander
Sonal Singh
Maung Maung Soe
Solomon R Guggenheim Museum
Julie Spatt
Mari Spirito
Thomas Stauffer
Aneta Świącicka
Kenji Takahashi
Jo-ey Tang
Ma Thanegi
Meenakshi Thirukode

Cornelia Tischmacher - Johnen
Galerie
Tivoli Framing
Turkish Embassy
University of Michigan Library
Roshini Vadehra
Marina La Verghetta
Andrea Viliani
Tine Vindfeld
Manfred Wiplinger
Jon Wood
World Bank
Bagyi Lynn Wunna
Joan Young

Shakuntala Kulkarni Acknowledgements

Cane armour

Production, design: Shakuntala Kulkarni
Cane armour structure: Dinesh Pardeshi
Weaving: Tonkeshwar Barik and Dhun Barik
Production support: Sanju Thakore
Armour stands: Puranmasi

Film : Julius

Concept, production, performance: Shakuntala Kulkarni
Camera: Ajay Norhona
Production support: Arundhati Chattopadhyaya
Production assistant: Niyati Upadhyaya

Editing: Rikhav Desai, Arundhati Chattopadhyaya, Shakuntala Kulkarni
Composer: Anand Bhutkar
Sound: Mohandas V. P.
Makeup: Umesh Pawar
Stills: Archana Hande, Devashish Guruji
Sound equipment support: Volte Gallery
Credits: Chemould Prescott Road, Vinod Guruji, Chitra Palekar, Ravi Kulkarni, Vijay Shirke, Madhosingh, Shanita, Toraskar Caterer, What About Art-Art Management Pvt., Land Mark World Wide Pvt. Ltd., Mother Nature Studio.

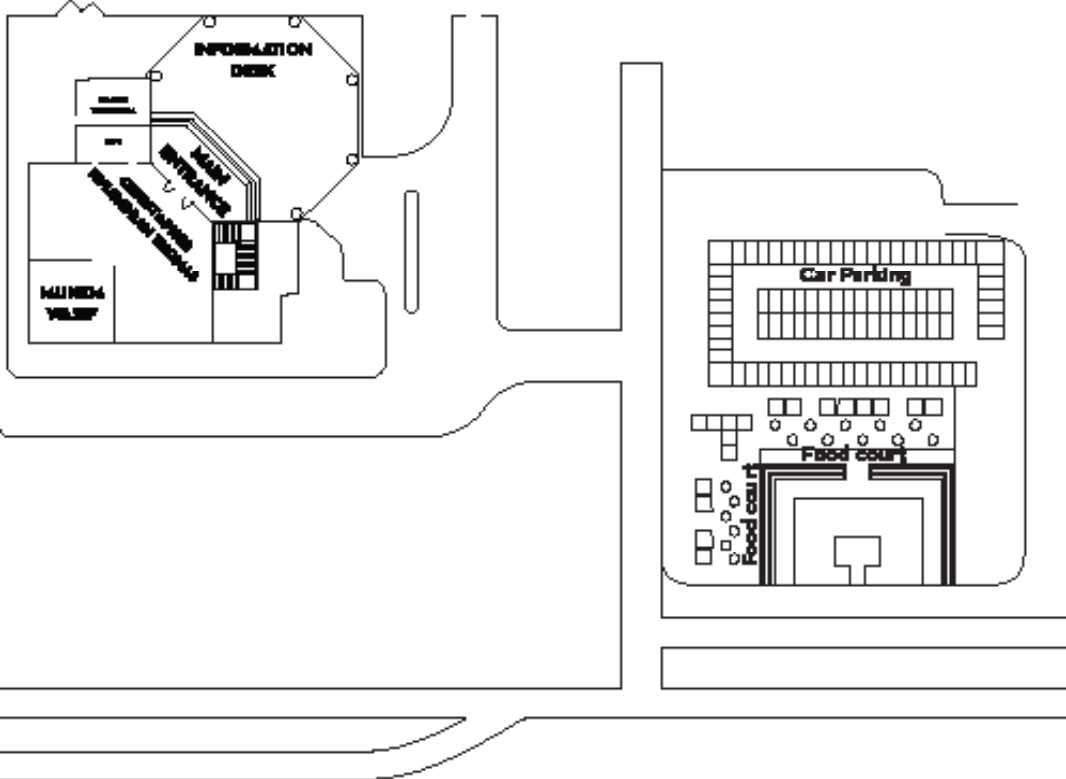
Tino Sehgal Acknowledgements

Sunbeams School Dhaka, with special thanks to Ms. Munize Manzur.
American International School Dhaka, with special thanks to Ms. Susan Lacy and Mr. Robert Russell.
Delhi Public School, Dhaka (DPS STS), with special thanks to Ms. Ruhi Zaman.
With the support of Goethe-Institut Bangladesh

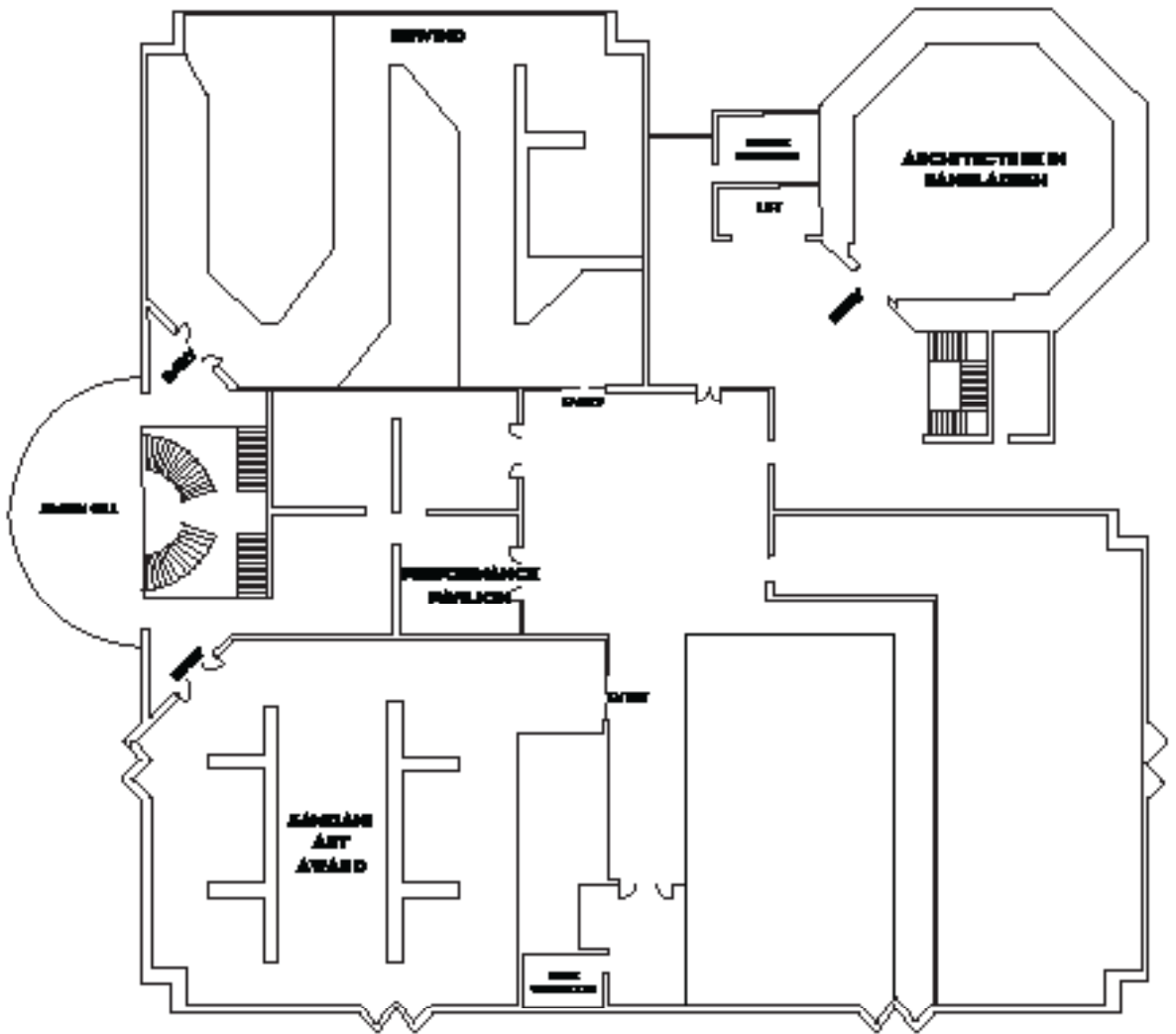
Selected Girls
Afreen Rahman (DPS)
Ariza Hossain
Atreyee Ahsan
Elsa Syed
Samiha Hassan

Trainer
Nikita Broadbent
Scott and Debbie Broadbent
Odile de Labouchère
Asad Raza

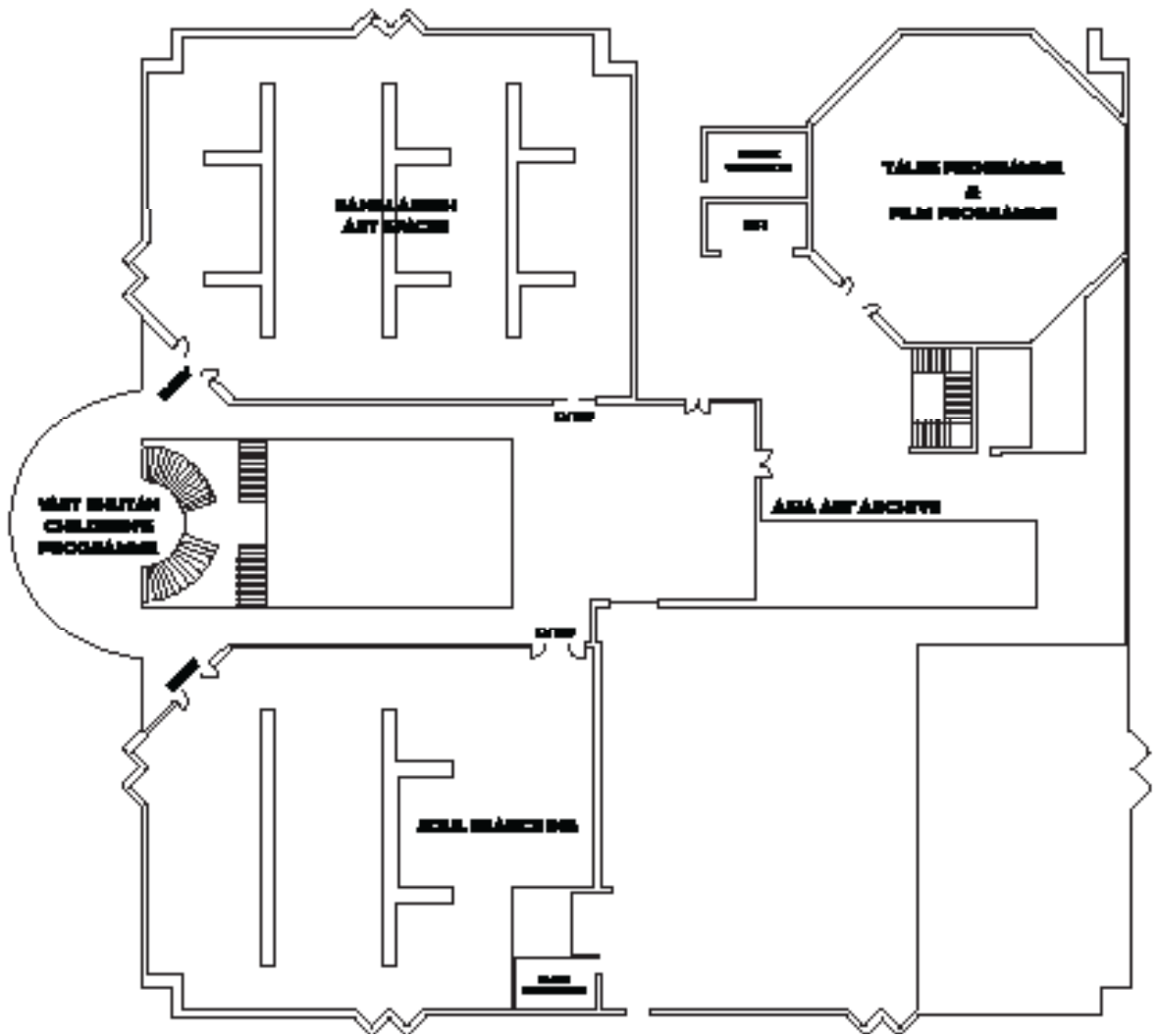
MAPS



GROUND FLOOR, BANGLADESH SHILPAKALA ACADEMY



2ND FLOOR, BANGLADESH SHILPAKALA ACADEMY



3RD FLOOR, BANGLADESH SHILPAKALA ACADEMY

DHAKA ART SUMMIT SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, 6TH FEBRUARY 2016

TIME	OTHER EVENTS	1ST FLOOR	PERFORMANCE/RECEPTION FLOOR	2ND FLOOR
10				
10:30				
11				
11:30				
12				
12:30		Anwar Jalil Shemza book launch, VIP Lounge 12:30pm - 1:30pm	ALL DAY	Film Programme curated by Shanay Jhaveri, 3rd floor auditorium Cluster III, VII, IX 12pm - 3pm
1				
1:30		Chandigarh is in India & Western Artists in India book launch, VIP Lounge 1:30pm - 2:30pm		
2				
2:30		Harvard South Asia Institute presentation, VIP Lounge 2:30pm - 3:30pm		
3				
3:30				Cross - Border Art Histories - Bangladesh and Pakistan Panel 3rd floor auditorium 3:30pm - 4:30pm
4				
4:30				
5				Art Initiatives off the Centre Panel 3rd floor auditorium 5pm - 6pm
5:30				
6				
6:30				
7				
7:30				
8				Film Programme curated by Shanay Jhaveri, 3rd floor auditorium Cluster II 7pm - 9pm
8:30				
9				

SATURDAY, 6TH FEBRUARY 2016

TIME	OTHER EVENTS	1ST FLOOR	PERFORMANCE ROYAL LION 3RD FLOOR	3RD FLOOR	
9:30	* Private Tour of Louis Kahn Parliament Building pre-registration to vip@delhiheartsummit.org essential by January 10th. Space is limited and government clearance is required 9:30am onwards		ALL DAY		
10					
10:30					
11					
11:30		Protecting the Past and Building the Future. Estates Panel, VIP Lounge 11:30am - 12:30pm			Film Programme curated by Shanay Jhaveri, 3rd floor auditorium Cluster: IX, XI 10am - 1:30pm
12					
12:30	Documents 14 Reading of South, VIP Lounge 12:30pm - 1:30pm				
1					
1:30		Take on Art Launch, VIP Lounge 1:30pm - 2:00pm			
2	British Council Poetry Trail, 1st floor, <i>The Missing One</i> 3pm - 2:30pm				
2:30					Collecting South Asian Art in a Non-Western Institutional Context Panel 3rd floor auditorium 2:30pm - 4pm
3					
3:30		Can Culture Counter Panel VIP Lounge 3:30pm - 4:30pm			
4	British Council Poetry Trail, 1st floor, <i>The Missing One</i> 4pm - 4:30pm				
4:30					Navigating the Uneven Terrain of Regional Group Shows: A Field Guide, Panel 3rd floor auditorium 4:30pm - 6pm
5					
5:30					
6		Arpita Singh book launch, VIP Lounge 6pm - 6:30pm			
6:30					
7	British Council Poetry Trail, 1st floor, <i>The Missing One</i> 7pm - 7:30pm			Film Programme curated by Shanay Jhaveri, 3rd floor auditorium Cluster: V, VII 6pm - 9pm	
7:30					
8					
8:30					
9					

SUNDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY 2016

TIME	OTHER EVENTS	1ST FLOOR	PERFORMANCE BY/IN/ON 2ND FLOOR	3RD FLOOR	
9:30	* Architectural highlights of Dhaka tour - pre-registration a must at vip@dhakacartoonistsmit.org Buses will be organised. Space is limited. 9:30am onwards	Critical Writing Ensemble Presentations, the Political Unconsciousness of Art Writing VIP Lounge 10am - 12pm	ALL DAY	Film Programme curated by Shanay Javeri, 3rd floor auditorium Cluster II, V, VII, III, VIII 10am - 4pm	
10					
10:30					
11	* Children's Workshops with VAST Bhutan Bangladeshi Shilpakala Academy ALL DAY	Presentation by Shakuntala Kulkarni in association with the World Bank, VIP Lounge 12:30pm - 1:30pm			
11:30					
12					
12:30					
1					
1:30					
2					
2:30					
3		Critical Writing Ensemble Presentations, the Political Unconsciousness of Art Writing, VIP Lounge 2:30pm - 5pm			
3:30					
4					
4:30					
5					
5:30		Musico Gokonde Book Launch, VIP Lounge 5:30pm - 6:30pm			
6					
6:30					
7					
7:30					
8					
8:30					
9					
				Bangladeshi Architecture Panel, 3rd floor auditorium 4:30pm - 5:30pm	
				Film Programme curated by Shanay Javeri, 3rd floor auditorium Cluster VI, IX, IV 5:30pm - 9pm	

MONDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY 2016

TIME	OTHER EVENTS	1ST FLOOR	PERFORMANCE PAVILION 2ND FLOOR	3RD FLOOR
10				
10:30				
11				
11:30				
12				
12:30	* Children's Workshops with VAST Bhutan Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy 10am - 5pm	Critical Writing Ensemble Presentations, Entangling and Disentangling Printed Matter, VIP Lounge 10:30am - 4pm	10am - 5pm	
1				
1:30				
2				
2:30				
3				Film Programme curated by Shanay Jhaveri, 3rd floor auditorium FULL PROGRAMME ALL DAY
3:30				
4				
4:30				
5				
5:30				
6				
6:30				
7				
7:30				
8				
8:30				
9				

A Primer to Bengal in the Context of South Asia and the Dhaka Art Summit

Bangladesh, officially the People's Republic of Bangladesh, is a country in South Asia, bordered by India and Myanmar at the tip of the Bay of Bengal. Governed as parliamentary republic, Bangladesh embraces a diverse cultural heritage that has a rich and complex history.

With Bangla as the official and most widely spoken language, Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated nations in the world. Over the course of the 20th century, the Bengal region has seen a succession of political changes resulting in shifts of identity, the least of which is reflected the changing national borders and place names (for example, Calcutta to Kolkata, and Dacca then to Dhaka).

Historically, the British Empire began in Bengal when the region was annexed by the British East India Company in 1765, establishing Calcutta (now Kolkata) as the capital of British India. However, by 1905 the first Partition of Bengal took place under the Viceroy of India, separating what he marked as Muslim areas of the East from Hindu areas in the West. These fault-lines ran deep even though East and West Bengal were soon reunited in 1911. Four decades after, with the Partition of India in 1947, the British Empire again divided the region into East and West Bengal, this time leading up to a series of national reconfigurations.

Independence movement

As the independence movement throughout British-controlled India gained momentum during the 20th century, Bengali politicians played an active role in exposing the opposing forces of ethnic and religious nationalism.

As part of the 1947 Partition, the Dominion of Pakistan was formed and included the East Bengal province (renamed in 1956 as East Pakistan, now Bangladesh). In 1952, the government declared Urdu as the national official language, sparking a protest movement among the Bengali-speaking majority.

The Bengali Language Movement advocated for the recognition of Bengali as an official language. On 21st February 1952, the deaths of student demonstrators at the hands of police provoked widespread civil unrest. The movement became a catalyst for Bengali national identity in the region and a forerunner to future Bengali nationalist movements, resulting in the official status of the Bengali language in 1956 and leading to the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971.

After independence, Bangladesh experienced several military coups until the parliamentary system was restored in 1990. The 21st of February is now observed as Language Mother Day and is a national holiday.

Artistic legacy

Bengal's prominence in the South Asia's modern art history goes back a long way, as far back as the late 19th century. By the early 20th century, the Bengal School of Art flourished, becoming an influential art movement that rebelled against academic styles that were made predominant under British rule.

Led by Abanindranath Tagore with the support of E. B. Havell, the principal of the Government School of Art in Calcutta from 1896, and Sister Nivedita, an associate of Swami Vivekananda, the Bengal School moved away from mediums considered Western such as oil painting and subjects rooted in a European tradition that were based on European standards of beauty, representation and technique. It instead looked to ancient murals, Mughal miniature paintings, and indigenous materials for inspiration.

The early 20th century was also a time when print culture in Bengal flourished unlike any other in the subcontinent. Over 2,000 periodical titles have been found to be published just in Bengal in the 19th and early 20th century, some of which proliferated with art illustrations and centre-spreads. Periodicals such as Prabasi (founded in 1901), Modern Review (founded in 1907), and Desh (1933) became harbingers of discussions around art and literature for decades.

In 1919, using the monies from his 1913 Nobel Prize in Literature, Rabindranath Tagore (uncle of Abanindranath) set up a centre for learning in the arts called Kala Bhavan in Santiniketan ("abode of peace"), a small town in West Bengal that is now home to Visva-Bharati University. By holding classes outdoors, Tagore hoped to integrate his school into the community and build a model of economic and cultural renewal.

These values of integrating art and life were also shared by the Bauhaus artists, based on which the two art movements were exhibited together in Calcutta in 1922 at the 14th annual exhibition of the Indian Society of Oriental Art, which was founded by Abanindranath Tagore and his brother Gaganendranath Tagore in 1907. Gaganendranath Tagore was a self-taught artist and illustrator who was able to create his own unique style by drawing from brush techniques from Japan as well as the Western avant-garde with cubism, and this early figure in Modern Indian art was one of the celebrated artists in this 1922 exhibition.¹ It is with these legacies in mind and with encounters such as these, which created a dialogue for the development of culture and exchange of ideas, that Dhaka Art Summit too draws its inspiration.

¹Works by Tagore are non-exportable national treasures of India, the only Tagore works from which curators can borrow from in Bangladesh belong to the Samdani Art Foundation, which explains why a work from this collection takes such prominence within the Dhaka Art Summit.

PRODUCED BY



IN ASSOCIATION WITH



TITLE SPONSOR



NATIONAL OUTREACH PARTNER



PARTNERS



PACE LONDON



MARTIN GOODMAN GALLERY

GALERIE KRINZINGER CONTEMPORARY

JHAVERI

CHEIM & READ

GREYNOISE

NATURE MORTE

LISSON GALLERY

project 88



VADHRA ART GALLERY

EXHIBIT320

Pinar Latta & Chandru Rameshant

experimenter

SAIFERCHANDI FOUNDATION



CREATIVIMEREPORTS

JUNAT ABOUT ARTZ

Avantgarde Slavonic



MASTHEAD



JUNCTURE EXPLORATIONS IN ART & HUMAN RIGHTS

Charles H. Schulz Jr. Center for International Human Rights Studies School

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND



MSR Singapore 2006

Asia Society India Center

ifa Institut für Asienbeziehungen



ArtReview Asia

THE ART NEWSPAPER

artnet

MOUSSE

TAKE

Dibakar Tribuna



canvas

ARTRA

SAFINA RADIO PROJECT

HIMAL

ASIAN ART www.asianartnewspaper.com



MODERATOR

AMRITA JHAVERI

EXHIBITION PARTNER

MERIDIEN DHAKA

TV OUTREACH PARTNER

CHRISTIE'S THE ART PEOPLE

ART INITIATIVE

TELEVISION PARTNER

Bloomberg TV INDIA

EXHIBITION PARTNER



EXHIBITION PARTNER



WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM THE FRANCE CLARE FUND, THE POLISH INSTITUTE AND C&M&S - PORTUGALISE BINAERY CULTS BAL CENTER, NEW DELHI

SUPPORTED BY



Ministry of Cultural Affairs

