



NEWSLETTER

LAHORE BIENNALE FOUNDATION

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The Lahore Biennale Foundation (LBF) is a Lahore-based, non-profit organisation committed to advancing cultural exchange by working with local and international artists and researchers and fostering social transformation through art. Through its flagship project, the Lahore Biennale, LBF provides a platform for art that encourages methodologically informed discourse and collective action in response to global and local issues. LBF is working to transform spaces in Lahore by elevating the relevance of contemporary art in Lahore's vernacular, bringing together different communities and stakeholders to explore new ways of experiencing and interacting with their environment.

In addition to its primary event, LBF organises workshops, talks, and other events that engage diverse audiences. LBF has also developed meaningful local and international collaborations with various institutions including several governmental departments, the British Council,

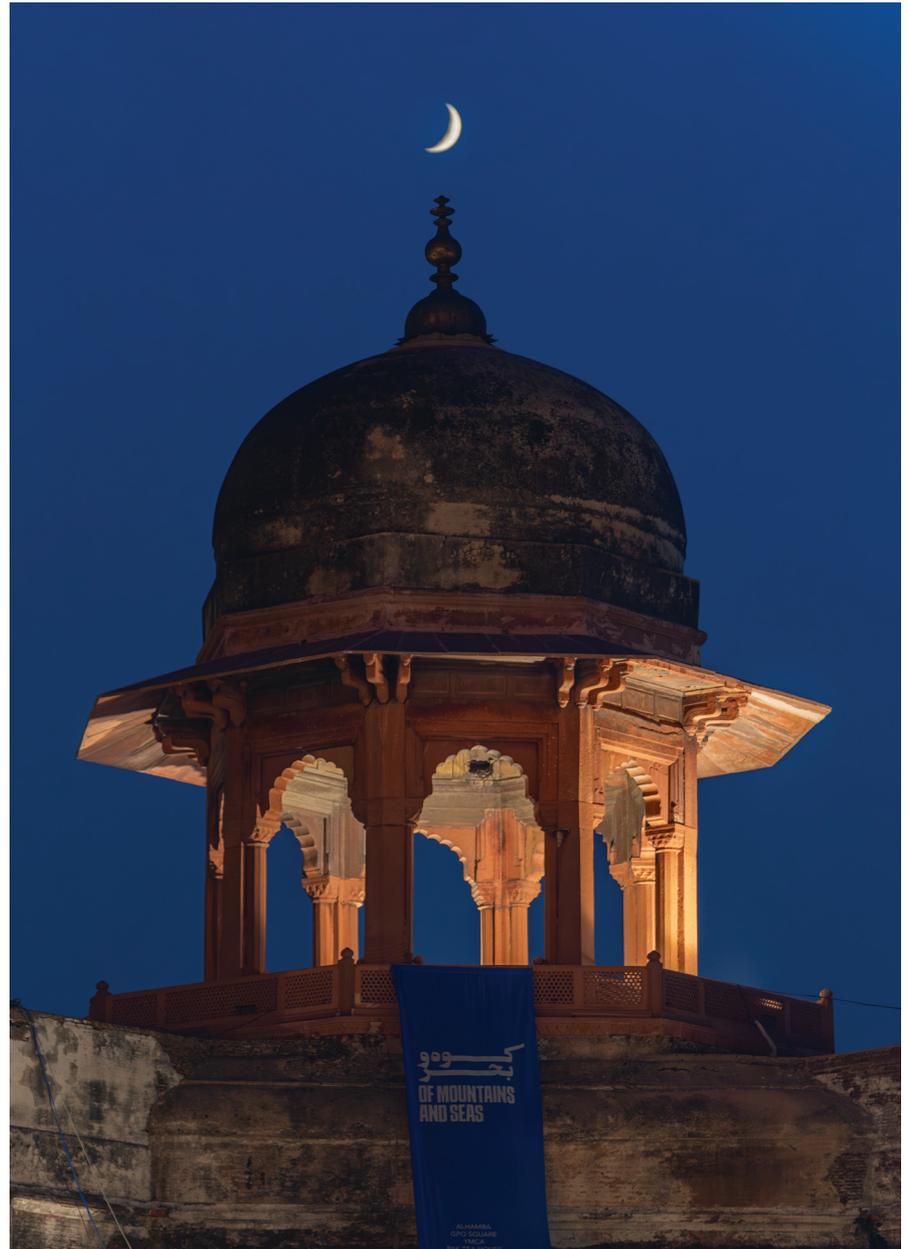
the Getty Foundation, and local and international universities including Harvard University, UC Berkeley, and Cornell, LUMS, and NCA. In addition, the Research Unit, an integral part of the Lahore Biennale Foundation, provides a platform for investigative learning, focusing on modern and contemporary art, visual culture, and its social dimensions in Pakistan and its diasporas. It is committed to supporting creative art practices, promoting a diverse cultural ecology, and encouraging interdisciplinary approaches and outcomes. LBF is committed to advancing locally informed climate programming through initiatives such as the Punjab Green School Certification Program (a province-wide program that aims to bring climate literacy to schools through art-based education, led by the EPCCD, Government of Punjab in collaboration with School of Education, LUMS), Afforestation Lahore, and the Zero Waste Initiative.

The Foundation seeks to democratise access to the arts and to emphasise engagement and capacity building for local cultural actors. LBF engages with underrepresented groups, and attempts to ensure that its programs are accessible within the cultural ecosystem. By promoting inclusivity, accessibility, and sustainability, LBF hopes to strengthen the relationship between the arts and the community, creating a cultural space that is vibrant, engaging, and reflective of the diverse social and cultural realities of Lahore and the wider region.

The Lahore Biennale Foundation has played a significant role in reshaping the cultural ecology of Lahore by expanding public awareness of contemporary art and its social relevance. Central to this work has been the reactivation of Lahore's heritage and civic spaces, including sites previously closed to the public like Bradlaugh Hall and Summer Palace; temporarily returning havelis, colonial-era

buildings, gardens, and public institutions to active cultural use, thereby re-inscribing them within the lived experience of the city. In doing so, LBF has contributed to new ways of understanding Lahore's layered histories, while demonstrating how art can operate as a catalyst for civic engagement, cultural stewardship and long-term urban imagination.

The Foundation also publishes the Lahore Biennale Reader, a recurring publication developed in collaboration with Cornell University and published by SKIRA. The Reader foregrounds the academic dimension of the Biennale, offering critical depth to the artistic programme and serves as a permanent archive and global reference point for contemporary art in and from South Asia.



MESSAGE FROM **THE CO-CHAIRS**

At the Lahore Biennale Foundation, our work is guided by a decentralized and context-sensitive approach that critically engages with pervasive ways of curation and research. By remaining closely involved with and deeply informed by the public, we develop programs that are shaped by dialogue instead of fixed frameworks.

This year marked an important institutional moment for the Foundation with the election of Qudsia Rahim to the Board of Directors of the International Biennial Association. Her appointment formally establishes the growing presence of the Foundation within the global biennial network and LBF's sustained commitment to represent Pakistan on the international level. LBF has also continued working on climate justice and environmental sustainability with support from the Federal Climate Ministry and the Provincial Environmental Protection Department. A pilot project of LBF, the Green School Certification Program, has recently been adapted by the Government of Punjab to become a province-wide initiative.



The third Lahore Biennale, *Of Mountains and Seas*, curated by John Tain, centered on ecologies and sustainable futures through a research-led and inclusive approach that amplified diverse voices and encouraged public engagement. These conversations will continue with LB04, which is scheduled for Spring 2027.



We extend our sincere gratitude to our patrons, partners, and supporters, and encourage continued investment in the arts as a vital step toward realizing Pakistan's immense creative potential.

Prof. Naazish Ata-Ullah
and
Raza Ali Dada

MESSAGE FROM **THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

As the year draws to a close, we reflect on periods marked by uncertainties and challenges, but also by possibilities and determination. The Lahore Biennale Foundation has remained committed to responding to local and regional issues, reaffirming the responsibility of art and locally informed solutions in mitigating and resolving these challenges.

In 2025, the Foundation continued to position Pakistani artists and cultural practitioners on the global stage. LBF's program formed part of the public program for South Asia at the 2025 edition of Asia NOW Paris. In addition, LBF's partnership with the South Asia Art Initiative at UC Berkeley initiated a multi-year residency program, creating new opportunities for research, exchange, and collaboration.

LBF also collaborated with the Government of Punjab to begin implementation of the the Punjab Green School Certification Program. The project seeks to bring climate awareness to public and private schools across Punjab through art-based education, equipping 11

million students with ecologically friendly frameworks of action, consequently impacting 11 million households. The program's bottom up approach seeks to not only hone students' critical thinking skills but also encourages local communities to exercise active agency in creating a better future.

As we look ahead, LBF's vision and work remain guided by the belief that cultural and artistic practice must be responsive, critical, and deeply engaged with local realities. We are grateful to our partners and audiences for their continued trust and participation, and we look forward to building on this shared work in the year to come.

Qudsia Rahim
Executive Director,
Lahore Biennale Foundation



OF MOUNTAINS AND SEAS: THE LASTING IMPACT OF LAHORE BIENNALE 03

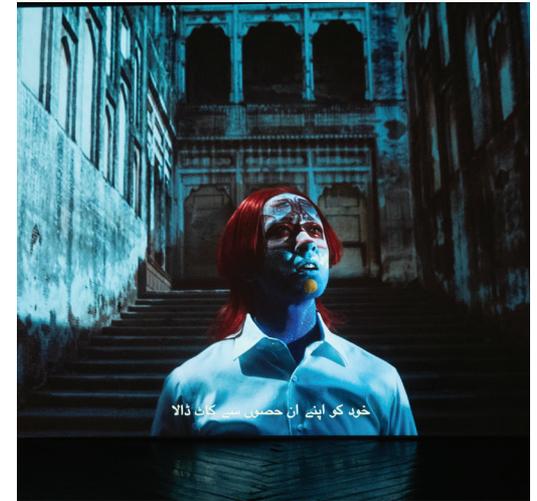
The Third Edition of the Lahore Biennale, LB03, *Of Mountains and Seas*, curated by John Tain, advanced LBF's commitment to ecology and sustainable futures, foregrounding urgent "Glocal" environmental concerns. Welcoming over 3 million visitors and partnering with 75 global institutions, LB03 delivered 42 capacity-building and knowledge-sharing workshops across the city. Presented at 11 landmark sites—including the Lahore



Chow and Lin, *Even If It Looks Like Grass*, 2024



Haegue Yang, *Spring Sailors – Six Synecologies Aloft*, 2024



Sin Wai Kin, *The Fortress*, 2024

Fort and, for the first time, the Shalimar Gardens—this edition showcased more than 550 works by over 75 artists, with several permanent installations gifted to Lahore. The Biennale concluded with the week-long Climate Congress, led by Prof. Iftikhar Dadi and John Tain, convening 78 international delegates from over 30 countries to chart pathways toward environmental resilience and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

LBO3:
OF MOUNTAINS AND SEAS



Farida Batool, *Thandi Sarak Eik Kahani*, 2024



Ali Kazim, *Untitled ('Ruins' Series)*, 2024



Zarina Muhammad, *Shelters for seeds and all that quietly survives*, 2024



Leeroy New, *Mebuyan's Colony*, 2024



Tomás Saraceno, *Museo Aero Solar*, 2007–Present



Abuzar Madhu, *Humming with Ravi*, 2024

QUDSIA RAHIM PRESENTS LBF'S WORK ON CLIMATE ACTION DURING A SESSION FOR COP30

Qudsia Rahim was invited to speak on biennials and the climate crisis in a discussion for the 30th session of the United Nations Climate Change Conference. She presented an overview of LBF's key projects over the past twelve years, including works from the third edition of the Lahore Biennale. Among these was Usman Saeed's Baghe-Noor Jahan, a rewilding initiative now extended to additional sites in Lahore. She also discussed LBF's climate-focused public programming, including the Punjab Green School Certification Program (PGSCP).



The International Biennial Association (IBA) and the Fundação Bienal de São Paulo, through its Vice President and Special Envoy for Culture and Creative Industries of COP30, Maguy Etlín, invite you to join

BIENNIALS AND THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

HOW CONTEMPORARY ART SHAPES CLIMATE CHANGE DISCOURSE

Take part in a compelling discussion with Ambassador André Corrêa do Lago, President of COP30; Antonio Lessa, CEO of Fundação Bienal de São Paulo; Hoor Al Qasimi, President of IBA and President and Director of the Sharjah Art Foundation; and Qudsia Rahim, Executive Director of the Lahore Biennale Foundation.

Together, they will explore **how contemporary art and major biennials can shape global climate discourse, foster environmental awareness, and contribute to the urgent fight against climate change.**

**October 20
Mon, 11am**

Via Zoom

iba
International
Biennial
Association

 **bienal são paulo**

PANEL DISCUSSION AT LLF 2025, **NEW YORK EDITION**

At Asia Society's Lahore Literary Festival held in New York in May 2025, Qudsia Rahim joined Iftikhar Dadi (Cornell University) for a discussion on "Art and the Citizen: Reinforcing Civic Norms and Critical Discourses". The discussion highlighted local urgencies and the role of biennials, particularly in the Global South, in bringing ownership of the space and narrative to the multiple publics that occupy the city. The panel also discussed the recent surge of public interest in art and environment and the role LBF has played over the last 12 years in helping situate the country's artistic and intellectual production in the international socio-cultural milieu.



A recording of the talk is available to be viewed at <https://asiasociety.org/video/lahore-literary-festival-new-york-2025-art-and-citizen-lahore-biennale-qudsia-rahim-iftikhar-dadi-and>.



ONSITE-OFFSITE: **A CURATORIAL CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP**

Conducted across Karachi, Lahore, and London in a hybrid format, Onsite-Offsite was designed for accessibility, capacity building, and cross-cultural exchange. It engaged 58 emerging scholars through seminars and craft labs, addressing themes

such as art, law, justice, spatial politics, and public engagement. The program equipped fellows with practical strategies for site-responsive and socially engaged exhibition-making.

INAUGURAL COLLABORATION LAUNCHES WITH 2025 ARTIST IN RESIDENCE, IMRAN QURESHI

Over the course of the week, LBF facilitated a series of public and university-facing events, including a curated viewing of miniature paintings at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA), a hands-on workshop on traditional pigment techniques, and a lecture by Qureshi exploring the evolution of his practice.



Qudsia Rahim and Imran Qureshi, hosted by SAAI Chair Dipti Mathur, discuss themes of resilience, violence, and historical form in South Asian art



Workshop on traditional pigment techniques and miniature painting



A site-specific work developed by Qureshi at 10 Stephens Hall

ZERO WASTE INITIATIVE

In February, the Lahore Biennale Foundation and the Planning & Development Board (P&DB), Government of Punjab, formalized their collaboration on the Zero Waste Initiative (ZWI) in the presence of Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb. Leveraging art to promote sustainable practices, ZWI adopts a whole systems approach, reducing landfill dependency and advancing environmental stewardship across Punjab.

This project has now become part of the PGSCP.



AFFORESTATION LAHORE

The Afforestation Lahore Group, in partnership with Soft Swirl, launched a plantation drive to promote a greener, healthier city. The initiative planted 5,000 native species along the Gajjumatta–Mustafabad–Lalyani stretch, strengthening urban ecology and community participation.

Afforestation Lahore is an ongoing initiative that responds to the loss of tree cover in Lahore and the city's continuing hazardous Air Quality.

LBF INVITED TO ASIA NOW, PARIS

The 2025 edition of Asia NOW, titled *Grow*, highlighted the capacity of art to shape perceptions, influence behaviour, and foster connections across cultural and geographic divides. Held at La Monnaie

de Paris, the fair brought together a wide range of artistic perspectives from across Asia. As part of the "Focus on South Asia Public Program," John Tain curated a selection of artworks and performances

from the third edition of the Lahore Biennale, *Of Mountains and Seas*. This collaboration was supported by the French Embassy in Pakistan.

Curator John Tain

Of Mountains and Seas, curated by John Tain for Asia NOW, highlights the **intersections of art, ecology, and cultural knowledge** across the region. The project brings together artists from Pakistan and beyond to highlight the country's role, alongside others across the continent most affected by the **climate crisis**, in helping societies **adapt through local and indigenous knowledge**.

Public Program Public Program Public Program

Of Mountains and Seas

Presented by Lahore Biennale Foundation.

Fazal Rizvi, How to Become a Rock - a fall, a poem, a wish, a score, a manifesto, 2024

Curator John Tain

John Tain curated *Of Mountains and Seas*, the third edition of the **Lahore Biennale**, in 2024. As Head of Research at Asia Art Archive, he led major projects such as AAA's contribution to documenta fifteen, Art Schools of Asia, Crafting Communities, and MAHASSA. He serves as an organizer of **Asia Forum**, a collateral event at the Venice Biennale, and previously worked as a curator at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles.

LBF INVITED TO ASIA NOW, PARIS

For the South Asia Program at Asia NOW, LBF's presentation featured several artists, including Abuzar Madhu, Bani Abidi, Fazal Rizvi & Baneen Mirza, Fazal Rizvi, with Paulina Ruiz Carballido and Faheem Abbas, Feroza Hakeem, Gidree Bawlee, Salma Jamal Mousham, Kamruzzaman Shadhin, Hamra Abbas, Imran Qureshi, Mella Jaarsma, Niamat Nigar, Sin Wai Kin,



Zheng Bo, *Phoenix*, 2024

Stolon Press (Simryn Gill & Tom Melick), and Zheng Bo.



Fazal Rizvi & Baneen Mirza, *from hand to hand to hands*, 2025



Abuzar Madhu, *Partitioned Waters*, 2024



Feroza Hakeem, *Khorshid Fruit*, 2024

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LBF **ELECTED TO IBA BOARD**

Qudsia Rahim was elected to the Board of Directors of the International Biennial Association (IBA) at its 12th General Assembly in Liverpool, marking a significant milestone and bringing international recognition to Pakistan and South Asia within the global arts community.

“Qudsia Rahim’s appointment marks a significant milestone for South Asia: the first time a biennale institution from the region has a leadership position on the global governing Board,” said Hoor Al Qasimi, President of the International Biennial Association.

Meet our new board member

Qudsia
Rahim

Executive Director of Lahore
Biennale Foundation

iba



THE BOARD OF IBA **MEETS IN AICHI, JAPAN**

In November 2025, the annual meeting of the International Biennial Association Board of Directors was held at the Aichi Arts Centre during the sixth edition of the Aichi Triennale, where Hoor al-Qasimi, the president of IBA, served as the Artistic Director.

Members visited the official programs and joined a special guided tour of the various exhibition venues, participating in events including “Three Special Days” and “Night Market of FLAMES”.

LBF PARTNERS WITH SOUTH ASIA ART INITIATIVE UC BERKELEY, FOR A MULTI-YEAR ARTIST RESIDENCY PROGRAM

In April 2025, the Lahore Biennale Foundation launched a major new international initiative with the South Asia Art Initiative (SAAI) at the University of California, Berkeley. This artist residency—part of a multi-year partnership between LBF and SAAI—reflects LBF’s commitment

to advancing global dialogue around contemporary South Asian art.

The collaboration includes an artist exchange residency program, potential exhibitions, and scholarship-building research initiatives.

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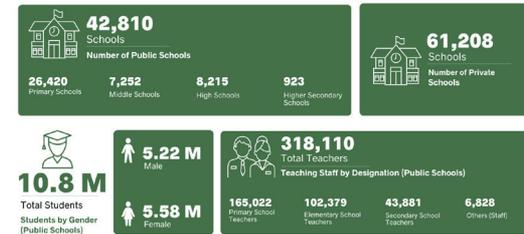


PUNJAB GREEN SCHOOL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (PGSCP)

The Punjab Green School Certification Program builds on the Green School Certification Program, conducted in 2022 as a pilot project by LBF under the patronage of Chief Secretary of Punjab, Abdullah Sumbal (late). Designed to integrate climate education and ecological practices into schools through art-based pedagogy, the initiative has since been

expanded into a province-wide program led by the Environment Protection and Climate Change Department, with the School of Education at LUMS serving as pedagogical partner. This expanded model aims to broaden impact and outreach through more diverse and scalable approaches.

Punjab School Statistics



MEETING OF PGSCP PARTNERS

Secretary Environment Protection Department Silwat Saeed, Director EPD Asim Rehman, Qudsia Rahim, and Professor Faisal Bari and Dr. Razia Sadik from the School of Education at LUMS, met at the Environment Protection and Climate Change Department headquarters to develop the program's pedagogical content.

The group refined the program's point-based framework. Logistical and administrative concerns were also reviewed, with critical solutions examined for possible challenges.



5-DAY TRAINING OF TRAINERS WORKSHOP CONDUCTED BY LUMS & LBF

The School of Education at LUMS, in collaboration with LBF, SED, and EP&CCD, successfully conducted the Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop in December 2025 as the first phase of the Punjab Green School Certification Program. The workshop brought together educators to explore climate literacy through inquiry-

based and art-informed pedagogical practices. Using Visible Thinking Routines (VTRs), educators examined local ecological realities, traced systems of consumption, and translated abstract climate concepts into practical, classroom-ready interventions.

The sessions included an emphasis on context-specific application, with participants designing and presenting strategies to embed climate action into teaching practices, school policies, and routines.



THE THING IS

THE THING IS

PRESENTING OUR FELLOWS

AMRA KHAN DURRIE BALOCH SAHER SOHAIL NATALIE STUART GHAFFAR MOHINUDDIN

For details please visit:
lahorebiennale.org

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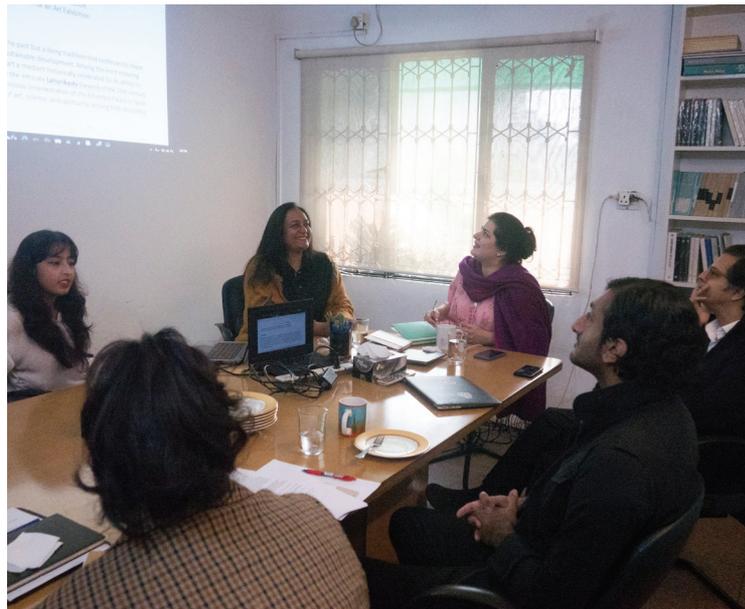
Building Curatorial Capacity in Pakistan Supported by the British Council

The Thing Is responds to a growing need for locally grounded, structurally informed curatorial training—especially in a region where dominant models remain tethered to Euro-American histories of collection and display. Initiated by the Lahore Biennale Foundation and led by Maliha Noorani, the program brings together a cohort of 5 curators from Pakistan and abroad to rethink curatorial practice from Global South perspectives. The project reimagines curatorial practice as a collaborative and critical mode of working—one that is responsive to the historical and social contexts in which it operates.

The programme features leading subject specialists who conduct core seminars and craft labs, enabling fellows, through these sessions and monthly reading circles, to explore innovative curatorial strategies, challenge dominant narratives, and develop contextually rooted approaches to exhibition-making.

The Thing Is aims to not only train fellows in curatorial methods but to equip them with critical insight, technical skill, and expanded curatorial vocabularies which can respond to contemporary urgencies.

INSTITUTIONAL ATTITUDES FOR A MULTIPOLAR WORLD



Workshop with Nav Haq, Associate Director at M HKA – Museum of Contemporary Art, Antwerp

The session introduced fellows to academic writing conventions and institutional protocols while encouraging critical reflection on the ways these systems both enable and restrict curatorial imagination. Broader institutional frameworks and their impact on practice were also discussed.



MUSEUMS, RESTITUTION, AND DECOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES

Focus Group with Professor Tom Harrison, Keeper of the Department of Greece and Rome at the British Museum

Artists, fellows, and academics brought their unique perspectives to a wide-ranging discussion about curatorial practices within complex institutional and historical contexts. Participants engaged with various themes, including museum recovery work. Debates about exhibition-making and restitution also took place.

MEET THE CURATOR OF THE FOURTH EDITION OF **THE LAHORE BIENNALE (LB04)**

The Lahore Biennale Foundation (LBF) is pleased to announce the appointment of Nav Haq as Curator for the fourth edition of the Lahore Biennale (LB04), which is planned to open in Lahore, Pakistan, in Spring 2027. LB04 will present new commissions, large-scale installations, and discursive programming across a range of public, historical, and civic venues in the city.

Nav Haq is a curator and writer based in Antwerp. He is currently Associate Director at M HKA — Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp — where he leads the artistic programme, and is an editor at Afterall journal. Haq has previously held curatorial positions at Arnolfini, Bristol, and Gasworks, London, and has organised many major monographic exhibitions. Most recently, he was part of the curatorial team for the itinerant Kyiv Biennial 2025 exhibitions at Museum of Modern Art Warsaw and M HKA respectively.

Haq's practice is grounded in values of coexistence and progressive internationalism, developed in response to the conditions of an increasingly multipolar 21st century world, and in exploring how these values can be embodied by institutional and curatorial reflection. This approach closely aligns with the Lahore Biennale Foundation's ethos of justice, inclusivity, and social transformation. The concerns guiding the forthcoming edition of the Lahore Biennale focus on the vitality of society and culture across borders, emphasising the unique capacities of culture to generate new solidarities, alliances, and dialogues. In proposing a new culture-oriented internationalism, LB04 will seek to utilise Lahore's position as a crucial node of global society as a place from which it can articulate its own worldview and space of exchange across Lahori, Punjabi, Desi, and Eurasian paradigms.

ABOUT NAV

Nav Haq currently leads the artistic program at M HKA – Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp and is an editor at Afterall journal. His practice focuses on questions of coexistence and progressive internationalism in the context of the 21st century multipolar world. He previously held curatorial positions at Arnolfini, Bristol, and Gasworks, London, and has organised many significant monographic exhibitions with artists including Otobong Nkanga, Shilpa Gupta, Haegue Yang, Hüseyin Bahri Alptekin, Joseph Beuys and Laure Prouvost, amongst many others. Haq was curator of the Göteborg International Biennial of Contemporary Art 2017 and Contour Biennial 2007, Mechelen, Belgium, and most recently was part of the curator team for the itinerant Kyiv Biennial 2025 exhibitions at Museum of Modern Art Warsaw and M HKA. At M HKA he also co-curated the group exhibition Don't You Know Who I Am? Art After Identity

Politics (2014), curated the interdisciplinary exhibitions Energy Flash – The Rave Movement (2016) and MONOCULTURE – A Recent History (2020), and most recently The Geopolitics of Infrastructure – Contemporary Perspectives (2025). In 2012, he was recipient of the Independent Vision Award for Curatorial Achievement, awarded by Independent Curators International, New York.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

GOVERNMENTAL PATRONAGE

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