

The background features a vertical color gradient from blue at the top to green at the bottom. Scattered throughout are various abstract, organic shapes in shades of blue, red, and green, some with intricate internal patterns.

Dhaka Art Summit

ঢাকা আর্ট সামিট

Seismic Movements

সঞ্চারণ

Bharti Kher
Intermediaries, 2018
Mud, paint, and bamboo armature
Courtesy of the artist and Thailand Biennale

The new sculpture *Yes No* (2020) from the *Intermediaries* series at DAS is made possible through the generosity of Nature Morte, Galerie Perrotin and Samdani Art Foundation

Dhaka Art Summit

Seismic Movements

অঞ্চল

7-15 February 2020

www.dhakaartsummit.org
#DhakaArtSummit2020
#SeismicMovements

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Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high
Where knowledge is free
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments
By narrow domestic walls
Where words come out from the depth of truth
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit
Where the mind is led forward by thee
Into ever-widening thought and action
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

Where the Mind is Without Fear, Rabindranath Tagore



Dhaka Art Summit has grown from an inkling of an idea in 2012 into a globally respected platform five editions later – a platform where we are able to come together and see the world outside of ‘narrow domestic walls’ and to find new ways to connect with each other through the power of art. Rajeeb and I have long been inspired by the work of Rabindranath Tagore (and other Bengali intellectuals) in the way that they were able to share their words and creativity with the world and refused to be seen as inferior to the imperial powers dominating the world they created their work in. Similarly, today – we feel that the art produced in Bangladesh, and also in South and Southeast Asia, Central and South America, Africa, Oceania, the Arab World (i.e. the global majority world – more people live here than in Europe or North America) is incredibly powerful, yet the world lacks enough platforms outside of commercial or soft-power channels to make this work visible to audiences that have so much to learn from it. This is where DAS comes in: together with our team, the artists, curators, scholars, and our partners – we have proudly built a truly public event where anyone can engage with the excellent exhibitions and public programme and feel welcome to ask questions and engage with the ideas through our arts mediation and education initiatives. We work tirelessly to keep this event free and ticketless so that there are no walls of class coming between art and its ability to touch all people. We are proud of all of the talented creative visionaries and scholars who have given their time and unique insight into the world to all of us enjoying this platform in Bangladesh.

‘Ever-widening in thought and action’, as Tagore put it, DAS changes and evolves from edition to edition and we look forward to watching DAS deepen in meaning locally and internationally in the years to come. Rajeeb and I are proud to have founded DAS which is primarily an event for the people of Bangladesh, and we are grateful to the hard work and sacrifices that people made before us to give us the freedom to envision such an initiative in our home country. Our country is celebrating the 100th birth anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who led Bangladesh to freedom and founded the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy which has hosted DAS since its inception, and Centre for Research and Information (CRI), ICT Division, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs are presenting a new look into his journey in its lounge which we hope will inspire other people to take action to make the world a better place.

Best wishes, Nadia
Director, Dhaka Art Summit
Co-Founder and President, Samdani Art Foundation

Dear Visitor,

It has been my pleasure to chair the organising committee of Dhaka Art Summit since its inception, and to see it grow and become more impactful from edition to edition. This is our fifth edition of this globally celebrated research platform, and it is one where we put mobility at the core of our thinking. We wanted to bring people to Bangladesh whose ideas could have deep resonance here, but who might not have otherwise had the opportunity to come to our wonderful country. We have participants from as far as Mali, Zambia, Argentina, Barbados, and New Zealand (naming only a few examples) and many other countries with contexts that resonate with the challenges we face in Bangladesh – and I greatly look forward to seeing what will be born from the incredible meeting of minds that we will experience in February 2020 at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. I would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and our missions abroad for facilitating visas for the participants who come from much more diverse geographies than they have in the past. South Asia remains the core of our platform – but we know that we have much to learn from other regions and we want them to be inspired by what we have built here together in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Dhaka Art Summit is a beautiful example of a private/public partnership and what is possible when private foundations with a public mandate (such as the Samdani Art Foundation) come together with the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, ICT Division and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Culture is an important part of Bangladesh, and the success and energy of DAS and the people who come together to make it possible attests to that. I would like to extend a very special thanks to the art collectors who have very graciously loaned some of their priceless masterpieces to be exhibited at DAS where these exceptional works of art can be seen and admired by the thousands of visitors from home and abroad who will be visiting the exhibition. It is my hope that our community of supporters and collaborators grows stronger with each edition – and that we can continue to host and nurture this important environment of creativity for years to come.

Sincerely, Farooq Sobhan
Chairman, Dhaka Art Summit Organising Committee

A Warm Welcome to the 5th edition of Dhaka Art Summit!

It has been a great honour and privilege to have been working alongside the Samdani Art Foundation since hosting the first DAS in 2012, watching the art and culture of Bangladesh thrive not only in our own country, but all over the world through our many initiatives at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. We look forward to seeing our building come to life as it does every two years in February at DAS through its varied and enthusiastic audience of arts professionals, art lovers, and students from across the full spectrum of Bangladesh's education system. Bangladesh was built through creativity, generosity, hard work, and a commitment to culture, fueled by many layers of collaboration across the country and the world. The success of Dhaka Art Summit can be found through these qualities as well and we could not be more proud of our 5th collaboration with the Samdani Art Foundation to produce this event that is so loved by our people.

Since its inception, the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has striven to promote, and to be involved in different endeavours that highlight the creative work of our country including painting, sculpture, graphic arts, 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 organising workshops, seminars, short-term specialised training, providing financial grants for talented artists, and hosting competitions in the various fields of Fine and Performing arts, we hope to build the academy into a hub for young and old arts and theatre enthusiasts alike. We also hope to have made a significant difference in preserving the enthusiasm for art and culture. Working with DAS has given us the ability to further enrich the international channels of empowering our country's cultural development further.

Best wishes, Liaquat Ali Lucky
Director General, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Dear Reader,

Thank you for being a part of our fifth edition of Dhaka Art Summit, the first one with a title: Seismic Movements. This play on words looks at how the world is moving and how we move the world, also considering the conditions that move us to act. While I am not from Bangladesh, I am moved by its people and all of the challenges they have overcome through commitment, creativity, and a passion for culture – inspiring qualities that you will see all around you as you visit DAS. Bangladesh is a place where you can palpably see what creativity can do, what it can solve, and what is at stake if you just accept things as they are.

I connect with Bangladesh's struggle for language and independence because my family comes from a place called Guam where speaking our native language was banned for generations as part of the strategy of colonial control. I have lived the difficulty of having one's voice drowned out by larger and more powerful narratives, and I am proud that through hard work of the thousands of people who come together to put on DAS, Bangladesh is not a place that can be ignored when it comes to art.

I am skeptical of big global exhibitions; however, DAS is unique in this challenging context in the way that it brings together 300,000+ people to physically cohabit a utopian space where we can ask and attempt to answer difficult questions together. In a time when what we consider to be private conversations in digital space are used to sell us advertising, the importance of convening in person could not be more urgent (to name just one example). I am grateful to Nadia and Rajeeb Samdani for their vision to create this platform for the public to enjoy, they move mountains to make DAS happen and I'm inspired to see how a dream became a purpose, and how it does so much good for so many people. I look forward to seeing DAS continue the incredible journey built up across these five editions. I am proud to see how my closest colleagues at Samdani Art Foundation Sazzad and Ruxmini, Teresa, Nawreen, Tanzila, Mobin, Asifur, Md. Nasim, Adam, and Lucia have grown over this time, and impressed at how a small group of people could become catalysts for the exponential growth in artistic and research projects extending into Bangladesh. Thank you to my entire team (old and new, personal and professional) and all of the artists and curators and writers (past and present) and our growing group of supporters for building the DAS you see today. Thanks for being a part of our movement.

Diana Campbell Betancourt
Chief Curator, Dhaka Art Summit
Artistic Director, Samdani Art Foundation

Thinking at the Edges of Language

Diana Campbell Betancourt

One of the many tactics of colonialism is imposing rules and standards from elsewhere and expecting people with no previous connection to these concepts to adapt their lives to them. In the case of Bangladesh's history, West Pakistan was trying to claim the need to 'purify' Bangla as it originated and evolved from 'Hindu' influences of an ancient 'Sanskrit' language. '...Bengali alphabets are full of idolatry. Each Bengali letter is associated with this or that god or goddess of Hindu Pantheon. Pakistan and Devanagri Script can't co-exist...' said Fazlur Rahman, Central Minister for Education, explaining why it was important to introduce Arabic script in East Bengal in a statement from 27 Dec. 1948.

'Every Bangla Alphabet Narrates a Bengali's life', reads one of the many posters from the 1952 Language Movement in Bangladesh.¹ The Language Movement was seismic. It led to Bangladesh becoming the first country in the modern world whose independence is directly tied to a desire to think, speak, and act in its mother tongue. Every February, most of the country celebrates its victory in overthrowing foreign attempts to control how its people express themselves, embracing the plurality embedded in their culture.²

Language has the ability to programme us and shape how we see and experience the world; we can be different people in different languages. I like thinking at the edges of languages, finding new cognitive possibilities when my brain gets stuck trying to translate something that does not fit into the logic structure of another language.³ Most of the people reading this catalogue and visiting DAS do not speak or read English as their primary language and the texts within this volume were written with this fact in mind. English is a tool that allows us to communicate with each other and provides a portal for non-Bangladeshis to understand our unique context, but it has many limits.

Opening up New Readings into DAS in the Space between English and Bangla

সঞ্চারণ/Seismic Movements is one example of what is possible when thinking across and between languages- where the theme of the show cannot be fully expressed by understanding only the English or the Bangla title.⁴ This brief essay is an attempt to muddy up the clear organisational structure of 'Seismic Movements' by introducing the Bangla concept of সঞ্চারণ (pronounced shon-cha-ron).⁵ A moving stereoscopic view of the exhibition

and the works within it opens up when we consider the meaning embedded in both of the titles and ponder their slight differences.

While Seismic Movements tend to be big, external and very visible, causing land and power structures to quake, সঞ্চারণ is subtler and connotes a continuous flow (in no particular direction) of movement on both micro and macro levels. সঞ্চারণ cannot be contained, and it is never linear. সঞ্চারণ can be applied to blood or emotions circulating within the body, or to the wind outside, or to concepts that move across generations like wisdom. The neural connections made in the process of translation are another form of সঞ্চারণ. The circulation of our visitors through the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy is a form of সঞ্চারণ, as is the ideating process of building DAS as its core concepts develop across editions.

Bangladesh is the country with the most rivers within its borders and their সঞ্চারণ creates the mud, sediment, and soil that transformed into the bricks of Muzharul Islam's architecture and the earth and clay transformed by Adrián Villar Rojas, Bharti Kher, Damián Ortega, Héctor Zamorra, Korakrit Arunanondchai, and Otobong Nkanga in their DAS projects. The dust circulating across the atmosphere speaks to another form of সঞ্চারণ in the work of Elena Damiani. The Hilsa fish navigating across the borders of East and West Bengal would be another form of সঞ্চারণ, as would be the experience of tasting this staple of the Bengali diet and the pursuit of knowledge about this fish by Pratchaya Phinthong and his collaborators Dr. Arnab Biswas and Md. Sajedul Haque. The convergence of scholarly minds considering Modern Art Histories in and Across Africa, South and Southeast Asia (MAHASSA) changes the circulation of knowledge connecting scholars outside of traditional North American or European centres, and can be seen as another form of সঞ্চারণ. The transfer of skills from teachers to students that built the art history of Bangladesh as chronicled in Bishwajit Goswami's exhibition 'Roots' is yet another form of সঞ্চারণ.

Like the earthquakes described in Seismic Movements, the idea of সঞ্চারণ doesn't have a fixed centre. Politics today remind us of the dangers of only paying attention to life in cities, and the works of art in this show speak to experiences across all walks of life, especially those in rural contexts as found in the work of Art Labor, Back Art, Damián Ortega, Gidree Bawlee, Kamruzzaman Shadhin, Mahbubur Rahman, S. M. Sultan, and many other artists in DAS. The connection of culture and agriculture is especially evident across this Summit as artists sow the seeds of ideas, watch them germinate in the research and

production process, and reap and share the results with one of the largest art going publics in the world. Weaving, stitching and sewing are other subthemes found across DAS especially in projects by Art Pro, Gudskul, Taslima Akhter, and Taloi Havini.

Scars, Wounds, and Joints

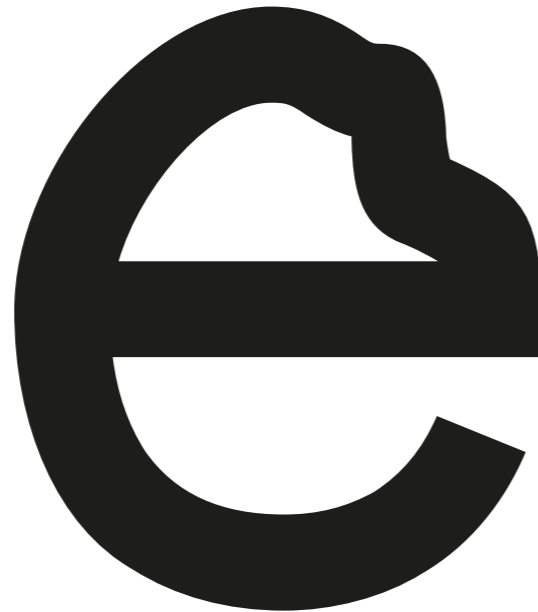
The 'Wounds Series' by Somnath Hore found in the first gallery on the second floor is a moving testimony to the scars of violence that British and Pakistani colonialism left on these lands (connecting deeply to Walter Mignolo's writings on Colonial Wounds and Decolonial Healings). These haunting works on paper also are reminiscent of aerial views of a landscape. The concept of scars and wounds ties together the bodily reading of সঞ্চারণ and the geological reading of 'Seismic Movements'. While scars are reminders of the healing process of the body as it repairs damaged tissue, fault lines and mountains are scars of terrestrial collisions, joints between moving plates. Religions from all over the world reference soul-searching and spiritual journeys to mountains as part of the quest for enlightenment beyond the confines of the human body. Works by Hlubaihu Choudhuri, Karan Shreshta, Liu Chuang, Minam Apang, Nilima Sheikh, Omer Wasim, Sara Sejin Chang, Subash Thebe and Zhou Tao, as well as others speak to this overlay of spiritual and bodily experience found in the mountainous regions connecting East, South, and Southeast Asia known as Zomia, chronicling the violence found in these highly charged locations.

Like most architecture in Bangladesh, DAS also exists on unstable foundations. Our institutional history shows the shifting lines of what is and what is not possible. The American choreographer William Forsythe speaks to the potential for failure as being a catalyst for active forms of thinking. While it can be trying on the patience of our team of collaborators, I would argue that it is the vulnerability, malleability, and instability of DAS that makes it such a powerful site for knowledge and artistic production. Metamorphosis and adaptability are sources of power in contexts such as Bangladesh. We reinvent ourselves in every edition, building on the fertile sediment of ideas accumulating since 2012.

DAS is a kind of joint, a metaphorical fault line connecting diverse histories and allowing for the circulation of ideas and generation of new structures to hold these ideas and histories together. Like fault lines, these ideas are generated through friction, through coming into contact. Coming into contact also allows us to heal and build new forms of solidarity as initiatives before us have done in the past including the Festival of Arts Shiraz-Persepolis (1967-77), The World Festival of Black Arts in Dakar (1966) and FESTAC in Lagos (1977) which have been referenced in past and present DAS editions.

Moving with the Flow

Storytelling is a fluid and vulnerable process, but people cling onto stories like rocks on a cliff in order to find a sense of identity and belonging in the world. It is not an accident that so many works connect to the uncontrollable and multi-directional flow of সঞ্চারণ which allows fact, faith, and fiction to coexist even in contradictory ways. We enter DAS under the watch of a monumental mud goddess by Bharti Kher which is a hybrid form created from two forgotten deities joined in the process of transforming into a snake. This nearly four-metre-tall sculpture was created by a Muslim artisan who makes Hindu goddesses for Bengali rituals, and the earth from which it is formed has seen Animist, Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim faiths thriving on top of it. This secular goddess will disintegrate back into the earth across the course of DAS and disappear once the exhibition is over. All that will remain is a story, and one that you are tasked with telling to keep it alive.



1. Thank you to Muhammad Nafisur Rahman for sharing his research with me which inspired the form of this essay. Thank you to Dr. Zahia Rahmani whose project found on page 41 inspired the English title.

2. While we celebrate the freedom to speak Bangla in Bangladesh, it is also important to note that over forty other mother tongues exist on this land and DAS's ongoing programmes seek to give agency to all people to have the freedom to express themselves in their mother tongues.

3. I am deeply moved by the work and practice of Cecilia Vicuña in the way it generates meaning in the cross-section of Spanish and English, and while she is not exhibited in DAS 2020 encountering her life and work was a seismic movement to articulating the ideas found in this essay.

4. Fraser Muggeridge studio's Graphic Identity for DAS juxtaposes manually printed coloured backgrounds alluding to the movement of platelets and bacteria within the body and a bespoke font of 'shakey text' alluding to earthquakes to create a beautiful visualization of the joint meaning of the two titles.

5. সঞ্চারণ was selected as the joint title for DAS 2020 after extensive whatsapp debates between my assistant curator Ruxmini Reckvana Q Choudhury and our MAHASSA colleagues Nurur Rahman Khan, Munhaned Rahman, and Amena Khanom Sharmin. The title came to life in Hong Kong over a Thai lunch in August 2019 while we were attending the AAA chapter of MAHASSA.

Curatorial Notation

Inspired by the geological reading of the word 'summit' as the top of a mountain, Seismic Movements: Dhaka Art Summit 2020 (DAS 2020) considers the various ruptures that have realigned and continue to shift the face of our spinning planet. Seismic movements do not adhere to statist or nationalist frameworks. They join and split apart tectonics of multiple scales and layers; their epicentres don't privilege historical imperial centres over the so-called peripheries; they can slowly accumulate or violently erupt in an instant. DAS 2020 is a cumulative festival building on the ideas we have been pondering since our first edition in 2012. Like in music, this Summit is arranged into both improvised and organised movements that can be experienced separately, but the complete work requires all of the diverse sounds and rhythms resounding within it to be considered together. It is a sum of many parts that reinforce each other and expand with unplanned trajectories and connections resulting from the energy and vision of our many collaborators and partners.

DAS 2020 touches upon geological movements, colonial movements, independence movements, social movements and feminist futures, spatial movements, the conditions that move us to act and the power that comes with moving collectively. We do not just consider forms of artistic production, but also forms of institutional production that enable artistic practices and pedagogies, generating new vocabularies of social organisation and building better ways to create and live together. What do the stirrings of a movement feel like and how do we learn from the experience of living through one? In the words of Sara Ahmed, a movement requires us to be moved. What might happen when ideas move from inside the exhibition to the larger reality outside? We designed DAS 2020 with this in mind, maintaining a porous barrier between the 'inside' and the 'outside' of the venue. DAS 2020 is about shaking up our understanding of the present and the past, creating opportunities to come together and make and write (art) history from new perspectives, trying to give a voice to the people who are not in the most dominant positions to be heard.

We reach a summit through a journey that pushes our mental and physical limits. We experience ourselves and the world with fresh eyes as obscured vantage points become visible and we feel ourselves grow small as we climb towards the top of a mountain. Could it also be that the mountain, in turn, sees us change in scale as we approach its zenith?

Diana Campbell Betancourt, Chief Curator Dhaka Art Summit
Artistic Director, Sandami Art Foundation
with Ruxmini Reckvana Q Choudhury and Teresa Albor

Geological Movements

We may think of 'land' as fixed but it is constantly shifting: below us through erosion, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes; swirling above us as dust clouds. The earliest signs of life, the impetus of cellular movement, as well as aeons of extinction are inscribed in stone and fossils. Fossil fuels, created from the remains of life from the deep geological past, power much of our way of life and threaten our collective future through the violent process of extracting and burning them. Geological and political ruptures often overlap, and the artists in this movement excavate metaphors to consider our past, present, and future on this planet beyond human-bound paradigms. Their works challenge us to find commonalities and to emerge from this sediment to heal, imagine, design, and build new forms of togetherness. What will coalesce and fossilise our presence on this planet for lifetimes to come?

Adrián Villar Rojas



The Theater of Disappearance (detail), 2017. Floor tiles and blocks of brown marble with incrustations of ammonites and orthocer fossils. Courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery. This work will comprise part of a permanent pavilion as part of the Samdani Art Foundation collection at Srihatta, the Samdani Art Centre and Sculpture Park.

New Mutants is a new immersive installation by Adrián Villar Rojas where visitors enter DAS by walking over a marble floor encrusted with 400-million-year-old ammonite and orthoceras fossils. These now-extinct species of undersea creatures thrived for 300 million years, swimming across the super-ocean Panthalassa and witnessing the creation and breakup of the single continent Pangaea. Paintings of burned-out fireplaces emerge from the rammed-earth walls that rise from the fossil floor, tracing the seismic shift that occurred in the evolution of humanity and our planet when we learned to control fire, invented agriculture, and began to settle and build civilisations. This work serves as a metaphor to think outside of human-bound time, and to consider common ground on which to come together.

Villar Rojas creates site-specific installations using both organic and inorganic materials that undergo change over time. Tied to their exhibiting context, they generate irreproducible experiences relying on a 'parasite-host' relation. His team-based projects that extend over open-ended periods allow him to question the aftermath of the normalised production of art in the Capitalocene era.

b. 1980, Rosario; lives and works nomadically

Elena Damiani

'There is a strange sympathy between the atmospheric particles that float through the sky and the human beings who migrate across the ground and then across the sea. Each body sets the other into motion – a pattern of movement and countermovement.'

Adrian Lahoud, *Climates: Architecture and the Planetary*, 2016.

Elena Damiani has created a collage of watercolour renditions of storming dust particles in the atmosphere as captured by NASA. Several hundred million tonnes of dust unsettle and travel through the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans from deserts to the Caribbean, Central America, and South America. We imagine land to be static, but deforestation, desertification, and climate-change-related storms distribute dust across vast distances in our planet's atmosphere. The handmade Nepalese paper beneath the layers of paint making up this work is a surface that could be read as stone tiles, an aerial view of a desert, or even a microscopic view of human skin.



As the dust settles, 2019–2020. Watercolour on handmade Lokta Barbour grey paper. Commissioned for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Revolver Gallery

Damiani creates installations, objects, and works on paper that focus on the politics of space and memory. She portrays landscapes and geological processes to reinterpret natural stages and their generative processes. Her work draws inspiration from collage techniques and historical science books, while the stone and metal in her sculptures recall the environments she studies and refracts.

b. 1979, Lima; lives and works in Lima

Jonathas de Andrade



Pacifico, 2010. Super8 transferred in HD, 12 min. Courtesy of the artist and Vermelho

Through the process of animating a styrofoam board model with maps and paper, Jonathas de Andrade proposes a fictional geological solution for the political turmoil and violence that normally accompanies changes of borders. A massive earthquake erupts over the Andes, detaching Chile from the South American continent. As a consequence, the sea returns to Bolivia, restoring its lost coastline, Argentina gains coasts with both the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans, and Chile becomes a floating island adrift in the seas. The aesthetic approach of the film allows the artist to touch upon topics such as the notion of truth as an ideological construction and the fabrication of mass commotion/emotion as political artifice.

De Andrade works predominantly with installations, videos, and photo-research. Addressing those overlooked in the dominant cultural narrative of Brazil, the artist ponders on the relationships between different social milieus. In collaboration with labourers, indigenous tribes, the disabled, and others, de Andrade commonly points out the inequality stemming from the discourses of colonialism and neo-imperialism. The artist co-founded the artistic collective A Casa como Convém in 2007.

b. 1982, Maceió; lives and works in Recife

Karan Shrestha

Within Nepal's contained geography, the landscape presents possibilities for adversity to spring from any fissure: be it a decade of revolutionary upheaval, political instability, natural disasters, economic ruptures, repressed social edifices, or perpetual state violence. Through the installation of a three-channel video and an ink drawing, *in these folds* addresses the resulting precariousness that has characterised Nepal's recent past. Incorporating documentary and fiction, Karan Shrestha questions the rhetoric of progress prescribed for paving the way forward and considers how transcendental practices that have endured over time are attempts at grappling with the everyday.

Shrestha's works overlay encounters in physical landscapes on mental maps of people and spaces he comes across so as to examine and restructure notions of the present. His practice – incorporating drawings, sculpture, photography, text, film, and video – seeks to blur the oppositions that build and define our individual and collective identities.



History is Present Tense, 2017. Courtesy of the artist

b. 1985, Kathmandu; lives and works between Kathmandu and Mumbai



Matías Duville



My red way, 2019. Sanguine on paper. Courtesy of the artist and Barro Gallery

Matías Duville's earthy mud-and iron-oxide-infused sanguine drawings call to mind landscapes in transition from natural disasters and also from human interference from the extraction and clearing processes needed for infrastructure development. Similar to these methods, Duville's drawings pulse with expressive brutality, trying to represent what the end of the world might look like both in a geographical and psychological sense. These works are inspired by the mental landscapes that are created inside our heads when we look directly at the sun and close our eyes to recover from its blinding light. The artist takes us along on his journey deep into the mind, trying to connect us with the idea of a universe out of control.

Duville works with objects, videos, and installations, although he predominantly employs drawing. His works evoke scenes of desolation with rarified, timeless atmospheres like those that precede a natural disaster: hurricanes, tsunamis, or situations of abandonment in the forest that act as a dreamlike vision of a wandering explorer, like a mental landscape.

b. 1974, Buenos Aires; lives and works in Buenos Aires

Omer Wasim

In the Heart of Mountains situates us amidst Omer Wasim's journey in the mountains of the Gilgit-Baltistan region of Pakistan, a contested terrain that he scaled with queer friends and friendships. The work, as well as his action, denounces romantic visions and imaginaries of the area perpetuated by the state, and instead relies on charcoal to make visible the mountains as witnesses to state violence, colonial and neo-colonial rule, and as sites where many death-worlds arise. These mountains anticipate their own demise, foreshadowing capital interests in the region that are in diametric opposition to nature, ecology, and people. Queer bodies and community enable this mode of inquiry, becoming, in the process, insurgents that counter state-sponsored redaction and violence. While it also stands alone as an installation, the work also becomes an environment for new readings into the future.



In the Heart of Mountains, 2019. Charcoal on canvas, lacquer, wooden armatures. Commissioned for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist

Wasim is an intermedia artist whose practice queers space, subverting the frames of development and progress that shape human relationships to the city and nature. His work bears witness to the relentless erasure, violence, destruction of our times by staying with queer bodies as they hold space and enact desire.

b. 1988, Karachi; lives and works in Karachi

Otobong Nkanga

Land extends beyond mere soil, territories, and earth. It relates to our connectivity and conflicts in relation to the spaces we live in and how humans try to find solutions through simple gestures of innovation and repair. As relationships with nature and people become affected, how can we find a platform to share, learn, exchange and heal? A series of tables forming a circular structure serve as the basis for an exchange between visitors and a group of people who all have close – professional, caring, vital – relationships with the earth. Otobong Nkanga weaves together strands of *landversations* realised in Beirut, Shanghai, and São Paulo in this project's newest iteration in Dhaka, and her collaborators have included geologists, housing and land rights activists, farmers, and many others who transform the land itself into other realities. What is ordinarily constructed through their contact with land now forms the foundation for new situations of exchange and transmission, activating interpersonal networks that come together in DAS with the power to move the world outside the exhibition.

Nkanga's drawings, installations, photographs, sculptures and performances examine the social and topographical relationship to our everyday environment. By exploring the notion of land as a place of non-belonging, Nkanga provides an alternative meaning to the social ideas of identity. Paradoxically, she brings to light the memories and historical impacts provoked by humans and nature.



Landversation, 2016. Beirut, Lebanon. Site specific installation and conversations, various materials, variable dimensions. Table view with Otobong Nkanga (left) and visitors. Photo: Walid Rashid. Courtesy of the artist and Beirut Art Center

b. 1974, Kano; lives and works in Antwerp

Raphael Hefti

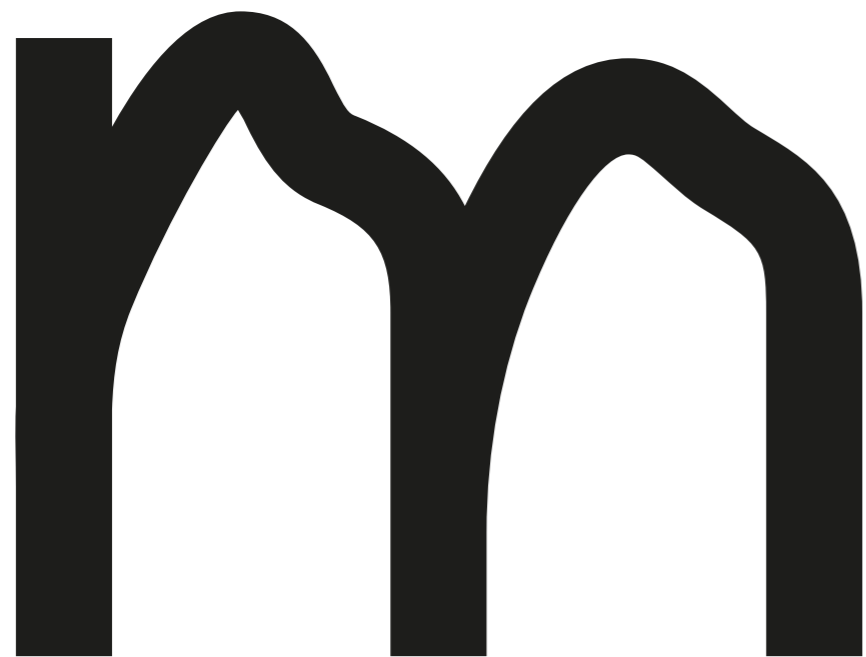


Quick Fix Remix, 2015. Courtesy of the artist and Fiorucci Art Trust. Photo: Giovanna Silva

Raphael Hefti uses the language of material to communicate a fascination with the behaviour of liquid metals, a material history which is part of the epic story of human civilisation across vast geographies. This performance, a spectacle between blunder and precision, is a conversation with the world of heavy industries and iron casting. The artist misappropriates thermite welding processes typically used to repair high-speed train tracks, transforming liquid steel through a blazing landscape of incisions that leaves behind a bed of solidified metal debris. Just as volcanic eruptions make visible the hidden energy properties of the molten rock and liquid metal moving deep within the earth, Hefti's 'artistic alchemy' makes visible the hidden industrial practices and processes that form the machine-made landscapes powering our way of life.

Working across sculpture, installation, painting, photography, and performance, Raphael Hefti explores how humans transform materials in the everyday urban landscape by pushing and testing material limits, while removing these materials from utilitarian obligations. He often works with teams of industry technicians to modify and misapply routine procedures and construction methods to open up new possibilities and unexpected beauty through guided accidents that he documents in his work.

b. 1978, Biel; lives and works in Zurich



Colonial Movements

Ongoing legacies of colonialism establish and maintain conditions of exploitation throughout the global majority world (the world outside of Europe and North America which hosts most of the human population on the planet). Naked capitalism and internationalism, sometimes masked under the guise of religion and development aid, continues to drive networks of power controlling the globe. Revealed through its extractive actions of planting and uprooting indigenous goods and people, colonialism still extends deep into the furthest reaches of the Earth through the seeds of commodities. Artists across generations have made works that reflect how histories of land are intimately entangled/embedded with narratives of hunger, dispossession and ultimately erasure. Colonisation is inscribed in the physical and cultural DNA of the worlds we inhabit, and the artists working across these spheres help us navigate through complex webs of greed and addiction to imagine solidarities for alternative and autonomous futures.

Adebunmi Gbadebo



True Blue: Peter, Peter 2 and Phillis, 2019. Human Black Hair, Cotton, Rice Paper, Denim, Hair Dye, Silk Screen Print. Courtesy of the artist and Claire Oliver Gallery

Adebunmi Gbadebo addresses the concepts of land, memory and erasure in her work. In this new work, sheets of paper constructed with beaten cotton lintens and human hair collected from black barbershops serve as abstracted documentations of genetic histories, embedded in the strands of hair. The dominant blue dye traces Gbadebo's maternal family history to three plantations where her ancestors were forced into slavery. Gbadebo's use of indigo inevitably links her historical inquiry to Bengal, where the plant was grown as a cash crop from around the year of 1777 by the British East India Company. The more recent histories of Bangladesh and the USA (where Gbadebo traces her family's history) are interlinked through the garment industry. The bold, blue colour produced from the indigo plant can serve as a reminder of the vast amount of denim clothing produced in Bangladesh for international export. The conditions under which the clothing worn by western consumers is produced by Bangladeshi workers should not be erased from history.

Using black hair, cotton, rice paper, indigo and sometimes silkscreened photo imagery, Gbadebo creates abstract 'portraits' of her enslaved ancestors. The DNA of those people still exists in these works of art. She perceives hair as a means to position her people and their histories as central to the narratives in her work.

b. 1992, Livingston; lives and works in Newark

Annalee Davis

The last will and testament of Thomas Applewhaite written in August 1816 directed that six years after his death his 'little favourite Girl Slave named Frances shall be manumitted and set free from all and all manner of Servitude and slavery whatsoever.' At the time, Applewhaite was the owner of Walkers – the site where the artist Annalee Davis lives, works, and explores. *F is for Frances* maps Frances' name in a series of seven drawings on ledger pages. The letters forming her name are comprised of 17–18th century sherds found in the soil of former sugarcane fields, suggesting fragments of history understood only in part – usually through the words of the white colonial-settler and most often a male voice. With Frances, another voice becomes audible and visible.



F is for Frances, 2015–2016. Coloured Pencil on Plantation Ledger Pages. Courtesy of the artist

Another voice which is often silenced is that of the post-reproductive woman. In a series of new large-scale drawings titled *Second Spring*, Davis explores women's embarkation into the uncharted territory following the generative stage of life. A woman's body, clothed in dresses of motherwort and Queen Anne's lace, shifts on and off plantation ledger pages, while post-reproductive breasts sprout Queen Anne's lace as part of this profound metamorphosis. Patriarchal narratives confine women's experience to marriage and motherhood, and often frame this powerful transition in misogynistic terms, arousing anxiety, shame, and judgment. These narratives imply that older female bodies are past their 'sell-by date', no longer useful to or valued by society. This series contests these entrenched fictions through an authentic and personal chronicling inspired by encounters with wildness, intuition, and alignment to spirit.



The Second Spring, 2019. Mixed media on paper. Courtesy of the artist

Davis has a hybrid practice as a visual artist, cultural instigator, educator, and writer. With the media of printmaking, painting, installation, and video art, she works at the intersection of biography and history, focusing on post-plantation economies through engaging with a particular landscape on Barbados. Davis has been involved in the founding and co-founding of numerous initiatives, including Fresh Milk (f. 2011), an arts platform and micro-residency programme, Caribbean Linked (f. 2012), an annual residency in Aruba, and Tilting Axis (f. 2015) an independent visual arts platform bridging the Caribbean through annual encounters.

b. 1963, Barbados; lives and works in Barbados

Apnavi Makanji

Sourced from the *Atlas International Larousse Politique et Economique* (1950), the pages making up Apnavi Makanji's collages are records of the treasures of the globe as represented through the eyes of imperial powers in their quest for progress and the modern condition. In fact, these pages of statistics are effectively lists of extractivism. They remain silent on the violence inflicted on the environment, on modern-day slavery, and on the displacement of indigenous communities. The artist has chosen to look at them instead as tools of capitalism and proof of systematic violence. These collages are not only a representation of what has been forgotten, buried, or annihilated, they also stand in for a subconscious that is mutant and diseased. In its soft sensuality and secretions, the work attempts to trigger a visceral memory of a situated environment that existed before it was reduced to highly mobile commodities.



Appropriation Disinformation - Nature and the Body Politic, 2019. Collage on found paper. Courtesy of the artist and Tarq

Makanji works with the media of installation, drawing, and film, producing complex constructs informed by botany, memory, displacement, and environmental urgency. They are interested in exploring the intersection of these concepts within the context of human-engendered climate emergency.

b. 1976, Bombay; lives and works in Geneva

Candice Lin

Candice Lin's works establish a network of connections between historical and contemporary Asian and African diasporas in the Americas, as well as their generational traumas. *Papaver Somniferum* is a tapestry where a person is ravaged by snarling beasts, speaking to the necropolitical horrors of life in the Caribbean for Asian and African workers brought across the seas to grow commodities for imperial consumption. In *The Roots of Industry*, Lin reinterprets an engraving of Bolivian silver mines by Theodor de Bry. The Andean potato was cultivated to feed indigenous miners mining silver and mercury in South America. This silver and the excess potatoes travelled across the sea and fuelled the Industrial Revolution, changing the course of world history. In *The Tea Table*, Lin appropriates an engraving by John Bowles (c. 1710) which was a satire on affluent fashionable ladies and featured a devil lurking under the table as Envy drives Justice and Truth out of a door. In this rendition, Lin draws connections between tea, opium, and sugar by replacing the symbolic figures with images of tea production and opium abuse.



Papaver Somniferum (Tapestry), 2019. Jacquard woven tapestry. Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly

Lin works predominantly with sculpture and video, addressing notions of cultural, gendered, and racial difference, rampant sexualities, and deviant behaviour. Interested in the fluid boundaries between the self and the other, she examines how Western ideologies of the self influence the politics of power within notions of individualism, selfhood, freedom, and difference.

b. 1979, Concord; lives and works in Los Angeles

Dhali Al Mamoon

The history of colonialism is objectively the history of despair. Dhali Al Mamoon's ongoing work searches for the self through the narrative of historically contextualised images, with a nod to the existentialism found in the analysis of every work of art. Our appearance, sartorial/material representation, and constructed sense of self carry the legacies of colonisation; history, memory, and flashes of coincidence prime our perception of the world. In free-play works on paper and canvas, the artist draws in commodities that changed the course of South Asian history under the control of the British East India Company: tea and indigo and spices. Tea and indigo, in both solid and liquid form, correspond to the colours of amber and blue used extensively in the artist's pallet, evoking a sense of melancholy associated with the history of how these materials were misused to exploit people and lands.

Al Mamoon works with drawings, paintings, kinetic sculptures and installations, addressing issues of knowledge, history and identity. Constructing complex experiences, he is interested in deconstructing the collective memory of his homeland of Bangladesh. He focuses on the ways in which colonialism dehumanised, exploited and dislocated people from their own land, culture and tradition, separating them from traditional systems of knowledge.



While They Came, 2017. Tea, indigo, and pencil on paper. Courtesy of the artist

b. 1958, Chandpur; lives and works in Chittagong

Elia Nurvista



Sugar Zucker, 2016-2018. Crystallised sugar, mural. Courtesy of the artist and QAGOMA

Beyond their sparkling surfaces, sugar and jewels are linked by stories of violent exploitation of labour and the environment. From Africa and the Caribbean to Asia, from Europe to the Pacific, the history of sugar is tied to the mass movement of people around the world as part of exploitative plantation economies that fuelled a global demand for its sweet taste. This model of commodity production continues today; the amount of money that producers of commodities make is far removed from the taxes that foreign governments levy on them and from the profits that traders and corporations enjoy as a result of addictive cycles of consumption. Elia Nurvista's gemstone-shaped candy sculptures remind viewers of an underlying bitterness behind the sweet 'taste' that we have grown accustomed to.

Nurvista presents her social research through mixed-media installations, food workshops, and group discussions. Her predominant focus is on the production and distribution of food, and its broader social and historical implications. Nurvista's works explore the intersection between food and commodities, and their relationship to colonialism, economic and political power, and status.

b. 1983, Yogyakarta; lives and works in Yogyakarta

Faiham Ebna Sharif

The *Baganiya* communities of Bangladesh are made up of tea workers who originate from at least ninety different ethnic groups from across South Asia formerly known as British India. While their ethnic and linguistic origins differ, their histories are intertwined as they were forcefully moved as indentured servants to the tea gardens of Sylhet and Chittagong, where they remain to this day. After the partition of British India in 1947 and the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971, these people became citizens of Bangladesh and lost touch with their ancestral homelands. *Cha Chakra* is Faiham Ebna Sharif's research-based work that uses old printed materials, advertisements, historical documents and show the ongoing story of inequity and exploitation behind the second most consumed drink (after water). His research extends into the resistance of the community as it strives to hold onto its traditions in this newly commissioned presentation.



Cha Chakra: Tea Tales of Bangladesh, 2016. Photograph. Courtesy of the artist

Faiham Ebna Sharif is an artist and researcher interested in long-term explorations of subjects such as tea plantations, the film industry of Bangladesh, the Rohingya refugee crisis, HIV patients, climate change, and migration from the micro-scale of the local bus to the meta-scale of humanity. Although Sharif studied international relations, he chose photography as his medium of expression. Sharif collects manuscripts, published primary sources (such as newspapers and other local media), as well as visual records (painting, photography and video) and oral histories parallel to and contributing to his artistic practice.

b. 1985 in Dhaka, lives and works in Dhaka and Uppsala

Gisela McDaniel

Many people are unaware that the United States still holds five inhabited territories from the Caribbean Sea to the Pacific Ocean that fall under the definition of a colony. The power and interests of the US military are given as reasons to deny the people of these colonies the same rights of self-governance that America fought for in the War of Independence in 1776. Gisela McDaniel is a mixed-race Chamorro artist whose DNA carries the complex history of colonisation on the American territory of Guam. Her paintings subvert traditional power relations by allowing the subject to talk back to the viewer through overlaid audio interviews. As evidenced in the works of artists like Paul Gauguin, power dynamics can be extremely problematic between native women and the men colonising their lands, and McDaniel's work pushes back against a primitivist gaze. This haunting new series of portraits provide a portal into the struggle of mixed-race people to find a sense of belonging and to pick a side in conflicted cultural and political battles for autonomy.

McDaniel's work is based on a process of healing from her own sexual trauma while engaging with other female sexual trauma survivors through the practice of portraiture. Interweaving assemblages of audio, oil painting, and motion-sensored technology, she creates pieces that 'come to life' and literally 'talk back' to the viewer, giving agency to the subjects of her paintings.



Only, 2019-2020. Oil on panel, found objects, flowers, resin. Commissioned for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist and private collection

b. 1995, Bellevue; lives and works in Detroit

Hira Nabi

Any attempt to map a history of plant species reveals that it is as migrant and varied, if not more than the human species. Can territorialisation be temporal as well as geographical? *Good Seeds / Bad Seeds* is a series of works thinking through botanical imaginaries and their influence upon nation building. The work traces the crafting of a regional and cultural identity tied up with fabricating *Pakistaniat*. Building upon a collection of archival postage stamps as a site of initial inquiries into marking terrain, cultivating and farming it, extracting from it, hydrating and dehydrating, and designing it in specific ways - I propose an allowing for a set of future possibilities as a way to expand an inclusive, regional identity of cross-pollination and care.



Good Seeds / Bad Seeds, 2019-2020. Relief print. Commissioned for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist

Nabi is a filmmaker and multimedia artist. Her practice moves across research and visual production interrogating the relationship between memory, histories and place. She is currently working on researching cinema houses in urban Pakistan, and on identity-making and cultural production in Lahore through a study of its gardens and botanical influences.

b. 1987, Lahore; lives and works in Lahore

Hlubaishu Chowdhuri



Shape of Map-1, 2017. Acrylic on canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Samdani Art Foundation

The Chittagong Hill Tracts in Southeast Bangladesh are comprised of three districts (Khagrachari, Rangamati and Bandarban) hosting eleven different ethnic communities with over a thousand years of diverse cultural, linguistic, and ethnic histories that differ from those of the majority Bengali population of Bangladesh. Chowdhuri's paintings depict the map of Chattagram (previously Chittagong) division, and forms of figures and objects emerge in the voids of intertwined lines that seem to pulse like veins. In her map series, the artist paints internally conflicted lands. She explores the paradox of forced migration of indigenous people in the face of their non-severable spiritual connections to their lands, stressing the importance of overcoming conflict derived from cultural and ethnic differences in order to find new ways to peacefully coexist.

Chowdhuri works predominantly with painting. As a member of the Marma indigenous community of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, her art is greatly influenced by the region's socio-political instability and cultural history. Chowdhuri's paintings reflect the existential crises of indigenous people over time through motifs drawn from indigenous knitting and craft techniques.

b. 1992, Khagrachhari; lives and works in Chattagram

Kamruzzaman Shadhin

in collaboration with Gidree Bawlee Foundation of Arts

Kamruzzaman Shadhin's collaborative work interweaves strands of history that seem innocently distinct from but are in fact connected to present-day peasant conditions in South Asia. The artist invited ecological migrants residing in his village who moved from the 'jute tracks' of Southern Bangladesh to create a memorial reminding us of how the desire and pursuit of a commodity economy continues to transform the land that we stand on. Seventy giant shikas hang in a formation based upon the Assam Bengal Railway that operated under British India from 1892-1942. Railways were a form of connectivity that displaced people and their ways of life; their construction transformed Bengal's lands from growing food to producing globally desired commodities (jute, indigo, opium).

Shadhin's participatory practice incorporates sculpture, painting, installation, performance, video, and public art interventions. His work maintains a satirical edge, dealing directly with the politics of environmental degradation and destruction and its effects on communities across Bangladesh. Migration, social justice, and local history are recurring themes in his works. He is the founder of the Gidree Bawlee Foundation of Arts (f. 2001) and a founding member of Chhobir Haat (f. 2005).



The Fibrous Souls (production detail), 2018-2020. Jute, cotton thread, brass, clay. Commissioned and Produced by Samdani Art Foundation for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Samdani Art Foundation

b. 1974, Thakurgaon; lives and works in Dhaka and Thakurgaon

Liu Chuang



Bitcoin Mining and Field Recordings of Ethnic Minorities (still), 2018. Three-channel video, 4K, 5.1 surround sound, 40 min. Commissioned for *Cosmopolis* #1.5: *Enlarged Intelligence* with the support of the Mao Jihong Arts Foundation. Courtesy of the artist and Antenna Space

Liu Chuang observes the displacement of indigenous peoples and cultures left in the wake of harvesting massive amounts of energy from hydroelectric dams, connecting historical narratives and stories of material and immaterial profit and loss across Asia via the mountainous region known as Zomia – which extends into the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. The work links political power, the extraction of minerals and energy from deep within the earth, and new currencies seeking to evade centralised national control, moving from the fifth century BCE to present-day China through a mixture of shot and found footage, the narration of fact and fiction, and sound.

Chuang works with found materials, such as window grilles and pulp-fiction books, in addition to video, installation, architecture, and performance. He critically reflects upon life in contemporary China, focusing on its culture of intensive industry and globalisation. The artist is interested in attending to larger socio-political phenomena that often go unnoticed in day-to-day existence.

b. 1978, Hubei; lives and works in Shanghai

Madiha Sikander

Madiha Sikander's *Majuma* ('assemblage' in Urdu) is an installation inspired by the similarities in the practices of miniature painting and Canadian First Nations weaving in terms of their relationship with labour and materiality. Cloves, beads, and microfilaments are woven together to create a transparent and powerfully scented curtain that invites us to consider how the world we experience today was designed by labour and trade routes drawn up by imperial powers. 'Each lozenge refigures how the lines of the Silk Road and the routes of the Spice Trade map the Indian subcontinent, trade routes tracing to the Neolithic and extending to Southern Europe... Africa... and Asia. Each bead recalls the European expropriation of indigenous lands in the Americas and of human beings in the African continent – the "slave trade beads" Europeans used in their dealings with indigenous American groups.'

da Silva, Denise Ferreira. *In the Raw*. e-flux. Accessed November 18, 2019. www.e-flux.com/journal/93/215795/in-the-raw



Majuma (detail), 2017–18. Cloves, monofilament, glass, metal beads. Courtesy of the artist

Sikander works with found objects, such as books, newspaper images, and family photographs, as well as items from flea markets. Her work addresses historical erasure and memory, notably in relation to labour, space, and material. Through repurposing and layering familiar materials, Sikander collapses the different tenses of time and space.

b. 1987, Hyderabad; lives and works between Karachi and Vancouver

Mahbubur Rahman

Unlike individuals, ideas have the potential to become immortal. Since 2004, Mahbubur Rahman's performance, sculpture, and video work has been embodying the popular folk story of the hero Nurul Din from the Rangpur Peasant Rebellion of 1783, specifically drawing references from the late Bangladeshi writer Syed Shamsul. Just as Haq revived Nurul Din as an allegory to fight back against the military rule of the 1980s, Rahman evokes this figure to encourage standing up against the injustices of today.

Rahman created this two-channel video from a performance he realised with Bangladeshi indigo farmers of today, Bihari migrant rickshaw pullers in Kolkata (likened to human horses), and horse riders on the bank of the Padma river in Bangladesh (the same source of water as Kolkata's Ganga river) surrounding the Farakka Barrage that has divided these once continuously flowing waters between India and Bangladesh since 1975. These locations and stories link East and West Bengal via their shared British colonial history; times have changed, but the stories of oppression of the working class persist. Rahman's *Transformation* is a call to rise up, remembering brave figures whose ghosts (that live on through stories) can't rest until justice is served.

Rahman works across painting, video, installation, and performance. He pushes the experience of art beyond visual pleasure, addressing wider social responsibilities in reference to his personal experience of anguish and anxiety in the context of contemporary Bangladesh. He is a co-founder of Britto (f. 2002).



Transformation (still), 2018–2019. Two-Channel HD Video, 14:35 min. Courtesy of the artist

b. 1969, Dhaka; lives and works in Dhaka

Munem Wasif



Sutra, 2019. Silkscreen and pigment print on archival paper. Courtesy of the artist and Project 88

Munem Wasif began visiting Rohingya refugee camps on the Myanmar–Bangladesh border in 2009. These camps have grown exponentially since the violent incidents escalating in 2017 that have caused hundreds of thousands of refugees to flee into Bangladesh. The artist is unable to type the word 'Rohingya' correctly because his computer lacks Burmese language programming; in Myanmar the word 'Rohingya' is expunged from official discourse in favour of the term 'Bengali'. Silkscreened onto a British colonial map, the distorted typography of the word 'Rohingya' hints to Myanmar's denial of the existence of this ethnic group which has been living within its borders for generations.

What can you hold onto when running away to save your life? How can you be, belong, or settle when nobody accepts you as a citizen? How do you legally prove your very existence after decades of systemic violence? *Spring Song* (2016–19) is a work in progress that revolves around objects and archival material found in the camps. Placed against vivid monochromatic backgrounds, these precarious assemblages, decaying documents, and faded photographs convey fragmented memories and feelings of displacement.

Wasif's work takes a humanistic approach, exploring social and political issues of Bangladesh primarily through photography but also video and sound. His works are remarkable for their clarity and depth, while his emphasis on long-term engagement with his subject matter allows for a broader understanding of the sites and cultures of the Bengal region and greater South Asia.

b. 1983, Dhaka; lives and works in Dhaka

Nabil Rahman

Nabil Rahman was born in and currently lives in the tea-district of Northeast Bangladesh, Sylhet; he was raised in New York and has experienced how value and values (mis)translate across these vastly different yet connected contexts. The least expensive cup of tea at Starbucks costs around \$1.75 in the United States, while the daily wage of a tea picker can be less than the equivalent of \$1.25 per day of work. Women sometimes collect more than 25kg of tea in one day, and tea is the second most consumed drink after water. The artist plays the role of facilitator when sharing his privilege with creative individuals working in neighbouring tea gardens, allowing their creativity to bloom in ways not tied to capitalist production, searching for new shared tools of expression.

Rahman's practice archives the industrial present using found objects, mark-making and the written word. Creating ironic references to the histories and languages of abstraction, he investigates its politics by weaving traces of the global flows of material into his work, destabilising the supposed aim of abstraction in search of a *pure form*.



Untitled, 2019. Photo of a Shiva Lingham, a sacred stone of the Hindu religion by Pancham Das, 24, son of a Sadhu in the tea garden. Pancham was unable to continue his studies because ends were getting harder to meet for his father. He is aware of the oppressive system within the tea garden, but argues that the capitalist system outside of the garden isn't any better. Courtesy of the artist

b. 1988, Sylhet; lives and works in Sylhet

Neha Choksi



The American President Travels (East) (detail), 2002 (remade 2019). Installation with wood, bamboo, paint, printed fabric. Courtesy of the artist and Project88

As a study of the possible ecologies of powerful males, this installation visually configures a scratchy and deteriorated archive of the 20th century travels of nine U.S. Presidents to over two dozen eastern nations, both revealing the paper diplomacy conducted through American newspapers and revelling in the comedy of each President filling his predecessor's shoes for the public's family album. A sheen of romantic getaway as well as 'I-scratch-you-if-you-scratch-me' is lent to the many recorded moments through the use of sheer silky fabric, backscratchers, and the form of a massage table.

Working across performance, video, installation, sculpture, and other formats, Choksi disrupts logic by setting up poetic and absurd interventions in the lives of everything – from stone to plant, animal to self, friends to institutions. Embracing a confluence of disciplines, she allows in strands of her intellectual, cultural and social contexts to revisit the entanglements of time, consciousness, and socialisation.

b. 1973, Belleville; lives and works in Los Angeles and Mumbai

Rossella Biscotti

Rossella Biscotti is interested in the power of storytelling and how this can open up a deeper exploration of untraced by history that reveals changing value systems. One of the stories that fascinates her is the story of Clara, a female rhinoceros who was brought to the Netherlands from Bengal in 1741 by a captain of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) along with a large shipment of textiles. While the detailed listings of textiles were declared and can be deduced from the reproduction of the ship's original manifest document reproduced on the wall, Clara was not, suggesting that the captain was trying to profit off her exoticness as a separate source of income from his official VOC duties. Clara toured around Europe for seventeen years. While she is not visible in this official document, her purported scent seeps across the space as an allusion to the fish oil rubbed across her skin on the journey but also how collective memory keeps stories (like Clara's) alive.

An installation made from cast natural rubber embellished with food-colouring and batik-inspired patterns carries Biscotti's interpretations of the powerful female characters in the *Buru Quartet* (1980-88), a series of novels by the late Indonesian author Pramoedya Ananta Toer while he was in prison. On a material level, the first rubber seeds were brought to Indonesia from the Belgian Congo, and batik techniques were exported to Africa via Europe as African Wax Cloth, speaking to the global scale of colonialism. Pramodeya's novels tell the story of nationhood narrated on the bodies of women, whose only inheritable possessions were batik fabric and jewellery. Among the characters is a woman called Surati who deliberately infects herself with smallpox to avoid colonial subjugation as a concubine on a sugar plantation and Princess of Kasiruta who dresses as a man to fight for freedom by night. Biscotti was inspired by the journeys and survival strategies employed by these women to resist the patriarchal colonial regimes they were born into, and imagines their characters in design motifs cast into these seductive floor-based forms.



Princess of Kasiruta (detail), 2019. Natural rubber. Courtesy of the artist and Mor Charpentier. Photo: Jeroen Lavèn

Biscotti describes the constitution of sentient beings as they are, instead of how they may be perceived, using sculpture, images and other materials. Her work explores forgotten or untraced events and the changing value systems they reveal. She explores the individual narratives of those affected by mining, exploitation and confinement, drawing from oral, technical, archival, and field research.



Clara, 2016-2019. Document transfer on wall. Courtesy of Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam. Photo: Kristien Daem

b. 1978, Molfetta; lives and works in Brussels and Rotterdam

Samsul Alam Helal



Disappearing Roots, 2019. Pigment print. Courtesy of the artist

Samsul Alam Helal's series *Disappearing Roots* considers the displacement of indigenous people in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. The Kaptai Dam was built in 1962 as a hydropower source, and it produces about 5% of the total electricity consumed by Bangladesh. However, its creation displaced over 100,000 people (70% Chakma) and also submerged many homes, including the palace of the Chakma king which remains buried deep underneath a lake that is currently frequented by tourists. Globally over 10 million people per year are displaced by World Bank development projects (dams and infrastructure projects); according to a 2019 article on the artist Liu Chuang by Mark Rappolt in *ArtReview*. Using video and photography created through the artist's long-term engagement with the Hill Tract communities, this work captures the remaining traces of ancient ways of life, highlighting the violence of gentrification and the trauma found in submerged symbols of cultural autonomy. 'If even a royal palace can drown, what hope is there for ordinary people?' asks the artist.

Helal works with photography, sound, 3D models, and video to document the experiences of communities that are often part of the working class or a minority. His work explores the identities, dreams, and longings of their individual members. Helal prefers to explore these in a studio set-up, blurring boundaries between documentary photography and fiction.

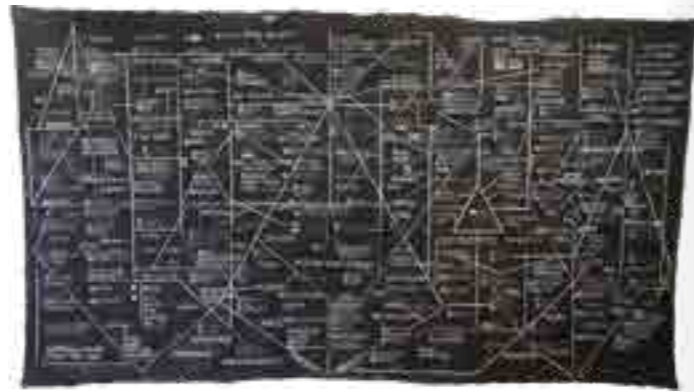
b. 1985, Dhaka; lives and works in Dhaka

Sawangwongse Yawnghwe

In Sawangwongse Yawnghwe's painterly practice, historical and political analyses of Shan State (Burma) are intertwined with personal and familial histories. This work commissioned for DAS contextualises the Shan State heroin-opium complex within opium's long and invisible history of impacting the drawing of borders across vast geographies. Opium traverses not only national borders, but blurs the line between the legal and the illegal.

'Because relationships are informal and regulated in irregular and informal patterns and because the balance of power and coalitions among the powers-that-be are unstable and shifting... no single economic-commercial actor can dominate the field... Entrepreneurial groups... operate with only one goal in mind... making and maximising profit. It is a world where the colour of flags or ideology is not as important as the colour of wealth.'

Chao Tzang Yawnghwe, *The Political Economy of the Opium Trade: Implications for Shan State*, 2003



The Opium Parallax, 2019. Acrylic on canvas. Courtesy of the artist

Yawnghwe works with painting and installation, addressing often fictional archives as a critique of Myanmar's ethnocentric nationalism. Growing up in the context of the country's patterns of military repression and domination, his work intertwines his personal experience with politics. Yawnghwe's family history of political engagement represents a point of crossing of the two.

b. 1971, Shan State; lives and works in Chiang Mai and Zuphen

Shiraz Bayjoo

Shiraz Bayjoo's immersive environment *Pran Kouraz* (meaning 'take courage' in Mauritian Creole) is inspired by his own history in Mauritius, once known as the Maroon Republic, a place created through the will and imagination to escape and overcome slavery and colonial subjugation. The story of the escaped slave becomes a wider metaphor about creating a new world on the back of migration and displacement where hybridity becomes a tool for freedom, survival, and self-transformation in the wake of trauma. Bayjoo worked with a group of eight-year-old migrant students in the UK, asking them to explore their rights as young people and to consider their own stories of courage and overcoming. The children critique the experiences of transmigratory groups today from their experiences of isolation, loss, and displacement stemming from patriarchal colonial legacies, power structures, and relationships that continue to endure and dominate. The resulting conversation, presented in the form of a film, creates a visual metaphor for the multiplicity of pressures facing humanity today.

Bayjoo works with painting, photography, video, installation, and artefacts stored in public and personal archives. His work addresses ideas of nationhood and the exploration of identity tied to the history and legacy of European colonialism. Drawing from a past of complex relationships of migration and trade, he traces the meaning of postcolonial collective identity.



Pran Kouraz, 2019. Mixed fabrics, dye-sublimation ink on canvas. Commissioned by INIVA and Art Night London. Courtesy of the artist and Ed Cross Fine Art

b. 1979, Port Louis; lives and works in London and the Indian Ocean region

Somnath Hore



Wound series, 1979. Pulp Prints. Courtesy of Samdani Art Foundation

'The Famine of 1943, the communal riots of 1946, the devastations of war, all the wounds and wounded I have seen, are engraved on my consciousness', 'Wounds is what I saw everywhere around me. A scarred tree, a road gouged by a truck tyre, a man knifed for no visible or rational reason... The object was eliminated; only wounds remained', reflected Somnath Hore, an artist celebrated in Indian art history who was born in what is now Bangladesh. He transformed hand-made paper into scarred, blistered, pierced, and wounded surfaces reminiscent of human skin in the aftermath of trauma in the highly experimental *Wounds Series* from the 1970s. This body of work speaks not only to the violent regional history that the artist lived through in the build-up and aftermath of the 1947 partition of British India and Bangladesh's subsequent war for independence in 1971, but also to the social scars of division found across our shared human history.

Hore worked to document and reinscribe the suffering working class into public memory, testifying to his important role as an artist-witness in a time of historical crisis. His works were published in various revolutionary publications, notably those of the Communist party. Hore invented and developed various printmaking techniques in addition to working in painting and sculpture. Later on in his career, Hore worked as an educator at multiple arts institutions, such as the Indian College of Art and Draftsmanship (Kolkata), Delhi College of Art, MS University (Baroda) and Kala Bhavan, Visva Bharati.

b. 1921, Chittagong; d. 2006, Santiniketan

Thao Nguyen Phan

Mute Grain (2019) examines the little-discussed 1945 famine in French Indochina during the Japanese occupation (1940–1945), in which over two million people died of starvation, partly due to Japanese demands to grow jute over rice to support their war economy. This three-channel film poetically weaves together oral histories, folk tales, and lyrical chronicles to tell a story that history left behind in Vietnam, creating narratives that sit at the border of fantasy and reality. Beyond her research in Vietnam, Thao Nguyen Phan also consulted Bengali literature in creating the work, notably Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's *Anandamath* (1882), set in the Bengal famine of 1770. Her film revolves around a young woman named Tâm, who becomes a hungry ghost unable to move to the next life, and Ba, who anxiously searches for his sister. Ba ('March') and Tâm ('August') represent the poorest months of the lunar calendar, when farmers once borrowed money and worked side jobs to sustain themselves.

Phan works with painting, video, installation, and what she calls 'theatrical fields', such as performance gesture and moving images. Utilising literature, philosophy, and open poetic spaces conducive to reflection, she highlights unconventional issues arising from history and tradition. This allows her to challenge received ideas and social conventions. In 2012, Phan co-founded the collective Art Labor.



Mute Grain (detail), 2019. Three-channel video, colour, sound, 15:45 min. Commissioned by Sharjah Art Foundation for SB14. Courtesy of the artist

b. 1987, Ho Chi Minh City;
lives and works in Ho Chi Minh City

Yasmin Jahan Nupur



Let Me Get You a Nice Cup of Tea (Frieze LIVE Edition), 2019. Antique furniture, antique tea set, embroidered textiles, tea, performance. Commissioned for DAS 2020 and Frieze LIVE. Courtesy of the artist and Exhibit320, with support from the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem

Tea has impacted cultures and changed the course of world history by bringing people together and tearing them apart: from the Opium Wars and the American Revolution to the mass movement of workers as part of plantation economics; from the fostering of friendships to marriage proposals through the ritual of tea ceremonies. Yasmin Jahan Nupur has arranged a tea party through a performative process. She has harvested the tea at home and, through the act of sharing, brings participants together to think more closely about the origins of this everyday commodity.

Nupur works with sketches, installations, and performances. Her work explores human relationships from various perspectives, reflecting her belief in democratic rights regardless of social position. She explores social discrepancies such as those of women and migrants in South Asia, hoping to support increased understanding between peoples of different backgrounds.

b. 1979, Chittagong; lives and works in Dhaka

Zainul Abedin

Zainul Abedin is considered by many to be the founding father of modern art in Bangladesh. In response to the Great Famine of Bengal (1943) under the British rule of India, he made hundreds of sketches depicting starving victims, serving as a form of visual testimony. His sketches spoke to the atrocities experienced by victims under what was a man-made famine and fuelled the public's will for independence. Throughout his artistic career, Abedin remained true to the representation of the struggles of those most vulnerable in society, notably the rural peasantry. He was actively involved in the Language Movement of 1952 and the Liberation War in 1971. Having witnessed the Bhola Cyclone devastation, he expressed solidarity through his scroll painting *Monpura '70*, drawing parallels between the struggle of the victims of the cyclone and that of the people of Bangladesh. Abedin travelled extensively, depicting those suffering under oppression, often returning to his Famine sketches such as in his series on the people of Palestine.

In addition to being one of the most important artists of his generation, Abedin was also an academic and bureaucrat who helped establish the first art college in Dhaka in 1947, after the partition of British India. He was given the title Shilpacharya ('great teacher of arts') for his contribution towards art education in Bangladesh. Abedin also established the Folk Art Museum and a folk village in Sonargaon in 1975.



Untitled work from the *Famine Sketches* series, 1943. Ink on paper. Courtesy of Rokeya Quader

b. 1914, Kishoreganj; d. 1976, Dacca

Zhou Tao

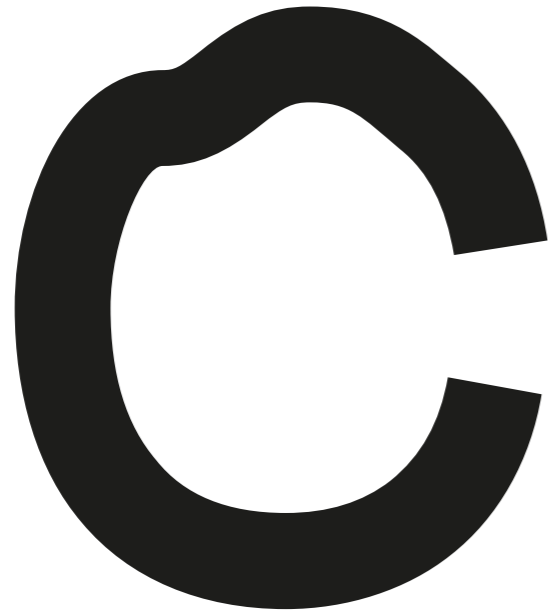


Winter North Summer South (2) (still), 2019. Inkjet prints on paper. From a film produced with support from Samdani Art Foundation and Kadist. Courtesy of the artist and Vitamin Creative Space

Zhou Tao spent nearly two years in an eco-industrial park at the foot of the Kunlun Mountains creating these images that swiftly alternate between natural landscapes of sandstorms, dust clouds, and the changing seasons, and realistic portraits of humans and other species fighting for survival in a state of exception. Human agency is not only manifested in transforming the external world but can also be exercised by preserving an internal, poetic space. Co-commissioned by Times Museum and Council and supported by Samdani Art Foundation and Kadist, his latest work, *North of the Mountain*, was shot with an 8K-resolution camera that is able to capture shades of brightness and darkness beyond the capacity of the human eye. It is the artist's radical attempt to ecologise the body of the filmmaker as well as filmmaking technologies in a place that is largely shut off from the gaze of the world outside.

Zhou Tao predominantly works with video, producing plotless events in a documentary language with a core focus on the sense and sensation of time. His works connect disparate milieus, often on the threshold between the natural and the artificial as a metaphor for the spatial multiplicity of modernism, incomprehensible to the human mind.

b. 1976, Changsha; lives and works in Guangzhou



Independence Movements

The shared energy fuelling movements and building constellations of solidarities across time and diverse geographies defies shallow geopolitical definitions that carve up the world. Artists played a major role in spreading the deep yearning for independence in what is now Bangladesh, as well as elsewhere in the global majority world. Creative individuals with conviction were willing to stake their position and shift the course of history by galvanising people around their work which became the images, words, and songs to rally resistance and transform mere individuals into a collective force to be reckoned with. The artists in this movement chronicle the spirit of resistance and struggle for freedom, shifting from euphoria to disillusionment and back again. Independence is a spirit that needs to be kept alive and moved and nurtured across generations.

Antonio Dias

Antonio Dias is an artist whose transnational experiences coloured his conceptual art practice. Supported by a Brazilian patron, he travelled to Nepal in 1976 'to buy paper for an edition'. He soon discovered that the kind of paper he imagined could not be purchased in a store. Over an intense period of five months in 1976–77, living near the Tibetan border with Nepali artisans, Dias adapted their paper-making process by mixing in plant fibres and materials such as tea, earth, ash and curry. This presentation includes the installation *Do it Yourself: Freedom Territory*, whose words and motifs appear in *Trama* – the edition that brought him to Nepal. *The Illustration of Art / Tool & Work*, also from 1977, marks a shift in his practice. His process became less about the 'illustration of art' (a series from 1971–1978) and more about the physicality and the making of art. This work is a rare example where Dias and his Nepali collaborator's hands both appear in the work, depicted as equals surrounded by the red Nepali clay they coexisted on. Dias returned to these papers to create works for at least a decade, layering further life experience into these remarkable collaborative surfaces that carry traces of experimentation, invention, and reinvention.

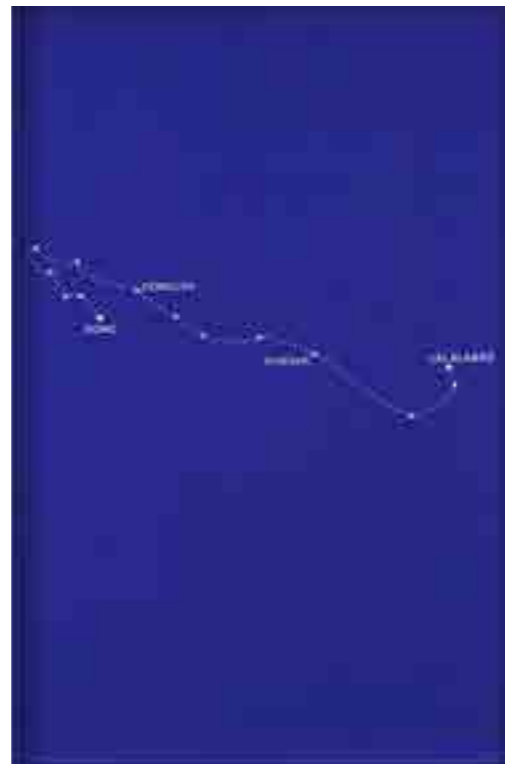


The Illustration of Art / Tool & Work, 1977. Red clay on hand-made Nepalese paper. Courtesy of Geyze Diniz Collection. Photo: Pat Kilgore

Dias was one of the leading figures of 20th-century Brazilian art, working across various media to question the meaning of art and its systems. He left Brazil in 1966 and arrived in Paris in time to participate in the May 1968 protests. Because of his political involvement he was forced to move again; he settled in Milan, where he became the only Latin American member of the Arte Povera movement, and spent his career working across Brazil, Italy, and Germany.

b. 1944, Campina Grande, Paraíba;
d. 2018, Rio de Janeiro

Bouchra Khalili



The Constellations, Fig. 6, 2011. Silkscreen print. Courtesy of the artist and Mor-Charpentier

Bouchra Khalili translates the illegal transnational journeys of individuals into utopian midnight-blue maps, where solidarities between people make visible the waiting, setbacks, force, and compromise found in the condition of statelessness. In her words: 'constellations are by essence reference points located in spaces where landmarks do not exist: the sky and the sea. As maps, they were used for centuries by sailors looking upward to locate themselves below... Constellations are also visual translations of narratives: many of them are based on mythology. Translating these forced illegal journeys into constellations of stars also aims to challenge normative geography in favour of a "human geography" – based on micro-narratives and singular lives. The limits between the sky and the sea blur, eventually suggesting an alternative form of orientation: the landmarks are [no longer] boundaries as established by nation-states, but the path of singular lives, from where the world can be seen. As alternative maps of the world, *The Constellations* suggests a counter-geography, of singular gestures of resistance against arbitrary boundaries.'

Working with film, video, installation, photography, and prints, Khalili's practice articulates language, subjectivity, orality, and geographical explorations. With her work, Khalili investigates strategies and discourses of resistance as elaborated, developed, and narrated by individuals – often members of political minorities.

b. 1975, Casablanca; lives and works in Berlin and Oslo

Kapwani Kiwanga

The Secretary's Suite is an installation that investigates the complexities of gift economies. Presented within a viewing environment inspired by the 1961 office of the United Nations Secretary-General, Kapwani Kiwanga's single-channel video examines the history and tradition of gifted items within the United Nations' art collection. Countries that are members of the UN, including Bangladesh, often donate works of art and objects of cultural value which go on display in public spaces, the Secretary General's office, or are stored away from private view. This work raises questions about how gifts can impact power dynamics in relationships and with differing cultural significance across the course of history.

In her ongoing project, *Flowers for Africa*, Kiwanga researches archival imagery relating to African independence, before consulting with florists to recreate flower arrangements found therein which were presented as gifts to celebrate newly independent nations. Initially fresh, the flowers and foliage are left to run the course of their transient cycle and wilt and dry. In Kiwanga's own words: 'Just as the enthusiasm present during the period of independence has faded, pan-African dreams have been eclipsed by the everyday difficulties of the average African citizen.' Rather like the process of storytelling, the past is momentarily brought back to life for consideration. The selection of African countries in this presentation relates to these countries' entangled histories with South Asia.

Kiwanga's work traces the pervasive impact of power asymmetries by placing historical narratives in dialogue with contemporary realities, the archive, and tomorrow's possibilities. Her work is research-driven, instigated by marginalised or forgotten histories, and articulated across a range of materials and media including sculpture, installation, photography, video, and performance.



The Secretary's Suite (still), 2016. Mixed media film installation. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Jérôme Poggi

b. 1978, Hamilton; lives and works in Paris

Maryam Jafri

Maryam Jafri's *Independence Day 1934–1975* features over 60 archival photos culled from more than 30 archives of the first Independence Day ceremonies of various Asian, Middle Eastern, and African nations. The swearing-in of a new leadership, the signing of relevant documents, the VIP parade, the stadium salute, the first address to the new nation – all are supervised and orchestrated by the departing colonial power. The photographic material is strikingly similar despite disparate geographical and temporal origins, revealing a political model exported from Europe and in the process of being cloned throughout the world. Although a great deal of research has been done on both the colonial and the postcolonial eras, this project aims to introduce a third, surprisingly neglected element into the debate – that 24-hour twilight period in between, when a territory transforms into a nation-state.



Maryam Jafri, *Independence Day 1934–1975* (Installation view from Betonsalon, 2015), 2009–present. Betonsalon. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Aurelien Mole

Jafri works with video, sculpture, photography, and performance, which act as a support for her research-based, conceptual practice. Her works address and question the cultural and visual representations of history, politics, and economics, such as the politics of food production and consumption, the highly coded performance rituals of nascent nation-states, and cultural memory and copyright law.

b. 1972, Karachi; lives and works in Copenhagen and New York

Murtaja Baseer

How does a living artist share their historically important work when the person keeping it for decades is not willing share it publicly in exhibitions or publications? Murtaja Baseer created a powerful series of drawings between 1971 and 1972 in Dhaka and in Paris, depicting the Pakistani military as prehistoric figures towering with physical might over Bengali people. The work violently alludes to the wartime atrocities of famine and rape as well as the colonial efforts to subjugate the Bengali language. Baseer first began these dinosaur drawings for mass dissemination in East Pakistani newspapers before the Liberation War broke out. Now 88 years old, the artist is working with archival material and a younger generation of artists to reimagine this series of work as a mural for all to see at the entrance of DAS, emblazoning it in public memory.



Sketch on pro-liberation of Bangladesh from Pakistan used as the cover of English language magazine, *The Express*. Published by Zahir Rahman in 1971. Courtesy of the artist

Murtaja Baseer is known for his abstract-realist paintings reflecting his daily experience of Bengal. In 1967, he started *Wall* series, his first step towards abstraction, which depicted the entropy and layers of textures and colours on the walls of old Dhaka, a reflection on the society under the dictatorship of Ayub Khan (1958-1969). He actively participated in the Language Movement of 1952 and pre-liberation war demonstrations. He was sent to jail throughout the East Pakistani period for his leftist political views and later left for Paris. He demonstrated his solidarity with the Liberation Movement through his work by changing the spelling of his name from Murtaza Bashir to Murtaja Baseer, adjusting the letters to suit the Bengali language. Baseer is also a writer, poet, numismatist, and acted as an academic at the University of Chittagong until 1998.

b. 1932, Dacca; Lives and works in Dhaka

Pratchaya Phinthong



Waiting for Hilsa, 2019. Colour film. Commissioned and produced by Samdani Art Foundation for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist, gb agency, BANGKOK CITYCITY, and Samdani Art Foundation

Stories of the Hilsa fish and its migration across salty and sweet waters have been inscribed in South Asian culture for centuries as they historically swam from the Bay of Bengal up the Padma river and into the Ganges. In 1975 the Farakka Barrage (dam) was completed on the Indian side of the Bangladesh-India border, disrupting this migration. Pratchaya Phinthong draws a mental map of this cross-border conflictual reality, combining photos taken at the Farakka Barrage, reconstructed images, books, and objects – taking into consideration geopolitics, science, spirituality, and human relationships. Using Bangladesh's 'national fish', the artist metaphorically examines nation-state powers, but also presents to us an example of water as a source of life and the ability of sensations such as taste to transcend ideas relating to national identity.

Phinthong creates situations without predetermined forms that rely on an element of viewer participation with the aim of creating a shared experience. He addresses financial fluctuations, media alarmism, and the global labour market, commonly employing them as metaphors for human behaviour. Interested in creating dialogue, he often juxtaposes different social, economic, or geographical systems.

b. 1974, Ubon Ratchathani; lives and works in Bangkok

Rashid Talukder

Fed up with being oppressed linguistically, economically, and culturally under the rule of West Pakistan (1947-1971), masses of people in what is now Bangladesh rallied in support of an independent sovereign country. People coming from all walks of life engaged in protests finally leading to the liberation war. This bloody war was catalysed when West Pakistan refused to hand over power to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1971, despite his having received the majority of the democratic votes in general election of Pakistan. Rashid Talukder dedicated himself to capturing the mass revolution of the East Pakistani people and their fight to maintain freedom as a newly independent nation. His images of empowered female activists, artists (including Murtaja Baseer whose renditions of resistance and independence are installed near this work) and students who participated in the making of Bangladesh greet visitors at the entrance of DAS, grounding us in the history of public assembly in Bangladesh that makes the Summit possible.



Arms drill by women members of the Chatro Union (students union) 1st March, 1971, 1971/2010. Inkjet print. Courtesy of Drik Picture Library

Rashid Talukder was a photojournalist whose images represent a significant contribution to the collective memory of Bangladesh. Among many other defining events in the history of the nation, he documented the struggles of East Pakistan in the 1960s that led to the liberation war and the formation of Bangladesh. His photographs immortalise mass uprisings, resistance movements, and the participants, of whom many were killed by the Pakistani army. Talukder also photographed artists, highlighting their role in the liberation. As a photojournalist, he worked at the *Daily Sangbad* and *The Daily Ittefaq* successively, reaching wide audiences. Dedicated to expanding the field of photojournalism in Bangladesh, he founded the Bangladesh Photo Journalists' Association in 1972.

b. 1939, Pargana; d. 2011, Dhaka

S. M. Sultan



First Plantation sketch, c. 1976. Ink on brown paper. Courtesy of Farooq Sobhan

While South Asian art history describes him as a landscape painter, S.M. Sultan is remembered in Bangladesh for his energetic paintings of strong farmers made after 1975. These large-scale paintings, primarily made with natural pigments on unprimed jute canvases, celebrate the strength of Bengali peasants, both male and female, in their struggle against colonial and ecological disasters. Famine had been plaguing the country from the era of the British Raj until just the year before Sultan first painted these icons of physical might. In this context, his depiction of the weak and downtrodden as invincible forces growing the future of Bangladesh can therefore be seen as subversive.

After travelling extensively as a celebrated artist both internationally and within South Asia, Sultan retreated from urban life, moving to his home village of Narail, where he founded the Shishu Shwarga art school. His devotion to rural art education has had a lasting legacy, inspiring many initiatives to promote personal growth outside of urban centres through art. Sultan's activities highlight the importance of rural culture in the collective identity of Bangladesh.

b. 1923, Narail; d. 1994, Jessore

Tuan Andrew Nguyen



Solidarities Between the Reincarnated, 2019. Digital pigment print on Hahnemühle paper and graphite on paper. Courtesy of the artist and James Cohan Gallery

Solidarities Between the Reincarnated interrogates the place of the archive document in a personal re-appropriation of history at the crossroads between echoes that persist amidst institutional amnesia and gaps in transmission within collective memory. At its core, this project considers the movement of people through (post-)colonial violence and the obscuring of its legacy in the context of France's use of colonial troops in global and colonial conflicts and of communities born from it. Tuan Andrew Nguyen offers imagination and creation as ways in which to connect the gaps and fulfil a desire for connection through imagined lines of solidarity whose absence in the historical canon are brought to clash against expanded possibilities for the means by which we can remember.

Tuan Andrew Nguyen's practice explores strategies of political resistance enacted through counter-memory and post-memory. Extracting and re-working narratives via history and supernaturalisms is an essential part of Nguyen's video works and sculptures where fact and fiction are both held accountable. He initiated The Propeller Group (f. 2006), a platform for collectivity that situates themselves between an art collective and an advertising company.

b. 1976, Sai Gon; lives and works in Ho Chi Minh City

Seismography of Struggles: Towards a Global History of Critical and Cultural Journals T1

Dr. Zahia Rahmani

b. 1962, Les Attouchs; lives and works in Paris and Heilles

This project was produced by INHA



Seismography of Struggles: Towards a Global History of Critical and Cultural Journals (installation image from RAW Material Company, 2018), 2017. Video and sound installation, 59 min. Courtesy of INHA, Paris

Seismography of Struggles is an inventory of non-European critical and cultural journals, including those from the African, Indian, Caribbean, Asian, and South American diaspora, produced in the wake of the revolutionary movements of the end of the 18th century up to the watershed year of 1989. The project is presented as an installation consisting of two films made up of montages of images from critical and cultural journals produced on different continents, and a third, which is a collection of historical manifesto texts from the aftermath of the Haitian revolution until the fall of the Berlin Wall. Covers, texts and portraits of founders, language and discourses present a long continuum of graphical inventions, including some 800 documents accompanied by an original musical composition produced by Jean-Jacques Palix. Figures of men and women appear, major intellectuals, militants, activists, writers, artists: authors of literary, poetic, visual and political texts. They made a mark on their era and beyond. This project helps to see, read and understand a particular writing of the history of the world outside of a Eurocentric lens. This history was not carried out in the margins or the periphery as has been said, but over a very wide territorial

distance where struggles were shared over time despite a perceived lack of geographic connectivity.

The sound and visual work included here reflects populations who have experienced colonialism, practices of slavery, Apartheid, and genocide. Also included are works from others who experienced violent dictatorships as well as brutal political and cultural convulsions. The struggle against slavery is at the root of many critical and cultural journals. Colonialism impacted the social and cultural cohesion of a number of communities and was also fought against in both writing and gesture by constantly renewing the modalities of political action.

In the 18th century, the American Revolution failed to put an end to slavery and to the dispossession of Native Americans. The abolitionist drive was principally nourished by maroonage, a method of resistance and resettlement by African Americans, especially by former slaves who escaped to the Americas and formed independent settlements. This began as early as the 16th century, first in Africa, spreading to the Mascarene Islands, then

to the Americas and the West Indies, through its clandestine political and artistic practices – inaugurating a practice of singing, poetry, and dance that continues to this day – and, later, through its narratives and texts. Very few materials from that era have survived and the rare few that exist are hard to access. Yet, it is in them that a model of critical resistance was born and realised in various media, as well as in cloth, wood, papers, and a variety of signs and drawings. The equivalent practice in Europe was Samizdat, which involved the clandestine copying and distribution of literature banned by the state, especially formerly in the communist countries of eastern Europe. Samizdat was produced underground by Jews to fight against oppression. But all of these precarious practices have withered over time.

The journals chronicled in this project constantly affirm their thwarted ambition for independence; as a whole, they are made up of singular voices from bold writers who are drawn to renewed political and cultural prospects. The oldest material evidence of this eminently modern exercise is *L'Abeille Haytienne*, a critical journal that was founded on the island of Haiti in 1817. The journal expresses the constant desire for emancipation. Christopher Columbus landed in Haiti in December 1492 and named it Hispaniola. The island later became a French territory and was renamed Dominica and, over time, more than 400,000 slaves live there and were subjected to France's ferocious rule. C.L.R. James noted that, in 1789, this territory alone accounted for more than two thirds of French foreign trade. In 1804, the revolt of subjugated populations gave rise to the birth of a small independent state of Haiti. Even though this cause was won, the struggles continued.

For over two centuries, print media has been a space that has accommodated varied experiences. Born out of a sense of urgency in response to colonialism, journals have aligned with a critical, political, aesthetic, poetic, and literary ambitions and helped sustain graphical and scriptural creativity. They have appeared with regularity in the struggles that women and men have waged for their emancipation. Consisting of formal singularities and political objectives that support human communities and their aspirations, the journal, this fragile object, often pulled together difficult material that was motivated by noble causes and the determination of committed authors. The journal reveals a rare aesthetic power. In this all-digital era, we must re-establish and qualify its formal, aesthetic, and political function on a global scale.

Zahia Rahmani is one of France's leading art historians and writers of fiction, memoirs, and cultural criticism. Rahmani curated *Made in Algeria, genealogy of a territory* (2016), dedicated to the role of cartography in the colonial expansion. Rahmani founded the *Global Art Prospective* (f. 2015), a collective of young researchers and actors within the art scene who are specialists in non-European territorial and cultural spaces.

Social Movements and Feminist Futures

What does an enfranchised future look like? Since the inception of the nation-state, not everyone has been considered a citizen with rights to protect. Throughout the world, the disenfranchised including peoples of colour, indigenous peoples, and people of diverse sexual and gender orientation, continue to fight for spaces to endure, imagining how and when their security, their representation in and of the world is recognised. The artists in this movement employ fantasy and poetry to imagine territories that emancipate them from the everyday violence of capitalism, patriarchy, and political/religious fundamentalism. These worlds might exist in outer space, on the ocean floor, at the poles of the planet, or they may emerge from hiding places between the lines that seemingly restrict and foreclose uncertain histories.

Adriana Bustos

Adriana Bustos's *Vision Machine* project poses questions about what we see, how we see it, and how vision can reinforce or dismantle the narratives which underlie systems of oppression. Two large maps – representing polarised views yet identical in structure – depict the constellations as they appeared in the skies on day one of month one of the Christian era. The names of stars have been replaced by words and concepts which act as a guide to the drawings around them. One of the maps quotes historical images depicting acts of patriarchal violence. They are rendered in red, and when seen through a filter positioned in front of the work they fade away and our gaze is instead drawn to the images in the opposite map depicting known and unknown heroines as well as references to repressed practices and events associated with women. This commission for DAS extends the artist's research into the feminist histories of South Asia.



Official Territory (From the *Vision Machine* series), 2019. Acrylic, graphite, and silver leaf on canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Sharjah Art Foundation

Bustos works with photography, video, performance, and drawing, addressing concepts drawn from anthropology, history, science, popular culture, fiction, biographical writings, and academic and intuitive knowledge. Her works act as arenas of intersecting methodological and representational systems that challenge global histories, specifically concerning Latin America.

b. 1965, Córdoba; lives and works in Buenos Aires

Bharti Kher



Intermediaries, 2018. Mud, paint, and bamboo armature. Courtesy of the artist, Thailand Biennale, Nature Morte and Perrotin

Bharti Kher's *Intermediaries* series invites us to consider a transitional space in the present – somewhere between truth and reality. This notion of the go-between or medium fascinates Kher, often resulting in unlikely pairings becoming hybrids, often half-female forms such as these women in the process of becoming snakes in this newly commissioned project for DAS. Made by traditional idol makers, Kher's painted mud and clay sculpture rises from the earth and will return to it through the natural process of entropy, speaking to the many layers of religions and cultures that have existed on the land that is now Bangladesh. Her work reminds us that there are multiple selves within us and that we are in a constant state of transformation.

Kher's way of working is radically heterogeneous, encompassing painting, sculpture, text, and installation. Central themes are the notion of the self as formed by multiple and interlocking relationships with human and animal bodies, places, and readymade objects. The body, a central element to her work, is one of the many tools she uses to transform metaphysical narratives into forms of hybridity.

b. 1969, London; lives and works in New Delhi

Chitra Ganesh

Using printmaking, video, installation, and sculpture, Chitra Ganesh unpacks gender and power in a futurist imaginary inspired by the utopian, feminist, sci-fi novella *Sultana's Dream* (1905) by Bengali author and social reformer Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain. In the words of the artist, the project 'draws on Hossain's vibrant imagery, translating a story written in verse into a visual grammar that connects with problems that shape 21st-century life: apocalyptic environmental disaster, the disturbing persistence of gender-based inequality, the power of the wealthy few against the economic struggles of the majority, and ongoing geopolitical conflicts that cause widespread death and suffering. These works comment on this fraught moment in world history, demonstrating the enduring relevance of feminist utopian imaginaries in offering an invaluable means of envisioning a more just world.' Ganesh met with Bangladeshi artisans and architects as well as members of the broader queer and trans community of Dhaka in the process of creating this commission for DAS. Their open process of sharing knowhow challenges received notions of how labour is gendered and organised within patriarchal structures.

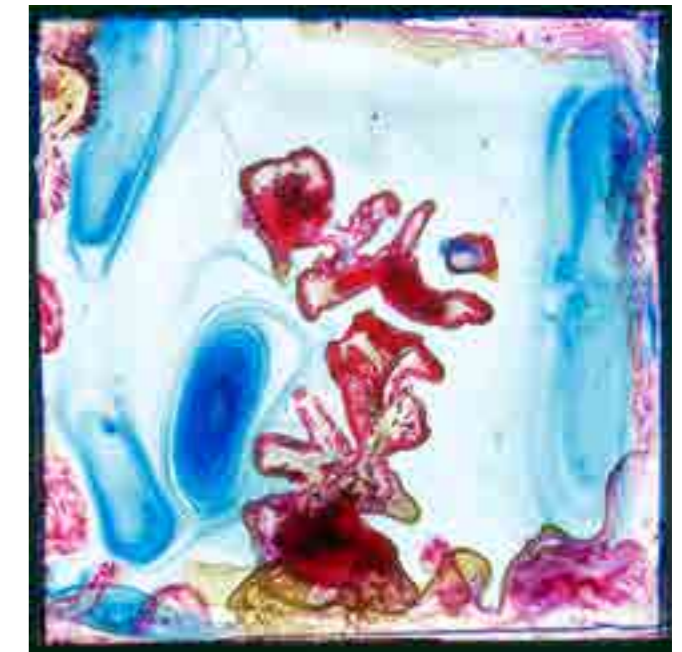
Ganesh's work draws from and deconstructs historical and mythological texts to queer the future of the iconic female figure. Her pictorial language is inspired by surrealism, expressionism, and South Asian visual culture, such as Kalighat painting and ACK comics.



Installation image from *Her garden, a mirror* at The Kitchen NY, 2018. Courtesy of the artist and The Kitchen

b. 1975, Brooklyn, New York; lives and works in Brooklyn

Edgar Cleijne and Ellen Gallagher



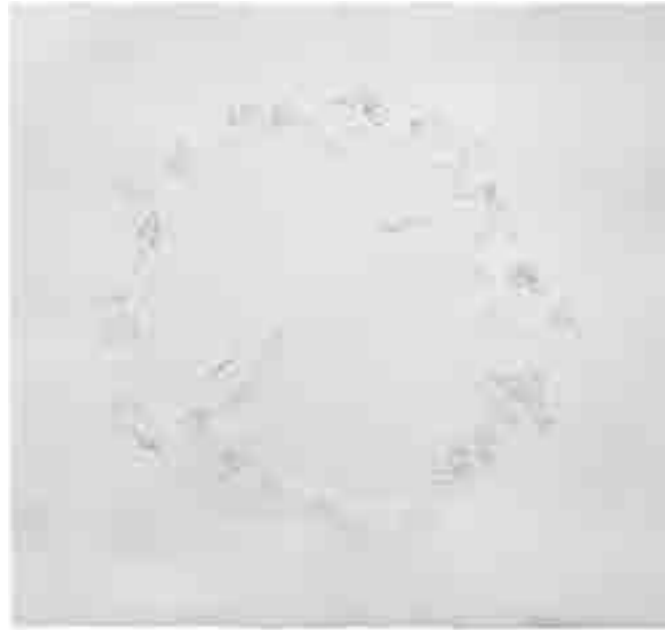
Osedax, 2010. 16 mm film projection, Hand-painted slide projection. Music: 'Message From A Black Man' by The Whatnauts, 1970 (A&I Records). Courtesy of the artists and Gagosian Gallery

The collaborative film installation *Osedax* is named after a new species of bone-devouring worm discovered around the time this work was made. The discovery inspired Edgar Cleijne and Ellen Gallagher to draw parallels between science fiction and hard science protocols, focusing on transformation processes of physical matter where you think you see one thing, but it turns out to be completely different. The work is based on 'whale fall', the scientific term for dead whales that have fallen to the ocean floor and are consumed by scavengers. The work relies on antique film technology (16 mm and synced slide projectors), but the artists also use modern 3D animation technology to draw into the film, weaving between watery passages and creating a portal into enchanting worlds populated with micro-organisms and submarine life forms and mythical stories of the African diaspora.

Edgar Cleijne is a Dutch artist predominantly working in photography and film. Merging discordant threads of analogue and digital imaging and sound, Cleijne looks at the effects of the human-engendered climate emergency in the crossing points of culture and nature. See page 46 for Ellen Gallagher.

b. 1965, Eindhoven; lives and works in Rotterdam and New York. b. 1965, Providence, Rhode Island; lives and works in New York and Rotterdam

Ellen Gallagher



Watery Ecstatic (RA 18h 35m 37.73s D37° 22' 31.12"), 2017. Cut Paper. Courtesy of the artist and Samdani Art Foundation

Ellen Gallagher's *Water Ecstatic* series imagines life as fluid: from our early days as cells that develop into foetuses within amniotic sacs in our pregnant mothers to the imaginary underwater world of Drexciya. In this myth, created by a Detroit-based electronic band of the same name, children born from pregnant African slaves thrown overboard during their passage across the Atlantic Ocean have gills and webbed feet and are therefore able to thrive underwater without the need to come up for air in the oppressive racist world above. Drexciya's world started out on the ocean floor and sailed into the cosmos when the group bought the naming rights to a Drexciya star, whose celestial address is referenced in the title of this work. Gallagher relates her labour-intensive cut-paper process on bright white paper to scrimshaw (illustrative carvings primarily made on whalebones and ivory). The intricate forms that she carves into paper of botanical and marine life growing from African masks conjure a utopian realm, adjacent to a horrific one, that can only exist in the realm of fantasy.

Gallagher's work comprises painting, film, cut and layered paper, and intricate combinations of the three. Through accretion, erasure, extraction, and synthesis, she counters static representations of race and nation, traversing geographies and histories. The eclipse of the African body into American blackface minstrelsy informs Gallagher's investigations into the violence embedded within the history of abstraction.

b. 1965, Providence, Rhode Island; lives and works in New York and Rotterdam

Héctor Zamora

Movimientos Emisores de Existencia (Existence-emitting Movements) is an action in which a group of women walk directly on an installation comprised of hundreds of raw clay vessels in different shapes and sizes inspired by traditional ceramic traditions of Bangladesh. Most cultures, including those of the artist's native Mexico as well as Bangladesh, perpetuate the iconic image of a woman bearing a vessel on her head to transport water or food; a symbol of the hard domestic labour weighing down women in society. Héctor Zamora disrupts the order of things by placing the vessel not upon the women's heads, but rather beneath their feet. By inverting the equation, what occurs is a shared space of liberation where women can turn the tide of patriarchy and recover pleasure in their lives.



Movimientos Emisores de Existencia (Performance view), 2019. Courtesy of the artist and Labor and Otazu Foundation

Zamora uses materials that resonate with the location of his chosen site, such as terracotta and bricks that allow him to question and engage with institutional structures. He often operates in dialogue with local communities, which allows him to produce ephemeral site-specific works that highlight social, political, and historical issues specific to their context.

b. 1974, Mexico City; lives and works in Lisbon

Himali Singh Soin



we are opposite like that polar futurisms (still), 2017-present. Multi-channel video. Courtesy of the artist

we are opposite like that is a magic-realist tale from the high Arctic circle, told from the nonhuman perspective of an elder that has witnessed deep time: the ice. Shown in an installation format for the first time, Himali Singh Soin's videos recount the 19th-century anxiety of an imminent ice age and illumine the hubris of the abandoned township of Ny London, where British extractionists mined marble that turned to dust when the permafrost evaporated. An alien figure, part-cyborg, part-vessel of ancient feminine knowledge, explores the blank, oblivious whiteness, foraging for decolonial possibilities in a landscape of receding glaciers. Inspired by field recordings, an original score for a string quartet creates an ethereal soundscape coded with temperature variances and latitudes and longitudes from the field. *we are opposite like that* beckons the ghosts hidden in landscapes and turns them into echoes, listening in on the resonances of potential futures.

Soin works across text, performance, and moving image. She utilises metaphors from the natural environment to construct speculative cosmologies that reveal nonlinear entanglements between human and nonhuman life. Her poetic methodology seeks inspiration from the ancient Stoics and contemporary philosophy to explore alchemical ways of knowing and the loss inherent in language.

b. 1987, New Delhi; lives and works between London and New Delhi

Huma Bhabha

Intense in their presence, Huma Bhabha's works aggressively attract the viewer by layering visual textures from across the many landscapes (real and imagined) that she has inhabited, from rural New York to Karachi to cinemas projecting horror and science fiction movies. She found in her research that illustrators of sci-fi movies and comic books used African masks and imagery from other cultures to develop their characters. According to the artist, the issues that sci-fi deals with – such as the state of the world, the future, and the fate of human beings – closely parallel her own interests as she explores the global as local and globalisation as the new colonialism. She sees these themes as 'eternal because as human beings we haven't been able to get beyond them.'^{*} Bhabha's alien forms emerging from photographic paper, cork, and styrofoam suggest a world beyond our human limitations.



Cowboys and Angels, 2018. Cork, styrofoam, acrylic paint, oil stick. Courtesy of the artist and Samdani Art Foundation

Bhabha's work addresses themes of colonialism, war, displacement, and memories of home. Using found materials such as styrofoam, clay, construction scraps, and cork, she creates haunting human figures that hover between abstraction and figuration, and include references to science fiction, horror films, tribal art, religious reliquary, and modernist sculpture.

^{*} Steel Stillman, *In the Studio: Huma Bhabha*, Art in America, May 15, 2018, www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-features/magazines/huma-bhabha

b. 1962, Karachi; lives and works in Poughkeepsie

Marzia Farhana



Sovereignty to Nature (detail), 2019–2020. Mixed media. Courtesy of the artist and Samdani Art Foundation

We live in a man-made world; the discrimination against women and nature on this planet is a part of the machinery behind its violent destruction. Marzia Farhana's DAS commission *Sovereignty to Nature* addresses this discrimination from an eco-feminist perspective. Situating her subject matter in Bangladesh, a nation among the world's most heavily affected by environmental destruction, with less than five per cent of its forest cover remaining, Farhana traces the current situation to the male invention of capitalism that subjugates nature to a rational economic calculus. Divided into three individual paintings signifying collapsed bodies in an apocalyptic world, elements such as machinery parts, toys, every-day ordinary materials, domestic materials and printed images tell the story of the destruction of nature and the consequential suffering of women and the planet. Farhana invites the viewer to call for a radical restructuring of human sovereignty, where all living and non-living inhabitants of our planet are included.

Farhana works with several media including painting, installation, and video. Her practice is time-and-space based, facilitating collaborations, participation and reinforcing the possibility of co-authorship on works of art that reinvent empathy. Farhana has recently co-authored works with a government school in Bangladesh, as well as with local communities in Kochi. For her, art is an 'act of resistance' to overcome the violence committed by the domain of the hegemonic society.

b. 1985, Dhaka; lives and works in Dhaka

Nilima Sheikh

'Immediate trauma finds historic/mythic prototypes. Dire times call for apocalyptic vocabularies', reflects Nilima Sheikh on the tragedies long-plaguing Kashmir, the epicentre of the destruction left in the wake of the British partition of India and exacerbated by rising Indian nationalism. The work takes the form of a narrative scroll that immerses the viewer in its representation of mourning, loss, and absence. As in life, song, and performance, so too in painting we look for a form to express and release what can seem inexpressible. In many cultures of mourning, women participate in prime roles, however, there are times when mourning has to be conducted in silence, in solitude, in the incantations of memory. Sheikh has been visiting Kashmir since she was a young child and has made work about the plural history of the place since 2002. This new work signals the valour of the women of Kashmir, whose energies are necessary to metaphorically ignite the flame of the cooking pot to reignite home-life in the face of an oppressive world outside.

Sheikh works with paper, painting, installation, and large-scale scrolls. Drawing from her extensive research on traditional Indian and Asian art forms, including mural paintings from China and screens and scrolls from Japan, her work reflects her decades-long advocacy for women's rights. Sheikh's mystical landscapes address themes such as displacement, longing, historical lineage, violence, and ideas of femininity.



Beyond Loss, 2019–20. Casein tempera on canvas scroll. Commissioned for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Chemould Prescott Road

b. 1945, New Delhi; lives and works in Baroda

Sara Sejin Chang (Sara van der Heide)

The Mother Mountain Institute aims to give a voice to mothers who have, often under duress, given their child up for adoption. Legacies of imperialism and colonialism can be read through the lens of transracial and transnational adoptions with the Global North. The interests of the birth mother are often overlooked with its many stakeholders. Women in precarious social and economic conditions can be faced with pressure from the state, the church, and/or criminal traffickers. In this work, two figures are evoked: the Mother and the Mountain, who both speak. A woman's voice narrates the story, based upon an interview with a mother by the artist that took place in January 2020 in Bangladesh. Alternating, the mountain speaks. After separation, the respective desires of the mother and child to find one another again remain. Like celestial bodies pulled by gravity, they circle around each other. Besides the political, economic, cultural and historical context provided about the why, the how and the when, no sufficient answers are provided that can heal the inner wound of being separated from one's child. The mountain is present here as a patient shelter and as a spiritual entity who might provide answers to impossible questions transcending rational thought, represented through sound and drawings made during the artist's walks in hills and mountains known for their spiritual qualities in Poland, India, Bangladesh, Lebanon, and South Korea. www.mothermountaininstitute.org



The Mother Mountain Institute, 2017–ongoing. Installation, collection of stories, sound, drawings. Courtesy of the artist

Sara Sejin Chang works with drawings, installations, performances, films, and interventions, examining patriarchal and Western imperialist ideas about linearity, gender, nation-state, spirituality, and world-making. In many of her works, Chang draws from her historiography and reflects paradoxically on these artistic processes and interventions as acts of historical repair, healing, and belonging.

with special thanks: Mrs Sayrun; Dutch Foundation Shapla Community

b. 1977, Busan; lives and works in Amsterdam and Brussels

Saskia Pintelon



No News Good News, 2019. Collage on Newspaper. Courtesy of the artist and Saskia Fernando Gallery

No News Good News is an ongoing body of work where the artist Saskia Pintelon imagines a world where the text comprising the English, Flemish, and Sinhalese newspapers that she reads is rearranged to tell stories of more hopeful and equal futures. With a subtle sense of humour, these subversive works push back against patriarchy in the world which often defines what is newsworthy, proposing new rules to break rigid standards of beauty and definitions of success and happiness. They question reigning paradigms about a variety of subjects from old age, to romance, matrimony, gender, religion, addictions through association and juxtaposition. The strong visual quality of Pintelon's newspapers forces us to stop and reflect, and through her imaginative editing process we are able to consider news that we overlook as a result of information overflow

Saskia Pintelon is at heart a figurative painter who periodically verges towards abstraction and text-based work. Inspired by local and universal issues, stories from the gut and the heart, politics and day-to-day concerns, her body of work interprets the collective human experience, environment and the cycle of life with intimate and personal preoccupations. She has spent nearly four decades working in Sri Lanka and her work reflects the hybridity of living between and across cultures.

b. 1945, Kortrijk; lives and works in Mirissa

Taslima Akhter

with Bangladesh Garment Sromik Samhota
(Bangladesh Garment Workers Solidarity)

'A thousand stars twinkle on the sky, and I dream of Beauty by my side', reads the translation of a traditional Kantha-stitched statement embroidered into Taslima Akhter's moving *Memorial Quilts*. This is not an abstract dream, Beauty was the wife of Alam Matobor who disappeared in the deadly collapse of the garment factory Rana Plaza in 2013, one of the worst industrial accidents in history. Their daughter Farzana embroidered her father's words on a handkerchief, and the stories of loss of 14 other families make up the details (which include messages, photographs, and belongings donated by surviving relatives) comprising this powerful collaborative reminder to 'remember the dead and fight for the living.' A counter-narrative to disaster, these quilts empower families to memorialise their loved ones and draw together a growing number of allies who demand the wage and safety conditions necessary to avoid history repeating itself.

Akhter is a documentary photographer and human rights activist, drawing attention to the issues faced by garment workers for over a decade. Her photographs address issues of gender, the environment, and social discrimination. Akhter's politics strongly influence her photography, which often captures the lives and struggles of those she rallies for. She is the chair of Bangladesh Garment Sromik Samhota (Bangladesh Garment Workers Solidarity) founded in 2008.



Stitching Together: Garment Workers in Solidarity, 2017. Community Stitching Action on Cloth Made by families of Bangladeshi Garment Workers. Courtesy of the artist

b. 1974, Dhaka; lives and works in Dhaka

Vivian Caccuri



A Sweet Encounter, 2019. Ink on paper. Courtesy of the artist and A Gentil Carioca

The mosquito, a pivot of epidemics such as yellow fever, dengue fever, and Zika, has often been a propagator of anguish, fear, and urban and environmental crises in Vivian Caccuri's native Brazil as well as in Bangladesh, which recently suffered the worst dengue epidemic in its history. Caccuri seeks a new environmental relationship with mosquitoes and proposes a futuristic moment when a new culture emerges in Brazil that has overcome its fear of mosquitoes – developing immunity and thriving in new symbiotic relationships with these insects in the wake of environmental destruction. Inspired by hallucinations typical of yellow fever, Caccuri's new sculptural work melds the human body and the mosquito body into one. The protection of the skin spreads into space as if breaking the visible boundary between this membrane and the environment.

Caccuri works with objects, installations, and performances in combination with sound. Complex experiments in sensory perception allow her to create situations that disorient everyday experience, addressing ecology, interspecies relationships, and the legacies of globalisation and colonial violence. Caccuri's practice lingers between visual art, experimental music, and anthropology.

b. 1986, São Paulo; lives and works in Rio de Janeiro

Collective Movements

We have been witnessing movements of people of all ages from Chile, to Lebanon, India, Hong Kong and beyond, all voicing a desire for forms of agency in the context of persistent repressive colonial and authoritarian structures. DAS was formed through the collective building of a grassroots transnational civil space where culture can be shared beyond the limits of the nation state. Together with artists who create situations, build relations, and organise events and institutions, we aim to create a strong sense of community rooted in Dhaka. The word body can also be read as individuals who come together as a group. Like antibodies, individuals within any body need to maintain the ability to disagree with the group and contribute to the dynamic evolution of the fragments, situations, and personalities that make it up. A powerful aspect of groups is that they are dynamic and fluid; they can come together, break up into two or more groups, move when they need to, and dissolve when their work is done, reforming if/when they are needed again.

Damián Ortega



Sisters; Hermanas (maquette), 2019–2020. Bricks, corn, squash, chiles, beans, Commissioned and produced by Samdani Art Foundation for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist, Kurimanzutto, White Cube, and Samdani Art Foundation

In an empty, uninhabited lot covered by wild weeds and grass, a big conical figure is raised. It is made of red bricks and could be described either as a stupa, or a pre-Colombian pyramid. It is a sculptural silo, containing an offering with a sample of one of the native corn species of Mexico, a single seed.

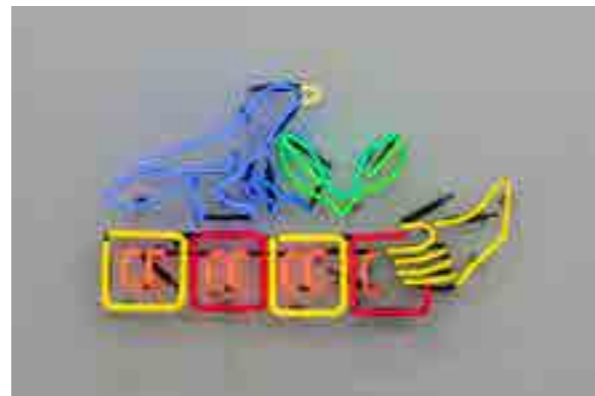
Seeds can be deposited on any land, and with some luck and under the right conditions, they multiply in a micro-explosion of fertility. Limits of private property are tested when rituals, knowledge and products are taken from one place to another. A 'milpa' is a piece of land that grows from using ancient Mesoamerican agricultural practices that are necessary to produce products to meet the basic needs of a family. A milpa contains a diverse ecosystem that produces corn, beans, squash and chile working in solidarity. This ecosystem is, to a certain point, what has fed us, and one of the most valuable gifts that Damián Ortega wishes to share from Mexico.

Ortega uses sculpture, installation, performance, film, and photography to arrive at events of deconstruction, both material and conceptual. In his work, the familiar is altered and re-purposed, leading the viewer to inspect the unexpected interdependence of the components involved. Ortega highlights the complex social, political, and economic contexts that are embodied in every-day objects.

b. 1967, Mexico City; lives and works in Mexico City

Fernando Palma Rodríguez

'Language programmes us', shares Fernando Palma, indicating that it is possible to be a different person in different languages. Palma is an expert in programming; he has a background as an electrical engineer and he is interested in the transmission of systems, knowledge, and electricity. Part of Palma's work is preserving the Nahua language, a group of languages related to the Aztec people, settled mainly in the central part of Mexico. 'It is through indigenous languages that we begin to see a different relationship between people and their environment, their art and culture', writes Palma. For example, the word for artist in Nahua language is derived from the word for the number five – because the artist is the fifth point connecting the four points on a compass: North, South, East, West. This definition does not contain the triangular axes of fame, power or money. The artist had a formative experience in Bangladesh visiting the Chakma community during a residency at Britto Art Trust in 2003, understanding that the condition of his community in Mexico was linked to that of indigenous people on the other side of the world. He returns to Bangladesh to catalyse transmission of indigenous knowledges of language and ecology through workshops related to his body of work creating Nahua inspired pictograms (found in *The Collective Body*).

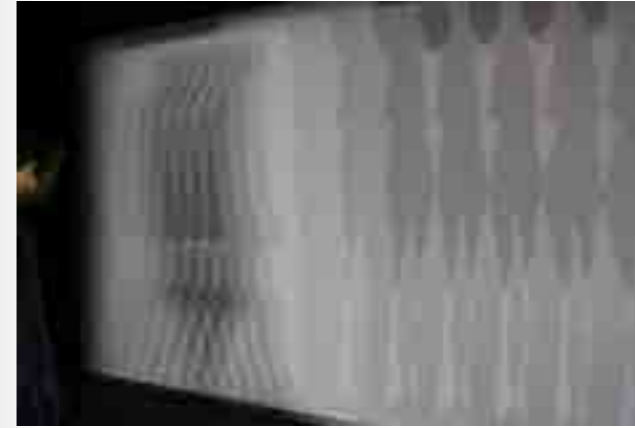


Totalhuan, 2016. Neon. Courtesy of the artist and House of Gaga

Palma makes robotic sculptures that perform narrative choreographies, addressing issues faced by Mexican indigenous communities, such as that in the agricultural region of Milpa Alta in Mexico. These include human and land rights, violence, and urgent environmental crises. He runs *Calpulli Tecalco*, a non-profit organisation dedicated to the preservation of Nahua language and culture as well as *Libroclub Fernando Benítez In Cualli Ohtli*, a book club active for over twenty years with Nahua reading groups for children, and *Maspor Nosotros AC*, an organisation constituted in order to prevent, mitigate and compensate for the environmental and social impact caused by industrial and consumer waste.

b. 1957, San Pedro Atocpan; lives and works in San Pedro Atocpan

Olafur Eliasson



Your Uncertain Shadow (Black and White), 2010. Courtesy of the artist and Samdani Art Foundation

Several spotlights project light on a white wall, however these lights only become perceptible when visitors enter and move across the space, blocking the light source and filling the void of the room with the presence of their shadows. The moving shadows of visitors create a sort of choreography and stretch and contract in tones ranging from grey to black, varying based on the movements of bodies in the space. Differences in race, religion, age, and class are flattened in this work as details used to identify individuals are reduced to moving outlines, and we become more aware of the present moment and the patterns we can build by engaging with people around us.

Olafur Eliasson's art is driven by his interests in perception, movement, embodied experience, and feelings of self. He strives to make the concerns of art relevant to society at large. Art, for him, is a crucial means for turning thinking into doing in the world. Eliasson's works span sculpture, painting, photography, film, and installation. Not limited to the confines of the museum and gallery, his practice engages the broader public sphere through architectural projects, interventions in civic space, arts education, policy-making, and issues of sustainability and climate change.

b. 1967, Copenhagen; lives and works in Berlin

Taloi Havini

Reclamation is a new work by Taloi Havini created in collaboration with her Hakö clan members. The artist draws from recent historical movements of conflict as well as acts of resilience and self-determination experienced within the social fabric of her inherited matrilineal birthplace, the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. *Reclamation* is a site-specific assemblage of natural materials, harvested from the artist's own matrilineal Hakö clan land. Here, Havini traces the significance of impermanence in traditional Hakö architecture. Individual panels have been shaped, cut and lashed within an arched form to reference formal Indigenous knowledges and map-making, echoing temporal spaces created for ritual and exchange to assert aspace for collective agency.

Reclamation speaks to notions of lineage and navigation. Underlying the ephemeral installation of cane and earth are questions about the ways in which we relate within temporal spaces; how borders are defined and claimed as well as the value of impermanence and embodied knowledge over fixed historical understandings. Havini weaves together the tensions of precarity and resilience, vulnerability and activism to create a space of encounter and transmission.

Havini speaks through geographic and cultural specificity of situations with global implications, working at a time when communities across the globe find themselves at the tipping point of environmental and social change. Havini works with photography, sculpture, immersive video and mixed-media installations. She considers the resonance of space, ceremony, and how material culture can be defined and translated through contemporary practice.



Reclamation, 2019–2020. Process Image of the Construction of the Installation, Co-Curated by Diana Campbell Betancourt, Alexie Glass-Kantor, and Michelle Newton. Commissioned and Produced by Samdani Art Foundation and Artspace, Sydney for DAS 2020 with support from the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body

b. 1981, Arawa; Lives and works in Sydney

Vasantha Yoganathan



A Team Member Ascends the Shara Ice Stupa, 2019.
Photo: Vasantha Yoganathan for The New Yorker

The artist Vasantha Yoganathan photographed SECMOL's moving Ice Stupa project in Ladakh (see page 78). Yoganathan's work straddles fiction and documentary, and this project shows how an imagined idea for a utopian future can come into being through creativity and institution building.

Yoganathan's photographic approach has been developed over the last 10 years whilst working on the major independent projects *Piémanson* (2009–2013) and *A Myth of Two Souls* (2013–2020) which have been published, exhibited and awarded internationally. Yoganathan is deeply attached to analogue photography for its slow – almost philosophical – process. His interest in painting led him to work around the genres of portrait, still life and landscape.

b. 1985, Grenoble; lives and works in Paris



Condition Report 4: Stepping Out of Line; Art Collectives and Translocal Parallelism

Envisioned by Koyo Kouoh, Marie Helene Pereira,
and Dulcie Abrahams Altass of RAW Material Company, Dakar

*Su sanxleēn booloo wot wer /
Ants come together to find wellbeing*

*Béy, bu àndul ak béy, ànd ak cere /
Goats who leave the herd,
find themselves in the company of couscous*

Wolof proverbs

Above our heads, this very second, thousands upon thousands of birds are flying in flocks. From the lightest shift in incline of feathers is born a collective moment that allows for protection and efficacy whilst flying over great distances. From the ground there appears to be perfect synchronicity within these flock movements, a marvel that scientists are still trying to understand. A flick of a wing, banal on its own, is the genesis of significant impact when performed with other, similar winged beings.

This fascinating and naturally occurring activity is a useful starting point for *Condition Report 4: Stepping out of line; Art collectives and translocal parallelism*, which exists as a forum for addressing practices and forms of production that take the cooperating, non-hierarchical group as a guiding principle. The fourth edition of RAW Material Company's biannual symposium program exploring the artistic landscape in Africa and beyond, CR4 delves into examples of collectivity both historic and contemporary to assess the scope of change possible through the ignition of our interconnectedness. Dreams of cooperation are not always fulfilled, and we acknowledge that the same spirit of resistance, survival or predation that facilitates collective action can wane or backfire, leaving members out of formation. Yet the aesthetic, physical and social fields of intervention that are the focus and fodder of collectives merit attention, particularly given the role they play in the seismic movements that are the focus of DAS 2020.

This symposium, through its form and content, opens up the different lines of enquiry that emerge from collective practice, with a particular focus on webs of international solidarities. Writers and curators are in dialogue with members of collectives, allowing both critical analysis and historical production to sit side by side with practice. We begin with an investigation into the formal aesthetic of the collective

and the forms, structures and shapes that emerge both organically and strategically when we flock together. Drawing on both traditions of Bengali ensemble music and the Senegalese *Penc* – a structure for community dialogue – allows us to enact collective forms and give shape to this coming together. Moreover, the space we use in Dhaka is designed to let the outside in and vice versa, an acknowledgement of the large number of collective practices that are currently threatened by displacement of entire communities for economic or climatic reasons, who are thus separated from the material space that plays an active role in the affirmation of collective existence.

Moving from concerns around form, the conversation will unpack different propositions for making histories of collective practice, and collective practices of making histories. Polyphonic in their very nature, collective movements have proven complex to anchor in any one narrative. Members may tell different and contradictory stories, highlighting aspects of particular relevance to their own journey or the wider circles within which they move, beyond the sphere of the collective itself. And yet we know that these stories must be told. If we accept this reality, can we think of the generative space between the swarm behaviour of two neighbouring bees? What historiographical approaches are necessary for unearthing and learning from gossip, witness accounts, and inconsistency? As articulated by Elvira Dyangani Ose, how can we 'claim history as a participatory experience'? International collectivism can at times be even harder to map, across linguistic lines and countries with differing relationships to the archive, and yet we must learn to become more supple and more creative in our historiographical methodology if we want to do justice to these histories.

Engaging in a more frontal manner with the contemporary moment and the crescendo of interest within both the art world and the fields of social

sciences and humanities in collectives and collectivism – indeed as a fully-fledged ‘ism’ – we will also ask questions related to the relationship between collective practice and economy. Are visions of commons and non-hierarchical labour structures purely utopian within a global, late-capitalist order? Must collectives shun capitalism completely to be legitimate, or is it that collective practice must fall on either side of a state/private dichotomy? How do collectives create models of institutions that disrupt this opposition? How do collectives engage with informal and bartering economies to survive, produce, and endure, and what lessons can be learnt from these strategies? Challenging traditional notions of authorship and therefore ownership, artist collectives also serve to challenge and reject the vision of the mythical, singular and historically male artist, drawing attention to the plurality of skills and efforts needed to generate and support a project.

Continuing in this vein, it is worthwhile to pause on the ways in which collective practice can influence how formal institutions function, and to consider to what ends and through which channels we can create new alliances of support across domains. Many collectives also tend to have a shorter lifespan than formal institutions, and we will consider the death and dispersal of collectives as key moments in their existence. When birds disband from the flock formation, it signifies that the need which brought them together is no longer of relevance; a danger has passed, or the aerodynamic support they provided one another has given sufficient time for rest. To be cognizant of how to collectively separate, shift energies and acknowledge the end of a mission is a skill that will also be discussed; what happens after the seismic movement?

Fundamentally, CR4 is an invitation to think about the ‘we’ and the forms of our relationships to one another. We will question and map strategies that allow the flock to fly and get the job done, and then to leave formation without injury, in a bid to open up this prescient field of study while learning and practising how we can live better together.

Featuring

Akaliko
Centre for Historical Reenactment (Kemang Wa Lehulere)
Chimurenga (Zipho Dayile)
Cosmin Costinas
Depth Of the Field (Emeka Okereke)
Elizabeth A. Povinelli
Gidree Bawlee (Salma Jamal Moushum)
Green Papaya (Merv Espina)
Hong Kong Artist Union – KY Wong
Jatiwangi (Ismal Muntaha)
John Tain
Joydeb Roaja & Hill Group
Laboratoire Agit’Art (Pascal Nampemanla Traoré)
Luta ca caba inda (Sonia Vaz Borges)
Marina Fokidis
Mustafa Zaman
Pathshala (Taslina Akhter)
ruangrupa (Farid Aditama Rakun)
Shawon Akand
Shomoy Group (Dhali Al Mamoon)
Shoni Mongol Adda (Tarana Willy)
Somankidi Coura (Raphaël Grisey and Bouba Touré)
The Otolith Group

Stitching Collective

Envisioned by Gudskul, Jakarta

Stitching Ecosystem

Stitching Ecosystem is a mini-festival format comprised of a series of workshops, sharing sessions, and market spaces with a focus on five of Gudskul’s eleven ‘collective studies’ subjects: Collective Sustainability Strategy, Public Relations, Spatial Practices, Art Laboratory, and Knowledge Garden. Gudskul will connect and reconnect collective networks and foster inter-collectiveness in order to understand and collaborate across different themes and contexts. We take this opportunity to build a bigger ecosystem, while maintaining the valuable organic intimacy found in any collective praxis. Further, this series of activities will cultivate, foster and distribute knowledge among the participating collectives in DAS, while also expanding network and sharable resources with the general public.

Collective as School

Collective as School is a sharing session between over forty collectives participating in DAS 2020 from Africa, Australia, Central and South America, Oceania, and South and Southeast Asia. Each collective will share their respective stories about how and why their collectives were established, what their goals are, how their regeneration processes unfold, what they learned, what their structure looks like, how they have sustained and survived, how they self-evaluate, how knowledge gets distributed within the collective internally and externally to broader communities, and how their collectives support each member as an individual. This closed-door introductory session will produce a series of scheme/maps of potentials, strategies, and common understanding to prime the remaining nine days of DAS.

Speculative Collective

Speculative Collective is Gudskul’s latest iteration of a knowledge-sharing and mapping module that was conceived as a tool to explore forms of collectivising through direct practice, forming a kind of know-how. Compressed both spatially and temporally, the project extends from ongoing work within the context of Jakarta. In a loosely defined process, Gudskul invites strangers to meet and share what they consider to be ‘knowledge’ by playing the roles of both teacher and student in a quick reciprocal exchange. This newly formed pair must then couple with another pair, forming a temporary collective. Gudskul has designed a ‘tool’ to enable participants to record this process for themselves and carry it on past these random yet choreographed meetings.

Gerobak Cinema

Gerobak Cinema is a mobile screening station presented as part of *The Collective Body* curated by Diana Campbell Betancourt and Kathryn Weir. The Chattogram based collective Jog and the Jakarta based collective ruangrupa collaborate using a rickshaw, producing screening sessions in several spots around the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, taking the energy from inside the venue out into the streets of Dhaka. The equipment will be collaboratively designed by artists, designers, IT technicians and created by the community according to local aesthetics to screen their own videos/movies, or even particular Bangladeshi movies. With these activities, we are trying to strengthen the relationships and collaboration potentials with the local community who may have not arrived at the world of contemporary art.

Printmaking Workshop

A collaborative workshop and sharing session between Grafis Huru Hara (Jakarta) and Pangrok Sulap (Sabah) and Shunno Space (Dhaka) will explore and raise similar issues the collectives are facing through specific media: woodcut and linocut techniques. This workshop will be open to students.

Loneless Market

One of our central focuses in developing an ecosystem is how sustainability could be understood through different perspectives. Not only in monetary aspects, but also values and notions, network and regeneration. Loneless Market is a session designed by Gudskul to develop exchange activities in material and immaterial things, and also at the same time generating revenues to benefit all of the participants of this marketplace. This will be a celebration of the nine days of collective work built across DAS. DAS is a non-commercial research platform that exists to support grassroots art ecosystems – and all proceeds go directly to the collectives involved in this platform.

Cooking & Karaoke Tent

For the last evening before DAS closes, Gudskul will collaborate with local collectives to imagine a big dinner through creating a fusion of Bangladeshi and Indonesian food recipes. A karaoke session will play some well-known Bangladeshi and Indonesian songs and the group will be open to song requests. Open to all participating collectives and artists in DAS, this event serves to strengthen the bonds and networks built up across DAS 2020.

The Collective Body

Curated by Diana Campbell Betancourt and Kathryn Weir.
Assistant curator: Kehkasha Sabah. Supported by Adam Ondak,
Lucia Zubalova, Ruxmini Reckvana Q Choudhury, Teresa Albor

Expressions of community and connections that precede the neoliberal individual and the nation-state are at the heart of *The Collective Body*, an exhibition that brings together more than thirty collaborative art initiatives. Half of these are from Bangladesh, where the thriving contemporary art ecology is largely carried by artist-led interdisciplinary initiatives that have developed festivals, art spaces, schools and collaborative networks to support their practice in the absence of centrally funded institutions or sources of economic support. Alongside these, artists and collectives have been invited from parallel contexts in order to crystallise discussions pertinent to collaborative practice in Bangladesh, drawing parallels and creating unprecedented forms of exchange of tools and strategies across Asia, Africa, Central and South America, and Oceania. The curating process opened articulated conversations from which emerged common interests and preoccupations; these include the transmission of long-standing aesthetic forms, relationships between rural to urban contexts, labour movements across agricultural and industrial domains, climate change and environmental toxicity. An emergent network of initiatives comes together at DAS to address – through puppet shows, concerts, debate, installation, documentation and performance – issues ranging from land rights and resource extraction, to strategies of visibility and contestation, to analyses of the intersection of gender, caste and ethnicity.

Centred on ideas and contemporary social contexts, the artistic practices represented in *The Collective Body* are fundamentally engaged in the creation of social tissue and in sharing knowledge. They are both rooted in particular contexts and looking elsewhere in formulations of what decolonial theorist Walter Dignolo calls 'cosmopolitan localism'. Artistic experiments around processes of community self-determination are gaining strength in the context of the ecological crisis and the widening cracks in the system of extractivist neoliberalism, defined by French sociological theorist Pierre Bourdieu over 20 years ago as 'A program to destroy the collective structures capable of opposing pure market logic' (*Le Monde diplomatique*, March 1998).

The Collective Body structures a reflection rooted in the dynamics and questions of contemporary art initiatives in Bangladesh but reaching out to multidisciplinary groups of creative practitioners across diverse geographies to highlight the collective processes that may be ignited in the space of freedom that art offers. These processes of social transformation may contribute to forms of profound structural change yet remain relatively invisible before attaining a critical mass. An extraordinary example from Bangladesh is *Mangal Shobhajatra*, a community procession to celebrate *Pohela Boishakh* (Bengali New Year) created in 1987 by Jessore-based artists' collective Charupith. Today it attracts massive crowds who carry painted paper masks, crowns, traditional dolls, and large sculptures that integrate folk forms and motifs, and perform music and comedy from Bengali culture in public space across the country; it is part of UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage list since 2016. This is not a generations old tradition, it is an initiative started as part of Charupith's wider practice of drawing inspiration from the plurality of rural culture in Bangladesh and creating a festive atmosphere for people across generations (especially children) to experience the potential of art to create spaces of freedom. Charupith is a longstanding research and education-based initiative located in southwestern Bangladesh; close to ten thousand young students have graduated from their independent school of fine arts. Rising fundamentalism has threatened the use of masks due to criticism of the figurative nature of the art with resulting security threats to the festival. The presentation in *The Collective Body* includes a series of masks created by senior artists with a long-term engagement in the festival, speaking to the role that artists in Bangladesh play in embodying secular values.

Artist and philosopher Denise Ferreira Da Silva speaks of 'the task of unthinking the world, of releasing it from the grips of the abstract forms of modern representation' that have supported violent forms of appropriation and extraction in modern juridic and economic systems. She suggests that artistic practice should today be considered 'a generative locus for engaging in radical reflection on modalities of racial (symbolic) and colonial (juridic) subjugation operating in full force in the global present.'* Artist-led initiatives such as Trovoa in Brazil, The Hill Group, Kaali, and Shako in Bangladesh, Mata Aho Collective in New Zealand, Thuma in Myanmar, and eleven and ProppaNOW in Australia, among others, have been tearing away the cloak of invisibility thrown by structural racism within the art world. The manifesto of Brazil's National Trovoa, a group of black and non-white women artists and curators which can be seen both as a collective and as a movement, states 'We understand the need to speak of and to exhibit the plurality of our languages, discourses, research and media produced by us as racialised women'. A rallying call that lives in physical and digital space, Trovoa counts over 150 members and empowers the most disenfranchised members of the art world to become visible together. Reflections on blackness and racial

subjugation must respond to different histories and contexts. The largest African diaspora in the world is found in Brazil, the context that has given birth to both Trovoa and Ferreira da Silva's approaches to blackness. In South Asia also, the colour of a woman's skin can subject her to structural prejudice. Skin-lightening creams are used widely across the country, derogatory phrases are directed at women with dark skin or indigenous features, and advertisements for arranged marriages explicitly favour 'fair skin'. *The Collective Body* brings together two generations of female-led collectives from South Asia (Shako) and South America (Trovoa) for a five-hour tea party within the exhibition's dedicated discussion space to compare experiences, and in their words, to 'darken our thoughts.' The results of these discussions will be published in Bangla, English, and Portuguese on social media.

The imperative to 'unthink the world' is also linked to what Ferreira Da Silva calls the deep implication of the human and non-human (and of life and non-life) to the collective, fluid, intuitive body and the elements that combine and recombine within it. In terms of the practices of art, where the image 'reduces the basis of existence to lethal abstraction' (as Ferreira Da Silva states in the film of 2019, *4Waters: Deep Implication*), elemental matter is always more complex than its representation and can provide pathways for artists' collective radical reflection. Jatiwangi Art Factory in Indonesia, located in the rural district of Jatiwangi that includes 16 villages, have been developing new community-based practices that take as their point of departure the local material of clay, particularly drawing on histories of roof tile production. Activities have ranged from tasting, chemically testing and cooking local clay to developing a Ceramic Music Festival using clay-based instruments to reanimate ceramic production. The elemental matter of clay makes more complex our relationship to the earth and calls up widespread mythological stories of humans being shaped from this. For DAS, Jatiwangi has explored parallels between the clay-based cultures of Indonesia and Bangladesh.

The Vietnamese collective Art Labor brings together agronomy as well as colonial and cultural history to study the circulation of plant species in international markets and the effects of industrial agriculture, notably focussing on Robusta coffee beans (introduced to Vietnam in the French colonial period). Policies of increasing scale and modernising techniques related to the introduction of coffee farming have led to mass deforestation and rapid changes in the lifestyle of local indigenous Jarai community in the Northern Highlands of Vietnam. Art Labor collaborates with these communities, from which one of the collective's members comes, to diversify sources of economic support outside of coffee cultivation and support Jarai culture and farming practices. Also working on community regeneration and seeking food sovereignty through revisiting indigenous agriculture traditions, Calpulli Tecalco works on the outskirts of Mexico City to revive indigenous language and farming techniques,

constructing an ecology of knowledge to rethink and defend the use of the land. *Adopta Una Milpa* is one example of the organisation's agricultural regeneration projects that reinforces systems of collectivity embedded within Nahuatl language and culture. As opposed to the monoculture of industrial farming, a milpa is a cultivated field where around a dozen crops are planted together – maize, avocados, squash, bean, melon, tomatoes, chilis, sweet potato, jícama, amaranth, and others – which are nutritionally and environmentally complementary, helping each species to grow and providing complementary proteins to the farmers.

Unthinking the world takes place not only through working with unexpected materials but also with unexpected groups historically excluded from serious art production such as children, climate change refugees or those affected by natural disasters, all examples taken from specific art projects included in DAS. *Calpulli Tecalco* has facilitated *The Book Club Incualli Ohtli* for over twenty years, introducing several generations of children to Nahuatl language and storytelling and also engaging them in imaginative activities with pictographic representation of their linguistic roots. Storytelling is one of the many ways that an idea can move across generations and be renewed. In Bangladesh, Gidree Bawlee Foundation of Arts in northwest Bangladesh acts as a catalyst for social inclusivity through community-focused activities, bringing together local communities and artists to experiment with local cultural traditions. In 2018, they created *Hamra* to develop experimental forms of puppeteering. The presentation in DAS, *Golpota Shobar* performs local history and myths surrounding a small village in northwest Bangladesh and the many living and non-living beings that inhabit it – as imagined by a theatre company of children. The handmade puppets made with found materials by the children tell stories of small incidents in the village – natural and/or supernatural that connect to long histories of waves of migration through to recent south to north movements of climate change refugees. In 2015, Bangladesh's neighbouring Nepal was hit by a massive 7.8 Richter scale earthquake, killing more than 9,000 people and leaving 22,000 injured and 3.5 million homeless. The collective ArTree Nepal initiated *12 Bishakh Post Earthquake Community Art Project* at Thulo Baysi, Bhaktapur, Nepal which started as an immediate relief initiative and developed into a six-month-long collective healing process involving more than 100 artists, community members, researchers, and musicians who created multi-generational interactive programmes, helping to allow the emotional ground of the community to settle in the wake of the trauma.

In recent times, an increased awareness of questions of the interdependence of the human community with non-living elements has emerged in the context of climate change and industrial toxicity. Bangladesh is home to one of the largest poisonings of a population in history via arsenic in the groundwater, exacerbated by ill-conceived plans for shallow wells imported by foreign NGOs who sought inexpensive solutions to

provide clean drinking water, but whose lack of specific knowledge of the local context instead unleashed enormous harm. When Europe and North America are directly affected by toxicity and freak weather effects that they previously had only read about in places like Bangladesh, their elites no longer quarantined from the sites of contamination and danger, the limits and violence of neoliberalism begin to be broadcast through the system's own infrastructure. The 'end of the world as we know it' is announced as a contemporary crisis without any recognition that this is the culmination of a more than 500-year accelerating history, the effects of which have been long felt by others who the system discounted, by other lifeforms, and by non-life. Artists, as receivers and transmitters of some of the key questions of our time, and particularly those working collectively in contexts historically subjected to violent extractive and colonial forces, have been approaching environmental interdependence in powerful and lateral ways. Made up of architects, remote-sensing geographers and visual culture researchers, INTRPRT investigates underreported environmental crimes known as ecocide (including the case of arsenic poisoning in Bangladesh). Their advocacy work, visual culture research, exhibitions and publications work towards making justice approachable in the fight against climate emergency and all forms of ecological impunity through collaborations with lawyers and policy-making bodies.

Whereas INTRPRT works through the judicial systems of the world, The Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL) engages scientists and engineers with young people growing up in Ladakh, especially those from rural or disadvantaged backgrounds. This platform equips young Ladakhis with the knowledge, skills, perspective, and confidence to choose and build a sustainable future in a high desert lacking water more every year. Temperatures in the Indian Himalayas are rising as a result of climate change, causing snow from glaciers to melt faster, negatively affecting local communities that rely on springtime meltwater for agriculture. Resulting from two years of experiments at SECMOL Alternative Institute, *Ice Stupa* was born as a local solution to a local problem, which is now being implemented elsewhere in the region and the world. *Ice Stupa* is an artificial glacier created by piping an un-useful winter mountain stream down below the frost line, and then cascading it out of a vertical spout in the desert plateau. When gushing water encounters freezing ambient temperatures, it transforms into a conical ice formation with minimal surface area exposed to direct sunlight. The artificial glacier lasts late into the spring, allowing communities extended access to water throughout the season, as opposed to ice, which melts much faster. This is a local solution at a human scale.

Particularly in resource and infrastructure-poor contexts, artists work to amplify local initiatives, voices, and materials, even experimenting with alternative economic systems, other approaches to technology and different articulations of scale in

political and social intervention in order to generate other sustainable models. The multidisciplinary platform Aman Iwan has developed an action-based research process, combining a research laboratory and the concrete experimentation of a workshop. The realities of diaspora and migration have allowed for a group to come together in Paris of which the members retain connections to many different places. Combining cultural translation and local, rooted knowledge, the platform focusses on cultural heritage preservation and renewal through knowledge transmission. In the installation *The Weight of Water* commissioned for *The Collective Body*, one landscape disappears while another appears, using elements inspired by longstanding water management and irrigation systems in Afghanistan, where Aman Iwan founding member Feda Wardak works with artisans on reviving and transmitting skills. Wardak says that 'Water management systems are both indicative of exceptional human know-how enabling settlement and catalysts for the evolution of certain landscapes, sometimes leading to their disappearance.'

Responding to a lack of spaces for the exchange and debate of ideas in Bangladesh, the open-membership artist-led initiative Shonimongol Adda (Bangla for 'Saturday Tuesday Debate Group') was formed by inviting friends to come to a quiet local café and to pay for their own food and drink (with a little extra to jointly remunerate an invited speaker) and to engage with a different guest speaker twice a week to debate topics such as 'What is public space?' (with a police commissioner as a guest speaker). The platform became so successful that members of the group took over management of the restaurant, which is now known as Kamor Cafe. It continues to host bi-weekly debates and exhibitions and has recently begun publishing newsletters.

While initiatives such as Shonimongol Adda push the limits of where a space for art could be located, several artists' collectives in the exhibition examine the political limits of where their passports allow them to go. The Shelter Promotion Council based in Kolkata and Dhaka's Britto Arts Trust collaborated in 2014 on *Project No Man's Land*, a research and process-based project that brought together twenty-four artists on the borderlines of Dhonitila of Monipur Para in Sunamgonj, Bangladesh and Kalibari village in Cherapunji, India, where they developed installation, performance, sound, photography, and video works on either side of the border. Their activities inspired the border authorities on either side, who in a seemingly unthinkable act, allowed the artists to shed their documents and meet and embrace each other in the zone between the borders. In another border area, issues between Bangladesh and Myanmar have been highly publicised in the wake of the Rohingya crisis, dominating conversations related to these two countries' relationships, and making it nearly impossible for Burmese citizens to obtain Bangladeshi visas, and vice-versa. Two collectives of young female photographers from either country came together in Yangon in 2019 to explore notions of identity, respect, hope, conflict,

and resolution through storytelling and photography, a collaboration which culminated in the photo book project *Bridging the Naf* (the river connecting Bangladesh and Myanmar). Based on their interests and experiences, artists from each country were paired up and took a journey to solve problems, make decisions, and explode stereotypes through the process of artistic exchange. The Burmese artists were denied visas to Bangladesh when it was time for the reciprocal exchange to occur, and *The Collective Body* is facilitating these collectives to meet in Dhaka for the first time. The Lagos-based platform Invisible Borders has placed political and conceptual border crossing at the heart of their activity of collaborative road trips bringing together photographers, filmmakers and writers from across the African continent. Founder Emeka Okereke speaks to the role that the important and longstanding Dhaka photographic and activist initiative Drik (and its school Pathshala) played as a model when he was conceiving Invisible Borders even though there had been no direct contact in Bangladesh. *The Collective Body* invited Invisible Borders to conceive together with the Drik Network a collaborative road trip taking Bangladesh as a starting point and they decided to focus on the area in the northeast of the country around Sylhet. This landmark trip inscribes itself into long histories of exchanges and solidarities between Africa and Asia and brings into the present their radical imaginaries.

The very act of assembling this event's collective of collectives in Dhaka dissolves borders through bringing initiatives together outside of an international art circuit centred in Europe and North America and tending to involve individuals who can speak 'art world English' and are also from countries where visas can be more easily procured. Born from relationships distributed across the global majority world between groups of artists who responded to the challenge to unite in Dhaka, *The Collective Body* opens a space for public conversations around common interests and preoccupations within reimagined geographies. Some important shared themes include the transmission of long-standing aesthetic forms, relationships between rural and urban contexts, labour movements across agricultural and industrial domains, climate change and environmental toxicity. An emergent network of initiatives comes together at DAS to address – through puppet shows, concerts, screenings, debate, installation, documentation and performance – issues ranging from land rights and resource extraction, to strategies of visibility and contestation, to analyses of the intersections of gender, race, caste and class in their symbolic and economic dimensions. When art is practised in life, not abstracted to formal dimensions or insular conversations, material approaches come to the fore that recompose and reinforce existing elements. Networks of artists and other producers develop generative spaces and work against the uniformisation of economic and cultural systems and experiment with other futures.

* Denise Ferreira Da Silva, *In the Raw*, e-flux Journal #93, September 2018, at www.e-flux.com/journal/93/215795/in-the-raw

DAS 2020 Collectives Platform Participants

Akālīko

Founded 2012, Dhaka, Bangladesh



Cover Art used for Akālīko Music Compilation, 2014. Courtesy of Akālīko

Akālīko means 'timelessness' in Pali, the language of the Buddhist scriptures, reflecting the group's belief that musical forms have always been present in everyday life in society. The promotion of electronic and experimental music is at the heart of Akālīko's activities and they collaborate with artists and professionals who make digital and sound art. They operate as a for-profit organisation and are committed to addressing social issues through their events and projects.

Born out of Dhaka's electronica scene, the group was originally established in 2012 as an independent music production label set up to address the need for a common platform to promote the work of 'bedroom' music producers. As Dhaka does not have a vibrant club scene, the founders of the group felt compelled to address the lack of infrastructure by amplifying local efforts, voices, and resources. Since 2014 they have expanded their practice to collaborate with like-minded performance artists, writers, choreographers/dancers, communication specialists, psychologists, and, most recently, sound artists, while at the same time maintaining their label. Their compilations are streamed online and are also available for purchase through major international music platforms.

One example of their collaborative approach, the *Dhaka Noise Project* captures the essence of Dhaka through sound: both young and experienced music producers worked with non-traditional sound to compose their pieces. Akālīko will soon launch a cloud-based user-generated version of the *Dhaka Noise Project*. Recent Akālīko releases include the double EP *Psycho-geography* by UK/Bangladeshi group After Art. A new compilation is underway for release in 2021.

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Aman Iwan

Founded 2015, Paris, France

Aman Iwan is a platform that focusses on the relations that link territories and their populations in order to understand the contemporary issues that affect and connect distinctive research contexts throughout the world. Its main objective is to bring together an international network of actors who collaborate to preserve different forms of heritage in danger of disappearing. Aman Iwan hosts two poles in relation to this network. On one hand, as an independent research laboratory, each year it brings together a community of researchers around a selected topic. This results in the production of a printed publication, an issue of the journal *Aman Iwan* which brings together social, political and geographic critique. On the other hand, it's a creative workshop that creates projects emerging from the research laboratory's topics which respond to local issues and create a space of experimentation.

In this way, Aman Iwan has created an action-based research process, through the research laboratory and the creative workshop. The laboratory intellectually feeds the workshop, whilst the latter provides an income stream, allowing the platform to exist autonomously. Whether in France, India, Afghanistan, Benin, Lebanon, Chile, Spain, Brazil, Algeria, Burundi or elsewhere, the research of the Aman Iwan platform has often resulted in the implementation of projects carried by local communities themselves. For example, in Afghanistan a craft school is being designed with local artisans. In India, an agricultural cooperative is in the process of being set up by farmers. In Benin, a project is being conceived to document the different types of lake habitat, threatened by rising waters. In France, a centre for artistic creation and crafts has been set up with local inhabitants in order to resist urban renewal processes resulting in gentrification. Each project is accompanied by members of the Aman Iwan platform who are rooted in these different territories.



The Arch of the Dhuis, Clichy-sous-Bois and Montfermeil, 2019. Courtesy of Aman Iwan

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Art Labor

Founded 2012, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



Art Labor Hammock Café, 2016-ongoing. Installation view at Cosmopolis #1, Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2017

Art Labor is an artist collective that works between visual arts, social and life sciences in various public contexts and locations. They do not produce single artworks but develop projects that are journeys across many years, during which each theme or inspiration becomes a seed to cultivate. Seeds grow and inspiration expands to develop into rhizomatic interconnected bodies of work.

Art Labor is currently on their third journey *JUA*, arising from their fascination with agrarian cultivation over the last century, during which major displacements of plants and people into and away from Vietnam took place. In particular they have been researching Robusta coffee and rice – two products that mark Vietnam today as a global agricultural exporter.

Their second project *Jrai Dew* (2016–2018) reflected the costs of a capitalised world through mythic narratives. As well as collaborating with filmmakers and designers, they worked side by side with Jrai wood carving artists to create sculpture gardens in their villages in Central Highlands of Vietnam. Employing products and symbols related either to the Highlands or to violent changes in history, *Jrai Dew* opens up poetically and critically a scene of human chaos.

In the first journey *Unconditional Belief* (2014), Art Labor teamed up with anthropologists and medical scientists to produce artworks, texts, and objects. These have been shown in the form of exhibitions, publications, workshops and very particular 'Gesamtkunstwerk' – the redesigned interior of the Pediatrics Department of Saigon Eye Hospital. All of these contribute to the core exploration of *Unconditional Belief*: the tension between belief, knowledge and seeing.

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Artpro

Founded 2016, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Artpro was founded in 2016 by a group of artists who wanted to explore various forms of making and to engage a diverse public. Artpro hosts a collaborative project bringing together artists and communities once a month as part of an initiative entitled *Weekend Artwork (WAW)*. Rather than an event-based model, the group is process-based.

Many of Artpro's projects mobilise artists to work with marginalised segments of society. For example, their ongoing project *Nakshi Katha: Interwoven Dialogues* (2019) involves traditional embroiderers. Artpro members engage the artisans in storytelling where the stories transmitted may be urban or tied to expressions of rural folk culture. Another project, *Soundscape* (2018), brought together 15 contemporary artists who collectively composed sound-art pieces using simple instruments to explore the art of listening.



WAW4 by Artpro Art Initiative, 2018. Courtesy of Artpro

The group also organises public knowledge-sharing workshops; these have included focusses on ceramics, image manipulation, performance art, and video art. While meeting every month, the group also organises festivals. Each year since 2017 they've hosted the Artpro Winter Performance Festival (AWPF) and, starting in 2019, the Artpro International Video Art Festival.

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ArTree Nepal

Founded 2013, Kathmandu, Nepal

Through interdisciplinary and socially rooted practices, ArTree questions mainstream narratives with strategic grassroots interventions. ArTree members prioritise critical discourse, research, collaboration, and exchange to promote collective growth and situate art within its social context. Mobilising political and pre-colonial vocabularies, the collective raises pertinent geopolitical issues with effects on everyday life, including the privatisation and corruption of the medical & education sectors, Nepali youth migration, and discrimination on the basis of gender/ sexuality, caste and ethnicity.

In 2015, Nepal was hit by a massive 7.8 Richter scale earthquake, killing more than 9,000 people and leaving 22,000 injured and 3.5 million homeless. ArTree initiated *12 Bishakh* Post Earthquake Community Art Project at Thulo Baysi, Bhaktapur, Nepal. What started as an immediate relief initiative developed into a six-month long collective healing process. More than 100 artists, community members, researchers, performance artists and musicians participated in the project through various programmes and exhibitions.

In 2017 and 2018, ArTree presented the exhibitions *The Work of Art as Scream of Freedom* and *Opposite Dreams: The Politics of Local*, commenting on how Nepal's mainstream history has excluded the stories of marginalised, underprivileged, indigenous peoples and how Nepal was colonised by Mughal kings and ruling elites who were allies with British East India Company.



12 Bishakh – Post Earthquake Art Project, 2015. Courtesy of ArTree Nepal

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Back ART Foundation

Founded 2013, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Back ART refers to the founders' 'backpack' approach combining youth, enthusiasm, and the portability of ideas. The group was founded to create opportunities to make and show challenging work that is less likely to gain visibility in institutional contexts and that engages with public space. Some of the subjects the group explores include rural life, urbanisation, refugees/migration, memory, language, environmental and climate issues that cause migration, as well as performance in all its dimensions. They explore folklore and long-standing aesthetic forms, seeking ways to situate these forms within contemporary art practice.



Native Myth 1st Season 2015, Ichakhali, Bangladesh, 2015. Courtesy of Back ART. Photo: Shubho O Saha

Back ART has hosted an international performance art festival, the *Dhaka Live Art Biennale (DLAB)*, focussing on diversity and multiculturalism through the exploration of mythology, language, and rituals. They describe their work as seeking to 'locate the commonality of "existence" and "spirit", exploring peaceful coexistence and democratic aspirations'.

Native Myth, an annual short-term artist residency project, engages with rural communities and explores long-held beliefs through scientific, historical, anthropological, and socio-political lenses. One project in this series was based near Jholmolia Dighi, a small lake which, unlike the saline ponds nearby, is freshwater. Some people believe this is due to the intervention of a goddess. Artists and scientists worked together with local people, listening to their stories, and constructed a holistic understanding of the phenomenon – part science, part myth – with the hope that this would lead to a greater appreciation of the need to protect this special area.

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Britto Arts Trust

Founded 2002, Dhaka, Bangladesh



Overlapping, 2012. A collective art project by Britto Members. Courtesy of Britto. Photo: Manir Mrittik

Britto Arts Trust (a non-profit artist-run collective) is located in a converted store within a commercial arcade and is a place where artists can meet, discuss, exchange skills, and exhibit and perform their work. Talks, film screenings, and a range of other activities provide support and visibility opportunities for artists. The project space, which is owned by the Trust, was opened in 2011; but from its establishment, the collective rented spaces and supported artists' practices in a variety of ways, including participation in exchange programmes facilitated by the Triangle Network and other international partners.

Britto aims to encourage critical discourse, research, interaction, diversity, and innovation in art. As well as initiating the first Bangladesh Pavilion at the 54th Venice Biennale in 2011, they have hosted five international artist workshops (which typically involve ten international and ten local artists). Their media-specific workshop (which includes traditional and experimental media) has been held annually since 2003. For example, one iteration, *Pixelation*, focused on exploring new-media art.

The collective has organised 31 residency programmes in Dhaka, hosting international artists, students, researchers, and curators. Other projects include *1sq Mile* (2009 and 2014), an initiative involving public art interventions across a square mile of the old city of Dhaka; *New Media Art Festival* (2009); and *Shohornama* (2018). Outside of Dhaka, *No Man's Land* (2014), a project exploring critical geopolitical issues, took place on the India-Bangladesh border near Bholaganj, Sylhet. 'Prantiker Prakritajan' (which means 'people living on the margins') is a community art project involving different indigenous and ethnic groups living in border and coastal areas of Bangladesh and India.

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Calpulli Tecalco

Founded 1990s, San Pedro Atocpan, Mexico

The central mission of Calpulli Tecalco is the investigation, conservation and rehabilitation of Mesoamerican (agri)cultural traditions that were once vibrant in their home of San Pedro Atocpan, but are disappearing due to rapid urbanisation in Mexico City. By gathering local community members and agents from different fields, the organisation seeks to recover traditional practices of language and agriculture and works on the construction of an ecology of knowledge to rethink and defend the use of the land. This is achieved through various stages beginning with the recognition of the territory where mostly children and youth participate in artistic activities coordinated by founder Fernando Palma and artists from Mexico and elsewhere. The rest of the project's cycle of activities – cultivation, harvest and traditional cooking – is also imbued with cultural practices, stimulating the exchange of experiences.



Courtesy of the Fernando Palma and Gaga, Mexico City and Los Angeles. Photo: Omar Olguin

Adopta Una Milpa is an agricultural regeneration projects that reinforces systems of collectivity embedded within Nahuatl culture and part of its fight for food-sovereignty by reactivating long-dormant milpas. A milpa is a field, usually but not always recently cleared, in which farmers plant a dozen crops at once. Milpa crops are nutritionally and environmentally complementary. Maize lacks the amino acids lysine and tryptophan, which the body needs to make proteins and niacin; Beans have both lysine and tryptophan, squash provides an array of vitamins; avocados, fats. The milpa, in the estimation of H. Garrison Wilkes, a maize researcher at the University of Massachusetts in Boston, 'is one of the most successful human inventions ever created.' Parallel to Calpulli Tecalco, *The Book Club Incualli Ohtli* has been active for over twenty years engaging several generations of children with the Nahuatl language.

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Center for Historical Reenactments (CHR)

Founded 2010, Johannesburg, South Africa



The unknowing grammar of trying to inhabit a text, 2011. Courtesy of CHR

The Center for Historical Reenactments (CHR) was a collaborative platform based in Johannesburg, South Africa. Since its founding in 2010, CHR has responded to the demands of the current moment through an exploration into historical legacies and their resonance and impact on contemporary art. By addressing current urgencies, which have grown over the debris of the issues of the past CHR has embarked on activities (events, seminars, exhibitions, residencies, interventions, etc), engaged local (South Africa) and international practitioners and raised questions about the political potentials of artistic interpretations of histories.

In their projects, CHR has investigated how, within a particular historical hegemony, certain values have been created, promoted and subsequently sublated into a broader universal discourse. CHR recognises that historical constructions play essential, almost central roles in the formation of the apparatus and what has been taken for granted as a given in the dominant world order. Therefore within the scope of emancipatory artistic productions, historical reenactments as an artistic framework can, and do play a significant role. CHR has explored how artistic production helps us to deconstruct particular readings of history and how historical context informs artistic creation, both which become central questions: How art can help us reinterpret history and its contextual implications and how it can add and suggest different historical readings and help in the formation of new subjectivities.

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Charupith

Founded 1985, Jessore, Bangladesh

Charupith is a longstanding research and education-based initiative located in Jessore in southwestern Bangladesh and led by an executive committee of seven members. It includes an art gallery for young artists, a library, a resource centre, studios for sculpture, printmaking, painting, and craft, accommodation for artists, and a village centre in Rupdia, Jessore. Close to ten thousand young students have graduated from this independent school of fine arts, which offers courses in art, dressmaking, architecture, city beautification studies, craft, and art history. It is one of the few art institutions outside the capital and, due to its policy of charging a single taka tuition fee, is inclusive. Charupith has organised more than a hundred and fifty exhibitions in their gallery and regularly runs workshops and art camps. They also organise art competitions, participate in national and international festivals, maintain a media lab and have attributed year-long residency fellowships.

Inspired by the teachings and practice of S. M. Sultan, a mentor to Charupith's founders, the initiative draws inspiration from the rural culture of Bangladesh. Charupith believes children thrive in an atmosphere of festivities, celebrations, and rituals rooted in culture; for this reason, it gives priority to organising six seasonal festivals. The best known of these is *Mangal Shobhajatra*, a community procession at dawn to celebrate Pohela Boishakh (Bengali New Year) initiated by Charupith in 1987. For this crowds carry painted paper masks, crowns, traditional dolls, and large sculptures which integrate folk forms and motifs, performing music and comedy from Bengali culture. The Faculty of Fine Arts, Dhaka University, as well as other art schools, universities, and colleges from across the country, now host their own *Mangal Shobhajatra*, which since 2016 has been included in UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage.



Charupith Outdoor Activities for Mangal Shobhajatra Preparation, 2009. Courtesy of Charupith

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Chimurenga

Founded 2002, Cape Town, South Africa



Journal cover of *Chronic*, October 2018. Courtesy of Chimurenga

Taking its name from the Shona word for 'revolutionary struggle', Chimurenga is a pan African platform of writing, art and politics. Drawing together a myriad of voices from across Africa and the diaspora, Chimurenga takes many forms operating as an innovative platform for free ideas and political reflection about Africa by Africans.

Its outputs include a journal of culture, art and politics of the same name (*Chimurenga Magazine*); a quarterly broadsheet called *The Chronic*; *The Chimurenga Library* - an online resource of collected independent pan-African periodicals and personal books; the *African Cities Reader* - a biennial publication of urban life, Africa-style; and the *Pan African Space Station (PASS)* - an online radio station and pop-up studio.

For Chimurenga, the aim of these projects is not just to produce new knowledge, but rather to express the intensities of our world, to capture those forces and to take action. This has required a stretching of the boundaries, for unless form and content are pushed beyond what exists, form is merely reproduced, remaining colonised by what has gone before. This requires not only a new set of questions but its own set of tools; new practices and methodologies that allow for engagement with the lines of flight, fragility, the precariousness, as well as the joy, creativity and beauty that defines contemporary African life. Chimurenga has addressed such topics as the rewriting of the continent's history, the role technology plays in its future, and its musical histories and diasporas.

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Depth of Field Photography Collective (DOF)

Founded 2001, Lagos, Nigeria

Depth of Field (DOF), founded in 2001, is arguably one of the foremost photography collectives in Africa. The earlier members comprised of Uche James Iroha, Kelechi Amadi-Obi, Toyin Sokefun (now Ty Bello) and Amaize Ojeikere. In 2004, Zaynab Odunsi and Emeka Okereke joined the collective. During the most active years of DOF, members of the collective realised collective projects and exhibited together, establishing a remarkable track record of collaborative practice. The six artists who make up the collective assigned, usually themselves, a weekly theme and met a week later to hold critical sessions/discussions on the resulting images. Some notable exhibitions include: *Lagos Inside* (French Cultural Centre, 2003), *Lagos Stadtansichten*: Lagos (IFA Gallery Berlin, 2004), *Snap Judgement* (ICP Newyork, 2004), *Depth of Field* (South London Gallery, 2005), *The Unhomely* (2nd, Seville Biennale, 2006).



Wood Market. Courtesy of Kelechi Amadi-Obi

Although today the members rarely work collaboratively, they have preserved the energy and collective spirit of DOF in their respective artistic practices, and thus have established other platforms of collaboration. Uche James Iroha is the director of Photo Garage, Lagos. Kelechi Amadi-Obi and Ty Bello are involved in the mentoring of a generation of fashion and portrait photographers who are dedicated to pushing the boundaries of aesthetics and visual content in that domain. Emeka Okereke is the founder and artistic director of Invisible Borders Trans-African Project.

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Drik, Pathshala, and Chobi Mela

Drik: Founded 1989, Dhaka, Bangladesh
Pathshala: Founded 1998, Dhaka, Bangladesh
Chobi Mela: Founded 2000, Dhaka, Bangladesh



Pathshala students discussing their photography assignment on campus
Courtesy of Pathshala

Drik is an independent media organisation committed to challenging social inequality. It specialises in providing state of the art media and communication products for a local and global audience. Establishing its own identity through images and words, it defies the stereotypes created by Western media and is a vibrant source of creative energy that refuses to be stifled.

Pathshala South Asian Media Institute is a path-breaking school of photography in South Asia. It offers a wide range of educational programmes in photography, film, and television for local and international students. The students are drawn from a wide range of backgrounds nationally and internationally and are encouraged to understand the world of visual storytelling by creating collaborative learning spaces with 21st-century resources. The vision of the institute is to enable an independent, responsible, and creative media industry that contributes to a just and equitable society. The institute is accredited by the University of Dhaka and collaborates with university exchange programmes internationally.

Chobi Mela International Festival of Photography has become a global platform that brings the world to Bangladesh (as opposed to taking Bangladeshi students to global festivals). Chobi Mela has been a forum for regional concerns and critical artistic practices and creates the conditions to rethink collaborative regional platforms. Each edition has a theme and different venues, and photographers and visual artists are invited to submit proposals through an open call. The organisers, which include former students and teachers of Pathshala as well as invited artists, encourage 'thinking beyond borders' as a way to revitalise society.

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eleven

Founded 2016, Australia

eleven is a collective of Muslim Australian artists, curators and writers. It functions as an independent creative platform through which alternative narratives and autonomous Muslim artistic voices can be expressed, shared and experienced. As a network of creative thinkers and practitioners, eleven uniquely straddles contemporary art, academia and grassroots community engagement with the intent to amplify intellectual, robust and inclusive conversations about art and Muslim faith in Australia. This is articulated through the member's respective art practice, curatorial practice, writing, academic research and community outreach strategies.



Abdul Abdullah, *Journey to the west*, 2017. Digital print. Courtesy the artist.

For eleven, contemporary art offers a functional duality; firstly, within the arts there are the means to disrupt the hegemonic discourse whilst interrogating issues of identity, religiosity, politics, gender, colour, race and class within contemporary culture and cultural history. Secondly, it offers space for artists' personal narratives to elucidate and transcend the ordinary, drawing on experiential and universal forms of communication, to address subjects from the spiritual to the political, the personal, domestic and the mundane as played out in specific socio-political contexts.

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Gidree Bawlee

Founded 2001, Balia, Bangladesh



Children's Puppet Theater Group Rehearsal Balia, Thakurgaon, 2019.
Courtesy of Gidree Bawlee

Thakurgaon-based Gidree Bawlee Foundation of Arts acts as a catalyst for social inclusivity through community-focused activities in northwest Bangladesh. Since 2001 the foundation has brought together local communities and artists from across the country to learn from, expand, and experiment with local cultural traditions, often creating something new in the process. In addition to working with the indigenous Santal community of Balia, Gidree Bawlee also collaborates with other communities living in the village, who are equally custodians of their ancient heritage. The goal is to build creative communities, with every member participating in these 'social sculptures.'

Over the years, Gidree Bawlee has organised a series of distinctive artist-in-residence programmes, each with a different focus - tradition, environment, craft - but all based on a collaborative workshop methodology to build a strong sense of community among diverse groups. *Roots and Land-Art* brought artists from Dhaka together with indigenous artists; *In-Site* projects have an environmental art focus; while *The Future is Handmade* targets the long-standing art forms of the region, introducing urban fashion entrepreneurs, designers, and artists to local artists so that they may together develop new forms with the potential to generate income.

In 2018, *Hamra* was initiated, which, among other practices, includes experimental forms of puppeteering. Also in 2018, the first *Charcha* sessions were organised, which are practice-oriented and aim to facilitate continuous (as opposed to one-off) collaborations. The organisation also supports local cultural activities and traditional sports all year round.

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Green Papaya Art Projects

Founded 2000, Quezon City, The Philippines

Green Papaya Art Projects is an independent and interdependent initiative that supports and organises actions and propositions that explore alternative approaches to the production, dissemination and representation of art in various disciplines. It endeavours to provide a platform for intellectual exchange, sharing of information, critical dialogue and creative-practical collaboration among the arts community.

Green Papaya's previous activities have included non-media based manoeuvres, inclusive of cross-practices in contemporary art that covers moving image, sound, contemporary dance and performance, public intervention, fashion, graphic and industrial design, built environment and architecture. It has also hosted local and international residencies (both formal and informal), started a pirate FM radio, published print and music in various formats, and even organised a biennial (the 15th edition of VIVA ExCon, the Visayas Islands Visual Arts Exhibition and Conference, in 2018). Green Papaya's programming has evolved over the years in response to the changing social and political climates, and the needs of the various communities it hosts and addresses. From having an open platform, to more of an open kitchen and open living room, it strives to uphold artists' positions and interests by providing discursive spaces that entail the most conducive and challenging conditions for both production and presentation of ideas.



A typical hangout scene in front of Green Papaya Art Projects in Quezon City. This particular night was on the occasion of *Denuded*, a performance by Bruno Isaković on 19 November 2014. Courtesy of Green Papaya Art Projects. Photo: Merv Espina

Starting and ending on its own terms, Green Papaya is now preparing for its closure on 5 May 2021. In consolidating and disseminating its archives, Green Papaya is investing in possible futures.

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Gudskul

Founded 2018, Jakarta, Indonesia

Gudskul: Contemporary Art Collective and Ecosystem Studies (or, for short, Gudskul, which is pronounced like 'good school' in English) is a public learning space established by three Jakarta-based art collectives: Grafis Huru Hara, ruangrupa and Serrum. Since the early 2000s, all three have actively immersed themselves into the contemporary art realm by practising a collective and collaborative mode of working. They collectively formed *Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem* in 2015 to practice an expanded understanding of collective values such as equality, sharing, solidarity, friendship and togetherness. The collective transformed into Gudskul in 2018.

Gudskul are operating within an ecosystem environment, in which many actors are co-operating: artists, curators, art writers, managers, researchers, musicians, film directors, architects, cooks, artistic directors, designers, fashionistas, street artists, among many other individual skills. This diversity renders Gudskul as a rich and dynamic 'Ekosistem' (Ecosystem), a fertile ground for enriching learning experience. Gudskul consists of collectives focusing on different artistic practice and media: installation, archive-based, video, sound, performance, media art, citizen participation, graphic arts, design, pedagogy, etc. This variety of perspectives also contributes to diversifying the issues and actors involved in every collaborative project happening socially, politically, culturally, economically, environmentally, and pedagogically.



Speculative Collective at Sharjah Biennial 14. Courtesy of Gudskul / MG Pringgono and Sharjah Art Foundation

Founded in 2012, Grafis Huru Hara (GHH) is a group of Jakarta-based graphic artists who focus on explorative, experimental and educational methods of graphic arts as their main medium. GHH's programmes include exhibitions, graphic art workshops and various publishing projects about graphic arts.

See page 77 for ruangrupa.

Serrum is a Jakarta-based art and pedagogy study group founded in 2006. The word 'serrum' comes from 'share' and 'room' and can be understood further as a 'sharing room'. Serrum approaches pedagogical, sociocultural and urban issues with artistic and educational presentation techniques. Its activities include art projects, exhibitions, workshops, creative discussions and propaganda. For media subjects, Serrum utilises video, murals, graphics, comics and installation art.

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Hill Artists' Group

Founded 1992, Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh

The Hill Artists' Group is based in three districts along Bangladesh's south-eastern border with India and Myanmar known as the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Home to 11 distinct ethnic groups with different languages and cultures, the region is under the control of the Bangladeshi army. A 1997 accord between the government and groups seeking autonomy is still in the process of being implemented in full. In this highly militarised environment, many indigenous people are reluctant to use public spaces. The Hill Artists' Group organises exhibitions to increase public engagement and, more recently, art camps for artists and young people.



Artists collaborating with children for project *Shikkhar shurute chitrakala* at Bishakha School, Khagrachhari, Chittagong, 2019. Courtesy of Hill Artists' Group. Photo: Joydeb Roaja

The group takes inspiration from Chunnilal Dewan (1911-55), the first formally trained Bangladeshi Chakma artist, who encouraged many indigenous artists to pursue academic training and to use art for social good by engaging with local communities. Collectively run by 11 artists between the ages of 20 and 60, the group has 30 artist members. A BDT100 (c. US\$1) monthly subscription fee is used to fund annual exhibitions, hosted in Chittagong, Dhaka, and elsewhere.

Art camps take place across the Chittagong Hill Tracts, connecting local and ethnic groups through art, and using local knowledge as a catalyst for artistic expression. Workshops are also planned with primary and secondary school students, involving Bangladeshi artists, theorists, and researchers. In order to build on the success of the annual group show, two additional annual solo shows are envisaged to promote the work of the Hill Tract community's most promising emerging artists.

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Hong Kong Artist's Union

Founded 2016, Hong Kong

2019 witnessed the city of Hong Kong in turmoil and organic networks of self-organised protests are cultivated in the Anti-extradition movement. Concerning the shrinking freedom of speech in town, the Hong Kong Artist Union (HKAU) has been taking an active and leading role in voicing the artists' burning concerns over political censorship as well as the spread of white terror in town. Through the network it has built since its establishment in 2016, the HKAU endeavours to unite the multitude of individual artists for the cause of not only professional interests but also human rights and freedom in Hong Kong.

Aware of the shift of mobilisation in social change, the HKAU is committed to building a platform for networking artists who tend to work individually rather than collaboratively. They see the importance of unionising artists defending its professional codes as well as rights in a collective and cross-disciplinary manner. Yet, they also value individuality that empower artists to have their own voices. They seek to investigate, by uniting artists through empowering individual practices, how they can build a sustainable network that celebrates diversity and facilitates mutual understanding as well as solidarity, especially in the face of political repression of human rights.

Established in 2016, the Hong Kong Artist Union has recruited over 300 members. Their services available to HK artists include but are not limited to: providing legal consultancy, advocating for equality and fighting for fair treatment by organising talks, workshops, exhibitions, calling for strikes and protests etc.



Hong Kong Artist Union at Work. Courtesy of Hong Kong Artist Union

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INTRPRT

Founded 2016, London, UK



Collaborative mapping for *Ogoniland* project, 2019. Courtesy of INTRPRT

INTRPRT is an investigative research office founded by Nabil Ahmed to fight ecological impunity. The group is made up of architects, remote sensing geographers and visual culture researchers who together investigate under-reported cases using environmental forensic methods, spatial analysis, interactive maps, videos and other innovative tools. The group has a studio in London but also operates out of Trondheim, Warsaw and Madrid.

INTRPRT's current casework includes gathering spatial evidence of contamination from nuclear testing, mining and fossil fuel extraction in sites in Oceania, Asia-Pacific and Africa. This is carried out in collaboration and cooperation with international criminal lawyers, investigative journalists, scientists and local political and civil society organisations. Its advocacy work on climate justice is currently in collaboration with the cultural NGO Further Arts from Port Vila, Vanuatu.

INTRPRT is part of the global campaign for criminalising ecocide under international law. The group undertakes advocacy work, visual culture research, and produces exhibitions, forums and publications towards making international justice approachable. INTRPRT is commissioned by TBA21-Academy and institutionally affiliated with Trondheim Academy of Fine Art at Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU and its engagement with Dhaka is part of a long-term dialogue with the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw and DAS, supported by the Office for Contemporary Art (OCA) Norway.

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Invisible Borders Trans-African Photographers Organisation

Founded 2009, Lagos, Nigeria

Invisible Borders Trans-African Photographers Organisation is an artist-led initiative that works with artists and individuals in contributing to the patching of numerous gaps and misconceptions posed by frontiers within the 54 countries of Africa through art and photography. The organisation hopes to expand its activities beyond issues that relate to geographic borders and other forms of discriminating parameters in photography and arts. It is a platform that also stands as a symbol of the exchange of ideas between cultures and people.

The Invisible Borders Trans-African Road Trip Project, is a flagship project in which about a dozen artists (including photographers, writers, filmmakers and performance artists) collectively take road trips across Africa to explore and participate in various photographic events, festivals and exhibitions while engaging on a daily basis with the environment and the people encountered. The emphasis is primarily on the collective journey of the participating artists who, during their momentary stops in capital cities, create photographic, video and textual works. They also collaborate intensively with colleagues from each of the countries involved.



Participants at Lugard's Rest House, *Borders Within*, 2016. Lokoja, Nigeria. Photo: Emeka Okereke

Participants of Invisible Borders are dedicated to creating works, which portray the dynamism, richness as well as contradictions of the various modes of existence of the African people. In doing this, they reject simplified notions of Africa and tidy definitions, instead hoping to create an archive of works which 'complicates' the depiction of contemporary Africa, one which sees the continent as work-in-progress, rather than a foregone conclusion.

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Jatiwangi Art Factory

Founded 2005, Jatiwangi, Indonesia



Jatiwangi triannual ritual of ringing the Jatiwangi soil with 11,000 People, 2019. Courtesy of Jatiwangi. Photo: Plul

Jatiwangi art Factory is a community-based organisation focused on examining how contemporary art and cultural practices can be contextualised within local life in a rural area, in terms of both form and ideas. Its activities include festivals, performances, music, video, ceramics, exhibitions, residencies, monthly discussions, radio broadcasting and education.

JaF's key programmes are the annual Village Video Festival, the biannual Jatiwangi Residency Festival and the triannual Ceramic Music Festival. These invite artists and cultural practitioners from various disciplines and countries to live, interact and work with the local people. Jatiwangi district, known in the past for its ceramic roof-tile production, includes 16 villages.

The Village Video Festival invites artists and non-artists with a passion for video and media art to collaborate with Jatiwangi's residents and take part in workshops tutored by invited practitioners, including video artists, researchers, filmmakers, and visual communication experts. During the Jatiwangi Residency Festival artists are guests in village homes and collaborate with their hosts and other artists to create new works of art for the festival event. Artists and villagers have an opportunity to showcase their skills and ideas, wherever possible using materials available from Jatiwangi.

The Ceramic Music Festival represents the emergence of a new culture in Jatiwangi of music from clay-based instruments or ceramic music. The first CMF in 2012 saw more than 1500 Jatiwangi people beating roof tiles in the Rampak 1001 Perkusi Genteng (1001 Rooftile Percussion Orchestra). Involving people from all 16 villages in the Jatiwangi district, the orchestra became a movement. Along with JaF and the district government apparatus (district chief, police chief, chiefs of the villages, and so on), more than 3000 Jatiwangi people sang the Jatiwangi hymn and made a collective pledge against self-interest and corruption, promising to uphold Jatiwangi's culture

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Jog Art Space

Founded 2012, Chittagong, Bangladesh

Jog Art Space is based in Chattagram, in south-eastern Bangladesh, the second-largest city in the country, but a place where emerging artists find it difficult to survive. Unlike Dhaka, Chattagram has no commercial galleries and no network of contemporary art collectors, leaving artists to find alternative ways to sustain themselves. Jog Art Space provides the local visual arts community with mentoring support, exhibition opportunities, platforms for exchange and discussion, and access to international artistic exchange programmes. Founded as an informal learning platform, Jog Art Space has grown to become an important support network beyond what is provided by formal academic structures. Some members of the group are teachers at the Institute of Fine Arts and see themselves as a bridge to experimental ways of working outside the confines of the academy, thus the name Jog, which translates as 'connect.'



CHERAGI ART SHOW 6, 2017. Performance by Joydeb Roaja. Courtesy of Jog Art Space. Photo: Zihan Karim

Through the use of photography, video, live performance, and unusual installations, the group interrogates the idea of what art is and how it is made. They advocate taking art out of the gallery, and into public spaces, which they refer to as 'the emancipation of art.' Thus, the group has organised events such as their signature Chiragi art show, which takes place in a bazaar, with performances and installations in open-air food markets, a restaurant, Abhoy Mitra Ghat (on the bank of the Karnaphuli River), and a bookshop.

Once based in a local market, Jog now has a space in southern Chittagong, making it possible to host artists-in-residence, who come from Bangladesh as well as other countries including Japan, Taiwan, and France. During their stay, resident artists conduct workshops with local artists.

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Website: www.jogartspace.blogspot.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/jogartspace
Key people: Zihan Karim, Zahed Ali Chowdhury Yuvraj, Shaela Sharmin, Syed Md. Shohrab Jahan

Jothashilpa

Founded 2016, Bangladesh

Jothashilpa is a centre for traditional and contemporary arts, which considers itself 'a melting pot where fine art, folk art, native art, and crafts are juxtaposed and create a new art language.' The group questions the notion of 'high art' and believes art is an integral part of society which emerges from everyday life. They work with cinema banner painters, weavers, and ceramicists among others, and their priorities include fair trade, women's empowerment, and community development.

Working with and supporting over five hundred artists, artisans, and craftspeople from across Bangladesh, the group makes sure their collaborators are paid fairly and acknowledged for their work. They maintain a showroom and small shop where work made by collaborating artists can be purchased, as well as an online shop.



Jothashilpa Cinema Banner painting workshop, 2019. Courtesy of Jothashilpa. Photo: Mohammad Shoab

They divide their work into four categories: research and publication; crafts/art of the everyday; training and skill development; and events and workshops. They notably run a seven-day cinema banner workshop, taught by master painters with decades of experience; work with Jamdani weavers to make marketable scarves and embroiderers to make notebook covers; and publish books of local poetry.

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Key person: Shawon Akand

Laboratoire Agit'art

Founded 1974, Dakar, Senegal



Initiation, 2019. Centre Culturel Blaise Senghor, Dakar, Senegal. Courtesy of Laboratoire Agit'art

In 1974, along with late filmmaker Djibril Diop Mambety and a group of artists, writers, musicians, actors and filmmakers, Issa Samb founded the Laboratoire Agit'art. Its multidisciplinary actions were directed against the formalism of École de Dakar, an object-bound movement developed at the National Art School of Dakar and shaped by Léopold Sédar Senghor's philosophy of Négritude. Aiming to start out from this conception, moving into experimentation and agitation, ephemerality rather than permanence, and political and social ideas rather than aesthetics notions, the Laboratoire Agit'art developed a distinct 'aesthetic of the social'. Audience participation was paramount to the group's work, as was the privileging of communicative acts over physical objects. Neither utopian nor self-referential, it grounded its actions in the immediate socio-political situation. Today many of the early members have passed away, but the group's spirit persists, materialised in the practice of those who walk in their footsteps.

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Key people: Ican Ramageli, Pascal Nampémanla Traoré

Luta Ca Caba Inda

Informally founded in 2012 (but potentially existing since a poisoned arrow trespassed Nuno Tristão on the waters of the West African coast)

For nearly thirty years, an archive of film and audio material was stored at the Guinean Film Institute in Bissau, institutionally neglected and on the verge of complete ruination. The material in it is a testimony of a decade of collective and internationally connected cinema praxis in Guinea-Bissau, as part of the people's struggle for independence from Portuguese colonialism (1963-1974) and subsequent nation-building.

In 2012, in collaboration with the Guinean filmmakers Sana na N'Hada, Flora Gomes and Suleimane Biai and with institutional support from Arsenal - Institute for Film and Video Art (Berlin), artist Filipa César, curator Tobias Hering and many others embarked on a long term project aimed at re-accessing this archive. Its peculiar state, suspended between ruination and work-in-progress, activates questions about past promises and their contemporary pertinence.



Image courtesy of Luta Ca Caba Inda

The project was titled *Luta ca caba inda* (The struggle is not over yet), after one set of reels found in the archive, a documentary film from 1980 on post-independence Guinea-Bissau abandoned in the editing process. The title cursed the completion of the film, the struggle and also this never to be finished project.

In the course of the *Luta ca caba inda* project a series of discursive events and public screenings have been dedicated to activating the potencies of this collection. *Luta ca caba inda*, as an informal collective of people and praxis, enables an ecology of relations and spaces of care and subjectivity to emerge, materialising in collective assemblies where images and sounds of the archive are discussed between the filmmakers, and European and African audiences. Here the cinema acted as a collective editing room and assembly for reflecting on conditions of the present and projecting new futures.

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Key people: Sana na N'Hada, Filipa César, Tobias Hering, Suleimane Biai, Sónia Vaz Borges, Diana McCarty, Flora Gomes, Aissatu Selde, u. v. a.

Kaali

Founded 2018, Dhaka, Bangladesh



Kaali Collective Group Photo, 2019. Courtesy of Kaali

Kaali Collective is a group of six female photographers from Bangladesh who have individual practices but have come together to support each other. The name is derived from the Goddess Mahakaali, the embodiment of power and destruction.

Through the practice of photography, their aim as a new collective is to create a sense of trust and mutual respect, and in doing so, create the conditions that will enable them to sustain themselves as artists, emotionally if not financially. While they have worked on collective projects, notably a collaboration with Thuma Collective - a Myanmar-based group of female photographers - that resulted in a book, they are primarily focused on supporting each other at this stage of their collaboration. They meet on an ad hoc basis, more or less monthly, but are in constant communication. They depend on each other for honest critique, validation, and motivation.

They describe themselves as 'woman photographers who feel the need to write and rewrite their own stories', although the theme of their work is not necessarily about their lived experience as women.

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/Kaali-Collective-425355568213259
Key people: Aungmakhai Chak, Juthika Dewry Gayatree, Farhana Satu, Farzana Hossen, Rajoyana Chowdhury Xenia, Sadia Marium

Mata Aho Collective

Founded 2012, Aotearoa



Mata Aho Making Aka, 2019. Courtesy of Mata Aho Collective

Mata Aho Collective is a collaboration between four Māori women who produce large scale fibre-based works. Their conceptual framework is founded within contemporary realities of mātauranga Māori (customary Māori knowledge systems) and centres the experiences and knowledge generated by women within and beyond those systems.

Mata Aho produce works with a single collective authorship that could not be physically or conceptually realised within their individual capacities. Their sewn textiles take a practice primarily realised by women at a domestic scale (the scale of the body) and render it large. For them, sewing is a form of wānanga (a conference or forum) that is integral to customary knowledge, be it genealogy, history, or philosophy; the completed textiles become the forum in which this knowledge is passed down.

Mata Aho is the Māori name for the viewfinder on a camera, whose function is to compose, construct and focus. 'Mataaho is also the personification of distant lightning, called upon by the collective's members as they live in different parts of Aotearoa/ New Zealand and often have to signal each other like bat women from afar.

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Instagram: www.instagram.com/mataahocollective
Key people: Erena Baker, Bridget Reweti, Sarah Hudson, Terri Te Tau

Pangrok Sulap Collective

Founded 2010, Ranau Sabah, Malaysia

Pangrok Sulap are a collective based in Sabah in Malaysian Borneo, consisting of indigenous Dusun and Murut artists, musicians and social activists who are dedicated to empowering rural communities through art. Membership is fluid and participation open, and their name expresses their make-up, locality and orientation: Pangrok means punk rock, and Sulap is a hut used as a resting place by Sabahan farmers. Pangrok Sulap has no permanent members as it is 'willing to welcome anyone who wants to contribute'.

Their ethos is conveyed by the slogan 'Jangan Beli, Bikin Sendiri': 'Don't buy, do it yourself'. The group came together to conduct charity work in rural schools, orphanages and homes for the disabled. Working primarily with wood-cut printmaking, they create works that are impressive in scale and seductive in detail, depicting narratives relating to pertinent issues in Sabah. The group has consistently fought against censorship, worked to spread awareness of Sabah's endangered rainforests, and promoted the power of the arts to empower.



Sabah Tanah Airku (Sabah My Homeland), 2017. Printing together with public at the market site in Ranau. Photo courtesy of Strap Design

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Instagram: www.instagram.com/pangrok_sulap
Key people: Rizo Leong, Mc Feddy Simon, Jirum Manjat, Mohd Hizal, Jibrail Jamil, Memeto Jeck

proppaNOW

Founded 2003, Brisbane, Australia



proppaNOW Group Shot. Courtesy of proppaNOW

Queensland's leading Indigenous arts collective, proppaNOW, presents a unique and controversial perspective of black Australia which is sometimes confronting and always thought-provoking. Set up in Brisbane in 2003, this collective gives urban-based Aboriginal artists a voice.

The name proppaNOW best encapsulates the philosophy of the collective. The group adopted the name after a conversation between Bell and Ah Kee - they wanted to form a 'proppa' group and it had to be about 'Now'. The collective aims to provide a supportive environment for members to explore current social and cultural issues through art.

Website: www.proppanow.wordpress.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/proppanow
Instagram: [#proppanow #proppaNOW](https://www.instagram.com/proppanow)
Twitter: twitter.com/proppanow
Key people: Vernon Ah Kee, Tony Albert, Richard Bell, Jennifer Herd, Gordon Hookey, Laurie Nilsen and Megan Cope

ruangrupa

Founded 2000, Jakarta, Indonesia

ruangrupa is a collective that supports the idea of art within urban and cultural contexts by involving artists and people from other disciplines such as social sciences, politics, technology, media, etc, to contribute critical observation and views about Indonesian urban contemporary issues. ruangrupa also produce collaborative works in the form of art projects such as exhibitions, festivals, art lab, workshop, research, as well as books, magazines and online-journal publications.

From 2015-18, ruangrupa co-developed the cultural platform Gudang Sarinah Ekosistem. As a cross-disciplinary space it aims to maintain, cultivate and establish an integrated support system for creative talents, diverse communities, and various institutions. It also aspires to be able to make connections and collaborate, to share knowledge and ideas, as well as to encourage critical thinking, creativity, and innovation. The results of these joint collaborations are open for public access, and presented with various exhibitions, festivals, workshops, discussions, film screenings, music concerts, and publications of journals.

In 2018, together with Serrum and Grafis Huru Hara, ruangrupa co-initiated GUDSKUL: contemporary art collective and ecosystem studies (or Gudskul, in short, pronounced like 'good school' in English). It is a public learning space established to practice an expanded understanding of collective values, such as equality, sharing, solidarity, friendship and togetherness. See page 70.



RURU, 2000 onwards. Installation image from 31st São Paulo Biennial, 2014. Courtesy of ruangrupa and São Paulo Biennial

ruangrupa have been chosen to curate documenta fifteen, which they will centre around the notion of 'Lumbung' (literally translates to 'rice barn') as a metaphor for common resource management and governance. ruangrupa practice Lumbung at GUDSKUL, and intend to expand it into planetary scale through the next edition of documenta.

Website: www.ruangrupa.org
Key people: Ade Darmawan, Ajeng Nurul Aini, Daniella Fitria Praptomo, Farid Rakun, Indra Ameng, Iswanto Hartono, Julia Sarisetiati, Mirwan Andan, Narpati Awangga and Reza Afisina

SECMOL

Founded 1988, Ladakh, India

The Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL) was founded by a group of young Ladakhis to reform the educational system in Ladakh. Today, their activities are extremely varied and numerous. SECMOL organises activities for Ladakhi youth, runs a campus for students going to school or college in Leh, develops solar energy projects, and much more.

Ladakh is a high desert region in the Indian Himalayas, with a culture and history drawing from Tibet, India, Kashmir and Central Asia. No road connected it to the outside world until the 1960s, but recent decades have brought a flood of development and tourism. SECMOL strives to equip young Ladakhis and others growing up in Ladakh, especially those from rural or disadvantaged backgrounds, with the knowledge, skills, perspective, and confidence to choose and build a sustainable future. One of such initiatives is SECMOL's Ice Stupa project, an artificial conical ice formation with minimal surface area exposed to direct sunlight, which allows for an extended access to water in local communities impacted by climate change.

Over the years, students and teachers at the SECMOL School Campus have been working on a variety of innovative projects such as solar-heated mud buildings that need no heating even in -25°C, low-cost greenhouses that enable large scale farming even in Ladakhi winters, underground mud pipes that are one-tenth the cost of the cheapest water pipes, solar rickshaws, solar-heated bio-gas plant and rocket stoves that cook and heat with a fraction of the wood needed by other stoves and even bake bread with the exhaust heat... just to name a few.



Ice Stupa. Courtesy of SECMOL

Website: www.secmol.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/secmol
Key people: Sonam Wangchuk, Tsering Angchuk Ralam, Konchok Norgay, Asma Yousuf, Malin Linderöth, Dechen Angmo, Rebecca Norman, Faiza Khan, Ishwarya G, Suril Patel, Phuntsok Namgyal, Tashi Angial, Stanzin Spalzom, Stanzin Norbu, Tsetan Dorje, Spalgyas, Janak Khadka and Thukjaj Dolma

Shako

Founded 2003, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Shako - Woman Artists Association of Bangladesh - for women and by women - believes art can play a role in healing society. It raises funds for individuals, male and female, who are unwell or in need of medical treatment; uses art to encourage physically or mentally challenged people; and promotes female artists and helps them develop skills. A 'shako' is a temporary bamboo bridge, built to make it possible to cross rivers and streams, an apt metaphor for Shako's work connecting talented female artists to vulnerable communities.



Shako Workshop *Immersing in Nature (Session 2)* on November 2019, at Aastha school, Dhaka introducing the idea of migration through plants, 2019. Courtesy of Shako

Shako has organised over thirty exhibitions, pointedly exhibiting the work of well-known professional artists alongside that of workshop participants and lesser-known artists, demonstrating their belief in social equality and inclusion. They routinely donate at least fifty per cent of all profits made from artwork sales to those in need and also maintain a fund for emergency relief. They have also run over ten therapeutic workshops for groups such as the workers who survived the 2013 collapse of the Rana Plaza factory, acid attack survivors, cancer patients, and children from shelter homes.

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Key people: Kuhu Plamondon (founder), Fareha Zeba, Farzana Islam, Kanak Chanpa Chakma, Naima Haq, Rebaka Sultan, Shulekha Chaudhury (founding members)

Shelter Promotion Council

Founded 1986, Kolkata, India

Shelter Promotion Council (India) was established with the objective of promoting the cause of housing and inclusive development of rural and semi-urban areas with special emphasis on the economically weaker section of society. It is a Voluntary Organisation consisting of social activists, architects, engineers, scientists, environmentalists, artists and planners.

Through participatory planning processes, they are currently examining the future of our cities in terms of cultural significance, sustainable and passive architecture, adaptation of vernacular technology in contemporary architecture and public amenities and spaces. The organisation is looking at the context of urban renewal projects in Kolkata and smaller towns of East and Northeast India as well as rural development of temporary/ kuccha building technology, design and construction.

The council has produced public art festivals in Sikkim called *Blooming Sikkim Public Art Festival* and *Hornbill Public Art Festival* in Nagaland, the first of its kind which comprised a melange of new media art and contemporary art addressing issues of socio-political and environmental nature in Northeast India. It has produced *No Man's Land*, an ongoing public art project at the international border of India and Bangladesh in East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya. It is an attempt to do public art projects across both sides of the border to shape and understand the strong historical, cultural and sociological contexts that govern both sides of the border. Shelter Promotion Council focusses on interventions in public spaces ensuring access to art for people from all walks of life, cutting across socio-economic and cultural barriers.



Untitled Place & Time: Bholaganj, India, 2014. Courtesy of Shelter Promotion Council. Photo: Sayantan Maitra Boka

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Key people: Sayantan Maitra Boka

Shomoy Group

See Page 83



Shomoy Group members, From left to right: Dhali Al Mamoon, Aziz Sharafi, All Morshed Noton, two friends, Shishir Bhattacharjee, and Saidul Haque Juise and Dilara Begum Jolly at a train window. Image courtesy of Shomoy Group

Shoni Mongol Adda

Founded 2016, Bangladesh



Courtesy of Shoni Mongol Adda

Shoni Mongol Adda is not a conventionally structured group – yet, paradoxically, it attempts to create structure around the Bengali practice of informal discussions that fall outside of hierarchies and protocol. Just as the word 'adda' is not easily translated (it more or less means 'a casual talk with friends and peers'), the group is a longstanding get-together of like-minded people who share ideas and knowledge in a serious yet informal way. The adda sessions are hosted by guest speakers who present their work. Twice a week, on Saturday and Tuesday ('Shonibar' and 'Mongolbar' in Bangla, which is where the group derives its name), artists, curators, art teachers, journalists, economists, architects, filmmakers, theatre artists, and others come together by invitation or word of mouth and engage in conversation. There's also a pun in the name, as 'shoni' and 'mongol', besides being days of the week, can also mean 'bad' and 'good'.

Examples of recent sessions include *Humanity, Crime, and Investigation*, led by a police sub-inspector; *Imagination and Thinking Related to Cosmological Matter*, led by a retired engineer and cosmology enthusiast; and *A Short Political Economy for Artists*, led by a politician.

The venue is Kamor Cafe and Restaurant, an artist-run cafe close to the Shilpakala Academy in Dhaka. The cafe, originally a separate venture, is now run by a member of the group and has a symbiotic relationship with Shoni Mongol Adda – alternately run by members, changing its name, but consistently providing the backdrop since 2016, and even hosting exhibitions.

The group is expanding its scope and has received funding from Samdani Art Foundation to hold three discussions/seminars in different art institutions in the greater Dhaka area. Subjects include new media, the evolution of folk art, and the history of the oldest art school in East Bengal. The group also plans to disseminate documentation of each adda via web and print publications.

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Key people: Shoni Mongol Adda team

Agricultural Cooperative of Somankidi Coura

Founded 1977, Mali, Kayes Region along the Senegal River

Sowing Somankidi Coura, a Generative Archive, is a long-term research endeavour by Raphaël Grisey in collaboration with Bouba Touré around the permacultures and archives of Somankidi Coura, a self-organised agricultural cooperative along the Senegal river founded by a group of former African migrant workers and activists in France in 1977 after the Sahel drought of 1973. Sowing Somankidi Coura unfolds and generates cine-geographies that reveal the boundaries between the liberation struggles of migrant workers in France, the Pan-African history of the cooperative and potentialities of permaculture.

Through a practice of filmmaking, archiving, publication, workshop and theatre, Sowing Somankidi Coura, engages in the articulation of liberation narratives, collective care and peasant alliances towards a denaturalisation and decolonisation of development politics.



Planting trees, Farming cooperative of Somankidi Coura, 1977. Photo: Bouba Touré

The research navigates the liaisons across partial perspectives; situated knowledges and ecosystems; hetero-temporalities; affinities between soils, plants, animals and farming technologies; archives and reservoirs. Deploying diverse modes of image circulation, the work aimed at resisting forces of erosion, determination, national migration management politics, and the patenting of colonial agro-industries.

The Association of the women of Somankidi Coura, the Regional Union of the agricultural cooperatives of Kayes (URCAK), the Radio Rural of Kayes, are organisation and/or collectives closely linked to the Cooperative of Somankidi Coura.

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Key people: Siré Soumaré, Ousmane Sinaré, Bathily Bakhoré, Ladjji Niangané, Mady Niakhaté, Karamba Touré, Fabourama Sissoko, Seydou Traoré, Moussa Diaby, Bangaly Camara, Bala Moussa Diallo, Ibrahima Camara, Dramane Diaby, Assa Soukho, Mariam Soumaré, Goundo Kamissoko Niakhaté, Souaré Samassa, N'diaye Diaby, Dramane Diaby, Moussa Coulibaly, Founty Diallo, Samba Sy, Dado Diakhité, Oumou Diara, Dado Niangané, Miaro Niakhaté, Fune Niakhaté, Maïmouna Bathily, Awa Bathily, Batou Coulibaly, Mina Diallo, Salla Soumaré, Assa Coulibaly, Ara Traoré, Idrissa Diara, Haby Diara, Ousmane Keïta, Ibrahima Traoré, Saly Soukho

Sowing Somankidi Coura, a Generative Archive

Founded 1977, Mali, Kayes Region along the Senegal River

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Thuma

Founded 2017, Yangon, Myanmar



Thuma Collective members posed in front of an artwork at their second collective exhibition *Disclosure* at Myanmar Deitta Gallery, Yangon, Myanmar, September 2019. Courtesy of Thuma

Thuma Collective is a group of seven women photographers from Myanmar who are dedicated to visual storytelling. 'Thuma' means 'She' in Myanmar language. They come from different non-photography backgrounds bringing in their diverse experiences and perspectives to the collective. The collective aims to promote the practice of visual storytelling in Myanmar and amplify voices through the eyes of women and to inspire and encourage women who are interested in using photography as a language to tell stories and engage with their world.

They have worked with NGOs, local women and youth organisations to provide training on using photographic storytelling as a tool to connect with others as part of advocacy and artistic expression. They have had two group exhibitions in Myanmar: *Us and Beyond* in May 2018, which also resulted in a self-published collective photobook and *Disclosure* in September, 2019. In early 2019, they collaborated with Dhaka-based photographers from Kaali Collective on *Bridging the Naf*, an exchange programme resulting in a series of photo stories and a photobook. Currently, they are participating in Contemporary Documentary Photography Practice, an immersive 7 month course which is a collaboration with Myanmar Deitta Gallery, funded by Foundation for a Just Society and supported by VII Academy.

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Key people: Khin Kyi Htet, Rita Khin, Shwe Wutt Hmon, Tin Htet Paing, Yu Yu Myint Than

Trovoa

Founded 2019, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

The idea of the National Trovoa came from four women artists of colour, each of whom was reflecting on the presence of their bodies in the world. They come from a movement that calls attention to the lack of visibility, space and remuneration – in other words, providing a context for the female artist of colour.

The discussion grew out of and resulted in a collective as a space of possible exchanges. They are a group of artists and curators gathering with the intention of making a national exhibit of visual arts produced by black and non-white women. They understand the need to speak of and to exhibit the plurality of their languages, discourses, research and media produced by them as women of colour.

To the Trovoa artists it increasingly became more of an issue that, in the art circles in general, even in spaces said to be open, that value the call for diversity and the presence of racialised bodies, there is no understanding that the discourse of non-white artists goes well beyond the denunciatory speech of a day-to-day racism.



Trovoa's Summer, 2019. Courtesy of Trovoa

In Trovoa there is also a strong discussion about freedom in their productions as artists. In Brazil specifically, there is little interest of institutions to absorb their work, and in addition to that, if it is not related to racial trauma, they tend to be perceived as a homogenous group, the 'women of colour artists', the collective holds.

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Key people: Ana Lira, Ana Almeida, Ana Clara Tito, Ariana Nuala, Biarritz, Carolina Lauriano, Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro, Carla Santana, Cecl Bandeira, Dhiovana Barroso, Fabiana Francisca, Gabriela Monteiro, Hariel Revignet, Heloisa Hariadne, Ione Maria, Jalara Dias, Juliana dos Santos, Kalor Pacheco, Kerolayne Kemblin, Keyna Eleison, Kika Carvalho, Lais Amaral, Mariana Rodrigues, Marissa Noana, Micaela Cyrino, Natacha Barros, Nutyelly Cena, Okun, Raquel Rocha, Silvana Mendes, Sunshine Santos, Thays Chaves

Uronto

Founded in 2012, Dhaka, Bangladesh



Performance *The Territory* by Abhimanyu Dalui with residence community at Uronto Residential Art Exchange Program, Sunamganj, 2017. Courtesy of Uronto. Photo: Shams Xaman

Uronto is an artists' community that reconnects with lost memories of forgotten places through interdisciplinary contemporary artistic interventions. They create opportunities to connect to cultural histories through coexisting and co-creating, gaining access to memories that inspire creative workers and empower current generations with knowledge. The Uronto Residential Art Exchange Programme is one of the major yearly initiatives of Uronto, which involves interactive pop-up residencies and workshops at sites that are mostly abandoned and soon-to-be-demolished heritage buildings in rural areas. Uronto believes that if we lose a heritage building we lose a part of our sense of belonging. Each iteration takes place in a new location, explores a new community, and brings together a new group of local and international artists from different backgrounds, including visual artists, writers, musicians, storytellers, architects, poets, engineers, and so on. Operating as a 'site-responsive' art exchange programme, ten to fifteen creative practitioners are convened through an international open-call. The participants live in the surroundings of these structures, fully immersed in day-to-day life, for a week to ten days, exploring oral history through the community. The process culminates in an 'Open Studio Day.' Since 2012, through nine iterations, Uronto has brought together over a hundred artists of various creative orientations from more than nine countries making work at nearly a dozen soon-to-be-lost architectural structures/palaces in Bangladesh.

Uronto mediates between local and international artists, rural and urban inhabitants, as well as conventional and experimental creative disciplines. Through shared experiences and storytelling, they have created an archive (available on their website) of lost narratives. Their work is a collaboration that both cherishes old narratives and creates new ones, resulting in a greater appreciation of the chosen sites.

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/UrontoArt

Key person: Sadya Mizan

Nobody Told Me There Would be Days Like These

Curated by Mustafa Zaman

Assistant Curator: Ruxmini Reckvana Q Choudhury

The 1980s was a decade during which art played an increasingly social-political role in Dhaka's art scene. This defiant point of departure from 'surface painting', which saw its emergence in the 1960s, can be seen as a tectonic shift since this strain of art-making continues to inform the discourses and debates across the cultural horizon in Bangladesh to this day.

Artists sought detours and vocalised antagonistic positions primarily to dislodge art from its elite academic perch. Dehumanisation and storytelling became twin conduits for artists to formulate new strategies to articulate dissent. In artist-curated exhibitions, access to ideas and information on art and artists was supplied with the intention to edify the public. This 'critical turn' left its influence on many disciplines – it effected a change in how artists, poets, as well as theatre and film activists perceived the relationship between their works and society. Thus, the 1980s witnessed a determined detour through reframing of the 'social' and invocation of the 'political'.

New idioms were born out of the resistance movements waged against the longest-ruling military dictatorship in Bangladesh – the regime of the recently deceased general H.M. Ershad that lasted from 1981 to 1990. The dictator's unscrupulous move to align with those who collaborated with the Pakistani army during the Liberation War in 1971, the pseudo-Islamic garb that came with the emerging brand of populism he was responsible for, the opening up of the economy to global market forces, and rising corruption coupled with political repression provided the backdrop for the subsequent resistance movements leading to the final overthrow of the dictator in 1990.

To parse the developments of the 1980s, one can say that in the arts, it was the decade of radicalisation as interrogation won over introspection and action over passivity. It was an era of political resistance as well as cultural re-organisation. In the arts, this critical turn resulted out of the conviction that to topple the dictator one must spread antagonism in all spheres of life. After the fall of the dictator in 1990 – the fate of 'democracy' in Bangladesh became entangled with issues of corruption and flawed elections, and art and activism of the 1980s were carried over to subsequent decades to be reframed and re-organised to bear on various different goals.

As DAS mounts its fifth edition, in which a synergy of the newest samples of South Asian art provide fodder for the public eye/mind, 'Nobody Told Me There Would be Days Like These' maps the history of groups that laid the ground for art and theatre, film and literary movements in the 1980s with the hope that we do not

collectively renege on our promises made in favour of life. The exhibition's title is a nod to a song from the same era by John Lennon and Yoko Ono.

Visual Arts



Shishir Bhattacharjee, *Could have been the Story of a Hero 2*, 1986. Oil on canvas. Courtesy of the Artist

In the visual arts, Quamrul Hassan (1921-1988) set a visual language into motion that sought to critique the emerging ruling elite of the early 1970s. Otherwise well-known for his pleasant depiction of rural life, Hassan, who belonged to the first generation of artists in East Bengal when Pakistan was formed, tackled what may be termed as the gentrification of urban society and the concomitant loss of social values. His political art, which articulated a critical voice by crowding his canvas with symbolic motifs where the dominant minority or alienated elite is represented in both human and animal form, was the first attempt in Bangladeshi art to instrumentalise 'social fact'.

Later in the 1980s, a group of young artists calling themselves 'Shomoy' emerged fresh out of art institutions. The group's politically cast art once again brought storytelling to centre stage and sought to redefine narrative painting in South Asia. Shomoy, which literally translates to time, sought political salvation, hoping to end the military misrule which coloured life in Bangladesh in the 1980s. Their creative acts percolated into a critical analysis of their time, often reflecting the prevailing mass discontent, seeking to restore the ethos of the 1971 Liberation War. The members of Shomoy were Dhali Al Mamoon (b. 1958), Wakilur Rahman (b. 1961), Habibur Rahman (b. 1958), Shishir Bhattacharjee (b. 1960), Nisar Hossain (b. 1960), Dilara Begum Jolly (b. 1960), Aziz Sharafi

(b. 1956), Saidul Haque Jaise (b. 1960), Ali Morshed Noton (b. 1958), Lala Rukh Selim (b. 1963), Tawfiqur Rahman (b. 1959).

Shomoy works lay at the intersection of many fields of emerging discourses and forms. The most active Shomoy members, including Shishir Bhattacharjee, Dilara Begum Jolly, Nisar Hossain, Dhali Al Mamun, and Wakilur Rahman also transported their creative energy to activities which lay beyond the scope of their respective disciplines. To understand the drift, one must take into account how the idea of dissent began to redefine cultural production of the era. The most active protagonists of theatre, cinema and poetry began to respond to the unfolding political events and the marketisation of the economy.

Shomoy artists worked simultaneously through various themes and trajectories, utilising the power latent in little-noticed popular culture of South Asia. They devised their own brand of social realism – a way to attend to the ‘here and now.’ The works of Shishir Bhattacharjee, Wakilur Rahman, and Nisar Hossain unveiled the decadence and dehumanisation of the era while throwing up sharp critiques of the dictatorial and imperial political scheme. Both Dilara Begum Jolly and Dhali Al Mamun’s figurative motifs began to break down into mangled entities referring to what was rotting in society, while Nisar Hossain’s insect-like predators were set against a backdrop teeming with references to rickshaw paintings.

The belief in secularism and democracy was of prime importance to the generation of artists that came to maturity in the 1980s. Pitted against the destructive power unleashed through subsequent regimes, their conviction to create a secular social sphere fuelled their creativity, although the zeal for the ‘real’ assumed many different dimensions in theatre, cinema and even in poetry. If secular logic was the common thread to all this, artist’s voices often turned sarcastic while talking back to power.

Architecture



Muzharul Islam’s Chittagong University. Courtesy of Muzharul Islam Archives

Networks of knowledge also kept people in sync with one another although they were working from within their respective disciplines. Chetana, a platform that grew out of a study circle that was presided over by late architect Muzharul Islam (1923–2012), often hosted their programmes in the presence of poets and literary personalities as part of the group’s early advocacy for interdisciplinarity. The late poets Shamsur Rahman (1929–2006) and Belal Chowdhury (1938–2018) and late professor and educationist Kabir Chowdhury (1923–2011) attended Chetana’s inauguration event. The most important element of their activism was that they attempted to bring Bangladesh’s architecture and heritage into the conversation about modern architecture. Chetana saw the union of like-minded architects: Raziul Hassan, Nazmul Latif, Syed Azaz Rasul, Uttam Kumar Saha, Nahas Khalil, then architects working in different fields including teaching at the architecture department of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, BUET, comprised the group. Saiful Haq (b. 1958), and Kazi Khaleed Ashraf (b. 1959), were members from the time they were fourth year students at BUET and are now established architects and researchers who continue to build on the ethos of Chetana.

Theatre



Dhaka Theatre’s *Paer Awaj Pawa Jay*, directed by Abdullah Al Mamun, South Korea, 1981. Courtesy Dhaka Theatre

Resistance took the most effective and potent form in the arena of the theatre. The most influential iconic theatre and literary personality Selim Al Deen (1949–2008), who initiated Dhaka Theatre, was also responsible for Gram Theatre (launched in 1983) and worked to extend urban theatre to the rural hinterland. Nasiruddin Yousuff Bacchu, an actor-director, played an important role in the creolisation of modern theatre by way of absorbing Al Deen’s ideals and activism. By the late 1980s, more than 150 theatre troupes were developed in villages across the country under Gram Theatre, although most ceased to be active over the following years. These troupes lent momentum to a country-wide cultural regeneration and in spreading awareness among the masses about the slow erosion of society and politics under military rule. As a playwright and teacher, Selim Al Deen introduced what many refer to as ‘Epic Realism.’ His extensive study on Bengali popular theatre genre called ‘jatra’ coupled with his attempt in retracing

the Hindu-Buddhist performance heritage led to his renowned drama ‘Kittankhola’, which is still considered a milestone in the modern theatre history in Bangladesh.

Dhaka Theatre and Aranyak among other theatrical groups were instrumental in staging dramas that either harked back to the theme of the Liberation War and the repression of the Pakistan junta, or aimed to expose the anomalies of military dictatorship. Some groups even attempted to poke fun at the then military ruler. Theatrical performances served as a means to educate and open the eyes of the masses. ‘Payer Awaj Pawa Jay’ is a case in point. First staged by Dhaka Theatre in 1976, it was written by the late writer and poet Syed Shamsul Haq (1935–2016) and was themed around the atrocities of the Pakistan army and the abuse of power by the village elite in the name of religion.

Film



Short Film Forum, Morshedul Islam, *Chaka working* (still). Courtesy Morshedul Islam

The Short Film Movement added a decisive layer to the cultural fabric woven since the early 1980s. Morshedul Islam and Tareque Masud debuted as young filmmakers in the 1980s and were part of a greater movement centred on the Bangladesh Short Film Forum. Formed in 1986 by a group of young independent filmmakers and activists inspired and mentored by Alamgir Kabir (1938–1989), the platform was created after years of activism and campaigning for creative and aesthetically pleasing cinema by collectives called film societies. When the forum came into being it featured some of the most notable young Bangladeshi film makers among its members at the time, including Morshedul Islam (b. 1957), Tanvir Mokammel (b. 1955), late Tareque Masud (1956–2011), Enayet Karim Babul, Tareq Shahriar, Abu Sayeed (b. 1962), Shameem Akhtar, Manjare Hasin Murad, Yasmine Kabir, Nurul Alam Atique, Zahidur Rahim Anjan, N. Rashed Chowdhury, and Akram Khan.

The Forum, by way of a biennial and non-competitive International Short and Independent Film Festival, kept hope alive for independent filmmaking, beyond injecting the cultural scene with much-needed

optimism in favour of cultural activism. The first festival was held in 1988 and was entirely dedicated to short films. The forum is still active and it continues to organise seminars and workshops on films and film festivals all over Bangladesh, in addition to holding film shows and film-related events at their permanent venue at Bangladesh Film Centre in Shahbagh, Dhaka.

Tareque Masud and Morshedul Islam played a decisive role in the development of Bangladeshi film, they made films that at once drew critical appreciation and public attention, the former for his documentaries and latter for his short-length films. ‘Adam Surat’, a documentary on the legendary artist S. M. Sultan by Tareque Masud, and ‘Chaka’ by Morshedul Islam were among the most influential films of the era, while Abu Sayeed, an early enthusiast of short-length film, later took to making feature films. Chaka carried over the idea of the ‘witness’, a theme that runs across many of his works, from the 1980s to the new millennium while Sayeed attempted to bring ‘Kittonkhola’, a popular stage play written by Selim Al Deen, to the silver screen in the year 2000.

Literature

The Little Mag movement was the veritable crucible of talents where writers and poets willing to break the mainstream circuit gathered. Working as a platform for literary aspirants who were willing to look beyond already explored territories, the alternative publications that gave it its shape also created space for artists and filmmakers to work in alignment with the cultural-political goals of the time. Among many who played a catalytic role, poet Sajjad Sharif (b. 1963) was particularly active in threading the literary world with the world of art and film as he was behind some specific moments of convergence between members of the Shomoy group and the filmmaker Tareque Masud.

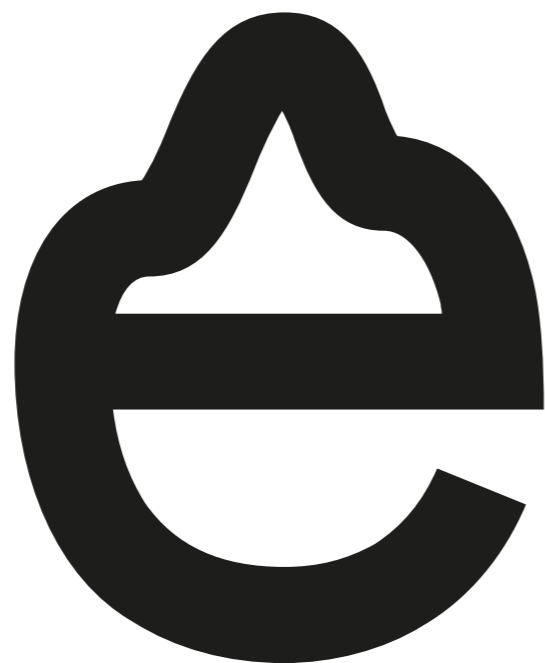


Little Mag Movement, Cover of Gandeep, 3rd Issue, 1988. Courtesy of Sajjad Sharif

Sajjad Sharif's contributions can be traced to the early editions of the 'Anindya' (meaning one who lived eternally without blemish) and 'Gandeeb', or 'Gandiva' (the bow of Arjuna, the central character of the Mahabharata). Little magazines were self-published zines; the writers and poets involved took turns in generating funds for printing. Sometimes they were sponsored by literary enthusiasts. They were cheap and contained works of prose and poetry by emerging poets and writers.

Although not directly involved with any little magazine, Ahmed Sofa (1943–2001) inspired many in the alternative literary circuit with his outspoken nature and intellectual honesty, including Salimullah Khan (b. 1958). While Sofa was stationed at Aziz Market, a place where these magazines were conceived and sold, he nurtured a new breed of young poets and writers. These were the literary creatives of the time who fought against conventional patterns of thought that then pervaded mainstream culture.

Among the little magazines that worked as nodal points through which artists, writers and poets made their presence heard, Anindya saw its beginnings in 1985 and Gandeeb had its start in 1987. Together they worked as an alternative platform where the possibility of cross-fertilisation first began to appear. The editors of the two of the most influential and long-lasting alternative magazines (both are in circulation now) were respectively Habib Wahid (b. 1962) and Tapan Barua (b. 1956). Of the emerging renegades who helped develop their reputation, some became part of the mainstream at a later date.



Spatial Movements

Universes exist within us and universes exist beyond us. We inhabit our bodies; our bodies inhabit dwellings; and our imaginations inhabit limitless realms free from our mortal limitations. The artists in this movement explore the spaces that we move through (physical, social, political, discursive) and the ways we are able to transmit stories and knowledge across (life)times, building bridges from past to present to future. These stories and the belief and value systems embedded in them often speak to how humanity related to physically inaccessible worlds below the earth's crust and beyond the sky. Certain works of art have the transformative power to make us feel and understand what is at stake, inspiring us to take action and bring new worlds into being. Your movement through the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy was carefully considered in our design of the Summit, contributing to the activation of artworks and ideas found across the venue. By sharing your experience with others both in physical and digital space, we can make history together.

Clarissa Tossin



A Queda do Céu (The Falling Sky), 2019. Laminated archival inkjet prints and wood. Commissioned and produced by Samdani Art Foundation for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Commonwealth and Council

When we talk about environmental concerns relating to the Amazon, we must consider its native peoples as part of the ecology. For instance, the terra preta, or black soil – the most fertile in the Amazon Basin – is a product of long-term indigenous land management practices, going back to ancient times. Discoveries such as this expand our perception of the forest beyond wild land myths and re-signify the 'jungle' as a result of human interactions with nature over time. The Amazon rainforest has been the recurring subject of Clarissa Tossin's work, providing a rich study in the impacts of global commodity chains and by extension, the perpetuation of colonial forces enacted on the region's environment, cultures, and people. *A Queda do Céu (The Falling Sky)* further engages with themes of ecological precarity and social justice. The weavings combine satellite images of the recent fires in Amazônia with Nasa images of the Mars plane named after the forest (Amazonis Planitia), the Amazon River and the Milky Way. The patterns were made to resemble the geometric partition of land created by agribusiness mostly visible from satellite images or bird's-eye view. The triptych suggests a constellation of planets that project ambiguous visions of futurity, post-human landscapes and the ruins of a world yet to come.

Clarissa Tossin uses installation, video, performance, sculpture, and photography to negotiate hybridisation of cultures and the persistence of difference. By embracing semantic displacements in given material cultural ecosystems, Tossin's work reflects on circulation from the level of the body to the global industry.

b. 1973, Porto Alegre; lives and works in Los Angeles

Korakrit Arunanondchai and Alex Gvojcic

Rising up three-storeys of the DAS venue, Korakrit Arunanondchai's monumental sculpture of a *naga* (a reincarnating deity found across the mythology of South and Southeast Asia that shifts between snake and human form) transforms into a stage for the artist's newest performance work in collaboration with Alex Gvojcic that connects the river-based histories of Bangladesh and Thailand. Arunanondchai and Gvojcic will create a soundscape within an environment based on Ghost Cinema, a post-Vietnam War ritual in Thailand where outdoor screenings function as communions between the audience and the spirits. Introduced by American soldiers stationed in Thailand who screened films in the forests, creating enigmatic projections which locals attributed to ghosts, the appropriation of the ritual by locals reflects the rich history of military coups and their effect on local folklore and rituals.



Together from No History in a room filled with people with funny names 5 Working images towards performance. Courtesy of the artists, BANGKOK CITYCITY, C L E A R I N G, Carlos/Ishikawa

Arunanondchai works with performance, video, and installation, addressing the crossing over of themes like family, superstition, spirituality, history, and politics. With an interest in collaboration, he transforms gallery spaces into arenas of connections, personal and cross-cultural. These allow him to explore relationships in recorded history while sidestepping its preoccupation with linear narratives. Alex Gvojcic specialises in the interdisciplinary crossing of art, fashion, and music. Within his breath of multimedia projects, which span from entertainment production to environmental design, each embodies a signature sharpness in both imagery and concept.

b. 1986, Bangkok; lives and works in New York and Bangkok

b. 1986, Chicago; lives and works in New York

Minam Apang



Untitled, 2017. Charcoal on cloth. Courtesy of the artist and Samdani Art Foundation

Minam Apang produces expansive intricate imaginary landscapes that reveal her spiritual connection to who she is and where she comes from. The artist moved from Arunachal Pradesh to Goa, mirroring the migration of large numbers of youth from Northeast India who are forced to leave due to a rampant military presence and the consequent lack of employment opportunities. Apang's savage yet delicate newly commissioned drawing registers this trauma, reimagining it at a mythical scale suspended above the heads of viewers. The sea seems to lay siege to the mountains, tilting the axis of the world – alluding to the conflicted landscape of Arunachal Pradesh, but also to the many chapters of change that our planet has experienced: the same Himalayas that are melting today were once completely underwater.

Apang's practice predominantly employs drawing with charcoal. In early works, she painted scenes inspired by the folktales and myths passed down orally by her tribe in Arunachal Pradesh. More recently, her landscapes and figures are drawn from imagination and informed by hybrid experiences of the landscapes she has inhabited.

b. 1980, Naharlagun; lives and works in Goa

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury

LOVE LETTER TO THE LAST SUN is a newly commissioned interactive installation is composed of a combination of everyday objects and natural elements (fire, water, earth, air) and aims to recalibrate the ecological co-existence of human and non-human living organisms in our universe. The work resides between fiction and reality, between the conceptual and the concrete, between an imagined reality and the construction of it. It fights against normative expectations. The progress of modernity is leading us towards the great destruction of this planet. Through Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury's use of cameras and projectors, the viewer is able to locate her/himself within the web and connectivity of a total magnetic force, while perceiving the energetic pulses of the universe. Immersing the viewer in his utopian world, s(he) is re-connected with planets and other beings, both human and not.

Chowdhury's interdisciplinary practice plays with different media, ranging from installation, assemblage, video, collage, sculpture, found footage, experimental film and more to conjure a multifaceted artistic universe. By creating unfamiliar space and situations for everyday mundane objects, Chowdhury creates unique interpretations while engaging new experimental territories with vast potentials.



The Place Where The Sun Has Another Name, 2019. Mixed media installation. Courtesy of the artist and Chobi Mela [X] International Festival of Photography

b. 1981, Noakhali; lives and works in Dhaka

Subash Thebe

Memories of possible and not so possible events woven into stories have been a fundamental way of accessing and disseminating knowledge to future generations in almost all indigenous communities, including Subash Thebe's Limbu community. In a sense, memory is more significant for the future than for the past. The glacial lakes in Subash Thebe's new painting are rendered in actual and imaginary time frames; sometimes they freeze back into glaciers and other times they grow bigger. At times, the Himalayas are rich with snow and glaciers and at other times they are nothing but grey tectonic rocks. There's a spaceship in the frame, its shape inspired by the object called *Silamsakma* commonly used in Limbu rituals. This memory of its existence in the future explores implications previously unimaginable.



NINGWASUM - *Moving Across Time and Space*, 2019. Acrylic on canvas. Commissioned for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist

Thebe works with sound, film, music, performance, painting, and podcasts, exploring the relation between art and social change. He records the sound and images of his public engagements to later incorporate them in his works. His work is inspired by science fiction, future scenarios of struggle, resistance, climate change, and indigeneity.

b. 1981, Nepal; lives and works in London

William Forsythe



Fact of Matter, 2009. Polycarbonate rings, polyester belts, ground support rigging. Courtesy of the artist. The development and international exhibition of *Choreographic Objects* by William Forsythe is made possible with the generous support of Susanne Klatten

Fact of the Matter, one of William Forsythe's *Choreographic Objects*, poetically speaks to the interplay of collective and individual experience in navigating the world and its challenges and forms of thinking that can be activated through movement. The object is not so much there to be seen as to be used, and engaging with the object and the artist's instructions gives the user a new perspective of the self as they become aware of their body's mass, strength, and coordination as a unified system. These three qualities are not as unified as we would like them to be, and we invent strategies to pull through what might seem like an unnavigable space while learning from the strategies devised by other people using the object.

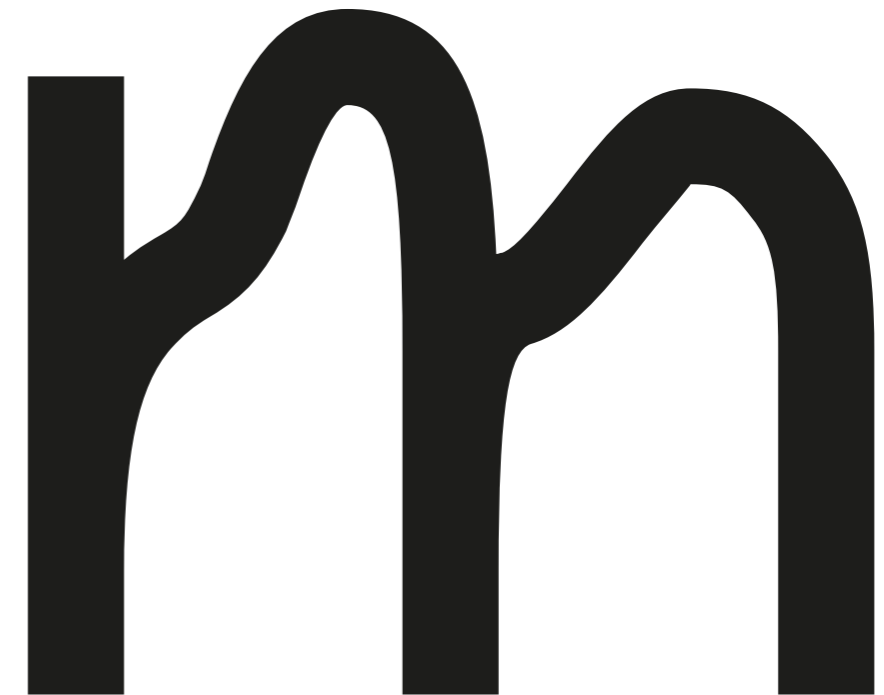
Forsythe is known for his radical innovations in choreography and dance. His deep interest in the fundamental principles of organisation has led him to produce a wide range of projects. Parallel to his career as a choreographer, he creates installations, film works, and interactive sculptures, known as *Choreographic Objects*.

b. 1949, New York

On Muzharul Islam: Surfacing Intention

Co-Curated by Diana Campbell Betancourt with Sean Anderson and Nurur Khan and Assistant Curator Ruxmini Reckvana Q Choudhury

Observing the interplay and occasional confrontation inherent among architectural spaces within an emergent nation-state, seventeen artists/ collaboratives respond to the built and unbuilt legacy of the ground-breaking Bangladeshi architect Muzharul Islam (1923–2012). Active in politics because of his own conviction that 'it was the most architectural thing he could do', Islam humbly and uncompromisingly forged an architectural movement in what was East Pakistan as part of a broader claim toward decolonial consciousness in the 1950s leading to the country's independence in 1971. His buildings and ideas influenced multiple generations of Bangladeshi architects working today and subsequently international figures. Working across photography, painting, sculpture, performance, sound, and film, the artists in the exhibition present work that at once negotiates and builds worlds that are borne from the local environmental and cultural climate of Bangladesh. For Islam as well as these artists, architecture and art are conceived as benefiting all who make up the lands of any nation, no matter their origin, without the boundaries of class or caste.



If the inception of the monument connoted manifestations of power, how do histories of collective agency, that which builds and/or questions the monumental, begin to be made visible? Architecture, in its capacity to embody the simultaneous recording of historical narratives in addition to marking action across time and space, extends how bodies modify, represent and experience the environment. Bangladeshi architect Muzharul Islam, born a generation prior to the partitioning of the Indian sub-continent and at work during the 1952 Language Movement and the 1971 Liberation War, was alarmed to witness attempts to transform the territory of his birth from a communal ecology grounded in culture to an alienated society in which interdependence was reduced. He deployed architecture and the assembly of physical and institutional structures as a fortress against myopic singular views of Nationhood and citizenship. While Islam believed in the strength of a Bengali identity, he also recognised how modernism as an ideology and tool could be deployed to extend the country's influence beyond the region. Bangladesh, according to Muzharul Islam, should be conceived as modern from the beginning.

In a striking departure from his predecessors, Islam's prolific works throughout the country ensured that the pursuit of a Bangladesh-born architecture was as much concerned with signifying the multiple worlds in which the individual and society functioned while also locating oneself, a calculation of value built from within and not externally construed. Islam harnessed the diachronic histories of the built environment in Bangladesh as a means to reject proscriptive views of Bengal rooted in vernaculars. He instead refocussed how his collaborators, workers, students, and leading architects of his time including Louis I. Kahn and Stanley Tigerman could witness a Bengal of 2,000 years ago that was building large scale cities and monuments in brick as a means imagine the future of a country that did not yet exist. Muzharul Islam's practice and ideology influenced multiple generations of Bangladeshi architects whose work has been increasingly visible internationally over the last five years. However, until recently, there has been little critical scholarly research in English about this architect who tirelessly and uncompromisingly fought to construct a new social order in cooperation with communities and partners of the land. Muzharul Islam's conception of modernity in Bangladesh was conceived as an extension of its lands while also ensuring a way of life that was accessible to and responsive of an international community of architects, designers and artists.

The production of a modern architecture in Bangladesh and more broadly, in South and Southeast Asia, expressed the potential of space with a materiality that was fluid in meaning and nature. While the introduction of concrete and cement in the region at the beginning of the 20th century promised the rise of new industrial techniques and forms, the use of brick in Bangladesh allowed for a return to the ground, to the unobstructed lands occupied for millennia by many different peoples.

How brick might be conceived within modernist paradigms that privileged the multiple industries related to concrete, was crucial for an emergent nation attempting to assert its own visual and spatial identity. With an almost ontological connectivity to building, to histories in and out of time, brick remains an essential component that transcends multiple scales and contexts. Muzharul Islam's brick architecture invests in tectonics that reconfigured how surfaces might be understood both as symbol and method. One may regard Islam's drawings and buildings as a structuring of structures. For the architect, and the artists presented in this exhibition, contrasting (im-)materialities allow for the mutability of meaning even among precise configurations of settings. One may be able to observe how Muzharul Islam, as both an architect and an activist, revealed how communities and cultures could serve as agents in the imagining of new institutions.

The conceit of the exhibition's title reveals a paradox found within the reception of modern architecture in Bangladesh. On one hand, surfaces are both agents of and metaphors for what contains us. Buildings can be surfaces. And surfaces may embody how buildings are designed and built. Informing our visual and haptic faculties, surface is also that which collapses the negotiable nature of built space. Surfaces are a productive in-between, neither here nor there. In architecture, we are at once enmeshed among assemblies of surfaces that may have been 'designed' or 'chosen' while they are also subject to entropy, to the passage of time. By extension, the collaborative efforts for much of how Muzharul Islam's projects transpired also allows for a questioning of labour; he built with and for the people of Bangladesh, refusing to inscribe himself as the 'genius creator.' Intention, likewise, is tied to internal and external processes that may broaden one's understanding of affect. The invisible may subsequently become an index of strategies for making. Found at the horizon of the known, or perhaps at the threshold of building as object and form, intention remains ever-present, pointing a way forward, a movement toward a fragile yet more complete notion of self-knowledge.

By surfacing intention, we are attempting to suggest how Muzharul Islam revealed subjectivities among his built and unbuilt projects. Consequently, the prompt for each of the artists allowed for expansive readings that are rooted in Bangladesh but also relevant to other local contexts such as Manila, Warsaw, Rio de Janeiro, New Delhi, among others. Each of the artists brought together for this exhibition use process, materiality and form to disassemble the boundaries that have long defined self and other. Conventional dialectics embedded within notions of gender and context are also questioned. In our discussions with each of the artists, how surface in all of its manifestations came to inform their own conception of Islam's architecture was apparent. Surface was imagined as a modern agent for thinking through and responding to alternative spatial paradigms. Yet, we remained steadfast that such diverse perspectives resonate

with how and why the (modern) architecture of Bangladesh might be reconceived through projection, sculpture, performance, photography, drawing and painting.

What are the residues of intention? By circulating through this exhibition one participates in a journey that reveals elements of Muzharul Islam's ideology that cannot be read by looking at an architectural plan or model. Fingerprints carry the material traces of a day's activities and are unintended marks of our presence in a space. One of the first works visitors encounter when entering the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy is an immersive installation on the winding central staircase of the venue choreographically built up by Rana Begum. Fingerprints of Bangladeshi collaborators of DAS come together to form a pattern of collectivity, a monument to democracy, speaking to what the hands of the people can achieve together, while maintaining the individuality of each person through the unique markings and spirals making up each fingerprint. If you look closely, similar traces of individual makers can be found on the terracotta screens and bricks of Muzharul Islam's art school, Charukala, now formally known as the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka (designed 1953-55). Similarly, works by Ayesha Sultana, Maria Taniguchi, and Prabhavathi Meppayil measure the markings of making that build up and transform over time through processes of accumulation, oxidation, and entropy.

As we pass Begum's installation and enter Gallery One, we become enveloped in another spiralling environment of iron rebar growing from what appears to be two stairs ripped out of the central staircase of Muzharul Islam's School of Fine Art. The climb up and down this staircase in addition to the hidden (and often forgotten) emotions from those daily journeys are part of what makes up the art history of Bangladesh, inspiring Monika Sosnowska to reimagine this element of Muzharul Islam's architecture in a seemingly displaced sculptural form. Hajra Waheed's video *The Spiral* (2019) draws us into another reading of the spiral, taking this catalytic geometry as a starting point to reflect on processes of upheaval in human experience. The video is a meditation on undefeated despair and the possibilities for radical hope that Islam fostered in his practice as Bangladesh fought for its independence. The spiral staircase in Muzharul Islam's Charulaka winds around a column, a pivotal support structure bearing silent witness to the generations of movement around it. Tanya Goel has wrapped the pillars of the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy's South Plaza with Bangla resistance poems that Muzharul Islam and his peers engaged with at the dawn of Bangladesh's existence. These texts and their florid Bangla forms painted in textured brick dust unfold as visitors circulate around these co-dependent structures which float free from obstructing walls for the first time in DAS's exhibition history.

Muzharul Islam designed his buildings with the hope that they would provide culturally grounded upward

mobility for all the people passing through them in their own pursuits of knowledge. Movement is key to the works by Aditya Novali, Shezad Dawood, and Dayanita Singh in this exhibition. Novali created rotatable paintings inspired by the situated modernism of Muzharul Islam and his Indonesian contemporary, Y. B. Mangunwijaya. These paintings change form throughout the course of the show, speaking to how influence moves and shapes architecture across space and time outside of nationalist frameworks. Drawing on the futuristic geometry of Muzharul Islam's drawings, Dawood's adaptable 'stage set' functions somewhere between architecture and tapestry. For a number of years, Dawood has been developing a notion of 'paintings without painting', that are created through the collaging and sewing of different textile elements, some incorporating Bengali kantha techniques. These works, inspired by Islam's plans for the University of Chittagong (1968-71), function as hangings and room dividers which envelop visitors and connect to a video that documents a dance performance realized in collaboration with choreographer Adrienne Hart, composer Patten, costume designer Priya Ahluwalia and Dawood. Dayanita Singh's 'Museum of Shedding' takes the elitist form of the museum off its metaphorical pedestal and puts it in the hands of the people, where they too can become the curators, adjusting the sequence and display of the individual images within it. Institutions are dynamic mechanisms for the making of society. Like Islam and his emphasis on change from within, Dayanita's Museums are open structures, frameworks for the making and reception of multiple meanings and audiences.

While movement was crucial to Muzharul Islam, so was standing still, a necessary state of being to learn from nature and its transformations across time. The open plan of most of Muzharul Islam's university and educational buildings speaks to how he wanted students and others alike not only to learn about art and culture within the classroom, but also from the activities teeming beyond the windows and across the roofs, verandahs, and ponds hosting other components of student life. The National Library in Dhaka has one artwork inside, a monumental mural of a jungle, and Lucas Arruda's exquisite jungle paintings speak to a kind of knowledge that cannot be taught from books. They are embodied and yet distant; seductive yet menacing. Daniel Steegmann Mangrané's narrative film, shot in Chaukala, looks at the spiritual interplay between humans and non-humans and the kind of interconnected ecology that Muzharul Islam tried to foster in his work in Dhaka in the 1950s, which has ongoing lessons for other parts of the world today. The Otolith Group's film *O Horizon* grounds the spirit of Dhaka's art school in its predecessor Santiniketan in West Bengal, speaking to the wisdom its founders and architects tried to glean from its surrounding structures and forests.

While the works described thus far draw inspiration from Muzharul Islam's built spaces, many of these

spaces no longer carry the architect's intentions due to bureaucracy, degradation or ideas of modernisation that implemented elements such as air conditioners and false ceilings, obscuring the quiet majesty of his spaces. The invention of blueprints, aspects of which are used today in contemporary architectural practice, carry the scores of intentions, of what was meant to come but might never appear or what may have ceased to be. Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman spent nearly ten years developing five polytechnic institutes across the country, including detailed studies into different microclimates of Bangladesh, which were never realized beyond visionary drawings and blue-prints from 1965-71. Marlon de Azambuja awakens Dhaka's multiplicity of densities at all scales in an installation inspired by the 'bones and organs of the city', shifting how we consider, deploy, and imagine the clamps, bricks and tools that both Muzharul Islam and architects today imagine and construct the urban environments that contain us. Seher Shah and Randhir Singh's cyanotype prints of Muzharul Islam's poorly preserved Central Library at Dhaka University employ conventional architectural representational methods, such as the plan and elevation, and function between the precise formalism of a blueprint and the intuitive nature of drawing. Haroon Mirza's animated scores of light and sound derived from Muzharul Islam's drawings and blue-prints for Chittagong University bring to life an architectural vision for sites that would train Bangladeshis (the East Pakistanis) to develop their own destiny (even if ironically many of these projects were funded by the World Bank).

Sometimes it is not possible to think or operate in a free and radical way with radical transparency, and it is necessary to remain invisible, emerging when the time is right. William Forsythe's work, *A Volume within which it is not Possible for Certain Classes of Action to Arise* (2015) locates the need to find new ways of navigating spaces that constrict freedom, akin to the kinds of social spaces that Muzharul Islam tried to create within his lifetime. If previous (Western) modernist paradigms for truth-seeking were in part coalesced in and around solutions, to finality, then this exhibition attempts to reverse course, to allow for an opening, even if brief, to the possibilities afforded by architectures that may not yet be visible. These are architectures of becoming. For this exhibition, inasmuch as for the architecture of Muzharul Islam, surfacing is thus an active method for articulating simultaneities in a society's arising, an awareness of emergent parallel historicities among movements near and far, a reshaping of value's precarity, of collaborations borne from collectivity, each of which threatens to disturb the surface.

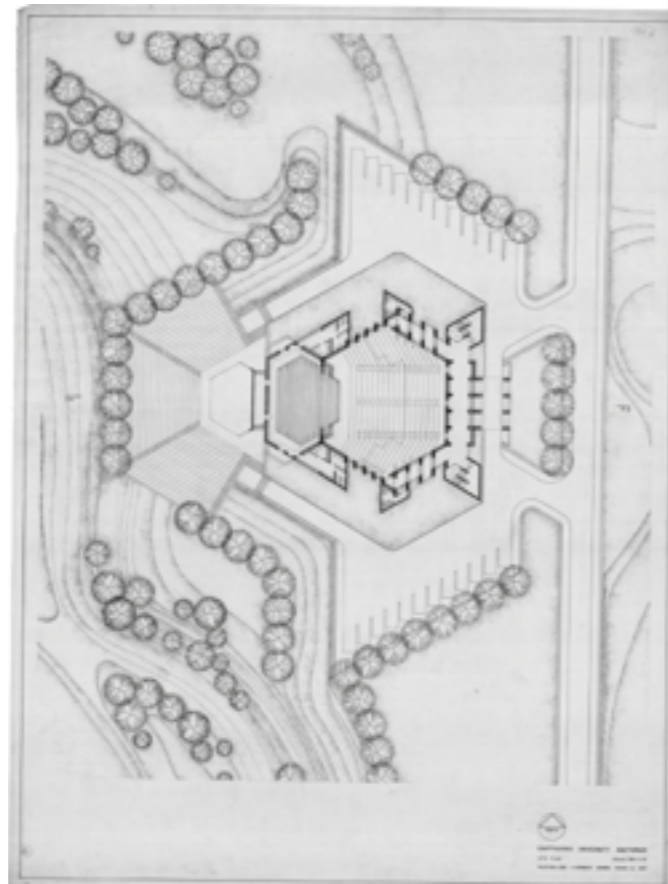
The authors wish to thank and cite the dedicated research of the exhibition's curatorial advisor Nurur Khan. Many of the ideas in this essay and exhibition stem from long conversations with Khan and relate to his upcoming PHD thesis.

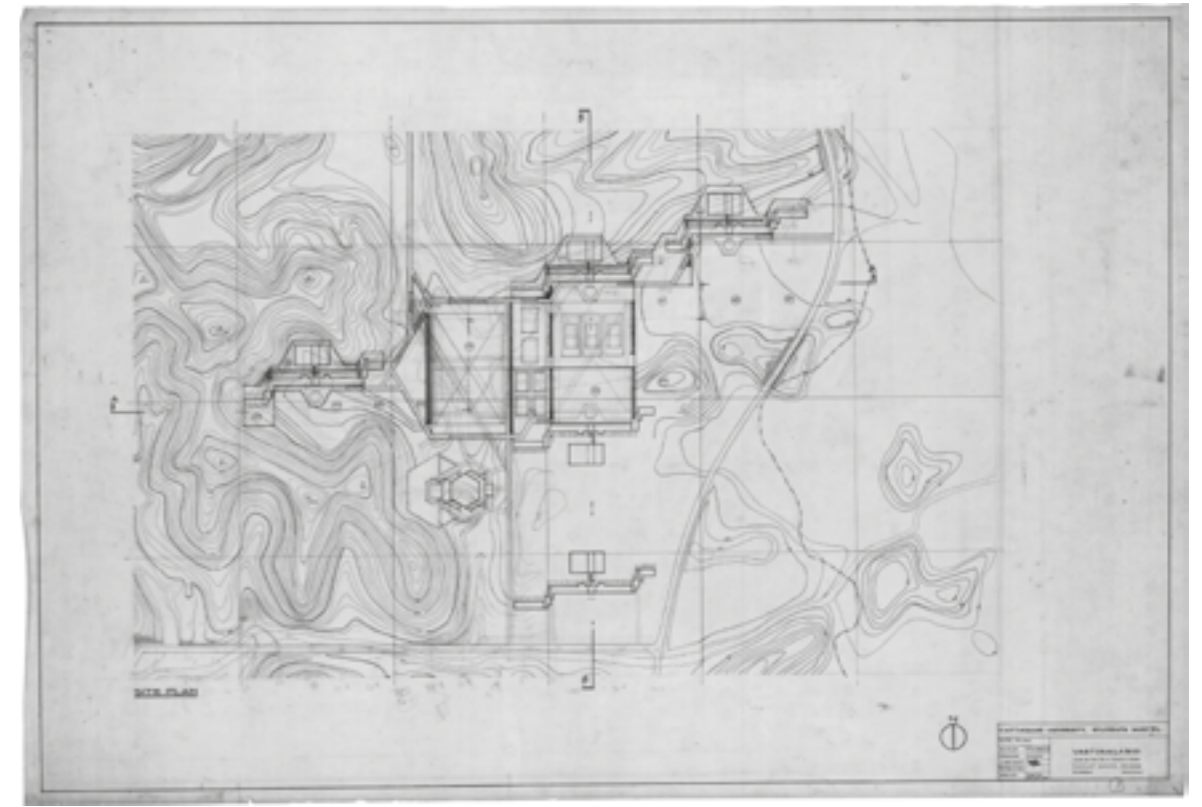
Muzharul Islam

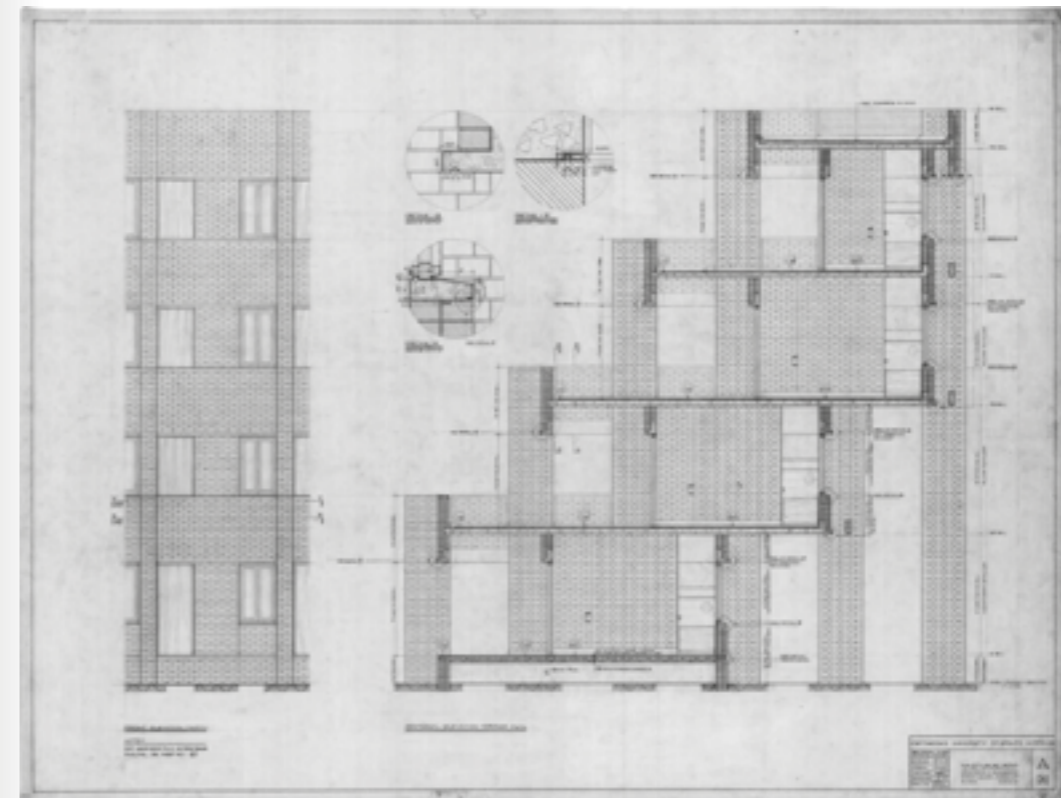
Muzharul Islam was an architect, urban planner, and educator and is considered to be one of the pioneers of South Asian architecture. He sought to develop a language of architectural modernism in South Asia that responded directly to the local social, cultural, and climatic conditions, while also establishing the groundwork for the development of architectural education in the region.

Islam's architectural projects include the Faculty of Fine Art, Dhaka University (1953-1955), the Central Public Library (1953-1954), the NIPA Building (1963-65) and the Rangamati Township (1964), Jahangirnagar University (1968-71), Chittagong University (1971), the National Library and the National Archives (1980-84). His works remain as outstanding instances of situated modernism, as well as sensitive and visionary architectural masterworks of architecture that address history, society, people, economy, city, and, foremost, the building and aspiration of a nation.

b. 1923, Murshidabad; d. 2012, Dhaka







Photos: Randhir Singh. Drawings courtesy of Muzharul Islam Archive

Aditya Novali

Aditya Novali finds inspiration in the ways that Muzharul Islam (1923–2012) and the Indonesian architect Y. B. Mangunwijaya (1929–1999) created spaces that provided a better quality of life for the people building the new nations of Bangladesh and his native Indonesia. For both, the ambition of architecture was in part to create transcendent opportunities for mobility across class barriers with a humanist approach. Islam and Mangunwijaya demonstrated how architecture could cross the borders of the political, social, economic, and religious realms to invent solutions for living inspired by local wisdom, especially when considering how to live in variable climates. We live in a world where many people relate more to digital information than to the immediate environment around them. In this new body of work, the artist paints rotatable panels inspired by the work of Islam and Mangunwijaya as a means to create hybrid paintings that change across the course of the exhibition, drawing connections across time, space, and cultures through the rooted legacy of these figures to their land and people.

Novali makes sculptures and installations using complex methods of production as well as commercial materials. Influenced by his background in architecture, his work addresses themes such as structure, space, and urban planning. Using audience participation, Novali's works act as investigations of social issues related to space with the help of methodological techniques and orderly systems.



Y/M/B/U/M/Z/A/H/N/A/G/R/U/U/N/L/W/I/I/S/J/L/A/A/Y/M/A (1–14, detail), 2019. Rotatable paintings. Commissioned for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Roh Projects

b. 1978, Surakarta; lives and works in Surakarta

Ayesha Sultana



Breath Count B, 2019. Mark-making on clay-coated paper. Courtesy of the artist and Samdani Art Foundation

Ayesha Sultana's recent work negotiates space and distance by measuring the space between things – such as the breaks between taking breaths – marking the rhythm of the day. She contemplates the relationship between her hand, her body, and the rest of the landscape surrounding her, making visible the motion of rhythm without being seen. Through a body of scratch drawings on clay-coated paper, *Breath Count* are personal explorations of movement, mark-making and corporeality. Ayesha reveals staccato patterns that represent a delicate inward probe of her own body using count, distance, motion and removal in breath in these works. Like the marble lines in Louis Kahn's parliament building, which mark the labour of a day's work casting concrete, Sultana's marks measure the labour of internal bodily systems.

Sultana works with drawing, painting, object, and sound, through processes that translate notions of space. She employs drawing as a tool of inquiry, through cutting, folding, stitching, layering, recording, and tracing applied to her series characterised by repetition, variation, and rhythm. Sultana often draws inspiration from architecture and the natural environment.

b. 1984 in Jessore; lives and works in Dhaka

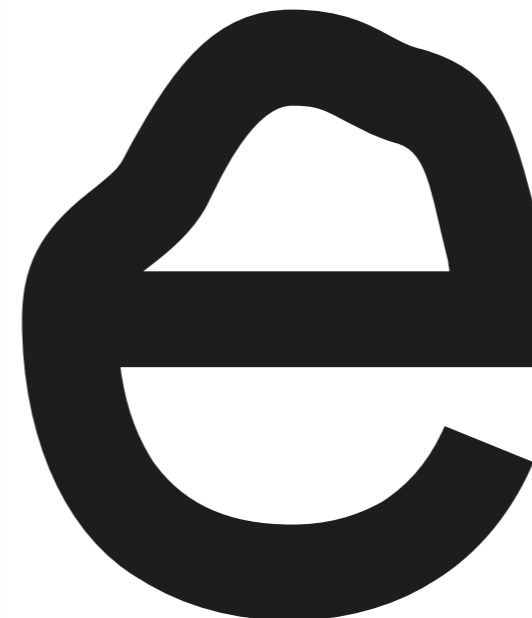
Daniel Steegmann Mangrané

Daniel Steegmann Mangrané's narrative film brings us into a community of human and inhuman inhabitants of Charukala, the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka (designed by Muzharul Islam from 1953–55). Mixing fiction and contemplation, this work explores the past and future spectres that haunt present-day Bangladesh from the viewpoint of the stray dogs who live in and among its shared spaces. While life revolves around the art school for the protagonists in this film, the horrors of climactic and political violence elsewhere in the world appear and speak to the interconnectedness of seemingly disparate contexts. Employing sculpture, installation, film, holograms, and drawing, Steegmann invites the viewer to critically reflect on how the divide between culture and nature is perceived while exploring their constructed interstices. Echoing his interest in biological systems, specifically Brazilian rainforests, Steegmann's works often introduce elements from nature into exhibition spaces.



Fog Dog (still), 2019–2020. Video. Commissioned for DAS 2020 and Produced by Samdani Art Foundation and Esther Schipper. Courtesy of the artist, Samdani Art Foundation, and Esther Schipper

b. 1977, Barcelona; lives and works in Rio de Janeiro



Dayanita Singh



Museum of Shedding, 2016. Photography, wood. Courtesy of the artist

What, when and where is a museum? For Dayanita Singh, the museum rests within, occasionally outside of the conventional market and aesthetic discourses that have come to instigate their articulation throughout history. One finds congruence with the institutional building projects of Muzharul Islam who actively sought to democratise spaces. For her *Museum of Shedding*, Singh has selected a collection of images that, with one box, suggests an origin or window into a visual and spatial language that does not seek answers. Drawn from her extensive photographic body of work, the box forms part of a series of mobile museums that allow her images to be endlessly edited, sequenced, archived and displayed. Like Muzharul Islam, the spaces that Singh has photographed are imbued with the relations, voices and rituals of their occupation. Viewers share in their unfolding. Each photograph in a Singh museum contributes to the making of unbound mythologies: of a chair, of an individual, of interiors that stand outside of time. Familiar but perhaps also unknown, Singh's photographs and Islam's buildings situate us in a continual state of becoming.

Dayanita Singh deploys photography to reflect and expand on the ways in which we relate to photographic images and their construction. Stemming from Singh's longstanding interest in the archive, her museums at all scales present photographs as interconnected bodies and spaces that are replete with narrative possibilities.

b. 1961, New Delhi; lives and works in New Delhi

Hajra Waheed



The Spiral (still), 2019. Video. Courtesy of the artist

'[*The spiral*] is made from the power and will of individuals and unarmed people; from the extraordinary achievement of ordinary people and ordinary daily actions of tending to, listening to, watching over, and protecting. It is survival as revival, resistance as reclamation, resilience as transformation.¹ Conceived and written by Hajra Waheed as a series of working notes for an exhibition, the narration of this film explores a single form – the spiral – as a starting point to reflect on processes of upheaval in human experience. The film acts as a meditation on undefeated despair and the possibilities for radical hope. For Waheed, spirals are reflexive and interdependent, much like Muzharul Islam's belief in the ability of architecture to bring people together to radically transform society for an equitable future.

Waheed's multidisciplinary practice ranges from interactive installations to collage, video, sound, and sculpture. Among other issues, she explores the nexus between security, surveillance, and the covert networks of power that structure lives, while also addressing the traumas and alienation of displaced subjects affected by legacies of colonial and state violence.

b. 1980, Calgary; lives and works in Montreal

Haroon Mirza

How does one envision a building while also recognising its inhabitation through time and space? Even with the best of intentions, spaces change over time and often deteriorate if not maintained. This is the case with several buildings designed by Muzharul Islam, such as the Jaipurhat Limestone and Cement Project (which was built as housing for 1,700 workers and is now a girl's military school) and the five polytechnic universities designed by Islam and Stanley Tigerman throughout Bangladesh. Architectural plans and blueprints are like scores for the future. Haroon Mirza has composed a new sound and light installation, *A Lesson in Theology* (2019–2020), reimagining Islam's frequencies of thought. For both the artist and the architect, building a society relies on the ways in which education contributes to and informs how equality transcends previously encoded class divides.

Mirza's medium is electricity, which is seen and heard simultaneously. He adopts found objects and audiovisual equipment in his installations and performances. Inviting the viewer to re-evaluate their definitions of noise and music, Mirza's work is known for its physical impact and its undermining of straightforward narrative by exploring the sociocultural histories of the objects, ideas, and processes he employs.



Installation view at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2019. Courtesy of hrm199 and Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne. Photo: Andrew Curtis

b. 1977, London; lives and works in London

Lucas Arruda



Untitled (from the *Deserto-Modelo* series), 2015. Oil on canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Mendes Wood DM. Photo: Jorg Von Bruchhausen

The National Library of Bangladesh (1978–9) reflects the architect Muzharul Islam's engagement with Louis I. Kahn. Upon entering the lobby, one immediately encounters a monumental mural of a jungle painted. This immersive and magnanimous image, an unusual choice for a library, greets those seeking knowledge while conveying Islam's belief that learning must be grounded in the demands of climate and place. Jungles rebuild themselves as dynamic and diverse ecosystems, akin to Islam's ideas about Bangladeshi society, which had to rebuild itself after the Pakistani army brutally massacred the country's intellectuals in 1971. Lucas Arruda creates images that concern the body's relationship to light throughout the day and life. Like the mural in Islam's National Library, Arruda's jungles coalesce a metaphysical sensation that can't be described by scouring all the books in the library. They allude to another form of feeling and knowing.

Lucas Arruda works with painting, prints, light installation, slide projections, and films. His practice encompasses a wide spectrum of subjects, ranging from the conceptual framework of painting to metaphysical questions. Commonly portraying archetypal landscapes characterised by a subtle and intricate rendition of light, Arruda's small-scale atmospheric compositions dwell on the viewer's experiences as opposed to geographical specificity.

b. 1983, Sao Paulo; lives and works in Sao Paulo

Maria Taniguchi

Like Muzharul Islam, Maria Taniguchi finds beauty in the marks of the human hand on objects that we associate with industrial production, such as bricks. These traces inform not only the contexts in which they were made but also the people who made them. Taniguchi's painted architecture calls to mind the transformative and meditative process of brick-laying as well as the subtle changes that can be found across seemingly monotonous surfaces through the movement of light and shadow. Bricks are an apt metaphor for Muzharul Islam's philosophy that can be read as nationalism expressed through modernity. 'When I mention standing on one's own soil', writes Muzharul Islam, 'it is to find oneself, but not to find oneself and become stagnant. What I am seeking is to stand on one's own feet and then to proceed forward. If for that reason I have to take two steps backward to go one step forward, I have no problem with that. I think that there is no other way of moving forward.'¹

Islam, Muzharul. *An Architect in Bangladesh: Conversations with Muzharul Islam*. Edited by Kazi Khaleed. Ashraf. Dhaka: Loka Press, 2014. p.37



Untitled, 2017. Acrylic on canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Perrotin

Taniguchi works with painting and video in addition to printmaking, pottery, and sculpture. Her work focuses on concepts of composing, constructing, and framing, whilst referring to the craftsmanship and history of the Philippines. The repetitive process of creation employed in much of her work has been likened to the urban structure of Manila.

b. 1981 Dumaguete City; lives and works in Manila

Marlon de Azambuja

Marlon de Azambuja's sprawling installation captures the density of Dhaka as well as its precarity in the wake of exponential urban growth resulting from climate change-related migration. The work unveils the inner organs of the city – construction materials such as bricks and concrete blocks, industrial clamps and building tools. Like unsung artists, Bangladesh's construction workers transform these everyday materials into the buildings that make up the cityscapes of emergent massive cities such as Dhaka. Dhaka is the world's most densely populated city, a fact that Muzharul Islam could never have imagined when he was the senior architect for the government of East Pakistan.



Brutalismo-Cleveland, 2018. Commissioned by FRONT International: Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art. Courtesy of the artist and Instituto de Vision. Photo: The Cleveland Museum of Art

'Cities should provide the environment for civilised life within the context of our own culture... The city can develop only as a part of the physical environment of the country – with the ultimate aim of abolishing all differences between the city and the rural areas. The traditional relationship with nature... should be continued in the cities.'

Islam, Muzharul. Muzharul Islam Archive. Accessed November 15, 2019. www.muzharulislam.com

De Azambuja works with drawing, photography, sculpture, installation, and video to create new ways of looking at the structures that surround us. He is invested in the cultural and aesthetic impact of architecture and urban planning as spaces of confrontation between instinct and rationality, and the city as a living, breathing entity.

b. 1978, Porto Alegre; lives and works in Madrid

Monika Sosnowska

Nearly every Bangladeshi artist exhibiting at DAS 2020 has climbed up and down the spiral staircase at Charukala (the Faculty of Fine Art) at Dhaka University as part of their artistic journey. Muzharul Islam viewed architecture as a vehicle to a better life, elevating local materials to their highest potential (while avoiding decoration). For Islam, the common Bangladeshi woman and man could rise above the circumstances in which they were born via education. Inspired by Islam and his vision, Monika Sosnowska has created a sculpture using similar materials to the staircase at Charukala, but removing its function. This sculpture leads nowhere, and while it pays homage to foundational structures, it also invites the viewer to consider the illusions inherent in built spaces.

Sosnowska uses building elements and materials to create disorientating installations, spaces, and objects that explore the psychological impact of architectural space. She is interested in architecture's capacity to influence behaviour as well as reflect social structures and ideologies. Flaws, glitches, and deficiencies in her work are used to question aspects commonly attributed to global modernisms.



Stairs, 2019–2020. Commissioned and Produced by Samdani Art Foundation for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Foksal Gallery Foundation

b. 1972, Ryki; lives and works in Warsaw

The Otolith Group

founded 2002 by Anjalika Sagar (b. 1968) and Kodwo Eshun (b. 1966), who live and work in London

O Horizon refers to the surface layer of soil, changed in the area around Santiniketan as the result of Rabindranath Tagore's introduction of new flora to the planning and development of the campus. The film extends The Otolith Group's ongoing consideration of the current geological age as one in which human activity spurs the primary changes on climate and the environment. *O Horizon* reflects upon modernist theories of dance and song developed by Tagore and the experimental practices of mural, sculpture, painting, and drawing developed by India's great modernist artists affiliated with Santiniketan. *O Horizon* draws together visual arts, dance, song, music, and recital to assemble a structure of feeling of the Tagorean imagination in the 21st Century. The work also has resonances with Muzharul Islam's campus of the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka, where learning and convening of students unite the indoors and outdoors around circular forms such as the rooftops and ponds.



O Horizon, 2018. 4K video. Commissioned by Bauhaus Imaginista and co-produced by the Rubin Museum, with support from Project 88. Courtesy of the artists

The research-based work of The Otolith Group spans moving image, audio, performance, installation, and curation. These are utilised to explore the temporal anomalies, anthropic inversions, and synthetic alienation of the posthuman, the inhuman, the nonhuman, and the complexity of the 'environmental conditions of life we all face'. The Otolith Group also runs a curatorial public platform, The Otolith Collective.

Prabhavathi Meppayil



dp/twenty/six (detail), 2019. Thinnam on gesso panel. Commissioned for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Pace

Time is rarely subtle. Yet among Prabhavathi Meppayil's works, one's gaze is enmeshed in a rare confluence of multiple structures, temporalities and forms that reconfigure our notion of space in and of time. At once archaeological in process and expansive in reading, Meppayil's multimedia paintings confound for their immediacy and immeasurability. These newly commissioned works observe how Muzharul Islam's reliance on both social and empirical structures informed the making and occupation of space. For Meppayil, her work shares in a similar layering of ideas; of an intuitive composition of sublime architectures that may be affected by forces such as entropy while at the same time, resistant to present-day desires for immediacy and easy reproduction. In this oscillation between additive and subtractive connotations, of surfaces marked and degraded, Meppayil's works encourage the generative act of looking closely and seeing beyond.

Prabhavathi Meppayil's practice rests in her meticulous approach to conceiving and executing processes specific to the materials that she uses. Coming from a family of goldsmiths, Meppayil adopts artisan techniques as a means to relocate particular materials as a generator of forms, providing a parallel reading to the way in which western art histories were received in the twentieth century. Through the use of non-traditional tools and often copper wire, she carves, erases and highlights carefully conceived lines and patterns into layers of gesso to underscore the blurring of painting, drawing, and other disciplines while establishing meditative installations.

b. 1965, Bangalore; lives and works in Bangalore

Rana Begum

Many buildings designed by Muzharul Islam carry the marks of their makers. The architect reminded Russian-born American architect Louis I. Kahn that Bangladesh's most skilled construction workers possessed a refined knowledge of building yet were illiterate, prompting Kahn to consider other ways of translating his vision for building in Bangladesh. In a similar spirit, writer Kazi Nasrul Islam invokes a benediction of indigenous forms of feeling and knowing in his poem *Ink on My Face, Ink on my Hands*. Inspired by her memories of growing up in Sylhet, Rana Begum creates an immersive participatory installation in the central staircase of DAS 2020, where the fingerprints of the individuals who come together to build DAS form an abstract portrait of the collective energy of the Summit and city.

Begum utilises industrial materials such as stainless steel, aluminium, copper, brass, glass, and wood in her minimalist sculptures and reliefs. Her contemplative works explore shifting interactions between geometry, colour, and light, drawing inspiration from both the chance encounters of city life and the intricate patterns of Islamic art and architecture.



Reference image for No. 972 Wall Painting, 2019-2020. Ink and fingerprints on wall. Commissioned for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Jhaveri Contemporary

b. 1977, Sylhet; lives and works in London

Seher Shah and Randhir Singh



Dhaka Library (2), 2017. Cyanotype prints on Arches aquarelle paper, Commissioned and produced by Samdani Art Foundation. Courtesy of the artist and Nature Morte

First presented at DAS 2018, *Dhaka Library* is part of a collaborative body of work by Seher Shah and Randhir Singh exploring overlapping ideas in architecture, photography, drawing, and printmaking. Cyanotypes were one of the first photographic printmaking processes developed in the 19th century and a precursor to the blueprint, which was an important reproduction method for architectural and engineering drawings well into the 20th century. Working with this printmaking process, Shah and Singh focused on Muzharul Islam's Dhaka Library (1953-1954), fragmenting its unique architectural components through photographic images. The artists were drawn to Islam's work due to its aesthetic qualities, including heavy massing, the sculptural use of concrete, and repetitive structural grids, along with a visionary intent driven by a desire to break from the status quo.

Seher Shah's practice uses experiences from the field of art and architecture to question the rational language of architectural drawing. Randhir Singh is an architectural photographer who draws on his education as an architect to focus on ever-changing meanings found within modern architecture and urbanism in South Asia. Over the past few years, they have collaborated on a number of projects to explore the relationships between drawing, photography, and architecture.

b. 1975, Karachi; lives and works in New Delhi
b. 1976, New Delhi; lives and works in New Delhi

Shezad Dawood

Considering how the body and fabric may become architecture, and where architectural space is always a platform for human performativity, Shezad Dawood's installation draws on the legacy of Muzharul Islam to create an adaptable stage set. His interior functions somewhere between architecture and tapestry. With the layering of sound, Dawood examines the influence of Bengali polymath Rabindranath Tagore on Muzharul Islam, but also how Tagore informed the later spiritual work of Alice Coltrane. Referencing Islam's approach to nondualism, the project extends such flows into the space of the exhibition and enacts a series of dynamic collaborations much like the architect who regularly collaborated with artists, poets, and singers.



University of NonDualism (performance detail), 2019. Commissioned by Frieze LIVE and DAS 2020, generously supported by the Bagri Foundation. Courtesy of the artist

Dawood works across disciplines to deconstruct systems of image, language, site, and narrative. His fascination with architectural modernism in South Asia recurs in several projects, interweaving these histories with those of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War. His practice often involves collaboration, imagining a remapping across geographic borders and communities.

b. 1974, London; lives and works in London

Tanya Goel



Installation image from Gwangju Biennale 2018. Mixed Media. Courtesy of the artist and Nature Morte

The brick is perhaps the oldest and most ubiquitous building material. Tanya Goel was inspired by the detailed texture found in the brick patterns of buildings by Muzharul Islam. In designing the Faculty of Fine Art, for example, Islam introduced a subtle geometric pattern on the face of each handmade brick, integrating a modern architectural language with the vernaculars of regional building. Islam was an avid supporter of the Bengali Language Movement and designed numerous institutions during the emergence of independent Bangladesh. Encouraged by these patterns that subtly constructed a nation based on culture and language, Goel has created pigments from brick dust sourced from around Dhaka. She has wrapped the pillars of the Shilpakala Academy in textured painted Bengali poems of independence. The words unfold across the columns that support the building, and the viewer must move around them to decipher the script, paying homage to the modern pillars that helped shape Bangladeshi identity. The artist has also traced details of Islam's ageing buildings in brick dust, protecting them for the next generation through the process of drawing. She juxtaposes these zoomed in details within their wider (material) context by framing them within her photographs of Islam's Faculty of Fine Art, National Library, and male dormitory at Jahangirnagar University (as they stand today), paired with paintings she made on fragments of debris collected from these sites.

Goel is invested in the afterlife of construction, creating pigments from charcoal, aluminium, concrete, glass, soil, mica, graphite, and foils, all of which are sourced from building sites. Exploring abstraction within her painting practice, Goel works with the concepts of density and complexity inherent to the synthetic repetition of mathematical formulas, balancing unforeseen orders and potential chaos.

b. 1985, New Delhi; lives and works in New Delhi

William Forsythe



A Volume Within Which it is Not Possible for Certain Classes of Action to Arise, 2015. Scaffolding structure, drywall. Courtesy of the artist

'Choreography is about organising bodies in space, or you're organising bodies with other bodies or a body with other bodies in an environment that is organised.'

William Forsythe (Steven Spier, *Dancing and Drawing, Choreography and Architecture*, Journal of Architecture, vol. 10, no. 4, Sept. 2005, p. 352)

Politics 'was the most architectural thing to do.'

Muzharul Islam (Nurur Rahman Khan, *Muzharul Islam: Selected Drawings*, Sthapattya O Nirmar, 2010)

Both Muzharul Islam and William Forsythe extrapolate the tenets of their respective fields, choreography and architecture, into the realm of the political where these ideas have implications in 'real life.' This work is a metaphor for time, for political structures, for any physical or metaphorical barrier that might not allow for certain actions to arise. When Muzharul Islam was building the Faculty of Fine Art and the National Library, such barriers could have been seen as colonial domination by West Pakistan. What are these barriers today? And how do they persist? This work offers the visitor the possibility of consciously and physically experiencing the loss of a broad degree of freedom, which is incorporated into our daily existence. In a world that is continuously creating impediments to movement, we must invent new strategies of transiting through them.

Forsythe is known for his radical innovations in choreography and dance. His deep interest in the fundamental principles of organisation has led him to produce a wide range of projects. Parallel to his career as a choreographer, he creates installations, film works, and interactive sculptures, known as *Choreographic Objects*.

b. 1949, New York

The development and international exhibition of *Choreographic Objects* by William Forsythe is made possible with the generous support of Susanne Klatten

Geographies of Imagination

Envisioned by SAVVY Contemporary with Antonia Alampi, Bonaventure S.B. Ndikung, and Olani Ewunnet with Jothashilpa in association with the Goethe Institut, Bangladesh and Samdani Art Foundation

Geographies of Imagination is a growing research and exhibition project that manifests itself as a cartographic time-line, a performative process of un-mapping the geography of power and a space of discourse. The project is an attempt to rethink, reconfigure and pervert history-at-large and cartographic histories in particular. Each iteration of *Geographies of Imagination* assumes a different point of departure, situates itself within another real or fictional geography, and thus brings about differing research processes and outcomes.

For this rendition in Bangladesh, *Geographies of Imagination* has two vantage points. For its first point, it takes the partition of 85 million people throughout Bengal in 1905 implemented by the British Raj in an effort to 'reorganise' but ultimately to divide and rule, by cutting through the middle of the Bengali-speaking 'nation'. Its second point is the Congo Conference hosted in Berlin in 1884, a moment in which fourteen Western 'great powers' partitioned the African continent amongst themselves for their geopolitical, exploitative economic and colonial agendas and fantasies, thereby re-imagining the cartography of the African continent irrespective of the peoples, cultures, and languages of Africans.

This incomplete timeline winding across the South Plaza of DAS features significant socio-political and cultural movements that pre-defined identities and nationhood, as well as rebellions and revolts against colonial rule, such as those that forged forms of resistance that planted seeds for future emancipation across different geographies. This includes how the socio-political movements on the African continent informed resistance movements in Asia and vice-versa. One such example is the Indigo revolt (ca. 1859-1862), through which Bengali farmers organised against plantation owners who severely undercut the price of indigo, thereby forcing farmers to sell their products at a price far below their own cost of production. We trace lines that move across centuries and oceans, looking for instance at the Anlu revolt (1958-1961), brought forth by Kom women in western Cameroon against the British administrative interference in agriculture (which was a female domain) and the alleged plan by the ruling political party to sell Kom land to Nigerian Igbos. The rebellion, which was crucial for the victory of the democratic party at the time of independence from colonial rule, had at its core women stripping naked in front of men as a weapon of rebellion - a practice implemented by other groups like the Takembeng.

We weave in connections between conferences and alliances that have strengthened positions

of emancipation in contexts facing similar conditions of oppression. Novel forms of trans-national solidarity, from the first Pan-African conference held in London (in 1900), through the Baku Congress (1920), the Asian Relations Conference (1947), the Bandung Conference or African-Asian Conference in Indonesia (1955) and to the foundation of the Movement of the Non-Aligned that followed in Belgrade (1961-ongoing), among others. We pause on movements for independence and listen to fragments of charismatic political speeches bearing witness to new proposals and ideas with regards to justice, and sovereignty. But we also look at populist and nationalistic speeches of more recent political leaders, at new border control monitoring systems, visa regulations, economic trades, and import and export of labour forces, that create and multiply invisible frontiers and partitions, and at how recent technological developments have facilitated novel forms of cartographic scarification and forced constructions of spaces and communities.

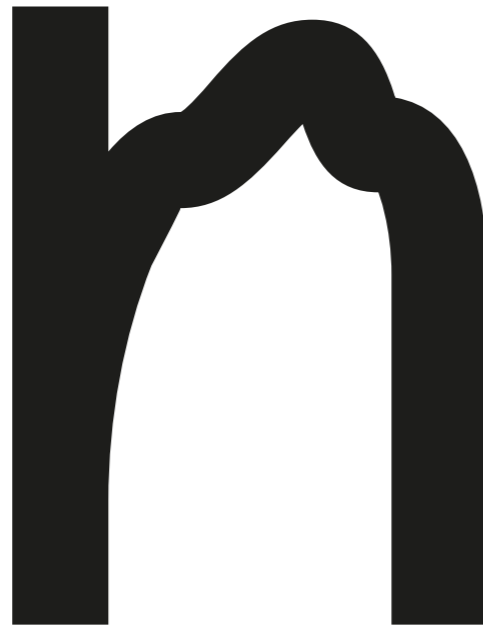
In a time when in Cameroon the lines of citizenship are drawn upon remnants of colonial language structures between Anglophones and Francophones, in a time when the Citizen Amendment Act and national register of citizens want to make Indian Muslims foreigners in their own country, in a time when black Africans are kicked out of South Africa in several waves of xenophobic attacks, in a time when the Rohingyas are openly persecuted in Myanmar, we must reconsider the powers that make geography be.

This iteration of *Geographies of Imagination* was developed through a wide range of interviews with academics and researchers from various disciplines, artists, curators, and researchers based predominantly in Dhaka in collaboration with the Samdani Art Foundation and Goethe Institut, Bangladesh. The timeline recurs with dates held in Bengali, Ethiopian and Gregorian calendars, to emphasise how the system of time itself is situated and subject to different representations and variations. The visualisation is the outcome of a close dialogue with the Dhaka-based Jothashilpa collective, working with master cinema banner painter Ustad Mohammad Shoab, artist and researcher Shawon Akand, and artists Sharmin Afroz Laboni and Alia Kamal.

Roots

Curated by Bishwajit Goswami. Research assisted by Sumon Wahed
This exhibition was made possible through the initiative and dynamic energy of Brihatta

Artists in Bangladesh have played a key role in building the institutions that support artistic production in the country, from founding formal institutions like art schools (such as Zainul Abedin with the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka and Rashid Choudhury with the Institute of Fine Arts, University of Chittagong) as well as informal art education outside of the capital (S.M. Sultan's Shishu Swarga and Charupith). Dhaka based artist and educator Bishwajit Goswami's exhibition examines the transfer of knowledge by art educators who have been critical in the building of Bangladesh's art history.



Roots explores the transfer of knowledge by 61 art educators who have been critical in the building of Bangladesh's art history through painting, sculpture, ceramics, craft, and other forms of art. They are represented not only through their art works but also related archival material that connects them across time and space. Zainul Abedin (1914–1976), Safiuddin Ahmed (1922–2012), Quamrul Hassan (1921–1988), and S. M. Sultan (1923–1994) were pioneer artists and educators who established fertile ground during the 1950s–60s that allowed artists from East Bengal (1947–1971) to transform from colonial subjects into artists who expressed their unique voices in a newly Independent Bangladesh. After Independence, the next generation of artists of the 1970s and 1980s were more focused on trying to relocate their artistic identities in a global context. Building on the foundations laid by Abedin, Ahmed, Hassan, and Sultan, the artists in this exhibition were crucial to the creation of the contemporary art ecology of Bangladesh. Their work in and outside of the studio and classroom has had a lasting influence on multiple generations of Bangladeshi artists. Their art and thoughts have had an influence on wider Bangladeshi society.

Decolonial Awareness and Action

There was a strong sense of decolonial awareness in the 1950s that pervaded the art scene of what was then East Pakistan. Several Muslim students and teachers from the Government School of Art in Calcutta opted to move to East Pakistan to develop their own distinct style after the 1947 partition of India – among these artists were Zainul Abedin, Safiuddin Ahmed and Quamrul Hassan. Zainul Abedin, for example, founded Dhaka's art institute in a context that previously had no recent history of institutional or professional art. What this first generation of artists initiated was not only a stylistic shift, but a call for the rethinking of East Bengali cultural practice, in addition to identifying its lack of institutional representation. They founded institutions to allow this culture to flourish in the new context of East Pakistan, and later Bangladesh.

Building from Scratch

The first generation of teachers in what is now the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka made deliberate strides to cultivate a context for artistic expression outside of British or West Pakistani domination. The school was and continues to be an intellectual meeting point and its building designed by Muzharul Islam made it one of the first examples of modern architecture in East Pakistan, if not all of South Asia. These teachers were politically active and vocal against the injustices imposed on them by West Pakistani rulers. They participated in mass movement demonstrations as part of the Language Movement of 1952 leading up to the independence movements of 1969–1971, remained involved in the

struggle for democracy of 1980s and later participated in the anti-fundamentalist uprising movements of the last two decades. Newly-founded formal institutions like art schools as well as informal art education platforms outside of the capital (S. M. Sultan's Shishu Swarga and Charupith in Jessore (1985)), artists such as Zainul Abedin with the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka in 1948, Rashid Choudhury with the Institute of Fine Arts, University of Chittagong (1970), and Shoshibhuson with Mahesharpasha School of Art; currently Fine Arts School, Khulna University (1904), established deep and resilient roots allowing the culture of East Bengal to spread its branches all over the country.

The Birth of Bangladesh

The birth of Bangladesh was made possible by a shared hope of creating a secular, democratic and socialist country where Bengali culture would flourish. It was a cultural movement before it was a nationalist one. The government's commitment to create institutions to nurture the country's culture was not limited to Dhaka – it extended to Chittagong (Southeastern Bangladesh), Rajshahi (North Bangladesh), and Khulna (Southwest Bangladesh). The 1971 war renewed the search for inspiration from Bengali cultural heritage and sparked a new impulse to communicate with the population at large by incorporating social and political interpretations into art. Quamrul Hassan depicted the furious face of West Pakistani aggression and encouraged people to demolish it in his poster *Annihilate These Demons*. In 1988 he again awakened the people against the authoritarian ruler of HM Ershad by inscribing his last drawing with the title *The country is under an impudent ruler*.

Many of the artists in the 1950s such as Aminul Islam (1931–2011), Murtaja Baseer (1932–), Rashid Choudhury (1932–1986), and Abdur Razzaque (1932–2005) went abroad for higher education and trained in the art centres of the 'Western world' (France, Italy, USA) where they came in contact with avant-garde movements. Looking eastward, Mohammad Kibria (1929–2011) travelled to Japan where he adopted a style of abstraction influenced by Japanese (as well as American) philosophy.

The artists of the 1960s searched for expanded and more meaningful involvement with ideas that had begun to dominate artistic and aesthetic discourse combining local and international influences. Hashem Khan (1941–) and Rafiqun Nabi (1943–) are notable examples of artists who portrayed local issues through illustrations and cartoons. Mustafa Monwar (1935–) invested his time in introducing art and creative practices to the masses through his widely broadcast television show that taught children how to express themselves with puppets, drawings, and watercolours. A great deal of passion flowed through the works of the 1970s where the impact of the Liberation War

was visible. The re-emergence of figurative art was a welcome relief from the obsessive preoccupation with abstract formalism of the previous decades. Hamiduzzaman Khan (1946–), Chandra Shekhar Dey (1951–), Alok Roy (1950–) and many other artists demonstrated an interest in the increased 'localisation' of themes and forms. The second generation of East Pakistani Artists of the 1960s worked in parallel with the first generation of Bangladeshi Artists of the 1970s with their teaching and artistic activities. They began to develop the local art scene by introducing art criticism, exhibition and graphic design to support the public dissemination of art. They established formal exhibition platforms (such as the Asian Art Biennale (f. 1981), which is the oldest continually running biennial of contemporary art in Asia) to share their work with both local and international audiences.

The generation of the 1980s developed a critical point of view about history and reality to combat the oppressive dictatorial regime of Ershad. The artists from the Shomoy Group (Dhali Al Mamoon (1958–), Shishir Bhattacharjee (1960–), Nisar Hossain (1961–) and others) blended elements of diverse social issues and represented time and history. The contribution of this generation of artists is significant; they brought about new readings of modernism, altering the art world and its values (more information about this generation can be found in Mustafa Zaman's exhibition at DAS on page 83).

Roots, Branches, and Leaves; Generations, Collectives, Individuals

The works of art in this exhibition visually stand for the individual contributions of 61 artists as they developed unique styles while being mentored by artist-pedagogues from the previous generation. When the socio-political environment was stable (which it rarely is in Bangladesh) artists became more focused on their personal practices and strove to build an art market in this young country, and several opened up commercial art galleries. However, during the several periods of unrest in the country, many shifted their focus to activism. They built collectives and artist groups to create a support system to push their radical ideas and demand for reform into being. This energy carried across generations, and the borders between individuals, groups, and generations are ambiguous. Visitors are invited to form their own narratives of connectivity across space and time through the artworks themselves, but also through the underlying networks that built the art scene of Bangladesh that we experience together at DAS.

A Guide to Bangladesh's Art Schools

Name changes of cities, streets, and buildings are common in South Asia, and the institutions described in these biographies are referred to by multiple names. The guide below is an attempt to map out how the four main art schools of Bangladesh were referred to at different times of their history.

Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka:

Government Institute of Arts, Dacca (1948–1963)

East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca (1963–1971)

Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca (1972–1983)

Institute of Fine Art, University of Dhaka (1 September 1983 – 1 August 2008)

Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka (2 August 2008 – present)

Institute of Fine Arts, University of Chittagong:

Department of Fine Arts, University of Chittagong (1970–2010)

Chittagong Art College (1973–1984)

Government Art College, Chittagong (1984–2010)

The Department of Fine Arts and Government Art College combined together to form Institute of Fine Arts, University of Chittagong (2010–present)

Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Rajshahi:

Rajshahi Arts & Crafts College (1978–1994)

Department of Fine Arts, University of Rajshahi (1994–2015)

Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Rajshahi (2015–present)

Fine Arts School, University of Khulna:

Maheshwarpasha School of Art/ Arts (1904–1983)

Khulna Art College (1983–2009)

Institute of Fine Arts, University of Khulna (2009–2019)

Fine Arts School, University of Khulna (2019–present)

Abdur Razzaque

Simultaneously a painter, a printmaker and a sculptor, Abdur Razzaque is known for his *Jagroto Chowrangi* (The Vigilant Crossroad), a memorial sculpture dedicated to the valiant Bengali Freedom Fighters from 1971 at Gazipur, Tongi. Razzaque earned his Fine Art Degree from the Government Institute of Arts, Dacca in 1954 and then received a Fulbright Scholarship to study Fine Arts at the State University of Iowa, USA in 1956, where he continued as a research assistant until 1957. Upon his return to Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) in 1958, he joined the Government Institute of Arts, Dacca as a teacher. He established the first sculpture department in the country in 1963 and dedicated himself to the development of the academic programme at a time when figurative sculptural representation was considered anti-religious and was therefore discouraged.



Jagroto Chowrangi, 1973. Concrete. Photo: Noor Photoface

b. 1932, Shariatpur; d. 2005 in Jessore

Abdus Shakoor Shah



River Bank, 2005. Watercolour On Paper. Courtesy of the artist and Ms Nilu Rowshon Murshed

Over a large span of his career, Abdus Shakoor Shah's work has been drawing on folk motifs and ancient Bengali ballads including Mahua and Malua love stories, Nakshi Kanthar Maath, Gazir Pata, Manasha Pata through painting, tapestry, batik and serigraphs. Shakoor was encouraged by his mentor Rashid Choudhury to work with heritage, culture and myths while studying at the Department of Fine Arts, Chittagong University. As a teacher, he inspires his students to find inspiration from the region. He earned his BFA from the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1970, and his Post Graduate Diploma from the M.S. University, Baroda, India in 1978. He is an Honorary Professor of the Department of Craft, University of Dhaka and formerly held the position of Director of the Institute of Fine Art.

b. 1946, Bogra; lives and works in Dhaka

Abul Barq Alvi

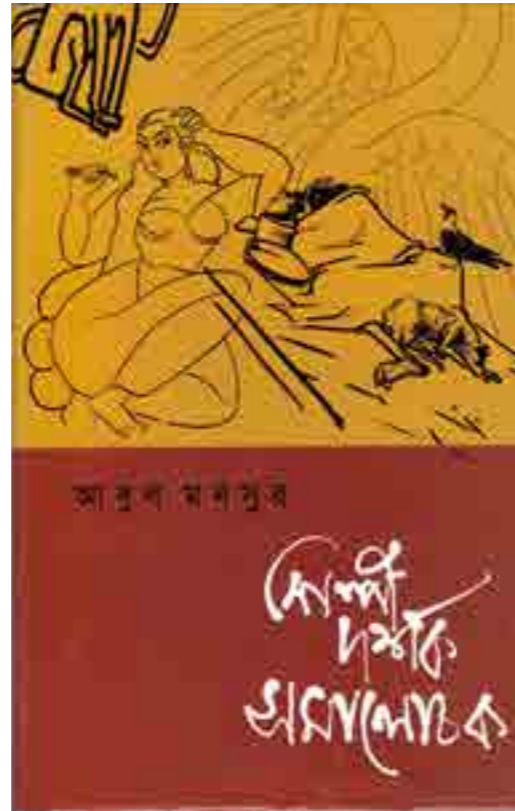
Abul Barq Alvi, a painter and printmaker, has been an inspiration for several generations of Bangladeshi art students. During the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971, he was arrested by the occupying forces and incarcerated and tortured. The war left a deep scar in his psyche that changed his perception of reality. Instead of recording external impressions, he became more interested in exploring the inner world of nature where images are reduced to their essential forms. He completed his BFA at the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1968 and conducted postgraduate research at Tsukuba University, Japan from 1983-84. He is currently Honorary Professor of the Printmaking Department, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka where he held the position of Dean from 2012 to 2014.



Graveyard, 1972. Oil on Board. Courtesy of the artist and Bangladesh National Museum

b. 1949, Pabna; lives and works in Dhaka

Abul Monsur



Book cover of SHILPI DARSHAK SAMALOKHAK (A Book on Art), Muktaadhara, Dhaka, 2nd Edition, February 2014

Over a more than three-decades-long career as an art educator and writer, Abul Monsur applied his literary practice to contribute to the field of art theory and art criticism, also promoting Bangladeshi artists through publishing artist monographs. To integrate the disciplines of art and literature, Monsur and his friends published the annual magazine *Proshongo* in 1985 and later established *Shilpo Somonnoy* (a space for young artists) in 1999. As a student, Monsur was involved with the collective *Oti Shamprotik Amra* that created a 13-panel mural in 1972 narrating the history of Bangladesh which was part of the *India-Bangladesh Friendship Fair* in Calcutta (considered to be the first international exhibition of an independent Bangladesh). Monsur started his career as a teacher in the Department of Fine Arts, University of Chittagong and taught theory until 2012. He completed his studies at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1972 and received his MFA in Art History from the M.S. University in Baroda in 1982.

b. 1947, Chittagong; lives and works in Chattogram

Abu Sayeed Talukder

Abu Sayeed Talukder played an important role in developing the foundation for modern ceramics and studio pottery practice in Bangladesh, by introducing modern techniques and concepts such as crystalline glaze and establishing ceramics as a mainstream art medium. He experimented with pottery-making, primarily using terracotta. He completed his BA in 1985 and his postgraduate diploma in 1986 in Ceramics at the Central Academy of Applied Art, Beijing, China. He became a teacher at the Ceramics Department, Institute of Fine Art, University of Dhaka in 1987 where he had previously completed a certificate course in 1980.



Mrit Shilpa Chir Kollankar, 1998. Ceramic. Courtesy of Department of Ceramic, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka. Photo: Noor Photoface

b. 1954, Sirajganj; d. 2005, Dhaka

Alok Roy



Strangulated, 1983. Black terracotta & sand. Courtesy of the artist and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Alok Roy is known for his monumental figurative sculptures combining folk and classical terracotta style in a contemporary fashion. Inspired by the ancient architecture of Bengal, his sculptures often carry fragments reminiscent of architectural forms and are also often situated in outdoor environments, interacting with the elements of sunshine, wind, and rain. One of his finest masterpieces that combines sculpture and architecture is his residence *Aroni*, where he also established *Chittagong Sculpture Center* in 2018, a space for students to share knowledge about sculpture. Alok Roy completed his studies at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1973 and earned his MFA from M. S. University in Baroda, India (1978). He later served as a teacher at the Institute of Fine Arts, University of Chittagong from 1978-2016.

b. 1950, Mymensingh; lives and works in Chattogram

Aminul Islam



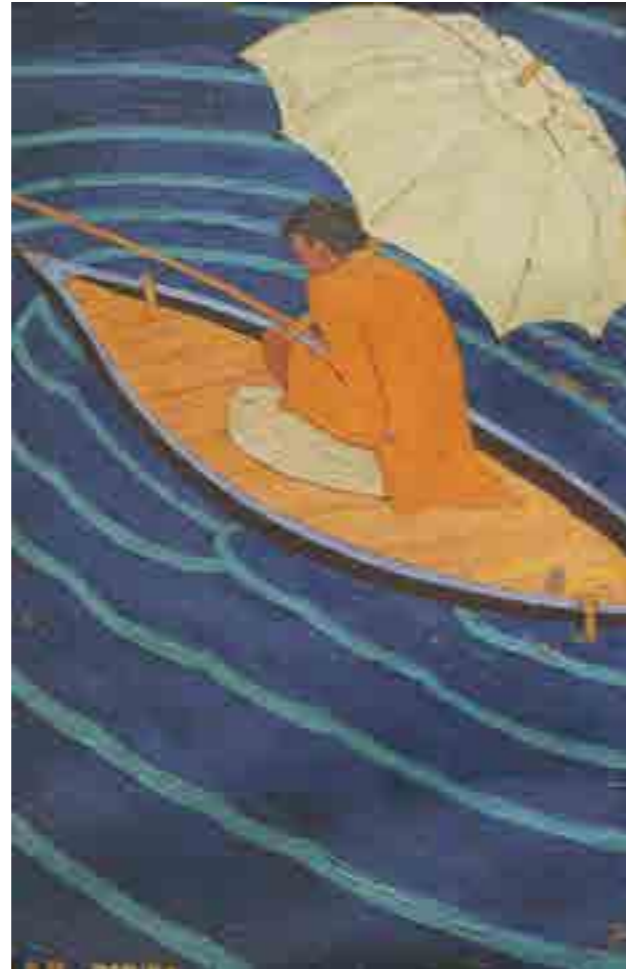
Shomoy Ebong Shomoyer Aatit, 1976. Oil On Canvas. Courtesy of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Aminul Islam was arguably the first artist to introduce mosaic murals to the art scene of Bangladesh. The Osmani Memorial Hall, Dhaka has a great example of his mural work on its entrance. An autobiographical streak runs through many of his paintings. His figures gradually became more suggestive and more geometrically organised later on in his career. He drew his designs from various sources, and his compositions became more focused and articulate. He was a student of the first batch of the Government Institute of Arts, Dacca. He completed a Fine Art Degree in 1953 and studied in Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze in Florence from 1953–1956. Later he became a teacher at the Institute and became its principal in 1978.

b. 1931, Narayanganj; d. 2011, Dhaka

Anwarul Huq

Anwarul Huq was one of the initiators of the Government Institute of Arts in Dhaka in 1948 and served as a teacher until 1977. He made significant contributions to the development of the curricula of the school. Anwarul Huq was the founding teacher of the Department of Drawing and Painting. He was a somewhat reclusive figure, preferring to stay away from the public gaze, focusing on institution building activities such as teaching and administrative duties. He completed a Fine Art Degree in 1941 and a 'Teachership' Course at the Government School of Art, Calcutta and taught there until Partition in 1947, after which he relocated to Dhaka.



Angling, 1959. Oil on canvas. Courtesy of Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka

b. 1918, Uganda; d. 1981 in Dacca

Banizul Huq

Banizul Huq was a vital figure in the foundation of two major art institutes in Bangladesh: Chittagong and Rajshahi Art College. Huq joined Chittagong Art College in 1973 as one of its first teachers. While teaching there, he built a hostel for the art college students to transform it into a residential campus. But soon after, he left the institution to establish Rajshahi Art College in 1978 which is now the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Rajshahi. He remained there as founding principal until 1986. Huq was a painter whose work reflected the serene beauty of nature with surrealist motifs. He completed his BFA at the Bangladesh College of Arts & Crafts, Dacca in 1973.

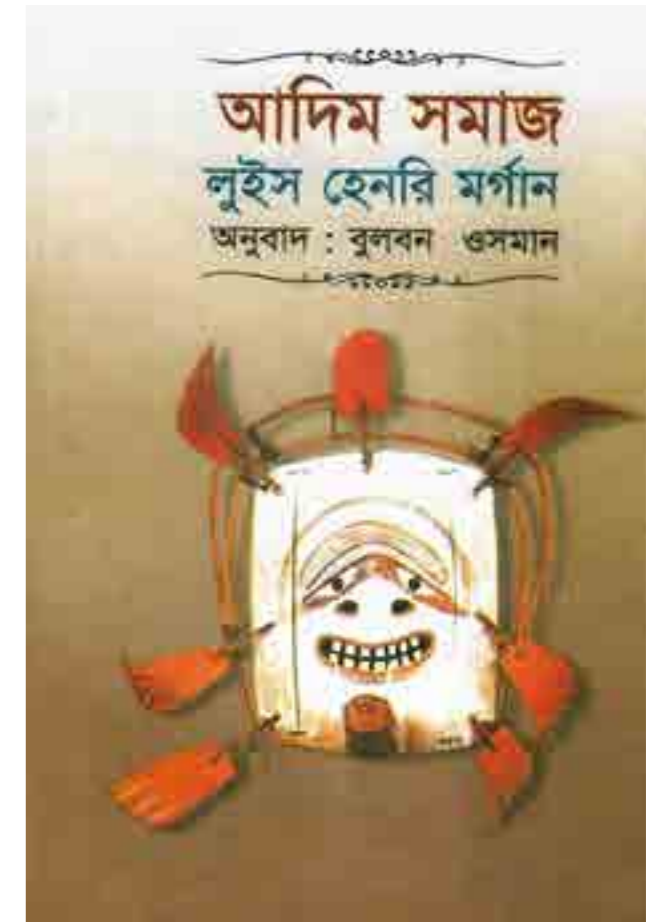


Shadow 1, 1980. Oil on Canvas. Courtesy of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

b. 1948, Gaibandha; d. 2018, Dhaka

Bulbon Osman

Despite having a background in sociology, Bulbon Osman has dedicated his career to the teaching of art history. He completed his BA in 1962 and his MA in 1963 at the Sociology Department of the University of Dacca. Osman began his teaching career in 1966 as a teacher of the 'Sociology of Art' at the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca. Osman's involvement in theory has also inspired him to become a self-taught artist working across painting and printmaking. He contributed to the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra (Free Bengal Radio Centre) during the Liberation War of 1971. Osman is currently serving as an Honorary Professor of the History of Art Department, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka.



Book cover of *Ancient Society* (translated), Lewis H. Morgan, 1975. Published by Bangla Academy

b. 1941, Howrah; lives and works in Dhaka

Chandra Shekhar Dey



Composition-5, 1976. Oil on Canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Chandra Sekhar Dey's canvases capture the magic of everyday life in Bangladesh and its stories, mostly focusing on urban landscapes. His unique use of the colour white in his art practice is notable and stands out in the Bangladeshi context. He worked as a teacher at the Chittagong Art College from 1973–1977 and from 1984–1988. During that time, he also volunteered at several cultural spaces in Chittagong. Active as a student, Dey was one of the key members of the collective group *Oti Shamprotik Amra* that created the 13 panel *Abahoman, Bangla Bangali* murals in 1972. He completed his BFA at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1972 and his MFA in 1975 at the Fine Arts Department, University of Chittagong.

b. 1951, Chittagong; lives and works in Dhaka

Debdas Chakraborty

Debdas Chakraborty works across various mediums and disciplines creating artworks that are distinct for their combination of lines that build up abstract geometric forms. His *Bristi* (Rain) series is the finest example of his style. As a politically aware artist, Chakraborty's artworks repeatedly depict social realism, but in an abstract form. Debdas Chakraborty taught at the Fine Arts Department of Chittagong University for about a decade from 1970–80. During the Liberation War of Bangladesh, he worked as a designer for the temporary Government of Bangladesh. Chakraborty completed his art education at the Government Institute of Arts in 1956.



Fishing, 1988. Oil on Canvas. Courtesy of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

b. 1933, Shariatpur; d. 2008, Dhaka

Dhali Al Mamoon



Lat Shaheber Chair, 2015. Resin, Spice, Tea, Indigo, Stone Dust Fiber and Textile, Garments Waste. Courtesy of the artist and Bengal Foundation

Dhali Al Mamoon is known for his versatile experimental works, both in terms of their ideas and the diverse media employed. His drawings, paintings, sculptures, installations and videos explore history and identity of Bengal. He finds it difficult to escape history and is driven by the need to articulate the social and political imperatives of the nation. His art writings reflect his anti-colonial standpoint and reveal the inferiority complex issues of colonised people in their cultural contexts. He was a founding member of the Shomoy artists' group, active from 1980 to 1995. He completed his Master Degree in Fine Arts at the University of Chittagong in 1984 and received the DAAD Fellowship at the Hochschule der Kunste, Berlin, Germany from 1993–94. He is a Professor in the Department of Painting, Institute of Fine Arts, University of Chittagong and one of the most influential teachers in Chittagong.

b. 1958, Chandpur; lives and works in Chattogram

Farida Zaman

Farida Zaman has been an inspiration for women in Bangladesh over her five decade long career due to her persistence to keep working against all odds. The artist's subjects interact with time and space, and she is particularly well known for her fishnet series. Zaman has published illustrations and articles in journals across Bangladesh. She completed a BFA at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1974 and an MFA at the M.S. University, Baroda, India in 1978 and later earned a PhD from the Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, India in 1995. She is an Honorary Professor of the Department of Drawing and Painting, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka.



Fishing Net, 1979. Oil on canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Photo: Bishwajit Goswami

b. 1953, Chandpur; lives and works in Dhaka

Foyejul Azim

Foyejul Azim's artistic journey centres on the theory of art which he taught from 1982–2018 at the Institute of Fine Arts, University of Chittagong, publishing several theoretical books parallel to his painting practice. In 1992 he published a collection of articles entitled *Charukalar Bhumika*, defining fundamental concepts of Fine Arts and their visible processes, helping Bangladeshi art students to enrich their theoretical knowledge. *Bangladesher Shilpakalar Adiparba O Aupanibeshik Prohab* is another one of his research contributions. Foyejul Azim completed his MFA at the Fine Arts Department of Chittagong University. He earned his PhD from Rabindra Bharati University, Calcutta in 1994.



Book cover of *Bangladesher Shilpakalar Adiparba O Aupanibeshik Prohab* (*Primitive Stage of Arts and Colonial Influence*) by Foyejul Azim, Bangla Academy, Dhaka, 1st Edition, September 2000

b. 1953, Cox's Bazar; lives and works in Chattogram

Golam Faruque Bebul



Fragmented Image-31, 2011. Acrylic on canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Cosmos Foundation

Golam Faruque is an abstract painter and printmaker and his works are notable for their fragmented imagery with varying forms and compositions that depict the anguish and joy of life. His abstract imagery includes a vocabulary of abundant and varied textures and colours and his layering techniques create enhanced expressiveness. He earned his BFA in Printmaking from the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1978. He later earned an MFA in the same subject from the Institute of Fine Art, University of Dhaka. He is a Professor of the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Rajshahi.

b. 1958, Jamalpur; lives and works in Rajshahi

Hamiduzzaman Khan

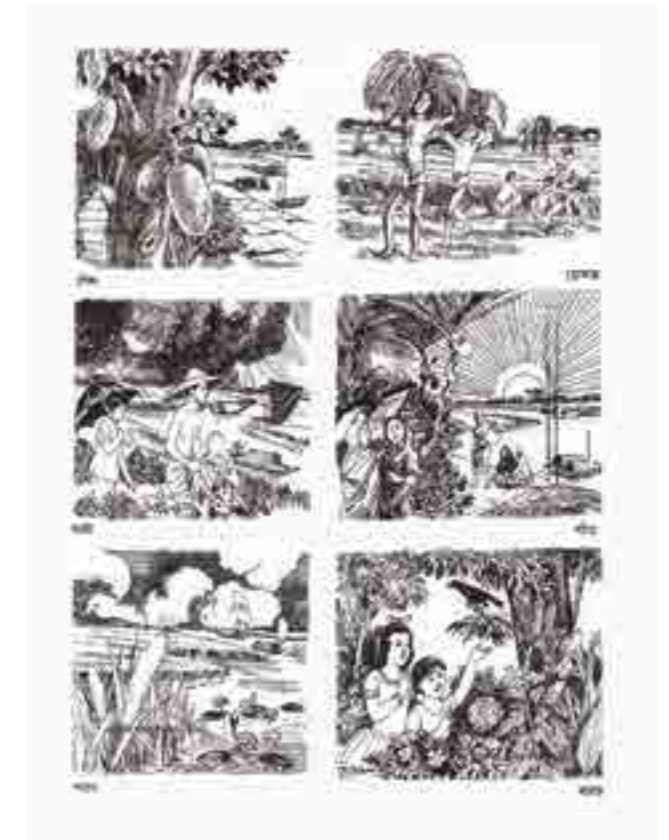
Hamiduzzaman Khan is known for his large-scale public sculptures that are found in Dhaka and across Bangladesh. His work is associated with the Liberation War and freedom fighters, and he uses a wide variety of materials in his sculptures from metal to marble to wood. While his own individual works on these themes began while he was a student in Baroda, the work became more ambitious while he assisted his teacher Abdur Razzaque in executing *Jagroto Chowrongi* in Gazipur in 1972. Khan earned his BFA in painting from the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1967. His travels in Europe sparked his fascination for sculpture in urban and public space, and he later enrolled in an MFA programme in sculpture at the M.S. University, Baroda from 1974–76. He interned at the Sculpture Centre in New York from 1982 to 1983. He is an Honorary Professor of the Department of Sculpture, University of Dhaka.



Remembrance 71, 1975. Bronze. Courtesy of the artist

b. 1946, Kishoreganj; lives and works in Dhaka

Hashem Khan



Six Seasons, 1986. School Textbook Illustration. Published by NCTB

Hashem Khan's school textbook covers and illustrations have been inspiring many generations of students to pursue art; his simple drawings effortlessly connect to the people and their daily life. His painterly work is romantic, abstract, and colourful. He actively participated in the Liberation War of 1971 and produced many works addressing the subject to rally the cause. Hashem Khan was one of the designers and illustrators of the handwritten Constitution of Bangladesh of 1972, under the supervision of Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin. He completed his Fine Art degree at the Government Institute of Arts, Dacca in 1961. He was a faculty member of the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka from 1968 to 2017.

b. 1941, Chandpur; lives and works in Dhaka

Hashi Chakraborty

Hashi Chakraborty was one of the pioneers in synchronising regional and global forms in his paintings, most of which demonstrate a strong presence of nature, the sea in particular. His work explores ideas of progression and epic consciousness. During his undergraduate years Chakraborty founded the Painters' Group along with his friends in 1973. He joined The Chittagong Art College as a teacher after completing his education at the Bangladesh College of Arts & Crafts, Dacca in 1972 and earned an MFA from the Fine Arts Department of Chittagong University in 1974.



Mayabi Dwip, 1977. Oil on Canvas. Courtesy of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

b. 1948, Barisal; d. 2014, Chittagong

Hritendra Kumar Sharma



Image-29, 2014. Acrylic on Canvas. Courtesy of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Hritendra Kumar Sharma is an artist and an art educator. A contrasting use of light and shade on the surface and drawing-based abstraction dominates his work. His powerful lines create visual illusions and generate dynamic space on the surface of the work. He completed his BFA in Drawing and Painting at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1981. He later earned an MFA in 1984 in the same subject at the Institute of Fine Art, University of Dhaka. He became a lecturer in Rajshahi Arts & Crafts College in 1989.

b. 1961, Netrokona; lives and works in Rajshahi

Jamal Ahmed

Jamal Ahmed's artworks portray two-dimensional painted figures against pastoral and urban scenes. He is known for his use of colour and textured surfaces and his ability to invoke drama and tension. He earned a BFA from the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1978 and an MFA degree at Tsukuba University, Japan in 1982. He studied oil painting in Japan from 1982 to 1984 and completed another year-long research course in Warsaw, Poland in 1980. Ahmed is currently a Professor at the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.



Bather, 2008. Mixed Medium on Paper. Courtesy of the artist and Ms Nilu Rowshon Murshed

b. 1955, Dacca; lives and works in Dhaka

Kazi Abdul Baset

Kazi Abdul Baset's work varies from realism to abstraction with a distinct richness of colour. He completed his BFA at the Government Institute of Arts, Dacca in 1956, and his MFA at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago under a Fulbright Scholarship from 1963 to 1964. While studying in the USA, Baset was influenced by abstract expressionism. Baset was at the forefront of those who tried to introduce abstract expressionism in Bangladesh and played an important role in modernising painting. In 1957 he joined what is now the Faculty of Fine Art University of Dhaka as a teacher, the Director of the Institute of Fine Art (1991-94) and the head of the Drawing & Painting Department. He retired in 1995.



Composition, 1982. Oil On Canvas. Courtesy of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

b. 1935 Dacca; d. 2002 Dhaka

Kazi Rakib



Morning 1, 2011. Glass Etching and Paint. Courtesy of the artist and Galleri Kaya

Kazi Rakib is recognised for his glass paintings although he also works in a variety of other media. Rakib was a founding member of the Dacca Painters 1974-1977, an artists' group inspired by Surrealism and Dada. In 1981, he created a series of prints denoting the corruption, killing, political instability, economic crisis and social discrimination of the time, part of his longstanding work as an artist-witness. Rakib completed his BFA in 1977 at the Department of Fine Arts, University of Chittagong. He was one of the founding teachers of Rajshahi Art College from 1979-1984. He regularly wrote on art and aesthetics for a newspaper named *Dainik Barta*.

b. 1958, Shariatpur; lives and works in New York

KMA Quayyum

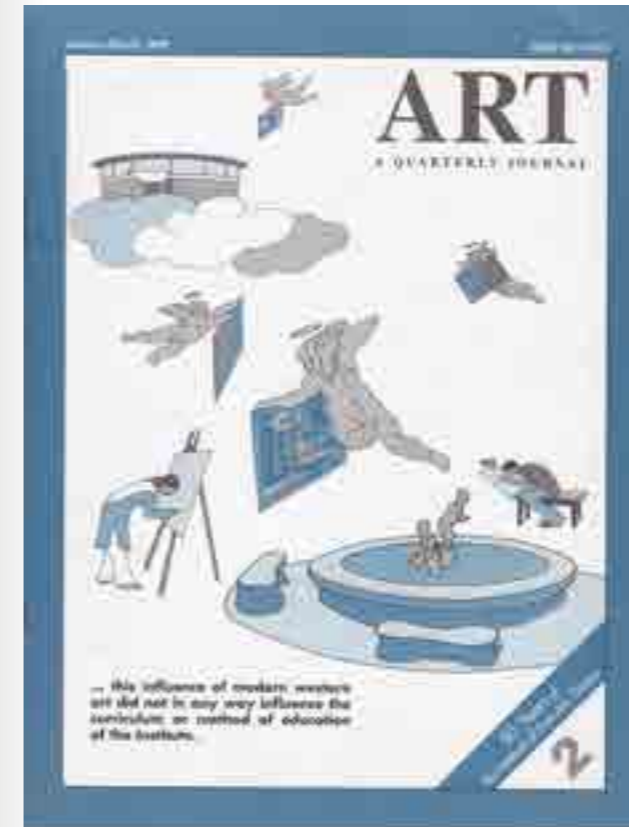
Stories originating from the sensibility and expectations of life find their place on the canvases of K M A Quayyum. His journey in the field of art finds its distinct identity through the use of a melancholic colour palette. While influenced by western naturalism, Quayyum's subject matter remains grounded in Bangladesh. After completing his studies at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1973, he completed his MFA degree at the Fine Arts Department, University of Chittagong in 1975. He started his teaching career at the Chittagong Art College in 1978 and taught there for four decades.



Painting-1, 1980. Oil On Canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

b. 1952, Comilla; lives and works in Chattogram

Lala Rukh Selim



ART, January-March 1999. A Quarterly Journal, edited by Lala Rukh Selim, Vol. 4. No. 3., Dhaka

Lala Rukh Selim is a sculptor, academic and researcher who was a member of Shomoy, an influential artists' group active during the 1980's and 1990's. She was the editor of *ART*, a quarterly Journal active from 1994 to 2004 that played an important role in disseminating English texts about art in Bangladesh. She edited the 'Arts and Crafts' section of the Cultural Survey of Bangladesh Series, published by the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh in 2007. She completed a BFA at the Institute of Fine Art, University of Dhaka in 1984 and earned an MFA at the Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati, Santiniketan, India in 1989. She was the lead partner for the Faculty of Fine Art in the INSPIRE project which was an educational exchange program with the Slade School of Art, UCL, London, UK from 2010-2017. She is a Professor of the Sculpture Department, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka.

b. 1963, Dacca; lives and works in Dhaka

Mahbubul Amin

Mahbubul Amin played an important role in the country's fine art movement through his service as a teacher for three decades, helping students to choose their artistic paths. Amin's works reflected various motifs of village life, both human and non-human. Although his taste was enriched and polished by urban life, his mind was filled with the essence of the soil. Amin completed his BFA at the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1970 and joined the college as a teacher in 1972.



Pigeon-7, 2000. Acrylic on Canvas. Courtesy of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

b. 1948, Mymensingh; d. 2001, Dhaka

Mahmudul Haque

As an artist and teacher, Mahmudul Haque introduced different printmaking and painting processes to his curriculum. Haque's stylised artworks are non-representational; line, color, shape, textures are dominant on the surfaces of his prints and paintings. He cooperated with the Bengal Foundation to establish the *Safiuddin Bengal Printmaking Studio*, an alternative space for artists. He completed his BFA at the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1968 and an MFA at Tsukuba University in Japan in 1984. Haque was a visiting Professor at Tsukuba University and the Indus Valley School of Art and Design, Pakistan. He is an Honorary Professor of the Department of Printmaking, University of Dhaka and held the position of Director of the Institute of Fine Art from 1999 to 2002.



Bikeler Janala, 1979. Oil On Canvas. Courtesy of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

b. 1945, Bagerhat, lives and works in Dhaka

Maran Chand Pal



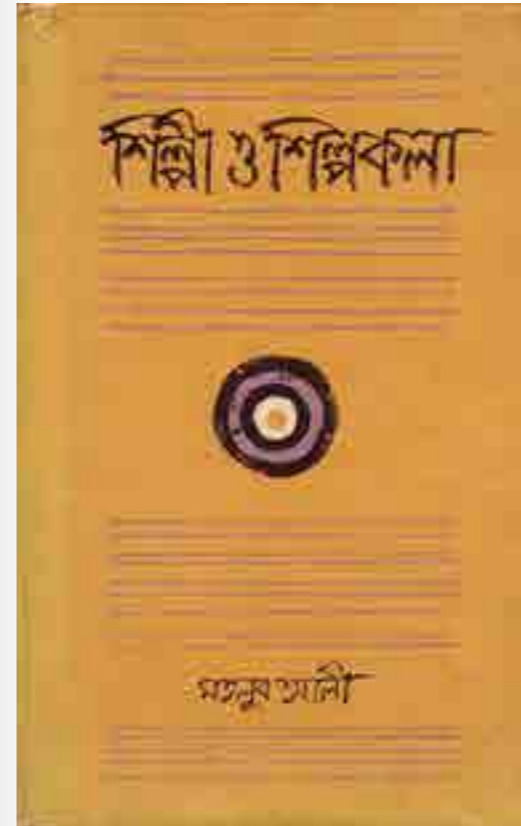
Untitled, (date unknown), Ceramic. Courtesy of Faculty of Fine Art, Dhaka University

The cultural history and heritage of Bangladesh inspired the work of Maran Chand Pal. He made a great contribution to the practising and conservation of traditional pottery folk dolls (i.e. Tapa Putul, peacocks, elephants, horses). He transformed forms and ideas from traditional dolls into impressive sculptures with his unique style. He was one of the first students of the Department of Ceramics at the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca where he completed his certificate course in 1964. He later joined the department as a teacher in 1965. Taking his teaching role outside of the classroom, he also taught ceramics to local youth as a tool for improving their livelihood.

b. 1945, Dacca; d. 2013 in Dhaka

Matlub Ali

Matlub Ali is an artist, art educator, art critic, writer, lyricist, composer and playwright. He has been contributing to Bangladeshi literature through numerous books on the socio-political scenario as well as the country's art and culture. He is highly influential in the development of art historical writing. He completed a BFA in 1969 at the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca and an MFA in 1987 at the Institute of Fine Art, University of Dhaka. He joined as a lecturer of Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts in 1973 and retired as a Professor of Drawing and Painting, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka in 2012. He held the position of Dean, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka from 2010 to 2012.



SHILPI O SHILPAKALAA (Essays on Art & Artist), June 1994. Matlub Ali, Bangla Academy, Dhaka, 1st Edition

b. 1948, Rangpur; lives and works in New York

Mir Mustafa Ali



Pottery, (date unknown), Ceramic, Faculty of Fine Art, Dhaka University

Mir Mustafa Ali was an artist and art educator who played a pioneering role in the development of ceramics as institutional practice in Bangladesh. He was the founding head of the Ceramics Department at the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca. He completed a Fine Art Degree at the Government Institute of Arts, Dhaka in 1955 and later went to England to study modeling and ceramics at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London from 1956-1960. Zainul Abedin took the initiative of opening the Ceramics Department in 1961 and invited Ali to join as a lecturer in 1963. Ali collected traditional ceramics and donated those to the department's permanent collection to enrich the students' knowledge of the medium. He was the Director of the Institute of Fine Art, University of Dhaka from 1986 to 1988.

b. 1932, Burdwan, British India; d. 2017 in Dhaka

Mohammad Eunos



X-ray of Bengal, 2007. Mixed Media. Courtesy of the artist

Mohammad Eunos is a painter and graphic designer whose versatile style enriches the scenography of major events like Amar Ekushey, Zainul Utsab, and many convocations at Dhaka University. He is also known for his painting, which is inspired by abstract expressionism but carries familiar textures of urban society. His canvases depict the effects of time, the rotation of the planet, and the cycle of the seasons through the use of texture across various shapes and forms. He earned his BFA from the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1978 and an MFA from Tama Art University, Tokyo, Japan in 1987. He is currently a professor in the Graphic Design Department, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka.

b. 1954, Thakurgaon; lives and works in Dhaka

Mohammad Kibria

Mohammad Kibria was an abstract painter and graphic artist who is remembered as one of the first successful non-representational artists in Bangladesh. Guided by Hideo Hagiwara while studying in Japan, Kibria learned to apply precision and balance to his painted surfaces, values that he passed onto his students. Kibria was inspired by abstract expressionism and his early-works articulated architectural concepts and geometric influences that recalled cubism. He completed his art education at the Govt. School of Art, Calcutta, India in 1950, and studied at the Tokyo University of Arts from 1959–1962. Prompted by Zainul Abedin, in 1958, Kibria joined the Government Institute of Fine Arts and taught painting and eventually moved to the printmaking department. As a teacher and artist, he inspired students and others to be open minded and to create art in a global context.



Landscape I, 1980. Oil On Canvas. Courtesy of Ms Nilu Rowshon Murshed

b. 1929, Birbhum, British India; d. 2011 in Dhaka

Monirul Islam



Green Haven, 2012. Acrylic on corrugated board. Courtesy of Ms Nilu Rowshon Murshed

Monirul Islam is one of the most influential living artists in Bangladesh known for his constant search for new methods of painting and print-making which also involves making his own paint and paper. He studied at the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts in Dacca from 1961–1966. He was a teacher at the same college in Dacca from 1966–1969 and left teaching for higher studies in Spain, studying mural paintings at the Madrid Academy of Fine Arts. Even while abroad, he remained in touch with Bangladeshi artists and conducted workshops when visiting Dhaka in order to pass down his methodology.

b. 1943, Chandpur; lives and works in Dhaka and Madrid

Monsur UI Karim

Monsur UI Karim expresses himself through paintings that speak to the co-existence of nature and humanity. Coming from Rajbari, a district near the bank of Padma River, he has depicted the life and struggle of people displaced by erosion, using bright and vibrant colours. His works on the hilly region of Bandarban are calm with cool compositions of blue and green. He founded *Monon Academy* (2005–2015) and established an artists' group called *Amader Chattogram 95* in order to keep the art scene in Chittagong alive. In his retirement, he founded *Bunon Art Space* (2016–) in his hometown of Rajbari. Monsur UI Karim earned his BFA from the Bangladesh College of Arts & Crafts, Dacca in 1972. He received his MFA degree from the Department of Fine Arts, University of Chittagong in 1974 where he taught from 1976–2015.



Point Of Departure, 2015. Acrylic. Courtesy of the artist and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

b. 1950 Rajbari; lives and works in Rajbari

Mostafizul Haque

Although Mostafizul Haque has been teaching painting at graduate and postgraduate level and made a considerable contribution in developing a culture for educating children in Fine Art. Very conscious about the relationship between children, art, and psychology, he implemented this knowledge to introduce new techniques to help children learn more effectively. He completed his BFA in 1978 and MFA in 1981 at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca. He later earned another Master's degree in Japanese Painting from the University of Tsukuba, Japan in 1995. He is currently teaching as a professor in the Drawing and Painting Department, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka.



Human Form-2. Acrylic On Canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Faculty of Fine Art, Dhaka University

b. 1957, Bagerhat; lives and works in Dhaka

Murtaja Baseer



The Wing #125, 2010. Oil on Canvas. Courtesy of Ms Nilu Rowshon Murshed

Murtaja Baseer is known for his 'abstract-realist' paintings reflecting his daily experience of Bengal. In 1967, he started the *Wall* series, his first step towards abstraction, which depicted the entropy and layers of textures and colours on the walls of old Dhaka, a reflection on the society under the dictatorship of Ayub Khan (1958–1969). He actively participated in the Language Movement of 1952 and pre-Liberation War demonstrations. He was sent to jail throughout the East Pakistani period for his leftist political views and later left for Paris. Baseer enrolled in the Government Institute of Arts, Dacca in 1949. After earning the degree in 1954, he studied at the *Accademia di Belle Arti* of Florence from 1956–1958. He later studied mosaic making at *École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts* (1971–1973) and Etching and Aquatint in *Académie Goetz* in Paris, France from 1972–1973. Baseer is also a writer, poet, numismatist, and acted as an academic at the University of Chittagong until 1998.

b. 1932, Dacca; lives and works in Dhaka

Mustafa Monwar

Mustafa Monwar is a painter, art educator, designer, media personality and cultural activist. He participated in the language movement of 1952 and during the 1971 Liberation War he organised puppet shows at refugee camps in West Bengal to inspire and encourage people in the midst of war. Monwar's television puppet show *Moner Kotha* ran on Bangladesh Television for twelve years and had a great impact on the children of that generation. Through his television show, many children learned about the different techniques of art. He runs the Dhaka-based organisation *Educational Puppet Development Centre (EPDC)*. He studied at the Govt. College of Art and Craft, Calcutta in 1959. Monwar started his career as a teacher at the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca from 1960–1963. He later joined Bangladesh Television (BTV) as Director General and went on to become Director General of the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and the National Media Institute. He also served as a managing director of the Bangladesh Film Development Corporation.



Drawing (experience from the liberation war), approx. 1971. Mixed media on paper. Courtesy of the artist and Bishwajit Goswami

b. 1935, Magura; lives and works in Dhaka

Naima Haque



How The Earth Became Green, 1996. Book Illustration. Published: Kagyusha Japan

Women and the mother-child bond dominate both the paintings and illustrations of Naima Haque. While earning her MFA, Haque took on the challenge of engaging with the male-oriented discipline of graphic design and later made this her tool to reach out to mass audiences, educating children with her illustrations, story books and witty poems. Being a prominent member of *Shako* (an association of female Bangladeshi artists established in 2003 that works for the welfare of women), she frequently works closely with organisations across Bangladesh who support groups that are marginalised by society. She completed a BFA in Drawing and Painting at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1974 and an MFA in Graphic Design at the MS University of Baroda, India in 1983. She joined the department of Graphic Design at the Institute of Fine Art, University of Dhaka in 1987 as a lecturer.

b. 1953, Dacca; lives and works in Dhaka

Nasreen Begum



In Waiting, 1996. Oil on Board. Courtesy of the artist and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Nasreen Begum broadly practices oriental-style wash painting. Her fluid use of color reflects the restlessness found in capturing the beauty of a passing moment and employs age-old techniques in a contemporary manner. Colour plays a great role in her works and one of her best-known bodies of work is the *Cactus Series* where women and nature are depicted symbolically. She completed a BFA in Oriental Art at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1978 and an MFA in Printmaking at MS University, Baroda, India in 1983. Nasreen Begum is currently a professor of the Department of Oriental Art, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka.

b. 1956, Chuadanga; lives and works in Dhaka

Nazlee Laila Monsur

Nazlee Laila Monsur depicts social relationships and issues of urban life in her own distinct style. She looked for inspiration from Indian miniature painting and rickshaw paintings of Bangladesh, transforming these traditional techniques with characteristics of her own. Her paintings display a narrative tendency and use bright and vivid colours. Set in an urban surrounding, symbolised by the presence of crows and rickshaws, her figures seem to be in a mystical mood torn between belonging and non-belonging. Nazlee completed an MFA at the Fine Arts Department of University of Chittagong in 1976. She started her career as a teacher at Chittagong Art College in 1976 and retired in 2009.



Her Life-3, 1990. Watercolour. Courtesy of the artist and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

b. 1952, Rajshahi; lives and works in Chattogram

Nisar Hossain



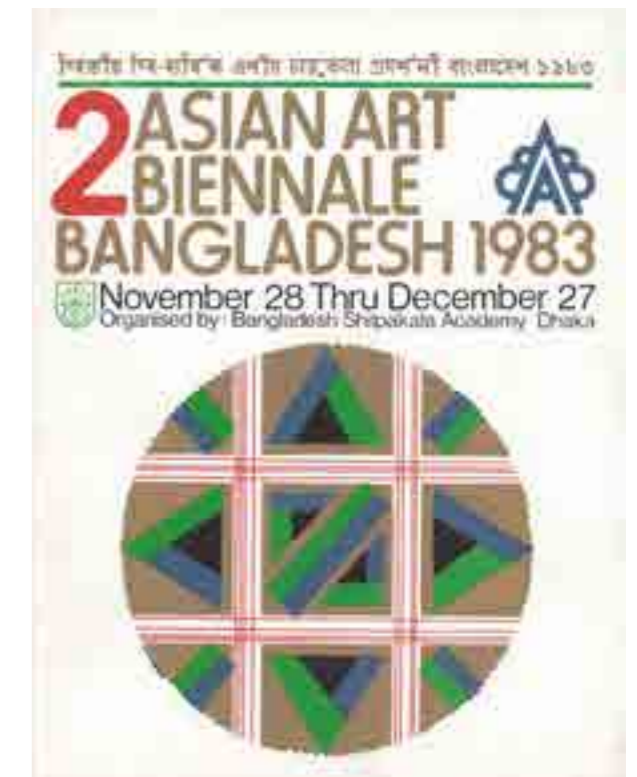
Portrait of The Killer, 2000. Oil on rexine cloth. Courtesy of the artist and ARTCON

Nisar Hossain is a versatile artist, academic, researcher, organiser and cultural activist. He was a founding member of the Shomoy group. Hossain rejected the complacent geometry and single-viewpoint perspective pursued by many artists of his time. His work today includes elements of performance art, sound art, installation, photography and pantomime to create moving images of our time. His research articles on folk art are published in national and international journals. He earned his BFA from Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1981 and his MFA from Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati, Santiniketan, India in 1985. He is a professor of Drawing and Painting Department, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka and holds the position of Dean.

b. 1961, Dacca; lives and works in Dhaka

Qayyum Chowdhury

Qayyum Chowdhury was known for his illustrative paintings and book illustrations. He designed many book covers and posters which are still used until this day. He used motifs of folk art more for stylistic reasons than for their content. He focused squarely on the rich style of folk art – its decisive use of lines, its decorative designs and ornamentation, and its detailed workings of various leitmotifs. He was the convener of the Charu Karu Shilpi Songram Parishad during the Liberation War in 1971. He completed his Fine Art degree at the Government Institute of Arts, Dacca in 1954. Chowdhury joined the same institute as a teacher in 1957 and then took a job at the newly established Design Centre and within a year joined the Pakistan Observer where he served as its chief artist. He later returned to the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts in 1965 as a teacher. Although he retired in 1994, he continued teaching there until 2002 as Honorary and Supernumerary Professor.



2nd Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh, 1983. Poster Design, 1982. Published by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

b. 1932, Feni; d. 2014 in Dhaka

Quamrul Hassan

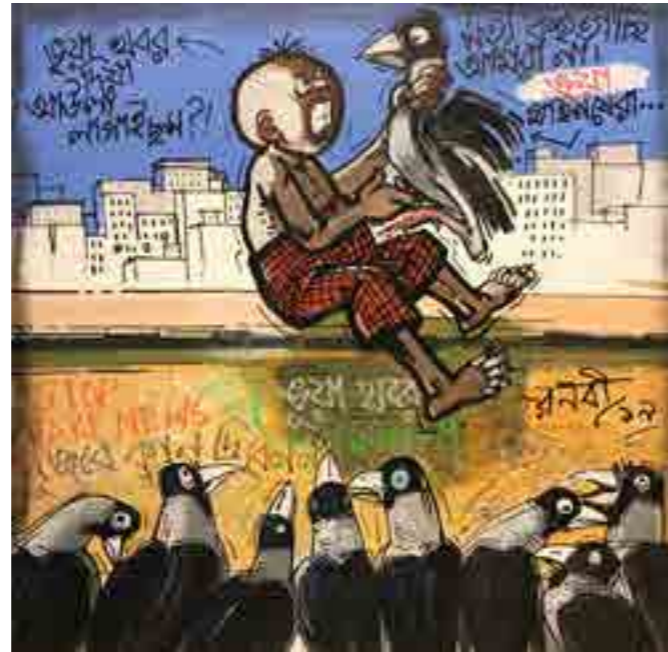
Quamrul Hassan was a painter, designer and art educator who was always politically active and is perhaps most famous for the poster *Annihilate These Demons* of the Liberation War of 1971. He was involved in the Non-Cooperation movement (1969–70) and also took part in the Liberation War, serving as the Director of the Art Division of the Information and Radio Department of the Bangladesh Government in Exile. He completed a Fine Art Degree in 1947 at the Govt. School of Art, Calcutta, India. After Partition, Quamrul Hassan came to Dacca and, in collaboration with Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin, established the Government Institute of Arts in 1948. He taught at the same institute until 1960. The East Pakistan Small and Cottage Industries Corporation was established under his leadership in 1960, and he worked there as Director of the Design Centre until his retirement in 1978. Politically active until his death, one of his last sketches became an inspiration for a mass movement that brought about the downfall of the Ershad regime in 1990.



Annihilate These Demons, Poster of a representation of Pakistani General, 1971. Courtesy of Liberation War Museum, Bangladesh

b. 1921, Calcutta; d. 1988 in Dhaka

Rafiqun Nabi



Fake News, 2019. Mixed Media on Canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Cosmos Foundation

Rafiqun Nabi (also known as Ranabi) is a painter, print-maker, art educator and cartoonist, best known for his creation of the icon Tokai. Tokai is a character that represents poor street children who live by begging and scavenging from the garbage and have a knack for telling simple yet painful truths about the current political and socio-economic situation of the country. His Tokai character has become a nationally adopted icon and has inspired many students to become cartoonists. He completed his art education at the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1964. During 1973–1976, he studied printmaking at the Athens School of Fine Arts with a scholarship from the Greek Government. Nabi joined as a teacher at East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts in 1964 and served as a member of the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka until 2010 and held the position of Dean. He is currently the Supernumerary Professor in the Department of Drawing and Painting, University of Dhaka.

b. 1943, Chapainawabganj; lives and works in Dhaka

Ranjit Das

Ranjit Das's romantic works seek to capture the essence of nature with an abstract and poetic disposition. His canvases reflect his experience with colour, space and time through his expressive brush strokes. Das was influenced by Picasso, Rembrandt, Matisse and other European painters as well as Indian contemporary art that he encountered while pursuing a Master's degree at the M. S. University, Baroda in 1981. He completed his BFA at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1975 and worked as a teacher in the Fine Arts Department, University of Chittagong.



Protifoloner Protichchobi, 2015. Acrylic On Canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

b. 1956, Tangail; lives and works in Dhaka

Rashid Choudhury

Rashid Choudhury's work is unique among his contemporaries as the source of his inspiration was not folk art but rather folk-lore. His works explore the myth, magic and the legend of both Muslim and Hindu cultures living across rural Bengal. While he painted with oil and gouache, Choudhury is best known for his tapestries. He was a significant pioneer in the modern art movement from as early as the 1950s, creating many hand-woven tapestries for government as well as private buildings. He studied at the Government Institute of Arts, Dacca from 1950 to 1954. He went to Madrid on a scholarship at the Central Escuela des Bellas Artes de San Fernando from 1956 to 1957. Returning from Spain, he joined the Institute of Arts as a teacher in 1958. He obtained a French Government scholarship to study at the Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts from 1960 to 1964. In 1970, the Fine Arts Department was established at Chittagong University and Choudhury joined as one of its first teachers and played a major role in developing the department. He was also a leader in establishing the Chittagong Art College in 1973. His works can be found in the permanent collections of Tate and the Metropolitan Museum of Art through the initiatives of Samdani Art Foundation.



Composition 13, 1981. Tapestry. Courtesy of Ms. Nilu Rowshon Murshed

b. 1932, Faridpur; d. 1986 in Dhaka

Rokeya Sultana



Mermaid, 2007. Tempera On Canvas.
Courtesy of the artist and Ms Nilu Rowshon Murshed

Rokeya Sultana's painting and printmaking practice is largely focused on her inner life and an exploration of the feminine experience. Sultana's works recall the relationship between mother and child, the apathy of girl's care, and the struggles of 'liberated Bangladeshi women' as compared with the contemporary global status of women. Her *Madonna* series is a well-known body of work that carries a strong determined feminist statement. She earned her BFA from the Bangladesh College of Arts & Crafts in 1980 and her MFA from Kala Bhavan, Visva Bharati, Santiniketan in 1983. She is a Professor of Printmaking Department at the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka.

b. 1958, Chittagong; lives and works in Dhaka

Safiuddin Ahmed

Safiuddin Ahmed is remembered for the lasting legacy he left on printmaking in Bangladesh. He, along with Zainul Abedin and others, played an important role in the foundation of art institutions in Dacca. Ahmed helped raise the profile of a printmaking, a discipline often considered of secondary importance, by adopting it as his main medium. He inspired many other artists from the subcontinent to begin printmaking. He often travelled to Dumka, India, a place populated by Santhal people, and like many modernists before and after him, he was inspired by their way of life. But after coming to East Pakistan the look, posture and the environment of his works changed and he gradually started to move towards abstraction. He completed a Fine Art Degree (1942) and Teachership Course (1946) from Government School of Art, Calcutta, India and subsequently travelled to London for advanced training in printmaking, enrolling at the Central School of Arts (now Central St. Martins) in 1956.



The Angry Fish, 1964. Etching and Aquatint. Courtesy of Ahmed Nazir

b. 1922, Calcutta; d. 2012 in Dhaka

Samarjit Roy Chowdhury



Untitled-9, 2011. Oil on Canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Faculty of Fine art, University of Dhaka

Samarjit Roy Chowdhury is a painter, art educator and graphic designer in Bangladesh. His book illustrations, book covers, poster designs, typography and other elements of graphic design are recognisable for their unique style. He was one of the designers of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh prepared in 1972. He completed a Fine Arts Degree at the Government Institute of Arts, Dacca in 1960 and joined as a teacher in the same year and spent 43 years teaching Graphic Design. He later served as Dean of the Department of Fine and Performing Arts of Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology, Dhaka until 2010.

b. 1937, Comilla; lives and works in Dhaka

Shahid Kabir

Shahid Kabir's art speaks to the struggles of everyday life; his art narrates the life experience of ordinary as well as subjugated and underprivileged people. His use of colour and texture in his paintings and prints connect to the earth of his motherland. Kabir was inspired by spirituality and Baul philosophy and he attained local fame for works on Lalon Shah Fakir and Baul masters in the 1980s. He left for Spain in 1981 to seek western contemporary art knowledge and came back to Bangladesh after 17 years. Kabir earned a BFA from the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts in 1969. He taught painting at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca from 1972 to 1980.



Fakir Lalon & Jesus Christ, 1981. Egg Tempera on Board. Courtesy of the artist and Rezwan Rahman. Photo: Anwar Hossain

b. 1949, Barisal; lives and works in Dhaka

Shafiqul Ameen

Shafiqul Ameen was an art educator, administrator and painter. He completed a Fine Art Degree in 1938 at the Govt. School of Art, Calcutta, India. He assisted in the primary administrative work of establishing the Art Institute in Dhaka. Ameen joined the Government Institute of Arts in 1955 as a founding teacher in the Oriental Art Department. Zainul Abedin retired from the post of Principal in 1967 and Shafiqul Ameen took up this leadership role. He was an excellent administrator and held the position of Executive Director at the Folk Art Museum, Sonargaon from 1976-1982 which was also founded by Abedin.



Shillong City from Jaialaw, 1937. Oil on canvas. Image courtesy Malay Bala

b. 1912, Assam; d. 2011 in Dhaka

Shoshibhuson Paul



Untitled, (date unknown). Oil on Board. Courtesy of Shoshibhuson Paul Art Gallery, Fine Arts School, University of Khulna. Photo: Jannatul Royhana

Shoshibhuson Paul was a well-known artist in colonial East Bengal. It is assumed that he was the first initiator of a sustainable art community in East Bengal, working to enrich art skills in the region (especially when it came to oil painting techniques). His works brought him respect and fame with the British Raj. His artworks were appreciated by many patrons and were commissioned by colonial officers and the local wealthy community. Shoshibhuson's greatest achievement was setting up the first art educational institute for the East Bengal region, named Maheshwarpasha School of Art, in 1904. It was later developed and became known as Khulna Art College, and is now merged with Khulna University.

b. 1877, Khulna; d. 1946, Khulna

Sheikh Afzal Hossain



Series of pioneer Art Educators (left: Anwarul Haq, center: Zainul Abedin, right: Zunabul Islam). Courtesy of the artist and Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka

Sheikh Afzal is well known for his representational art-making from the 1980s. He created many portraits of legendary personalities such as Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Rabindranath Tagore, Zainul Abedin and many others. He earned his BFA from the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1981. He completed an MFA at the Institute of Fine Art, University of Dhaka in 1984 and the University of Tsukuba, Japan in 1993. He is a faculty member in the Department of Drawing and Painting, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka.

b. 1960, Jhainaidah; lives and works in Dhaka

Shishir Bhattacharjee



Untitled, 2007. Ink on paper. Courtesy of the artist and Md. Imam Hossain

Shishir Bhattacharjee is a painter whose work stands out for its strong social commitment, sarcasm and wit. He was a founding member of Shomoy, an artists' group which was significant both in terms of the artists' understanding of time and their role in the course of Bangladesh's history. His works project a dystopia where power-hungry people rule. He is considered to be one of the leading satirical cartoonists in the country and continues to publish his political satires on the front cover of the highest nationally circulated newspaper. His socio-political commitment inspires him to create murals on the Shaheed Minar (Martyr Monument) premises every year to commemorate International Mother Language Day and he plays a vital role for organising Mongol Shovajatra on Pohela Boishakh (Bangla New Year). He completed his BFA at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dhaka in 1982 and MFA at the M.S. University Baroda, India in 1987. He is a professor and chairs the Drawing & Painting Department, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka.

b. 1960, Thakurgaon; lives and works in Dhaka

Showkatuzzaman



Untitled, 1997. Watercolour on paper. Courtesy of Malay Bala

Showkatuzzaman was known for his watercolour wash techniques and use of tempera, a practice employed by artists practicing 'oriental art' in Bangladesh. He was one of the artists who played an important role in developing and inspiring students to pursue oriental art, a genre that was inspired by pan-Asian movements of the 20th Century. Showkatuzzaman earned his BFA from the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1974 and completed his postgraduate studies from Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati, Santiniketan, India in 1976 and 1990. Showkat taught at the Chittagong Art College for a few years and joined the Oriental Art Department at the Institute of Fine Art, University of Dhaka in 1992 and taught there until his death.

b. 1953, Faridpur; d. 2005 in Dhaka

Siddhartha Talukder

Siddhartha Talukder's area of interest is abstraction. He completed his BFA in Drawing and Painting at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1981. He continued his studies and earned an MFA in 1985 in the same subject from the Institute of Fine Art, University of Dhaka. In 1999, he earned his PhD in the History of Art from Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, India. Talukder is currently a professor in the Department of Painting, Oriental Art and Printmaking and also holds the position of the Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Rajshahi.



Image Of - 24 April 2013, 2016. Acrylic On Canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

b. 1957, Jamalpur; lives and works in Rajshahi

S. M. Sultan



Resurrection, 1970s. Oil on canvas. Courtesy of Cosmos Foundation

S. M. Sultan was known for his energetic paintings of muscular farmers and their engagement with the landscape of Bangladesh. He began to study at the Government School of Art, Calcutta but left without completing his degree in 1944 to travel to Kashmir, which inspired many of his landscapes. After travelling extensively as a celebrated artist both internationally and within South Asia, Sultan retreated from urban life, moving to his home village of Narail, where he founded the Shishu Shwarga art school. His devotion to rural art education has had a lasting legacy, inspiring many initiatives to promote personal growth outside of urban centres through art.

b. 1923, Narail; d. 1994 in Jessore

Syed Abdullah Khalid

Syed Abdullah Khalid belonged to the first generation of sculptors who practiced sculpture-making as an institutional discipline despite discouragement under the West Pakistani regime. He flourished as a sculptor practicing realism. The *Aparajeyo Bangla* monument of the liberation war of 1971 at the Dhaka University campus is one of his most well-known creations. Today this sculpture stands as a prominent example of modern sculpture in post-independence Bangladesh. He completed his BFA at the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1969 and MFA at the Fine Arts Department, University of Chittagong in 1974. He served as a professor at the same institute until his retirement in 2012.



Aparajeyo Bangla, 1973. Reinforced Concrete. Photo: Noufel Sharif Sojol

b. 1942, Sylhet; d. 2017, Dhaka

Tarun Ghosh



Mangal Shobhajatra, 1991. Poster. Photo courtesy of Mangal Shobhajatra Research and Expansion center

Tarun Ghosh is a painter and designer. Ghosh formed the Dacca Painters Group in 1974 with a group of friends, drawing inspiration from European painters and intending to break new ground. Researching folk art, he visited many rural areas and came into contact with artists there. The free and spontaneous way they worked, and their empathic use of material, form and design influenced him profoundly. He redirected his lifelong passion for folk art towards artisanal practices and local visual cultures. This inspired him to create posters for the Mangal Shobhajatra (procession on the first day of bangla new year) from the Institute of Fine Arts, Dhaka in 1989. He earned his BFA from the Bangladesh College of Arts and Crafts, Dacca in 1977. After working at the Rajshahi Art College as a teacher for a few years, he went to the M.S. University in Baroda, India in 1982 and obtained his MFA degree in 1986.

b. 1953 Rajbari; lives and works in Dhaka

Zainul Abedin

Zainul Abedin was an artist of exceptional talent and international repute. He played a pioneering role in the modern art movement in Bangladesh that began with the setting up of the Government Institute of Arts (now Faculty of Fine Art) in 1948 in Dacca where he was the founding principal. He was well known for his leadership qualities, organising artists and art activities in a place that had practically no recent history of institutional or professional art. In 1943, he drew a series of sketches on the man-made famine that had spread throughout Bengal. He became actively involved in a movement to preserve the Folk Art of Bengal, and reorient art to the roots of Bengali culture. In recognition of his artistic and visionary qualities, he was lovingly given the title of Shilpacharya (Great Teacher). He completed a Fine Art Degree from Govt. School of Art, Calcutta, India (1938) and received training from Slade School of Art, London, UK (1951).



Famine, 1940s. Linocut print on paper. Courtesy of Jahanara Abedin

b. 1914, Kishoreganj; d. 1976 in Dacca

Zunabul Islam



Elephant & Banana Tree, 1994. Batik Print. Courtesy of Shahnoor Ahmed

Zunabul Islam was a founding teacher of the Department of Crafts at the East Pakistan College of Arts and Crafts (at present Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka). He was one of the designers of the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh prepared in 1972. Islam worked with the medium of batik. He sought to achieve a transformation of craft into art, rejecting the problematic hierarchies between art and craftsmanship. He took his ideas, forms and designs from his native land. He dealt with life around him, but also traveled to the romantic past of mythology and poetry. He completed his Fine Art Degree at the Commercial Art Department, Government Institute of Arts, Dhaka in 1954 and a teachership course at the Brighton College of Arts and Crafts, U.K. from 1965 to 1966.

b. 1929, Mymensingh; d. 1997, Dhaka

Bangla-e Bidroho

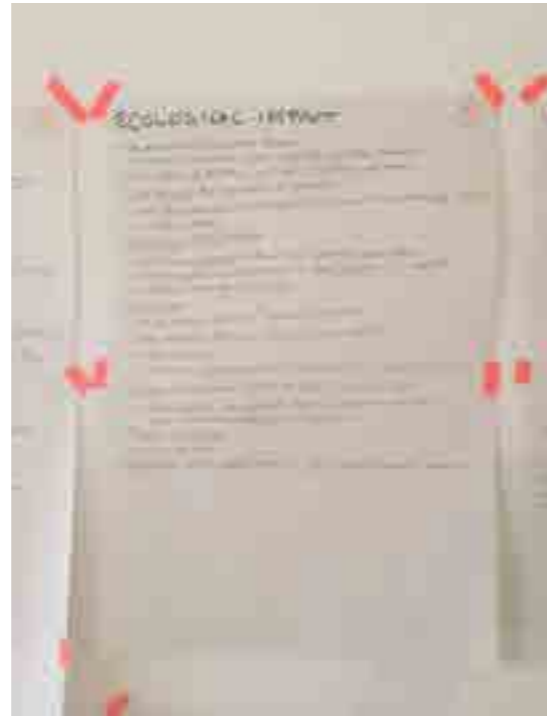
Bangla-e Bidroho is a print folio of offset lithography by six artists: Rashid Choudhury, Devdas Chakraborty, Syed Abdullah Khalid, Sabih-ul-Alam, Ansar Ali and Mizanur Rahim. The print folio was published to fund raise in Chittagong by Shilpi-Shahitit Shongskritishebi Protirodh Songha on 15th March 1971 headed by artist Rashid Choudhury on the occasion of public meeting at Laldighi Maidin. A forward note on the cover was written by Professor Mahmud Shah Qureshi. In the exhibition, the print folio is shown from the collection of Ashfaqur Rahman.

Srijan-Abartan

A Workshop for Exhibition Making and Unmaking led by common-interest with support from Pro Helvetia – Swiss Arts Council

How is the practice of exhibiting – be that of art, design, history, or science – fundamentally implicated in the imminent threats of climate change? And, conversely, how can exhibition-making help us attain political momentum and agency around ecology? How can it support communities fighting on the frontline of climate change who are leading the way in safeguarding our collective future? These are the fundamental questions that prompted the start of a workshop for exhibition making and unmaking at the heart of DAS.

Srijan-Abartan is a cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary research project aimed at developing new tools and methodologies for creating culturally rooted, ecologically sustainable, and socially responsible exhibition displays. Its international team consists of artists, designers, researchers, architects, engineers, exhibition-makers, curators, and producers from Bangladesh, Switzerland and beyond. They work alongside to discuss, problematise, envision, conceive, conceptualise exhibition displays, and support structures that take sustainability as their core concern. The generated design strategies and solutions developed collaboratively make up the exhibition design for the DAS 2020. Nodding to the summit's impetus of igniting a movement beyond the confines of an art exhibition, Srijan-Abartan's process, methodology, and learning outcomes will be compiled and shared in the form of open access research. The goal is to provide thinking tools to help others also to start reimagining exhibition-making as a practice of resistance that strives for more just and sustainable forms of living.



Background

Often referred to as the 'ground zero' for climate change, Bangladesh has long been trailblazing innovative strategies to adapt to threats such as rising sea level, water-logged land, and increased salinity. Ecology and sustainability are core concerns for DAS which happens bi-annually at the Shilpakala Academy. Dr. Huraera Jabeen, a core member of Srijan-Abartan, assessed the environmental impact of DAS 2018 utilising the Equity Share Approach. The aim is to create a baseline to determine the upcoming DAS 2020. The operational process will follow PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act).

Based on the information received on materials, venue design, communication materials produced, estimated waste generated, and energy usage, the estimated total emission for DAS 2018 comes to 18043 tons of CO2 emission. Which is equivalent to:

An average car could be driven for 80.02 years non-stop

A 747 could fly for 23.73 days non-stop

Taking 3,538 cars off the road for a year

Producing 1,357 tons of Beef



A 42-inch LCD TV could be used for 12,334 years continuously

The assessment points to multiple strategies that can be used to reduce the negative ecological effects of DAS 2020, for example:

Venue design accounts for about 77% of the emission. Use of particleboards with timber frames forms 58% of the 77%. Although they are assumed to be reused by vendors, management of them as waste accounts for almost 14% of the emission. Additional new surfaces also require additional paint. Therefore, CO2 emission can be significantly reduced intelligently through venue design. One possible way could be to use the existing spaces and infrastructure of the building, rather than creating new temporary structures that cannot be reused or recycled multiple times.

Plastic films used for printing communication accounts for 15% of the total emission and they have no options of recycling or reusing and ends up fully as waste. Paper-based publications for communication forms 0.03% emission production and 0.09% for managing as waste. Consideration can be given how to reduce waste, especially for communication.

Waste management accounts for around 20% of the emission. Food and water waste accounts for 6% of emission. Vendors running food stalls can be given recommendations to reduce waste as much as possible.

About 0.02% of emission results from electricity usage for lights and air conditioning. Considerations can be given to make spaces less environmentally controlled if not needed.



Process

Srijan-Abartan officially started in February 2019, when the Bangladeshi and international participants met in Dhaka for the first time. They visited museums, galleries, cultural sites, monuments, artist studios, factories, workshops, and more. In the process, they spent time together and slowly started to get acquainted with each other. At the end of the eight-day visit, the team agreed on a working structure: the project's core members would assemble again in Switzerland to conduct an intense schematic design workshop. At that point, the team started collectively brainstorming the project's name, and unanimously agreed it should be formulated in Bangla. 'Srijan-Abartan' in English means creation and revolution/rotation, speaking to the idea of creating something new using existing structures with negligible changes. In other words, why not see the Bangladesh Shilpakala Building for its potential rather than its shortcomings, and enhance the existing building with local materials and knowhow, reducing waste and bettering the building for future exhibitions? The resulting plan would be subsequently developed by the Bangladeshi team, with the international participants regularly following up on the process to provide alternative perspectives, thoughts, and ideas on the design.



Methodology

The schematic codesign workshop took place in Basel in April 2019. The local participants hosted the Bangladeshi participants, which helped strengthen bonds between the group. Each workshop day started with a collective breakfast, also meant to foster an informal space of togetherness. Through different group dynamics, participants shared references, thoughts, and perspectives around display practices and discussed strategies to challenge the so-called 'white cube'.

Inteza Shariar shared samples of local recyclable, biodegradable, and alternative materials that could be used to build up temporary exhibition displays, for example bamboo, mud, coconut straws, canes, hogla leaves, recycled board and corrugated boards,

jute, coconut ropes, fishing net ropes, cotton ropes, and etc. Considering the widespread vernacular usage of such materials, Shariar stressed the importance of 'tweaking' those elements so that they do not appear ordinary or banal to local audiences.



The team worked with a 1:50 scale model of the Shilpakala Academy, which could be stacked and unstacked to reveal the different floors, and levels of the building. The model helped the participants to analyse the spatial opportunities of the Shilpakala Academy and provided a common ground for discussions. Participants were able to intuitively place the artworks that had been confirmed up to that point, which were also rendered as scale models. The set-up ultimately allowed for team members to play different roles, for example, for the curator to act as an architect or exhibition designer and vice-versa. The process eventually led to the sketching of different schematic solutions, which were discussed and consolidated into one plan. The schematic design is currently being developed, refined, tested. It is supplemented by the set of guidelines overleaf, which were also generated by the group.



Guidelines

Approach environmental impact holistically

Take into account other types of sustainability alongside environmental (i.e. social, cultural, economic, etc.)

Design for the experiences of the local audiences instead of those of international audiences (i.e. privilege the use of local language, local script, and local artists/practices/works)

In case the minimised displays generate any savings, these should be re-allocated into wages (first local wages and secondly into international wages)

Work with the building, instead of against it

Minimise material resources by building as little as possible (new walls or structures should be absolutely necessary and sized to support a given set of artworks and not more than that)

Place artworks site-specifically where the building already provides the best support (i.e. artworks that require darkness should be allocated to windowless rooms, artworks that require climate control should be placed in rooms with pre-existing air-conditioning, artworks that require security should be allocated to enclosed galleries, etc.)

Harness natural light whenever possible (new lights should be added only when absolutely necessary, opt for LED tubes as night lights, and few intentional dramatic/spotlights)

Make use of natural ventilation and avoid the use of air-conditioning whenever possible (i.e. AC rooms should be used only for artworks that require climate control or museum conditions)

Minimise, recycle, reuse

Opt for reusable or recyclable materials whenever possible

Opt for sea freight over air freight whenever possible

Opt for local labor, local materials, and local modes of production/fabrication whenever possible

Minimise size, page count, and print runs for publications, whenever possible

Opt for sustainable curatorial strategies

When selecting and sorting works and planning their transportation, fabrication and building logistics

For example, by opting to produce new commissioned works on site using local materials and local labor

For example, by planning ahead so that there are less energy consumption and human stress

Address actual impact rather than aesthetics of ecology

Avoid 'greenwashing' or 'symbolic environmental' moves such as mock/fake usage of natural materials, or using natural materials in an unsustainable way

Improve the building as a lasting collective resource

Clean, fix, restore, renovate and upgrade existing structures whenever possible; their reuse is also a contribution for future sustainability

Strip back unnecessary and redundant past constructions whenever that improves the building usability for the future (i.e. in terms of circulation, spatial experience or aesthetics)

Srijan-Abartan is funded by Pro Helvetia - Swiss Arts Council, and led by the Swiss design research practice common-interest in collaboration with Samdani Art Foundation for DAS 2020. The project's core team is comprised of Diana Campbell Betancourt (chief curator, Dhaka Art Summit), Dries Rodet (architect, Truwant + Rodet), Huraera Jabeen (architect, Brac University), Inteza Shariar (artist/architect, Bangladesh), Khan Md. Mobinul (engineer, Dhaka Art Summit), Mohammad Asifur Rahman (architect, Dhaka Art Summit), Mohammad Sazzad Hossain (head of administration, Dhaka Art Summit), Nina Palm (design researcher, common-interest), and Prem Krishnamurthy (exhibition maker, Wkshps). The team was further supported by the expertise of Ashfika Rahman (freelance artist, Bangladesh) and Shawon Akand (freelance artist and researcher, Bangladesh).

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Moving Image Rituals for Temporal Deprogramming: Videos, Films and Talks Programme

Curated by the Otolith Group (Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun)

To use images, sounds, voices, gestures, expressions, noises, colours, spaces and silences to deprogram the inherited orders of temporality, chronology and history that seek to manage and encourage the form of the present and the fate of the future. To formulate audiovisual projects that operate as diagrams for reprogramming the parameters of the present. To intervene in the timelines of the present in order to hack the lines of time. To be guided by an imagination of the future that works on and in and through the present.

These impulses, intimations and imperatives subtend the works of the artists selected by Kodwo Eshun and Anjalika Sagar of The Otolith Group for Rituals for Temporal Deprogramming. Works by Ayo Akingbade, Hadel Assali, Taysir Batniji, Tony Cokes, Esi Eshun, Black Quantum Futurism, Mohammed Harb, Louis Henderson, Onyeka Igwe, Salman Nawati, Ana Pi, Morgan Quaintance, Alfred Santana, Rania Stephan, Sharif Waked and Rehana Zaman can be understood as rituals for the deprogramming of time, reprogramming in time and programming with time. Rites that aim to bring viewers face to face with the violence of images and the threat of sounds so as to intervene in the foreclosures of colonial time and racial space. *Rituals for Temporal Deprogramming* includes conversations with invited artists and theorists.

The videos directed by Hadel Assali, Taysir Batniji, Mohammed Harb, Salman Nawati and Sharif Waked were programmed by Jasbir Puar and Francesco Sebregondi for the installation *Future Lives of Return*, 2019, and commissioned by Sharjah Architecture Triennial.

Alfred Santana

Alfred Santana is an independent filmmaker and photographer with numerous award-winning documentaries, public affairs films and videos that have aired on both network and public television. Mr. Santana's production company, Al Santana Productions, produces documentary, narrative and experimental work for television, the web and theatrical presentation. The company also produces industrial and corporate videos.

Voices of the Gods examines the Akan and Yoruba religions, two West African traditions practiced within the United States today. It looks at their cosmologies, their use of music, dance and medicine in various ceremonies and rituals. The film includes contemporary and historical examples of the influences of these religions in secular African-American culture, which in turn influenced mainstream American society, more through culture than religion, and in some ways, even politics.



Voices of the Gods, 1985, 58 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

Ana Pi

Ana Pi is an artist working with image and choreography, a contemporary dancer and pedagogue, a researcher-lecturer performer on peripheral dances and she also collaborates on projects of various kinds.



NOIRBLUE, 2017, 27 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

NOIRBLUE opens space to fiction and an atlantic navigation of some peripheral bodies. This exercise interrogates presence, absence, speeches and time to produce an extemporary dance aligned to two specific colors: the blackness of the skin and the ultramarine blue pigment.

Ayo Akinbade

Ayo Akinbade is a British Nigerian artist and filmmaker who has produced a number of acclaimed artist films exploring the contemporary Black experience in London particularly in relation to housing. She is an alumna of Sundance Ignite and New Contemporaries.

The future of social housing is threatened by the AC30 Housing Bill. *Dear Babylon* is set in London's East End, a trio of art students are eager to raise awareness about their neighbourhood, especially the lives of tenants and people who work on the estate.



Dear Babylon, 2019, 21 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

Set in 1985 and the present day, *So They Say* (2019, 11 min) explores and reflects on the often forgotten histories of black and brown community struggle in the East London borough of Newham.

Street 66 (2018, 13 min) chronicles the life of Ghanaian housing activist Dora Boatemah and her influence on the regeneration of Angell Town Estate in Brixton, South London. Dr. Theodora Boatemah MBE was born in Kumasi, Ghana in 1957, where her mother worked in President Kwame Nkrumah's cabinet. In 1987, she founded the Angell Town Community Project and campaigned for the community-controlled regeneration of the Angell Town Estate in Brixton. Dora was awarded an MBE in 1994 for services to the community in Brixton and received an honorary doctorate from Oxford Brookes University in 1996. Dora died in 2001 at the age of 43.

Black Quantum Futurism

Black Quantum Futurism Collective is a multidisciplinary collaboration between Camae Ayewa and Rasheedah Phillips exploring the intersections of futurism, creative media, DIY-aesthetics, and activism in marginalised communities through an alternative temporal lens. BQF Collective has created a number of community-based events, experimental music projects, performances, exhibitions, zines, and anthologies of experimental essays on space-time consciousness.

Like politics and the weather, all time is local. Considering time's intimate relationship to space and locality, this text, video, and object series continues the work of BQF in recovering and amplifying historical memory of autonomous Black communal space-times in North Philadelphia, meditating on the complex, contested temporal and spatial legacies of historical, liberatory Black futurist projects based primarily in North Philadelphia, such as Progress Aerospace Enterprises, Zion Gardens, and Berean Institute.



All Time is Local, 2019, 5 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

Time Travel Experiments (Experimental Time Order) (2017, 9:30 min) documents experiments from an embedded time travel manual in the speculative fiction book *Recurrence Plot (and Other Time Travel Tales)*, written and published by Rasheedah Phillips. The depicted time travel experiments employ the concept of Black Grandmother Paradoxes, which emphasise matrilineal or matri-curvature timelines that are feminine and communally-generated, where the future emerges into the past by way of omens, prophecies, and symbols, while the past is a space of open possibility, speculation, and active revision by multiple generations of people situated in the relative future.

Black Quantum Futurism Visual Astrolabe (2015, 7:07 min) focuses on the mysterious Antikythera Mechanism, an astrolabe known as the first computer, that was recovered in 82 fragments from a sunken shipwreck off the island of Antikythera around 1900. Although it is widely believed to have been constructed by a Greek astronomer around 100 BCE, this origin story has not been confirmed. No other such technologically complex artifact appeared anywhere in Europe until the late 14th century. In 2015 AD, BQF Theorists unearthed rare, previously unseen records and unheard sound clips claiming to detail the true origins of the mechanism as designed and constructed by a secret society in ancient Ifriqiyah as a device for time displacement.

On the occasion of the 50 year anniversary of the enactment of the United States Fair Housing Act, *Black Space Agency Training Video* (2018, 4:09 min) explores the chronopolitical imaginaries of the Civil Rights and Black Liberation movements during the space race, particularly as it unfolded in North Philadelphia in 1968. The series follows the pattern of entanglements in the fight for affordable and fair housing, displacement/space/land grabs, and gentrification for a better understanding of its present day implications on Black spatial-temporal autonomy.

Futurist Garvey // Gravity WAVES Sound Image Study (2016, 2:42 min) represents one example of futurity in the Black diaspora, which predates the coining of the term afrofuturism. Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association and the Black Star Line envisioned the future of Black Americans as a return, by ship, to Africa, and took practical steps to create an alternative economy to achieve these goals. Imagine how different the course of history would be, had the Black Star Line succeeded with its stated mission. On the other hand, one can see the spread of the Garveyite waves of gravity, his impact on the future of Black America-to-come, as a catalyst and inspiration for other Black resistance movements, with an influence in name and philosophy capable of binding space-time.

Esi Eshun

Esi Eshun's work encompasses poetry, performance and music making and has been presented across a number of platforms including Norway's 2018 Radio Space Borealis Festival, Resonance FM and Wave Farm FM, and at live venues including Iklektik, New River Studios and The Intimate Space.

Unfolding through a series of enigmatic tableaux, told through the artist's poetry, voice, field recordings and improvised score, *The Beast* (2018, 8 min) takes the listener on a dreamlike journey through myth, collective memory and fable, to a place where dark undercurrents linking the city of London, the West African coast, muck, gold and Frantz Fanon's anti-colonial classic, *The Wretched of the Earth*, coincide.

Francesco Sebregondi

Francesco Sebregondi is an architect and a researcher, whose work explores the intersections of violence, technology, and the urban condition. He is a researcher and project coordinator at the independent research agency Forensic Architecture, as well as the co-editor of *Forensis: The Architecture of Public Truth* (Sternberg Press, 2014). His current research examines the architecture of the Gaza blockade.

Hadeel Assali

Hadeel Assali is a Palestinian-American filmmaker, writer, and currently a PhD candidate in Anthropology at Columbia University. She created several experimental short films centered around the Gaza Strip, which have been screened in several small film festivals, academic conferences, and art exhibitions. Assali is currently working on her first feature-length documentary.



Daggit Gaza, 2008, 7:15 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

Daggit Gaza is a play on translation, as the spicy tomato salad made in Gaza (called daggah) also means 'the pounding of Gaza'. Preparation happens whilst a phone conversation between Houston and Gaza serves as voiceover commentary.

Jasbir Puar

Jasbir Puar is a queer theorist and Professor and Graduate Director of Women's and Gender Studies at Rutgers University, New Jersey. Puar is the author of award-winning books *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (2007) and *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability* (2017). She has written widely on South Asian diasporic cultural production in the United States, United Kingdom and Trinidad, LGBT tourism, terrorism studies, surveillance studies, biopolitics and necropolitics, disability and debilitation, theories of intersectionality, affect, and assemblage; animal studies and posthumanism, homonationalism, pinkwashing, and the Palestinian territories.



Louis Henderson



Bring Breath to the Death of Rocks, 2019, 28 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker and Spectre Productions

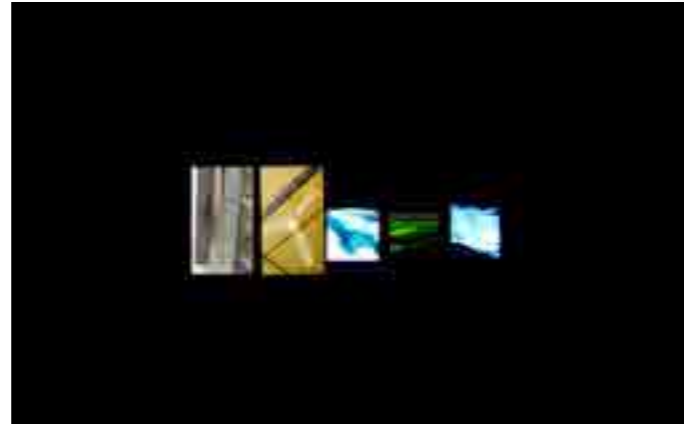
Louis Henderson is a filmmaker who experiments with different ways of working with people to address and question our current global condition defined by racial capitalism and ever-present histories of the European colonial project. Developing an archaeological method in cinema, his films explore the sonic space of images, geologic time, haunted landscapes and voices within archives.

Wandering from a study of the handwritten memoirs of Toussaint Louverture in the French National Archives to his prison cell in the Jura mountains in which they were written, *Bring Breath to the Death of Rocks* proposes an archaeology of the colonial history of France buried within its landscapes and institutions. If stratigraphy is the writing of strata, here we have a reading of this strata in which the fossilised history of Louverture can be brought to life through a geologic haunting. The film dramatises the escape of Louverture's ghost from his castle prison (through the body of a young Haitian researcher) into a form of marronage and errantry within the fields of snow and a dark baroque-like cave. The film offers what Glissant described in the introduction to his play *Monsieur Toussaint* as 'a prophetic vision of the past'. We hear an echo, a spiral retelling.

Mohamed Harb

Mohammed Harb was born in Gaza and graduated from Al Najah University, Nablus, with a BA in Fine Arts in 2001. He is a member of the Palestinian Association of Fine Artists and since 2003 has been working as a director at the Palestine satellite TV channel in Gaza. Harb has also participated in many local, regional and international exhibitions, festivals and workshops, in Europe and the Arab world. He lives and works in Gaza.

Light From Gaza is a meditation on the waxing and waning of access to light and other daily necessities due to the titration of electricity in Gaza.



Light from Gaza, 2013, 10 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

Morgan Quaintance

Morgan Quaintance is a London-based writer, musician, broadcaster and curator. His moving-image work has been shown recently at LIMA, Amsterdam, Cubitt Gallery, London; Jerwood Space, London; the 14th Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival, London Film Festival 2018, and November Film Festival.



Bataaxalu Ndakaaru (Letter from Dakar), 2019, 47 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

Bataaxalu Ndakaaru (Letter from Dakar) surveys aspects of the vibrant grassroots arts and culture scene in the Senegalese capital of Dakar. Highlighting the difference between the openness and innovation of community run spaces versus the staid professionalism of established galleries and museums, the film offers the first critical look at the much touted Museum of Black Civilisations.

Another Decade (2018, 26:50 min) combines archive and found footage from the 1990s, with recently shot 16mm film and standard definition video. Focusing on testimonies and statements made by artists, theorists and cultural producers that are still pertinent over two decades later, the film is propelled by the sense reality that very little socio-cultural or institutional change has taken place in the United Kingdom. While recent attention paid to the '90s casts a largely apolitical and monocultural view over the decade, the work seeks to exhume evidence buried in the shallow grave of cultural amnesia of another, more political, iconoclastic, and confrontational decade that promised a future still yet to arrive.

Onyeka Igwe

Onyeka Igwe works between cinema and installation. Her research-based practice uses dance, voice, archive and text to expose a multiplicity of narratives exploring the physical body and geographical place as contested sites of cultural and political meaning.



The Names Have Changed, Including my Own and Truths have been Altered, 2019, 25:42 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

This is a story of the artist's grandfather, the story of the 'land' and the story of an encounter with Nigeria -retold at a single point in time, in a single place. The artist is trying to tell a truth in as many ways as possible. *The Names Have Changed* tells us the same story in four different ways: a folktale of two brothers rendered in the broad, unmodulated strokes of colonial British moving images; a Nollywood TV series, on VHS, based on the first published Igbo novel; a story of the family patriarch, passed down through generations; and the diary entries from the artist's first solo visit to her family's hometown.

Rania Stephan

Rania Stephan has directed videos and creative documentaries notable for their play with genres, and the long-running investigation of memory, identity, archeology of image and the figure of the detective. Anchored in the turbulent reality of her country, her documentaries give a personal perspective to political events. She gives raw images a poetic edge, filming chance encounters with compassion and humour.



The Three Disappearances of Soad Hosni, 2011, 70 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

The Three Disappearances of Soad Hosni is a rapturous elegy to a rich era of film production in Egypt, lapsed today, through one of its most revered actresses: Soad Hosni, who from the 1960 into the 1990s, embodied the modern Arab woman in her complexity and paradoxes. Pieced exclusively from VHS footage of films starring Soad Hosni, the film is constructed as a tragedy in three acts where the actress tells her dreamed life story. Irreverent, playful, marvellous, serious, the film proposes a singular rewriting of a golden period of Egyptian cinema, enacted by an exceptional artist, tragic star, symbol of modern Arab womanhood.

Entirely taken from an old Egyptian science fiction film *The Master of Time* (1987) about an illuminated scientist wanting to extend human life, *Threshold* (2018, 11:30 min) is built on the intuition that if this science fiction film were emptied of all its fictional elements, retaining only the transition shots featuring doors, gates and boundary crossings, *The Master of Time* would reveal its quintessence: its obsession with eternity and the extension of time. Here, the science fiction experience is doubled. This new condensed version of *The Master of Time* lies on the threshold of fiction and abstraction, narration and experimentation, cinema and art.

Double Cross (2018, 3:40 min) reduces the intricate labyrinth of *Threshold* into an infernal drama of entrance and exit that condenses space and time into an infernal loop of crossing, recrossing and re-recrossing. *Double Cross* is Rania Stephan's profound meditation on the power of montage: an ode to the plot twist and the fatal destiny of film noir enacted in the eternal passage from illumination to occlusion.

Memories of a Private Eye (2015, 30:35 min) is the first chapter in a trilogy which investigates the filmmaker's personal archive. Evoking the language of film noir, it foregrounds a fictional detective to help unfold deep and traumatic memories. The film spirals around a lost image: the only moving image of the filmmaker's dead mother. How is absence lived? What remains of love, war and death with the passing of time? These are the questions that are delicately displayed for contemplation. Weaving together images from different sources (private archive, history of the cinema, television, you-tube) while investigating the past, the film unfolds into a labyrinthine maze to create a blueprint of remembrance itself.

Rehana Zaman

Rehana Zaman is based in London, working with moving image and performance. Her work considers the interplay of multiple social dynamics that constitute subjects along particular socio-political formations. These narrative based pieces, often deadpan and neurotic, are frequently generated through conversation and collaboration with others.

How Does an Invisible Boy Disappear? emerges from a nine-month collaboration with Liverpool Black Women Filmmakers, a new women's film collective made up of young women from Somali and Pakistani backgrounds. The film documents the group as they work together to create a thriller focusing on a teenage girl's attempt to find a missing local boy. Comprised of candid footage captured during the workshop process, behind-the-scenes filming and archive footage of anti-racist organising in the aftermath of the Toxteth race riots, the film questions how modes of representation and societal structures are gendered and racialised.



How Does an Invisible Boy Disappear, 2018, 25 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

Your Ecstatic Self (2019, 31:50 min) is a conversation unfolding in a car with Sajid, the artist's brother. As the journey progresses Sajid discusses his engagement with the philosophy and practice of Tantra, having spent the majority of his 44 years as a strict Sunni Pakistani Muslim. Placing the idiosyncrasies of western fetishism towards eastern philosophical traditions alongside cultural orthodoxies and ancestral knowledge, *Your Ecstatic Self* takes up multifaceted expressions of desire, intimacy and sexual agency.

Salman Nawati

Salman Nawati was born in Gaza in 1987. He works as a Coordinator of Plastic Art in Qattan Centre for the Child. In 2011 he worked as a lecturer in the Department of Painting within the Faculty of Fine Art at Al-Aqsa University, Gaza. His works were shown in group exhibitions internationally.



Port Hour, 2009, 3:12 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

Port Hour shows the artist's vexed relationship with the Gaza port, where he struggles with the sea which acts as both freedom and barrier.

Scenario (2013, 2:43 min) is a meditation on movement, and an oblique reference to maiming.

Sharif Waked

Sharif Waked was born in Nazareth in 1964. He studied Fine Art and Philosophy at Haifa University, Israel between 1983 and 1986. His work critically engages the prejudices, propaganda, and institutional violence that inform Middle Eastern politics. By creating striking juxtapositions between the representations of Arabs and Islam in the media and injustices experienced in reality, Waked reveals the ways that power, politics, and aesthetics are powerfully inscribed on the surface of everyday life.

In 2009, two donkeys were transformed into zebras in Gaza by an entrepreneur whose zoo was badly damaged in the Israeli incursion earlier that year. The aftermath of this cross-dressing of species is the subject of *Bath Time*, where a donkey takes a good shower after a long day saturated with the spectator's gaze and laughter at the Gaza Zoo.



Bath Time, 2012, 5 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

Taysir Batniji



Transit, 2004, 6:30 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

Taysir Batniji was born in Gaza and lives and works in Paris. Since the 1990s Batniji has worked mainly with video and photography, two 'light' mediums that fit with a career which has involved much travelling to and from between Palestine and Europe. He documents Palestinian reality in a physically vivid, anti-spectacular way by focusing on displacement, intermediate states, and the inhibition of movement. These objective issues which are part and parcel of the social, political and cultural context in Palestine also reflect the position of the artist as a witness and contributor to the life of his country, but also the Western art scene.

Transit presents a silent slideshow, made up of photographic images, taken at border passages between Egypt and Gaza, reflecting the passing of time and the difficult and often impossible conditions of mobility for today's Palestinians.

Tony Cokes

Tony Cokes investigates identity and opposition through reframing and repositioning. He questions how race and gender influence the construction of subjectivities, and how they are perceived through 'representational regimes of image and sound' as perpetuated by Hollywood, the media and popular culture. His assemblages consist of archival footage, media images, text commentary, and pop music.

they pass up
Nietzsche
and choose
Hitler." (1976)

Face Value, 2015, 14:10 min. Courtesy of the filmmaker

Face Value can be said to have started with a short text that Cokes was asked to write prior to the American release of Lars von Trier's *Manderlay* in 2006. At the time he decided to focus his commentary on one section of the film the end credits featuring the David Bowie song *Young Americans*. The text was not published, but while writing it a friend informed him of some quotations from David Bowie that seemed to be relevant to it. When in 2011 he had an opportunity to publish a portion of the text in a new context, another friend and colleague suggested some then recent quotations from von Trier himself that might relate to the project. What started as a long epigraph to a text became a sequence of images.

The text in *Evil 12 (edit B) Fear, Spectra and Fake Emotions*, (2009, 11:43 min) is excerpted from Brian Massumi's essay *Fear (The Spectrum Said)*, which discusses the Bush Administration's terror alert color-coding system as a method to modulate public affect via media representation. The insertion of a soundtrack by Modeselektor with uncanny vocals from Paul St. Hilaire (remixed by Dabrye) seeks to double (ghost) and thereby underline the point of Massumi's complex media textual analysis.

Mikrohaus, or the Black Atlantic? (2006-2008, 31:07 min) presents transcribed text interviews set to music. The project was inspired by the writing of music critic Philip Sherburne, who coined the term 'Micro House' to describe the conjuncture of minimal techno and house music tropes in the early 21st century. Central to the video's intent is foregrounding how black pop cultural forms are consumed and then redeployed to produce hybrid interventions in today's global contexts. The work also features fragmented interviews with German techno/house producers framed by the comments of Detroit techno artists discussing the relation between their practices, which reference Afro-American musical traditions, and questions of racial politics, perception, and identity.



Modern Movements

DAS hosts the second convening of *Connecting Modern Art Histories in and across Africa, South and Southeast Asia* (MAHASSA) with support from the Getty Foundation's *Connecting Art Histories* initiative. MAHASSA is a collaborative research project whose partners include the Dhaka Art Summit, Asia Art Archive (Hong Kong), and Institute for Comparative Modernities at Cornell University (USA). The project brings together a team of leading international faculty and emerging scholars to investigate parallel and intersecting developments in the cultural histories of modern South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa. Comparative study of the development of practices, pedagogy, institutions, and circulation can be very insightful in critically situating local and national developments, as well as in recognising transnational dimensions to the rise of modern art and its institutions in this vast region. The first set of meetings was held in Hong Kong during August 2019; the program at DAS includes focused seminars, panel discussions, public talks, and presentations by participants.

Modern Art Histories in and Across Africa South and Southeast Asia

Introduction by Project Leader Dr. Iftikhar Dadi

By the early to mid-twentieth century, in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa the 'modern' increasingly dominated the making and the study of art. As recent studies continue to show, modern art was enacted on a transnational scale during the twentieth century, but canonical studies of modern and contemporary art and visual practices have continued to assume the centrality of Western art in specific geographic and cultural sites. Simultaneously, Western modern practices have also been understood as constituting the 'universal' modern. Consequently, modern non-Western art is seen inevitably to lack both a fully realised modernist subjectivity and cultural authenticity. Non-Western artists are viewed as failing to measure up to the aesthetic standards of the purported tradition of the artist that is invariably always situated in the premodern era, and their works are also seen simply as a belated and impoverished derivative response to Western modernism.

Moreover, canon formation is linked to global power imbalances, capitalist accumulation, and institutional developments in complex ways that require analysis rather than tacit acceptance of its apriori status. This is a well-established debate within postcolonial scholarship. Nevertheless, modern art of the region, by fostering new imaginations, also offers critical and affirmative potential. The Indian art critic Geeta Kapur recognises this dilemma: 'Imposed on the colonised world via selective modernisation, modernism transmits a specifically bourgeois ideology. With its more subtle hegemonic operations, it offers a universality while obviously imposing a Eurocentric (imperialist) set of cultural criteria on the rest of the world.' Despite these reservations, however, Kapur recognises the critical and affirmative potential of these developments: 'Yet, as modernism evolves in conjunction with a national or, on the other hand, revolutionary culture it becomes reflexive.'

To outline a few basic assumptions: 'Art', (modern art in particular), cannot exist by itself as an autonomous formalist practice, but requires an elaborate set of requisite institutions to be legible – academies, galleries and museums, catalogues, criticism in journals and newspapers, collection and patronage structures, publics and audience etc. These institutions gathered force and acquired new valences in the Western world with the advent of industrial capitalism and colonialism. But in the increasingly colonising world of the nineteenth century, whose peoples were subjects rather than citizens, the colonised territories lacked the ensemble of institutions that render a similar legibility to art. In the case of India for example, its 'classical' art was rendered monstrous by the Hegel and Ruskin, and as recently as the early

twentieth century, colonial cultural administrators were asserting that India did not possess any worthwhile tradition of high art. Ongoing 'traditional' material and visual practices were made visible only as timeless, anonymous, and disappearing craft and the artisan was subalternised. Popular prints and objects that circulated in bazaars since the late nineteenth century were not considered art either. The non-Western world thus enters the discourse of 'modern art' in the twentieth century in the framework of colonialism, orientalism, primitivism, and institutional and historical lack.

Nevertheless, the founding of art schools and academies, salons and art societies, and writings on art in journals and newspapers marks developments in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa, from the late nineteenth to the mid twentieth centuries. These processes were uneven, fitful and interruptive, but they mark the emergence of precisely the kinds of institutions that modern art requires for its framing. For example, as is evident from recent studies, the advent of cubism was immensely liberating for art practice in much of the non-Western world, as modern art was no longer encumbered by Eurocentric post-Renaissance visual codes of perspectivalism and realism.

While modern artists were imbricated in complex ways with the rise of nationalism and decolonisation, we need much better accounts of these artistic valences than have been provided by many nation-state based art surveys so far. Briefly put, the concept of the 'nation' in much of the region does not possess an adequate referent: the persistent and multiple crises of the postcolonial nation-state in these regions only serves to underscore the epistemic violence by which the nation-state was enacted as a dominant political and social framework during the twentieth century. Many artists refused narrow nationalist framings in their practice: the importance of negritude and calligraphic abstraction since the mid twentieth century might be understood in the vein. Andreas Huyssen has noted that postcolonial theory and globalisation studies are enabling new ways of writing histories of modernism that are transnational, rather than national or even international, and which he terms 'modernism at large', by which he refers to 'crossnational cultural forms that emerge from the negotiation of the modern with the indigenous, the colonial, and the postcolonial in the 'non-Western' world.' The role displacement and travel play in the construction of even a 'national' or local modern art clearly requires a better understanding than has been available as yet. And one also needs to underscore the powerfully affirmative potential of modernism itself in fostering new imaginations during the decolonising era.

Viewing art history in terms of statist and national art histories obscures their analysis in a comparative framework. By contrast, *Connecting Modern Art Histories in and across Africa, South and Southeast Asia* (MAHASSA) emphasises a connected and contextualised approach to better understand both common developments as well as divergent trajectories. MAHASSA has unfolded across two in-person sessions in Hong Kong in August 2019 and at the Dhaka Art Summit in Bangladesh in February 2020. Each gathering has been structured around ten days of intensive activities including seminars by the affiliated core faculty, workshops, field trips, participant presentations, and public lectures. Drawing from the local academic communities in each location, the core faculty has been augmented through the involvement of professors, curators and artists based in Hong Kong and in Bangladesh.

MAHASSA Scholars

Akshaya Tankha

The colonial construction of indigeneity as an exception to the time of modernity has resulted in the marginalisation of Indigenous aesthetic practices in modern histories of art in South Asia. Akshaya Tankha's research addresses this gap through a study of art in contemporary Nagaland, an Indigenous and predominantly Christian state in India's northeast that was home to an armed movement for a sovereign 'Naga nation' from the mid to late 20th century. In the post-conflict political field, representations of 'Naga culture' are mobilised as temporally static markers of cultural and political difference by the Indian state and regional groups. In contrast, his research foregrounds the complex relationship to time enacted by sculptures produced by art-school trained artists, 'house museums' founded by Christian priests and photographic calendars and public monuments made by Naga nationalist sympathisers as examples of the temporal instability of the work of art itself. In doing so, it challenges their art historical marginalisation and critiques the modernist narratives of art, nationalism and modernity that underlie it.



The artist Veswuzo Phesao stands, with his child, in front of his Chakhesang Naga 'rich man's house' in United Village, Dimapur, Nagaland. Photo: Akshaya Tankha

Tankha is a Doctoral Candidate at the Department of Art History, University of Toronto. Tankha's research is on the relationship between Indigenous art, visual culture and politics in modern and contemporary South Asia. His current project explores the plural temporalities of modern artistic and exhibitionary forms in Nagaland, northeast India.

Amena Khanom Sharmin

Amena Khanom Sharmin investigates Bangladeshi political allegory and satire in modern art and activism. She focuses on the ongoing conversation between 21st century activist-artists and Satyajit Ray's Indian Bengali language trilogy *Goopy-Bagha*, released in India between 1969 and 1992, a time of political turmoil in the adjacent new nation, Bangladesh. Due to both countries' politically-informed censorship regulations, metaphors and symbols became necessary in the art of various media. In her research she explores encoded and metaphoric political messages Ray used visually, cinematically and textually to avoid censorship and communicate with the audience. Using a socio-political lens, she examines how artists and activists appropriate the trilogy. Her MA thesis analyses Bangladeshi street art, slogans, and particularly the social media activist campaigns that appear in reaction to the parallel social-political phenomena of this region. This research is significant because these artworks offer insight on how a new generation engages with contemporary Bangladeshi politics.



Reproduction of the movie poster for *Goopy Gayen Bagha Bayen*

Sharmin is pursuing a master's degree at the University of Victoria, BC, Canada, in the Department of Art History and Visual Studies. She received her Bachelor and Masters in Art History at the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Her scholarly interests focus predominantly on activist art, specifically, the role and the embodiment of activist artists in society.

Amie Soudien



Following Ansla van Bengalen's walking tour, Company's Garden, Cape Town, South Africa. Photo: Meghan Daniels

Amie Soudien currently engages in research regarding personal histories of enslavement in Cape Town, through the entry point of a project begun as a fellow at the Institute of Creative Arts (ICA), University of Cape Town, in 2016. In this project she traced the life of Ansla van Bengalen, one of the first enslaved people brought to Cape Town by the Dutch East India Company in the 1660s. As part of the ICA fellowship, she led a walking tour of the Cape Town city centre, marking areas of importance in 17th century Cape Town as they coincided with sites which Ansla van Bengalen may have frequented. The tour's content was both historically grounded and speculative in nature. This research now functions as the groundwork for a discussion regarding revisited narratives, and the ways in which previously marginalised historical figures can be recentred through embodied practices such as walking, protest, performance or 'Live Art.'

Soudien is a curator, researcher, and art writer. Soudien completed her MA in New Arts Journalism at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her interests include archival studies, popular media, gender and sexuality, and emerging artists from Africa and the diaspora. Soudien's current research concerns the use of art, performance and the performing arts in the commemoration of historical events in Cape Town.

Andrew Mulenga

Andrew Mulenga's research considers Zambia's considerably overlooked and underrepresented status in art historical scholarship; in terms of national art histories it has been obscured from analysis in a broader comparative framework. However, Zambia provides a remarkable case study for divergent trajectories in the field. From the outside, it is as if art history scholarship on it does not exist. This is owing partially to belated academic infrastructure, for example, at the Zambian Open University (ZAOU), the first in the country to provide art education at university level, has a programme that is less than a decade old. Therefore, a huge epistemic gap persists with respect to knowledge on modern and contemporary Zambian art, its chronicling; theorisation and outright documentation all which lend themselves to vibrant postcolonial, decolonial, transnational and global discourses.



Fine Arts Head of Department William Miko from Zambian Open University instructs a student. Photo: Andrew Mulenga

Mulenga is an emerging art historian and a freelance arts and culture journalist whose focus is documenting the contemporary art scene of his home country Zambia. He currently lectures in art history at the Zambian Open University and publishes *Mulling over Art with Andrew Mulenga*, a weekly column in *The Mast* newspaper. He is pursuing a PhD in Art History at Rhodes University, South Africa.

Anissa Rahadiningtyas



Haryadi Suadi's sketch, xerography on paper

Anissa Rahadiningtyas' project builds on efforts to look closely at how different conceptions of modernity and modernism have emerged and developed in areas outside the West. She focuses on the role and relationship between visual art and Islam in producing and shaping notions of modernity in Indonesia. She investigates works of art and discourses on Islam and modern art from 1967 to early 2000s. She is interested in works of art produced by artists associated with a modern art training institution in Bandung where the influence of international modernism was directly transmitted to students by Dutch teachers. Works from this period demonstrate the heterogeneous configurations of Islam and competing religious values in modern and contemporary art in Indonesia. Through the works of these artists, the dominant discourse of modern art and Islamic art in Indonesia are constantly challenged and reworked through local adaptations of both modernism and Islam as well as through feminist critiques.

Rahadiningtyas's primary research area is the history of modern and contemporary art in Indonesia. Her interests include postcolonial theory, ocean studies, comparative modernisms, and religious studies. She received an MA in Aesthetics and Art Sciences from the Faculty of Art and Design, Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB), in Indonesia. Currently, she is a PhD candidate in the History of Art and Visual Studies Department at Cornell University.

Carlos Quijon Jr.



Installation photo of the exhibition *Asian Modernism: Diverse Development in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand* at The Japan Foundation Forum in Tokyo in 1995. The exhibition travelled to Manila, Bangkok, and Jakarta in 1996. Photo: The Japan Foundation

Carlos Quijon Jr.'s research considers exhibitions that dwell on modernity in Southeast Asia in the 1990s, a timeframe that might seem belated. He is interested in troubling the understanding of modernity as punctuality to a Euroamerican aesthetic timeline, thinking about modernism in a postcolonial milieu, which for historian Deepak Ananth elaborates a 'predicament of latecoming.' These exhibitions are *Asian Modernism: Diverse Developments* (Japan Foundation Asia Center, 1995); *Modernity and Beyond* (Singapore Art Museum, 1996); and *The Birth of Modern Art in Southeast Asia* (Fukuoka Art Museum 1997). He is interested in these exhibitions as nodes in prospecting a discourse of modern art in Southeast Asia in the 1990s by way of its regional interlocutors. The proposal appreciates the afterlife of the modern, and the tropes that these exhibitions nominate in relation to modernism and modernity (its 'birth', 'diverse developments', and what is 'beyond' it), which simultaneously problematise and articulate this afterlife most compellingly.

Quijon, Jr. is an art historian, curator, and critic. His writings have appeared in *Art Monthly* (UK), *Asia Art Archive's Ideas*, and *Trans Asia Photography Review*, among others. In 2017, he was a research resident in MMCA Seoul and a fellow of the Transcuratorial Academy both in Berlin and Mumbai. He curated *Courses of Action* at the Hong Kong Arts Centre in 2019. He is completing an MA in Art Theory and Criticism at the University of the Philippines.

Chanon Kenji Praepipatmongkol

How to develop decolonial sociologies of art worlds alongside decolonial histories of modern art? That is, if scholars of modern art in the North Atlantic generally rely on a tripartite sociological model of the art world consisting of public museums, private galleries, and independent criticism/journalism, how do we construct frameworks to describe other configurations of the social field that underpin artistic production and reception? Alternative descriptions have recently emerged in the work of Marian Pastor Roces (on the guises of 'royalty' in the Philippines, Iran, Chile, and Thailand), David Teh (on the combustible 'ecology' of art festivals), and Anneka Lenssen (on zones of 'fragile institutionalities'). Chanon Kenji Praepipatmongkol takes stock of these emergent methods for comparative and relational art historical inquiry across multiple medial scales and, in doing so, aims to arrive at more robust methodological bases for the twinned analysis of social and aesthetic form.



Buddhadasa Bhikku in front of the Spiritual Theater, Suan Mokkh, Thailand, c. 1970s. Photo: Buddhadasa Indapanno Archives

Praepipatmongkol is a historian of modern and contemporary Asian art and 2018–19 Marjorie Susman Curatorial Fellow at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. He has worked on programmes and publications for the Tate, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, National Gallery Singapore, and Jim Thompson Art Center. Kenji is currently completing a PhD in History of Art at the University of Michigan, with a dissertation on postwar abstraction in Southeast Asia.

Dana Liljegren



Atelier of Meissa Fall, Saint-Louis, Senegal. Photo: Dana Liljegren

The use of repurposed materials can be found among many historic and emerging artists worldwide; however, it has a unique politicised history in Senegal going back to the 1970s. As an interdisciplinary approach to this practice, referred to as *récupération*, Dana Liljegren's research presents it as a strategy whose implications have shifted at key moments since its emergence. Previous approaches to *récupération* often regard it as a largely unchanging phenomenon, anchoring it in the prerequisite of poverty or reducing its complexity to tensions between African and European influences. In providing an account of this practice, her analysis draws on art historical methods as well as the fields of 'garbology' and discard studies (interdisciplinary sub-fields focused on waste, recycling, and pollution in relation to social, political, and material histories). This dissertation on *récupération* in Senegal aspires to offer a model for interpreting similar contemporary artistic practices in Africa and around the world.

Liljegren is a PhD Candidate in Art History at the Graduate Center, CUNY. Her specialisations include West African art, global contemporary art, postcolonial theory, environmentalism, and film studies. She holds degrees in art history from Brown University, Columbia University, and Université Paris 1. Her dissertation examines the repurposing of trash in contemporary Senegalese art and the circulation of objects under conditions of postcolonialism.

Deborah Philip

Deborah Philip's research focuses on Burgher identifications and imaginaries in colonial and post-colonial Sri Lanka, exploring two aspects of the '43 Group (Sri Lanka's first modernist art collective) which was partially made up of a vanguard of Burgher artists when the island was on the cusp of independence in 1948. Namely, how did Burgher artists position themselves as 'modern', 'local' and 'cosmopolitan' within a cultural-nationalist project that locates creole identifications as 'out of place' in the colonial/postcolonial nation-state of Sri Lanka? Secondly, what then is the afterlife of modernity in Sri Lanka, and how does it reinforce or disrupt national narratives of history and heritage?



Scanned page from *The Ceylon Daily News*, 1930

Philip is a PhD student in Cultural Anthropology, The Graduate Center, City University of New York and a Trustee of the Sapumal Foundation, Sri Lanka. Selected public talks include: Sri Lanka Archive of Contemporary Art, Architecture and Design, Jaffna (2016), and *Open Edit: Mobile Library*, Asia Art Archive and Raking Leaves, Colombo (2013).

Dipti Sherchan

The twentieth century modern nation-state of Nepal emerged at the crossroads of global modernity and postcoloniality, however, it has always occupied a contested space of non-coloniality. Dipti Sherchan examines this particular milieu in which artistic production and consumption take place. Her research investigates the emergence of institutions like art schools, museums, and gallery spaces as sites of local, regional, national and transnational encounters with tradition, modernity, nationalism, cosmopolitanism and other forms of artistic and political subjectivities. An integral part of her research inquiry is to question the 'rupture' between what is 'tradition' and 'modern' by examining the continuities and contestations in the shifting regimes of aesthetic practices and arts patronage in Nepal. Additionally, she explores the inclusion/exclusion of 'the body of an artist' in these institutional spaces and practices. She is interested in understanding how Nepali artists navigate, negotiate, and narrate their own experiences and aspirations within such intricate histories.



A Nepali language book on world art history authored by seminal Nepali surrealist artist Manuj Babu Mishra. This book was part of the curriculum developed by the Tribhuvan University for its Bachelor in Fine Arts program. Copyright: Viśvakalāko itihāsa (World Art History) by Manuja Bābu Miśra, Pāthyakrama Vikāsa Kendra, Tribhuvana Viśvavidyālaya, 1982

Sherchan is a PhD student in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She explores the intersections of ethnography and art history to critically examine cultural politics, histories, and encounters in South Asia and in particular, Nepal.

Greer Valley



Africana, 2014. Photo: Greer Valley

Greer Valley's research questions whether curatorial interventions can address and unsettle the legacies of colonial power and subjective authority embedded in museum practice. She considers the Rijksmuseum exhibition, *Goede Hoop, South Africa and the Netherlands from 1600* (2017) to examine how Dutch exhibition curators represent the shared colonial history between these two countries. The study looks critically at the notion of a shared history, especially since it is important to consider from whose point of view this history is told. To frame the argument of the dissertation, she makes use of the notion of the exhibition as social intervention. One of the objectives of the project is to survey emergent curatorial methods and methodologies of exhibition-making that can potentially unsettle the colonial/colonised gaze in institutions that were specifically designed for this purpose to engage with broader questions of how one would start curating exhibitions differently to develop new forms of exhibiting and curating.

Valley is a PhD candidate in Art Historical Studies at Michaelis School of Fine Art and a fellow at the Archive and Public Culture Initiative at the University of Cape Town (UCT). In 2018 she was a curatorial fellow at the Institute for Creative Arts (ICA) also at the University of Cape Town. She is currently a director on the board of the Africa South Arts Initiative (ASAI).

Kathleen Ditzig

Kathleen Ditzig's research traces the emergence and desire for 'Southeast Asia' as a regionalism that was articulated through exhibition-making. It covers a historical period of the 1940s-1970s and is not limited to the geographic region of Southeast Asia. I'm interested in how Southeast Asia as regionalism was articulated in relation to other forms of solidarity and to endeavours that defined modern art as a break from empire. In tracing the early inclinations toward a collectivising of Southeast Asia that grew out of the perceived shortcomings of other solidarities, she will examine how and why political projects and artistic projects were ascribed to Southeast Asia and how this evolved as part of a larger project of imagining a new post-imperial and de-colonialised modern world.



Image from Ha Bik Chuen archive at Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong

Ditzig is a Singaporean researcher and curator. She has an MA from Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College and is pursuing her PhD at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. Her work has been published by *Artforum*, *Art Agenda*, *Southeast of Now* among others. She co-founded offshoreart.co and most recently curated *State of Motion: A Fear of Monsters* for the Asian Film Archive in Singapore.

Marian Nur Goni

Marian Nur Goni's research focuses on Joseph Murumbi (1911-1990), Kenya's first Foreign Minister and second Vice-President, whose intense and dedicated work within transnational, liberation networks was instrumental in the years leading up to the independence of Kenya. From the 1950s on, Murumbi also became a collector of African art and a patron of artists, particularly, but not exclusively, from East Africa. He collected artefacts from all over Africa - advocating for the preservation of African heritage/art on site - a very diverse and rich collection that he conceived himself as a Pan-African one. His path and gestures will thus be critically explored in their cultural dimension, in close conjunction with his engagement in Pan-African networks and anti-imperialist movements in the UK and beyond (his connections with India will also be highlighted), particularly in the 1950s. These networks involved streams of solidarities whose memories need today to be rekindled

Nur Goni is a historian whose work focuses on the trajectories of historical objects and photographs in and from East Africa, raising questions about how memories, histories and heritages are constructed, transmitted and written about. She is currently a post-doctoral researcher at musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, Paris. She received a PhD in Art History from Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris.



Building of National Archives of Kenya, Nairobi. Photo: Marian Nur Goni

Melissa Carlson



Khin Swe Win, *Sleeping Lady*, 1986. Oil on canvas

Using Myanmar as a case study, Melissa Carlson's research triangulates questions of censorship, artistic practices, and national identity in the Indian Ocean – a region where borders, governments, and economies remain in flux amid rapidly changing political landscapes. Her project examines the ongoing process of nation-building in Myanmar with a focus on the postcolonial history of censorship that shaped the visual arts alongside interruptions to cultural flows imposed by Burma's retreat into isolationism in 1962. Isolationism interrupted artistic exchange between Burmese artists and the region (let alone the world). Yet, as her preliminary research demonstrates, Burmese artists forged regional and global connections as global artistic movements permeated Burma's borders in spite of political isolation. In her work, she aims to highlight the ways in which artists devised unique creative strategies of subversion, resistance, and subterfuge, both in the realm of form and representation and in terms of political participation and regional networks.

Carlson is a PhD student at the University of California, Berkeley. Recent work has examined how the postcolonial censorship regime in Myanmar shaped the development of Burmese modern and contemporary art in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. She has a Masters degree from Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.

Muhammad Nafisur Rahman

Dhaka's urban fabric is structured through a complex visual amalgamation of building facades, images, symbols, and letterforms. In Dhaka, research on urban issues is overruling delicate variables such as urban typography with its importance in wider design pedagogy, cultural identity, and urban discourse. There has been no systematic ethnographic study or taxonomy on these Bengali legible artefacts in the urban streetscape. Unique to Bangladesh is its language and its complexly saturated urban experience. Here, architecture becomes the façade of urban communication while establishing a 'right to the city.' Muhammad Nafisur Rahman carries out qualitative research on Bengali urban typography by studying the origin of Bengali language along with the socio-political evolution of traditional Bengali letterforms. Onsite commercial signage, wall graphics, posters, and urban experience allow for his research to be founded on impermanence, challenging western architectural education's account of such urban strategies.

Rahman is currently a PhD student in Architecture at the College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning (DAAP), University of Cincinnati, OH and Adjunct Faculty in the School of Design. Rahman holds an MDes in Graphic Design from University of Illinois at Chicago and BArch from BRAC University, Bangladesh. Prior to pursuing PhD, he taught architecture in Bangladesh. Rahman worked as a Branded Environments Designer at Perkins and Will in Chicago.



Classic text-book phrases of children's alphabet book have been transformed into political metaphors and parody with powerful illustrations depicting the political, social and national ethos near the Martyr Monument (Shaheed Minar) in Dhaka University campus, on 21 February, 1969. Photo: Mohammad Sakhawat Hossain

Nurur Rahman Khan

Muzharul Islam's works, his philosophy and his politics, had a deep connection with artists, writers and musicians of his time. Islam's 'artistic' yet 'socio-political' approach to design had a distinctive perspective that allows us also to evaluate the arts of that period (1940–1980). When art is compartmentalised only with architecture, other fields such as music and craft remain side-lined. This myopia leads to a study that does not embrace all the arts. Islam's association with artists and writers of that time was not only unique, but also led to the beginning of a Bengali Modern Movement specific to that era, a broader artistic modernity in association with socio-political modernity. It will thus be important to see his work also beyond architecture, and understand nation-building politics as a key idea of that time, and which was shared among other fields of the arts. This perspective will allow Nurur Rahman Khan to better map the history of arts in South Asia.



College of Arts and Crafts, Dhaka, designed by architect Muzharul Islam. Photo: Randhir Singh

Khan is a practicing architect, architecture historian, and an academic. He is pursuing his PhD from Università Iuav di Venezia in Architecture History and Criticism. He has presented lectures at many significant universities such as Yale, Columbia, MIT, RISD, IUAV (Venice) and also the UIA and ARCASIA Conference.

Samina Iqbal



Moyene Najmi, *Anarkali*, 1955. Oil on Paper. Photo: Parveen Noon

Like many other non-western countries, modern art in Pakistan cannot be considered simply as a single movement that operated parallel to or in conformity with western modernist trends. Samina Iqbal's research focuses on an empirical study of the specific conditions that gave rise to modern art in Pakistan in its formative years and analyses how a small group of artists called Lahore Art Circle engaged in a countermovement outside the nationalist agendas of Pakistan after its independence in 1947. She is interested in expanding a comparative study of what modern art entailed for other neighbouring countries of Pakistan and the MENASA region. To examine the respective, purposefully open-ended, dialectical tensions between international, national, and local stylistic concerns of these regions – a parallel dialogue to the western canon, it is her effort to develop a parallel and critical dialogue of modern art in the context of regions outside of Europe and Americas.

Iqbal is a practicing artist, art historian, and an academic. She received her BFA from the National College of Arts Lahore in 1997, and MFA from the University of Minnesota in 2003. She received her PhD in art historical studies from the Virginia Commonwealth University Richmond in 2016. Her research interest is modern and contemporary art of South Asia.

Sanjoy Chakraborty

Folk art has left a sizeable and long-lasting impact on modern and contemporary art in Bangladesh. Zainul Abedin founded the first art college of Dhaka in 1948, of which one of the key focuses was an engagement with folk art, and later established Bangladesh's Folk Art Museum. Qamrul Hassan was deeply involved with folk dance, and S. M. Sultan eventually settled in the rural area of Narail and founded the Baul society, becoming skilled himself in folk-music and folk dance. This lineage of modernist engagement with performing arts has led students of the art college to initiate art in large processional forms in a wide range of mediums, including an event called *Mangal Shovajatra* that began in the 1980s and is now an iconic part of Bangladeshi visual culture. This has in turn led a generation of art students towards exploring performance art in the 1990s. Rather than seeing performance art in Bangladesh as a development only from the late 1990s onwards, a more complex history needs to take into account this deep and multifaceted legacy that extends back to the mid twentieth century.

Chakraborty is an assistant professor of Art History at the University of Dhaka and also works as a visual artist. He earned his master's and bachelor degrees in Art History from Rabindra Bharati University, India and is currently working towards his PhD on Bangladeshi Folk art from Dept. of Drawing and Painting, University of Dhaka. His writings on Bangladeshi modern art, art education, and folk art have been published in various journals and magazines. His curatorial work in Bangladesh includes *Vicinity* (2009) in Chittagong and *Kolpobikolpo* (2017) in Dhaka, and he also co-edited the catalogue of the 2015 Kornaphuli Folk Triennial.



Mangal Shobhajatra. Photo: Emdadul Hoque Topu

Taushif Kara



Ismaili Mosque at Fort Hall Road, Nairobi ('Pangani *Jamatkhana*'), architect unknown, 1957. Photo: Dennis Sharp Archive, The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, London

Taushif Kara's research explores the intellectual history of the Khoja diaspora across the Indian ocean world in the 20th century. A trading community from western India, the Khoja are a community whose borders were drawn up in colonial courtrooms and whose migration paths traversed the routes of empire. With an eye to moving beyond the text as the sole space of intellectual production, his research looks to architecture as a source for reading the modern history of the community. He is particularly interested in exploring the many connections between Muslim nationalism in the subcontinent and the racialised anti-colonial nationalisms of eastern Africa; the Khoja, as an Indian Muslim community in Africa, were notably excluded from both. He looks at these connected histories through their respective aesthetic elaborations, namely architecture. Kara uses the term elaboration because he prefers to treat aesthetics not as most historians do – that is, as primarily illustrative sources derivative of dominant intellectual paradigms – but as constitutive sources, capable of containing, generating, and resisting ideas.

Kara is a PhD student in history at the University of Cambridge and an affiliate scholar of the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London. He has lectured on Muslim political thought at SOAS, University of London, and is currently a producer of *Interventions*, the intellectual history podcast.

Uthumalebbe Iffath Neetha

Uthumalebbe Iffath Neetha's work thus far explores the art history, heritage, and aesthetics of the Muslim communities of Eastern Sri Lanka, communities vastly understudied. One of her ongoing projects investigates a flag-making tradition, which appendages the Kalmunai Beach Mosque. This tradition, and the mosque and tomb-shrine that envelop it continue to bring devotional communities together across the Indian ocean. She experiments with various methods including ethnography, oral history, and art history to explore how practices of craft and devotion are integrated. Another project she is currently undertaking seeks to bring mosque architecture into the wider story of Sri Lankan artistic heritage. The architecture of several mosques in this region bring out histories of connection between trade routes, craft routes, devotional spaces, and colonial influences, which is especially important because it brings to light the rich diversity of visual expressions prevalent in the past.



Muhaideen Jumma Mosque, Oluvil, Sri Lanka. Photo: Uthumalebbe Iffath Neetha

Iffath Neetha is from Maruthamunai, Sri Lanka, and completed her BA in Art History at University of Jaffna. She is currently the lecturer of art history at Swami Vipulananda Institute of Aesthetic Studies (SIVAS), Eastern University, Sri Lanka. Her research interests are in art history, and her work also seeks to integrate approaches and theory from fields like architectural history and cultural studies.

Yujia Bian



Herbarium of the Seed-Collecting Expeditions Dispatched. Photo: Yujia Bian

Yujia Bian's recent work draws upon historical materials while incorporating theoretical texts on cultural techniques, modernity, and visuality. It looks at late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century British plant-collecting expeditions in the eastern Himalayas. Illustrations and photographs constituted a scientific medium for these expeditions. The project considers the intersection of imperialism and scientific objectivity by drawing on Chinese and British manuscripts and botanical archives. Her current work continues the research on human understandings of nature and focuses on culture of weather phenomena. One such project, supported by Design Trust HK, looks at Hong Kong's relation to typhoons. Personal accounts as well as the scientific means for weather observation suggest that the city's urban fabric has been continuously concretised.

Bian is a researcher in landscape, architecture, and art. Trained both in landscape architecture and architectural history and theory, her works interrogate the regulation and interpretation of nature that often involves design and exhibition-making. Her most recent work focuses on environment and nature expeditions in the Mekong Delta and the Himalayas during the late 19th century and early 20th century. She holds an MS in Critical, Conceptual, and Curatorial Practices in Architecture from Columbia University's *Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation* (GSAPP).

MAHASSA Faculty

Leader

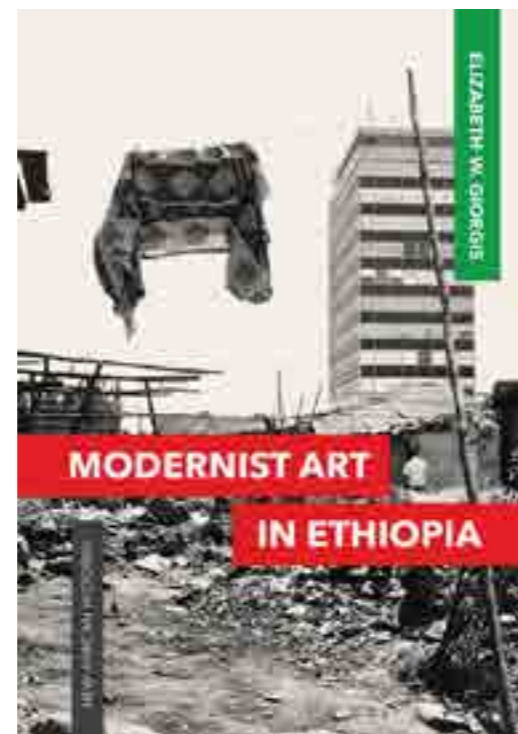
Dr. Iftikhar Dadi is associate professor in Cornell University's Department of History of Art, Co-director of the Institute for Comparative Modernities, and Director of the South Asia Program. He teaches and researches modern and contemporary art from a global and transnational perspective, with emphasis on questions of methodology and intellectual history. His writings have focused on modernism and contemporary practice of Asia, the Middle East and their diasporas. Another research interest examines the film, media, and popular cultures of South Asia, seeking to understand how emergent publics forge new avenues for civic participation. Publications include *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia* (2010). Other publications include the edited monograph *Anwar Jalal Shemza* (2015), the co-edited catalogue *Lines of Control* (2012), and the co-edited reader *Unpacking Europe* (2001). His essays have appeared in numerous journals, edited volumes, and online platforms. Dadi currently serves on the editorial and advisory boards of *Archives of Asian Art* and *Bio-Scope: South Asian Screen Studies* and was a member of the editorial board of *Art Journal* (2007-11). He is an advisor to the Hong Kong-based research organisation Asia Art Archive.'



Cover of catalogue *Unpacking Europe: Towards a Critical Reading*, 2001, Edited by Salah Hassan and Iftikhar Dadi. Published by Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen: NAI Publishers in Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

Core Faculty

Dr. Elizabeth W Giorgis is Associate Professor of Theory and Criticism at the College of Performing and Visual Art at Addis Ababa University. She previously served as Director of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies and Dean of the College of Performing and Visual Art at Addis Ababa University. She is the editor and author of several publications, including serving as guest editor for *Perspectives on Ethiopian Modernity and Modernism*, a special issue in *North East African Studies* (Michigan State University), co-editor of *Charting Ethiopian Modernity and Modernism*, a special issue on Ethiopian art and literature in *Callaloo, Journal of the African Diaspora* (Johns Hopkins University Press) and *Gebre Kristos Desta: The Painter Poet*. She has curated several exhibitions including *Time Sensitive Activity*, an exhibition of Olafur Eliasson's work (2015). Giorgis received her PhD in History of Art and Visual Studies at Cornell University and previously studied Museum Studies at New York University. Her book project on Ethiopian modern art history, *Modernist Art in Ethiopia* is forthcoming in 2019 from Ohio University Press. As an expert in African modern art, Giorgis addresses our project's intellectual scope across those regions.'



Book cover of *Modernist Art in Ethiopia (New African Histories)*, 2019. Elizabeth W. Giorgis. Published by Ohio University Press

Dr. Ming Tiampo is Professor of Art History and Director of the Institute for Comparative Studies in Literature Art and Culture at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. She is a scholar of transnational vanguardism. Books include *Gutai: Decentering Modernism* (2011) and in 2013, she was co-curator of the AICA award-winning *Gutai: Splendid Playground* at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. In addition, Tiampo has published on globalisation and art, multiculturalism in Canada, and the connections between Inuit and Japanese prints. She is currently working on two books: *Decentering Globalism* is an interdisciplinary and methodological analysis of World Art Studies. *Paris from the Outside In: Art and Decolonization* considers Paris as a site of intersection to investigate the historical conditions of global modernism. Her interests and expertise in global modernism and decolonisation are deeply relevant to this project.'



Book cover of *Gutai: Decentering Modernism*, 2011. Ming Tiampo. Published by University of Chicago Press

Dr. Salah M. Hassan is the Goldwin Smith Professor of African and African Diaspora Art History and Visual Culture in Africana Studies and Research Center, and Department of History of Art, and Director of the Institute for Comparative Modernities (ICM), Cornell University. Hassan is an editor and founder of *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art* (Duke University Press). He currently serves as a member of the editorial advisory board of *Atlantica* and *Journal of Curatorial Studies*. He authored, edited and co-edited several books including *Darfur and the Crisis of Governance: A Critical Reader* (2009), and *Diaspora, Memory, Place* (2008); *Unpacking Europe* (2001); and *Authentic/Ex-Centric* (2001). His book *Ibrahim El Salahi: A Visionary Modernist*, published in 2012 in conjunction with the retrospective of the Sudanese artist, Ibrahim El Salahi, which was exhibited at Tate Modern in London (2013).



Book cover of *Ibrahim El-Salahi: A Visionary Modernist*, 2013. Salah M. Hassan. Published by Tate Publishing

Dr. Sanjukta Sunderason is tenured Assistant Professor at University of Leiden. Her research expands on her interest in the aesthetics of decolonisation, by looking at post-partition visual art across India, West and East Pakistan during the 1950s-1960s, alongside simultaneous transnational formations of Third World cultural solidarities. At present, she is working on several book projects. The first is a completed manuscript that studies left-wing aesthetics in India under the shadow of the long decolonisation, spanning the 1920s through the 1960s. Another project ongoing since 2013 is under a broader project *Aesthetics of Decolonization* funded by the European Commission Marie Curie Grant (2013-2017) and the Research Grant of the Asian Modernities and Traditions profile of Leiden University (2015-2018). The research, spanning sources, archives and private collections across South Asia, Europe, the United States and the Middle East, hopes to contribute to new intellectual histories of the Global South through the materiality and scopes of the aesthetic. A native speaker of Bengali and an expert on the modern art in Bengal and South Asia, she will relevantly address our project's context in Dhaka and Bengal.'



Zainul Abedin, *Famine Sketch*, 1943. Black Ink on Paper. Courtesy of Jahanara Abedin Collection

Dr. Simon Soon is a senior lecturer at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur. His research focus includes 19th and 20th-century art and visual culture in Southeast Asia. Other research interests include global flows in art, architecture, and visual cultures of Asia (early modern, colonial, modern/contemporary), Latin-America and Southeast Asian cultural networks and comparative frameworks, and abstraction and modernism in Asia and Africa. His doctoral dissertation investigated the spatio-visual practices of postwar left-leaning art movements in Singapore/Malaya, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines from the 1950s-70s. Prior to undertaking academic research, he worked as a curator in the field of Southeast Asian modern and contemporary art. Soon is co-founder and a member of the editorial collective of *SOUTHEAST OF NOW: Directions in Contemporary and Modern Art in Asia*, a new peer-review journal published by NUS Press. He is also a team member of Malaysia Design Archive, an archival, research and education platform on visual cultures of the 20th century. Soon's expertise in Southeast Asia, archives, and in comparative methodologies addresses our project's Southeast Asian frameworks.'



Page from *New Straits Times* showing the team of Malaysia Design Archive. Courtesy of New Straits Times

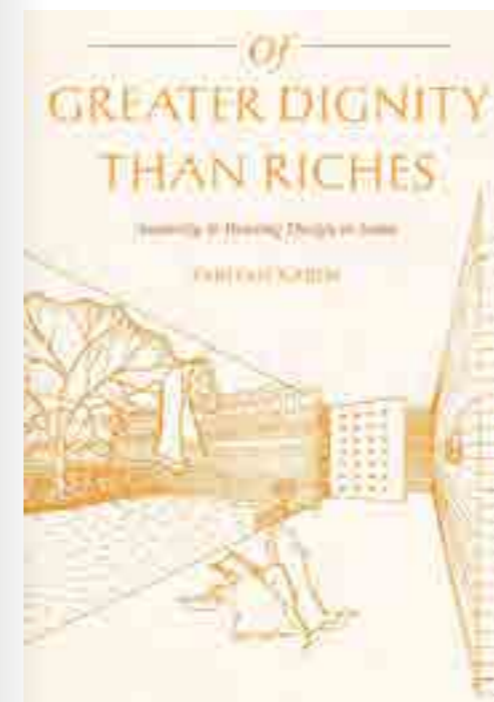
Guest Faculty

Dr. Anna Arabindan-Kesson is an art historian and writer, who has lived and studied in Sri Lanka, Australia, New Zealand and England. Prior to completing her PhD in African American Studies and Art History in the United States, Anna was a Registered Nurse. Her personal and professional background inflect her academic and curatorial work which focuses on the relationship of vision and visibility to histories of race, empire, and migration.



Agostino Brunias, *Linen Market Dominica*, cca. 1780. Oil on canvas. Courtesy of Yale Center for British Art and Paul Mellon Collection. Photo: Yale Center for British Art

Dr. Farhan S Karim is an architect, educator and architectural historian. He is the author of *Of Greater Dignity than Riches: Austerity and Housing Design in India*. His forthcoming book is *Architecture and Cold War Modernization in Postcolonial Pakistan*. He is now designing a community mosque and Qur'anic school in Maryland, USA.



Book cover of *Of Greater Dignity than Riches: Austerity and Housing Design in India* by Farhan Karim. Courtesy of Farhan Karim

Dr. Lotte Hoek is a media anthropologist whose ethnographic research explores the moving image in South Asia, particularly in Bangladesh. Her current research focuses on art film and non-theatrical exhibition as grounds for political contestation in Bangladesh since 1948. She is the author of *Cut-Pieces: Celluloid Obscenity and Popular Cinema in Bangladesh* (Columbia University Press, 2014; winner of the Bernard S Cohn book prize) and co-editor of the journal *BioScope: South Asian Screen Studies*. Her research has been published widely, including in *Third Text*, *Himal Southasian*, *British Art Studies* and *Screen*. Her research blog *De Media Automatiek* narrates her ongoing research work. She is Head of Social Anthropology at the University of Edinburgh.



Courtesy of Lotte Hoek

Dr. Sean Anderson
See page 191

Dr. Zahia Rahmani
See page 41

Organisers

Amara Antilla is Senior Curator at the Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) in Cincinnati. She previously worked at the Guggenheim Museum in New York where she contributed to various exhibitions including *V.S. Gaitonde: Painting as Process, Painting as Life* (2014), *Monir Farmanfarmaian: Infinite Possibility, Mirror Works and Drawings, 1974-2014* (2015), and *Simone Leigh: Loophole of Retreat* (2019), as well as the curatorial program of the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative (2014-18). She has coordinated performances and special projects by artists such as Luis Camnitzer, Amalia Pica, Naufus Ramirez-Figueroa, and Slavs and Tatars, among others. Antilla was awarded an Asian Cultural Council grant for art history (2015-16) and served as curatorial adviser for *Rewind* at the Dhaka Art Summit (2016). Antilla studied art history at Tufts University, the Museum School, and Hunter College at the City University of New York (CUNY).



Installation image from *Rewind*, Dhaka Art Summit, 2016. Courtesy of Samdani Art Foundation. Photo: Jenni Carter

Diana Campbell Betancourt
See page 193



Raiji Kuroda and Yasunaga Koichi identifying visitors to the first Asian Art Show Part II in Fukuoka, February 2016. Courtesy of Diana Campbell Betancourt

John Tain is Head of Research at Asia Art Archive, where he leads a team of researchers based in Hong Kong, New Delhi, and Shanghai, with projects spanning all of Asia. In addition to exhibitions at the Serendipity Arts Festival in Goa (2018) and Art Basel Hong Kong (2018, 2019), he co-organised a symposium on art periodicals that took place during the Sharjah Art Foundation's Focal Point art book fair (2018). His writings on Rirkrit Tiravanija, Wu Tsang, Charles Gaines and Kara Walker, among others, have appeared in *Artforum*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Flash Art*, *Art Review Asia*, and in various exhibition catalogues, and he is an editor of the *Afterall Exhibition Histories* series. He was previously a curator for modern and contemporary collections at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles.¹



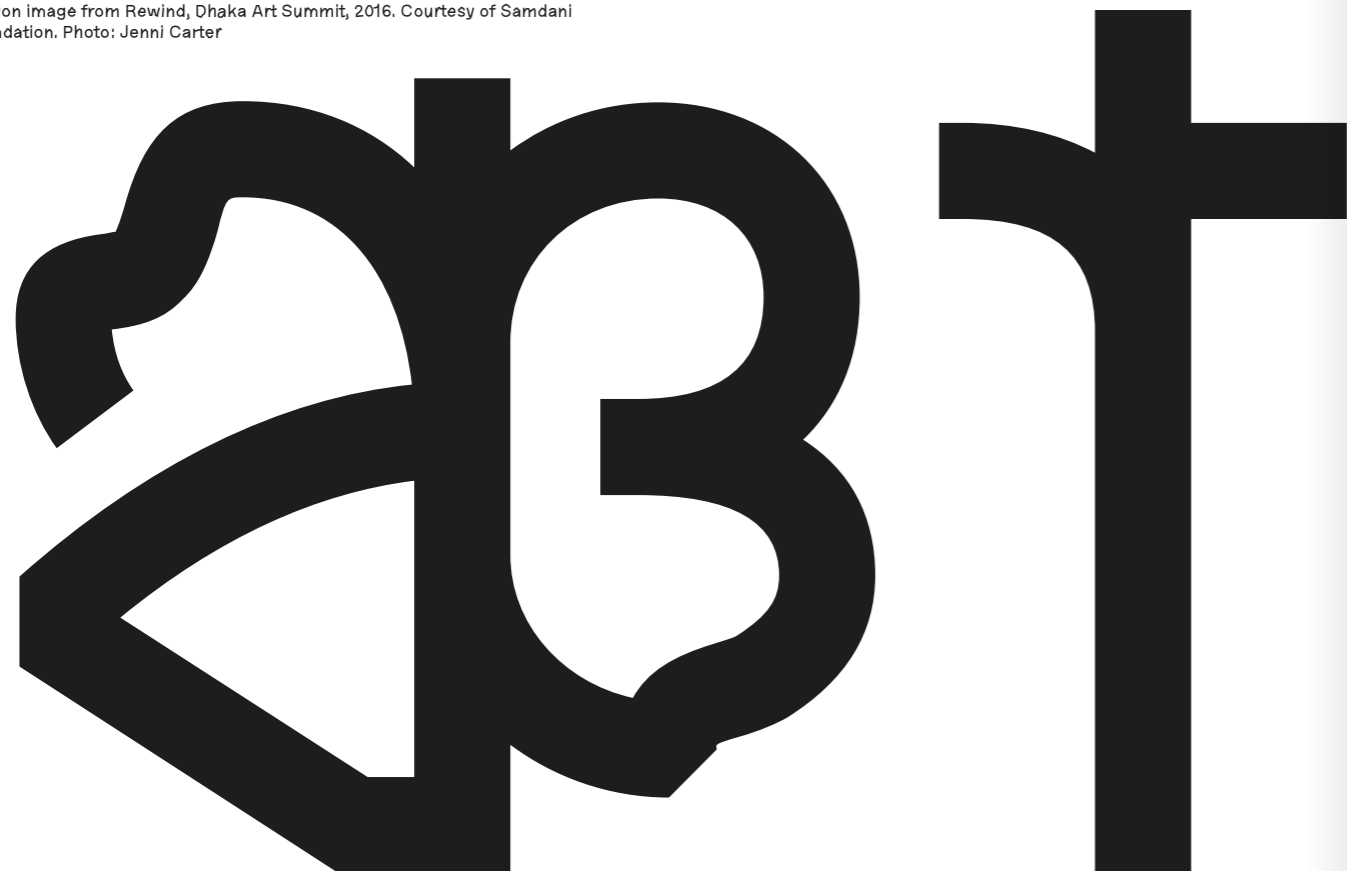
Jyoti Bhatt, *Students Preparing for the Fine Arts Fair, Baroda, 1967*. Courtesy of Jyoti Bhatt

Research Team

Michelle Wong is an Asia Art Archive researcher based in Hong Kong. She leads the Ha Bik Chuen archive project, which is cataloguing and researching the papers of a Hong Kong-based artist who also documented over 1,500 exhibitions in Hong Kong and elsewhere from the 1960s till the end of the twentieth century, providing precious rare archival material for the development of art history in Hong Kong and the region more broadly. Wong developed some of her research for the *Ambitious Alignments project* (2015), which was supported by a grant from the Getty Foundation. She is a 2019 Pernod Ricard Fellow at Villa Vassilieff & Bétonsalon, Centre for Art and Research, Paris.



Jose Maceda, *Cassettes 100*, performance at Culture Centre of the Philippines, 1971. Photo from *The Asia Magazine*, 30 May, 1971, found in the Ha Bik Chuen Archive in Hong Kong. Courtesy of the Asia Magazine, the Ha Bik Chuen Family, and Asia Art Archive



Dr. Sneha Ragavan has been an Asia Art Archive (AAA) researcher based in New Delhi since 2012, and as such is responsible for AAA research activities in South Asia. Ragavan collected parts of the Baroda Archive for AAA, led the *Bibliography of Modern and Contemporary Art Writing of South Asia* project, which compiled over 10,000 texts in 13 languages from South Asia over the course of the twentieth century, and is currently developing the Nilima Sheikh archive project.



Installation view of the exhibition *Serial Killers (Two)* at Green Papaya Art Projects, MIM Yu, 2009. Courtesy of Green Papaya Art Projects



Jyoti Bhatt, *Students Preparing for the Fine Arts Fair, Baroda, 1967*. Courtesy of Jyoti Bhatt

Dr. Chuong-Dai Vo is a Researcher at Asia Art Archive, specialising in modern and contemporary art related to Southeast Asia. Her research and curatorial interests include collective platforms, ephemeral practices, social movements, and marginalised genealogies. Her writing can be found in publications such as *Afterall*, *Sismographie des luttes*, the exhibition catalogue *Southern Constellations: The Poetics of the Non-Aligned*, *Taipei Fine Arts Museum's Modern Quarterly*, the anthology *Film in Contemporary Southeast Asia*, and *Journal of Vietnamese Studies*. Her research has been supported by Institut national d'histoire de l'art, Mellon Foundation, Asian Cultural Council, Fulbright Program, University of California Pacific Rim Research Program, and National Endowment for the Humanities. She is researching the construction of multiple modernisms through arts pedagogy, arts writing, and exhibition-making in Vietnam, 1925-1975. Additionally, she is curating an exhibition about Green Papaya Art Projects at Vargas Museum, as part of the artist-run platform's closing after two decades.

Ruxmini Reckvana Q Choudhury
See page 193



Cover page of catalogue from Asian Art Biennale, 1981. Courtesy of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Samdani Art Award 2020

Curated by Philippe Pirotte
assisted by
Ruxmini Reckvana Q Choudhury

All too often, our so-called priorities dictate what we imagine important for understanding life in places and histories different than ours. Often coming from 'the West', the groups and economics that have become dominant and which recast societies have become the paradigms that we are led to view as critical to our understandings of many places. Generally these models were built by a colonial system, and then inherited by nationalist revolutions that continued to define and maintain those sometimes problematic interpretative structures. Through templates borrowed from subsequent dominant elites, be they secular or religious, forces of 'modernity' appeared to define independent, nationalist cultures. Their now metropolitan centers progressively become the scene of tension between trajectories of growing global integration, spread through bureaucracy, schools, literature, electronic media, on the one hand, and resurgent claims to validate indigenous ways of life or to maintain cultural traditions that pre-date colonisation on the other.

The young Bangladeshi art scene seems acutely aware of local cultural memories, the struggle to preserve knowledge and traditions of indigenous identities, but also of everyday forms of resistance against forces attempting to make things uniform. In their works for the 2020 Samdani Art Award exhibition, the artists pay particular attention to complexify and to add nuances of memory, tradition, feminism, race, environmental adjustment, and the struggles of indigenous groups. These are all issues characterised by fraught relationships with homogenising strategies, manifesting themselves in forms and claims of universal theories, such as nationalism, religion, and the idea of modernity as progress. Most of the artists in the exhibition feel a sense of solidarity with smaller communities, such as the often-difficult situations of women, workers and peasants. These groups of people are often kept voiceless or out of sight – and seen as expendable in larger geopolitical scenarios and/or transformations of religious, political, and economic nature. Those large transformations are characterised by complex interplay, which altered traditions, and sometimes these revisionist forms were the only way certain traditions could survive. One could call it 'syncretic receptivity' as new symbols can be received as supplements, which enrich the so-called substratum, rather than replace what went before. An obvious example is the conversion of Santal to Hinduism and Christianity, while also maintaining their own forms of spirituality. Clearly, local cultures re-assembled each process and stage of adaptation, they gave distinctive meaning to ascendant ideas and practices coming from elsewhere.

The artists in the exhibition appreciate the local perspectives which have conditioned peoples' reception of new currents of thought and organisation, and they also look deep into the recesses of social life where the resilience of indigenous cultures still resonate. For example, abrupt shifts in religious allegiance precariously put communities in a world

of contradiction and fluctuation with respect to their original spiritual practices. But as new idioms framed local understandings, undercurrents of earlier sensibility have been consistently nurtured.

Ashfika Rahman, Najmun Nahar Keya, Soma Surovi Jannat attempt to characterise local cultural life, identifying key structures, patterns of social interaction, as reshaped through time. **Ashfika Rahman** engages with the Oraw, a little known indigenous group akin to the Santal, which was lured with financial compensation and employment to migrate to cities after the Bangladesh liberation war in 1971, a time when massive conversions to Christianity of the low caste Hindu community and indigenous communities happened. **Rahman** re-creates a 'Sitalpati', a mat manufactured by the Oraw community made from murta plants and adorned with decorative designs called 'nakshi pati' – including 101 names of converted Oraw. **Najmun Nahar Keya** works with women from village communities in Tangail district, more specifically from Pach Charan, to trace folk tales, ballads, poetry and proverbs from the oral tradition, embodying traditions, emotions, thoughts and values of everyday life, devotion, love ritual and labor. The collected texts will be transferred into word-shapes made up from mixing Bangla and English language forms with Tangail sarees. **Soma Surovi Jannat's** ambitious spiral-shaped table features drawings on handmade paper from banana, sugarcane, bamboo leaf, palm tree, and rice straw, next to mud-pottery, jute accessories, and medicinal herbs. She worked with the Kumar Para, the well-known potters community in Lalmonirhat, and wants to bring forth their eco-friendly style of living.

Other artists featured in the exhibition, like **Promiti Hossain** and **Faiham Ebna Sharif** engage with vulnerable groups, sometimes subjected to brutal and exploitative occurrences. In an isolated village in Subarnachar, Noakhali, **Promiti Hossain** engaged in conversations, and subsequently made drawings, together with a woman, who was gang raped by 16 cadres of a political party. Broadening her exchange in Noakhali, Hosain met also like child brides, and other women with whom she would engage in collective drawing. Photographer and filmmaker **Faiham Ebna Sharif's** ongoing documentary project 'Cha Chakra : Tea Tales of Bangladesh', connects to colonial histories of plantation economies, using photography and moving image. Today this 'enclave economy' within the tea estates in Bangladesh, a remnant of British colonial rule, employs approximately half a million workers stemming from the mass migration of 80 different ethnicities and communities, toiling within old feudal working conditions. These workers are the cheapest form of labour for the second most consumed drink after water in the global economy. **Tahia Farhin Haque** traces back the specific migration of her family as a result of communal sectarianism, through compelling black and white photographs and a video work. Revisiting the place her father was born before

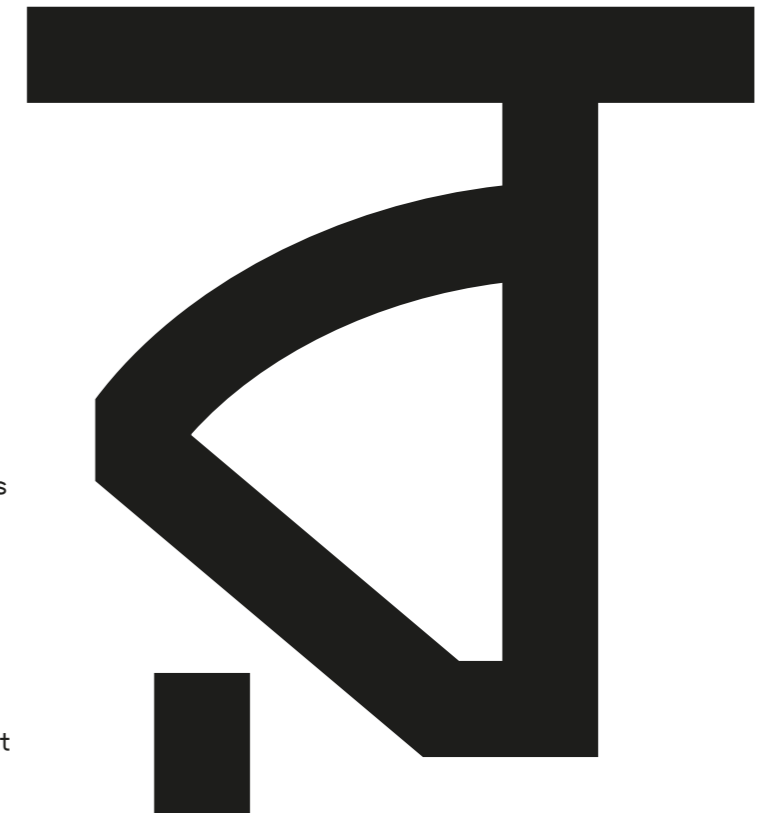
the 1947 partition of British India into India and East and West Pakistan, the tension she felt still palpable in the air today, making photographs as a Muslim woman predetermined every encounter and became an integral part of her project. Since 2014 **Habiba Nowrose** develops a body of work tackling concepts of female beauty, their often-oppressive nature in the longing for perfection, negotiating global normative concepts with an iconic character, encompassing enticement, seduction, and persuasive female charm, in the Bangladeshi context. In Nowrose's imaginary world, happy kitschy fabrics with flashy patterns and colours adorn the characters depicted on glossy paper and veil the revered woman, the modern working woman of urban Dhaka, the woman confined to domestic roles and/or aspects of intimate relationships.

Performance is a catalyst in the works of **Sumana Akter, Ariful Kabir and Palash Battacharjee**. **Akter** engages with old children games like 'danguli', thief, police, 'gollachut', bomb busting, seven plants, 'daria banda', 'kutakuta', 'icimbicim', 'baiama', 'hadudu', 'kabaddi', 'ludu', rope, 'kanamachi', dolls marriage, marble, kite, 'uranosaha', etc.,. All of them have a connection with soil/earth, as they are played on the ground. In a durational performance, **Akter** re-creates the toys used in those games out of clay, as a metaphorical protest against urban anxiety, consumerism. **Ariful Kabir's** durational performance on his turn, with the artist whispering from a self-made coffin for several hours, has no morbid overtones. Old Egyptian traditions of dealing with the death, and a keen interest in specific shapes carrying old memories and symbolisms, fuel his performance. The transformation from an act of everyday life into the performative, and possibly the ritualistic motivates **Palash Battacharjee's** video installation in which one monitor features a scene of an opening and closing drawer and the other shows the restless movement of a hand holding and shaking some small sized papers. Through these absurd actions, Battacharjee brings about the domestic as an ambiguous space in which movement hovers from the banal to the compulsive.

Sounak Das and **Zihan Karim** are keen observers of the urban environment, looking at either a recurrent feature, or a specific history with nostalgic overtones. **Sounak Das's** installation sculpturally evokes the dark intricate nests of chaotic wires, transmitters and electric connections hanging from poles to poles across the roads, typically representative of urban Dhaka. An audio track of collected sonic material objects produces a fitting vibrating sound. In earlier work, **Das** documented these wire poles photographically, as there is a will from the state that they would disappear by the year 2022. **Zihan Karim's** video-installation 'Last Five Minutes of Xiluo Theatre' focuses on the history of an old movie theatre in Taiwan. Karim's installation consisting of a wall of monitors and a projection, negotiates the nostalgia involved while visiting this now dilapidated theatre which is no longer in use, since the advent of television,

and even newer media kept the people away. The story will resonate in the Bangladeshi context, as since 2000 around thousand movie theatres closed permanently.

This exhibition was realised in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut Bangladesh.



Ariful Kabir



Sense Perception And Feelings, 2016. Performance Belfort by ISBA Besancon, France. Courtesy of the artist

Ariful Kabir is an interdisciplinary artist whose work spans painting, sculpture, installation and performance. Instead of focusing on particular subjects, his inspiration stems from his immediate context, alternating between Bangladesh and France, where he is currently based. In his performances, found objects such as a coffin, wheel, rope and a blindfold have been used as metaphors for the political situation in Bangladesh and his personal experience there. Kabir's performances also explore the ephemerality of the medium itself in relation to the construction and deconstruction of time, drawing from various histories such as that of Buddhism.

b. 1990 in Chattogram, lives and works in Besancon

Ashfika Rahman

Ashfika Rahman's practice explores and experiments with photography, using media ranging from historical techniques like 19th century printmaking, to documentary approaches and contemporary media. Photography is the predominant medium that she uses to express her views on complex systemic social issues such as police violence, rape, and religious extremism – often overlooked by the administrative machinery of the state. In her practice, she creates a conceptual timeline of the stereotypes of victims, repeated across history, notably in regard to minors.



Redeem, 2019. Mixed media installation. Commissioned for DAS 2020. Courtesy of the artist and Samdani Art Foundation

b. 1988, Dhaka, lives and works in Dhaka

Faiham Ebna Sharif

Faiham Ebna Sharif is an artist and researcher interested in long-term explorations of subjects such as tea plantations, the film industry of Bangladesh, the Rohingya refugee crisis, HIV patients, climate change, and migration from the micro-scale of the local bus to the meta-scale of humanity. Although Sharif studied international relations, he chose photography as his medium of expression. Sharif collects manuscripts, published primary sources (such as newspapers and other local media), as well as visual records (painting, photography and video) and oral histories parallel to and contributing to his artistic practice.



Cha Chakra: Tea Tales Of Bangladesh, 2016. Photo: courtesy of the artist

b. 1985 in Dhaka, lives and works in Dhaka and Uppsala

Habiba Nowrose



Life Of A Venus, 2019. Photo: courtesy of the artist

Habiba Nowrose explores human relationships and gender identities through photography. She makes photographic portraits as this allows for the introduction of different perspectives and interpretations regarding topics such as the life of HIV positive patients or mourning over the death of a loved one. Nowrose takes careful mental note of objects, colours, patterns and locations that attract her on a repeated basis, which she then re-introduces in her carefully constructed compositions. These elements play a fundamental role in her interactive and psychologically moving image making process.

b. 1989 in Sirajganj, lives and works in Dhaka

Najmun Nahar Keya

Najmun Nahar Keya is primarily a painter, but also employs old photographs, gold gilding, drawing and printmaking, which she juxtaposes to create nostalgic settings. Having grown up in the old part of Dhaka, Keya draws her inspiration from the rapid social, economic and environmental changes happening in the area as a result of urbanisation. Often using identifiable architectural structures and characters she encountered in the past, she depicts memories and narratives tied to them. She is interested in the duality of society focusing on lifestyle, culture, cityscapes, urban motifs, customs and architecture.



Between The Sky And The Earth-9, 2016. Graphite, oil and acrylic on canvas. Courtesy of the artist

b. 1980 in Dhaka, lives and works in Dhaka

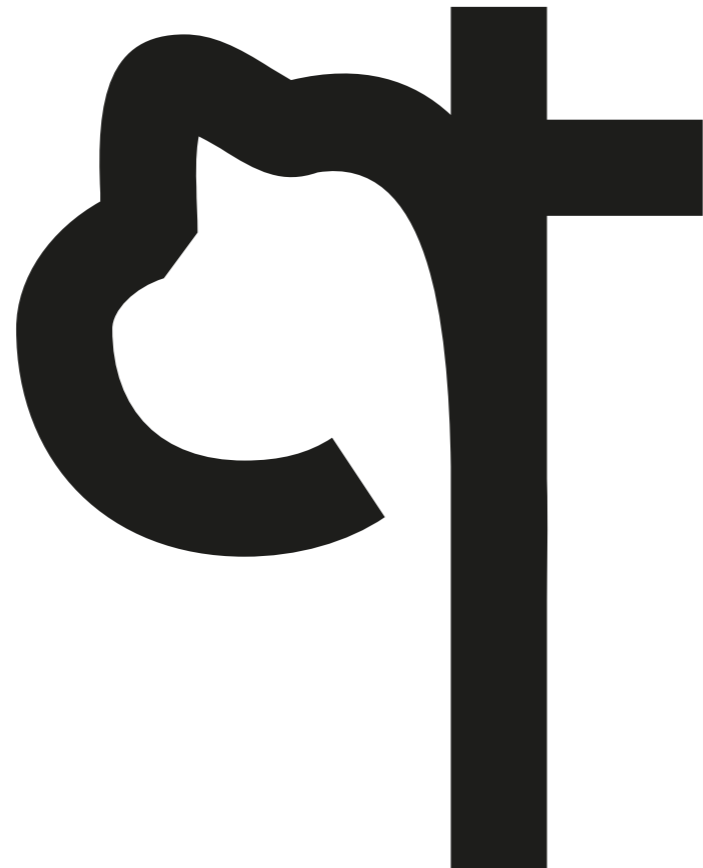
Palash Bhattacharjee



Pass, 2019. Video still of a part of two-channel video installation. Courtesy of the artist

Palash Bhattacharjee works with performance, installation, and video within his practice. His works are the result of aesthetic experimentation derived from personal experience, set in relation to human sensitivities and emotions. These are conscious and unconscious expressions of his everyday behaviour, excitement and obsessions within the context of a society where narratives of a human's existential reality seem to be losing meaning in the face of larger political, social concerns.

b. 1983 in Chattogram, lives and works in Chattogram



Promiti Hossain



Continual Conversation, 2019. Drawings. Courtesy of the artist

Promiti Hossain's artistic practice is comprised of drawing, painting and collage. Her work addresses her private experience as well as the subjectivity of gender. The constant news stories of gender-based violence against women and children, which she comes across daily, inspire her to draw attention to the struggles women face in the world. Her anatomic-style ink drawings of insects, flowers, and the female body allow marks and mistakes to represent the challenges women face in society.

b. 1991 in Dhaka, lives and works between Dhaka and Santiniketan

Soma Surovi Jannat

Soma Surovi Jannat works with illustration, drawing and painting. Her work bridges different stimuli from her surroundings, aiming to depict what often are grim circumstances through an optimistic lens. Jannat transforms her two-dimensional works into installations, developing a visual language that allows the viewer to perceive the presence and correlation of different elements across varied circumstances. Numerous facets with individual storylines are joined to present a dominant narrative, which allows for the experience of a complex visual illusion. Interaction, collaboration and social engagement are characteristic of her working process.

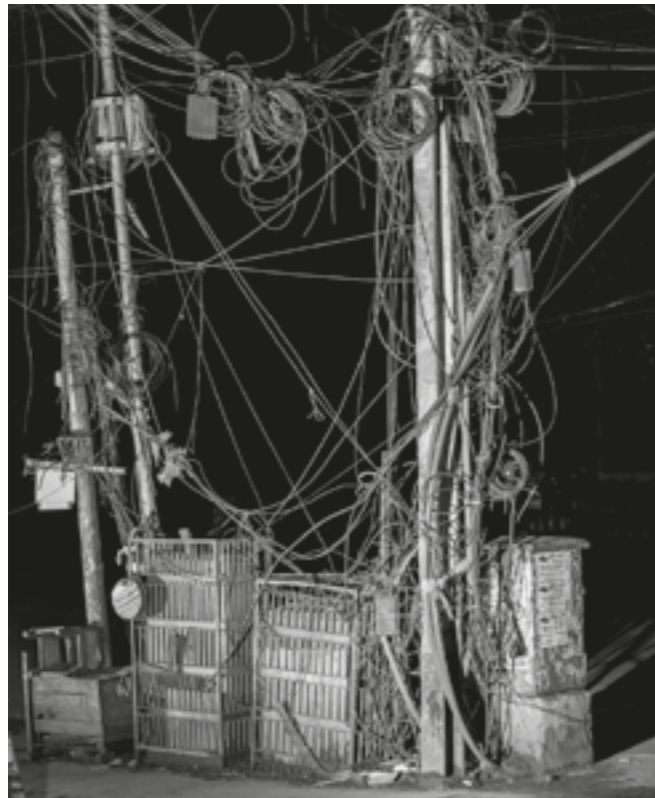


Overarching Chain of Connections, 2018. Detail of a drawing installation, pen on canvas, wood and wall. Courtesy of the artist

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

Sounak Das

Sounak Das works with photography, moving image and sound. His interest in photography was sparked by his exploration of photo albums of his father's theatre performances created in the 1990s. The loss of his father in 2012, which is accompanied by a rich tradition of rituals in the Hindu religion, drove him to explore spirituality and ritualistic practices in more depth. He makes portraits of religious leaders as an act of documenting his own experience with Hindu spiritual practice. Das has produced, worked and collaborated with various artists on numerous projects, using VR, installations, performance art, and various film formats: documentaries, art films, commercials and after-movies (a term used to describe short documentary style films to show behind-the-scenes stories, informal interviews, film production processes, advertising, etc).



Wire Formation, 2018. Installation with light boxes. Courtesy of the artist and Kochi Biennale Foundation

b. 1993 in Dhaka, lives and works in Dhaka

Sumana Akter



Look Back - Part 2, 2018. Performance documentation. Courtesy of the artist

Sumana Akter is interested in performance art in addition to painting. Her work takes a critical stance towards social, political and cultural issues, such as the environmental concerns of the Sundarbans caused by industrialisation. In her performances Akter references the century-old Bengali Kantha (quilt) stitch practice and traditional childhood games that are increasingly forgotten across generations due to urbanisation and technological dependency. Her own voice becomes an important tool in her performance practice.

b. 1983 in Narayanganj, lives and works in Narayanganj, Bangladesh

Tahia Farhin Haque

Tahia Farhin Haque's work shatters traditional stereotypes about women, specifically in Islamic countries, by bringing women's unique perspectives to the forefront of her photography practice. She hopes to lend a voice to issues that are unheard of and unseen in the rest of the world, while making her viewers question their paradigms on a personal level. She believes her gaze is affected by her conservative Muslim background, and wants to express this through her work.



The Soul Inside, 2016. Photo: courtesy of the artist

b. 1996 in Dhaka; lives and works in Dhaka

Zihan Karim



The Song From Wrapped Expansion, 2019. Film and single-channel video. Courtesy of the artist

Zihan Karim's works address the subtleties of time, space, and social issues through various media, objects and architecture through installation, sound, and projection. He blends analog reality with the virtual to initiate new layers of observation, leading viewers into an advanced perceptual world. Karim's transposing of sequential events of one specific time to another might ultimately inspire new situations, and the artist likes to observe the reaction of his audience to these scenarios.

b. 1984 in Chattogram; lives and works in Chattogram

DAS Guest Artistic Team

DAS is pleased to have curatorially collaborated with the following institutions and individuals on its fifth edition:

Artspace (*Collective Movements*) Established in 1983, Artspace is one of Australia's leading institutions for the production and presentation of contemporary art. Through new commissions, exhibitions, performances, artist residencies, public programmes, publishing and advocacy, Artspace is where artists of all generations test new ideas and shape public conversation. Committed to risk, experimentation and collaboration, Artspace's mission is to enhance our culture through a deeper engagement with contemporary art.

Alexie Glass-Kantor is Executive Director of Artspace, Sydney, supporting the commissioning of contemporary art, publishing initiatives, and research residencies for artists and curators. She is the Curator for the Encounters sector at Art Basel, Hong Kong, which is the curated sector for the presentation of large-scale installations. She has curated or co-curated over 100 exhibitions across independent spaces, collecting institutions, biennials and festivals and will curate Australia's pavilion at the 2021 Venice Biennale.

Lola Pinder is the Development and Public Engagement Manager at Artspace, Sydney and works across curatorial and community outreach to support the development of new work and programming. She has previously worked at the Australian Centre for Photography in Education and Public Programs as well as the Flying Arts Alliance in education programming. Recent programs include community engagement events with Isabel and Alfredo Aquilizan & Volume | Another Art Book Fair, Sydney. She has contributed to publications including Art Monthly Australasia, Ocula, Heavy Volume II and Angelica Mesiti: A Communion of Stranger Gestures. She holds a BA in Art History from the University of Melbourne and the University of Granada with honours in Art Theory from the UNSW Art & Design.

Michelle Newton is the Deputy Director at Artspace and works as a curator and producer to support the commissioning of contemporary art projects and related discursive programmes. Before joining Artspace in 2012, she was the Associate Director at Grantpirrie Gallery and has previously worked with First Nations' artists at Jilamara Arts on the Tiwi Islands (NT) and Jirrawun Arts in the East Kimberley (WA).

Gudskul
See page 70

RAW Material Company (*Collective Movements: CR4*) is a centre for art, knowledge and society based in Dakar, Senegal. It is an initiative involved with curatorial practice, artistic education, residencies,

knowledge production, and archiving of theory and criticism on art. It works to foster appreciation and growth of artistic and intellectual creativity in Africa. The programme is trans-disciplinary and is equally informed by literature, film, architecture, politics, fashion, cuisine and diaspora.

Dulcie Abrahams Altass is a Dakar-based British art historian and curator. She is Curator of Programmes at RAW Material Company and her work in Senegal has included research on diverse topics ranging from the country's performance art history to the nexus of hip hop and contemporary art in Dakar. She has also been a member of Dakarois artist's collective 'Les Petites Pierres'.

Koyo Kouoh is the Executive Director and Chief Curator of Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa in Cape Town, South Africa. Prior to this she was the Founding Artistic Director of RAW Material Company in Dakar, Senegal.

Marie Hélène Pereira is the Director of Programmes at Raw Material Company. Pereira has organised a dozen exhibitions and related discursive programmes. She has a strong interest in the discourse and reflection around identity and migration.

SAVVY Contemporary (*Geographies of Imagination*), a Berlin based laboratory of form-ideas is an art space, discursive platform, place for good talks, foods and drinks – a space for conviviality. SAVVY Contemporary situates itself at the threshold of notions of the West and non-West, to understand and deconstruct them. SAVVY Contemporary has realized a kaleidoscope of art exhibitions, performances, film screenings, lectures, concerts, readings, talks, dances. SAVVY Contemporary has established a participatory archive on German colonial history, a performance arts documentation centre, a library, a residency programme, as well as educational projects with schools.

Antonia Alampi is a curator, researcher and writer currently based in Berlin, where she is Artistic Co-Director of SAVVY Contemporary. She is also on the curatorial team of the quadrennial Sonsbeek 2020. She recently founded a research platform – 'Toxic Commons' – that brings together cultural practitioners and academic researchers in the sciences to address environmental injustice by unravelling the complex nature of toxicity.

Olani Ewunnet is an urban designer, researcher and sound artist living in Berlin. She is interested in the inter and intra border signifiers of African sonics, urbanism and design typologies. She currently works at Kéré Architecture / Kéré Foundation, and is the founder of the 'Selamawi Project', a traditional instrument construction programme in Addis Ababa. At SAVVY Contemporary, she works on the project 'DisOthering: Beyond Afropolitan and Other Labels'.

Shawon Akand (*Geographies of Imagination*, collaborating with SAVVY) is an artist, researcher, and curator based in Dhaka. Akand is the Director and co-founder of 'Jothashilpa', a centre for traditional and contemporary arts. 'Jothashilpa' has started its journey as an artist-led organisation in 2016 with the aim for enhancement of arts practices in Bangladesh with a sustainable approach towards community engagement and development. Akand is also co-founder of 'Crack International Art Camp', launched in 2007 and held in Kushtia (rural Bangladesh).

Bishwajit Goswami (*Roots*) is a faculty member at the Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka. As an artist, he maintains a visual language in constant flux, and strives to create new approaches and ideas through other mediums. Among his recent curation projects are 'BRIHATTA/IMMENSITY', a four month long open studio based around a student art project and 'BINDU BISORGA' at the 18th Asian Art Biennale, Bangladesh in 2018. He also participated in the Bangladesh Pavilion at the 58th Venice Art Biennale in 2019.

Sumon Wahed (*Roots*) is a visual artist, researcher, art educator and very much interested to explore the local and global context of modernity, post modernity in terms of his own identity, history and practice. He is a research based practicing artist of several expressions, including painting, assemblage, sculptural installations, interactive project works etc. His interest in art education has derived him to join as a Lecturer in Drawing and Painting Department, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka. Now he is an Assistant Professor and PhD researcher in the same department.

Brihatta (*Roots*) is a research-based non-profit art platform, with a strong focus on community development and collaboration. The project possesses a collective spirit that centers on the youth, and proposed to its participants to examine alternative understanding of their artistic practice & encourages numerous interdisciplinary practices to build networks. Artistic freedom is nurtured in this space, as one gains clarity of self, by engaging in creative dialogue and mentorship. Brihatta art platform increases the value and vitality of communities by improving cultural access to, and visibility of, art. Focused on the creation, and curation of art within the public realm, Brihatta is a dynamic liaison between artists, craftsman, local and expat community members, and global practitioners to place artwork that achieves shared goals.

Kathryn Weir (*The Collective Body*) founded 'Cosmopolis' at the Centre Pompidou in 2015 as a platform for research-based and collaborative multidisciplinary art practices. The platform constructs bridges between new forms of creative experimentation and critical vocabularies from contemporary theory, and between reconceived geographies and histories. From 2006 until 2014, she led the international art and cinémathèque curatorial areas at the Queensland Art Gallery |

Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA), Brisbane and was one of the curators of the 5th, 6th and 7th Asia Pacific Triennials of Contemporary Art. From 2020 she has been appointed Director of the MADRE museum in Naples.

Kehkasha Sabah (*The Collective Body*) is an independent curator, visual artist and researcher based in Dhaka, Bangladesh. She is Assistant Curator, Collectives Platform at DAS 2020. She is engaged in contemporary art, new media and curation focusing on socio-political issues such as cultural taboos, identity, body and space. She received the Talent Recognition Award of the Society for Promotion of Bangladesh Art in 2019. She is one of the founding members of Art Lab Dhaka.

Mustafa Zaman (*No One Told Me There'd Be Days Like This*) was trained as a printmaker, however he soon veered into multidisciplinary practice turning his attention to contemporary human conditions often observed in relation to the instruments of power. Zaman held solo shows at the Zainul Gallery, Institute of Fine Arts (2000); at the Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts (2010); and at Alliance Francaise (2010) Zaman is now chief curator at Dwip, a gallery based in Dhaka.

Philippe Pirotte (*Samdani Art Award*) is an art historian and curator. He is the Dean of the Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste Städelschule and Director of Portikus in Frankfurt am Main. He also serves as Adjunct Senior Curator at the UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, and as visiting professor at the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore.

Sean Anderson (*On Muzharul Islam: Surfacing Intention*) is Associate Curator in the Department of Architecture and Design at The Museum of Modern Art. He has practiced as an architect and taught in Afghanistan, Australia, India, Italy, Morocco, Sri Lanka and the U.A.E. His book, 'Modern Architecture and its Representation in Colonial Eritrea' (2015) was nominated for the AIFC Bridge Book Award for Non-Fiction.

Nurur Rahman Khan (*On Muzharul Islam: Surfacing Intention*) is a practicing architect, architecture historian, and an academic. He is pursuing his PhD at the Università Iuav di Venezia in Architecture History and Criticism. He has presented lectures in many significant institutions such as Yale University, Columbia University, MIT, Rhode Island School of Design, IUAV (Venice) and also at the UIA and ARCASIA conferences.

The Otolith Group – Kodwo Eshun and Anjalika Sagar (*Moving Image*) is a London-based collective initiated in 2002, who work with film, video, lecture performance, and publications. Their research-based projects combine narrative, archival material, and documentary footage, with an interest in futurity, speculative science fiction, and geology. The Otolith Group were nominated for the Turner Prize in 2010.

Huraera Jabeen (*Srijan-Abartan*) is a development professional engaged in research, practice and teaching on critical issues of urban resilience, more specifically researching the intersection of gender and climate change in cities of the global South. Dr. Jabeen is assistant professor at BRAC University, and previously worked as a post-doctoral research fellow at the Population Council in New York.

Inteza Shariar (*Srijan-Abartan*) is a Bangladeshi architect, designer and artist. Since graduating from BRAC university he has been developing and experimenting with alternative material in his design practice. He worked with the architect Salauddin Ahmed Potash, focusing on architecture, artworks, exhibitions and publications. Later he worked with the architect Saiful Haq on his Aga Khan Award winning amphibious school. He is a Core member of Akaliko Artist Initiatives and Leads Akaliko's – Visual, lighting & spatial designs. He also co-founder Ora Design Studio in 2013, and designs energy efficient low-carbon sustainable products.

Nina Paim (*Srijan-Abartan*) is a Brazilian designer, researcher, and curator who holds a BA in Graphic Design from Gerrit Rietveld Academie and an MA in Design Research from HKB Bern. In 2014, she curated the exhibition *Taking a Line for a Walk* at the 26th Biennial of Graphic Design Brno, Czech Republic, for which she received a Swiss Design Award in 2015. In 2018, she co-founded the non-profit 'common-interest,' dedicated to making research public through creative means of knowledge mediation and storytelling. As part of common-interest, she curated the 2018 exhibition 'Department of Non-Binaries' at the inaugural Fikra Graphic Design Biennial in Sharjah.

Prem Krishnamurthy (*Srijan-Abartan*) is a partner and director of the multidisciplinary design practice Wkshps. Previously, he was a founder of the design studio Project Projects, winner of the Cooper Hewitt's National Design Award. He is co-Artistic Director of FRONT International 2021, the contemporary art triennial in Cleveland and Northern Ohio. As an independent exhibition maker, he was an Artistic Director of the inaugural Fikra Graphic Design Biennial, 'Ministry of Graphic Design', and has curated exhibitions internationally including at PI, the acclaimed 'Mom-and-Pop-Kunsthalle' that he founded in New York's Chinatown in 2012.

Truwant + Rodet is a Basel based architecture office founded in 2013 by Charlotte Truwant and Dries Rodet. Their cultural background has been shaped by various experiences abroad such as studying in Switzerland and Belgium, working in Rotterdam, Denmark, Belgium, a residency in Japan. As a consequence, their objective is to stay as curious and receptive as possible and to open the field of investigation to architecture, landscape urbanism, exhibition, installation, furniture design, research and education. Truwant + Rodet develop projects without cynicism nor nostalgia, engaging with all available technologies and specialists

while relying on territorial and landscape's logics . The projects can be read as abstract ideas that crystallize and resonate with their environment. In 2017, they were awarded the Swiss Art Award for their project *A Pavilion*. And since 2018 they are developing the project *Fountain of Youth* together with Fabian Marti for the Campus Santé in Lausanne.

Zahia Rahmani (*Seismography of Struggles*)
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Cosmin Costinas (*Curatorial Workshops for Artist/ Curators*) is the Executive Director and Curator of Para Site, Hong Kong since 2011. At Para Site, Costinas oversaw the institution's major expansion and relocation to a new home in 2015, and curated numerous exhibitions, including *A beast, a god,* and *a line* from DAS 2018 and the recent: 'An Opera for Animals' (with Claire Shea). He is the Artistic Director of the 2020 Kathmandu Triennale.

Alejandra Ballón Gutiérrez (SÖI Mural Methodology Workshop) is a Lima based researcher and artist who employs both theory and practice to contribute to the social construction and reconstruction of her country. Her praxis develops peer-to-peer, artistic research, and other methodologies for the intercultural transmission of empirical knowledge. Through the conceptual use of colonial aesthetics history, she builds feminist activism strategies for political transformation.

Sebastian Cichocki (*Workshop for Collectives*) is Chief Curator of the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw and one of the founding members of The Consortium for Postartistic Practices. Select exhibitions include the Polish pavilions at the 52nd and 54th Venice Biennales and recently: *The Penumbra Age. Art in the Time of Planetary Change* (2020), *Never Again. Art against War and Fascism in the 20th and 21st centuries* (2019) and *The Bródno Biennale* (2018). Cichocki has curated exhibitions in the form of a novella, radio drama, opera libretto, garden, anti-production residency programme, and performance lectures.

DAS Core Team

Nadia Samdani is the Co-Founder and President of the Samdani Art Foundation and Director of DAS. In 2011, with husband Rajeeb Samdani, she established the Samdani Art Foundation to support the work of Bangladesh and South Asia's contemporary artists and architects and increase their exposure. She collects both Bangladeshi and international art, reflecting her experience as both a proud Bangladeshi and a global citizen. She has contributed texts and given talks about collecting and philanthropy in leading journals and institutions globally.

Rajeeb Samdani is a Co-Founder and Trustee of the Samdani Art Foundation, Chairman of Gulf International Finance Limited, UAE, and Managing Director of Golden Harvest Group. In addition to his cultural philanthropy, he is the Secretary General of the Bangladesh Human Rights Foundation, Founder of the Taher Ahmed Chowdhury Charitable Hospital in Sylhet, and the Alvina Samdani Trust. He first began collecting contemporary art with his wife Nadia Samdani, with whom he established the Samdani Art Foundation in 2011.

Diana Campbell Betancourt is a Princeton educated American curator who has been working in and building art institutions in South and Southeast Asia since 2010, primarily in India, Bangladesh, and the Philippines. She has served as the Founding Artistic Director of Samdani Art Foundation and Chief Curator of DAS since 2013. Through her exhibitions, artist commissions, education outreach, and scholarly cross-pollination in conjunction with academic research centres, Campbell Betancourt is laying the groundwork for valuable cross-cultural dialogue, nurturing solidarity across the Global South. Concurrent to her work in Dhaka, she was the Founding Artistic Director of Bellas Artes Projects in the Philippines from 2016-2018 and the curator of Frieze Projects in London from 2017-2019.

Mohammad Sazzad Hossain is the Head of Administration of the Samdani Art Foundation. Hossain has worked for the Samdani Art Foundation since 2012 and has been a key member of the management team since the first edition of DAS. He is responsible for the artistic production of DAS and Srihatta, along with the management of all teams on site.

Ruxmini Reckvana Q Choudhury is the Assistant Curator of the Samdani Art Foundation where she has worked since 2014. She works directly under Diana Campbell Betancourt to arrange seminars and international exhibitions. Her work is comprised of research on local artists, archiving and monitoring the Samdani Art Foundation Collection among others. She is also responsible for the Samdani Artist Led-Initiatives Forum. Choudhury also works as a freelance art writer, researcher and bilingual translator.

Teresa Albor, Director of Cultural Affairs of the Samdani Art Foundation, is a cultural producer who has been working internationally in the US, UK, and Eastern Europe, and was based in South and Southeast Asia for over a decade. Her roles have included running a London-based art college, co-founding an international artists' residency programme and others. She has a practice as an artist, making live art, video and sound work which explores questions of human nature, identity and marginalisation.

Md. Nasimul Alam has been involved with DAS since 2016 when he acted as Chief of Security. After completing 26 years of service in the Bangladesh Army, he joined the Golden Harvest Group as Head of Operations at Brain Train Studio Ltd, and now holds the position of Director.

Md. Mobinul Haque is a civil engineer working with Samdani Art Foundation since 2011 working with artists to produce ambitious artistic projects. After graduating from the America Bangladesh University, he began to work for leading developer companies in Bangladesh as a project engineer. As a current employee of the Golden Harvest Group he is responsible for supervising all construction work, coordination, and cost estimations.

Mohammad Asifur Rahman studied architecture at the University of Asia Pacific and has been the DAS architectural coordinator since the 2016 edition. After graduation, he was assigned to produce the architectural drawings of historical mosques for an academic publication of prof. Dr. Abu Sayeed M. Ahmed published by UNESCO. Recently, two of his pavilion designs won awards from The Dhaka International Trade Fair.

Tanzila Reza is working as Communications Manager of the Samdani Art Foundation. She is an experienced marketing communication officer who previously worked in the utilities industry.

Adam Ondak works as Curatorial Assistant of the Samdani Art Foundation and DAS and is the assistant to Diana Campbell Betancourt. He currently studies Business Management at King's College London. Ondak participated in an interdisciplinary academic programme 'Experiencing China 2018' at Tsinghua University, Beijing. He is part of the organisational team of the annual 'Central European Conference' held at London School of Economics.

Lucia Zubalova works as curatorial assistant of the Samdani Art Foundation and DAS. She is an alumnus of the Courtauld Institute of Art. Zubalova has previously interned at the Slovak National Gallery, worked for the Bratislava-based Linea Collection and was taught by Diana Campbell Betancourt at the Salzburg International Summer Academy of Fine Arts.

Enayet Kabir is the Collective Platform Fellow at DAS. He is a Bangladeshi multimedia artist whose work explores speculative Bengali futures

and the unreality of Dhaka city. Kabir is a driving force in Brooklyn's underground electronic music community, as both a live performer and event organizer. He is currently the Creative Director for the musician Yaeji, directing her music videos and conceiving of international stage shows.

Fraser Muggeridge and **Joe Nava** of Fraser Muggeridge studio, London, are the graphic designers responsible for the visual identity and design production of DAS 2020. Throughout a wide range of formats, from artists' books and exhibition catalogues to posters, marketing material, exhibitions and websites, the studio prioritises artists' and writers' content over the imposition of a signature style. Clients include: Artangel, Art on the Underground, Focal Point Gallery, Hauser & Wirth, Sadie Coles, Somerset House, Tate, V&A, The Vanity Press.

Alyesha Choudhury (intern) works as the Architectural intern for the Samdani Art Foundation and DAS. Living between London, Dhaka and Glasgow, she is a student of architecture and one of the founders of the /other collective. She received her RIBA Part 1 certification from the Mackintosh School of Architecture at the Glasgow School of Art. The /other collective deconstructs colonial discourse in the architectural environment, commissioning installations and hosting a panel for the 2019 ArchiFringe at the Lighthouse Gallery and Transmission Gallery. Her previous experience includes internships with the Delfina Foundation and Rana Begum Studio.

Pinto Rahman INTRPRT Abu Naser Jolputul Puppet Studio
Manik Bawri Bisu Tripura Md. Foyzal Ahmed Narendra Babu Trovoa
Aaron Cezar Sidra Sohail INIVA Susan Ibreck Tanvir Murad Topu Mriduli Chakma
Zahed Ali Jawwadul Fattah Filip Weselowski Nantu Chakma Carolyn Christov Bakargiev
Habib Nagar Tea Estate Alyxandria Charfauros Yujia Bian Chimurenga Times Museum Loïc Chambon
Silvana Mendes Jean-Claude Do Van Hira Chakma Maxime Algis Kemang Wa Lehulere
Feda Wardak Ana Lira Devra Freelander Ahsana Angona Gitiara Nasreen
Clarissa Tossin Victoria Dreesmann Rita Khin Art Pro Khin Kyi Htet Foyejul Azim Rifa Nanziba
Farid Rakun Tamzidul Islam Najmun Nahar Keya Saskia Fernando Mustafa Monwar Who's Next Barber Shop
Sonam Wangchuk Nurur Rahman Khan Sugata Bose Enrico Nunziata Wakilur Rahman
Mrittika Kamal Abul Barq Alvi Manish Paudel Nabil Ahmed Sigma Mehdi Kelechi Amadi-Obi
Subash Thebe Ed Cross Sarwar Hossen Rameez Shahi N'diaye Diaby Dado Diakhité
Elizabeth (Buffy) Eastman Mrs Sayrun Anissa Rahadiningtyas Alia Kamal Khan Mohammad Faisal
Rina Soemarno Sayantan Maitra Boka Hira Nabi Hoda Afshar Maya Awal Rizvi Amy Zahrawan
Sean Anderson Ritesh Kumar Jaiswal Rebeqa Sultana Moly Maya Espiritu Sawangwongse Yawnghwe
Jennifer Herd Willem van Schendel Kasper Bosmans 7s Barbershop Shanto Barman
Mehruz Munir Daniella Praptono Susanna Chung Shantanu Chowdhury Kika Carvalho
Dibarah Nurunnabi Shanto Mansoor Elahi Saydia Gulrukh Felipe Dmab
William Forsythe Philippe Bischoff Hécctor Zamora Hamiduzzaman Khan Arif Al Karim Bhuiyan White Cube
Sima Chhetri Manuel Miseur Jeonhwan Cho Amir Chaïbi
Wong Ka Ying Muhammad Nafisur Rahman Begum Rokeya Shantwana Shahrin Nini
Jeremy Smith Babu Shopnowala Huraera Jabeen Antenna Space Chandrashekhar Koteswar Satez Chakma
Gabriela Moraes Rana Begum Jay Levenson Simon Minett Kesang Tseten
Tristan Cassir Tamara Corm Sushmita Das Dewan Rakib Anwar Paijo

Majeda Begum Robert Chatterton Dickson Michela Zoppi Chhobi Zulfiqure Ilisa Barbash Simon Rogers
Moussa Coulibaly Mathura Mata Aho Collective Abtahi Rahman Utshab Kapwani Kiwanga
Fatima Begum Nasreen Begum Jan Scholten Sharmin Akhter Shammi Luta Ca Caba Inda
Pintu Purification Shushila Rani Anais Lopez Rizvi Mahmud Arief Rachman Lucia Zubalova Tarek Noor
Tarana Halim Kehkasha Sabah Tapos Sarker Nasrin Jahan Onika Samuel Côte Mostak Ahmed Ousmane Keita Laurie Storey
Noreen Rowshan Riasat Shwe Wutt Hmon House of Gaga Goodman Gallery Babul Hossain Truong Cong Tung
Jane DeBevoise Tyler Friedman Nasrat Khalil Choudhury Lily Bayoumy Batou Coulibaly Md. Ruhul Amin Sreemati Pratima Rani
Noor Romena Yeasir Maleena Dhrity Gomez Florencia Portocarrero U. V. A. Robiul Karim Minar Shashi Bhushan Paul
Hadeel Assali Berto Tukan Md. Rifat Billah Norberto Roldan Arun Das Painka Ahmad Thian Vultan
Ubik Productions Mustafa Zaman Rizo Leong Hadrien Diez Imam Mahdi Akinbode Akinbiyi
Shyamal Chandra Sarker Jane Pujols Bristy Salma Zakia Ousmane Sinaré
Shawon Akand Akshay Pathak Tanzim Wahab Md. Habib Ullah Fariha Rahman
Gudskul Anika Alam Pradip Barman Tsering Angchuk Ralam Rahat Alam
Saskia Pintelon Gabriela Magaña Sana na N'Hada Edward Palma Maliha Mohsin
Khing Shai Marma Shayan Nasir Cole Speck Nasir Ahammed Kamruzzaman Shadhin Sunshine Santos
Twasin Aufie Sandra Terdjman Jasbir K Puar Pierre Lannoy Imran Hossain Piplu
Dhiovana Barroso Eshan Kumer Maitra Devaraj Thimmaiah Moussa Diaby Adil Hasnat Carlos Quijon, Jr
Faiaz Rafi Golam Imran Siddhartha Shah Tuan Andrew Nguyen Aminul Islam Dipti Sherchan
Mamadou Diallo Atahar Hossain Surjo Bill Nguyen Bisa Butler Kirsten Hackenbroch
César Bazin Laurie Nilsen Noor Photoface Shayan Rajani Zaynab Odunsi
Enayat Kabir Tanya Goel Rahnuma Ahmed Matias Duville India Foundation for the Arts Kanak Aditya
F. Rajibuddin Ahmed Jasmin Pelham Shayekh Arif Mamunur Rashid Kazi Abdul Baset
Afra Nawmi Ellen Chapinduka Schaffauser Dutch Foundation Shapla Community
Sanjay Soni Nasima Begum Mamunur Rasid Imtiaj Islam Kiran
Kanak Chanpa Chakma Antora Mehrukh Azad Gupin Tudu Amal Akash Thuma
Max Schubert

Waseka Wahid Lori Wood
Meena Hewitt
Pao Quang Yeh Reena Yousuf
Nahid Hasan Chowdhury
Kazi Rakib
Huma Bhabha
Marcellina Dwi
Rehana Zaman
Hritendra Kumar Sharma
Alok Roy Solene Guillier
Zulfiqar Ali
Bertan Selim
Shama Khan
Esi Eshun
Sadekuzzaman Masum
Abdul Abdullah
Rashmimala
Syed Md. Shohrab Jahan
Shams Xaman
Md. Shafiq Tom Mclean
Md. Zahid Hossain
Hripsime Visser
Georges Armaos
Pepa Ubera
Marian Nur Goni
Linda Lushai
Pedro Mendes
Humaira Salaams
Rara Dias
Hritendra Kumar Sharma
Solene Guillier
Bertan Selim
Shama Khan
Esi Eshun
Sadekuzzaman Masum
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Otobong Nkanga
 Pointe Noire Fragments - State of Black Point, 2009
 Acrylic on paper. Courtesy of the artist



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