

## Lahore Biennale Foundation

### What is a Biennale

A Biennale (bi-annual) is the most prestigious art event a city can host. The biennale invites artists from all over the globe to use the city as its canvas and transform the city into a living art gallery. From the nooks and crannies of sub-urban living to the high rises of the business districts, the city is re-imagined to create a multi-faceted academic and cultural exhibition. A Biennale brings art to the public spaces and engages the city's population in rich art-based programming ranging from display of spectacular pieces of art; lectures, workshops, panels and curated tours.

### Lahore Biennale Foundation (LBF)

The Lahore Biennale Foundation (LBF) is a non-profit organization that seeks to engage with and revitalize the practice and appreciation of the arts in Pakistan.

The Foundation is committed to the transformative power of art and its role in sustaining a balanced society. LBF aims to expand the role of the arts in Pakistan by making them a larger part of public discourse and consciousness, to introduce art in public spaces, and reestablish a dialogue that cuts across national boundaries, and to create linkages in the arts between Pakistan and the rest of the world.

### LBF's Previous Work

#### My East is Your West



*My East is Your West* was an official collateral event of the 56<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition – Venice Biennale, which united for the first time the historically conflicting nations of India and Pakistan in a collaborative exhibition by artists from both countries, namely Shilpa Gupta (Mumbai) and Rashid Rana (Lahore). *My East is Your West* was conceived by Feroz Gujral, Director and Founder of the Gujral Foundation.

One of the components of *My East is Your West* was an installation by Rashid Rana, entitled *Shuhuud-o-shaahid-o-mashhuud (The Viewing, The Viewer and The Viewed)*. This work was a collaborative effort between Rashid Rana and the Lahore Biennale Foundation (LBF), and has been celebrated as one of the highlights of the 56<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale.

### Intersections



*Intersections* is a public art project at Istanbul Chowk, Lahore. Supported by the Commissioner's Office Lahore, the Government of Punjab and the Parks and Horticulture Society (PHA), and facilitated by the Lahore Biennale Foundation (LBF), the project marks the beginning of the *Art in Public Spaces* venture.

*Art in Public Spaces* envisions a dialogue between the government, art and the public; the aim is to recognize art as a powerful and positive tool in shaping the everyday experiences of the city, bridging gaps, alleviating the public and initiating meaningful dialogue.

The Commissioner's Office, Lahore, under the Government of Punjab, overlooks one of the most densely populated cities in the country, known for its cultural importance in history. *Art in Public Spaces* is the beginning of yet another revival for the city's culture and arts, an

investment in the artist community and an indicator of a firm belief in the arts as a fundamental right of the people.

### Raqs-e-Rang



*Raqs-e-Rang* is a public art installation that presently adorns the Dharampura Underpass in Lahore. The Lahore Biennale Foundation (LBF), the Commissioner's Office, Lahore and the Government of Punjab, in collaboration with the Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA), have helped bring art into a public space.

Brainchild of artists Ahmad Sajjad and Sadqain, the artwork uses inexpensive, reflective material available in local markets, along with a cost-effective and energy-efficient method to transform the underpass into a site of aesthetic and sensory experience. As vehicles move through the underpass, the work responds to their movement and glows – lending dynamism to the artwork. Moreover, the installation employs local materials and draws on the visual language of Pakistan, thus re-contextualizing it. The work engages with the public on multiple levels.

## Routed / پیوسته (Paivasta)



*Routed/پیوسته (Paivasta)* is a public art project at Bagh-e-Jinnah (Lawrence Gardens), Lahore. Curated and commissioned by the Lahore Biennale Foundation (LBF) and British Council Pakistan, with generous support from the Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA) Lahore, the project is second in the *Art in Public Spaces* series.

In December 2015, LBF and British Council Pakistan, sent out an open call inviting creative individuals and collectives in Pakistan to view Bagh-e-Jinnah through a critical lens, and submit proposals for an on-site, semi-permanent artistic intervention. The jury chose Lahore-based artists Unum Babar and Matt Kushan to work with Marc Cairns from the Glasgow-based creative studio Pidgin Perfect.

This collaborative artistic endeavor resulted in eight permanent artworks at various locations across the sprawling gardens; they reference, and have a resemblance to the heritage of Bagh-e-Jinnah itself. South of the Quaid-e-Azam Library, an Islamic star inlaid into the ground acts as a marble compass; a map leading the way to seven meticulously chosen sites. The destination of each of the seven routes is a Point of Contemplation, marked by a marble seat sited to inspire introspection and solitude. The project encourages the viewer to explore and personalize undiscovered spaces in the park dotted with rare and historic flora.



## Where the Bus Stops



*Where the Bus Stops*, the second public art project in the *Intersections* series, is a collaboration between the Lahore Biennale Foundation (LBF), the Commissioner's Office, Lahore, the Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA), the Lahore Transport Company (LTC), the Social Innovation Lab (SIL) at the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), and the COMSATS Institute of Information Technology (CIIT). In January 2016, LBF launched an open call for creative practitioners in the fields of art, architecture, urban planning and other relevant disciplines, to source design solutions for six LTC bus stops along the city's central routes.

Winning proposals now mark vital spaces within Lahore's transportation network with their distinct brand of visual identity. The project has aimed to be instrumental in creating infrastructural support that is mindful of the interests of all of its stakeholders, especially those of its end users. The output is highly functional in nature, providing comfort to the city's many commuters.

*Where the Bus Stops* is a project that carries in it the ethos of what LBF is truly about. The approach to all of our programs conducted within the public realm is to bring together diverse thinkers, practitioners and partners in such a way that outputs and outcomes generate new synergy that is collectively more effective than any isolated effort. By working with, and mobilising its partners, LBF has been able to champion this goal, as well as look out for the interests of all parties involved including those of the public.

## Stories We Tell



The Lahore Biennale Foundation (LBF) and the School of Visual Art and Design (SVAD) at Beaconhouse National University (BNU) have partnered to create *Stories We Tell* (آو سنائیں کہانی), an audio-visual storytelling project made possible with the support of the Centre for Culture and Development (CKU).

The project aims to bridge gaps between communities and individuals by cultivating an exchange of ideas and experiences. An intercultural dialogue is being initiated and fostered using site-specific community projects that serve as a point for the generation and collection of multiple narratives. It would further encourage the citizenry of Lahore to both reflect upon and share their personal experiences, and also expand public discourse.



## City in Context



A four-day symposium, *City in Context* is a collaborative venture that brings forth three key projects: *Urbanities – Art and Public Space in Pakistan* by the Goethe-Institut Pakistan and Lahore Biennale Foundation (LBF), and *Stories We Tell (Aao Sunayein Kahani)* by the Beaconhouse National University – School of Visual Arts and Design (BNU-SVAD), the Centre for Culture and Development (CKU) and the Lahore Biennale Foundation. It also introduces the inaugural Lahore Biennale 01 through the first-ever public introductory session in Pakistan.

In a mix of workshops, talks, performances, discussions and exhibitions, *City in Context* will bring together poets and writers, theoreticians, artists and architects, musicians, activists, and various other practitioners from diverse fields of study. It will aim to discuss and expand existing ideas and projects pertaining to the multifarious aspects of the urban realm, and to explore the wider connections that they draw with the world of art.

For more on ongoing work please visit <https://www.lahorebiennale.org/>

## Impact of a Biennale

Biennales lead to the proliferation and growth in numerous ways including

- *Economic growth of the city including large scale reduction in unemployment and new streams of revenue generation*
- *A Biennale attracts foreign investments and interests in the city and leads to development and increase in value of real estate and infrastructure*
- *It encourages cultural tourism by painting a softer image of the city and government that supports the Biennale*
- *It encourages development of art schools and galleries and brings in new academic expertise and knowledge*
- *The quality of life of the city's population increases leading to positive self-image, appreciating for the authorities and leads to positive community interactions and relations between the private and public sector*
- *Modernization and development occurs for the city landscape and its related department in the shape of better city aesthetics and intellectual discourse*
- *A city hosting a Biennale permanently increases its influx of local and foreign tourists that bring business and global media attention for the city*

**A bi-annual mega event that is listed as a must see happening of that region or country, and by its existence attracts global attention and has both short term and long term on the host nation's economy**  
(Lim&Lee 2006)

Below are some examples of how cities fared after hosting various projects of a Biennale

### Regenerating a city and nations image in the global context

#### **Documenta**

ARTIST/GROUP: Ai Weiwei

NAME: Fairytales: 1001 Chinese Visitors

TYPE: Installation

LOCATION: Kassel, Germany

TIME: 2007, June-July

COST: \$4.3 million

DESCRIPTION: 1001 Chinese tourists visited Kassel.





### **Dhaka Art Summit**

Bring ideas together from South East Asia  
Ignite Intergenerational and interregional dialogue  
Contextualize South Asian Art  
Refurbish the Country/City Image  
Connect Dhaka to the World



### **NAME: Art Basel Conversations**

TYPE: Discussions

LOCATION: Basel and Miami Beach, FL

SCALE: Local (global in content)

DESCRIPTION: Conversations held between a moderator and leading members within the cultural world. After the discussion between the parties on stage, the floor is open to the audience. The conversations are focused on the production, collection, and exhibition of art. Art Basel conversations are typically held at the beginning of the day(s).



[Profound effects on the art making processes of the discipline](#)

### **EVENT: public art works**

LOCATION: New York, New York

AREA/VENUE: New York City

IMPACT: Non-profit organizations, including the active Public Art Fund and CreativeTime organizations, continue to commission both temporary and permanent art projects by various artists to saturate New York City. These initiatives along with public engagement continue to reinvent public art practice and fuse art work with city landscape



### **NPO: Public Art Fund**

NAME: In The Public Realm

TYPE: Program / Initiative

LOCATION: New York City

TIME: 1995-present

IMPACT: \$1,000 each for ten artists selected to develop a proposal for a public artwork. \$15,000 commission and \$2,500 artist fee for up to three artists to realize their artwork

DESCRIPTION: Program designed to promote and realize projects by emerging New York artists.



### **City regeneration**

#### **Documenta**

ARTIST/GROUP: Joseph Beuys

NAME: 7000 Oaks

TYPE: Installation / Rehabilitation

LOCATION: Kassel, Germany

TIME: 1982-1987 to present

DESCRIPTION: Trees were planted in urban voids in an attempt to effect environmental and social change. The work is interdisciplinary and participatory.



#### **TYPE: Archive**

LOCATION: Kassel

TIME: 1954-present

DESCRIPTION: Documenta builds, restores, and preserves structures around Kassel including the Orangerie, New Gallery, and Documenta Halle. The growth of the event and the city are explicitly linked together.



### European Capital of Culture

ARCHITECT: Lars Spuybroek

NAME: La Maison Folie de Wazemmes

TYPE: Building

LOCATION: Lille, France

TIME: 2004

DESCRIPTION: An old textile mill transformed into a performance space: theater, studios, workshops, exhibition spaces, dining hall.



### EVENT: European Capital Of Culture 2010

LOCATION: Essen RUHR

AREA/VENUE: EMSCHERKUNST

IMPACT: A large art project on the island of Emscher that activated locks, former industrial sites and otherwise urban wastelands, ultimately producing eight exhibition rooms displaying works from 40 different individuals over the course of 100 days



### ARTIST/GROUP: Primary Flight and Art Center

South Florida

NAME: Primary Flight

TYPE: Street Art/Murals

LOCATION: Miami, Florida

TIME: 2007-present

SCALE: Urban

IMPACT: Since 2007, over 100 street murals have been installed.

DESCRIPTION: The world's largest site-specific street level mural installation. Commissioned works from some of the most influential street artist in the world to install their work in the Wynwood Arts District of Miami.





## Community engagement and involvement

### Manifesta

GROUP: Education Department of Manifesta 7

NAME: Family Sundays

TYPE: Education Program

LOCATION: Trentino and South Tyrol, Italia

TIME: 2008

SCALE: Regional

DESCRIPTION: Four Family Sundays, with many activities for children and adults to explore together for an encounter with contemporary art.



### Manifesta

ARTIST/GROUP: Sal Randolph

NAME: Free Manifesta

TYPE: Installation / action

LOCATION: Frankfurt, Germany

SCALE: Local > International

COST: \$15,099

DESCRIPTION: A physical location was purchased thru eBay and opened to amateur artists to engage with the space and exhibit their work. Over 225 artists participated.



## Contribution towards cultural tourism

### ARTIST: Karlos Andrei Ibarra

NAME: Vivo En America

TYPE: Sculpture

LOCATION: Biennial of the Americas, Denver, CO

TIME:

SCALE: Local

DESCRIPTION: Solar-powered neon sign addressing immigration, nationality, and personal identity.



### EVENT: Art Basel Miami Beach

LOCATION: Miami, Florida, United States

AREA/VENUE: city of Miami

IMPACT: Smaller satellite fairs piggyback on the hype of Art Basel Miami Beach and supply the city with a total of 800 exhibitors throughout the three day event. This along with public commissioned art throughout the city and the parties and events taking place as a result of the fair create the critical mass necessary for a successful event to take place. The influx of people and events to the Miami Beach area during each fair encourages activity and spending in both Miami Beach and Miami city itself creating massive, albeit temporary, economic revenue for local businesses



### Kochi Biennale

The first Kochi Biennale hosted by India lasted for 96 days and hosted more than 400,000 visitors.

As a consequence

- New galleries and art spaces sprouted across the city
- Hotel Occupancy rose
- Restaurant table turnover rates spiked
- Shop owners and taxi/rickshaw drivers

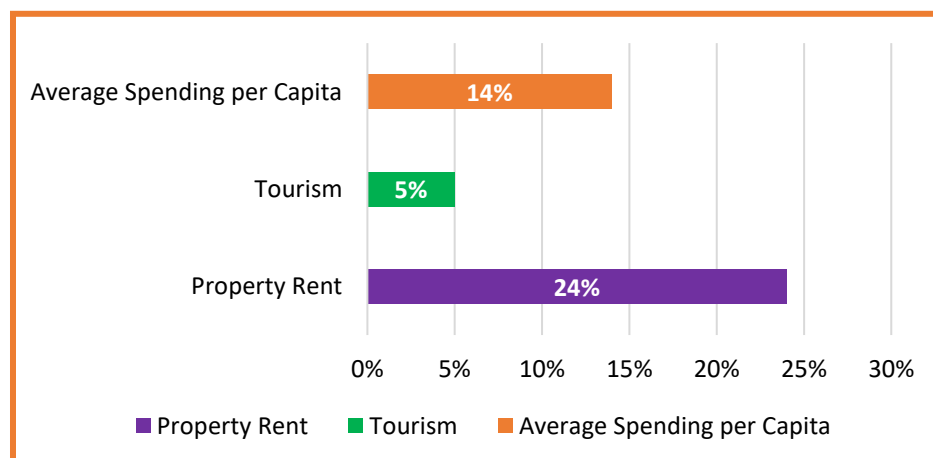
The Biennale directly employed **108** people.

**77%** people agreed that the Biennale created jobs

**65%** of the people agreed it created new audience for the Arts

Kochi experienced the **Bilbao Effect** during the Biennale which reduced large scale unemployment. Made Kochi the cultural hub of India and breathed life into every historical landmark long forgotten.

### The Impact on the city of Kochi(Increase in the following)



## Asia Triennial Manchester II

Below are the numbers of how the works from Asian artists fared in a Biennale hosted in Manchester



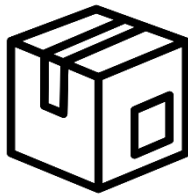
**£6.65 million**

**Economic Impact**



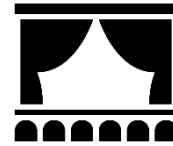
**£525,000**

**Press Coverage**



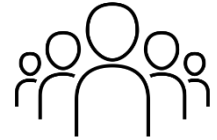
**£243,000**

**Support in Kind**



**350,000**

**Audience**



**1500**

**Participants**

The quality of life is a fleeting metric. It cannot be measured by the financial or the military strength of the country. More so, it is valued in the happiness of its citizens; the joy in their routine lives experienced firsthand through music, poetry, literature and art. A Biennale serves to do just that.

## Lahore and LB01

Lahore is rich in art, film, academic institutes, architecture and gardens which have been cultivated throughout its history. It is also the cultural center of Pakistan. Its rich culture and history has been influenced by the variety of leaders that have ruled Pakistan. From the Mughal Era to the Sikh rule until the British Colonial years, Lahore has seen a diverse influx of knowledge and influences that it carries with it to this day.

If there ever was a city deserving of a Biennale, it is one with a heritage and culture as rich and diverse as Lahore. A city truly meant to embrace the art against the backdrop of modern and traditional urban life.

Lahore Biennale LB01 seeks to revitalize art in Lahore and greater Punjab and sow the seeds that create a movement that can reclaim art for the public, in both public and heritage spaces. 2018 will be the first time that Lahore becomes a site for such a grand event that will include 75+ local and international artist projects, performances and workshops taking place from March 17-March 31, 2018. We expect 2.5 million visitors to this event per day.

With its rich history, culture and wealth of art institutions, Lahore is ready to reclaim its place as the cultural capital of South Asia. The Lahore Biennale presents an ideal opportunity for the government to showcase the vibrancy of Pakistan's contemporary art scene, celebrate the immense creativity of our people, and in doing so, promote the softer image of Pakistan.

To this end we are most grateful for the continued support of the Government of Punjab, that has previously been a benefactor and great supporter of our various public art projects since 2015.