

Annual Report
2023

سالانہ رپورٹ



LAHORE
BIENNALE
FOUNDATION

Message from Prof. Naazish Ata-Ullah & Raza Ali Dada

Co-Chairs

As we reflect on the year's endeavours, the Lahore Biennale Foundation stands firm in its commitment to democratise art through a meticulously planned decentralised approach. Our bilingual ethos, where local or colloquial languages are woven into programs, exemplifies our dedication to reaching diverse audiences. The Green Schools Certification Programme (GSCP) is a testament to this, responding to local conditions to serve, empower and connect with our communities.

The Lahore Biennale has changed the arts community in several ways. We have not only observed heightened investments in the arts but also experienced a surge in the establishment of galleries, museums, and exhibitions, accompanied by a substantial increase in artwork sales. The global appetite for art from Pakistan has surged, leading to artists receiving higher value for their creations. Moreover, educational institutions are recognising the importance of the arts, with new arts spaces emerging and liberal arts institutions flourishing.

Our vision and mission persist – to carve a space for the local arts community in the global art discourse, fostering opportunities and kindling a heightened interest in the arts locally and beyond. We now plan to further the engagement between the arts and the people in our upcoming LB03 through public-centred placemaking in key sites along Mall Road, allowing for the development of town squares and enriching lived traditions through artistic interventions.

We thank all our patrons, partners and supporters, and urge you to consider supporting the arts as the best way to promote Pakistan and the immense creative potential of its people.

Thank you for being part of our journey.

Prof. Naazish Ata-Ullah and Raza Ali Dada

Executive Director's Message:



The Lahore Biennale Foundation adopts an inclusive and context-driven approach to achieve its projects and goals, which challenges traditional critique methods and prevalent frameworks for curating, researching, and archiving material culture, built ecologies, and histories. The organisation is committed to being

public-centred, and to achieve this, it embeds itself within the public and creates sustained dialogues with various layers of publicness. This approach catalyzes public-centred programming.

Over the years, LBF has launched various initiatives and partnerships that align with the pressing need for climate justice and environmental sustainability. These initiatives have been supported by the Federal Climate Ministry and the Provincial Environmental Protection Department. One of LBF's major projects last year was the Green School Certification Program, which aimed to integrate climate

education and ecological practices into schools. The project revealed the importance of working with public schools, their teachers, and students, given their limited resources. The government extended support to develop a scalable module initially aimed at expanding it city-wide.

Lahore Biennale LB03 is scheduled to take place in 2024, and the project is being developed under the leadership of curator John Tain. The biennale will focus on the themes of ecologies and sustainable futures, with Tain being the perfect visionary and executor to lead this. He shares the Foundation's objectives of inspiring investigative learning and research-driven approaches and plans to adopt a decentralised approach that empowers multiple voices within the country. Tain also aims to build a wider community of care and support through promoting the arts among the public.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Q. Rahim', enclosed within a white rectangular box.

Qudsia Rahim
Executive Director, Lahore Biennale Foundation

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Introduction

The Lahore Biennale Foundation (LBF) is a non-profit organisation that seeks to provide critical sites for experimentation in the visual arts. LBF focuses on the many stages of production, display and reception of contemporary art in diverse forms. It understands inclusivity, collaboration, and public engagement as being central to its vision and is committed to developing the potential of art as an agent of social transformation.

Thus, the LBF focuses on the many stages of production, experience and appreciation of art in all its forms. The Foundation is committed to the potential of art as an instrument of important social critique. The LBF operates in awareness of possible public(s) and location(s) but is global in aspiration: It values public investment and considers the specificity of geographical and social context in establishing the legitimacy of its functions but does not pander to preconceived tropes of the 'vernacular'.

To this end, LBF endeavours to approach its projects and goals through alternate strategies informed by inclusivity

and context-driven knowledge. This approach counters traditional forms of critique and prevailing frameworks for curating, experimenting, researching and archiving material culture, built ecologies, and histories.

LBF is supported by government bodies and has developed enduring relations with international partners. These partnerships at home and abroad attempt to bridge institutional gaps between Lahore and the rest of the world. The third edition of its flagship event, the Lahore Biennale, will be held in Fall 2024.

Board of Directors

Naazish Ata Ullah
Co-Chairperson

Raza Ali Dada
Co-Chairperson

Qudsia Rahim
Executive Director

Ahmad Rafay Alam
Secretary

Tariq Zaman

Mohsin Hamid

Naima Dadabhoy

Announcements

LB03 Curator Announcement at Alhamra Arts Council, April 2023

The Lahore Biennale Foundation announced the appointment of John Tain, Head of Research at Asia Art Archive, as the Curator for the third edition of the Lahore Biennale, LB03, whose theme is Ecology and Sustainable Futures. LBF hosted a conversation with Tain on the next Lahore Biennale (LB03) at Alhamra on April 17th, 2023.



Following the success of the inaugural Lahore Biennale in March 2018 and the second edition in early 2020, curated by Hoor Al Qasimi, the Foundation remains committed to showcasing groundbreaking contemporary art from around the world. LB03 promises to build on the legacy of its predecessors, with Tain at the helm, by continuing to foster critical practice and discourse on contemporary art in the region and beyond. The Lahore Biennale has become a significant platform for contemporary art in the region, showcasing artworks from a range of disciplines and media. The appointment highlights the Foundation's commitment to promoting cultural exchange, inclusivity, and accessibility through the arts.

The Lahore Biennale 03 (ongoing)

For the upcoming third edition, scheduled to take place in Fall 2024, LBF will deepen its commitment to bringing art to the people through the placement of new art commissions and large-scale public installations at various heritage and everyday venues across the city. In addition, research into Lahore's history will contribute to the exhibition's emphasis on local and indigenous knowledges and practices as resources for thinking about the future. It will also showcase place-making by devoting a number of projects to Mall Road, a historical centre for public expression and cultural activity. LB03 will also integrate its discursive programming as part of its overall offering. All of these enhancements will foster a deeper connection and understanding of Lahore by diverse communities.

LB03's convening of emerging and established artists, scholars, and researchers addresses ecology and sustainable development, urgent topics in a country that in the past year has seen calamitous floods and degraded environment, aggravated by agricultural disasters, urban pollution, and social inequality. These problems now cannot be ignored, and have long been in gestation. The exhibition will foreground contributions by artists that suggest aesthetic, sensorial, conceptual, and collective ways to address such challenges, while also underscoring resonances between the histories of Lahore and Pakistan with other parts of the world that face similar issues.



Green School Certification Program

GIVE NATURE A CHANCE

Green School Certification Program (ongoing)

Pilot Project: The Green School Certification Program (GSCP) is a year-long initiative that seeks critical thinking and whole



systems learnings on climate education and ecological practices using art education as a pedagogical tool, with a

focus on climate justice. We aim to establish 'baseline – Green Schools' by developing a comprehensive pedagogical



model and promoting climate knowledge and ecological practices through a whole systems approach.

Core Project Partners: Secretary, Environment Protection Department, Government of Punjab, District Education Authority, Lahore, School of Education, LUMS, World Wildlife Fund, Ecological Thematic Partner Lucky Core Industries/LCI

Secondary Partners: School Education Department, Government of Punjab, Office of the Commissioner, Lahore, Terylene Clean (Program Sponsor), Youth Affairs and Sports Department, Government of the Punjab, Parks and

Horticulture Authority, Lahore, Lahore Waste Management Corporation

Download the brochure as a [PDE](#)



GSCP Award Distribution Ceremony, May 2023

LBF held an award distribution ceremony in May 2023 to pay tribute to their outstanding contributions to the program's pilot phase and to shaping a more environmentally conscious future.



This pilot project generated a scalable module to create 'Green Schools Policy Recommendations', a resource manual for training teachers to deliver climate science information and a checklist of localised sustainable solutions for schools. All schools were required to complete the program to receive the Green School Certification. As a result of this project, LBF along with its partners aimed to aid selected schools in

becoming 'ecologically green institutions'. And, it is projected to produce a mitigating effect on the current climate crisis the city is facing.

In addition to schools, the Aabroo Educational Welfare Organization played a crucial role in promoting zero-waste policies within all government offices and workspaces throughout Lahore. This initiative involved comprehensive recycling practices for all organic, plastic, paper, and metal waste, paving the way for a cleaner and healthier environment.



Looking ahead to the next phase of the program, the Green School Certification Program will be expanded to encompass public and private schools in the Shadman area. By involving both sectors, we aim to create a profound impact on the community and raise awareness about the vital importance of environmental conservation. This initiative is a significant

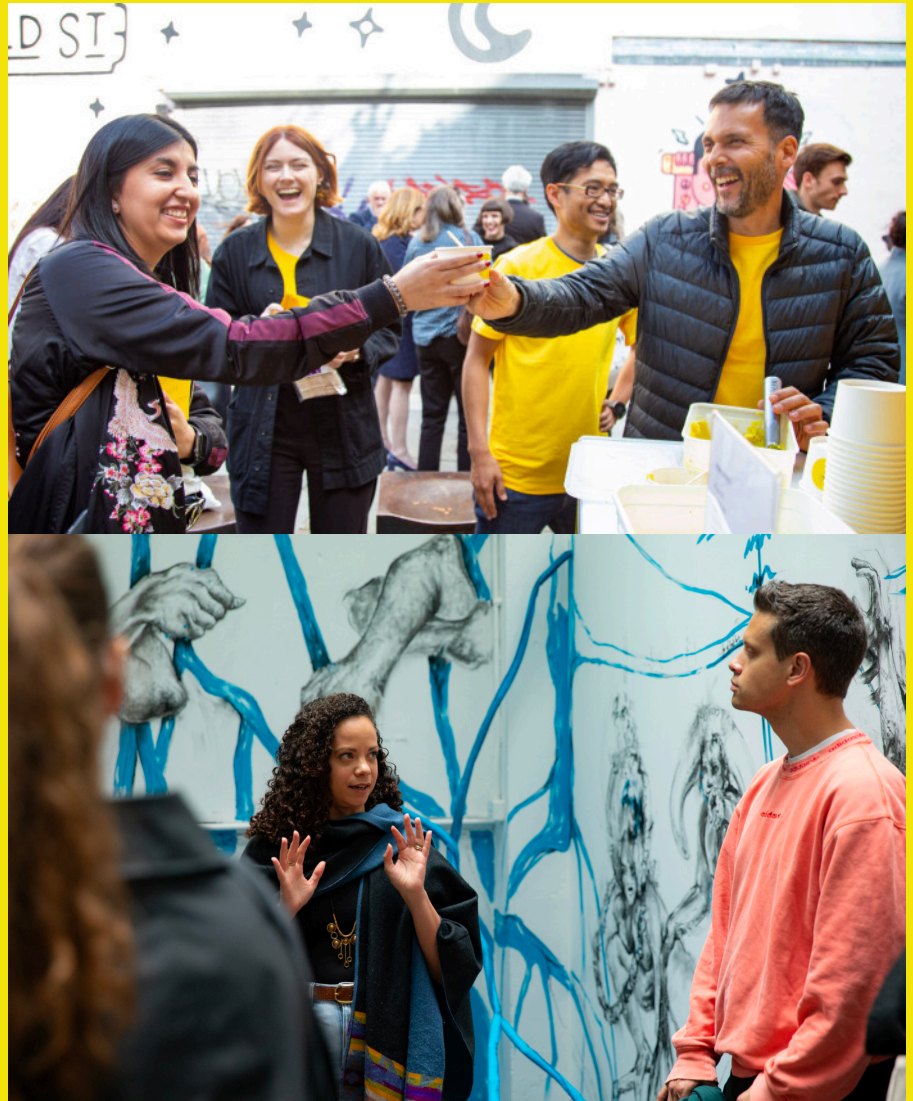
stride towards constructing a greener, more sustainable future for Shadman and beyond.



Liverpool Biennial / British Council: Biennials Connect Curators' Week (UK), August 2023

As part of a shared commitment to enhancing learning and collaboration between the UK and international Curators, Liverpool Biennial and the British Council joined forces to host a Curators' Networking Week from 1-6 August 2023, within the 12th edition of Liverpool Biennial. LBF's Executive Director, Qudsia Rahim, was invited to be part of the program.

The programme took place across a range of different exhibition venues in Liverpool including Tate Liverpool, Bluecoat, FACT Liverpool, Open Eye Gallery, National Museums Liverpool, and Tobacco Warehouse, and included day trips to Leeds and Manchester. The aim of the programme being the facilitation of professional development and foster international links between Curators, artists and institutions.



Lahore Sangat (ongoing)

February 2020 - November 2020

Supported by the Lahore Biennale Foundation and in collaboration with the Commissioner Office Lahore, Municipal Corporation Lahore and Walled City Lahore Authority, the Lahore Sangat is an informal association of Lahoris that works to remember and pay tribute to the extraordinary women and men not always sufficiently acknowledged, by mapping where they lived and worked and putting up distinctive blue enamel plaques in their memory.

Lahore Sangat honours and celebrates the rich tapestry of Lahore and the Personalities that have made the adage "*Lahore Lahore ai.*"

These exceptional individuals were painters, writers, poets, architects and master craftsmen, wrestlers, storytellers, actors, scholars, teachers, revolutionaries, philosophers, jurists, cooks, weavers, embroiderers, designers, doctors, philanthropists, saints, mystics, musicians, singers, freedom fighters, dancers, sportsmen and women, dramatists, travellers, composers, publishers, journalists, theatre and film personalities. The list is part of an ongoing process that

is being added through additional research and contributions by the people of Lahore and beyond.

The objective of the plaques is not only to honour the personalities but also to generate awareness and instil a sense of pride amongst the people who live in the vicinity of the significance of their locality and neighbourhood.



Lahore Biennale (LB03):

Of Mountains and Seas

Curated by John Tain

October 5–November 8, 2024



Acknowledgements

Institutional Partners

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Babar Ali Foundation
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Parks & Horticulture Department
Walled City of Lahore Authority
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
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Ali Embroidery Mills (Pvt) Ltd.
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Qudsia & Raza Ali Dada
Sadiah & Osman Khalid Waheed