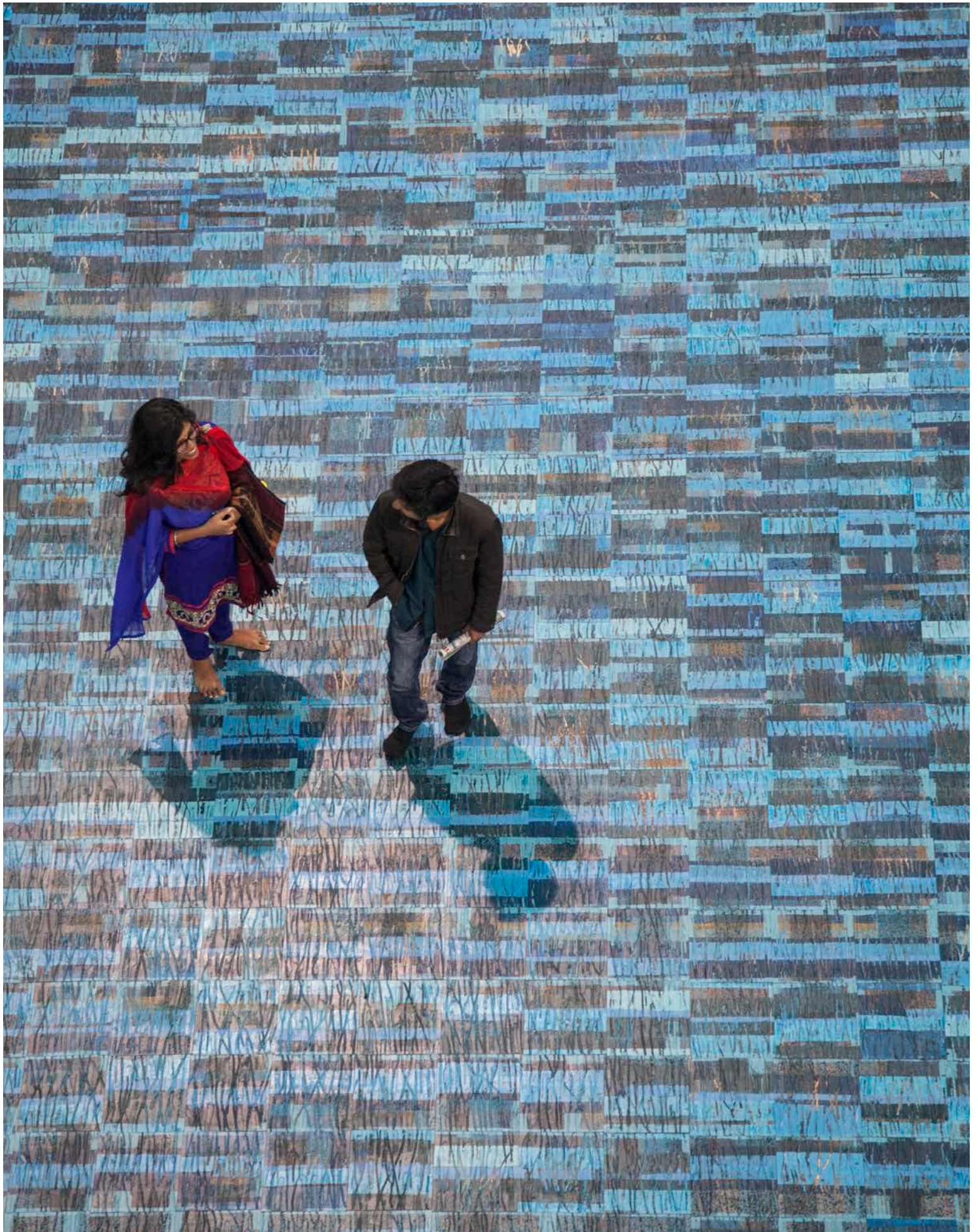


DHAKA ART SUMMIT 2016 REPORT

**DHAKA
ART
SUMMIT**



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SAMDANI ART FOUNDATION & DHAKA ART SUMMIT

The Samdani Art Foundation is a registered private trust in Dhaka that aims to increase artistic engagement between Bangladesh and the rest of the world. Founded in 2011 by collector couple Nadia and Rajeeb Samdani, the foundation has enabled Bangladeshi artists to expand their creative horizons and for international artists and art professionals to engage with Bangladesh. Bangladesh was a country founded in 1971 and born from a desire to speak its own language - and the foundation exists to give support to this voice, which anyone can learn unlike a race or a religion.

The Foundation collaborates with the Bangladeshi government through official partnerships with the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, the Bangladesh National Museum, the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy - the principal state-sponsored national cultural center of the country, and has also collaborated in the past with the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka. The Samdani Art Foundation has supported international institutions such as the Kunsthalle Basel, the 2nd Kochi Biennale, and the 56th International Art Exhibition of la Biennale di Venezia, however the Foundation is not a grant making body and generally works with curatorial collaborations on an institutional level. The Foundation has most recently supported curators from the Tate Modern, Centre Pompidou, Kunsthalle Zurich, Guggenheim, New York, Rubin Museum, Asia Art Archive, and many others to travel to the region for their research and to develop exhibitions geared towards South Asian audiences.

The Samdani Art Foundation produces the bi-annual Dhaka Art Summit (DAS) which exists as the world's largest non-commercial research and exhibition platform for South Asian Art. Through the unique format of the Summit, which is not a biennial, not a symposium, not a festival – but rather somewhere in-between and removed from the pressures of the art market – DAS is known for creating a generative space where participants can reconsider the past and future of art and exchange within South Asia and the rest of the world.

Since its inauguration in 2012, Dhaka Art Summit has fast become considered a central meeting point for art professionals from the region and further afield. The Summit facilitates inter-generational and inter-regional dialogues that were not previously possible due to restrictions of movements of people and goods across South Asia (which for DAS purposes includes India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and Myanmar). We also provide a platform for individuals with ties to the region which might not be national or ethnic. The Foundation produces major bodies of work for the Dhaka Art Summit through deep engagements with artists over several years, the work later belongs to the artist, and many have toured internationally, such as Shilpa Gupta's acclaimed project at the 8th Berlin Biennale, Tayeba Begum Lipi's *Love Bed*, which is now in the collection of the Guggenheim Museum, to name but a few.

3RD EDITION OF THE DHAKA ART SUMMIT - AT A GLANCE

Dhaka Art Summit, 3rd Edition: 5th – 8th February 2016
Held at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
14/3 Segunbagicha, Segun Bagicha Rd, Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Summit is a free and ticketless event and this year welcomed 138,000 visitors in 4 days, and operated tours for 2,500 students from 30+ schools. Those participating included over 300 emerging and established artists, as well as internationally renowned curators and writers, and attracted visitors from over 70 international institutions, who attended the Summit to extend and further their research into the region.

Curated by Samdani Art Foundation Artistic Director and DAS Chief Curator Diana Campbell Betancourt, Katya García Antón (Director of the Office for Contemporary Art Norway), **Daniel Baumann** (Director of the Kunsthalle in Zurich), artist **Nikhil Chopra**, **Beth Citron** (Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Rubin Museum of Art), artist **Madhavi Gore**, curator **Shanay Jhaveri** (Assistant Curator-Modern and Contemporary Art, South Asia, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), **Aurelien Lemonier** (Architecture Curator at the Centre Pompidou), **Nada Raza** (assistant curator at Tate Modern), **Md. Muniruzzaman** and artist **Jana Prepeluh** with Asia Art Archive Senior Researcher **Sabih Ahmed** and **Amara Antilla** (assistant curator at the Guggenheim Museum, New York).

DAS provokes reflections on transnationalism, selfhood and time with invited artists, curators and thinkers who build exhibitions through commissioned research and experience within the region—without being prescriptive. Neither a biennial, symposium nor festival but somewhere in between, the unique format of the Summit transforms the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy into a generative space to reconsider the past and future of art and exchange within South Asia and beyond. DAS 2016 included loans from the Bangladesh National Collection; the Museum Folkwang in Essen; the Pinault Collection and many public and private South Asian collections as well as partnerships with institutions such as the Centre Pompidou; Asia Art Archive and Harvard South Asia Institute, DAS considers South Asia from the view of doing and becoming rather than cartography, occupying the triplet planes of imagination, will and circumstance.

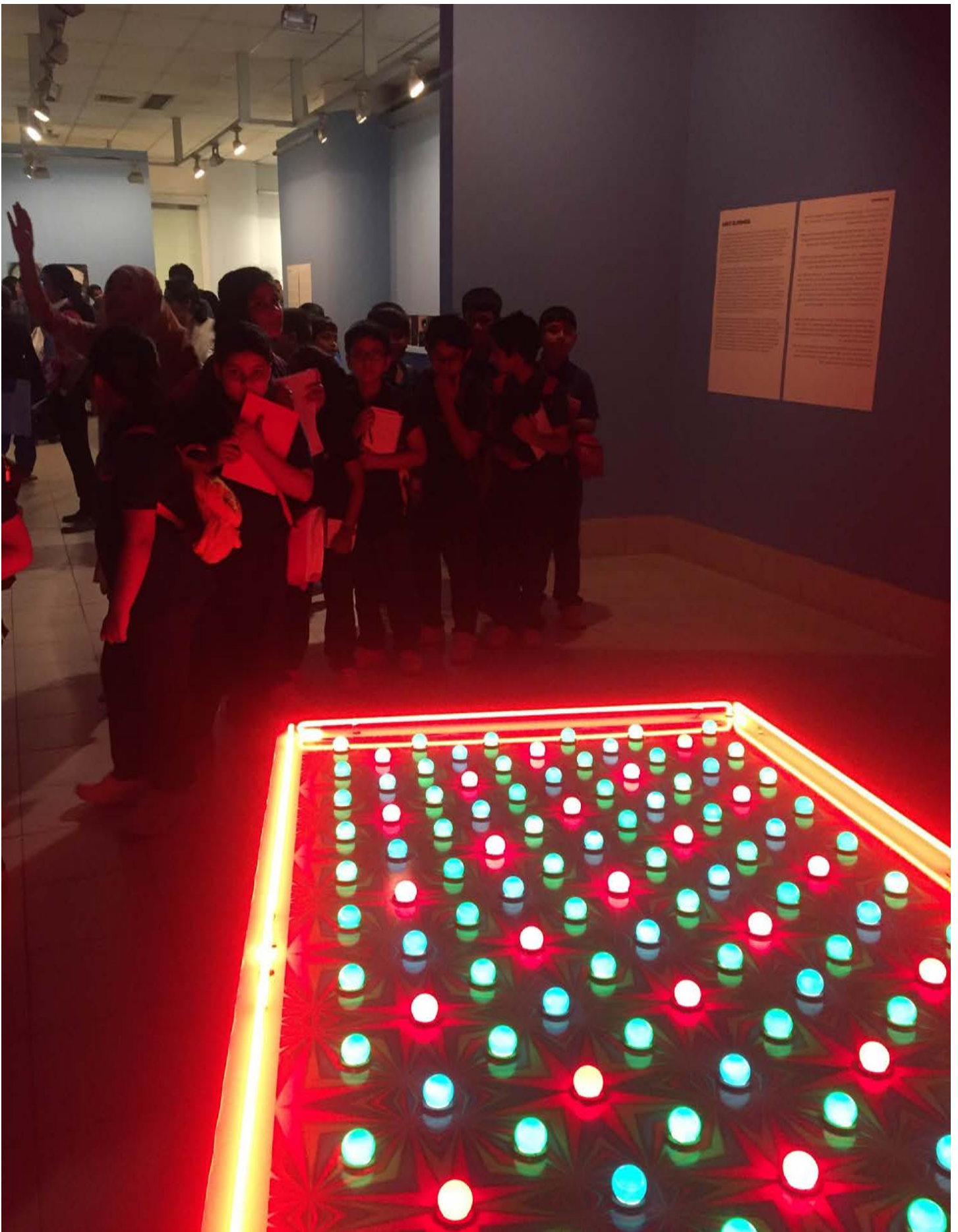
In addition to new commissions and curated group exhibitions, **DAS events** included talks, critical writing, performances, films, book launches and the Summit's first historical exhibition, **Rewind. The Samdani Art Award** finalists exhibition curated by Daniel Baumann; **The Missing One** curated by Nada Raza; **Architecture in Bangladesh** curated by Aurelién Lemonier; **The Performance Pavilion**, curated by Nikhil Chopra, Madhavi Gore and Jana Prepeluh; **Not as far as it seems**, a series of conversations and sound pieces curated by Safina Radio Project; a **Film Programme** curated by Shanay Jhaveri; as well as **Critical Writing Ensemble**, **panel discussions**, workshops, and more.



Dhaka Art Summit 2016, Student tours. Courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation Photo credit: M. Samad Choudhury



Dhaka Art Summit 2016. Courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and the Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface



Iftikhar Dadi and Elizabeth Dadi, *Magic Carpet II*, 2005-2016. Commissioned and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for the Dhaka Art Summit 2016. Courtesy of the artists, Dhaka Art Summit, Samdani Art Foundation and Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai. Photo credit: Nivriti Roddam (from The Missing One)



Solo Projects, Sandeep Mukherjee, *The Sky Remains*, 2015-2016. Commissioned and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for the Dhaka Art Summit 2016. Courtesy of the artist, Dhaka Art Summit, Samdani Art Foundation and Project 88, Mumbai. Photo credit: Sandeep Mukherjee



Rewind, installation view, works by Bagyi Aung Soe, courtesy of the Samdani Art Foundation Collection, private collection, Singapore and Bagyi Lynn Wunna collection, Yangon. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface



Talks Programme, Cross-Border Art Histories - Bangladesh and Pakistan, (left to right) Shimul Saha, Ayesha Sultana, Salima Hashmi, Farooq Sobhan and Iftikhar Dadi. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface



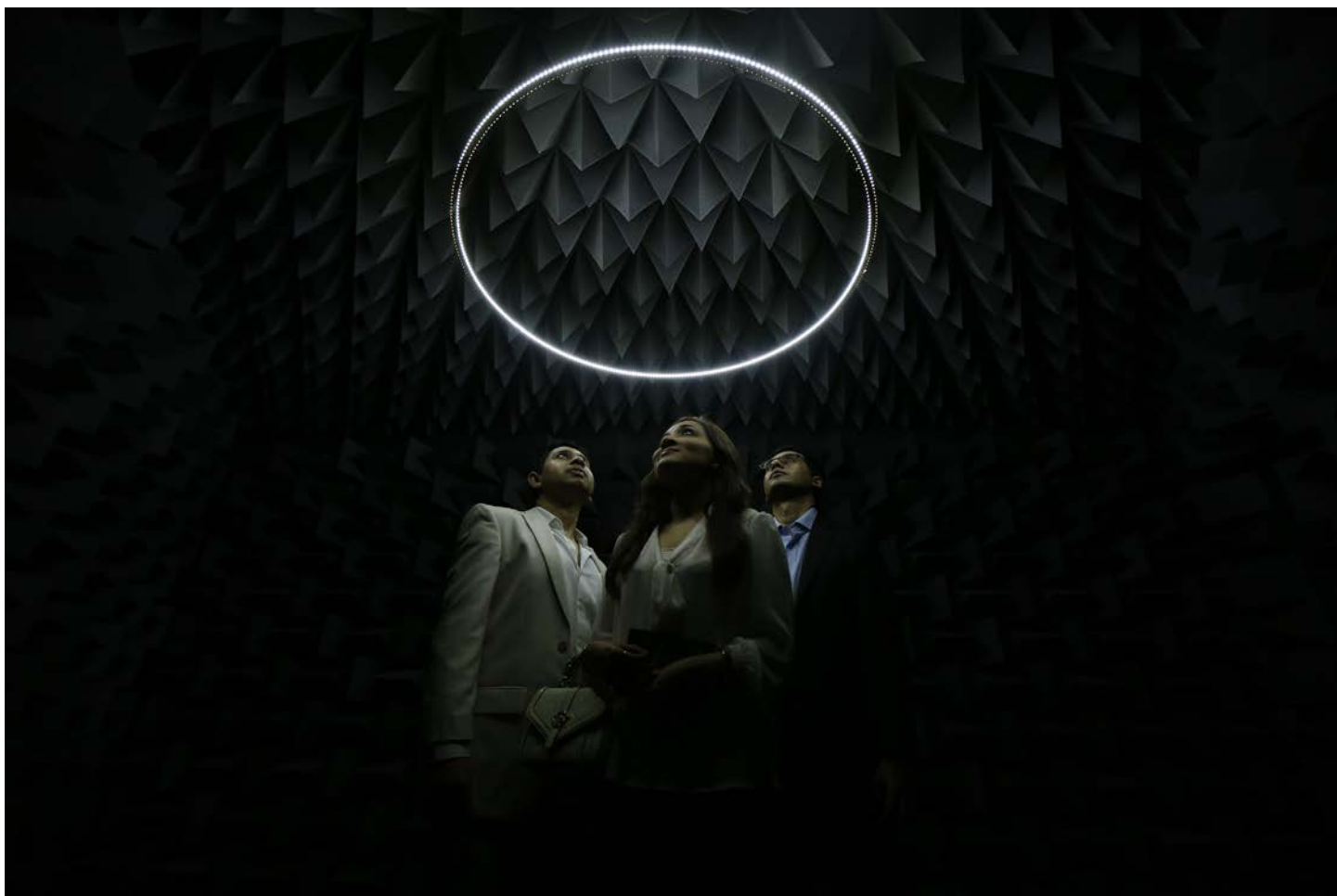
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DHAKA ART SUMMIT 2016

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

17 Solo Projects curated by Diana Campbell Betancourt:

13 new commissions and 4 works reconfigured within the Bangladeshi context celebrated pluralism and looked at the experience of becoming an individual through the fluid continuum between birth and experience, book-ended by **Lynda Benglis** and **Tino Sehgal** with **Shumon Ahmed**, **Tun Win Aung** and **Wah Nu**, **Simryn Gill**, **Waqas Khan**, **Shakuntala Kulkarni**, **Prabhavati Meppayil**, **Haroon Mirza**, **Amanullah Mojadidi**, **Sandeep Mukherjee**, **Po Po**, **Dayanita Singh**, **Ayesha Sultana**, **Christopher Kulendran Thomas**, **Munem Wasif**, and **Mustafa Zaman**.



Solo Projects, Haroon Mirza, installation view of *The National Apavilion of Then and Now*, 2011, courtesy of the artist and Lisson Gallery, London. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface



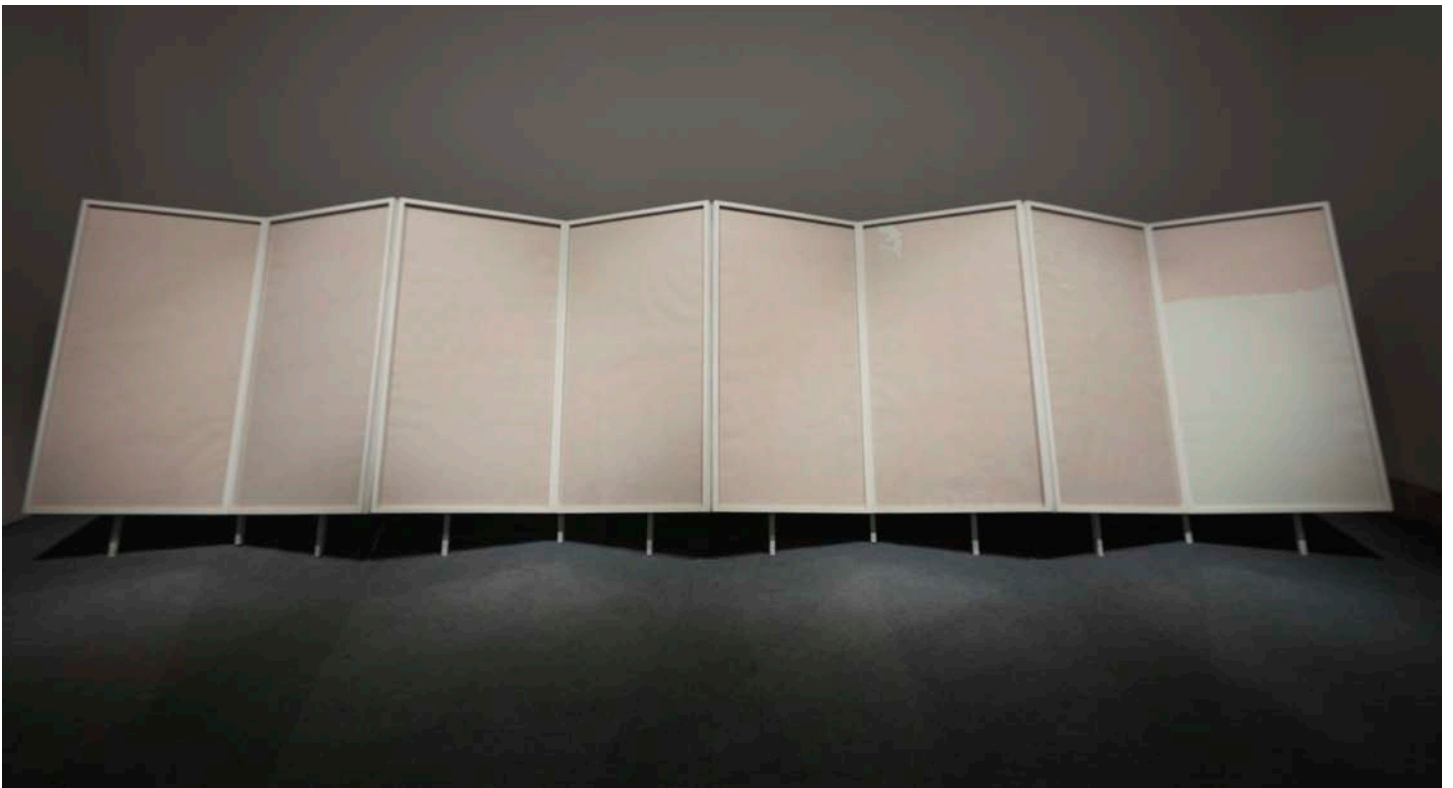
Solo Projects, Lynda Benglis, Installation view, 2015. Commissioned by the Samdani Art Foundation for Dhaka Art Summit 2016. Courtesy of the artist, and Cheim and Read, New York. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation Photo credit: Jenni Carter. Art © Lynda Benglis/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY



Solo Projects, Shakuntala Kulkarni, *Of Bodies, Armour and Cages*, 2012 - 2015. Courtesy of the artist and Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter



Solo Projects, Prabhavathi Meppayil, *dp/sixteen/part one*, 2015-2016. Commissioned and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for the Dhaka Art Summit 2016. Courtesy of the artist, Dhaka Art Summit, Samdani Art Foundation and PACE, London. Photo credit: Jenni Carter



Solo Projects, Waqas Khan, *In the Name of god*, 2015. Commissioned and produced by Samdani Art Foundation for the Dhaka Art Summit 2016. Courtesy of the artist, Samdani Art Foundation, Dhaka Art Summit and Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna. Photo credit: Jenni Carter



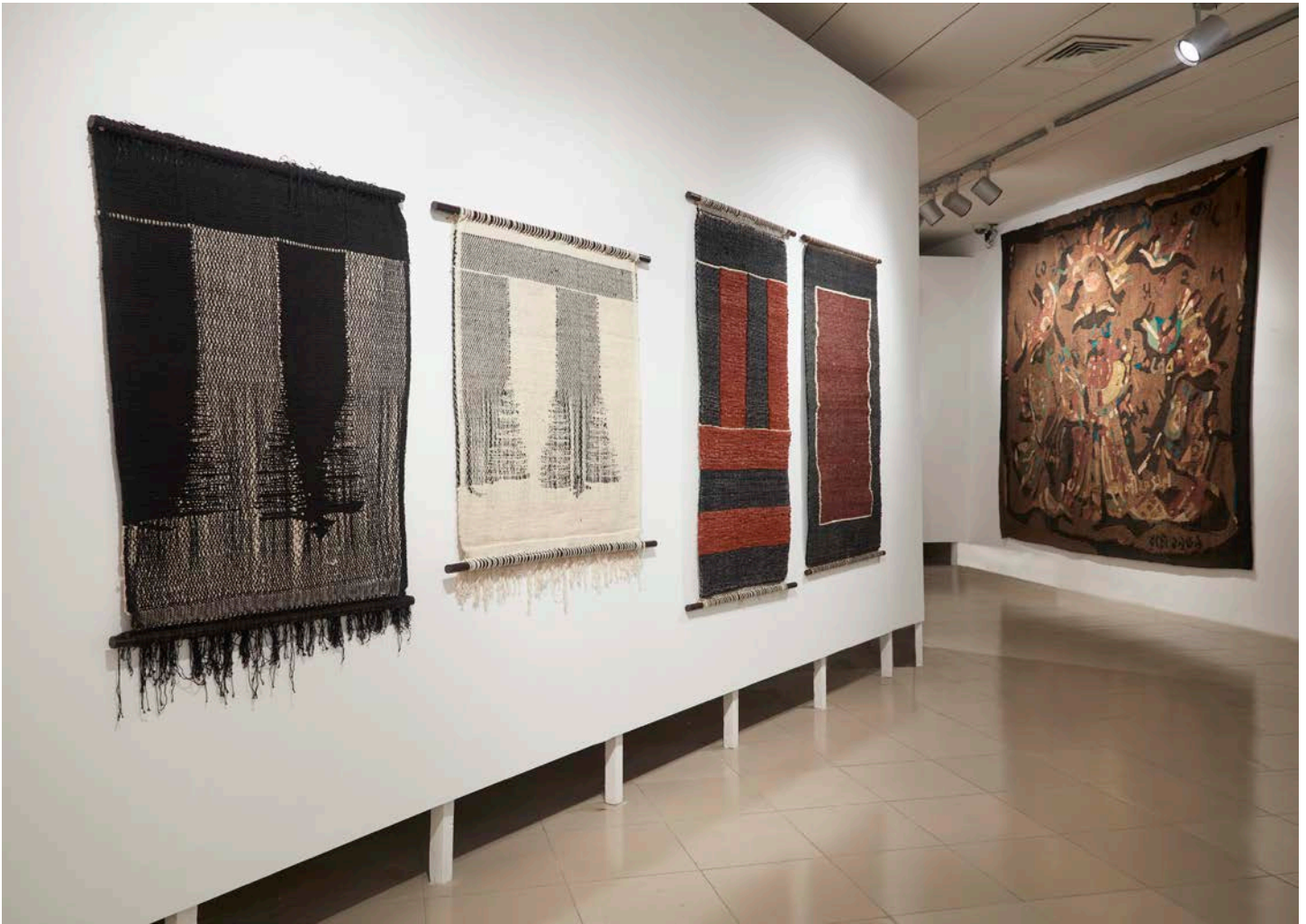
Solo Projects, Shumon Ahmed, *Land of the Free*, 2009-2016. Commissioned and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation. Courtesy of the artist, Dhaka Art Summit, Samdani Art Foundation and Project 88, Mumbai. Photo credit: Jenni Carter



Solo Projects, Sandeep Mukherjee, *The Sky Remains*, 2015-2016. Commissioned and produced by the Samdani Art Foundation for the Dhaka Art Summit 2016. Courtesy of the artist, Dhaka Art Summit, Samdani Art Foundation and Project 88, Mumbai. Photo credit: Sandeep Mukherjee

Rewind, advised by Sabih Ahmed, Amara Antilla, Diana Campbell Betancourt and Beth Citron:

Illuminating the “alternative universe offered by transnational modernism” (Ifitkhar Dadi), Rewind highlighted 12 artists active before the late 1980s, including **Rashid Choudhury**, **Monika Correa**, **Germaine Krull**, **Nalini Malini**, **Anwar Jalal Shemza**, **Arpita Singh**, **Bagyi Aung Soe**, and **Lionel Wendt**, among others. Rewind was generously supported by Amrita Jhaveri.



Rewind, installation view, works by Monika Correa (left), courtesy of the artist and Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai and Rashid Choudhury (right) courtesy of the Bangladesh National Museum collection, Dhaka. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter



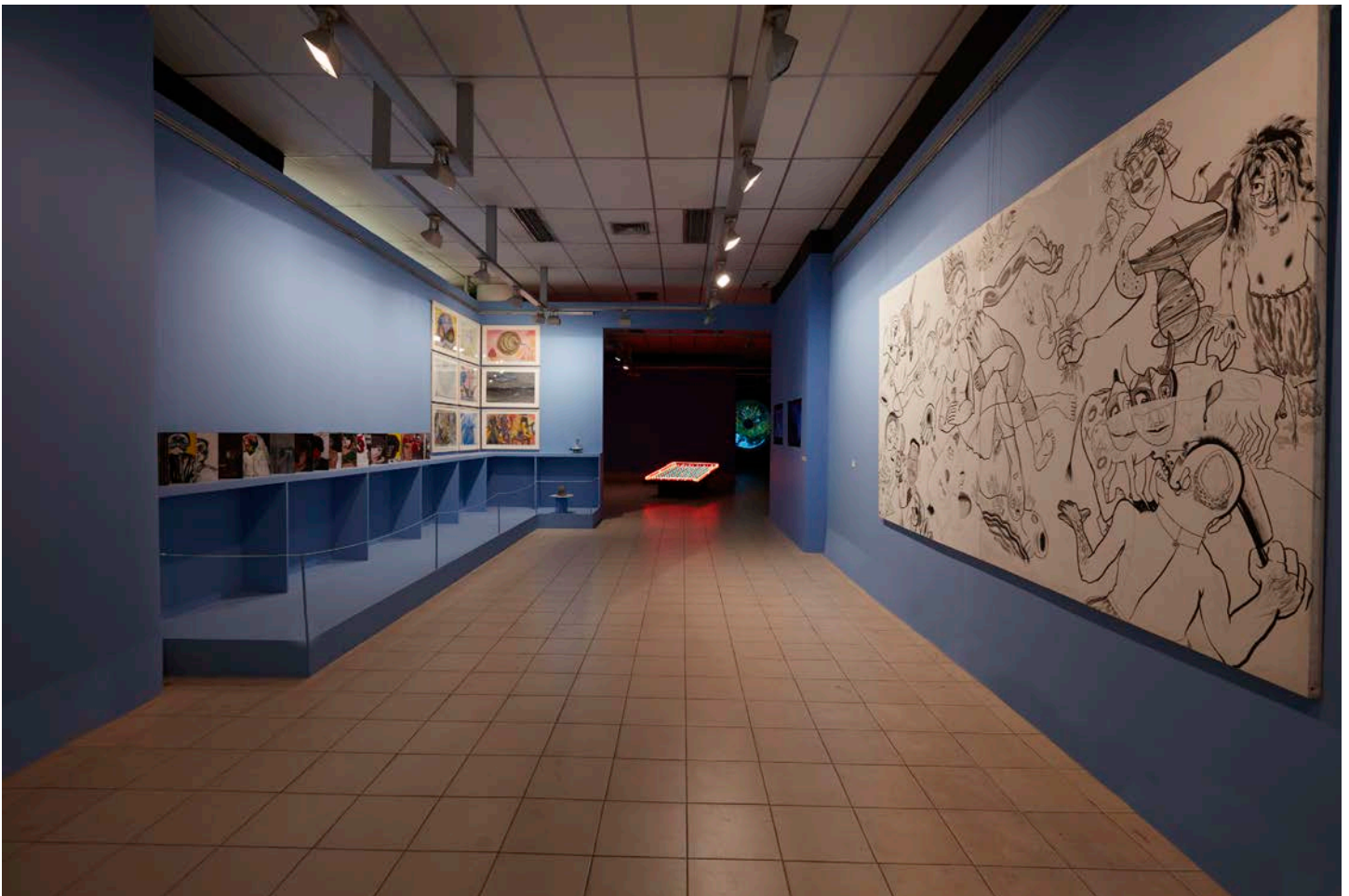
Rewind, installation view. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface



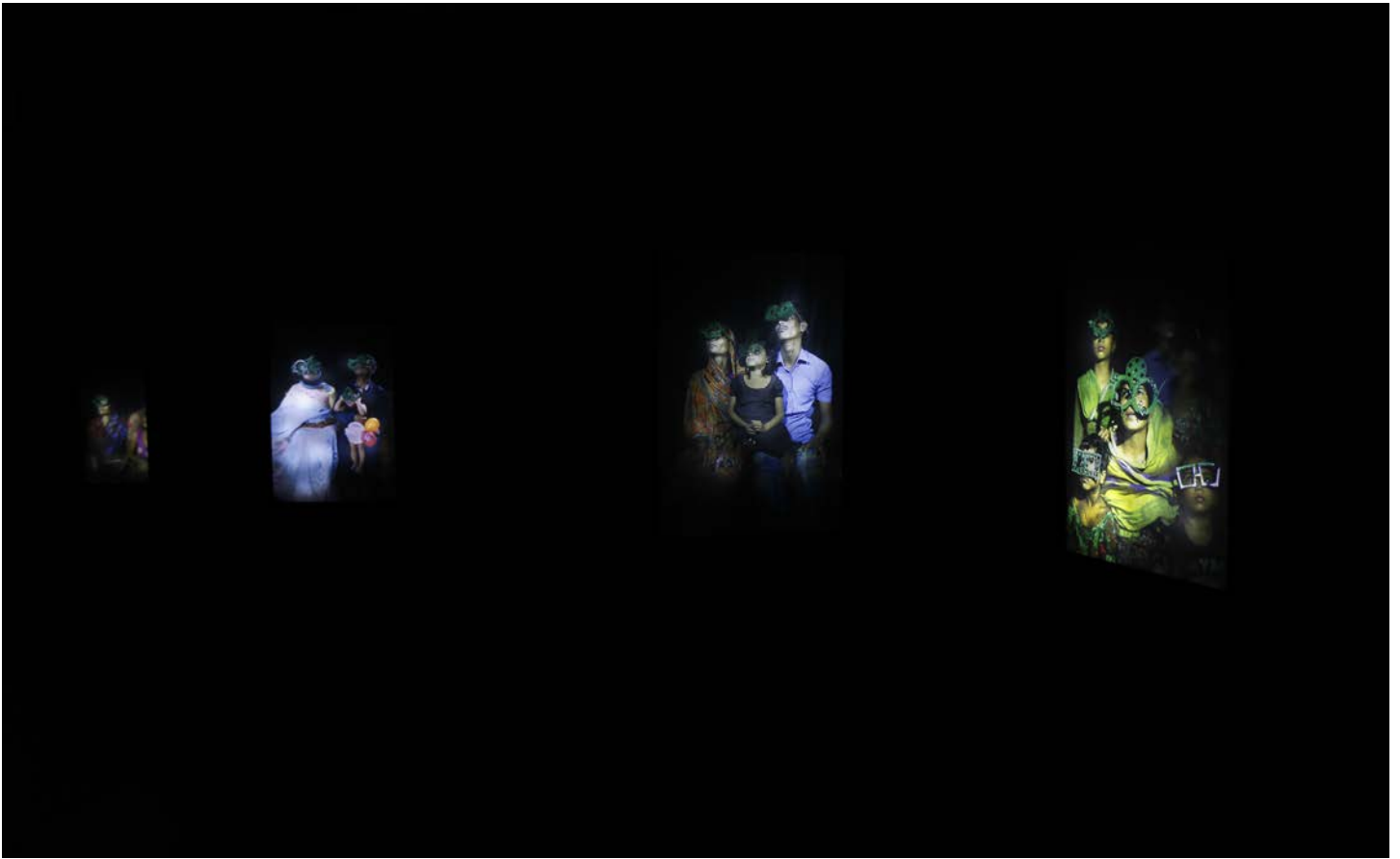
Rewind, installation view, works by Anwar Jalal Shemza, courtesy of Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai and the Estate of Anwar Jalal Shemza, Eastbourne, UK. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface

The Missing One, curated by Nada Raza, Assistant Curator, South Asia, Modern and Contemporary Art, Tate, London:

Inspired by a Bengali sci-fi story by J. C. Bose (1896), the searching or enraptured gesture of looking toward the sky became a thematic device, navigating from a celestial modernist watercolour by **Gaganendranath Tagore** to cosmological enquiry and speculative visual exploration from the turn of the 21st century, with works by **Ronni Ahmmed, David Alesworth, Shishir Bhattacharjee, Fahd Burki, Neha Choksi, Iftikhar Dadi** and **Elizabeth Dadi, Rohini Devasher, Marzia Farhana, Aamir Habib, Zihan Karim, Ali Kazim, Sanjeewa Kumara, Firoz Mahmud, Mehreen Murtaza, Saskia Pintelon, Sahej Rahal, Tejal Shah, Zoya Siddiqui** and **Janet Meaney, Himali Singh Soin, Mariam Suhail, and Hajra Waheed.**



Installation view. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter (from The Missing One)



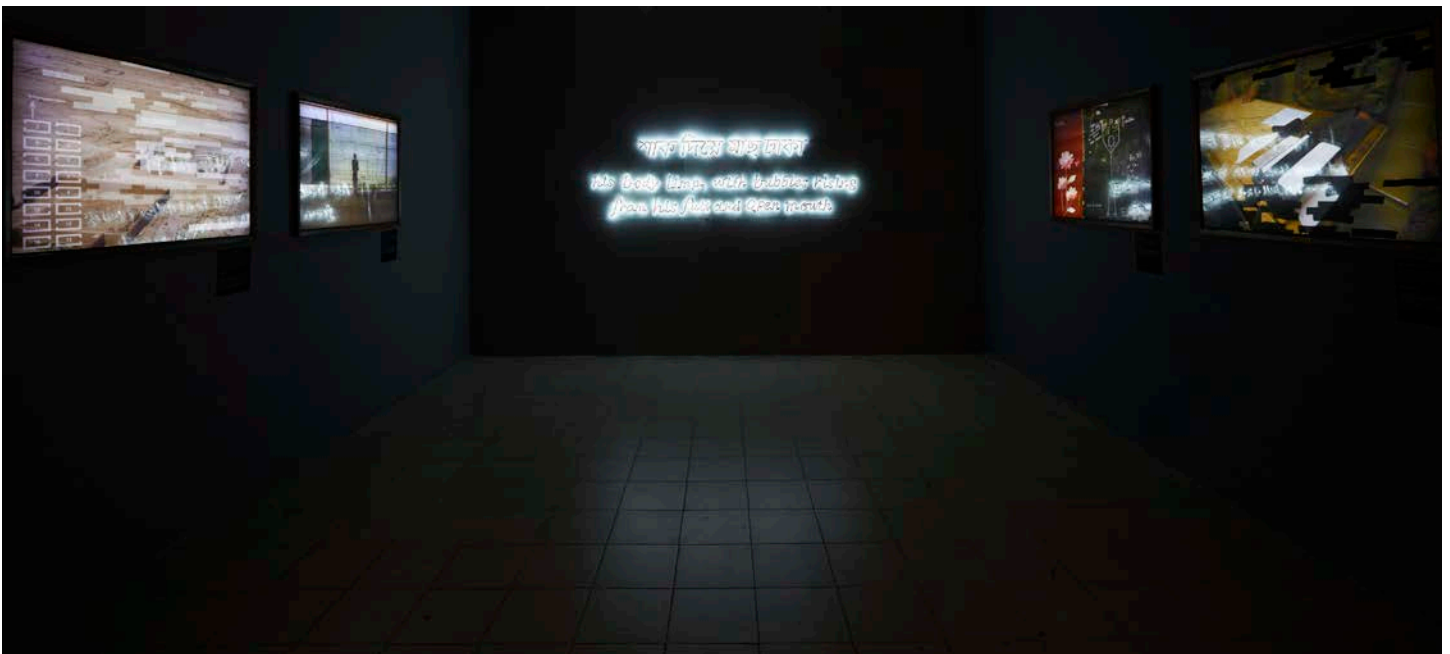
Firoz Mahmud, *Flights of the desire for castles in the air, a figment is not far that will be very near* (selection from *Soaked Dream and Future Families*), 2012 - Present. Courtesy of the artist and Exhibit320, New Delhi. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface (from *The Missing One*)



Installation view. Left to right: Sahej Rahal, *Tandav III*, 2015 (documentation of performance in 2012). Courtesy of the artist and Chatterjee and Lal, Mumbai/ Fahd Burki, *Believer*, 2012. Courtesy of the artist and Grey Noise, Dubai / Fahd Burki, *Saint*, 2012. Courtesy of the artist and Grey Noise, Dubai/ Fahd Burki, *Night Walk*, 2013. Courtesy of the artist and Grey Noise, Dubai. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter (from *The Missing One*)

Mining Warm Data, curated by Diana Campbell Betancourt:

Featuring artists from Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Tibet, Nepal, Bangladesh and their diaspora, the exhibition exposed subjective and emotional history radiating around **Mariam Ghani and Chitra Ganesh's** new chapter of the "Index of the Disappeared," produced by the Samdani Art Foundation, Yale University Law School's Schell Center for Human Rights and Creative Time Reports. Artists included **Lida Abdul, Gazi Nafis Ahmed, Pablo Bartholomew, Neha Choksi, Hasan Elahi, Hitman Gurung, S. Hanusha, Maryam Jafri, Dilara Begum Jolly, Amar Kanwar, Nge Lay, Huma Mulji, Nortse, Tenzing Rigdol** and **Menika van der Poorten**.



Mariam Ghani and Chitra Ganesh, *Black Sites I: The Seen Unseen*, 2015-16. Commissioned and produced by Creative Time Reports, the Juncture Initiative at Yale Law School and Samdani Art Foundation for the Dhaka Art Summit 2016. Courtesy of the artists, Creative Time Reports, the Juncture Initiative at Yale Law School, Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter (from Mining Warm Data)



Mining Warm Data, installation view, Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter.



Mining Warm Data, installation view, Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter.

Architecture in Bangladesh curated by Aurélien Lemonier, Curator of Architecture, Centre Pompidou, Paris:

Featuring 19 Bangladesh-based architects, the exhibition honoured “the humanistic modernity” of Muzharul Islam, key in Louis Kahn’s commission to create the masterpiece National Assembly Building in Dhaka. Featuring **Jalal Ahmed, Nahas Ahmed Khalil, Raziul Ahsan, Rafiq Azam, Kashef Mahbood Chowdhury, Bashirul Haq, Mazharul Islam, Ehzan Khan, Nurur Rahman Khan, Enamul Karim Nirjhar, Mustapha Khalid Palash, Stephane Paumier, Salauddin Ahmed Potash, Uttam Kumar Saha, Chetana Society, Marina Tabassum, Saif Ul Haque, Urbana, and Shamsul Wares.**



Architecture in Bangladesh, works by Marina Tabassum, installation view. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter



Architecture in Bangladesh, works by Stéphane Paumier, Mustapha Khalid Palash and Nurur Rahman Khan, installation view. Courtesy of the architects. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter



Architecture in Bangladesh, works by Bashirul Haq, installation view. Courtesy of the architect. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter

Film Programme Curated by Shanay Jhaveri, Assistant Curator, South Asia, Modern and Contemporary Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York:

Locating South Asian concerns within a transnational conversation, the programme explored colonial and post-colonial conditions through the lives and journeys of individuals but also the emotional narratives attached to objects, patterns and landscapes.



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



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



Performance Pavilion curated by Nikhil Chopra, Madhavi Gore and Jana Prepeluh:

Shifting Sands, Sifting Hands approached contemporary critiques of performance art within the institution and an object-orientated art world, considering everything especially the body as in a state of flux. **Ali Asgar, Sanad Kumar Biswas, Kabir Ahmed Masum Chisty, Manmeet Devgun, Sajan Mani, Yasmin Jahan Nupur, Venuri Perera, and Atish Saha**



Performance Pavilion, Yasmin Jahan Nupur, *Another Crazy Thing I can Do, Dance!*, 2016. Courtesy of the artist. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface



Performance Pavilion, Atish Saha, *Memories of my Mother's Womb*, 2016, courtesy of the artist. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Aditya Rawat

Samdani Art Award curated by Daniel Baumann, Director, Kunsthalle Zurich:

The Samdani Art Foundation again partnered with the **Delfina Foundation** to award an outstanding young Bangladeshi artist the opportunity to attend a three-month residency at the Delfina Foundation in London as part of the bi-annual Samdani Art Award. Curator **Daniel Baumann** (Director, Kunsthalle Zurich) selected 13 talented Bangladeshi artists from an applicant pool of over 300 Bangladeshi artists. This exhibition was realised in collaboration with **Pro Helvetia-Swiss Arts Council**, and Baumann mentored **Ruxmini Choudhury** and **Ayesha Sultana** who assisted with the exhibition. The jury panel for the award was comprised of **Aaron Seeto** (Curatorial Manager, Asian and Pacific Art, QAGOMA), **Cosmin Costinas** (Director, Para/Site), **Catherine David** (Deputy Director, Centre Pompidou), **Beatrix Ruf** (Director, Stedelijk Museum), and chaired by **Aaron Cezar** (Director, Delfina Foundation). The award winner, Rasel Chowdhury, was announced by **Kiran Nardar** at the opening dinner of the Dhaka Art Summit. The finalists of the Samdani Art Award were **Ashit Mitra**, **Atish Saha**, **Farzana Ahmed Urmi**, **Gazi Nafis Ahmed**, **Muhammad Rafiqul Islam Shuvo**, **Palash Battacharjee**, **Rasel Chowdhury**, **Rupam Roy**, **Salma Abedin Prithi**, **Samsul Alam Helal**, **Shimul Saha**, **Shumon Ahmed** and **Zihan Karim**.



Samdani Art Award, Rasel Chowdhury, *Railway Longings*, 2011-2015. Courtesy of the artist. / Shimul Saha, *Rebirth*, 2012. Courtesy of the artist. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and the Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter.



Samdani Art Award, Atish Saha, *Water*, 2015. Courtesy of the artist. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter



Samdani Art Award, Rafiqul Islam Shuvo, *Drawing*, 2016. Courtesy of the artist. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter





Announcement of the 2016 Samdani Art Award Winner. Rasel Chowdhury (Samdani Art Award recipient) with Kiran Nadar and Aaron Cezar. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation



Samdani Art Award winner Rasel Chowdhury with curator Daniel Baumann and other Samdani Art Award finalists. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation

Critical Writing Ensemble, curated by Katya García-Antón (Office for Contemporary Art Norway) with Diana Campbell Betancourt from a collaboration led by Chandrika Grover Ralleigh(Pro Helvetia - Swiss Arts Council); Garcia-Anton, Betancourt (Samdani Art Foundation) and Bhavna Kakar (Take on Art):

Meeting the need to potentiate writing across histories and working from the context of South Asia, the project gathered writers, critics, poets, philosophers and curators including **Nabil Ahmed, Belinder Dhanoa, Anshuman Das Gupta, Rosalyn D’Mello, Mariam Ghani, Nida Ghouse, Salima Hashmi, Geeta Kapur, Yin Ker, Quinn Latimer, Maria Lind, Chus Martínez, Rosa Martínez, Aunohita Mójumdar, Victoria Noorthoorn, Paul B. Preciado, Chantal Pontbriand, Sharmini Pereira, Filipa Ramos, Dorothee Richter, Shukla Sawant, Devika Singh, Mike Sperlinger** and **Mustafa Zaman**. Critical Writing Ensemble-II followed a prelude in India, Critical Writing Ensemble-I that occurred in December 2015 in an official collaboration with MSU Baroda, convened by Bhavna Kakar.



Critical Writing Ensemble. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface

Maria Lind, Artistic Director, Gwanju Biennale 2016, peer in CWE said:

..I almost gave up reading art writing. I have come to reconsider this through the summit, thanks to the encounters of the many colleagues in the room, who have been speaking about art writing, who have been reading their writing (during Critical Writing Ensemble presentation at DAS 2016)



Critical Writing Ensemble, Geeta Kapur. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface



Panel Discussions:

With over 50 speakers including **Suhanya Raffel, Amar Kanwar, Omar Kholeif, Dayanita Singh, Beatrix Ruf, Hans Ulrich Obrist, Sharmini Pereira, Salima Hashmi** and **Vivan Sundaram** the discussions will consider institutional collecting of art and archives from South Asia in a non-Western context, art initiatives on the periphery, the opportunities and landmines of curating regional group exhibitions, legacy building and artists' estates, and the rich history of exchange between Bangladesh and Pakistan.



Talks Programme, Art Initiatives off the Centre, Sharmini Pereira, Yaminay Chaudhury (Tentative Collective), Sonal Jain (Desire Machine Collective), Amar Kanwar, Ritu Sarin, Tenzing Sonam, Shawon Akand (Crack), Aung Ko and Shaela Sharmin (Jog). Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface



Talks Programme. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface

Dhaka Art Summit - List of Speakers

Mainul Abedin (Artist and son of Zainul Abedin, Dhaka)
Nabil Ahmed (Artist and Writer, London)
Sabih Ahmed (Senior Researcher, Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong)
Shawon Akand (Artist, Researcher and Curator, Founder of CRACK, Kushtia)
Amara Antilla (Assistant Curator, Guggenheim, New York)
Kazi Khaled Ashraaf (Architecture Critic, Dhaka)
Pablo Bartholomew (Artist, New Delhi)
Desire Machine Collective (Artists, Guwahati)
Tentative Collective (Artists, Karachi)
Kashef Chowdhury (Architect, Dhaka)
Shehzad Chowdhury (Artist and founder of Longitude Latitude, Dhaka)
Beth Citron (Curator, Modern and Contemporary Art, Rubin Museum, New York)
Cosmin Costinas (Executive Director/Curator of Para Site, Hong Kong)
Iftikhar Dadi (Artist and Art Historian, Cornell University, New York)
Anshuman Das Gupta (Art Historian, Critic and Curator, Kalabhavan, Santiniketan)
Catherine David (Deputy Director, Centre Pompidou, Paris)
Farrokh Derakhshani (Director, Aga Khan Award for Architecture, Geneva)
Belinder Dhanoa (Writer and artist, Ambedkar University, New Delhi)
Rosalyn D'Mello (Writer, New Delhi)
Kate Fowle (Chief Curator, Garage Museum of Contemporary Art in Moscow and Director-at-large at Independent Curators International, New York)
Mariam Ghani (Writer and Artist, New York)
Nida Ghouse (Director and Curator, Mumbai Art Room)
Salima Hashmi (Visual Artist, Writer, and Founding Dean of Beaconhouse National University, Lahore)
Camp.Hub (Artists, Nepal)
Rina Igarshi (Curator, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum)
Amrita Jhaveri (Art Collector and Gallerist, London and Mumbai)
Shanay Jhaveri (Writer and Curator, London and Mumbai)
Amar Kanwar (Artist, New Delhi)
Geeta Kapur (Writer, Curator and Art Historian, New Delhi)
Roobina Karode (Director and Chief Curator, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi)
Yin Ker (Art Historian, NTU Singapore)
Nurur Rahman Khan (Architect, Dhaka)
Omar Kholeif (Manilow Senior Curator at Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago)
Aung Ko (Artist, Yangon)
Quinn Latimer (Writer, Head of Publications, Documenta 14, Athens)
Maria Lind (Artistic Director, 2016 Gwangju Biennale, Stockholm)
Chus Martinez (Writer, FHNW Academy of Arts and Design, Basel, Switzerland)
Rosa Martinez (Writer and Curator, Barcelona)
Kerstin Meincke (Researcher and Curator, Museum Folkwang in Essen)
Amanullah Mojadidi (Artist, Paris)
Aunohita Mojumdar (Associate Editor, Himal Southasian, Kathmandu)
Hammad Nasar (Head of Research and Programmes, Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong)
Victoria Noorthoorn (Director, Museo de Arte Moderno, Buenos Aires)
Hans Ulrich Obrist (Co-Director of Exhibitions and Programmes and Director of International Projects, Serpentine Galleries, London)
Sharmini Pereira (Co-Founder and Director of the Sri Lanka Archive of Contemporary Art, Architecture & Design, Jaffna)
Chantal Pontbriand (Writer and Curator, CEO, Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto)
Paul Preciado (Curator of Public Programmes, Documenta 14, Barcelona)
Sheikha Hoor al Qasimi (Chairperson, Sharjah Art Foundation)
Suhanya Raffell (Deputy Director and Director of Collections, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney)
Dorothee Richter (Curator, Director in Curating, Zurich University of the Arts, Publisher, OnCurating.org, Zurich)
Beatrix Ruf (Director, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam)
Shimul Saha (Artist, Dhaka)
Ritu Sarin & Tenzing Sonam (Artists and Founders of Dharamshala International Film Festival)
Shukla Sawant (Writer and artist, School of Arts and Aesthetics, JNU, New Delhi)
Shaela Sharmin (Artist and Member of JOG, Chittagong)
Dayanita Singh (Artist, New Delhi)
Devika Singh (Writer, Research Fellow, University of Cambridge, London)
Farooq Sobhan (President and CEO of the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute, Dhaka)
Mike Sperlinger (Writer and Professor, Kunstakademi, Oslo)
Mari Spirito (Founder, Protocinema, Istanbul)
Ayesha Sultana (Artist, Dhaka)
Vivan Sundaram (Artist, New Delhi)
Joanna Warsza (Curator, Warsaw and Berlin)
Mustafa Zaman (Writer and Artist, Editor in Chief of Depart, Dhaka)
John Zarobell (Assistant Professor and Undergraduate Director of International Studies, University of San Francisco)

আত্ম-অন্বেষণ ; Soul Searching, curated by Md. Muniruzzaman:

আত্ম-অন্বেষণ; Soul Searching looks into the roots of Bangladeshi Art which started from a modern era influenced by Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin, S.M Sultan, Qamrul Hassan and Safiuddin Ahmed. To discover their own identity within a new nation, they eventually relied on the cultural and environmental heritage of Bangladesh. According to Zainul Abedin, the river was his muse, SM Sultan's search for his artistic self took him to the remote village of Narail. Qamrul Hassan discovered himself as a Potua (folk painter) and Shafiuddin Ahmed's modern prints reflected the mixture of folk and urban approaches of abstracted fishermen's landscapes. 52 Bangladeshi artists considered the last generation's approach, to discover themselves through artistic journeys in the contemporary and increasingly urbanised context of Bangladesh. The artists participating were: **Murtaza Bashir, Syed Jahangir, Samarjit Roy Chowdhury, Hashem Khan, Rafiqun Nabi, Monirul Islam, Shahid Kabir, Kalidas Karmakar, Mahmudul Haque, Abul Barq Alvi, Monsur Ul Karim, Chandra Shekhar Dey, Shahabuddin Ahmed, Abdus Shakoor Shah, Biren Shome, Jamal Ahmed, Ranjit Das, Mohammad Eunos, Ahmed Shamsuddoha, Sheikh Afzal, Nisar Hossain, Tarun Ghosh, K.M.A Quyyum, Dhali Al Mamun, Wakilur Rahman, Mohammad Iqbal, Ahmed Nazir, Anisuzzaman, Kazi Salauddin Ahmed, Biswajit Goswami, Hasan Mahmood, Khalid Mahmud Mithu, Rashid Amin, Golam Faruque Bebul, Naima Haque, Farida Zaman, Nazlee Laila Mansur, Rokeya Sultana, Nasreen Begum, Kanak Chanpa Chakma, Maksuda Iqbal Nipa, Gulshan Hossain, Atia Islam Anne, Faraha Jeba, Najma Akhter, Hamiduzzaman Khan, Imran Hossain Piplu, Tejosh Halder Josh, Saidul Haque Juis, Shyamal Sarkar, Dilruba Latif Rosy and Mustafizul Haque.**



Soul Searching, installation view. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface



Soul Searching, installation view. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface



Soul Searching, installation view. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface

Children's Workshops with VAST Bhutan:

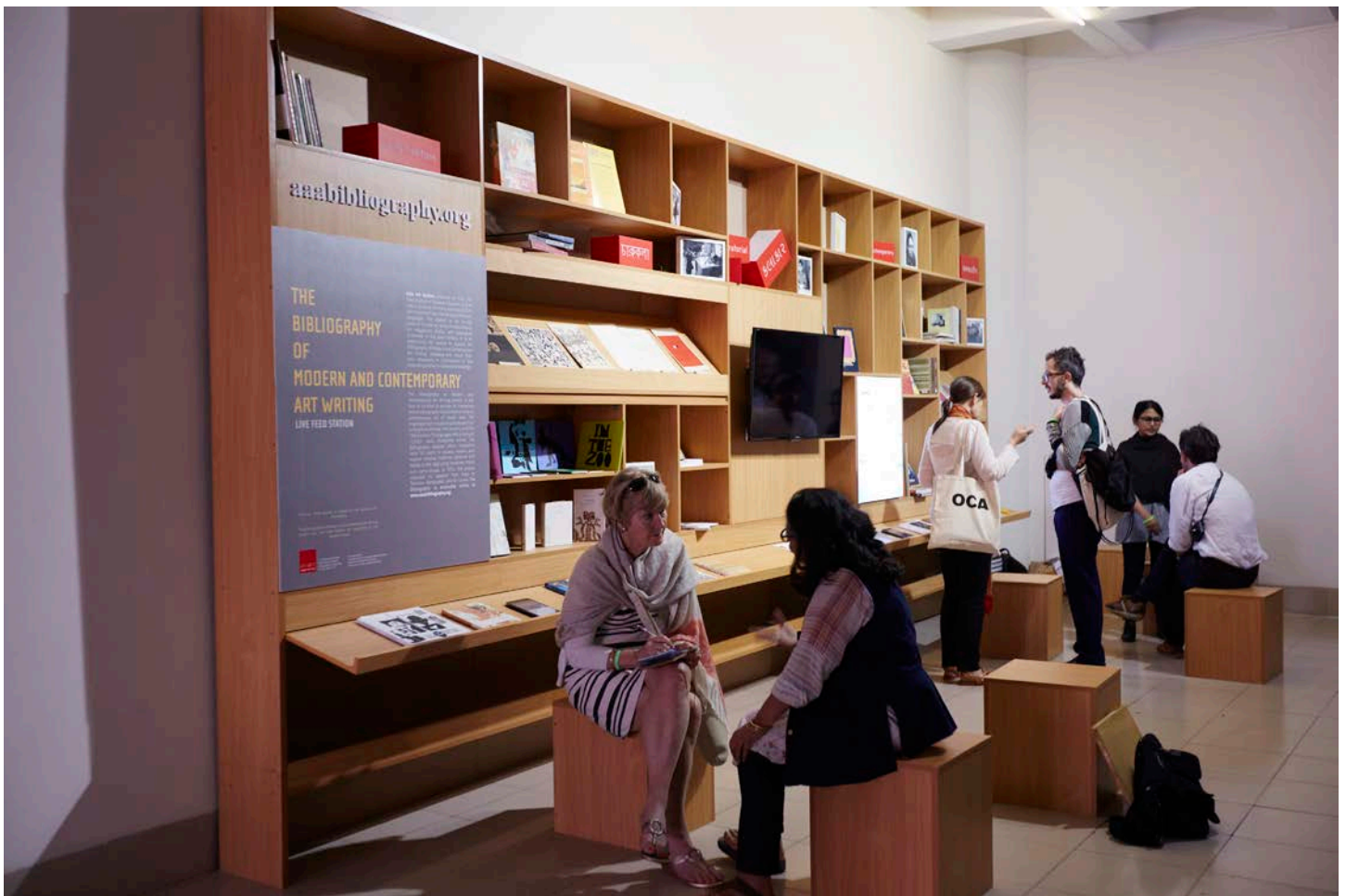
VAST Bhutan hosted a children's workshop for 2 days of the summit, working together with the youth of Dhaka to make an immersive installation from local waste products. These creative workshops engaged a new generation with the important topic of Climate Change, connecting it specifically to aquatic life and fish, a dietary staple that is central to Bengali identity. The workshops were conducted all day on the 7th and 8th of February, 2016.



©Vast Bhutan

Asia Art Archive:

In its ongoing effort to map and present the many histories of 20th-century art writing in the different languages of South Asia, Asia Art Archive presented its first Live Feed Station at DAS 2016. The Live Feed Station was an on-site junction for viewing an array of some of the most interesting publications, art magazines, books and catalogues that have been published in the past century, and also an opportunity for visitors to explore the database and bring their own references to contribute to this expanding platform of shared knowledge. The Live Feed Station was part of Asia Art Archive's ongoing Bibliography of Modern and Contemporary Art Writing project, hosted by the Samdani Art Foundation at the Dhaka Art Summit.



Asia Art Archive, Live Feed Station. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Jenni Carter

Safina Radio Project

Safina Radio Projects are itinerant online broadcasting platforms, each edition acting as a roving stage for conversation and performance, working alongside contemporary art events.

The project adopts radio as a format for exploring subjects and concepts that relate to the aesthetic, social, cultural and political. The project space is one for binding different realities and experiences – with participants and listeners prompted by the site, context and its curatorial pretexts. Content varies with each iteration, combining travelogues (conversations), performative pieces and audio projects aimed at interrogating artistic practices, building on a spectrum of artists whose work draws from a variety of social and political contexts. Through a multiplicity of access points, Safina Radio Projects intend to broaden conversations and widen interactions, from playful through to more critical discourse.

The first edition of Safina Radio Project took place during the opening of the 56th Venice Biennale, and the second edition took place in partnership with the Dhaka Art Summit – Safina Radio Project was the official broadcasting platform for the Dhaka Art Summit 2016.

Director, Anabelle de Gersigny

Commissioned by Alserkal Avenue

Founding partners: Anabelle de Gersigny and Alserkal Avenue

To listen to the conversations captured at the Summit please visit:

https://www.mixcloud.com/Safina_Radio_Project/



(left to right) Monica Narula and Maria Balshaw, Safina Radio Project, Director, Anabelle de Gersigny, Commissioned by Alserkal Avenue



(left to right) Daniel Baumann, Diana Campbell Betancourt and Beatrix Ruf. Safina Radio Project. Director, Anabelle de Gersigny. Commissioned by Alserkal Avenue



Supplementary Programme

A number of book and publication launches, institutional presentations and artists talks were also hosted over the Summit in the VIP Lounge, across the Shilpakala Academy Arts building and throughout Dhaka city.

These included:

Anwar Jalal Shemza book launch by Iftikhar Dadi

Chandigarh is in India & Western Artists in India book launch by Shanay Jhaveri

Harvard South Asia Institute presentation

Aurélien Lemonier, Architecture in Bangladesh, tour

Amara Antilla, Rewind tour

Nada Raza, The Missing One tour

Daniel Baumann, Samdani Art Award tour

Kerstin Meincke, Germaine Krull in Asia lecture

Private Tour of Louis Kahn Parliament Building, Dhaka City

British Council Poetry Trail

Documenta 14 Reading of *South*

Take on Art Launch

Arpita Singh book launch

Architectural highlights of Dhaka tour, Dhaka City

Presentation by Shakuntala Kulkarni in association with the World Bank, WEvolve

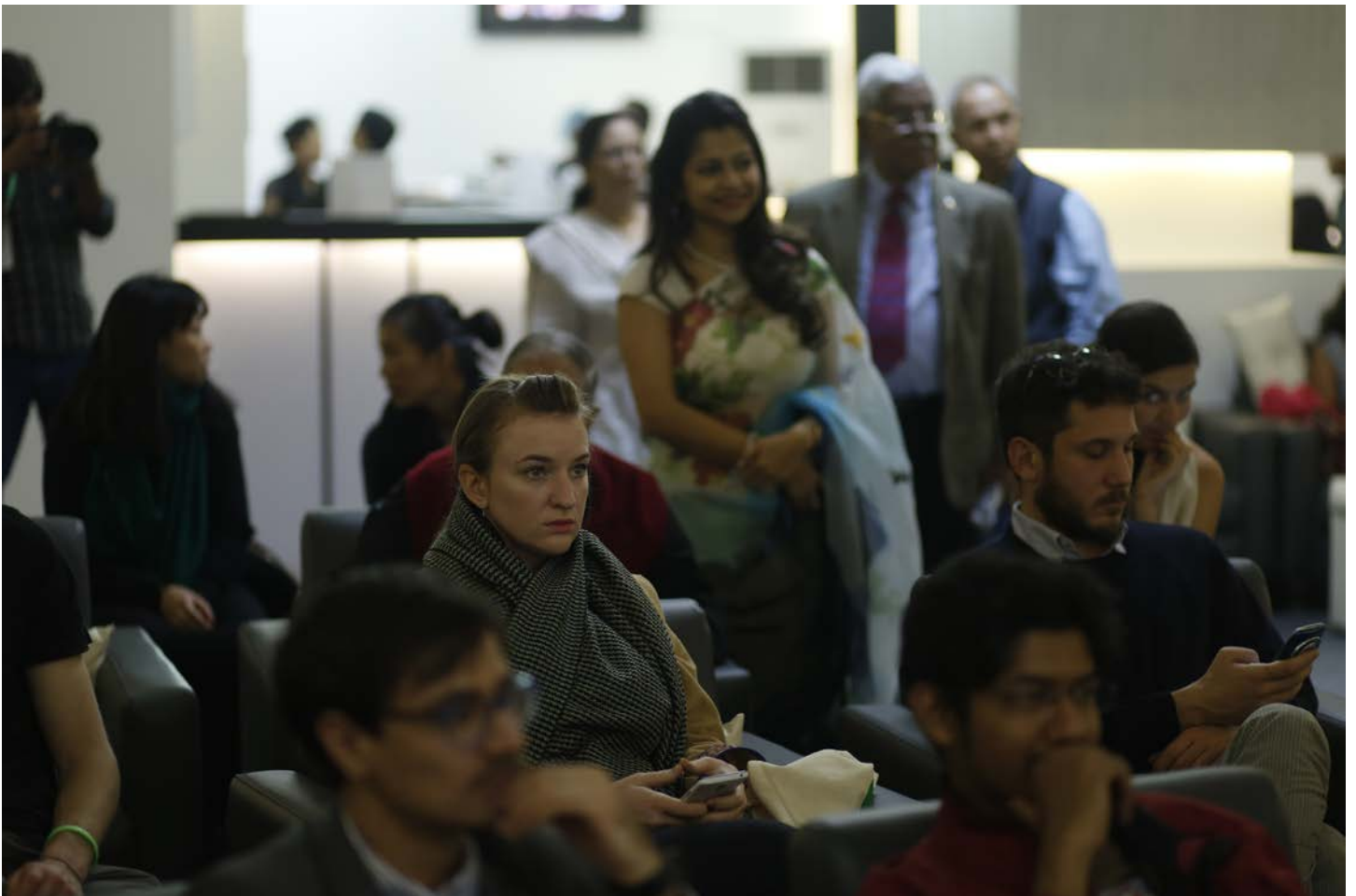
Vasudeo Gaitonde book launch



Take on Art Launch. Hans Ulrich Obrist and Davanita Singh. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface



Artist as Activist: Presentation by Shakuntala Kulkarni in association with the World Bank. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface



Audience. Photo courtesy of the Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation. Photo credit: Noor Photoface

Friday, February 5th 2016

10am - 9pm (daily timings): Dhaka Art Summit Opens at *Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy*

10am - 9pm (all day): Shifting Sands, Sifting Hands, Performance Pavilion curated by Nikhil Chopra, Madhavi Gore, and Jana Prepeluh, *2nd floor*

12pm - 3pm: Film Programme curated by Shanay Jhaveri, *3rd floor auditorium, (see page 8)*
Cluster: III, VII, IX

12:30pm - 1:30pm: Anwar Jalal Shemza book launch, *VIP Lounge*

1:30pm - 2:30pm: Chandigarh is in India and Western Artists in India Book Launch, *VIP Lounge*

2:30pm - 3:30pm: Harvard South Asia Institute presentation, *VIP Lounge*

3:30pm - 4:30pm: Cross - Border Art Histories - Bangladesh and Pakistan, panel discussion, *3rd floor auditorium*

5pm - 6pm: Art Initiatives off the Centre, panel discussion, *3rd floor auditorium*

7pm - 9pm: Film Programme curated by Shanay Jhaveri, *3rd floor auditorium, (see page 8)*
Cluster: II

Saturday, February 6th 2016

* **9:30am:** Private Tour of Louis Kahn Parliament Building (pre-registration to vip@dhakaartsummit.org essential by January 10th as space is limited and government clearance is required)

10am - 9pm (daily timings): Dhaka Art Summit Opens at *Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy*

10am - 9pm (all day): Shifting Sands, Sifting Hands, Performance Pavilion curated by Nikhil Chopra, Madhavi Gore, and Jana Prepeluh, *2nd floor*

10am - 1:30pm: Film Programme curated by Shanay Jhaveri, *3rd floor auditorium (see page 8)*
Cluster: IV, I, VI

11:30am - 12:30pm: Protecting the Past and Building the Future: Legacy and Estate Building in South Asia, *VIP Lounge*

12:30pm - 1:30pm: Documenta 14 Reading of South, *VIP Lounge*

1:30pm - 2pm: Launch of TAKE on Art Magazine Photography - The Dematerialising Arc, *VIP Lounge*

2:30pm - 4:00pm: Collecting South Asian Art in a Non-Western Institutional Context, panel discussion, *3rd floor auditorium*

3:30pm - 4:30pm: Can Culture Counter, panel discussion, *VIP Lounge*

4:30pm - 6:00pm: Navigating the Uneven Terrain of Regional Group Shows: A Field Guide, panel discussion, *3rd floor auditorium*

6pm - 6:30pm: Arpita Singh book launch , *VIP Lounge*

6pm - 9pm: Film Programme curated by Shanay Jhaveri, *3rd floor auditorium (see page 8)*

***9:30am:** Architectural highlights of Dhaka tour - pre-registration a must at vip@dhakaartsummit.org. Buses will be organised for guests. This is on first come first served basis and space is limited.

10am - 9pm: Dhaka Art Summit Opens at *Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy*

10am-9pm (all day): Children's Workshops with VAST Bhutan

10am - 9pm (all day): Shifting Sands, Sifting Hands, Performance Pavilion curated by Nikhil Chopra, Madhavi Gore, and Jana Prepeluh, *2nd floor*

10am - 4pm: Film Programme curated by Shanay Jhaveri, *3rd floor auditorium (see page 8)*,
Cluster: II, V, VII, III, VIII

10am - 12pm: Critical Writing Ensemble Presentations, the Political Unconsciousness of Art Writing, *VIP Lounge*

12:30pm - 1:30pm: Artist as Activist: Presentation by Shakuntala Kulkarni in association with the World Bank, *VIP Lounge*

2:30pm - 5pm: Critical Writing Ensemble Presentations, The Political Unconsciousness of Art Writing, *VIP Lounge*

4:30pm - 5:30pm: Bangladeshi Architecture Panel, *3rd floor auditorium*

5:30pm - 6:30pm: Vasudeo Gaitonde book launch, *VIP Lounge*

5:30pm - 9pm: Film Programme curated by Shanay Jhaveri, *3rd floor auditorium (see page 8)*
Cluster: VI, IX, IV

Monday, February 8th 2016

10am - 9pm: Dhaka Art Summit Opens at *Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy*

10am-5pm: Shifting Sands, Sifting Hands, Performance Pavilion curated by Nikhil Chopra, Madhavi Gore, and Jana Prepeluh, *2nd floor*

10am-5pm: Children's Workshops with VAST Bhutan

10am-5pm: Guided Tours for Children

10am-9pm: Film Programme curated by Shanay Jhaveri, *3rd floor auditorium (see page 8)*
Full Programme

10:30am - 4pm: Critical Writing Ensemble Presentations, Entangling and Disentangling Printed Matter, *VIP Lounge*

DHAKA ART SUMMIT 2016 EXHIBITION GUIDE



To download the Dhaka Art Summit 2016 Exhibition Guide, please use the link below:
<http://dhakaartsummit.org/assets/Uploads/DhakaArtSummit2016-ExhibitionGuide.pdf>

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Critical Writing Ensemble, DAS 2016, Day 1

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Please visit our Youtube page using the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcztQ88t9C6wqec-9FhTCBw>

Visit our Youtube channel and find a number of videos from the Dhaka Art Summit, 2016.

Critical Writing Ensemble:

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 1 with Anshuman Das Gupta
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ZW7yMBdxaM

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 1 with Yin Ker
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqrQoYxzWmQ>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 1 with Shukla Sawant
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uPrAD4Uwtww>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 1 with Filipa Ramos
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eiqL84SMddo>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 1 with Chus Martinez
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUuynzkj8GY>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 1 - Discussion part 1
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpqQhzVVeCw>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 1 - Discussion part 2
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17h8ClajDJA>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 2 with Belinder Dhanoa
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nASno2p8rmc>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 2 with Quinn Latimer
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9rYUKnmWXw>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 2 with Rosalyn D'Mello
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqOaO9jIQVM>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 2 with Salima Hashmi
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QahKVcuHff4>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 2 with Chantal Pontbriand
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EM4_BsTH7lc

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 3 with Geeta Kapur
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_aOUkUDYC3o

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 3 with Mariam Ghani
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tK7ouFDOruo>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 3 with Nabil Ahmed
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlO49pUC4ql>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 3 with Maria Lind
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwBJQ4EaXkc>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 3 with Övül Durmusoglu
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rH9_W6DkldA

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 3 with Mike Sperlinger
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZeOeieA3C4>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 4 with Mustafa Zaman
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rAMy8rHPWos>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 4 with Aunohita Majumdar
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KFt3vSZ2xNI>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 4 with Devika Singh
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hHYmbNYF668>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 4 with Dorothee Richter
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8C6VF-Yyfuk>

- Critical Writing Ensemble, Session 4 with Sharmini Pereira
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4d8E86s67jY>

Talks Programme:

- Talks Programme, Discussion Panel 1: Cross-Border Art Histories- Bangladesh and Pakistan
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_PQFGjiJFY

- Talks Programme, Discussion Panel 2: Art Initiatives off the Centre
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrOb5XApaul>

- Talks Programme, Discussion Panel 3: Protecting the Past and Building the Future
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PRCnpY4WJal>

Architecture in Bangladesh:

- Architecture in Bangladesh - The Legacy of Muzharul Islam
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqCKzX4aCUo>

- Architecture in Bangladesh - Louis Kahn
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8NtwO4hKNo>

- Architecture in Bangladesh - The Legacy of Muzharul Islam, discussion with Samsul Wares and Nurur Rahman Khan
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdsOMoUcHlk>

- Architecture in Bangladesh - Interview with Bashirul Haq
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N5W5ZNINhpc>

- Architecture in Bangladesh - Interview with Samsul Wares and Salauddin Ahmed Potash
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmVZ4wkQcA4>

- Architecture in Bangladesh - Interview with Saif UI Haque and Nahas Khalil
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUhWFCiwfNY>

- Architecture in Bangladesh - Chetena Society - In discussion with Saif UI Haque
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtEA53OOcNE>

- Architecture in Bangladesh - Interview with Ehsan Khan, Rafiq Azam and Kashef Chowdhury
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ogk2smR_gtE

- Architecture in Bangladesh - Interview with Mustapha Khalid, Nurur Rahman and Marina Tabassum
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gy_YZhyia74

Dhaka Art Summit 2016, The Missing One:

- The Missing One, curated by Nada Raza - Interview with Zihan Karim
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkIKUIOTz6g>

Press Videos:

- The 3rd edition of the Dhaka Art Summit, 2016 - Bloomberg TV
<http://youtu.be/xLSyKMPm1VQ>

VISITOR COMMENTS

Frances Morris - Director of Tate Modern, London, UK

The Dhaka Summit has rapidly become an important focus for artists from South Asia and beyond and this year is attracting widespread International attention. The Samdani Foundation have done an amazing job in combining new research, artistic production and creative collaboration. They deserve huge congratulations. I am personally looking forward to making discoveries and encountering new perspectives in Dhaka. It's a few years since my last visit so I am excited about what has taken place since my last visit. At Tate we now have a new research centre dedicated to art from Asia - with funding from the Andrew Mellon Foundations - so we are especially keen to continue discussions and exchanges with artists and colleagues in the region. We hope that our collective understanding of the complex histories of modernism can develop through greater dialogue and that this regional focus on previously overlooked practices will continue to bring great artistic voices to light. Its wonderful that my colleague Nada Raza has been able to contribute to this year's summit as a curator.

Beatrix Ruf - Director, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

The Dhaka Art Summit is an exciting event for Dhaka and the global art community, and a real game changer for the South Asian art world. The Samdani Art Foundation together with Diana Campbell Betancourt have in a very short time established a format for meetings, dialogues, and high profile exhibitions which is open for experiment and sustainable development of the arts community in this cultural context. I am impressed by the international scope, societal inclusiveness and educational range the Dhaka Art Summit is weaving into the Bangladesh life and the art community worldwide... The shows Dhaka Art Summit puts up are so interesting and so many people come here just for the exchange. What really amazes me is that there is no assumption of what this event should be... it's not an art fair, it's not a symposium, it's not a biennial. I was so excited to see the rows of children entering the Summit, the whole building was filled with children from schools looking at something that they understood far better than I did.

Bunty Chand - Director, Asia Society, India

The Dhaka Art Summit a novel, audacious and creative venture emanating from Bangladesh has in its third edition become a place for interesting conversations and ideas for artists, curators, museums, scholars, and visitors around the art of South Asia. Asia Society's global initiative 'Arts and Museum Network' in Asia seeks to strengthen conversations between art communities and strengthen collaboration between institutions and art professionals of Asia. With Asia Society's group of collectors and art professionals from India attending the summit, we hope we will expand formal and informal ties with institutions and artists in Dhaka and hope that we can further link the Dhaka Art Summit to Asia Society's larger networks in Asia and the US. Dhaka Art Summit has set the gold standard for the visual arts in South Asia

Salima Hashmi - Artist and Writer, Pakistan

I felt it was imperative to be part of what is emerging as an unusually fertile forum for experiencing art and talking about it, firmly in the context of our region. Refreshingly, it is not about the market! Although inevitably, the discussions and the work will somehow be reflected in that dreaded place. But for a few days one can just look, see and ponder not only in the company of one's peers, but also in the company of the young and old in Dhaka. For me as a Pakistani, this was especially valuable.

Adam Szymczyk - Critic, Curator and Artistic Director of Documenta 14, Kassel, Germany

The Summit was a surprisingly personal, low-key and highly focused gathering of many amazing individuals from several countries in South Asia. A variety of experiences brought under one roof was what I really appreciated as it exceeded the usual monofoms of a "biennial", "art fair", "conference" etc., offering instead a holistic experience of being with the artists, seeing their work and discussing it on the spot. Unpretentious and intelligently designed in skillful hands of the Artistic Director Diana Campbell Betancourt, the Summit

Suhanya Raffel - Director of Collections, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australia

In the face of an increasingly global art world, the active articulate regional center is vital. In these locations the deep work of art and place are explored, established and formed, contributing invaluable to knowledge and understanding. The Dhaka Art Summit is surely one of these places.

Maria Balshaw - Director, Manchester International Festival, Director, The Whitworth Gallery, Manchester and Director, Manchester City Art Gallery - UK

The Dhaka Art Summit is incredibly special. Not only does it feature the work of brilliant curators, exhibitions showcasing emerging and established South Asian art and a fabulous programme, it is free - and free access to art in a public space is something to be celebrated. It's so important to support DAS because by doing so, we're responding to a great need for art in the lives of all people...It is quite extraordinary walking into this energy. I have been really struck by the range and quality of work. There are many artists whose work I have not seen before. But also - half the world is here - there are colleagues from every European country here and also from the Americas. As a newcomer arriving it feels like there is something felt, and that is a spirit of generosity. Perhaps because it isn't a fair and so the dimension of the art market is not present... there is an excitement and a generosity and a warmth in the presentations and in the interactions between the people, which feels very different!"

Daniel Baumann- Director, Kunsthalle Zurich, Switzerland

On his experience of the Samdani Art Award

When I heard of what Dhaka Art Summit was trying to pull off, I got interested in it. I came here and all nominees [for the Samdani Art Award] were extremely interesting, curious and very informed and committed to the place where they were living. I thought this was exceptional. They had obviously been taught well and knew a lot of what was going on. This Summit is a game changer for the local art students." (...)“The Samdani Art Award went to Dhaka based artist Rasel Chowdhury who, with his diverse projects, is part of a new generation of Bangladeshi artists developing a visual memory for this still very young country. Therefore, it not only recognised a highly talented individual, but a whole community of photographers and artists including their school, the Pathshala South Asian Media Institute. Rarely have I seen such a diverse, joyful and productively contradictory, festival-esque exhibition.

Adam Sheffer - President of the Art Dealers Associate of America, New York and Partner, Cheim and Read, New York

Having travelled across the world to attend the Dhaka Art Summit, I can personally testify to how worthwhile it is. The Dhaka Art Summit has firmly situated itself among a class of international art exhibitions, the calibre of which is not to be missed. Curated by Diana Campbell Betancourt, the selections were both deeply relevant to the international discourse on contemporary art while also highlighting regional interconnections. Of particular note was the film series, a deeply sensitive and insightful selection curated by Shanay Jhaveri, and an historical retrospective of modernist architecture in Bangladesh.

Meena Hewett - Executive Director, South Asia Institute (SAI), Harvard University

I found the Dhaka Art Summit to be a uniquely revealing window into the region's extraordinarily complex socio-ecological landscape. The artists from the region and the cultural leaders of Bangladesh are to be admired for convening so contextually rich a selection of South Asia's most expressive two and three-dimensional work that attracted visitors worldwide to come to Dhaka.

Lucas Huang - Manager, The National Gallery, Singapore

I thought the Dhaka Art Summit 2016 was a splendid affair of critical clout and great programming. There is literally nothing like it in Asia and I am certain the next one will be an even bigger success.

Maria Lind - Critic and Artistic Director, Gwanju Biennale 2016

Critical Writing Ensemble presentation at DAS 2016

I almost gave up reading art writing. I have come to reconsider this through the summit, thanks to the encounters of the many colleagues in the room, who have been speaking about art writing, who have been reading their writing...

Chantal Pontbriand- Curator and Art Critic, Awarded the Governor General of Canada Award for an Outstanding Contribution in the Visual and Media Arts, Canada

It is quite extraordinary for events of high quality like the Summit to exist in places we need to discover like Dhaka. It will enable us to create a world forum between places in the world from which voices with difference occur.

Kate Fowle - Director of Independent Curators International and Chief Curator, Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow

What I appreciated most about the Dhaka Art Summit was the opportunity it offered for open dialogue. It provided an extraordinary platform for curators from around the world to share ideas, stories and research in terms of art, history, and the socio-political-economic ramifications of our work in a larger social sense.

Shanay Jhaveri - Curator of Dhaka Art Summit Film Programme and Assistant Curator, South Asia Modern and Contemporary Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

The Dhaka Art Summit is a remarkable endeavour. It serves not only as a platform for the intergenerational exhibition of South Asian art, but also provides that rare opportunity to engage in conversation and debate around regional representation. The Summit's evolving and changing format from edition to edition further tests the boundaries of how modern and contemporary art is experienced today. I was very grateful to have received an invitation from the Samdani Foundation to curate the 3rd Editions film programme and to be able to share work by over 35 international filmmakers with a primarily local audience.

Geeta Kapur - Art Critic and Art Historian, India

The Dhaka Art Summit is a very impressive event

Stuart Comber - Chief Curator of Media and Performance, Museum of Modern Art, New York

The Dhaka Summit proved to be an invaluable interface with a number of key artists, discourses, and histories that suggest the increasingly urgent voice South Asia has in the current global cultural discourse. A group of MoMA curators representing a diverse range of the Museum's departments were all profoundly engaged by the energy, exhibitions, and opportunities we encountered. We look forward to developing many of these conversations as we deepen our engagement in the region.

Gary Carrion Murayari - The New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York

The Dhaka Art Summit is an incredibly exciting forum for research and dialogue and particularly impressive for the range of artists and thinkers assembled in one context. I have been looking forward to the summit as an introduction to the rich community of emerging artists across South Asia and I'm sure it will greatly advance my research for our upcoming New Museum Triennial.

Chus Martinez - Head of the Institute of Art at the FHNW Academy of Art and Design, Switzerland

We are living in the time, when the sense of the real produced by softwares and technologies, needs a new insistence in the person and the personal as its counterbalance. The encounter, the exchange of views in a context from the tests want to learn and the art agents from the place want to report... All that it seems natural is what makes the art and cultural world stay alive and gain a force, a dynamic force. To produce, again and again, this possibilities is key for the future of gaining an understanding of the world without reducing its complexity to measurable parameters.

Jitish Kallat - Artist and Artistic Director, Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2nd Edition, India

I felt Dhaka Art Summit 2016 was a historic effort and in the years to come it will have a transformative and catalytic effect not just on the art scene in Bangladesh but the wider South Asian belt. It was not just an event but a destination; a four day pop-up institution and a fold-away infrastructure hoisted to welcome the wider international art world to interact with the art scene in Bangladesh.

Nurjahan Akhlaq - Collector and Lender, Pakistan

DAS is the most exciting event for the South Asian region bringing a dynamic selection of international participants that will no doubt impact the way we see and think about art practice, writing, cinema and curating. I am thrilled to be attending this year - representing my father's oeuvre and legacy - and look forward to conversations that will engage in our shared histories as well as contemporary concerns.

Saskia Fernando - Gallerist, Sri Lanka

The Dhaka Art Summit adds value to the South Asian art scene by tying together and creating a platform for its established and emerging art scenes. It is essential for a summit of this nature to bring together all those involved in the development of the South Asian art industry and by doing so nurture its growth. It is within this structure that our individual art scenes will achieve a stronger identity through the translations and curation of art that is relative to one another.

Shumon Ahmed, DAS Solo Project Artist, Bangladesh

When it comes to art from South Asia I can't think of any other platform so important and exciting than Dhaka art summit today in the art world, I feel it is important to attend Dhaka art summit not just for its uniqueness as a platform for artists from the region but for it being a melting pot for a real dialogue for the future of South Asian art as a whole.

Aparajita Jain - Director, Nature Morte Gallery and Founder of Saat Saath Arts Foundation, India

The Dhaka Art Summit is an incredible effort to put South Asia on the world art map... It redefines soft power and this year round it was the play ground of the intellectually gifted.

Amrita Jhaveri - Founder, Jhaveri Contemporary, India

In three editions the Summit has already established itself as a place to make interesting discoveries and forge new relationships within an intimate setting. A constellation of exhibitions, talks and screenings combined with the legendary hospitality of Nadia and Rajeeb Samdani make DAS an unmissable event.

Nada Raza - Curator of Dhaka Art Summit Exhibition, The Missing One and Assistant Curator, Tate Modern, London

Dhaka has a vibrant cultural scene and the Dhaka Art Summit is an important bridge for new conversations within the region and beyond. Even as the Summit has quickly established itself on the international calendar, what most impressed me was the enthusiastic and receptive local crowd. It was wonderful to see local poets, in a programme arranged by the British Council, respond to the exhibits in verse. As a South Asian, I relished the opportunity to address this audience and develop and present a museum quality exhibition with a diverse group of contemporary artists. I was overwhelmed by the positive response and hope that these productive opportunities for close engagement between artists, curators and members of the public continue to flourish, at the Summit and beyond.

Dayanita Singh, DAS Solo Project Artist, India

I have never experienced something as art focused, open and inclusive as I just did at Dhaka Art Summit. The calibre of the conversations was a rare happening in our region. Perhaps because it was Bangladesh and not India at the centre? Exquisitely curated exhibitions. So much thought all round. Thank you Diana; thank you Samdanis; thank you Dhaka. I am still wearing the green bracelet.

Sushmita Ghoshal - Executive Director, Curator, Fundraiser, Hong Kong

It was truly a brilliant event. Throughout the years, at many biennial openings, while everyone was complaining about the meaninglessness of the format and the utter inertia of dissolving different ideas, artists, scenarios and interests into one single inept sausage-exhibition, the solution that seemed too idealistic was exactly what you have done with the Dhaka Art Summit. The wonderful combination of different & thoughtful exhibitions and display modes, each achieving their own particular set of tasks. And being brilliant and highly informative, and embedded into a great & fun event that everyone loved. Chapeau!

Monica Narula, Raqs Media Collective, India

The summit is going from strength to strength, it's sharpened its edges and has created situations that are much more clear as exhibitions and as gestures and the energy is amazing. What is this unique thing that is the Dhaka Art Summit?... It is a creature of its own making and we are witnessing a moment of transformation in the way art is articulated. Language creates reality. Once it's been said, it exists, and it's that kind of articulation. What exists, it's a hybrid and a creature that changes with each iteration and this articulation has created something that many of us have come to acknowledge. DAS is not an attitude as much as a lived disposition.

Munem Wasif, DAS Solo Project Artist, Bangladesh

Photography, film, performance, writing, and architecture were always far away from the art scene in our part of the world. Things were blocked in their own confinements with little room for interdisciplinary cross-pollination. To bring all these different experience and knowledge under one umbrella and to create a dialog between these disciplines as the Dhaka Art Summit did is very important and meaningful in the region. Step by step every new edition of Dhaka Art Summit is adding a paradigm, which will be increasingly visible in the coming years.

Mustafa Zaman, DAS Solo Project Artist, Bangladesh

The Summit seems more inclined towards a better understanding of the cultural psyche of the South Asian region, and is now operating more in synchrony with the social-political aspirations of the peoples across the region. It is a stage for artists whose works merit to be in the global limelight, a platform suitably connected to other regional stages as well as the global art circuit, ensuring the launch of many global careers for Bangladeshi artists that was previously unimaginable.

Aktari Mamtaz - Hon. Secretary, Ministry of Cultural Affairs, People's Republic of Bangladesh

The Bangladesh Cultural Ministry is a proud supporter of the incredible initiative of the Dhaka Art Summit, the world's largest platform for South Asian art. It is wonderful that this event occurs in Bangladesh and we look forward to getting back to work on the next edition

Ritika Kochchar - Journalist, Business Standard, India

Another Point of the summit is that, unlike India and the rest of the sub-continent, the Government seems entirely on board.

Asaduzzaman Noor - Hon. Minister of Cultural Affairs, People's Republic of Bangladesh

The DAS offers a unique opportunity for artistic exchange and interaction between our artists and the artists of the world. I think, this exchange will help our arts and artists reach beyond our border.

A M A Muhit - Finance Minister, People's Republic of Bangladesh

This is the best and largest art summit of Asia and we take great pride in it. We will continue to support it all the way.

Rashed Khan Menon - Hon. Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism, People's Republic of Bangladesh

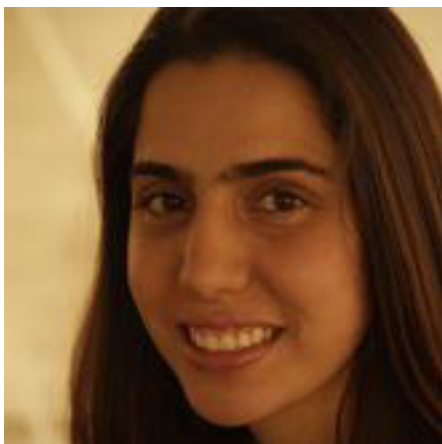
Through the showcase of art and its diverse facets in this platform, Bangladesh art reaches the international arena, augmenting the country's image. I hope the number of foreign tourists will double at the 2018 summit

DHAKA ART SUMMIT TEAM



Nadia Samdani, Founder

Nadia Samdani is the Co-Founder & President of the Samdani Art Foundation and Director of the Dhaka Art Summit. In 2011, she and her husband Rajeeb began the Samdani Art Foundation to support local artists and promote Bangladeshi and South Asian art in the region and around the world. As part of this initiative, she founded the Dhaka Art Summit, which has since completed two successful editions in 2012 and 2014 under her leadership. Nadia is a member of the Tate South Asia Acquisitions Committee, Tate's International Council, the New Museum's International Leadership Council and is part of the Parasol Unit's International Committee. She has been named as one of the founding members of Harvard University, South Asia Institute Art Council.



Diana Campbell Betancourt, Artistic Director

Diana Campbell Betancourt is an American curator based in Mumbai and working across South Asia for the last six years. She is the Artistic Director of the Samdani Art Foundation in Dhaka and the Chief Curator of the Dhaka Art Summit for the 2014 and 2016 editions. Betancourt's research interests lie in rethinking cross-cultural encounters in public space, and rethinking what public space might mean. In addition to running the Foundation's exhibitions and international exchange programs, she is building the Samdani Art Foundation collection ahead of the opening of a permanent space in Sylhet, Bangladesh slated for 2018. Betancourt has collaborated with sculpture parks around the world contributing to new commissions of Indian art at institutions including Yorkshire Sculpture Park, deCordova Sculpture Park, and Wanas Konst. Betancourt co-curated "Energy Plus," the Mumbai City Pavilion for the 9th Shanghai Biennale and was a curatorial advisor for the 2015 New Museum Triennial in New York. Betancourt is a Henry Moore Institute Fellow for 2015-2016, curator in residence at the FRAC Champagne-Ardenne and a research fellow at the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum for 2016.

Guest Curatorial Team for DAS 2016



Shanay Jhaveri - Curator DAS 2016 Film Programme

Shanay Jhaveri is Assistant Curator, South Asian art, within the Department of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

A graduate of Brown University, with a BA in Art-Semiotics and the History of Art and Architecture, Shanay has a PhD in Curatorial and Critical Studies from the Royal College of Art, where his dissertation addresses the topic of self-identity in South Asian art: *The Journey in my Head: Cosmopolitanism and Indian Male Self-Portraiture in 20th Century India - Umrao Singh Sher-Gil, Bhupen Khakhar and Raghubir Singh*. His recent exhibitions include *In Dialogue: Amrita Sher-Gil and Lionel Wendt* (Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai, 2014); *Raghubir Singh and William Gedney* (Esther Schipper Gallery, Berlin, 2013); *Companionable Silences* (Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2013); and *India: Visions from the Outside* (Cultuurcentrum Brugge, Bruges, 2012). Shanay has also curated film programs for Light Industry, New York, Cambridge University, - and in London the LUX/ICA Biennial of Moving Images, the East London Gay Film Festival, Iniva, Frieze Art Fair, Tate Modern and the forthcoming 3rd Edition of the Dhaka Art Summit. Shanay's books include: *Western Artists and India: Creative Inspirations in Art and Design* (Thames & Hudson and The Shoestring Publisher, 2013); *Outsider Films on India: 1950-1990* (The Shoestring Publisher, 2010); and *Chandigarh is in India* (forthcoming Feb. 2016, The Shoestring Publisher). He has published widely in various art journals and is a contributing editor to *Frieze Magazine*. He is a trustee of the non-profit public space Mumbai Art Room, Mumbai, and a member of the Chinati Contemporary Council, Marfa Texas.



Nada Raza - Guest Curator, highlight South Asia Exhibition *Story of the Missing One*

Nada Raza is an Assistant Curator at the Tate Modern who focuses her research mainly on Modern and Contemporary Art from South Asia. Raza was born in Karachi and completed an MA in Curatorial Studies from the Chelsea College of Arts and previously worked with Iniva and Green Cardamom in London. Raza was Guest Curator for The Abraaj Group Art Prize 2014 which included artists from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. Other recent exhibition projects include *Meschac Gaba: Museum of Contemporary African Art* (Tate 2013, Deutsche Bank KunstHalle 2014); *Lines of Control*; (Herbert F. Johnson Museum, Cornell University 2012) and *Social Fabric* (Iniva, 2012).



Aurélien Lemonier - Guest Curator, Architecture in Bangladesh Exhibition

Aurélien Lemonier is an architect and a curator in the department of Architecture of the Centre Pompidou in Paris. In the past ten years that he has been affiliated with the Centre Pompidou, he has curated extensive exhibitions on Robert-Mallet-Stevens, Dutch Avante-Garde Architecture, the History of the Modern Museum in France, Jean Prouvé, Bernard Tschumi, and most recently a Frank Gehry retrospective. Lemonier has been researching post-Independence South Asian architecture for the past three years and expanded the collection of architectural drawings at the Centre Pompidou to include the Middle-East and South Asian holdings.



Daniel Baumann - Guest Curator, Samdani Art Award

Daniel Baumann is the Director of the Kunsthalle Zurich. Prior to this appointment, Baumann has been the curator of the Adolf Wölfli Foundation, dedicated to the outsider artist, at the Museum of Fine Arts in Bern since 1996. He has also directed the Basel exhibition spaces Kunsttangent and New Jersey, which he founded in 2008, and has organised exhibitions worldwide, including the series “Tbilis” in Georgia. In 2013, Baumann co-organised America’s oldest survey show for contemporary art, the Carnegie International in Pittsburgh, alongside Dan Byers and Tina Kukielski.



Nikhil Chopra - Guest Curator, Performance Pavilion

Nikhil Chopra’s artistic practice ranges between live art, theatre, painting, photography, sculpture and installations. Chopra was born in Calcutta in 1974, and currently lives in Goa. After studying at the Faculty of Fine Arts at Maharaja Sayaji Rao University in Baroda, India, Chopra continued his studies in the USA, where he had his first solo exhibition, Sir Raja II, in 2003. Chopra’s performances on the international art scene began in 2008 on the back of a series of performances titled Yog Raj Chitrakar: Memory Drawing Series that first opened at Chatterjee & Lal, Mumbai, and he has since exhibited at institutions such as the Yokohama Triennale, the New Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, among others.



Madhavi Gore - Guest Curator, Performance Pavilion

Madhavi Gore is a visual artist whose interdisciplinary art practice engages performance, painting and drawing, craft and pedagogy. After University in the United States, Madhavi worked in Mumbai as an art writer with Art India Magazine, and went on to organise and facilitate studio-art workshops on new practices and critical thought for college-level students. Currently based in Goa, she collectively runs an international artist residency space, called The Heritage Hotel. The space had its first opening event in October 2014. Recently she has been collaborating with artists' Jana Prepeluh, and her partner Nikhil Chopra, on 'bodyworkshop', a studio-art workshop focused on exploring transformation through the practice of performance.



Jana Prepeluh - Guest Curator, Performance Pavilion

Jana Prepeluh is Slovenian performance artist, currently based in Goa. She founded the Čumnata gallery and shop in Ljubljana where she scheduled thoughtful urban art projects and organized street-fashion shows. Together with Aleksandra Čalič she created a short video entitled Punk nije mrtav Kenedi (Punk Is Not Dead Kenedi). Her performance works include Wailing where wails and weeps, mourning people and situations either for her inner, personal reasons or at the request of others and Pri Tleh (Down To Earth) - a research on the attitude to non-material or manual work by over-worked alienated individuals in a contemporary society in which work is still associated with social status. She also collaborates with the Slovene theatre group Grejpfрут.



Md. Muniruzzaman - Guest Curator, Bangladesh Exhibition, আত্ম-অন্বেষণ; Soul Searching

Md. Muniruzzaman is a Bangladeshi curator and the Executive Director of Gallery Chitrak. He is also a freelance artist and has had several solo and group exhibitions. He completed his MFA in Fine Arts from the University of Dhaka in 1984.



Katya García-Antón - Guest Curator for Critical Writing Ensembles

Katya García-Antón is an English-Spanish curator, recently appointed Director of The Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA). García-Antón has been affiliated with several major international art institutions, including the Centre d'Art Contemporain, Geneva; the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; the Museu d'Arte Moderno de São Paulo, Brazil; the Institute of Contemporary Art, London. García-Antón has had many curatorial triumphs, she contributed to the Spanish Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2011, the flagship exhibition of the very first edition of the Qalandiya International Biennial in Palestine in 2012 and is set to curate the Norwegian Pavillion at 56th Venice Biennale 2015.



Beth Citron - Advisor to Rewind Exhibition

Beth Citron is the Curator for Modern and Contemporary Art at the Rubin Museum in New York. In 2014 she organised "Francesco Clemente: Inspired by India" and "Witness at a Crossroads: Photographer Marc Riboud in Asia." For the museum, she also organised a three-part exhibition series "Modernist Art from India" (2011-13) and with Rahaab Allana of the Alkazi Foundation "Allegory and Illusion: Early Portrait Photography from South Asia" (2013). She has contributed to Artforum, ArtIndia, and other publications, and published "Bhupen Khakhar's 'Pop' in India, 1970-72" in the Summer 2012 issue of ArtJournal. She completed a Ph.D. on Contemporary Art in Bombay, 1965-1995 in the History of Art Department at the University of Pennsylvania in 2009, and has taught in the Art History Department at New York University, from which she also earned a B.A. in Fine Arts.



Sabih Mohd Ahmed - Advisor to Rewind Exhibition

Sabih Mohd Ahmed is a Senior Researcher at Asian Art Archive and has been a member of the Research+team since 2009. Based in New Delhi, he has overseen the Archive's digitization projects in the country alongside other research initiatives. Ahmed completed Bachelors in Visual Arts with specialisation in Art History from the M.S. University of Baroda, following which completed the interdisciplinary MA program at the School of Arts & Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University in 2009 and has organised and participated in numerous conferences and workshops internationally. He has been involved in doing research and archiving with art-critics and artists over the years and his area of interest is in investigating the infrastructure and institution of Art in the country.



Amara Antilla - Advisor to Rewind Exhibition

Amara Antilla is an Assistant Curator at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. She is part of the curatorial team working on acquisitions and exhibitions focusing on three regions: South and South East Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa under the auspices of the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative. In addition, Amara Antilla assisted on the first retrospective of celebrated Indian modernist, V. S. Gaitonde, *V. S. Gaitonde: Painting as Process, Painting as Life* (2014). Previously, she assisted on various exhibitions for the museum's Asian Art Initiative, including the rotunda retrospective *Lee Ufan: Marking Infinity* (2011).

International Advisory Committee



Massimiliano Gioni

Italian curator and art critic Massimiliano Gioni (b. 1973), based in New York, is the Artistic Director of the New Museum. He is also the Artistic Director of the Nicola Trussardi Foundation in Milan. He curated the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013, 8th Gwangju Biennale in 2010 and co-curated Berlin Biennial (2006) and Manifesta 5 (2005).



Beatrix Ruf

German born curator Beatrix Ruf (b.1960) is the Director of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. She was formerly the Director of the Kunsthalle Zurich and she holds strategic positions at JRP/Ringier (associate editor) and Luma Foundation core group, and serves on the cultural advisory board at CERN, the board of Mumok Vienna and the art commissioning board at Swiss Re.



Monica Narula

Monica Narula New Delhi based Indian artist and a founder member of Raqs Media Collective. Raqs is best known for its contribution to contemporary art, and has presented work at most of the major international shows, from Documenta to the Venice Biennale. The members of Raqs were co-curators of Manifesta 7, and also INSERT and the Sarai Reader in New Delhi.



Shahzia Sikander

Shahzia Sikander is an internationally recognized Pakistani artist specialized in Indian and Persian miniature painting. She is one of the pioneer to transport traditional miniature style into the contemporary settings rendering through drawing, painting, animation, large-scale installation, performance and video. She serves on the advisory boards of the Hammer Museum and Art21 in the USA.

Producers



Emily Dolan, Director of Operations & External Affairs

Emily Dolan is the Director of Operations and External Affairs . She originally trained as a visual artist and since 2002 has worked in art institutions, including five years at The Fine Art Society, her primary focus being contemporary art. More recently she has taken on production roles in non-profit organisations and has coordinated exhibitions at the Hayward Gallery in London, The 55th Venice Biennale, Garage Centre of Contemporary Art and Culture, Moscow, and the Chalet Society, Paris.



Eve Lemesle, Associate Producer

Eve Lemesle has been working in the arts sector since 15 years in Canada, Europe and India. She is a graduate of La Sorbonne in arts management and holds a diploma in South-Asia studies from INALCO (Paris). She started her career in the non-for-profit sector as an arts manager and curator at the Darling Foundry in Montreal. She moved back to Paris and curated international residency programs at the art centre Point Ephemère. After several visits to India starting in 2003, she settled in Mumbai in 2009, and started What about art? (WAA), a first-of-its-kind arts management agency in India. WAA produces ambitious art projects within the growing South-Asian art scene. Since its creation, WAA has collaborated with numerous galleries and cultural institutions in India, and handled projects for artists such as Shilpa Gupta, Rashid Rana, Nikhil Chopra, Tejal Shah to name a few. Among WAA recent projects is production of the solo exhibition of William Kentridge (Mumbai), production of the Public art program ArtC (Chennai) and conservation of important art collections in South-Asia. In 2013 Lemesle expanded the activities of the agency by starting a not-for-profit artists' residency and a video lab in Mumbai that facilitates practice and exhibition of video art.



Mohammad Sazzad Hossain, Head of Administration

Mohammad Sazzad Hossain is the Head of Administration of the Samdani Art Foundation. He managed the successful execution of the first and second Dhaka Art Summits in 2012 and 2014. Sazzad Hossain completed his M.A. and B.A. from Stamford University Bangladesh majoring in English Literature.



Ruxmini Choudhury, Curatorial Assistant, Dhaka

Ruxmini Choudhury is a Curatorial Assistant for the Samdani Art Foundation. She completed her BFA in Art History from University of Dhaka in 2014 and previously interned at the Dhaka Art Centre.



Nivriti Roddam, Curatorial Assistant and Institutional Relations Liaison
Nivriti Roddam is a graduate from the Parsons the New School for Design where she earned a degree in Design and Management.



Shabnam Lilani, Curatorial Assistant And Assistant to Artistic Director, Mumbai

Shabnam Lilani has keen interest in the digital space in her curatorial practice. She has five years of experience working in the arts and also has extensive experience working with the media industry. Lilani worked for Shilpa Gupta for four years focusing on the research, production, and installation of her new media works and has been assisting Diana Campbell Betancourt since 2013 on her international exhibitions including the 2nd Dhaka Art Summit.



Tasmia Nehreen Ahmed

Tasmia Nehreen Ahmed manages communications and administration and is the assistant to Ms. Nadia Samdani, President of the Samdani Art Foundation. She studied fine arts and previously worked at JAAGO Foundation as the Assistant to the Founder. Tasmia studied Fine Arts

DHAKA ART SUMMIT ACHIEVEMENTS

Dhaka Art Summit 3rd Edition, 5-8 February 2016

300 artists / visitors from over 70 International museums and institutions / 138,000 visitors

Munem Wasif, Ayesha Sultana, Rana Begum have been selected to present work in the 11th Gwangju Biennale, Korea. This marks the Biennale's first inclusion of Bangladeshi artists

Architects Kashef Chowdhury and Rafiq Azam have been selected for the Venice Architecture Biennale, Main Pavilion and EU Pavilion respectively, marking the Biennale's first inclusion of Bangladeshi architects

Bangladeshi solo project artist, Munem Wasif has been selected for the 5th edition of the Singapore Biennale

Kabir Ahmed Masum Chisty is to have a Solo exhibition at Tokyo Wonder Site, Japan

Solo project artist Ayesha Sultana has been included in a Group exhibition at Queens Museum, New York, and Atish Saha in a group exhibition at Tarq, Mumbai

Ayesha Sultana has been awarded a 6 months residency at Iaspis, Sweden

Solo project artists Munem Wasif has been signed by leading Mumbai gallery, Project 88 and Mustafa Zaman by Exhibit 320, New Delhi

Many young artists featured in the Samdani Art Award are in conversation with galleries in Europe and Asia hoping to sign these artist

DHAKA ART SUMMIT - 2016 SELECTED PRESS

Bussiness Standard, February 27, 2016

“Half of the world is here. Perhaps, because it isn’t a fair (the art isn’t sold), there is an excitement, and a generosity and warmth in the presentations and in the interactions between the people which feels very different.”

- Maria Balshaw, Director, Manchester City Art Gallery

Forbes, February 22, 2016

‘Dhaka Art Summit gives Bangladesh a global spotlight’.

“The biggest indication of success at the event, which was free to the public, was the fact that 2,500 students visited, perhaps experiencing their first exposure to work by international artists ...”

- Beatrix Ruf, Director, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

Happening, February 19, 2016

“The Dhaka Art Summit seems to have surpassed other regional cultural events, including the Kochi Biennale...”

The Gulf Today, February 18, 2016

“The Summit provided an important meeting point between South Asia’s art scene and the international art world, serving as a springboard for future collaborations and closer cultural relations.”

Scroll.in, February 19, 2016

“The world doesn’t identify Bangladesh with contemporary art and design, but the Dhaka Art Summit might just change that.”

Artforum, February 16, 2016

“If I had paid more heed to the US government’s strident security alerts about Bangladesh, I might have been more concerned about the dead, decaying body lying at my feet. Thankfully, any fears proved unwarranted for travelers on the latest stop of the art-world’s global itinerary.”

- writer Zehra Jumabhoy

HK Economic Times, 12 February 2016

“From financing solo exhibitions to organising an Art Summit that amazed the world, the Samdani Art Foundation’s ultimate goal is to put Bangladesh on the map. And they definitely spared no expenses and effort in achieving that goal.”

Art Review Asia, 23rd February, 2016

“ The Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, the state-sponsored national academy of fine and performing arts, which for the four days of DAS’s occupation was transformed into something of a South Asian tower of art power.... The biennial Dhaka Art Summit is widely hailed as one of the most important art events in South Asia. It certainly draws the crowds - of international art professionals and locals... All that in a country that has only existed in its present configuration since 1971...”

- writer Mark Rappolt

The Art Newspaper, February 4, 2016

“Destination Bangladesh: art world decamps to third Dhaka Art Summit...”

Harvard University South Asia Institute, Online News Article, February 11, 2016

“Dhaka Art Summit: Connecting Bangladesh and the World...”

Open magazine, February 16, 2016

“Unlike its immediately neighbouring countries, (Dhaka Art Summit) was organized with the full-fledged support of the ministry for cultural affairs. The support of about 80 partnering institutions, including Harvard University, Centre Pompidou, Rockefeller Foundation, the Oslo-based Office for Contemporary Art and the Swiss Arts Council, enhanced the summit’s international stature.”

- writer Rosalyn D’Mello

DAS 2016 has already generated over 300 news stories from 35 different countries

Download the complete Dhaka Art Summit 2016 Press coverage to date:

International press booklet:

<http://dhakaartsummit.org/assets/Uploads/DAS-2016-International-Press-Booklet.pdf>

Local press booklet:

<http://dhakaartsummit.org/assets/Uploads/DAS-2016-Local-Press-Booklet-09-04-2016.pdf>

REVIEW - 04 APR 2016

Dhaka Art Summit 2016

BY KURCHI DASGUPTA

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy



Haroon Mirza, *The National Pavilion of Then and Now*, 2011, installation view. Courtesy the artist, Lisson Gallery, London, Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation; photograph: Noor Photoface

Haroon Mirza, *The National Pavilion of Then and Now*, 2011, installation view. Courtesy the artist, Lisson Gallery, London, Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation; photograph: Noor Photoface

This year, the Dhaka Art Summit (DAS) – the largest non-commercial platform for South Asian Art in the world – re-thought its previous art-fair format. It now positions itself as a research-based platform that provides insights into the region’s art historical and socio-political contexts in order, according to curator Maria Lind, to promote the kind of art that ‘makes itself known as a dandelion rising out of the concrete’.

Under the Artistic Directorship of Diana Campbell Betancourt, a slew of talks, film screenings, performances, a writing workshop and architectural presentations were held concurrent with the main exhibition (which was free to visit) at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, the event’s sole venue. Ideas around resistance, introspection and displacement linked the 17 solo projects, some of which were specially commissioned, by artists working in South Asia, Europe and the US. In Tino Sehgal’s film *Ann Lee* (2011), schoolgirls slowly transform into near-automatons while interrogating the idea of individual freedom. Waqas Khan’s meditative, abstract ink drawings (*The Text in Continuum*, 2015) complemented Prabhavathi Meppayil’s site-specific sculpture *dp/sixteen/part one* (2016), which comprises white gesso cubes that echoed the construction of the ceiling, in the upstairs lobby. A similar quietness pervades Mustafa Zaman’s series of photographs, *‘Lost Memory Eternalized’* (2016) – images of iconic individuals and moments from the subcontinent’s pre-partition era lay

under globs of ant-laden honey, evoking layers of time. Ideas around exclusion were central to Burmese artist Po Po's VIP Project (2015-16) and Ayesha Sultana's installation *A Space Between Things* (2016), which was made from scraps of paper and cloth, tiles, metal frames and tubes, and could only be experienced by a dozen people at a time. In graceful contrast, Shakuntala Kulkarni's cane armour sculptures embody trauma by highlighting the physical threats individuals must negotiate daily in an epoch of terror and violence.



Shakuntala Kulkarni, *Of Bodies, Armour and Cages*, 2012-15, installation view. Courtesy the artist, Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai, Dhaka Art Summit and Samdani Art Foundation; photograph: Jenni Carter

The main exhibition, 'Mining Warm Data', also curated by Campbell Betancourt, brought together the enraged voices of 18 artists from across South Asia. Light boxes, neon signs and videos deciphered the state interferences of a post 9/11 world in Chitra Ganesh and Mariam Ghani's *Black Sites I: The Seen Unseen* (2016) – interferences that impact upon and often destroy lives in Afghanistan. A similar resistance informs Bangladesh-born, US-based Hasan Elahi's ongoing self-surveillance project, as well as Nepal's Hitman Gurung's *I have to Feed Myself, My Family and My Country* (2013), a record of the plight of migrant Nepalese workers through visual metaphors such as collages of printed money. Pakistan's Huma Mulji's animal-hide sculpture of a decomposed, tortured body (*Lost and Found*, 2012) also references state violence, while Amar Kanwar's videos from *The Torn First Pages* (2008) document Burma's struggle for democracy. Violence was also addressed in Ali Asgar's performance, *Inside the Zone, Outside Your Conscience* (2016): the artist attempted to create a gender-free zone where visitors and the artist could interchange roles through the use of 'gender objectified props'. In 'The Missing One', a section curated by Nada Raza structured around art's encounters with modern science, David Alesworth's *Probe Intervention* (2003-04) stood out as a witty dig at Pakistan's rapid nuclearization: its digital slideshow places nuclear warheads in the quotidian moments of urban street life in Karachi. Similarly, in Tejal Shah's video *Landfill Dance* (2012), gas-masked schoolchildren perform what looks like medieval dance routines on landfill.



Prabhavathi Meppayil, *dp/sixteen/part one*, 2015-16. Courtesy the artist, Dhaka Art Summit, Samdani Art Foundation and PACE, London; photograph: Jenni Carter

The reclaiming of history – which is vital to DAS’s commitment towards research – was evident in the ‘Soul Searching’ and ‘Rewind’ sections. While ‘Soul Searching’ contextualized the main exhibits through the works of 50 senior Bangladeshi artists, ‘Rewind’ was a fantastic survey of 90 works from the 1940s to the ‘70s, by 13 South Asian artists. The Samdani Art Award, curated by Daniel Baumann, went to Rasel Chowdhury’s contemplative documentation of railway stations (‘Railway Longings’, 2011-15), which contrasted with Shumon Ahmed’s lyrical images of Bangladeshi ship graveyards. But it was Zihan Karim and Chang Wan Wee’s *Habitat* (2013) that encapsulated the spirit of DAS – a slew of unhappy statistics slid across the video documentation of the daily lives of people displaced by the Chittagong airport project, to the sound of the Beatles’ song ‘Sgt Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band’ (1967). Bangladesh, like much of South Asia, is debilitated by poverty as it tries to negotiate its colonial past and find its way forward. DAS was an exciting and important event for the region, but the slickness of its presentation struck an incongruous chord when set against the context of the host country’s economic and political urgencies. Nonetheless, DAS’s commitment towards amplifying the ‘voice of the dandelions rising out of the concrete’ is what makes the project a worthwhile endeavour.

FINANCIAL TIMES

March 4, 2016 3:00 pm

Photography in Bangladesh: a medium on the move

Maya Jaggi

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Fêted internationally, the country's photographers have struggled for status at home. Could that be about to change?



From the series 'Railway Longings' by Rasel Chowdhury

The eerie moonscape of Munem Wasif's new photographic series, "Land of Undefined Territory", appears empty. On closer inspection, it reveals the scars of industrial activity, from vehicle tracks to stone crushing. The sense of menace and alienation is compounded by a three-channel video with a grating soundtrack.

These digital black-and-white shots were taken along an indefinite border between Bangladesh and India — disputed land that is now home to unregulated mining but which also soaked up the blood of past upheavals, from the first, temporary partition of Bengal under the viceroy in 1905, to Partition in 1947 and the Liberation war of 1971. Ostensible documentary veers into questioning in Wasif's deeply unsettling yet distanced probing of history, territory, ownership and exploitation.

Bangladesh's bloody birth 45 years ago was — often horrifyingly — recorded by photographers, both foreign and, like the phenomenal Rashid Talukder, Bengali. Some images remain on show in the Liberation War Museum in Dhaka, which traces the nine months of mass killing that followed former East Pakistan's declaration of independence on March 26. Forty-five years on, the installation by Wasif (born in 1983) reveals how the medium that bore such powerful witness is being transformed in the hands of today's artists, in turn changing the international image of the country.

The work premiered in February at the third biennial Dhaka Art Summit in the Bangladeshi capital. An initiative of the private Samdani Art Foundation, it is held at the government-owned Shilpakala Academy. The free event drew more than 138,000 visitors, almost double the figure for 2014. In only five years, the summit has surmounted a nightmare of logistics (art from near neighbours in the politically tense subcontinent must be shipped via Dubai or Hong Kong) to raise the global profile of artists from a country more often subsumed under India.

For at least 20 years, Bangladesh's photographers have been fêted internationally. Earlier this year, Wasif's work "In God We Trust", an installation exploring religion and identity, was at the Paris gallery Le 247. A group show of nine new-generation Bangladeshi photographers has just ended at New York's Bronx Museum. Yet photography is still not admitted to the National Biennial (one of south Asia's oldest) or taught at Dhaka university's faculty of fine arts.

And although photography was given its own space at the second summit in 2014, this time it was integrated into all the thematic sections, says Diana Campbell Betancourt, the Samdani Foundation's artistic director and the event's chief curator, "because here many don't consider photography to be fine art". The intention was to open the minds of both public and collectors.



From the series 'Railway Longings' by Rasel Chowdhury

Shahidul Alam at the Pathshala South Asian Media Institute, which he founded in 1998, says: "Photography is so marginalised, we've created a space for ourselves." This marginalisation stems, he says, partly from a "media hierarchy where they saw photographers as an illiterate bottom rung; they had very little say. That's something we're far from." The initiative followed Alam's agency Drik, founded in 1989 and now south Asia's biggest photographic archive. He is also founding director of Chobi Mela, Dhaka's international photography biennial, which started in 2000.

From the classic pictorial black-and-white shot favoured in the 1960s, Alam pioneered a socially engaged narrative art whose power is partly its fusion of a documentary approach with artistic vision and social critique. His photographic installation "Kalapana's Warriors" comes to Rivington Place in London in April; in this work, he says, he uses "new techniques — laser etchings on straw — making portraits of warriors carrying on the fight for justice".



From the series 'Railway Longings' by Rasel Chowdhury

"It's a banal question whether photography is art," Alam says. "Art can't be medium-specific — it's what you do with your work." Pathshala was founded to create an alternative photographic vision to that of disaster news and the "tear-jerker" shots required for NGO fundraising.

The school's nurturing of talent has borne fruit. The winner and a majority of the 13 finalists of the Samdani Art Award, which is given at the summit for the best artist from Bangladesh, are photographers. Daniel Baumann, director of the Kunsthalle Zurich, who judged the award, perceived a new generation's "urge to build up a visual memory for a very young country at the brink of maybe a new era".

Of the Samdani award finalists, six are Pathshala graduates, and most say they do photojournalism or NGO work only under financial duress. Shumon Ahmed tells a story of a former classmate whose pictures of madrassas (Koranic schools) were used in an article "on the 'future of fundamentalism', when he wanted to tell the opposite story".



From the series 'Railway Longings' by Rasel Chowdhury

Ahmed's own haunting 2015 series, "When Dead Ships Travel", contains blurred images of the Chittagong ship-breaking yards made famous by Sebastião Salgado. Ahmed's were shot on "expired film and handmade pinhole cameras" with multiple exposures, creating a sense of disorientation as well as nostalgia. His focus is on "human absence, the place, the stillness of the dead ships as part of the landscape". His photographic installation "Land of the Free", also at Dhaka, conveys the trauma of a Bangladeshi former inmate of Guantánamo and the fragile line between sanity and madness; visitors don headphones and hoods to replicate a minute of the detainee's torture.

Rasel Chowdhury's engaging "Railway Longings", his winning series of 250 colour photographs, is the record of a journey along the disused train line he used as a child between Dhaka and the village of Jamalpur. Yet it becomes a contemplative journey into a shifting landscape, imbued with colonial history; in its deadpan way, it evokes loss and the passage of time. Neither good-quality film nor processing chemicals are readily available in Dhaka, so he shot with film bought in Bangkok and

Kolkata, and cropped the prints into squares. He unassumingly describes his passionate work on the environment as “just documentary”, yet adds, “when I shoot something, I want to feel it”.



From Salma Abedin Prithi's 'Dear Love' series

Others of the new-generation finalists emphasise portraiture. Salma Abedin Prithi's series “Dear Love”, incorporating letters as well as dual portraits, grew from building long relationships with subjects who were often initially strangers. Samsul Alam Helal incorporates performance in his images of people in Old Dhaka's “sweeper colony” ostracised as cleaners. His instant staging of them against red backdrops, and as they wish to be seen, renders them visible. Outstanding among the portraitists is Gazi Nafis Ahmed's “Inner Face” series, begun in 2008, which reveals sexual diversity (in a country where same-sex relationships are still criminalised) with an intense intimacy.

The past five years have seen a shift towards mixed-media and a more fluid photographic language, with greater collaboration between fine art and photography collectives. “Photography grew up separately in this country,” Wasif says. Yet, “nowadays, to have boundaries makes no sense.”

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VIDEOS

ArtReview Asia

Tatsuo Miyajima



Yutaka Sone Kishio Suga Elmgreen & Dragset

New in its third edition, which took place over a packed weekend this past February, the biennial Dhaka Art Summit (DAS) operates according to an unusual structure. Part biennale, part conference, part art fair, part research report, part collection of museum-style exhibitions, part awards ceremony and yet at the same time not exactly any of those things, it took place in the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, the state-sponsored national academy of fine and performing arts, which for the four days of DAS's occupation was transformed into something of a South Asian tower of art power. All that in a country that has only existed in its present configuration since 1971, following numerous massacres, widespread population displacement and a guerrilla war waged against the Pakistan Army. And in a city where poverty is evident, the roads are often gridlocked, certain trips around the city involve an armed escort and the local English-language newspaper suggests that you subscribe via your hawket, it can be hard for the visitor to understand how the development of a contemporary art scene is its inhabitants' most pressing need. But if you wanted a reminder of the potential power of art, and of the political tensions still present in the country and the region that surrounds it, then the Chinese ambassador's much-publicised opening-day 'explosion' at the sight of Dharambala-based filmmakers Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam's *Last Words* (2005, part of a larger ongoing multimedia work titled *Burning Against the Dying of the Light*), featuring the last letters of five Tibetans (freely available online) who had self-immolated in protest against Chinese occupation of their country, gave an indication of that. Bangladesh is China's third largest trade partner in South Asia and the latter a major supplier to the former's military; the offending letters remained, but were subsequently covered by sheets of blank paper following the ambassador's request for their removal. Perhaps the incident was also a reminder of the limits within which art operates.

Ultimately though, most of art's more interesting adventures involve a leap of faith. In this case, the jump has been taken by Nadia and Rajeed Samdani under the auspices of their privately run Samdani Art Foundation (founded in 2011), which spearheads the event and is working towards the opening of a permanent art centre in Sylhet, in the northeast of the country. Almost incredibly, DAS hosted six curated exhibitions, 15 new commissions, four artworks that had been reworked for the site, plus a constant stream of talks, conferences and film screenings over the course of the long weekend. Among the highlights were *Rewind*,

THE POWER OF ART

The biennial
DHAKA ART SUMMIT
is widely hailed as
one of the most
important art events
in South Asia.
It certainly draws the
crowds – of international
art professionals and
locals – but is it building
A SUSTAINABLE
LOCAL ART SCENE?
As it grows in stature,
Mark Rappolt
takes a measure
of its ambitions

a show of rarely seen works produced by South Asian artists before 1980 and broadly reflecting the international spread and local adaptation of Modernism's vogueish theme right now that exposes the shared concerns of artists adopting a modernist language and the different reasons for their doing so. By way of example, the show featured one of two films (transferred to video) by Mumbai-based painter Akbar Padamsee. *Syzygy* (1969–70) is an extraordinary 11-minute black-and-white animation inspired by Paul Klee's pedagogical drawings in which the Indian artist sews out a series of quasi-mathematical propositions that lie behind a series of geometrical line drawings, reflecting his notion that 'you need the mind of a mathematician and poet put together to be a painter'. Near to *Syzygy*, Nalini Malani's remarkable *Tropic* (1985–86) is a dual projection that features a woman silhouetted against a window looking out over Bombay and a series of colour studies of models of blocky modernist houses, capturing themes of isolation, aspiration, dreams and disillusionment in a haunting way.

That work found an echo in Aurélien Lemonnier's beautifully curated and intelligent survey of *Architecture in Bangladesh*, which

charted the country's journey from modern to contemporary architecture with a focus on its role in nation-building and related struggles between regionalism and internationalism. Such debates in turn had an effect on the experience of viewing the *Solo Project* section, curated by DAS artistic director Diana Campbell Benacourt (whose group exhibition, *Mining Warm Data*, featured *Memento Mori*, 2016, an incredibly moving installation by Indian photographer Pablo Bartholomew that revolved around his response to the accidental destruction of one of his photographic archives). While the projects included absorbing works such as Shumon Ahmed's Guantánamo-inspired interactive installation and Tan Win Aung and Wah Nu's fusion of traditional theatre sets and documentary videos to chart environmental change in their native Myanmar, the focus on individual artists, their projects isolated one from the next (bookended by a version of Tino Sehgal's 2001 *Amor Let* performance and phosphorescent paintings by Lynda Benglis), seemed slightly discordant with the notion of dialogue and historical and geographical location established in the other exhibitions. Perhaps it was also a reminder that this type of art tends to operate in a privileged space (which, once you've walked Dhaka's streets, DAS undoubtedly is). That said, it's also true that the *Solo Project* simply articulate the desire to provide a 'something for everyone' experience at DAS. They were certainly packed with extraordinary numbers of students, families and schoolchildren. Some of the irony of the 'VIP treatment' was captured in a photographic and film project by Myanmar-based Po Po, which (following on from a similar 2008 *VIP Project* in Yangon) explored the prevalence of and deferential reaction to VIP signs in Bangladesh. It was, of course, located next to DAS's VIP lounge.

Amidst the art and the crowds of visitors, it's easy to lose track of the fact that many of the things that made their way into the Shilpakala Academy are the product of ongoing workshops and dialogues with local and international artists, and museums around the world. Behind the exhibition spaces are passionate summits and conversations (one gathering a 'Critical Writing Ensemble') that debate the pathways that South Asian art (and art in general) might follow and the structures it might build to support that, both within the region and internationally. And it's the initiation and facilitation of such discourse that is, in many ways, the really lasting effect of the DAS initiative – and one of the paths by which it can truly contribute to the establishment of a vibrant art scene in Bangladesh.

The Dhaka Art Summit Gives Bangladesh A Global Spotlight



Ann Binlot
CONTRIBUTOR

Both children and adults, locals and foreigners grazed their feet over the 1,000 tiles in monochromatic shades of turquoise to feel the texture in Sandeep Mukherjee's installation "The Sky Remains," at the Dhaka Art Summit. The piece, which also consists of 14 modular wall panels is meant for viewers to think of the country's sky and surrounding delta tributaries. Families posed for pictures in front of the immersive work, teenagers dressed in saris took selfies and toddlers wobbled across the work, demonstrating the hands-on nature of the biannual event.



Children look at Sandeep Mukherjee's "The Sky Remains" at the Dhaka Art Summit (Noor Photoface)

The Dhaka Art Summit is not quite a biennial in the vein of the Venice Biennale, an art fair like Zona Maco and Art Basel, or a museum, but in many ways, it's all those things and more. "The Dhaka Art Summit is our own model, and we have different curated shows, we have solo projects, we have talks, we have performances – so all kinds of things under one roof," said the Dhaka Art Summit's co-founder Nadia Samdani, who along with her husband Rajeeb Samdani, started the summit, which had its first iteration in 2012, in 2011.

The four-day event, a collaboration between the Samdani Foundation and the Bangladesh Ministry of Cultural Affairs, took place from February 5 to 8 at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in Dhaka, attracting over 138,000 visitors from the region and around the globe to experience South Asian Art. "There's no other event like this, which is focused towards South Asian art, and we really wanted to give a platform for this, and it's a major exposure for the international, especially for the western world, to come and discover our South Asian artists," said Nadia.

Although there currently are no contemporary art museums in Bangladesh, the Samdanis currently have plans to build an art space in Sylhet, Bangladesh that is expected to open in 2018, but until then, aside from the galleries located in Bangladesh, the Dhaka Art Summit is the premier stage for South Asian art in the world. “So many curated exhibitions that Bangladeshi artists are being included, so many articles, so much written about them, even important museums have collected, like the British Museum, Tate, Guggenheim, Kunsthalle Basel, so they’re giving shows to Bangladeshi artists,” said Nadia. “This is what our success is of the Dhaka Art Summit, putting Bangladesh and South Asia on the map.”

“I could not be more thrilled with the breadth and quality of all of the exhibitions and for all the intellectual discourse thriving in the Critical Writing Ensemble, which percolated in formal and informal meetings across the four days of DAS,” added Diana Campbell Betancourt, Samdani Art Foundation Artistic Director and DAS Chief Curator.

The biggest indication of success at the event, which was free to the public, was the fact that 2,500 students visited, perhaps experiencing their first exposure to work by international artists like Lynda Benglis, who exhibited a series of sculptures she created specifically for the event, and Tino Sehgal, who presented a performance piece acted out by Bangladeshi drama students. “The shows DAS puts up are so interesting and so many people come here just for the exchange,” said Beatrix Ruf, director of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. “What really amazes me is that there is no assumption of what this event should be... it’s not an art fair, it’s not a symposium, it’s not a biennial. I was so excited to see the rows of children entering the Summit, the whole building was filled with children from schools looking at something that they understood far better than I did.”

Here’s a brief overview of the highlights of the Dhaka Art Summit:

Samdani Art Award

The gallery that exhibited the nominees for the Samdani Art Award, curated by Daniel Baumann, showed Bangladesh’s most promising contemporary artists. At the opening dinner for the Dhaka Art Summit at Le Meridien, an ecstatic Rasel Chowdhury won the grand prize for “Railway Longings”, a thought provocative look into the lives lived along the country’s railroad system. Chowdhury will spend a three-month residency at the Delfina Foundation in London.

A Journey Through Architecture in Bangladesh

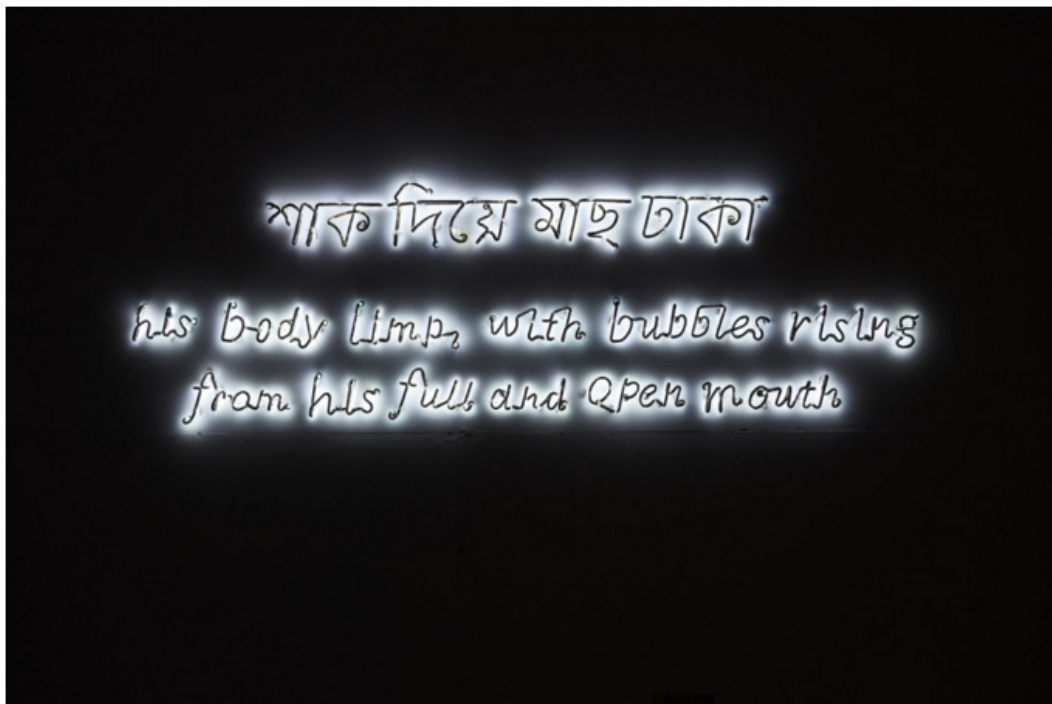
Curated by Centre Pompidou curator Aurélien Lemonier, A Journey Through Architecture in Bangladesh was the first exhibition of its kind in the country. The exhibition uses Muzharul Islam as its starting point. Rather than create it himself, Bangladeshi architect Islam tapped Louis Kahn to design the Dhaka parliament building. Both Islam and Kahn would go on to influence generations of architects in Dhaka, like Bashirul Haq of Bashirul Haq & Associates Ltd., Salauddin Ahmed of Atelier Robin Architects, and Mustapha Khalid Palash of Vistaara Architects Ltd., whose models and plans are among those that were displayed in the exhibition.



An installation shot of Rewind at the Dhaka Art Summit 2016. (Jenni Carter)

Rewind

Although the names of European and American Modernist artists are known to art enthusiasts around the globe, the names of prominent South Asian artists from the same period or not. Rewind featured 90 works by 13 artists who had connections with Bangladesh, and displayed their pre-1980 endeavors in abstraction and figuration, many of which had never been seen before. “One of the works, which was by a Bangladeshi Modernist, it belongs to the Shilpakala Academy Collection Archive,” said Nadia. “Another work hasn’t been shown in 30 years.” Anwar Jalal Shemza’s abstract masterpieces, Bagyi Aung Soe’s felt tip pen on paper works, and Germaine Krull’s beautiful photographs of early ‘60s Burma were among the countless highlights of the exhibition.



Mariam Ghani and Chitra Ganesh's "Index of the Disappeared" (Jenni Carter)

China Censors Work

DAS artistic director Diana Campbell Betancourt curated Mining Warm Data, a group exhibition that displayed work that was overtly political in nature. Betancourt began the exhibition with the continuation of Mariam Ghani and Chitra Ganesh's Index of the Disappeared. On February 7, Ma Mangqiang, the Chinese ambassador to Bangladesh, marched in and told organizers to take down "Last Words," a series of five images by Indian artist Ritu Sarin and Tibetan artist Tenzing Sonam of letters written by Tibetans who burned themselves to death to protest the Chinese government's oppression of Tibet. By the final day, five pieces of white paper covered the places where the art once hung.

ART WORLD

The world doesn't identify Bangladesh with contemporary art and design, but the Dhaka Art Summit might just change that

The event is a quiet argument for the viability of broad public engagement with intelligent and occasionally provocative forms of expression.

Michael Snyder · Feb 19, 2016 · 01:30 pm

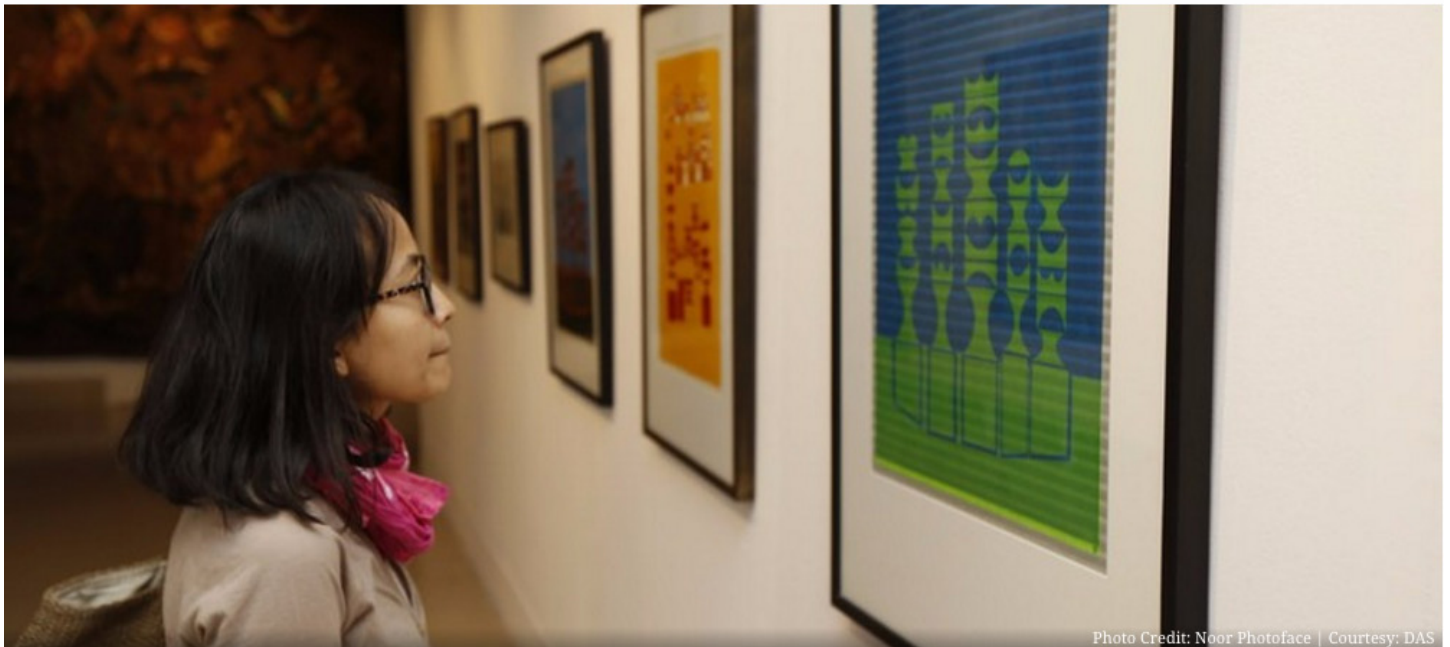


Photo Credit: Noor Photoface | Courtesy: DAS

On the second morning of the Dhaka Art Summit, the largest non-commercial art event in South Asia held from February 5-8, Bangladesh's Parliament building saw what must have been the largest (and certainly best dressed) group of visitors in its history. Curators, artists, gallerists and journalists – probably 100 people in all – who had flown in from around the world for the summit, had come to see the interior of what is probably Bangladesh's best-known monument, the magnum opus of the great Russian-American modernist architect Louis Kahn.

From the outside, the primary impression of the Parliament building is of bulk – a wan grey concrete block, cross-hatched by strips of marble, huddled low on one of relatively few open spaces in this crumpled cardboard box of a city. Inside, it is immense yet prayerful, abstract yet familiar – its cathedral grandeur directing your eyes and spirit not toward god, but inward. It encourages an introspective sense of democracy; the building, like Kahn himself, is eternally idealistic.

Begun in 1962 as a centerpiece for the auxiliary capital in East Pakistan, and completed 20 years later as a capitol complex for the newly-liberated nation of Bangladesh, the building, which appears on the pages of Bangladeshi passports and on the national currency, is perhaps the country's closest thing to a national monument.

Labour of love

Kashef Chowdhury - a Dhaka-based architect whose work I've written on in the past and who was among the eight contemporary architects featured in the summit's outstanding architecture exhibition (curated by Aurelien Lemonier, architecture curator for the Centre Pompidou in Paris), told me: "People here identify with these spaces."

Yet, for the most part, the outside world knows little about them. I had the good fortune of going around Dhaka with Chowdhury two years earlier, and so knew at least something of its rich culture of contemporary architecture. At the Parliament that morning, watching this worldly, elegant crowd (which included representatives from 71 major museums and arts institutions around the world) wandering slack-jawed and wide-eyed through those towering geometries in what must be one of the world's most unprepossessing cities, was in itself a kind of performance art.

Though Dhaka hosted the region's first Biennial in 1981, and hosts Asia's largest photography festival, the Chobi Mela, the kind of international attention that the Samdani Foundation - the non-profit organisation that created the art summit in 2012 and organised it this year for the third time - has brought to Dhaka has never been a given. People in Dhaka may well identify with spaces like Kahns, as Chowdhury says, but the rest of the world still does not identify Bangladesh with triumphs of contemporary art and design.

Foundation trustee Rajeeb Samdani's presence at the Parliament building that morning - helping the team of summit volunteers to herd awe-struck outsiders through the building - demonstrated the extent to which the summit is truly a labor of love, a matter of personal investment, rather than merely a financial one.

Something to prove

Bangladesh has had its share of political issues, among them recent attacks on journalists and foreigners that inspired half-a-dozen of my own acquaintances to warn me against going near anyone carrying a machete (sound advice in most places, as far as I'm concerned).

Dhaka is an exceptionally difficult city to navigate, so guests of the summit had their schedules pretty closely managed. We were shuttled between our hotels and the summit venue at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, invited for dinners and cocktail parties (this is the art world, after all), and granted access to the obligatory VIP lounge - ironically placed adjacent to Burmese artist Po Po's masterful photo and video installation, VIP Project, which quietly eviscerates VIP cultures in Burma and Bangladesh.

Despite this, the overwhelming impression of the summit was neither hermetic nor rarefied, but rather joyous, free-wheeling and democratic, without being pandering or populist. When, in a talk on her installation Museum of Chance, Delhi-based photographer Dayanita Singh said, "we need to go back to the dissemination part of photography," it seemed very much in keeping with the spirit of an event that was not only entirely free, but that, in the course of just four days, attracted 138,000 visitors, including 2,500 children from local schools.



Dayanita Singh with visitors (Photo credit: Noor Photoface | Courtesy: DAS)

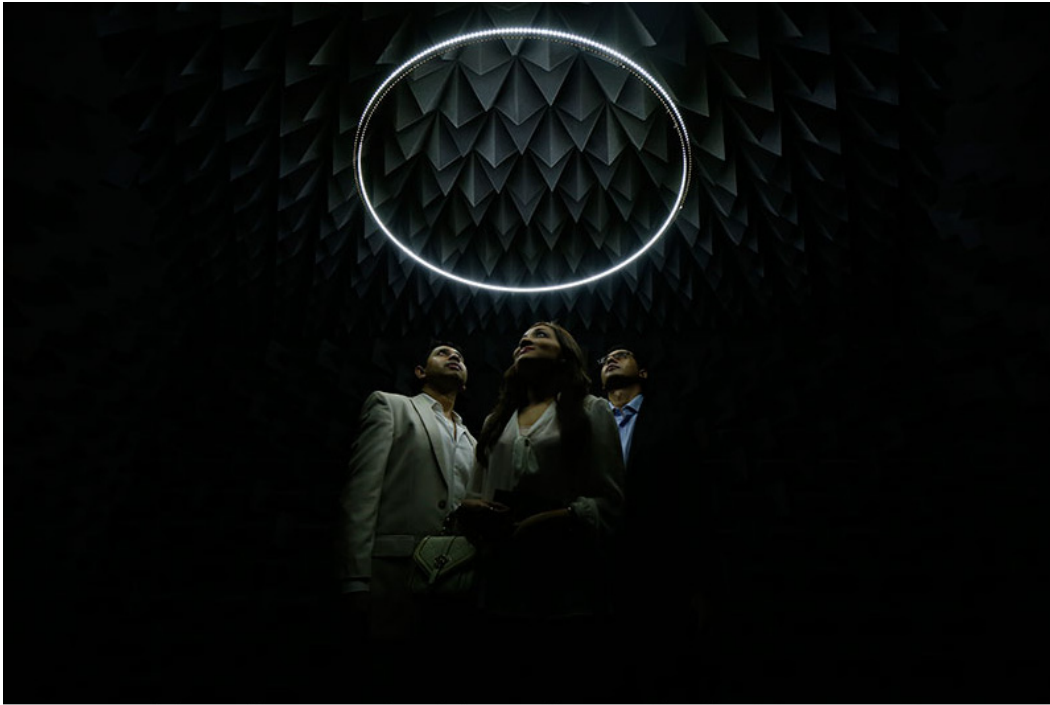
Shanay Jhaveri, who curated the summit's film program and who was recently appointed assistant curator, South Asia, under the department of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, told me that other art events – like Documenta or the Venice Biennale or Frieze, for instance – have extended histories, “so people are being told how to interact with them.” At Dhaka, that is palpably not the case.

The works on display at the summit never condescended to their audiences. They were challenging, often political, and in some cases quite confrontational. The big story out of the summit was the Chinese ambassador's angry insistence on the removal of the installation *Last Words* by artists Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam, which consisted of the final letters written by Tibetan self-immolators. The curators chose to cover the work, rather than remove it, a concession to political exigencies. But it became a powerful visual statement in its own right, transforming the work from one about a specific protest to one about censorship more broadly. But to focus on just that would be to ignore the summit's subtler triumphs.



Accessible art

Groups of school children looked closely at images from a series called Inner Face by the young Bangladeshi photographer, Gazi Nafis Ahmed, which depict with exceptional warmth, humanity, and intimacy members of Dhaka's queer community. Teenagers chatted excitedly as they attempted to make sense of installations in the Nikhil Chopra-curated performance pavilion. Families lined up to wear heavy goggles, headphones, and black sacks over their heads in an installation by another Bangladeshi photographer, Shumon Ahmed, titled Land of the Free, which simulated the aural and visual experience of containment in Guantanamo. Across the main gallery from Ahmed's installation, another line snaked out of the enclosure that contained a geometrically padded room that was the setting for a sound installation by Pakistani artist Haroon Mirza. It's worth noting here that customs laws being what they are, bringing artworks from India or Pakistan into Bangladesh requires sending them via the Middle East, which might give a sense of how complicated an endeavour the art summit is.



Visitors with Haroon Mirza (Photo credit: Noor Photoface | Courtesy DAS)



Architecture students, who otherwise have limited access to venues presenting architectural exhibitions, were able to see, assembled in one room, an impressive edit of models, images, and archival sketches from some of the best architects working in Dhaka – indeed, in South Asia – today.

The Rewind exhibition gathered works by South Asian artists working before 1980, notably skipping the obvious reference points of figures like Hussain and Gaitonde in favor of works by lesser known artists, exhibiting drawings by the Burmese master Bagyi Aung Soe and several exceptional works by Pakistani painter Zahoor UI Akhlaq, among others.



Photo credit: Nivriti Roddam

The group shows – curated by the Samdani foundation’s artistic director, Diana Campbell Betancourt, and Nada Raza, an assistant curator of South Asian art at the Tate Modern in London – put works from across the region in dialogue with one another, emphasising both the continuities in artistic concerns and the immense variety in responses to those concerns across a region known, above all else, for its mind-boggling diversity. Campbell described the event as “a pop-up museum” – as apt a description as I can imagine – combining the aesthetic daring of a contemporary art gallery with the effervescent now-or-never energy of a one-night-only theatrical performance.



SM Sultan with women (Photo credit: Noor Photoface | Courtesy: DAS)

A research platform

“What I find fascinating in Bangladesh, and Dhaka specifically, is that art initiatives are really trying to build their own models and identities,” Diana told me via email shortly before the summit began. “There is a strong sense of individual responsibility. I think this grassroots approach to building a cultural ecosystem is exceptional to the region. People are hungry for culture.”

In the weeks leading up to the summit, I spoke to Nadia Samdani, the foundation’s director. “Before all of this, we had artists, of course, but research was just very difficult,” she said. “There were hardly museums and hardly galleries, except for those in India and Pakistan, so where could people go to find out what’s happening?”

As a research platform, which is its stated intent, the summit provides an exciting opportunity for institutions around the world to explore South Asia’s rich and diverse contemporary artistic output, and more specifically the compelling cultural life of a nation founded, perhaps uniquely, on the basis of language and cultural identity, an identity closely tied to the arts (Bangladeshis are Bengalis, after all). The tour of the Parliament building that morning encapsulated quite effectively this component of the summit’s mission.

But that is, to my mind, the less exciting element of what I saw in Dhaka. If the summit is, indeed, “what’s happening,” then it is cause not just for admiration, but also, perhaps, for optimism, a quiet argument for the viability of broad public engagement with intelligent, measured, and occasionally provocative forms of expression, at a time when that kind of optimism is not so easy to come by.



News

Destination Bangladesh: art world decamps to third Dhaka Art Summit

Four-day event is billed as “the world’s largest non-commercial platform for South Asian art”

by GARETH HARRIS | 4 February 2016



Shumon Ahmed, *Land of the Free* (2009) will be on show at the third Dhaka Art Summit in Bangladesh. Courtesy of the artist and Project 88

A key art-historical exhibition throwing new light on historic post-war works by South Asian artists forms part of the third Dhaka Art Summit in Bangladesh, which opens tomorrow (5-8 February). The show, entitled *Rewind*, features 12 artists including the late Bangladeshi practitioner Rashid Choudhury and Indian-born Monika Correa. The Indian art collector Amrita Jhaveri is sponsoring the exhibition, which is part of a programme encompassing solo art projects, group shows, panel discussions, and workshops.

The summit—a meeting point for more than 300 art professionals—will be held in the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. According to the organisers, the event is “the world’s largest non-commercial platform for South Asian art”. The summit “is not a biennial, and not a symposium, nor a festival, but rather somewhere in between and removed from the pressures of the art market”, they say.

The Mumbai-based curator Diana Campbell Betancourt is the summit’s artistic director and the chief curator of the 2016 edition. She is overseeing *Rewind*, along with a solo projects section comprising 17 pieces by artists such as Lynda Benglis, Simryn Gill and Sandeep Mukherjee. Tino Sehgal’s performance *Ann Lee* (2011), shown courtesy of the François Pinault collection, is also included.

Guest curators include Nada Raza, an assistant curator at Tate Modern, and Daniel Baumann, the director of the Kunsthalle Zürich. Raza is organising an exhibition entitled *The Story of the Missing One*, the centerpiece of which is a Modernist watercolour by the early 20th-century Indian painter Gaganendranath Tagore. Performance art, a staple of biennials and fairs worldwide, is also on the agenda; a Performance Pavilion called *Shifting Sands, Sifting Hands* is run by Nikhil Chopra, Madhavi Gore, and Jana Prepeluh.

Nadia Samdani and her husband Rajeeb are the summit's founding patrons. They launched the Samdani Art Foundation in 2011; the first edition of the summit opened the following year. More than 90% of the funding for the Dhaka Art Summit comes from the Samdani Art Foundation, with the remainder coming from private and governmental sources.

A spokesman for the Dhaka Art Summit says: "One of the reasons the summit lasts four days, apart from the production costs, is that it is ticketless and free for all, which means there is no income."

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SAMDANI ART FOUNDATION

BEYOND THE SUMMIT

Beyond DAS: Samdani Art Foundation's further activities

Samdani Seminars

Samdani Seminars are a series of talks and workshops geared at enhancing arts education in Bangladesh by facilitating interactions with international artists. Visiting artists have featured in leading exhibitions such as the Venice Biennale, Documenta, Sharjah Biennale, Guggenheim Museum, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, among others. The artists conduct free lectures/workshops to complement the existing curriculum of Bangladesh's leading educational institutions. While half of the seminars are open to the public and enjoyed by audiences of over 300 art students, the other half of the seminars are closed-door discussions with a group of participants selected by the visiting artists.

In September 2016, Polish artist, Pawel Althamer, along with members of his community from Brodno, will travel to Bangladesh to engage alienated communities in creative and collaborative workshops as part of Samdani Art Foundations continued Seminar programme. A member of MoMA Warsaw's team shall accompany the group on their journey, hold a curatorial seminar in Dhaka, and in turn disseminate information about this experience in Poland.

This seminar will particularly focus on bridging understanding across social and cultural divides through the power of creativity. Pawel and his neighbours will engage the patients of Protisruti (the Promise) drug rehabilitation centre in Sylhet, in 7 days of workshops to create a communal work of art. These workshops will be a continuation of Althamer's long-standing history of working with people with various disabilities. For 20-years he has run workshops for Nowolipie Group- people suffering from multiple sclerosis. Here he discovered a different kind of academy, using his work to activate a broader concept of community in an increasingly isolating world. These workshops will be informed by his prestigious works, The Neighbors and Draftsmen's Congress, focusing on the essential role of collaboration and community.

The group will also hold workshops in Dhaka, again working collectively to create a work of art with artists and students across Dhaka city. This stage of the Seminar is an extension of his work with the Nowolipie group, and more specifically inspired by his Public Art Fund Workshops at the New School, New York, in which Althamer invited local residents, members of his family and American artist Noah Fischer, to create the communal sculpture.

Sylhet Sculpture Park and Public Arts Centre

In 2018, the Samdani Art Foundation will open a public arts centre in Sylhet, Bangladesh on a 100+ acre outdoor site (2018 will mark phase 1). In addition to a sculpture park, it will house the Samdani's art collection, as well as commission new works by South Asian and international artists.

The building and acquisition of works will be funded entirely by the Samdani Art Foundation, with residencies, workshops and temporary exhibitions realised in collaboration with international partners, such as the Polish Institute and Asia Europe Foundation.

Through opening this space we aim to improve the existing public art infrastructure in the country, as well as create accessibility of a wider audience to contemporary art.

Residency programme

The Samdani Art Foundation provides Bangladeshi artists and curators funds to travel to enhance their professional growth. The winner of the Samdani Art Award receives an all expense paid, three-month residency at the Delfina Foundation in London, UK.

The Collection

There are approximately 2,000 artworks in the Samdani Art Foundation collection. South Asian highlights of the collection include Anish Kapoor, Gaganendranath Tagore, Naeem Mohaliemen, Rana Begum, Raqs Media Collective, Shilpa Gupta, and Zarina Hashimi. International highlights include Rembrandt, Matisse, Picasso, Paul Klee, Dali, Ettore Spalletti, Cindy Sherman, Marina Abramovic, Ai Weiwei, Pawel Althamer, Mona Hatoum, Philippe Parreno, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster. The collection is currently based at Golpo, the Samdani Art Foundation residence in Gulshan, Dhaka. The collection is open to the public by appointment and serves as an important study tool for local artists and aspiring curators in Bangladesh to learn about international art.

LOOKING TOWARDS DHAKA ART SUMMIT 2018

2-10

FEBRUARY

2018

TENTATIVE DATES

