

Faiza Butt, 'Not You'



# COLOMBO ART BIENNALE

Curated by  
Alnoor Mitha

**LOCAL MEDIA COVERAGE**



'CONCEIVING SPACE'

**73 artists,  
10 venues,  
21 countries**

**2nd - 20th  
December 2016**

Exhibitions, Installations, Performances,  
Architects, Symposiums, Community -  
Workshops, Education, Outreach Events  
and More!

Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology  
The Old Town Hall in Pettah  
JDA Perera University Gallery  
Cathedral of Christ The Living Saviour  
Slave Island Community  
Theertha RedDot Gallery  
Prana Lounge  
ZMAX Fairway  
CoCA Residency  
Taj Samudra



COLOMBO **ART** BIENNALE  
2016



Nov. 10, 0 89

## Colombo Art Biennale 2016

EntertainmentEvents

<http://life.dailymirror.lk/article/41/events/16249/Colombo-Art-Biennale-2016>

### Artists Featured In Colombo Art Biennale 2016

Colombo Art Biennale established in 2009, is aimed to promote and place contemporary Sri Lankan artists on the map on an international scale. Keeping this core value in mind, this year the Colombo Art Biennale will feature 45 artists of which 24 will be local. Out of the 24, 3 are well established, mid-career artists, and the rest comprise of young, emerging artists from around the island. For the selection of artists for the Biennale, CAB sent out an open call- this year and they have had a significant number of applications from the North and East.

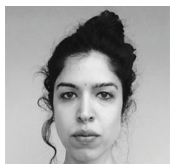
Let's meet some of the local artists who will be taking part in this year's Colombo Art Biennale. Some are based here and some away. This platform will help bring them to one place to stage their exhibits and performances.

#### Saskia Pintelon



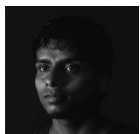
Belgium-born Saskia Pintelon, has spent the last 36 years living in Sri Lanka, a defining influence and a continual inspiration for her work. Her paintings are very personal and yet encompass a wide range of universal concerns in strong, layered images. Senior Sri Lankan artist, Pintelon has shown her work in galleries in Asia and Europe. She participated in the 2009 Colombo Art Biennale in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Inspired by local and universal issues, stories from the gut and the heart, politics and day-to-day concerns, her body of works interprets the collective human experience, environment and the cycle of life with intimate and personal preoccupations.

#### Nadia Haji Omar



She currently lives and works in the US and is of Syrian, Indian and Sri Lankan descent. She received a MFA from the School of Visual Arts, NY in 2014 and a BA from Bard College, NY in 2007. One of her Solo exhibitis "I Dream of Water" can be viewed at the Saskia Fernando Gallery, Colombo.

#### Pakkiyarajah Pushpakanthan



He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Jaffna in Sri Lanka. Pushpakanthan has exhibited in group exhibitions organized by the university's faculty of Arts, as well as exhibited at Saskia Fernando Gallery in Colombo. Most recently he has exhibited at the 'Shadow Scenes' exhibition curated by Natasha Ginwala and Menika van der Poorten as a part of Colomboscope 2015. The mood of Pushpakanthan's work is intentionally unsettling as he draws inspiration from his experiences of conflict & trauma from the war in the North.

### **Savesan Nallaiah**



He too holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Jaffna in Sri Lanka and has exhibited in group exhibitions organized by the university's faculty of Arts, as well as exhibited at Saskia Fernando Gallery in Colombo. His luridly painted, almost child-like, canvases are in stark contrast to the graphic and sexual nature of the subject he explores.

### **Tracy Holsinger**



She founded the Mind Adventures Theatre Company in 1999 and has served as its Artistic Director since. Her graduate and postgraduate qualifications in theatre are from Goldsmiths College and Trinity Guildhall, London. Her work has been featured at the GalleLiterary Festival, Colomboscope, Metroplus (India) and Ubumuntu (Rwanda). Tracy's work focuses on socio-political issues of special relevance to Sri Lanka, and has been supported over the years by the Sunethra Bandaranaike Trust, The British Council, The Goethe Institute, GIZ and the governments of Switzerland and Japan. Since 2009, Mind Adventures has used devised and immersive theatre to highlight the need for reconciliation and community building in Sri Lanka, and is currently engaged in creating a countrywide tour that is funded by the Office for National Unity and Reconciliation. In addition, Tracy has 18 years of arts education experience, having worked in various capacities with The Wendy Whatmore Academy, The British School and the Open University of Sri Lanka.

### **Firi Rahman**



He is a self taught artist from Colombo, Sri Lanka. Firi's work consists of hyper realistic drawings of portraits and maps. He explores themes such as conservation, and beauty and expresses them with his skilled pencil work. He held his first solo exhibition "Unconventional Beauty" at the Saskia Fernando Gallery in 2015. That same year, his map of Slave Island was featured in Colomboscope - Shadow Scenes. In December 2015, he was invited to speak at the Sri Lanka Archive of Contemporary Art. He is currently working on an awareness program about animal welfare with the Otara Foundation. He is also part of a group show curated by Priyantha Udagedara, and is also involved in a visual storytelling project using participatory photography.

### **Liz Fernando**



She is an award-winning fine artist and photographer, born and raised in Germany, she graduated from the University of Arts, London, LCC. The concept of an evolving interplay between the fragile and fugitive existence of a photograph lies at the heart of Fernando's work, which often derives itself from a sense of nostalgia, building upon a personal archive of aesthetic and practical reflections within non-western cultures. Her work has been exhibited at the Tate Modern, London and showcased by Photoworks UK. Her highly acclaimed work, "Trincomalee – My Father's Stories and the Lost Photographs" was recently acquired for the private collection of the World Bank Headquarters in Washington DC and is currently on an international traveling exhibition. Fernando lives and works in London, Hanover and Colombo.

### **Vijitharan M**



He has graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, from the University of Jaffna. M.Vijitharan's body of work narrates the experiences of civilians of the Vanni in the north of Sri Lanka during

and post war. The artist utilizes objects and forms from their story to create drawings and installations that act as a narrative.

### **Samvarthini Gunasecharam**



She is also a graduate in Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Jaffna. Her recent works explore the experience of place in the relation to memory. The content of her work deals with five years of continuous back and forth travel from Puttalam to Jaffna passing through Anuradhapura, Vavuniya and Kilinochchi. She was a part of Srilankan Artists, An Exhibition of Seven conversations, at the Saskia Fernando Gallery, 2015. She also had another show in 2013 titled 'Introducing my village' at Park Street Mews.

### **Anoma Wijewardena**



She studied and worked in the UK for three decades as a designer and artist and now divides her time between London and Sri Lanka where her studio is now based. Anoma's designs have been displayed at the V&A Museum and the House of Commons in London and been shown in the USA, Japan and Europe. Clients have included Yves St Laurent, Pierre Cardin, Calvin Klein and Ralph Lauren, and have been featured in several international publications including the cover of Vogue Magazine in the UK. She was also one of the painters selected by India for the SAARC art Exhibition which toured the 7 capitals of the SAARC region.

### **Venuri Perera**



She is a performer and performance maker from Sri Lanka. Trained in Kandyan Dance under Vajira and Upeka Chitrasena, she was a member of the Chitrasena Dance Company from 1994 to 2007. In 2008, she completed her Postgraduate Certificate in Dance from Laban, London, where she was awarded the Michelle Simone prize for Outstanding Achievement in Choreography for her solo, Abhinishkramanaya.

### **Kanesh Thabendran**



He holds a Bachelor of Art and Design from the University of Jaffna in Sri Lanka. Thabendran has exhibited in group exhibitions organized by the university's faculty of Arts, as well as exhibited at Saskia Fernando Gallery in Colombo. His work deals with his family's struggle to safeguard their household items during and after the war as well as the loss that his family faced when so many of their items went missing. Cutting out of photographs helps the artist come to terms with his reality.

### **Pradeep Thalawatta**



He graduated from Beacon house National University in 2016 with a MFA in Fine Art. Solo exhibitions of his work have included 'A Different Road', Lionel Wendt Gallery Colombo, Sri Lanka (2012) He has also participated in several group exhibitions such as: 'South by Southeast', Osage Hong Kong (2015); the Sovereign Asian Art Prize, Christie's, Hong Kong (2015); 'Serendipity Revealed', Brunei Gallery, London (2014)'; the 5th Fukuoka Asian Art Triennial Japan, (2014) etc. He also has received a Commonwealth Connections International Arts Residency, at Shanthi Road, Bangalore, India. Pradeep was born in Rathnapura. He currently lives and works in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

### **Gayan Prageeth Samaranayaka**



He is one of the island's strongest emerging artists. His works have moved further into controversial politics facing the island over the past years. The subtlety with which he approaches his subject combined with a strong detail in his technique make him part of the growing trend of artists choosing to use contrast as a mechanism of representation in their art.

### **Poornima Thenuwara**



Through public participatory interactive art works, Poornima boldly engages with the audience, where the viewer participates in some way by providing an input in order to determine the outcome. She is currently working as head of Art at the British School in Colombo. She is a co-founder and a director of the Collective of Contemporary Artists (CoCA) - the first pioneering art organization in Sri Lanka which focuses on socially-engaged and sustainable art in public spaces. They also engage in research-based art, and encourages diverse audiences of all ages and backgrounds to participate and appreciate arts. The organization emphasises on and promotes 'sustainable art' in harmony with the key principles of sustainability that includes ecology, social justice, non-violence and grassroots democracy.

### **Abdul Halik Azeez**



He is a strategy consultant working both for the corporate and development sectors. He is also an independent researcher whose main areas of interest currently include online hate speech and critical discourse analysis. With a Master's in financial economics and a Bachelor in international business, Halik has worked in fields as diverse as marketing, banking and economic research.

### **Chinthaka Thenuwara**



He is an international and local award winning photographer/ artist. Within his art practice 'Time' is represented as a symbolic process and deals with the inherent contradictions of the sociopolitical and cultural context in Sri Lanka. Time based mediums and art forms such as Kinetic Art, Interactive Art, Video, installations, sculptures, photography and paintings are widely use within his art practice. He is the co-founder and director of the Collective of Contemporary Artists (CoCA). His work has been shown as part of CoCA Artists group at the CAB 2012, Goethe-Institut, Beyond Perception at Park Street Mews, French Spring Festival, "Pettah Expose" at the CMC Building Pettah, CAB 2014, Vijayanagar Residency 2014 India, Colomboscope 2013, 2015, 2016 and various other local and international exhibitions.

### **Sujeewa Kumari**



She is a silent force in local contemporary art. She was educated at the University of Kelaniya and then completed her MFA at the Dutch Art Institute in the Netherlands. Kumari has held solo shows in the UK, Sri Lanka and the Netherlands. Kumari paints, draws and performs her art as and when she feels like it. There is something incredibly free about Kumari's works, they exaggerate the presence of texture in objects, transforming them into tactile representations of femininity. The subject of her work is based on the her personal experiences of motherhood, her research into post-colonial costumes of Sri Lanka and contrasting techniques which emphasize each concept. Kumari continues to have a nonchalant attitude to describing her work. There is something that occurs between the work and it's viewer that she refuses to allow an explanation to destroy, this in itself is the essence of her work; mystery.

### **Udani Samaraweera**



She is a 20 year old artist currently studying interior design at Academy of design, Sri Lanka. She has been passionate about drawing since a young age. She is intrigued by vivid colours and patterns,

which she combines together to create extraordinary pieces of work. Experimenting with different techniques using various media to create unusual, striking art pieces is her forte.

### **Rajini Perera**



She explores issues of hybridity, sacrilege, irreverence, the indexical sciences, ethnography, gender, sexuality, popular culture, deities, monsters and dream worlds. She has a B.F.A. in Drawing & Painting, from OCAD University, Canada. Her awards and grants include Nora E. Vaughan Award, OCAD University 2011, First Capital Realty, Imagination Zone Award 2011, Toronto Arts Council Emerging Artist Grant 2014.

### **Danushka Marasinghe**



He was born and raised in Negombo, Sri Lanka. He studied at the Digital Film Academy, Sri Lanka Foundation Institute, Colombo and Faculty of Visual Arts, The University of Visual and Performing Arts Colombo (2007) and was part of the Art need space Public art workshop at German Culture Center, Colombo in 2011. Marasinghe is primarily a video-artist interested in exploring modern society, through sociopolitical issues, surveillance and the modern manifestations of privacy, or lack thereof.

### **Dr. Priyantha Udagedara**



His principal research interests lie in the field of contemporary fine art practice focusing upon South Asia. His PhD research explores the contextual analysis of the “Notion of Paradise” in its relationship to socio-political ideology within the limitations of visual art. His future research plans will build on the foundations of his PhD to further develop research in visual art practice within Sri Lanka and the region. He has particular expertise and research interest in colonial-art, post colonial art and contemporary Western and Eastern visual culture. He is a practicing artist specializing in paintings and has exhibited nationally and internationally in countries including Sri Lanka, India, Australia, Portugal, Dubai and Great Britain.

### **Kavan Balasuriya**



He is a visual artist living and exhibiting in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The artist is a graduate of the BA Fine Art Course at the Central Saint Martin’s College of Art & Design, University of the Arts London. In Kavan’s work, textural expositions and schemata are explored in the conveyance of a contextual understanding of language and identity. The artist has held two solo exhibitions in Colombo, as well as participating in numerous showcases including Cinnamon Colomboscope’s Shadow Scenes (2015), Testing Grounds (2016), and ColomboFashion Week’s CFW: Frame (2016).

### **Asvjit Boyle**



He is an audio/visual artist and graphic designer with a special interest in long-form design. He has designed and overseen the production of several commercial publications in collaboration with theatre repertories, music and arts festivals, magazines, and non-government organizations. In recent years, Asvjit has created audio-visual experiences, interactive digital installations and digital collages. As a composer and performer of electronic music, his work has been released on record labels world-wide and showcased at music festivals and nightlife institutions in Europe and Asia. A proponent for the development of non-traditional forms of music in Sri Lanka, Asvjit works with the Goethe-Institut to implement workshops, artist residencies and performances including the annual Pettah Interchange showcase. He is also the founder and curator of Jambutek Recordings, an independent electronic music imprint and artist collective based in Colombo.

**Let's talk Art: Here and in the region**

*With exciting new programmes lined up for next month's Colombo Art Biennale, Adilah Ismail talks to the prime mover behind CAB Annoushka Hempel and this year's curator Alnoor Mitha*

20<sup>th</sup> November 2016

<http://www.sundaytimes.lk/161120/plus/lets-talk-art-here-and-in-the-region-217171.html>



Alnoor Mitha

The team behind this year's edition of the upcoming Colombo Art Biennale have been untangling notions of spaces. 'Conceiving space', the theme for the biennale is a result of these explorations and taps into the zeitgeist of Colombo as it stands today – a mutable city at the crossroads of change. The theme 'Conceiving space' and the work which will beckon the city's artgoers next month seek to reimagine the concept of space and the way we engage with spaces.

This year's CAB is its most ambitious, yet. And a quick glimpse of what to expect is warranted. Curated by Alnoor Mitha, CAB 2016 will feature 50 artists across multiple locations around the city and exhibits span installation, sculpture, sound and performance. The Colombo Art Biennale's architects programme (led by Gihan Karunaratne) is a first and there's added emphasis on education and community engagement programmes this year.

Annoushka Hempel, Founding Artistic Director of CAB, explains that the Art Biennale started off as an exercise to create a space for artists, and an exploration of art as a language for communication and as a conduit for social change through themes relevant to Sri Lanka. Past themes for the Colombo Art Biennale include 'Imagining Peace' (2009), 'Becoming' (2012) and 'Making History' in 2014.

This year, the Biennale explores the multiple facets of public and private space – whether as place, protest, community, history, imagined, performative, virtual, ritualistic or architectural – and is brimming with exhibits and events which engage with this theme. One of the sites, for instance is the Cathedral of Christ the Living Saviour – prodding people to explore and view a site beyond its functionality, perhaps even see it anew. The programme includes artists from Jaffna, Puttalam, Batticaloa, Gampaha and Colombo while more established artists have voluntarily taken a step back to provide an opportunity for emerging artists to showcase their work.

"What we wanted to do with this edition was to create a space where dialogues which have not been happening, need to happen. 'Conceiving space' came up as a theme, within that space. We are bringing in a focus on unity, reconciliation and community engagement – we're looking at what's going on locally in Sri Lanka and also at what's going on in the region and among international artists of South Asian origin," explains Hempel. "What we're looking here is to create a dialogue within the South



Asian region, and Colombo to be a hub for the South Asian region,” she sums up simply.

A desire to trigger cultural conversations is also evident in CAB 2016 curator, Alnoor Mitha’s vision. Mitha is a Senior Research Fellow (Asian Cultures), Manchester Metropolitan University and Manchester School of Art and founding artistic director of the Asia Triennial Manchester (2008 to present). He brings in 20 years’ experience to this year’s CAB, having worked in Britain and internationally, as artist, curator, writer, and producer. For the past few months he has been at work, selecting and working with the artists, offering guidance through any concepts and building towards the final works to be exhibited.

“I’m delighted to be here and to be working with Colombo artists,” he noted. Mitha added that for CAB 2016, he intends to create conversation and a notion of resonance in and around the art. Coming from a background as a practitioner, Mitha’s curatorial philosophy is informed by a firm avowal to support artists. During his stint in Sri Lanka, he hopes to build relationships both locally and internationally which will extend beyond CAB’s conclusion and help Sri Lankan artists to reach out to wider audiences, upping their ante.

### **Biennale at a glance**

**The Colombo Art Biennale will be held from December 2 – 20. Here’s what to expect in brief. For more information, visit <http://colomboartbiennale.com/>**

\* The visual arts programme will feature 25 local artists and 25 international artists exhibiting at several different locations around Colombo. Some of the event spaces include the JDA Perera Art Gallery, Old Town Hall, Cathedral of Christ the Living Saviour, Slave Island, Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology, Theertha Red Dot Gallery and Prana Lounge.

\* The launch of CAB’s first architects programme which takes place from December 3 – 11.

\* An educational programme which gives the opportunity for students to assist the architects and artists featured at CAB in the production of their work and attend creative workshops.

\* Community engagement programme which will see international artists working with the local community, educational collaborations, performances and a symposium.

\* Artist in residency programme, mentoring programmes as well as independent art projects and exhibits which will run in parallel to CAB.



**Colombo Art Biennale 2016**

**By Parris Bambery**

**November 2016 issue**

<http://www.lt.lk/2016/11/colombo-art-biennale-2016/>

The wheels are in motion for the 4th edition of the Colombo Art Biennale (CAB), Sri Lanka's largest showcase of contemporary art running from the 2nd to 20th December around Colombo.

Launched in 2009 the CAB emerged from the vision of Annoushka Hempel, an art enthusiast born and raised in England with a background in public relations and events and a university degree in the arts. Hempel moved to Sri Lanka in 2003 with her family and set up the first art gallery in Galle showcasing contemporary Sri Lankan artists. With a fervent passion for local Sri Lankan art, Hempel together with Jagath Weerasinghe subsequently founded the very first South Asian Art Biennale collaborating with leading local curators, artists and art historians. Since then artists from different backgrounds and schools of thought have continued to come together under one roof and one theme.

Following the CAB themes of previous years, including the thought provoking 'Imagining Peace' in 2009, "Becoming" in 2012, and 'Making History' in 2014 – the theme for 2016 'Conceiving Space' focuses on re-imagining traditional concepts of the 'spatial' in relation to boundaries and engagement.



'Conceiving Space' will set the scene for 67 local and international artists of varying disciplines including installation, sculpture, sound and performance to delve into the paradigm of seeing. Space will be considered as public and private; space as protest; space as tangible and imagined; space as community, memory and legacy; space as architectural, conceptual, performative, temporal, spiritual, symbolic, intuitive and rhythmic; space as liminal and ritualistic; space as embodied and meditative, virtual and transcendent.

This year's CAB will see a local line-up of artists from different corners of the island, including Jaffna, Puttalam, Batticaloa, Gampaha and Colombo. These homegrown participants include Rajni Perera, Saskia Pintelon, Priyantha Udagedara, Tracy Holsinger, Venuri Perera, S. P. Pushpakanthan and Asvajit Boyle, to

name a few. This segment will focus on young emerging artists of Sri Lanka who will comprise 50% of local artist involvement. Overseas artists include Mithu Sen from Delhi, Pushpamala from Bangalore, Faiza Butt from the United Kingdom/Pakistan, Ghada Khungi from Bahrain, Cristina Rodrigues from Portugal and Ruby Chisthi from the United States.



The various exhibition venues scattered across Colombo's cityscape will provide the backdrop for these artists to unite and creatively explore diverse senses of space. The sites will include the Old Town Hall, Slave Island, Prana Lounge, Cathedral of Christ the Living Saviour and Theertha Red Dot Gallery, as well as parallel events to be held at Barefoot Gallery, Saskia Fernando Gallery & CoCA.

Fundamental to the CAB vision for 2016 is the establishment of dialogue between local and international artists as Alnoor Mitha, this year's lead curator explains:



“Artists are the conduits of engagement with each other and most importantly with their immediate audiences. We are increasingly living in a time that is dominated by political events that are transforming our globe, making it unsafe, creating a new paradigm that questions our humanity through conflict. However, artists bring a new light, a new wisdom that generates a genuine engagement with the visual narrative that encapsulates issues around space, memory, identity, place, and what I call the transformative architectural paradigm that brings a new experiential reality.

The ultimate vision is to create a South Asian artistic hub in Colombo that is inspirational – an artistic journey that captivates the imagination whilst exploring new ideas with young people, and with the local communities who live in Sri Lanka whilst welcoming international delegates. At the end of the day, art is transformative; it brings smiles to many faces and challenges the cerebral mindset.”

A top priority this year is community engagement and educational initiatives and as such, a nine-day architects programme will take place from the 3rd to 11th of December. Internationally renowned and award winning architects will work as artists alongside the local community with the support of both international and local students and artists, including a series of creative workshops involving the Slave Island community. The collaborations will be showcased on the last day of the programme in and around the community area as well as the 'Great Feast' that will bring together the local community, artists, architects and visitors.

Some of the artists taking part in this branch of the CAB include Studio Assemble (UK), Prof. Will Alsop (UK), Prof. Dr. Alex Lehnerer (Germany/Switzerland), Madelon Vriesendorp (The Netherlands), Mullegama Project (Sri Lanka), CoCA Collective (Sri Lanka), Jayne Dyer (Australia), Jean-François Boclé (France/Martinique), Cristina Rodrigues (Portugal), Mind Adventures (Sri Lanka) and Eva Priyanka-Wegener (Sri Lanka/Germany).



manifestation not to be missed.

The Colombo Art Biennale endeavors to nurture, encourage and promote the finest of Sri Lankan contemporary art, to strengthen the island's art scene and continue an international reciprocal exchange of artists. As a platform for and a showcase of some of the most progressive contemporary artists of the region and further afield, the 2016 Colombo Art Biennale is an art

**For more information visit [www.colomboartbiennale.com](http://www.colomboartbiennale.com).**



## Q& A with Annoushka Hempel Founder of Colombo Art Biennale

By Parris Bambery

November 2016 issue

<http://www.lt.lk/2016/11/q-annoushka-hempel-founder-colombo-art-bienale/>

### What sort of discussion are you hoping this year's theme 'Conceiving Space' will prompt?



The theme Conceiving Space is an attempt to create space in which new dialogues or dialogues that haven't been happening, can happen within and between communities. To this end we have invited renowned international architects to come on board as artists to create these spaces with a focus on community engagement.

### Who are some of the 2016 CAB artists you're most excited about?

This is tricky but I am extremely excited to have Studio Assemble as part of the architectural/community engagement programme, as this year has a very strong focus on unity and community engagement. As part of this component, I'm also very excited to have Will Alsop, Alex Lehnerer and Jayne Dyer on board.

The visual art programme has a strong emphasis on South Asia and the South Asian diaspora with a focus on Colombo as a South Asian cultural hub in terms of art. Some of the artists I'm most excited about for this section are Saima Rasheed (Lahore/UK), Kirti Kaushal Joshi (Nepal), Pushpamala N (India), Faiza Butt (UK/Pakistan), Reena Kallat (India), Hardeep Panal (UK/India).

From a local perspective I am very excited that we have 3 established artists, Anoma Wijewardene, Saski Pintelon and Priyantha Udegara, because the remaining 21 local artists are all young and emerging artists coming from different ends of the country.

### 3. Where does Sri Lanka currently sit on the world stage of contemporary art?

Biennales are seen as a powerful narrative tool as well as a very positive means for international relations. Sri Lanka in terms of Biennales has been relatively marginalized due to lack of funds coming from the local government.

However, the CAB is now recognised and is a partner in receiving the 'Ambition for Excellence' award, a three year programme of dialogues, collaborations and exchanges between art museums and institutions in

Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds and five South Asian Biennales. In terms of art and art biennales the world is starting to take more of an interest in the South East Asian region and CAB aims to position itself as the artistic hub in the South Asian region.

#### **4. What do you hope for the future of CAB and contemporary art in Sri Lanka?**

The CAB has certainly had an enormous impact on the local art scene; giving artists the opportunity to create and exhibit works beyond the spacial and commercial restrictions of a white cube gallery. In addition, given that CAB also hosts international artists, curators and press, many Sri lankan artists have since been offered the opportunity to participate in international artist residencies, exhibitions and international art prizes.

All this is more than I could have hoped for when Jagath Weerasinghe, CAB co-founder and I kicked-off the first CAB in the midst of the armed conflict in early 2009 with 'Imagining Peace'. My hopes are simply that the CAB journey continues and that Sri Lankan artists are given the exposure they deserve.



<http://life.dailymirror.lk/article/33/entertainment/16307/International-artists-at-Colombo-Art-Biennale-2016>

Nov.24, 2016

International artists at Colombo Art Biennale 2016

#### EntertainmentEvents

The fourth edition of the Colombo Art Biennale (CAB) 2016 themed 'Conceiving Space' will be held from December 2 - 10, 2016. CAB is the largest and most significant contemporary art festival in Sri Lanka. Established in 2009, CAB showcases contemporary art with an emphasis on Sri Lanka and the South Asian region. This year the Biennale will showcase 64 local and international artists, (including 20 emerging and 3 established local artists), 11 international architects, 5 international university student groups and 17 performance artists from Theertha Performance Platform, Sri Lanka. CAB will feature a variety of artistic expressions, including: visual multimedia installations, performance art, and architects working as artists.

Let's meet some of the international artists taking part in this year's biennale.

#### **Faiza Butt (UK/Pakistan)**



Faiza Butt was born in Lahore, Pakistan. She received her BA from the National College of Arts in 1993, with Honours, and was awarded the Berger Gold Medal for outstanding student of the year. She holds a master's degree in painting with a distinction award from

the Slade School of Fine Art, and a teaching certificate from the Institute of Education.

In 1995, Butt was awarded a UNESCO-Aschberg Bursary, and was artist in residence for three months at the Bartle Arts Trust (BAT) in Durban, South Africa. During this time, she held workshops for women from shantytowns, presented talks at museums and galleries and produced a solo show at the BAT Centre.

Butt's elaborate drawings are obsessively crafted with passion and rigour, and create surfaces that hover between photography and embroidery. Born into a family of five sisters, gender related themes are close to her heart. Her work has been exhibited at various art fairs, such as Art Dubai and the Hong Kong Art Fair, and extensively in Europe, the Middle East, South Asia and the United States. Her work can also be found in private and public collections, including the British Museum, around the world. Her Mid-career retrospect 'Paracosm' opened at the New Art Exchange in April 2015, It travelled to the Art Exchange at the University of Essex in November 2015 and opened at the Attenborough Centre of Arts ( University of Leeds), in Sep 2016.

### **Mithu Sen (India)**



Mithu Sen lives and works in New Delhi, India. She completed her BFA (1995) and MFA (1997) from Kala Bhavan, Santiniketan, Visva Bharati, India; and PG Programme from the Glasgow School of Art 2000-2001, UK. Sen's practice stems from a conceptual and interactive background woven into drawing, poetry, moving images, installations, sculptures, sound and performances. With LIFE being the medium of her practice, she pushes the limits of acceptable language, questioning our pre-codified hierarchical etiquettes in society within the politics of tabooed (cultural and gendered) identity/psychosexuality, radical hospitality and lingual anarchy.

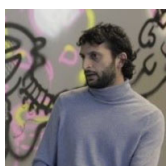
She has exhibited widely at museums, institutions, including, Kenpoku Art, Northern Ibaraki Prefecture, Japan (2016); PEM (Peebody Essex Museum) USA, (2016); Art Unlimited, Basel (2016); Albertina Museum, Vienna (2015); Queens Museum, New York, (2015) and in many other previous occasions.

### **Tasawar Bashir (UK/Pakistan)**

During the 1990s Tasawar worked for Cinephilia, The Drum, BBC Radio One, and Channel Four. He became Head of Cinema at mac in Birmingham in 1998, where he developed international Film Festivals with the BFI. In 2002 he became Head of Cultural Projects for the Birmingham European Capital of Culture bid team where he produced international projects for the CBSO, Fierce Earth Festival and RIBA. In 2005 he began series of on-going Sufi-inspired collaborations with AR Rahman.

Since 2006 he has worked in tough social contexts with young people to make short films, scripts, music videos, and photography projects that examine crime, gang-related violence, inner-city identity and affiliation. In his own work Tasawar explores notions of the sacred using modern technology, public data sets, software algorithms, and art-based experiments to design contemporary mosques. His gallery-based works comment on our collective responses towards the idea and the reality of God - in 2012 his work was exhibited at the Venice Architecture Biennale. Most recently he has commenced his PhD research at the University of Birmingham around 21st century Sufi sound art. At the CoED Foundation Tasawar leads on research and administration he works closely with the CEO to develop the Foundations projects.

### **Hardeep Pandhal (UK)**



Born in Birmingham, Hardeep Pandhal now lives and works in Glasgow, having graduated with an MFA from the Glasgow School of Art in 2013 with the support of a Leverhulme Scholarship award. He was selected for Bloomberg New Contemporaries (2013), the Glasgow

International Open Bursary (2013), the Catlin Art Guide (2014) and the Drawing Room Bursary Award (2015).

Recent solo exhibitions include a solo show at Castlefield Gallery as part of the Asian Triennial Manchester 2014 and a public art commission on the site of the former Camp Coffee factory for the Glasgow International Festival 2014. He was selected for Collective's 2015 Satellites Programme for emergent artists based in Scotland.

In recent works, Hardeep Pandhal has incorporated non-linear modes of storytelling, parodic language and his own biographical content; in home movies, recurring cartoon alter-egos and handmade garments made by his mother, with whom he shares a Punjabi/English language barrier. He would like to question whether art can confront or sublimate trauma to convey otherwise unrepresentable ideas, address situations of compromise and articulate so-called marginalised positions.

### **Reena Kallat (India)**



Reena Saini Kallat's (Delhi, India) practice spanning drawing, photography, sculpture and video engages diverse materials, imbued with conceptual underpinnings. Her work has widely been exhibited across the world in venues such as the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; Kennedy Centre, Washington; Vancouver Art Gallery; Saatchi Gallery, London; SESC Pompeia and SESC Belenzino in Sao Paulo; Goteborgs Konsthall, Sweden; Helsinki City Art Museum, Finland; National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts; Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel; National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul; Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo; Casa Asia, Madrid and Barcelona; ZKM Karlsruhe in Germany; Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney; amongst many others. She was a recipient of the ZegnArt Public Award, Milan in 2013 when her work was commissioned for the façade of the Dr. Bhaudaji Lad Museum in Mumbai besides several other honours. Her in situ work is being shown at the Museum Of Modern Art, New York in an exhibition titled Insecurities: tracing Displacement and Shelter that will run from 1st October 2016 to 22nd January 2017, besides her participation at the 10th Busan Biennale in Korea.

### **Pushpamala N. (India)**



Born in Bangalore, Pushpamala has been called “the most entertaining artist-iconoclast of contemporary Indian art”. In her sharp and witty work as a photo- and video-performance artist, sculptor, writer, curator and provocateur, she seeks to subvert the dominant discourse. She is known for her strong feminist work and for her rejection of authenticity and embracing of multiple realities. As one of the pioneers of conceptual art in India and a leading figure in the feminist experiments in subject, material and language, her inventive work in sculpture, conceptual photography, video and performance have had a deep influence on art practice in India.

Starting off her career as a sculptor, Pushpamala began using photography and video in the mid-1990s, creating tableaux and photo-romances in which she casts herself in various roles. Interested in history and the idea of cultural memory, she cites a wide range of references in her series of masquerades where she simultaneously inhabits and questions familiar frames from art history, photography, film, theatre and popular culture, thereby placing herself as the artist at the centre of social and political inquiry.

Pushpamala lives and works in Bangalore. She exhibits widely in India and internationally.

### **Iqra Tanveer (The Netherlands/Pakistan)**



Iqra Tanveer graduated from the Department of Visual Studies at Karachi University in 2007 and further went ahead to receive a postgraduate diploma in Art Education from the Beacon

house National University in Lahore during the year 2009. Working with video, photo and installations, Tanveer has participated in several group and solo exhibitions across Pakistan, India, UAE, Hong Kong and Italy. Among the prominent is a solo exhibition titled “Between Earth and Sky” held at the Museum of Modern Art in Moscow. She was also a participant of Kochi Muziris Biennale 2014.

As a participant in The 3rd Moscow International Biennale for Young Art she was granted a special mention award. She was the recipient of the Triangle Trust Residency in Dhaka, Bangladesh and currently is an artist in residence at the Rijksakademie, Amsterdam.

### **Cristina Rodrigues (Portugal)**

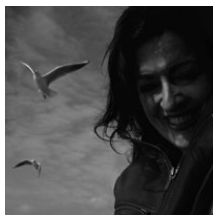


Cristina Rodrigues is a Portuguese artist and architect born in Porto in 1980. She graduated in architecture and completed a Masters degree in medieval and renaissance history at the University of Porto, Portugal. She later moved to Manchester, United Kingdom, where she lectured at university and was awarded a PhD research grant from Manchester School of Art.

By combining her many interests, namely culture, oral traditions and textiles, she created ‘The Blanket’, one of her most emblematic works. The original version of this contemporary art installation was made with Idanha-a-Nova’s traditional instrument, the adufe, cotton lace and satin ribbons. In situ, Cristina’s art installations and sculptures become jewels, lushly adorning ordinary objects with baroque detail. She masterfully combines creative flair with everyday items. Each of her art installations is locally inspired yet universal in meaning, and it intentionally touches the lives of all those involved in its artistic production. Her practice is marked by simple aesthetics, almost always based on ethnographic research. Her art celebrates the role of women in contemporary society, and explores themes such as emigration and contemporary society.

Cristina’s work has been admired by several hundred thousand visitors across different parts of the world, in various exhibitions, such as: ‘Issues of Urbanization’, at GDMOA – Guangdong Museum Of Art, in Guangzhou, China; ‘21st Century Rural Museum’, at MUDE – Museu do Design e da Moda, in Lisbon, Portugal; ‘My Country Through Your Eyes’, at the MNA – Museu Nacional de Arqueologia of the Jeronimos Monastery, in Lisbon, Portugal; ‘The House’, at Zweigstelle Berlin, Germany; ‘Women From My Country’, at the Manchester Cathedral, United Kingdom; and many others.

### **Jane Dyer (Australia)**



Jane Dyer is an Australian artist, based in Lisboa, Portugal. Her interdisciplinary practice spans Australia and Asia, with an increasing focus on east and west Europe.

Her recent collaborations with British artist Wayne Warren has expanded the parameters of her practice, evidenced this year in Last things, at the Bury Art Museum in England, and It’s closing time for gardens of the west for the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015. She is recognised for her diverse and social engaged projects such as Ger to Ger, Mongolia National Art Gallery, Ulaanbaatar; The protest that never ends, ARTISTERIUM 5, Tbilisi; The Butterfly Effect, ARTBosphorus, Istanbul; URS27, a Taipei City Urban Redevelopment initiative; postEDEN, Today Art Museum, Beijing; and Spill, Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts, Taipei.

In 2013 Dyer received the inaugural Individual Artist Award from the Australian Federal Government for arts achievements in Asia, and in 2005 a Commonwealth of Australia public service medal for contributions to arts and education. Arts agencies including Australia Council for the Arts and DFAT have funded major projects. Her large scale public and corporate commissions in Hong Kong, Beijing, Manila, Malaysia and Delhi are fuelled by direct experience living in Asia, initiated through artist residencies with e-Co.design - Sunhoo, Hangzhou; Fubon Art Foundation; Taipei National University of the Arts; Asialink-Australia in Beijing and Taipei; and Lingnan University, Hong Kong.

Dyer's text project Tell me something... is specifically developed for the 2016 Colombo Art Biennale.

### **Ghada Khunji (Bahrain)**



Ghada Khunji is a graduate of the Parsons School of Design and the International Center of Photography's Documentary Program, both in New York. She started her career in the early nineties as a freelance photographer in the fashion industry in New York City, and spent two years as a research assistant for photo agencies, including Black Star and Magnum, followed by eight years as a printer and print manager for a high profile clientele including Annie Leibovitz and Steven Meisel.

Khunji's photographs are known for documenting both landscapes and people from all over the world and the inherent dignity of the human element. In her latest work she focuses the lens on herself by exploring her innermost feelings, thoughts and identity as a woman.

Khunji is the recipient of a significant number of awards, including the Lucie Discovery of the Year (2006), American Photo Magazine's Image of the Year Award (2007), as well as the Golden Lights Award for Travel. She has exhibited widely in the US and Europe, and in recent years, in London, Spain, and throughout the Middle East. Khunji is a recipient of the Julia Margaret Cameron Award (2012), where she won the first prize in the category of portraiture. One of her recent works was acquired by the Abdul Latif Jameel Community Initiatives (ALJCI) in 2013. In the same year, Khunji was nominated for the Prix Pictet, the global award in photography and sustainability.

### **Chila Kumari Burman (UK)**



For more than twenty years, visual artist Chila Kumari Burman has worked experimentally across print, collage, mixed media, paint and photography with a predominantly autobiographical focus, exploring the construction of classed, gendered, sexualised and 'raced' subjectivities.

Having studied at the prestigious Slade School of Fine Art, Burman generates powerful works of contemporary Asian feminisms. Informed by bold colour, form and line with direction from street politics, graffiti, Hindi film, fashion and found objects, Burman has confirmed her status as a leading figure among UK Black and Asian artists with her work being exhibited globally.

She has had a number of captivating exhibitions globally and locally e.g. at Victoria & Albert Museum and currently exhibiting at the Wellcome Trust and British Council Collection in New Delhi and is in the private collection of Lekhar Poddar and Sir Richard Branson amongst others and just recently been acquired by the Tate and Wolverhampton art gallery.

### **Samson Ogiamien (Austria/Nigeria)**



Samson Ogiamien was born in Nigeria and has been working as a freelance artist in Graz, Austria for several years. After his training focusing on art and design as well as welding and construction he managed a sculptor's workshop and came to Austria in 2004. Here the young artist attended the two-year master class in sculpture at Ortweinschule Graz – college, from which he graduated with distinction in summer 2007. Ogiamien's works are based on the traditions of his home country and usually show the human form in semi-abstract style, often using "contemporary" materials such as concrete, iron, varnish, resin. It is important to him that people less familiar with art should also be able to understand his works. Samson Ogiamien likes to help people experience and express their own creativity. Thus the artist passes on his talents in workshops. Samson Ogiamien sees his art as a bridge between cultures and as an opportunity of bringing people together.

Integral to CAB's vision for 2016 is the establishment of dialogue between local and international artists, curator Mitha explains: "My ultimate vision is to create a South Asian Artistic Hub in Colombo that is inspirational - an artistic journey that captivates the imagination whilst exploring new ideas with young people, and with the local communities who live in Sri Lanka whilst welcoming international delegates. At the end of the day, art is transformative; it brings smiles to many faces and challenges the cerebral mindset."

Here's a few more artists from around the world taking part this year.

**Sumit Sakar (UK)** Sumit Sarkar is a visual artist based in the North West of England, whose artwork takes the form of digital and canvas paintings, digital sculpture, 3D animation, video mapping and work inspired by graffiti. The content of his personal work ranges from the fantastical characters of Sumit's KrikSix world, to his modern interpretation of the Hindu Gods, Ananta, through to his environmental sculptural graffiti work, Kerst.



Sumit also works as a designer, illustrator, curator and workshop leader, and is involved in various live art events around the UK, from live aerosol art and drawing battles to a live digital painting and sculpture. He has exhibitions in and around the UK, with solo exhibitions at Lanternhouse in Ulverston, and the Cornerhouse in Manchester. Sumit is currently producing MESH a group exhibition of British fine art sculptors working with 3D print.

#### **Samsul Alam Helal (Bangladesh)**



Samsul Alam Helal is a documentary photographer based in Dhaka, Bangladesh. He completed his graduation in photography from Pathshala South Asian Media Institute. His recent work Love Studio depicts the portraits of a working class community where an old studio in Dhaka transforms into a neighborhood venue to represent the dreams, hopes and desires of the factory workers, their families and unemployed neighbors. In his portrait series on Hijra (transgender community), the camera hones in on the unfolding drama, nothing but a short razzmatazz, that reads like a narrative, and exotic hieroglyphics as the protagonists represented make dancing and singing for an absent audience, or as an end in itself.

Helal wants to tell the stories of people and that especially of minority groups and the neglected classes. Through his photographs, he explores their identity, dreams and longings to raise our curiosity and question. He often likes to stage in a studio setup where dramatic moods and vibrant colors are loudly presented. In oppose to mere fiction, Helal's work represents a reality in an alternate space.

#### **Pavitra Wickramasinghe (Canada/Sri Lanka)**



Pavitra Wickramasinghe is a multidisciplinary artist mainly concerned with new ways of conceptualizing the moving image and conventions of seeing. Her current work is an exploration of notions of traveling, fluidity of place and memory. She uses light and shadows as extensions of the projected image to create installations where the viewer occupies filmic space instead of being physically removed from the work.

Selected exhibitions include: OBORO (Montréal), Kunst Kraft Werk (Germany), SIGHTINGS, Leonard & Bina EllenArt Gallery (Montréal), Yeosu International Art Festival (South Korea), Centre des Arts Enghien--les--Bains (France), Cable Factory (Finland), among others. She is a recipient of numerous residencies, awards and grants including, Art Omi (NY), La Chambre Blanche (Québec), Pépinières Européennes pour jeunes artistes, (Spain), UNESCO--Aschberg Bursaries for Artists Programme, Changdong Art Studio, National Museum of Contemporary Art (South Korea), Canada Council for the Arts and The Claudine and Stephen Bronfman Fellowship in Contemporary Art.

### **Naiza Khan (UK/Pakistan)**



Naiza Khan explores ideas of movement and boundaries, the breaching of borders, as well as a perceptual and textural building of terrain, as it is linked to witness political and social realities. Through a range of media, including drawing, video works and sculpture, she brings to the fore considerations of spillage, spontaneous making and transformation of space.

Khan trained at the Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford. Her work has been exhibited widely, including the forthcoming Kochi Biennale, 2016, the Shanghai Biennale, Hanging Fire: Contemporary Art from Pakistan, Asia Society, New York, as well as her solo museum exhibition Karachi Elegies, at the Broad Museum, Michigan. Khan curated The Rising Tide: New Directions in Art from Pakistan 1990-2010 at the Mohatta Palace Museum, Karachi and is a founding member and former Coordinator of the Vast Artists' Collective. She was member of the Faculty of Visual Art at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi (1991-2009).

Khan is the recipient of the Prince Claus Award, 2013. Currently Senior Advisor at the Visual Studies Department, Karachi University, Naiza works between London and Karachi.

### **Saima Rasheed (UK/Pakistan)**



Saima Rasheed lives and works in Derbyshire as an artist, book illustrator and art tutor. She specialises in Indian and Persian miniature paintings and is a 2006 recipient of The Arts Council of England Award. She has had solo exhibitions in the UK, France and Pakistan. Her work has also been shown in group exhibitions in international settings.

From the long tradition of Indo-Persian miniature paintings, Saima combines techniques from historic imagery with her own contemporary and sensitive aesthetics, resulting in her unique style. Her work addressed gender, social and political issues. Technically her paintings employ subtle brush strokes and microscopic rendering technique like those from a miniature painting are painstakingly employed to produce an image, this in turn leaves poetical outlines and gives these paintings their distinctive character.

### **Video Jam (UK/Sri Lanka)**



Video Jam is a self-initiated event series which seeks to explore the relationship between moving image and live sound. Each Video Jam event features a wide variety of contemporary short films with a particular emphasis on experimental and independent moving image. For each of these films, a different musical act or sound artist is selected to compose an original soundtrack of their own interpretation to be performed as a live accompaniment. Video Jam

was initiated from scratch by a group of 3 emerging producers, curators and artists in 2011 as a grassroots venture. To date, they have curated 39 events in the UK and beyond, including a 3 part UK tour, a residency in Ibiza, events in New York & Argentina and commissions from many leading organisations in the UK including The Whitworth, FACT, Manchester Art Gallery and Abandon Normal Devices Festival.

Video Jam has showcased many first works by emerging regional film talent, providing visibility within programmes featuring award winning international artists such as Jeremy Deller, Phil Solomon, Ryan Gander, Soda Jerk, Haruka Mitani & Ron Fricke. They have screened films between 1 minutes and 40 minutes of all genres, scored by musical acts as diverse as opera, ceilidh bands, percussion, electronic, guitar orchestras, harpists and iPhones. Music highlights include working with Krautrock legend Dieter Moebius, tribal pop/synth band Flamingods, mallet guitarists Ex-Easter Island Head and electronic artist Joe Snape.

### **Kirti Kaushal Joshi (Nepal)**



Kirti Kaushal Joshi is a visual artist based in Kathmandu. He gained his BA in Fine Arts from Tribhuvan University, Nepal followed by a Master of Fine Arts from the Central Academy of Fine Arts, in Beijing. As an artist he is interested in contemporary socio-political subjects and works in different mediums. For Kirti, art is a way to express infinite thoughts, dialogue that can be transferred to visuals, it is zeal of making and creating, and executing as a body of work that makes sense. It is a process of learning and discovering. He works with objects that have connection with the subject matter particularly working in medium like installation, I think objects are already a piece of work, it depends upon the interpretation. His artworks are result of self-analysis, a question, reaction, realization, suggestion, or respond regarding to the circumstances around us.

Kirti has participated in exhibitions internationally including: Xin Jiang International Arts Biennale, China (2014); Kathmandu International Arts Festival (2012); SAARC Artist Camp, India (2011) to name a few.

### **Aroosa Rana (Pakistan)**



Aroosa Naz Rana is a visual artist and an educator, currently doing her Masters degree in Art Education from Beaconhouse University. She graduated in December 2003 from National College of Arts with Distinction in B.F.A degree. She graduated as a painter but currently working in digital media, photography and video.

Rana's art is a constant query about "who is a viewer and who is being viewed" and the position of a viewer in her art works. She acknowledges that before the advent of advanced technologies, fact and fiction resided in two distinguishable categories. In art, for example, it was possible to differentiate between a fiction and realism. In contemporary life and vis-à-vis in contemporary art, however, the difference between fact and fiction has been complicated by experiences that derive from simulations, virtual reality and digital manipulations and by such crossover products as designer knock-offs, tribute bands, and docudramas. Her works of art challenge viewers in the same way that they are challenged by contemporary technologies – to decipher fact from fiction.

Since her graduation Aroosa Rana has been part of several Group Shows in her home country and abroad including "Exit" Dhaka Art Summit | Dhaka | Bangladesh | 2014 and "Crossing Over" Delhi | India | 2013 and "Extra | Ordinary" Karachi | Pakistan | 2013, curated by Rashid Rana. Aroosa Rana had her first Solo Show in "Subverting Desire" (2007), and second solo show "Suspended Disbelief" (2013) in Lahore | Pakistan.

Aroosa Naz Rana lives and works in Lahore, Pakistan.

### **Jeanno Gaussi**



Jeanno Gaussi was born in Kabul, Afghanistan. Initially focused on film and video art, her work now transcends genre boundaries. Using a narrative concept as jumping off point, she creates installations that include video, photography, objects, and texts. A central theme of her artistic oeuvre is the exploration of those places where she's worked, travelled, and experienced meaningful encounters. Her work engages with mechanisms of remembrance, the search for identity, and the social and cultural processes associated with them. Gaussi has participated in numerous international exhibitions, including the DOCUMENTA (13) and the 12th Havana Biennale. She lives and works in Berlin.

### **Jean-François Boclé (France)**



Jean-François Boclé is based in Paris. He was born in Fort-de-France. He left Martinique when he was 15 and lived in there nearly 17 years before age 20 years. His geographical exile of his immeasurable island activated at 15 a daily practice of writing, drawing, and painting.

He was trained between 1992 and 1998 at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts of Paris fine art school, preceded by 3 years at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts of Bourges.

He participates regularly in international Biennials such as Bienal Centroamericana (2016, Puerto Limon and San José, Costa Rica), Dak'Art Biennial (2016, Senegal, Contours - invited curatorships), Subabiennale (2016, Senegal), Bienal 43 Salón (inter)Nacional de Artistas (2013, Medellín, Colombia), the First Biennial of Thessaloniki (2007, Greece) among many others.

We see his work, among others, at the Saatchi Gallery (2015, London), at Para Site (2016, Hong Kong), at Bétonsalon Centre d'art et de recherche (2016, Eva Barois de Caével's workshop accomplishments, Paris), at Ely House-Mallet/The Auction Room (2015, London), at Fuego Fuego (2015, San José, Costa Rica), at Trisakti University (2015, Jakarta, Indonesia), at the Philharmonie de Paris/Cité de la Musique (2013), at the National Museum of World Culture (2013, Stockholm), at the Queens Museum (2012, New York), the KAdE Kunsthal (2012, Netherland), at the FRAC Champagne-Ardenne (2006, France), and at the Centre for Contemporary Art Le Parvis (2005, Ibos, France).

### **Eva Priyanka Wegener (Germany/Sri Lanka)**



Eva was born in Sri Lanka, grew up in Germany and currently lives between those two countries and continents. She has studied political science, sociology and contemporary dance in Germany and Yoga all over Europe and Asia. She recently opened “Sri Yoga Shala”, a center for Yoga and Arts in the south western part of Sri Lanka ([www.sriyogashala.com](http://www.sriyogashala.com)). Rooted in the multiplicity of her movement experience and practice, her interests are socio-political and mind-body-spirit related. She’s curious about creating awareness through inner and outer movement and stillness, moving stillness and dynamic awareness within oneself and a (spontaneous) community. She investigates and plays with the dialogue and the roles between “performer” and “audience”.

### **Ruby Chishti (USA/Pakistan)**



She is primarily a representational sculptor, her work is largely autobiographical in nature. Ruby was formally educated at the National College of Art in Lahore, Pakistan. Over the last 17 years, she has produced a series of lyrical sculptures and installations that touch on such issues as Islamic myths, gender politics, migration, and memory, universal theme of love, loss and of being human.

Solo exhibitions include Nest of Memories at Vermont Studio Center in 2006, There is no hero, Canvas gallery, Karachi 2008 In the vast valley of my heart there is a place, Green Cardamom gallery London 2009, Placed displaced, misplaced, 2010 at Rohtas Gallery Lahore, We leave, we never leave, we return endlessly at Twelve gate Arts Philadelphia 2015 and many others.

She has been showing internationally since 2000. Graduated from National College of Arts Lahore Pakistan, Ruby Chishti now lives and works in Brooklyn NY. Her work has been published in numerous magazines, newspapers along with Chicago Tribune, NY Times and books including, unveiling the visible and The eye still seeks: Pakistani Contemporary Art by Salima Hashmi & Matand Khosla.



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**RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE**

## **French artist Jean-François Boclé at the Colombo Art Biennale 2016**

24<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2016

<https://www.google.com/url?hl=en&q=http://www.ambafrance-lk.org/French-artist-Jean-Francois-Bocle-at-the-Colombo-Art-Biennale-2016&source=gmail&ust=1484029505151000&usg=AFQjCNHDSiYGIo0knVPw-PIyq6VYsRknXw>

**The Colombo Art Biennale (CAB) is an independent organization that is the most important contemporary arts festival in Sri Lanka and as with all international art biennales, it takes place biannually. Through the interactions of Sri Lankan and international contemporary artists, the event is viewed as a significantly positive project in which the international community is able to interact in a creative manner.**

The forthcoming edition is set to open on the 2nd of December 2016 and carries the theme of 'Conceiving Space'. The French artist Jean-François Boclé, supported by the Embassy of France in Sri Lanka and the Maldives and the Alliance Française de Kotte will make a culinary performance/conference - Colombo IN Colombo.

Jean-François Boclé is based in Paris. He was born in 1971 in Fort-de-France. He left Martinique when he was 15yo and lived there nearly 17 years before age 20 years. His geographical displacement from his immeasurable island activated at 15 a daily practice of writing, drawing and painting.



He was trained between 1992 and 1998 at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts of Paris fine art school (1995-1998), preceded by 3 years at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts of Bourges (1992-1995), where he began to develop an artistic work on a broad range of media: installation, painting, sculpture, video, photograph, intervention in public space, performance, and

writing.

Jean-François Boclé is represented in collections such as the Saatchi Collection.

The multi Skype conference will be organized by the Political scientist Françoise Vergès (Réunion-France) and Jean-François Boclé.



Colombo IN Colombo is curated by Madeleine Füppi (France) and Rajesh Punj (UK). The Curator of the Colombo Art Biennale is Alnoor Mitha.

At the occasion of his participation at the Colombo Art Biennale 2016, the Alliance Française de Kotte invites you to meet Jean-François Boclé for an introduction to his work and a dialogue with the artist followed by a cocktail reception.

Tuesday 29th November at 6 PM; 11 Keppetipola Mawatha Colombo 05.

For more information:

[Biennale](#)

[Artist](#)

Online 24/11/2016



## Colombo Art Biennale goes to Slave Island

*By Adilah Ismail*

*November 27, 2016*

<http://www.sundaytimes.lk/161127/plus/colombo-art-biennale-goes-to-slave-island-218036.html>



An Api project: Involving the future generation in creating art: Pix courtesy Colombo Art Biennale and CoCA

Since its inception in 2009, the Colombo Art Biennale has now grown in size and cemented its place in the local contemporary art calendar. This year's Colombo Art Biennale will be held from December 2 – 20 and brings together 73 artists from 21 countries in 10 venues. This edition of the Art Biennale revolves around the theme 'Conceiving

Space' and the Biennale's events are divided into five components – visual art, architects, community engagement, education and outreach.

This week, the Sunday Times takes a look at the architectural components – a new addition to this year's Biennale – as well as its outreach and community engagement programmes.

Architecture

The Colombo Art Biennale's (CAB) inaugural Architects' programme will run from December 3 – 11 in and around Slave Island with an emphasis on community engagement and education. The programme will see a heady mix of events taking on the Biennale's theme and will culminate with food and fellowship in Slave Island, bringing all participants together with the local community. The programme features names such as the Turner prize-winning Studio Assemble, Madelon Vriesendorp, Cecil Balmond, Ciriacidis Lehnerer Architekten (a Zurich based architecture practice), Channa Daswatte, Juhani Pallasmaa and many more.



The programme explores the synthesis of art and architecture and a large component takes place in Slave Island, with close collaboration with the residents and partnerships between students, artists and architects. For Director of the Architects Programme, Gihan Karunaratne, a personal interest in the use of space in urban neighbourhoods such as Slave Island, prior research on the subject and existing ties with the community proved to be an initial springboard. The Architecture programme unpacks the theme of 'Conceiving Space' through artist and architect collaborations and an exploration of the neighbourhood the work is located in. It keeps the focus within Slave Island and the teams have been working with the residents of the neighbourhood over the months in preparation for the Biennale next week.

Speaking to the Sunday Times via Skype, Karunaratne explained that the desire to showcase the architecture and vibrant urbanism of Slave Island influenced the programme. Unlike a gallery where one browses and leaves, the locations slotted in for the Biennale allows for an immersive experience and creative use of space beyond its utility. Karunaratne added that he hoped that the people who come for the Biennale would leave with an understanding of how the space within the neighbourhood is utilised by its residents and a sense of history of the locality.

The framing of art and architecture in the programme will see the real time construction of several art and architecture installations in the neighbourhood during the course of the Biennale. Visitors can expect to see projects by Studio Turner, Madelon Vriesendorp, Prof. Will Alsop, Prof. Dr. Alex Lehnerer and Cecil Balmond. A 1:50 scale model of a community centre designed by Prof. Juhani Pallasmaa and Prof. Alberto Foyo will be on display, while creative workshops involving the Slave Island community will also be underway. Meanwhile, an educational collaboration will see local students and international students from UK and New Zealand assisting artists in the production of their work. A symposium will also be held on December 10, discussing topics such as taking architectural education to the community, the megapolis and feminism and space.

Given the theme of the Biennale and the vicinity in which the architectural aspects take place, it is also hoped that CAB will untangle aspects of urban change of the neighbourhood through an artistic approach. The Biennale's theme is an all-encompassing one and it would be interesting to see stories of Colombo's changing spaces and the implications of these changes through the work of artists and architects.

#### Outreach

Halfway during our conversation Poornima Thenuwara brings out a toy that wouldn't look out of place in a Michael Bay movie. The figurine is assembled out of other broken toys and has been given new life by an evidently imaginative mind and has a sleek, finished look which belies its patch worked origins. The figurine is one of the many results of a project titled 'Api – I am because we are', a solution focused art project initiated by CoCa (Collective of Contemporary Artists) in 2014.



The project which is currently ongoing at the Vajira Sri Children's Development Centre began as a skills exchange programme through art-based activities as well as outdoor initiatives such as organic farming. Api focuses on personal growth through mutual support and is adapted to suit the needs of the students.

Poornima and Chinthaka Thenuwara, co-founders and directors of CoCa, explain that the project developed organically and is focused on sustainable and solution focused skills exchange between the children and the facilitators. Over the past two years, local and international artists from Australia, UK and France have conducted art, drama and music activities to enhance the children's sense of smell, sight, hearing, taste and touch.

CoCa has long been interested in questioning notions of art and what constitutes a work of art and their exhibits at the Biennale take on the same questions, focusing on the process of creating art. The Sri Lanka based art organisation explores socially-engaged, research-based art as well as art in public spaces and encourages those from non-art backgrounds to engage with art.



During CAB 2016, Artists Poornima Jayasinghe and Chinthaka Thenuwara will exhibit the experience they gained from the project and will also engage with visitors through interactive art work. Plans are on the cards to develop a mobile interactive play-garden which can travel to various locations and to educate and connect communities through art.

'Cube out of the box' is another project initiated by CoCa – a multifunctional mobile space which morphs into a gallery, studio, community centre and workshop space. A mobile white cube which can be flat-packed and transported with ease, 'Cube out of the box' will take the first step of its journey at CAB 2016. The project invites people from diverse backgrounds – artists and those who aren't from an art background and various communities– to connect with the space and make art.

Poornima explains that the artists of CoCa are interested in the artistic process as opposed to the final product and seek to bridge the detachment between art and the audience. Projects such as 'Cube out of the box' become a platform to create dialogue and encourage interaction between varied audiences and a space, and encourages the making of art as a part of day-to-day life.

### Community Engagement



"When CAB ends, it does not stop," mulls Lalith Manage, who leads the Mullegama Children's Art Project and CAB Mentoring projects. "What I mean is that there are lot of activities that flow after the CAB event officially ends. Constantly, there is a great enthusiasm amongst young artists about participating in CAB [...] Everyone knows that this is the biggest international art event in Sri Lanka and it generates a rich discourse of Sri Lankan art."

The Art Biennale's community engagement projects this year take on the question of what constitutes art for artists and art communities and intersects the education components of the Biennale. "Tell me Something" is a collaboration between Australian artist Jayne Dyer and a local non-profit, Unity Mission Trust. The collaboration will result in a multi-media installation featuring the aspirations and insights of Sri Lankan youth leaders from diverse backgrounds

The Theertha Performance Platform (TPP) Workshops and Participatory Performances will see 18 local performance artists teaming up with performance artists from India and Serbia to explore concepts of space and public participation through performance art. A three-day programme led by Dr. Godwin Constantine and Bandu Manamperi will encompass morning workshops on performance art techniques and culminate in participatory public performances, held in and around Slave Island during the evenings. Held at the Slave Island Community Centre, the workshops will be open to interested community members along with the participation of students from the University of Jaffna, University of Batticaloa, Sri Palee Campus, University of Kelaniya, and University of Peradeniya

Lalith Manage gave the Sunday Times a glimpse into the Mullegama Project which is an extension of a workshop done for CAB in 2014. This year's project builds on its previous edition, and brings in a mix of old and new participants, including participants from Slave Island. Students of Mullegama Art Center, Ratnawali Balika – Colombo 8, and students of Sri Palee Campus of the University of Colombo will participate in the project which is run by Pala Pothupitiya, Pradeep Thalwatte and co-ordinated by Lalith Manage in collaboration with local artists. In this project, participants will explore Slave Island and document it accordingly, responding to their wandering through art.

Manage explains that this exercise will give an opportunity for the students of Slave Island, Mullegama and Sri Palee to connect with each other, introspect on space and explore unconventional methods of making art.

“CAB is the local expression of a global idea of a Biennale. Upcoming artists in Sri Lanka especially look forward to participating in this event. It brings in a lot of international artists and curators to Sri Lanka. This generates a rich exchange of ideas which is very important for the young in this country,” he concluded.



#### **International artists at Colombo Art Biennale 2016**

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The fourth edition of the Colombo Art Biennale (CAB) 2016 themed ‘Conceiving Space’ will be held from December 2 - 10, 2016. CAB is the largest and most significant contemporary art festival in Sri Lanka.

Established in 2009, CAB showcases contemporary art with an emphasis on Sri Lanka and the South Asian region. This year the Biennale will showcase 64 local and international artists, (including 20 emerging and 3 established local artists), 11 international architects, 5 international university student groups and 17 performance artists from Theertha Performance Platform, Sri Lanka. CAB will feature a variety of artistic expressions, including: visual multimedia installations, performance art, and architects working as artists.

Let's meet some of the international artists taking part in this year's biennale.

**Faiza Butt (UK/Pakistan)**

Faiza Butt was born in Lahore, Pakistan. She received her BA from the National College of Arts in 1993, with Honours, and was awarded the Berger Gold Medal for outstanding student of the year. She holds a master's degree in painting with a distinction award from the Slade School of Fine Art, and a teaching certificate from the Institute of Education.

In 1995, Butt was awarded a UNESCO-Aschberg Bursary, and was artist in residence for three months at the Bartle Arts Trust (BAT) in Durban, South Africa. During this time, she held workshops for women from shantytowns, presented talks at museums and galleries and produced a solo show at the BAT Centre.

Butt's elaborate drawings are obsessively crafted with passion and rigour, and create surfaces that hover between photography and embroidery. Born into a family of five sisters, gender related themes are close to her heart. Her work has been exhibited at various art fairs, such as Art Dubai and the Hong Kong Art Fair, and extensively in Europe, the Middle East, South Asia and the United States. Her work can also be found in private and public collections, including the British Museum, around the world. Her Mid-career retrospect 'Paracosm' opened at the New Art Exchange in April 2015, It travelled to the Art Exchange at the University of Essex in November 2015 and opened at the Attenborough Centre of Arts ( University of Leeds), in Sep 2016.

Mithu Sen (India)

Mithu Sen lives and works in New Delhi, India. She completed her BFA (1995) and MFA (1997) from Kala Bhavan, Santiniketan, Visva Bharati, India; and PG Programme from the Glasgow School of Art 2000-2001, UK. Sen's practice stems from a conceptual and interactive background woven into drawing, poetry, moving images, installations, sculptures, sound and performances. With LIFE being the medium of her practice, she pushes the limits of acceptable language, questioning our pre-codified hierarchical etiquettes in society within the politics of tabooed (cultural and gendered) identity/psychosexuality, radical hospitality and lingual anarchy.

She has exhibited widely at museums, institutions, including, Kenpoku Art, Northern Ibaraki Prefecture, Japan (2016); PEM (Peebody Essex Museum) USA, (2016); Art Unlimited, Basel (2016); Albertina Museum, Vienna (2015); Queens Museum, New York, (2015) and in many other previous occasions.

Tasawar Bashir (UK/Pakistan)

During the 1990s Tasawar worked for Cinephilia, The Drum, BBC Radio One, and Channel Four. He became Head of Cinema at mac in Birmingham in 1998, where he developed international Film Festivals with the BFI. In 2002 he became Head of Cultural Projects for the Birmingham European Capital of Culture bid team where he produced international projects for the CBSO, Fierce Earth Festival and RIBA. In 2005 he began series of on-going Sufi-inspired collaborations with AR Rahman.

Since 2006 he has worked in tough social contexts with young people to make short films, scripts, music videos, and photography projects that examine crime, gang-related violence, inner-city identity and affiliation. In his own work Tasawar explores notions of the sacred using modern technology, public data sets, software algorithms, and art-based experiments to design contemporary mosques. His gallery-based works comment on our collective responses towards the idea and the reality of God - in 2012 his work was exhibited at the Venice Architecture Biennale. Most recently he has commenced his PhD research at the University of Birmingham around 21st century Sufi sound art. At the CoED Foundation Tasawar leads on research and administration he works closely with the CEO to develop the Foundations projects.

Hardeep Pandhal (UK)

Born in Birmingham, Hardeep Pandhal now lives and works in Glasgow, having graduated with an MFA from the Glasgow School of Art in 2013 with the support of a Leverhulme Scholarship award. He was selected for Bloomberg New Contemporaries (2013), the Glasgow International Open Bursary (2013), the Catlin Art Guide (2014) and the Drawing Room Bursary Award (2015).

Recent solo exhibitions include a solo show at Castlefield Gallery as part of the Asian Triennial Manchester 2014 and a public art commission on the site of the former Camp Coffee factory for the Glasgow International Festival 2014. He was selected for Collective's 2015 Satellites Programme for emergent artists based in Scotland.

In recent works, Hardeep Pandhal has incorporated non-linear modes of storytelling, parodic language and his own biographical content; in home movies, recurring cartoon alter-egos and handmade garments made by his my mother, with whom he shares a Punjabi/English language barrier. He would like to question whether art can confront or sublimate trauma to convey otherwise unrepresentable ideas, address situations of compromise and articulate so-called marginalised positions.

Reena Kallat (India)

Reena Saini Kallat's (Delhi, India) practice spanning drawing, photography, sculpture and video engages diverse materials, imbued with conceptual underpinnings. Her work has widely been exhibited across the world in venues such as the Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; Kennedy Centre, Washington; Vancouver Art Gallery; Saatchi Gallery, London; SESC Pompeia and SESC Belenzino in Sao Paulo; Goteborgs Konsthall, Sweden; Helsinki City Art Museum, Finland; National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts; Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel; National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul; Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo; Casa Asia, Madrid and Barcelona; ZKM Karlsruhe in Germany; Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney; amongst many others. She was a recipient of the ZegnArt Public Award, Milan in 2013 when her work was commissioned for the façade of the Dr. Bhaudaji Lad Museum in Mumbai besides several other honours. Her in situ work is being shown at the Museum Of Modern Art, New York in an exhibition titled Insecurities: tracing Displacement and Shelter that will run from 1st October 2016 to 22nd January 2017, besides her participation at the 10th Busan Biennale in Korea.

Pushpamala N. (India)

Born in Bangalore, Pushpamala has been called "the most entertaining artist-iconoclast of contemporary Indian art". In her sharp and witty work as a photo- and video-performance artist, sculptor, writer, curator and provocateur, she seeks to subvert the dominant discourse. She is known for her strong feminist work and for her rejection of authenticity and embracing of multiple realities. As one of the pioneers of conceptual art in India and a leading figure in the feminist experiments in subject, material and language, her inventive work in sculpture, conceptual photography, video and performance have had a deep influence on art practice in India.

Starting off her career as a sculptor, Pushpamala began using photography and video in the mid -1990s, creating tableaux and photo-romances in which she casts herself in various roles. Interested in history and the idea of cultural memory, she cites a wide range of references in her series of masquerades where she simultaneously inhabits and questions familiar frames from art history, photography, film, theatre and popular culture, thereby placing herself as the artist at the centre of social and political inquiry.

Pushpamala lives and works in Bangalore. She exhibits widely in India and internationally.

Iqra Tanveer (The Netherlands/Pakistan)

Iqra Tanveer graduated from the Department of Visual Studies at Karachi University in 2007 and further went ahead to receive a postgraduate diploma in Art Education from the Beacon house National University in Lahore during the year 2009. Working with video, photo and installations, Tanveer has participated in several group and solo exhibitions across Pakistan, India, UAE, Hong Kong and Italy. Among the prominent is a solo exhibition titled "Between Earth and Sky" held at the Museum of Modern Art in Moscow. She was also a participant of Kochi Muziris Biennale 2014.

As a participant in The 3rd Moscow International Biennale for Young Art she was granted a special mention award. She was the recipient of the Triangle Trust Residency in Dhaka, Bangladesh and currently is an artist in residence at the Rijksakademie, Amsterdam.

#### Cristina Rodrigues (Portugal)

Cristina Rodrigues is a Portuguese artist and architect born in Porto in 1980. She graduated in architecture and completed a Masters degree in medieval and renaissance history at the University of Porto, Portugal. She later moved to Manchester, United Kingdom, where she lectured at university and was awarded a PhD research grant from Manchester School of Art.

By combining her many interests, namely culture, oral traditions and textiles, she created 'The Blanket', one of her most emblematic works. The original version of this contemporary art installation was made with Idanha-a-Nova's traditional instrument, the adufe, cotton lace and satin ribbons. In situ, Cristina's art installations and sculptures become jewels, lushly adorning ordinary objects with baroque detail. She masterfully combines creative flair with everyday items. Each of her art installations is locally inspired yet universal in meaning, and it intentionally touches the lives of all those involved in its artistic production. Her practice is marked by simple aesthetics, almost always based on ethnographic research. Her art celebrates the role of women in contemporary society, and explores themes such as emigration and contemporary society.

Cristina's work has been admired by several hundred thousand visitors across different parts of the world, in various exhibitions, such as: 'Issues of Urbanization', at GDMOA – Guangdong Museum Of Art, in Guangzhou, China; '21st Century Rural Museum', at MUDE – Museu do Design e da Moda, in Lisbon, Portugal; 'My Country Through Your Eyes', at the MNA – Museu Nacional de Arqueologia of the Jeronimos Monastery, in Lisbon, Portugal; 'The House', at Zweigstelle Berlin, Germany; 'Women From My Country', at the Manchester Cathedral, United Kingdom; and many others.

#### Jane Dyer (Australia)

Jane Dyer is an Australian artist, based in Lisboa, Portugal. Her interdisciplinary practice spans Australia and Asia, with an increasing focus on east and west Europe.

Her recent collaborations with British artist Wayne Warren has expanded the parameters of her practice, evidenced this year in Last things, at the Bury Art Museum in England, and It's closing time for gardens of the west for the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015. She is recognised for her diverse and social engaged projects such as Ger to Ger, Mongolia National Art Gallery, Ulaanbaatar; The protest that never ends, ARTISTERIUM 5, Tbilisi; The Butterfly Effect, ARTBosphorus, Istanbul; URS27, a Taipei City Urban Redevelopment initiative; postEDEN, Today Art Museum, Beijing; and Spill, Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts, Taipei.

In 2013 Dyer received the inaugural Individual Artist Award from the Australian Federal Government for arts achievements in Asia, and in 2005 a Commonwealth of Australia public service medal for contributions to arts and education. Arts agencies including Australia Council for the Arts and DFAT have funded major projects. Her large scale public and corporate commissions in Hong Kong, Beijing, Manila, Malaysia and Delhi are fuelled by direct experience living in Asia, initiated through artist residencies with e-Co.design - Sunhoo, Hangzhou; Fubon Art Foundation; Taipei National University of the Arts; Asialink-Australia in Beijing and Taipei; and Lingnan University, Hong Kong.

Dyer's text project Tell me something... is specifically developed for the 2016 Colombo Art Biennale.

Ghada Khunji (Bahrain)

Ghada Khunji is a graduate of the Parsons School of Design and the International Center of Photography's Documentary Program, both in New York. She started her career in the early nineties as a freelance photographer in the fashion industry in New York City, and spent two years as a research assistant for photo agencies, including Black Star and Magnum, followed by eight years as a printer and print manager for a high profile clientele including Annie Leibovitz and Steven Meisel.

Khunji's photographs are known for documenting both landscapes and people from all over the world and the inherent dignity of the human element. In her latest work she focuses the lens on herself by exploring her innermost feelings, thoughts and identity as a woman.

Khunji is the recipient of a significant number of awards, including the Lucie Discovery of the Year (2006), American Photo Magazine's Image of the Year Award (2007), as well as the Golden Lights Award for Travel. She has exhibited widely in the US and Europe, and in recent years, in London, Spain, and throughout the Middle East. Khunji is a recipient of the Julia Margaret Cameron Award (2012), where she won the first prize in the category of portraiture. One of her recent works was acquired by the Abdul Latif Jameel Community Initiatives (ALJCI) in 2013. In the same year, Khunji was nominated for the Prix Pictet, the global award in photography and sustainability.

Chila Kumari Burman (UK)

For more than twenty years, visual artist Chila Kumari Burman has worked experimentally across print, collage, mixed media, paint and photography with a predominantly autobiographical focus, exploring the construction of classed, gendered, sexualised and 'raced' subjectivities.

Having studied at the prestigious Slade School of Fine Art, Burman generates powerful works of contemporary Asian feminisms. Informed by bold colour, form and line with direction from street politics, graffiti, Hindi film, fashion and found objects, Burman has confirmed her status as a leading figure among UK Black and Asian artists with her work being exhibited globally.

She has had a number of captivating exhibitions globally and locally e.g. at Victoria & Albert Museum and currently exhibiting at the Wellcome Trust and British Council Collection in New Delhi and is in the private collection of Lekhar Poddar and Sir Richard Branson amongst others and just recently been acquired by the Tate and Wolverhampton art gallery.

Samson Ogiamien (Austria/Nigeria)

Samson Ogiamien was born in Nigeria and has been working as a freelance artist in Graz, Austria for several years. After his training focusing on art and design as well as welding and construction he managed a sculptor's workshop and came to Austria in 2004. Here the young artist attended the two-year master class in sculpture at Ortweinschule Graz – college, from which he graduated with distinction in summer 2007. Ogiamien's works are based on the traditions of his home country and usually show the human form in semi-abstract style, often using "contemporary" materials such as concrete, iron, varnish, resin. It is important to him that people less familiar with art should also be able to understand his works. Samson Ogiamien likes to help people experience and express their own creativity. Thus the artist passes on his talents in workshops. Samson Ogiamien sees his art as a bridge between cultures and as an opportunity of bringing people together.

Integral to CAB's vision for 2016 is the establishment of dialogue between local and international artists, curator Mitha explains: "My ultimate vision is to create a South Asian Artistic Hub in Colombo that is inspirational - an artistic journey that captivates the imagination whilst exploring new ideas with young

people, and with the local communities who live in Sri Lanka whilst welcoming international delegates. At the end of the day, art is transformative; it brings smiles to many faces and challenges the cerebral mindset.”

Here’s a few more artists from around the world taking part this year.

#### Sumit Sakar (UK)

Sumit Sarkar is a visual artist based in the North West of England, whose artwork takes the form of digital and canvas paintings, digital sculpture, 3D animation, video mapping and work inspired by graffiti. The content of his personal work ranges from the fantastical characters of Sumit’s KrikSix world, to his modern interpretation of the Hindu Gods, Ananta, through to his environmental sculptural graffiti work, Kerst.

Sumit also works as a designer, illustrator, curator and workshop leader, and is involved in various live art events around the UK, from live aerosol art and drawing battles to a live digital painting and sculpture. He has exhibitions in and around the UK, with solo exhibitions at Lanternhouse in Ulverston, and the Cornerhouse in Manchester. Sumit is currently producing MESH a group exhibition of British fine art sculptors working with 3D print.

#### Samsul Alam Helal (Bangladesh)

Samsul Alam Helal is a documentary photographer based in Dhaka, Bangladesh. He completed his graduation in photography from Pathshala South Asian Media Institute. His recent work Love Studio depicts the portraits of a working class community where an old studio in Dhaka transforms into a neighborhood venue to represent the dreams, hopes and desires of the factory workers, their families and unemployed neighbors. In his portrait series on Hijra (transgender community), the camera hones in on the unfolding drama, nothing but a short razzmatazz, that reads like a narrative, and exotic hieroglyphics as the protagonists represented make dancing and singing for an absent audience, or as an end in itself.

Helal wants to tell the stories of people and that especially of minority groups and the neglected classes. Through his photographs, he explores their identity, dreams and longings to raise our curiosity and question. He often likes to stage in a studio setup where dramatic moods and vibrant colors are loudly presented. In oppose to mere fiction, Helal’s work represents a reality in an alternate space.

#### Pavitra Wickramasinghe (Canada/Sri Lanka)

Pavitra Wickramasinghe is a multidisciplinary artist mainly concerned with new ways of conceptualizing the moving image and conventions of seeing. Her current work is an exploration of notions of traveling, fluidity of place and memory. She uses light and shadows as extensions of the projected image to create installations where the viewer occupies filmic space instead of being physically removed from the work.

Selected exhibitions include: OBORO (Montréal), Kunst Kraft Werk (Germany), SIGHTINGS, Leonard & Bina EllenArt Gallery (Montréal), Yeosu International Art Festival (South Korea), Centre des Arts Enghien--les--Bains (France), Cable Factory (Finland), among others. She is a recipient of numerous residencies, awards and grants including, Art Omi (NY), La Chambre Blanche (Québec), Pépinières Européennes pour jeunes artistes, (Spain), UNESCO--Aschberg Bursaries for Artists Programme, Changdong Art Studio, National Museum of Contemporary Art (South Korea), Canada Council for the Arts and The Claudine and Stephen Bronfman Fellowship in Contemporary Art.

#### Naiza Khan (UK/Pakistan)

Naiza Khan explores ideas of movement and boundaries, the breaching of borders, as well as a perceptual and textural building of terrain, as it is linked to witness political and social realities. Through a range of

media, including drawing, video works and sculpture, she brings to the fore considerations of spillage, spontaneous making and transformation of space.

Khan trained at the Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford. Her work has been exhibited widely, including the forthcoming Kochi Biennale, 2016, the Shanghai Biennale, Hanging Fire: Contemporary Art from Pakistan, Asia Society, New York, as well as her solo museum exhibition Karachi Elegies, at the Broad Museum, Michigan. Khan curated The Rising Tide: New Directions in Art from Pakistan 1990-2010 at the Mohatta Palace Museum, Karachi and is a founding member and former Coordinator of the Vasl Artists' Collective. She was member of the Faculty of Visual Art at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi (1991-2009).

Khan is the recipient of the Prince Claus Award, 2013. Currently Senior Advisor at the Visual Studies Department, Karachi University, Naiza works between London and Karachi.

Saima Rasheed (UK/Pakistan)

Saima Rasheed lives and works in Derbyshire as an artist, book illustrator and art tutor. She specialises in Indian and Persian miniature paintings and is a 2006 recipient of The Arts Council of England Award. She has had solo exhibitions in the UK, France and Pakistan. Her work has also been shown in group exhibitions in international settings.

From the long tradition of Indo-Persian miniature paintings, Saima combines techniques from historic imagery with her own contemporary and sensitive aesthetics, resulting in her unique style. Her work addressed gender, social and political issues. Technically her paintings employ subtle brush strokes and microscopic rendering technique like those from a miniature painting are painstakingly employed to produce an image, this in turn leaves poetical outlines and gives these paintings their distinctive character.

Video Jam (UK/Sri Lanka)

Video Jam is a self-initiated event series which seeks to explore the relationship between moving image and live sound. Each Video Jam event features a wide variety of contemporary short films with a particular emphasis on experimental and independent moving image. For each of these films, a different musical act or sound artist is selected to compose an original soundtrack of their own interpretation to be performed as a live accompaniment. Video Jam was initiated from scratch by a group of 3 emerging producers, curators and artists in 2011 as a grassroots venture. To date, they have curated 39 events in the UK and beyond, including a 3 part UK tour, a residency in Ibiza, events in New York & Argentina and commissions from many leading organisations in the UK including The Whitworth, FACT, Manchester Art Gallery and Abandon Normal Devices Festival.

Video Jam has showcased many first works by emerging regional film talent, providing visibility within programmes featuring award winning international artists such as Jeremy Deller, Phil Solomon, Ryan Gander, Soda Jerk, Haruka Mitani & Ron Fricke. They have screened films between 1 minutes and 40 minutes of all genres, scored by musical acts as diverse as opera, ceilidh bands, percussion, electronic, guitar orchestras, harpists and iPhones. Music highlights include working with Krautrock legend Dieter Moebius, tribal pop/synth band Flamingods, mallet guitarists Ex-Easter Island Head and electronic artist Joe Snape.

Kirti Kaushal Joshi (Nepal)

Kirti Kaushal Joshi is a visual artist based in Kathmandu. He gained his BA in Fine Arts from Tribhuvan University, Nepal followed by a Master of Fine Arts from the Central Academy of Fine Arts, in Beijing. As an artist he is interested in contemporary socio-political subjects and works in different mediums. For Kirti, art is a way to express infinite thoughts, dialogue that can be transferred to visuals, it is zeal of making and creating,

and executing as a body of work that makes sense. It is a process of learning and discovering. He works with objects that have connection with the subject matter particularly working in medium like installation, I think objects are already a piece of work, it depends upon the interpretation. His artworks are result of self-analysis, a question, reaction, realization, suggestion, or respond regarding to the circumstances around us.

Kirti has participated in exhibitions internationally including: Xin Jiang International Arts Biennale, China (2014); Kathmandu International Arts Festival (2012); SAARC Artist Camp, India (2011) to name a few.

Aroosa Rana (Pakistan)

Aroosa Naz Rana is a visual artist and an educator, currently doing her Masters degree in Art Education from Beaconhouse University. She graduated in December 2003 from National College of Arts with Distinction in B.F.A degree. She graduated as a painter but currently working in digital media, photography and video.

Rana's art is a constant query about "who is a viewer and who is being viewed" and the position of a viewer in her art works. She acknowledges that before the advent of advanced technologies, fact and fiction resided in two distinguishable categories. In art, for example, it was possible to differentiate between a fiction and realism. In contemporary life and vis-à-vis in contemporary art, however, the difference between fact and fiction has been complicated by experiences that derive from simulations, virtual reality and digital manipulations and by such crossover products as designer knock-offs, tribute bands, and docudramas. Her works of art challenge viewers in the same way that they are challenged by contemporary technologies – to decipher fact from fiction.

Since her graduation Aroosa Rana has been part of several Group Shows in her home country and abroad including "Exit" Dhaka Art Summit | Dhaka | Bangladesh | 2014 and " Crossing Over" Delhi | India | 2013 and " Extra | Ordinary" Karachi | Pakistan | 2013, curated by Rashid Rana. Aroosa Rana had her first Solo Show in "Subverting Desire"(2007), and second solo show "Suspended Disbelief" (2013) in Lahore | Pakistan.

Aroosa Naz Rana lives and works in Lahore, Pakistan.

Jeanno Gaussi

Jeanno Gaussi was born in Kabul, Afghanistan. Initially focused on film and video art, her work now transcends genre boundaries. Using a narrative concept as jumping off point, she creates installations that include video, photography, objects, and texts. A central theme of her artistic oeuvre is the exploration of those places where she's worked, travelled, and experienced meaningful encounters. Her work engages with mechanisms of remembrance, the search for identity, and the social and cultural processes associated with them. Gaussi has participated in numerous international exhibitions, including the DOCUMENTA (13) and the 12th Havana Biennale. She lives and works in Berlin.

Jean-François Boclé (France)

Jean-François Boclé is based in Paris. He was born in Fort-de-France. He left Martinique when he was 15 and lived in there nearly 17 years before age 20 years. His geographical exile of his immeasurable island activated at 15 a daily practice of writing, drawing, and painting.

He was trained between 1992 and 1998 at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts of Paris fine art school, preceded by 3 years at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts of Bourges.

He participates regularly in international Biennials such as Bienal Centroamericana (2016, Puerto Limon and San José, Costa Rica), Dak'Art Biennial (2016, Senegal, Contours - invited curatorships), Subabiennale (2016, Senegal), Bienal 43 Salón (inter)Nacional de Artistas (2013, Medellín, Colombia), the First Biennial of Thessaloniki (2007, Greece) among many others.

We see his work, among others, at the Saatchi Gallery (2015, London), at Para Site (2016, Hong Kong), at Bétonsalon Centre d'art et de recherche (2016, Eva Barois de Caemel's workshop accomplishments, Paris), at Ely House-Mallet/The Auction Room (2015, London), at Fuego Fuego (2015, San José, Costa Rica), at Trisakti University (2015, Jakarta, Indonesia), at the Philharmonie de Paris/Cité de la Musique (2013), at the National Museum of World Culture (2013, Stockholm), at the Queens Museum (2012, New York), the KAdE Kunsthal (2012, Netherland), at the FRAC Champagne-Ardenne (2006, France), and at the Centre for Contemporary Art Le Parvis (2005, Ibos, France).

Eva Priyanka Wegener (Germany/Sri Lanka)

Eva was born in Sri Lanka, grew up in Germany and currently lives between those two countries and continents. She has studied political science, sociology and contemporary dance in Germany and Yoga all over Europe and Asia. She recently opened “Sri Yoga Shala”, a center for Yoga and Arts in the south western part of Sri Lanka ([www.sriyogashala.com](http://www.sriyogashala.com)). Rooted in the multiplicity of her movement experience and practice, her interests are socio-political and mind-body-spirit related. She's curious about creating awareness through inner and outer movement and stillness, moving stillness and dynamic awareness within oneself and a (spontaneous) community. She investigates and plays with the dialogue and the roles between “performer” and “audience”.

Ruby Chishti (USA/Pakistan)

She is primarily a representational sculptor, her work is largely autobiographical in nature. Ruby was formally educated at the National College of Art in Lahore, Pakistan. Over the last 17 years, she has produced a series of lyrical sculptures and installations that touch on such issues as Islamic myths, gender politics, migration, and memory, universal theme of love, loss and of being human.

Solo exhibitions include Nest of Memories at Vermont Studio Center in 2006, There is no hero, Canvas gallery, Karachi 2008 In the vast valley of my heart there is a place, Green Cardamom gallery London 2009, Placed displaced, misplaced, 2010 at Rohtas Gallery Lahore, We leave, we never leave, we return endlessly at Twelve gate Arts Philadelphia 2015 and many others.

She has been showing internationally since 2000. Graduated from National College of Arts Lahore Pakistan, Ruby Chishti now lives and works in Brooklyn NY. Her work has been published in numerous magazines, newspapers along with Chicago Tribune, NY Times and books including, unveiling the visible and The eye still seeks: Pakistani Contemporary Art by Salima Hashmi & Matand Khosla.(Life Online)

**Lanka  
Business  
News**

**‘Conceiving Space’, Colombo Art Biennale 2016: A celebration of Sri Lanka and South Asia’s most innovative emerging and established artistic talent 2nd - 20th December 2016**

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The 4th edition of the Colombo Art Biennale (CAB) 2016, themed 'Conceiving Space', will be held from the 2nd- 20th December 2016. Established in 2009, CAB is the largest and most significant contemporary art festival in Sri Lanka, and has also become an art focal point at the international level. This year the Biennale will showcase 73 local and international artists – including 45 local artists, architects and performers, alongside international artists, architects, university student groups and performance artists. This year we will also see unique collaborative community engagement projects produced by established artists

and architects and community members residing in Slave Island, Colombo.

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**Entrance is free to all events.**

For more information, please visit: [www.colomboartbiennale.com](http://www.colomboartbiennale.com)



## OPENING NIGHT OF THE COLOMBO ART BIENNALE

*Opening party & performance at ZMAX Fairway Hotel Tickets Rs.2000 Location: Top floor and rooftop of ZMAX Fairway Hotel, No 7, Hospital Street, Colombo 01 Tickets available on...*

ZMAX Fairway Colombo, No. 07, Hospital Street, Colombo

**POSTED BY RISHANI 1 MONTH AGO**

Opening party & performance at ZMAX Fairway Hotel  
Tickets Rs.2000

Location: Top floor and rooftop of ZMAX Fairway Hotel, No 7, Hospital Street, Colombo 01

Tickets available on the door

'Re: Encounters' by Samson Ogiemien and Ceylon African Manja 6.30-7pm

Stunning and vibrant music and dance from the Afro-Sri-Lankan and Edo-Nigerian communities facilitated by CAB artist Samson Ogiemien. The performance responds to this year's Biennale theme 'Conceiving Space' re-affirming African cultural heritage in Sri-Lanka that has survived many centuries.

Followed by Video Jam 7.30-10pm

A specially curated evening of short films with a variety of live musical accompaniment by UK film/music collective Video Jam.

Featuring Biennale, local & international artists including:

Filmmakers:

Hetai Patel

Vimukthi Jayasundara

Alice Dunseath

Cassie Machado

Haruka Mitani

Sarah Rowland Hill

Muvindu Binoy

Musicians:

Imaad Majeed

Asvajit

Music Matters

Nichola Scrutton

Gayathri Khemadasa

Martin Janicek

About Video Jam

[www.videojam.co.uk](http://www.videojam.co.uk)

Video Jam is a self-initiated grassroots event series which seeks to explore the relationship between moving image and live sound. Each Video Jam event features a wide variety of contemporary short films with a particular emphasis on experimental and independent moving image. For each of these films, a different musical act or sound artist is selected to compose an original soundtrack of their own interpretation to be performed as a live accompaniment.

Video Jam have curated 41 events in the UK and beyond, including a 3 part tour, festivals in New York and Argentina, a residency in Ibiza and commissions from leading organisations in the UK including The Whitworth, FACT, Manchester Art Gallery and Abandon Normal Devices Festival.

About Colombo Art Biennale

[www.colomboartbiennale.com](http://www.colomboartbiennale.com)

The CAB (established in 2009) is the largest and most significant contemporary art festival in Sri-Lanka. It has collaborated with numerous artists and creative networks both nationally and internationally. The fourth edition of the Biennale will showcase 73 artists, from 21 countries across 10 venues in Colombo. The CAB will present community engagement projects that will celebrate the diversity and richness of local artists as well as an architects programme and a performative platform in Slave Island.

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cuz artists do have th

[Home](#) » [News](#) » Decibel Exclusive : Shereen From The Colombo Art Biennale & Some Of The Artists Of Video Jam



**Decibel Exclusive: Shereen from the Colombo Art Biennale & some of the artists from Video Jam 1st December 2016**

<http://decibel.lk/decibel-exclusive-shereen-from-the-colombo-art-biennale-some-of-the-artists-of-video-jam/>

Decibel Exclusive : Shereen From The Colombo Art Biennale & Some Of The Artists Of Video Jam  
There's only a few more hours till the opening night of the Colombo Art Biennale and caught up with Video Jam curator Shereen & two creative names who will be part of the Video Jam : Gayathri Khemadasa & Martin Janicek to give us what's going on and what they will be doing on the day.

**DecibelLk:** About You & CAB This Year ([Video viewable via above link](#))



ZMAX Fairway Colombo hosts the Colombo Art Biennale's Video Jam

Featured

Published in Hospitality & Leisure

<http://www.lankabusinessnews.com/index.php/hospitality-leisure/item/5501-zmax-fairway-colombo-hosts-the-colombo-art-biennale-s-video-jam>

Colombo's newest hip city hotel, the ZMAX Fairway Colombo, will host the Colombo Art Biennale's opening party at the rooftop lounge, adding to its growing reputation as a cultural oasis in the heart of the city's business district. ZMAX Fairway Colombo is also the hospitality sponsor for the Colombo Art Biennale 2016.

The Colombo Art Biennale is the largest contemporary art manifestation in Sri Lanka and its theme this year is 'Conceiving Space'. The most ambitious edition to date, the Colombo Art Biennale 2016 will showcase up to 70 artists from 21 countries across 10 venues in Colombo and will be curated by Alnoor Mitha. The program includes a cluster of educational and community activities around Slave Island and an exclusive Architects' program with a Great Feast and outstanding performance platforms.

The ZMAX Fairway Colombo hotel will also be the venue for the Colombo Art Biennale Video Jam. Video Jam is a new and emerging form of creative expression that fuses two modes of artistic expression into a single performance – that of a live musical performance responding to a short video film. Video Jam commissions musicians to compose and perform original live accompaniments to short contemporary films. The Video Jam to be held at the Zolo rooftop bar of the ZMAX Fairway Colombo hotel on the 2nd of December 2016 includes several local and international artists. The evening's program will feature an extract from Vimukti Jayasundera's film, 'Light in the Yellow Breathing Space' that will be accompanied by a piece of music scored by sound artist and experimental vocalist, Nicola Scrutton and performed by Samson Ogiamien and Ceylon African Manja.

The ZMAX Fairway Colombo hotel, as a venue with a distinct cultural ambience, already has a special collaboration with the internationally acclaimed artist, Anoma Wijewardena, whose works adorn each of the hotel's 181 rooms.

The ZMAX Fairway Colombo hotel is owned by Fairway Holdings, whose CSR initiatives include a commitment towards enriching culture and the arts in Sri Lanka. Fairway Holdings is the title sponsor of the Fairway Galle Literary Festival, which brings internationally recognized writers to local audiences. In addition, the annual Fairway National Literary Awards for creative writing seeks to support and inspire local creative writing in all three languages. Fairway Holdings is also the principal sponsor of the Chamber Music Society of Colombo and the sponsor of Soul Sounds – Sri Lanka's premier all women orchestra.



### **ZMAX Fairway Colombo hosts Colombo Art Biennale's Video Jam**

**2<sup>nd</sup> December 2016**

<http://www.ft.lk/article/583355/ZMAX-Fairway-Colombo-hosts-Colombo-Art-Biennale-s-Video-Jam>

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- See more at: <http://www.ft.lk/article/583355/ZMAX-Fairway-Colombo-hosts-Colombo-Art-Biennale-s-Video-Jam#sthash.MAIVUags.dpuf>



## THE COCA RETRO PARTY

*CoCA Art in collaboration with the Colombo Art Biennale 2016 present: the CoCA Retro Party! Good food courtesy of The Vegan Kitchen, good music courtesy of Chinthaka...*

<https://www.yamu.lk/event/the-coca-retro-party>

CoCA Art in collaboration with the Colombo Art Biennale 2016 present: the CoCA Retro Party!

Good food courtesy of The Vegan Kitchen, good music courtesy of Chinthaka Thenuwara who will be spinning records exclusively from his special vinyl record collection and good company await you at this unique charity event.

All proceeds from entries to the event contribute to the building of a mobile, educational and interactive, community play-garden which can travel around various locations and communities. It is intended to be fun and to educate and connect communities around art work. It is intended to fuel 'growth'.

The interactive play-garden emphasizes holistic education, life experiences and learning beyond the confines of the classroom and the formal educational environment.

This ongoing project provides a platform for children to learn subjects such as maths, science, languages etc. while engaging with both art-based and physical activities such as the growing of organic food for a healthy diet and lifestyle. This is an ongoing solution-focused project at CoCA

For information on entrance to the party, contact Chinthaka on 0777316256

About Colombo Art Biennale

[www.colomboartbiennale.com](http://www.colomboartbiennale.com)

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Special thanks to TNL Radio - the official radio sponsor for the CAB



## FROM ARTIST TO ARTISTE - A COLOMBO ART BIENNALE PARTNERED EVENT

*The Sooriya Village is honored to be part of The Colombo Art Biennale 2016 to present a unique dining experience, coupling its love for the world of art...*

The Sooriya Village, No. 49, Skelton Road, Colombo 5.

**POSTED BY RISHANI 1 MONTH AGO**

The Sooriya Village is honored to be part of The Colombo Art Biennale 2016 to present a unique dining experience, coupling its love for the world of art with comfort food created by renowned chef Koluu.

The Sooriya Village is a facility that breaks the boundaries between galleries and restaurants, with its vast spaces which are constantly redesigned by non-auditioned and non-curated individuals. The duty of the artist/artiste then becomes to create a relationship between the space, the tables, the food, and the audience, allowing for mixed reactions from the diner according to their experience. This way we allow the audience to decide whether the art is a complementary good to the restaurant or if it is an added feature.

The days proceedings include Musical Performances, Live Paintings, Mehendi Collections, SFX Make Up tutorials, and Knitting & Designing, all taking place simultaneously allowing the diner to enjoy their meal whilst being exposed to the creators in their work-in-progress mode.

Location:- The Sooriya Village located at No. 49 Skelton Road, Colombo 05

Date:- 4th of December 2016

Time:- 11:00am to 3:00pm



**'Conceiving Space', Colombo Art Biennale 2016: A celebration of Sri Lanka and South Asia's most innovative emerging and established artistic talent 2nd – 20th December 2016**

*Posted On 06 Dec 2016*

<http://cbr.lk/entertainment/conceiving-space-colombo-art-biennale-2016-celebration-sri-lanka-south-asias-innovative-emerging-established-artistic-talent-2nd-20th-december-2016/>



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local and international artists – including 45 local artists, architects and performers, alongside international artists, architects, university student groups and performance artists. This year we will also see unique collaborative community engagement projects produced by established artists and architects and community members residing in Slave Island, Colombo.

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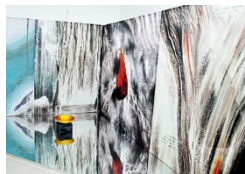


## **CAB, the journey begins**

*By Purnima Pilapitiya*

**4<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

<http://www.sundaytimes.lk/161204/plus/cab-the-journey-begins-218549.html>



The Colombo Art Biennale (CAB) 2016 had its grand opening with a VIP Private View on the evening of December 1 as participating artists and local art lovers gathered at the Prana Lounge and then shifted to the JDA Perera Gallery and Flamingo House for performances and dinner. The much anticipated event will continue till December 20 at various locations in Colombo.

Earlier on Tuesday, lead curator Alnoor Mitta told the press how he sees CAB as more than a canvas for the participating artists. “It’s an experimental platform,” he said, adding that he is hoping that artists will not only use it to express themselves but also to take risks. Mitta is the founding artistic director of Shisha (the international agency for contemporary South Asian arts and visual crafts).

This year’s edition of CAB hopes to reach out to over 73 artists from 21 countries with a diverse line-up of events and programmes. With the theme “Conceiving space”, it will unfold across ten venues in Colombo with programmes from visual arts to architecture and education where both local and international students will collaborate with artists and architects in a nine-day series of creative workshops and productions.

Including an element of visual performing arts is director of the Theertha Performance Platform (TPP) Dr. Godwin Constantine. Upon CAB Founder Anoushka Hempel's request for performance artists, CAB will also feature performance art in Slave Island along with performers from Sri Lanka, India and Serbia. "We want to take it straight to the public," explains Dr. Godwin, who feels the open surroundings will invite a spontaneous response from the audience.

For Ruwanthi de Chickera, CAB is a platform that addresses the problems in the cultural and educational systems. "We are building a subconscious space" the head of research and policy writing, Arts and Culture Council, Sri Lanka says of the numerous billboards and half constructed buildings in and around the city. Stressing on the need to "invest in our citizens in the right way", she feels that CAB is steering in the right direction. "Unless you involve artists in these areas you are creating insular, uninteresting young people," she says frankly, stressing on the need to give people a creative ownership and heritage of the places they inhabit.

Colombo Art Biennale will continue on its journey till December 11. As the programmes may change please follow them on Facebook at @ColomboArtBiennale, Twitter @CAB\_lk ,tel- 0777907728 or log on to [www.colomboartbiennale.com](http://www.colomboartbiennale.com) to keep up to date.



### **'Conceiving Space', Colombo Art Biennale 2016**

<http://bizenglish.adaderana.lk/conceiving-space-colombo-art-biennale-2016/>

### **A celebration of Sri Lanka and South Asia's most innovative emerging and established artistic talent 2nd – 20th December 2016**

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Entrance is free to all events.

For more information, please visit: [www.colomboartbiennale.com](http://www.colomboartbiennale.com)



Arts

## Stepping out in search of Art

*Kaveesha Fernando and Minushi Perera take us on a tour of Colombo Art Biennale that ends on December 20*

<http://www.sundaytimes.lk/161211/magazine/stepping-out-in-search-of-art-219238.html>



Udani Samaraweera's work at the ZMax Hotel. Pix by Indika Handuwala

If you love art or have an adventurous spirit, the Colombo Art Biennale is for you. Aiming to stretch traditional boundaries, this year's Biennale is being exhibited in diverse locations around Colombo. Travelling around Colombo looking for the various exhibits is akin to a modern-day treasure hunt, with the distance, traffic and the heat making

it quite an arduous undertaking.

"We're trying to make art more accessible by exhibiting it in different locations around Colombo so that the city itself becomes a gallery," explains Director of Architecture for the Colombo Art Biennale 2016 Gihan Karunaratne. He explains that the exhibits show beauty through the process and feels that they are as beautiful while being installed as when the finished work is exhibited. He also stressed the importance of investing in the island, with all of the artists using local material and artisans for their exhibits.

Seeing all the exhibits requires almost a complete tour around the city, and although some exhibits are worth going the distance for, others might disappoint. For a quick view, head over to the Prana Lounge and JDA Perera Gallery in Colombo 7. With exhibits from many artists on display, these two galleries which are conveniently located within metres of each other on Horton Place offer anyone short of time a quick glimpse. If you can make it to Prana Lounge on Monday or Tuesday between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. you can experience dancer Venuri Perera's performance. Titled 'Entry No Entry', the five-minute performance takes place in a dark room with one member at a time and aims to question the practices of visa offices around the globe. Explains Venuri, "I was triggered by various experiences I have had when travelling," adding that the experience was an intrusion of her personal space and one which she considers to be degrading.

For interesting art that is still 'traditional' compared to the other offerings, visit The Postgraduate Institute of Architecture on Bauddhaloka Mawatha which has many paintings on display.

If you are in the mood for walking – head over to Slave Island. If you brave the many alleyways of the area and find the exhibits you are looking for, you'll undoubtedly be impressed by a map of Slave Island which has been carved on half a tree trunk, along with a few other exhibits that may please or disappoint depending on your taste in art. The Zmax Hotel near the Dutch Hospital in Fort also has some interesting exhibits on display and is much easier to find. For a more meditative experience, the woven panels at the Cathedral of Christ the Living Saviour on Bauddhaloka Mawatha inspired by the Shroud of Turin is a must-see exhibit. The Red Dot Gallery in Borella also has a few interesting exhibits for anyone looking for unusual art.

Overall, the Colombo Art Biennale has exhibits that may challenge your conception of art. Like in the proverbial treasure hunt, who know what you may find.

**The Colombo Art Biennale exhibits can be viewed from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily till December 20. For more information, see their website <http://colomboartbiennale.com/>.**



Encounters: The Ceylon African Manja in action at ZMax Hotel. Pic by Anuradha Bandara

Danushka Marasinghe and Isuru Kumarasinghe's installation at the Theertha Red Dot Gallery





at the Cathedral

German-Lankan artist Liz Fernando's work

Map of Slave Island carved in wood by German team  
Ciriacidis Lehnerer Architekten

***(Gayan Prageeth's installation appears***



Pakistani American artist Ruby Chishti's work at the JDA Perera Gallery

Portuguese artist Cristina Rodrigues' panels



***on the Mirror Magazine  
cover)***

## **The Island**

ZMAX Fairway Colombo takes on a lead role in the Colombo Art Biennale

December 20, 2016, 7:38 pm

[http://www.island.lk/index.php?page\\_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code\\_title=157514](http://www.island.lk/index.php?page_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code_title=157514)



Hemaka de Alwis Chairman and Managing Director of Fairway Holdings with Annoushka Hempel founder and Director of CAB

From the 2nd – 20th of December, Colombo was to be the location of the Art Biennale 2016, an exhibition of art, architecture, music and performance centered on the theme, 'Conceiving Space'.

The 2nd of December saw ZMAX Fairway Colombo host the opening event of the exhibition. The hotel's rooftop lounge bar proved to be the perfect location for the evening's activities presenting guests with an incredible view of nighttime Colombo. The evening began with a performance by Samson Ogiamien and the Ceylon African Manja titled, 'Re-encounters'. Following this was a visual display of the process of digital sculpting by artist, Sumit Sarkar, whose work, Odzihozo – 'He who makes himself from nothing' was displayed at the event. The colorful paintings of artist, Udani Samaraweera were also on display. The evening also saw guests been enthralled and entertained by mesmerizing video jam sessions.

Thus far ZMAX Fairway Colombo has served as a hospitality partner of the Art Biennale 2016, offering lodging to visiting artists who have described their stay at Sri Lanka's most technologically advanced city hotel in glowing terms.

"It's been a really good stay," stated James Binning, an architect and member of Assemble. "The hotel is in a really great location and it's been very easy getting about whether it is to the market in Pettah or Slave Island or to the restaurants. I think it's a quiet and relaxed set up. It feels homely and pleasant which is really nice because at the end of a very busy day during the Art Biennale you get to come back and relax without being overwhelmed by too many people and a lot of noise". Speaking about the artwork featured in the hotel, Mr. Binning had this to say, "I see a strong relationship between the culture and the land, and I think the artwork plays on that. The paintings are truly extraordinary"



## Seen, not heard!

Wednesday, December 21, 2016 - 01:00

Print Edition

<http://dailynews.lk/2016/12/21/features/102476>



The Colombo Art Biennale 2016 featured the works of 73 local and international artists. Local artists from Jaffna, Puttalam, Batticaloa, Gampaha and Colombo constituted 50 percent. The other 50 percent are from 23 different countries. A variety of Media will be on display including installation, mixed media, painting, drawing, sculpture, sound and performance.

Jayne Dyer is one such artist who is here to participate in the Colombo Art Biennale. Daily News met up with Jayne to talk about the creative side of life. “I was asked to be in the Biennale a year and a half ago. I was very interested in being able to make work especially for the Biennale about Sri Lanka. The

Biennale has grown from strength to strength. The Director is Annoushka Hempel who is a marvelous woman. She is working with a team of young Sri Lankans who are helping to manage to do promotions and so forth for the Biennale,” said Dyer.

The curator is Alnoor Mitha from Manchester who is selecting the work. He is of South Asian origin. "He has selected artists from across the world. He has made sure that there is a really strong group of young Sri Lankan artists which is very special, as well as International artists from other countries. There is a very

big South East Asian representation – from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. There are also artists from Bahrain, there is me, I am an Australian Artist. So this Biennale is a very interesting encompassing program,” stated Dyer.

So this Biennale is an Art exhibition that happens every two years. This particular Biennale is very diverse. Because it does not only involve paintings there is also a program of performance where artists are making work that is more to do with body movements. There are other artists making work on Slave Island with the community. So there is a very big community program this year. So it is very mixed.



“It is not only paintings, drawings and photography. It can be other things as well. And this Biennale is very broad with many activities happening. It has been two years in the planning. And it goes on for one month. So altogether there are 73 artists. There is a wide range of artists coming from so many countries other than Sri Lanka – India, Bangladesh, Bahrain, Pakistan, England, Australia and America. Annoushka and her team worked with the Sri Lankan government and they have worked with supporting organizations like the British Council and the Norwegian council. I, of course have been supported by the Unity Mission Trust, the Australian High Commission and Sovereign Art Foundation,” explained Dyer.

Dyer felt that the project that she is doing here is very important.

“I have been here for about three weeks. And I have met 41 young Sri Lanka people. They have come from all over Sri Lanka. From Jaffna, Galle, Mirissa, Matara and Kandy, North, South, East and West. From 20 different places around Sri Lanka. This work is about them. They had come to meet me. They are young people, not artists, who are in my project. They came by bus and train to meet me. I worked with them for one week. We talked and took photos together. My work is made up of Sri Lankan stories. It was organized by the Unity Mission Trust, which is a really important organization,” elucidated Dyer.

The Unity Mission Trust organizes camps for people in the age group of 17 – 25. At the camps they get to meet each other. A person from Galle may meet a person from Jaffna. And they will have the chance to talk. “From communicating with each other, they build friendships. I have, in my project gathered stories of Sri Lanka people - the people who came here from different parts of Sri Lanka to be interviewed by me. I made the work about their stories. Because the country has had many different things happening during the last 30 years, these are stories about their hopes, fears and joys. Each person tells me about their stories. My work is a work I made with these young people,” pointed out Dyer.

Dyer is very interested about meeting people from different countries. It is more global because she wants every voice to be heard.

“My practice is across the world. My work is in China, England, Georgia, Turkey, Japan, Korea and now I am in Sri Lanka. I want your voice and my voice to be heard. I want to understand the country through its people. Not just to travel, but to really talk with the people. This project is a good example of how I make an exchange. My project is not a painting on the wall. It is the people of this country,” added Dyer.

Dyer is involved in environmental causes and works with groups who are interested in the environment on issues such as air pollution and water pollution.

“We work with engineers, designers, conservationists who are looking after the land. Basically people who are in the industry. So we come together and we sometimes make art works and projects that help the environment. So they are not always in the gallery, they are sometimes in the land, and sometimes they are actually with groups of people. Sometimes they are photos, sometimes they are videos and sometimes they are made with objects like sculptures, but they are all about working with communities. They are all about improving our future. Some countries have very good water but in many countries there is bad water. In some countries the air is very bad,” stressed Dyer.

Dyer wants to raise the voices of many to help the world no matter how little they may be.

“Our world is a diverse world, with many voices. In the world there are millions of people and each person has a voice. They have something to say. What I work towards is tolerance. They should have a chance to be heard. That is what I think we all need. We need to reach out to each other but not hit each other. We may not be the same as each other. We are all different. But we hope everyone is happy,” maintains Dyer.

Dyer pointed out that sometimes she does not make work with artists. Sometimes she likes to make work with engineers, a conservationists and scientists. At the moment she is making work with a poet.

“I don’t make paintings. I work with many mediums. I use photographs, videos, sculpture. Sometimes I like to go outside in the street and I find things on the ground and take them into my studio. In one project I used 3000 books to make a work. My projects are contemporary,” informed Dyer.

Dyer is inspired by what is happening in the world. She is inspired by people. By politics, environment and social causes.

“I loved two places in school. The library with all the books and the art room. It was a wonderful way to spend my time. My two favorite places. As an artist today I still go to my studio which is my art room and the library as sources of inspiration,” pointed out Dyer.

Dyer earns her money through her art work. She does very large commissions for public work – sometimes as tall as a 20-storey building. How she makes a living is through artwork. In 2013 Dyer received the inaugural individual artist’s award from the Australian Federal Government.

“I am very strongly committed to art and education. And the government recognized this by the projects I do and it is very meaningful to me,” summed up Dyer.



[Sunday Times 2](http://www.sundaytimes.lk/161218/sunday-times-2/anomas-mi-casa-es-tu-casa-at-cab-a-celebration-of-unity-in-diversity-221039.html)

Anoma’s ‘Mi Casa Es Tu Casa’ at CAB: A celebration of unity in diversity

18<sup>th</sup> December 2016

<http://www.sundaytimes.lk/161218/sunday-times-2/anomas-mi-casa-es-tu-casa-at-cab-a-celebration-of-unity-in-diversity-221039.html>



“How will 2016 be recorded in the annals of the future? An annus horribilis of historic proportion perhaps? Will this be the pivotal year when notions of humanity, integrity and liberal ideals succumbed to the base instincts of our lesser selves?

As I watched with growing disbelief and alarm the events of 2016 develop, so this installation germinated and took shape in my imagination, my sketchbooks and notebook,” writes internationally known artist Anoma Wijewardene whose installation ‘Mi Casa Es Tu Casa’ at the JDA Perera Gallery on Horton Place,

Colombo 7 is one of the stand-out exhibits at the Colombo Art Biennale 2016 which concludes on December 20. CAB opened on December 2 and is seen in multiple venues across the city.

The artwork was initially inspired by the migration and refugee crisis unleashed on the world by war, poverty and famine and the political shockwaves that reverberated throughout the world, creating a volte face for values, morality, ethics and societal norms.

“The art is a response to the rise and normalization of the unconscionable, the divisive and destructive forces of intolerance, hatred and bigotry. Perhaps Sri Lanka which has so recently suffered the pain of conflict and loss, can be the beacon of hope, of values, of inclusion? Can human beings surmount our base greed, and biologically programmed need to compete for ourselves, and instead compete to improve our society and environment?” Anoma asks.

The installation comprises many elements and layers. The primary medium- transparent fabric, references the fragility of home, refugee tents, Calais jungles, and alludes to the idea that walls and borders are really a fragile construct of man, especially ‘when we live in a borderless world where we can share anything, anywhere, in real time.’ The perforations reiterate the need for openness since everything today is porous and leaking. The images on the transparent fabric remind us of the fragility of nature and the environment.

The viewer is invited to step on to the floor and engage with Mi Casa. It hints at the need for reflection and contemplation, perhaps reminding us that while we are treading water much is being lost, perhaps also to caution that every step we take resonates, and has eddying repercussions.

The bowl at the centre channels the sun, source of all energy, the idea of the holy grail, the cup of loving kindness, maitreeya, a receptacle for thoughts. The spiralling crystal ball alludes to questions of how this new unfathomable future will unfold, creating illusions and intangibility, in a spinning, out of control globe.

The accompanying concertina installation documents the creative process. It echoes the theme of the installation, the production itself being a diverse journey of action in unison with the inspirational spoken and written words of thinkers and spiritual leaders urging viewers to reach for their higher selves.

For the artists who collaborated on the installation, it was a revelation in many ways. “Being asked to think creatively always stretches the mind, making us think outside our usual comfort zone. We should do it more.... working and thinking together surprising ourselves and enjoying the shared experiences,” said Nikki Harrison who designs interiors and jewellery in both France and Sri Lanka.

It’s a pleasure for us to be a part of this team and help to construct this artwork. We have met many times and discussed numerous changes and varieties of materials and made several samples, as we try to arrive at solutions that will convey the complex ideas of the artist,” said Amila Alawathugoda, founder & Managing Director of Ad Plus & Concept79.

A painting will visually deliver a message but when it is expressed in voice it has more depth and vigour. This is a unique concept which touched me deeply. I tried my best to give life to the words the artist wanted to express through her painting, said Ruwan Walpola, MD of Sound Asia Holdings while interior designer and decorator Ajith Jayasundera said they discussed the suspension of a crystal glass sphere trapped by a stainless steel rod which was formed in to shape by Prasad, a very talented metal craftsman. “My part was to ensure that it was done exactly the way we discussed and that it created an illusion.”

We live in a borderless world, where you can share anything, anywhere in real time. Cultures converge together, changing our values as a result of living within the information era. As our borders collide, so do our cultural values. However, old structures fight to remain supreme, suppressing mainstream media, segregating societies for their own twisted benefit, wrote KikeMacias, Head of the Interior Design Department at AOD in Colombo for the University of Northumbria in Newcastle.

Anoma said it was heartening to discover while working on this installation which celebrates unity in diversity that the very way they worked reiterated just that. “The creation of it was a bringing together of people from diverse experiences. Through our comparative dialogue, freedom of expression, non-judgmental openness, we were able to create this artwork. This truly was a labour of love and passion from everyone who participated.”



## **A Stunning Piece of Art in Search of a Space**

December 24, 2016, 6:59 pm

[http://www.island.lk/index.php?page\\_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code\\_title=157740](http://www.island.lk/index.php?page_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code_title=157740)



Anoma Wijewardene's installation for the 2016 Biennial is truly mind-blowing. With the input of interior and sound designers, metal workers, researchers, writers and thinkers from different parts of the world Anoma has produced an inspired installation: a thoughtful, provocative, artistic statement of a historical moment in our world and our time – 2016. It is a moment that seems to have crystallized issues of war and violence, home and exile, ethnicity and nationalism, 'us' and 'them', for vast numbers of the world's populations.

It is perhaps particularly apt that a creative artist from Sri Lanka, a country that has barely emerged from thirty years of ethnic strife still struggling for reconciliation, should seize the moment to make this artistic statement. How does one, how should one respond to these issues? Should we give in to deep subliminal fears of the need to preserve 'me and mine' against a possible influx of 'the other'? Such fears have surfaced in unexpected ways, in unexpected places and produced unexpected responses across the world. Europe faced with millions of refugees driven by war and poverty and the loss of home and country, moved from initial sympathetic openness to now quotas and a closing of borders. America under Trump is planning to build walls to keep out Mexicans from across the border or Muslims who they fear may be terrorists. Then there is the inexorable push already evident of climate change with foreboding prospects of more aridity, more poverty and disastrous starvation; the melting of the polar ice caps, rising sea levels and submersion of lands. All this is the moving subtext of this installation aptly entitled in the simple phrase "Mi Casa es Tu Casa" (My house is Your house).

The first frame is painted on cloth — cloth that man associates with warmth, home and shelter, or now tents for the displaced. For me the painting evoked a sense of the earth, moving upward in warm brown tones and soaring lines. The cloth was perforated and the light refracted through onto the wall behind. Anoma says she

wanted to suggest that life and everything in it was porous, leaked through, cast its shadows, and affected the world around it. The next frame had a blood red map of Sri Lanka centered against a background of a whirling world of movement and colorless and chaotic forms. The blood red island also cast its reflection in the mirrored surface below. That was the 'here and the now', the present moment of chaotic movement and fluidity of a world in turmoil. The next frame has downward reaching forms that seem searching to root like the roots of the Banyan tree. Finally the eye moves into the last frame. It is a stunning painting of ice blue serenity, silence and emptiness. I felt as if I had moved into a world of melted ice where all was cold, silent and in a strange way beautifully serene.

Yet in the middle of the installation is a small golden bowl, symbolizing water, compassion, love and the possibility of ongoing life – perhaps. Above it hangs a crystal ball, twirling and twirling — to ask the question — "Is this the way the world ends, not with a bang or a whimper —but into a cold, lonely, serenely beautiful silence.

What does one do with a breathtaking installation such as this? In any other part of the world a museum would grab it. In Sri Lanka we cannot even maintain the beautiful museums and artwork that we have – as in the case of the Japanese funded environmentally exquisitely designed Sigiriya museum, or the University of Peradeniya which owns a fabulous art collection donated by its former librarian but still has not had the money to build a museum to house it; or the Colombo Art Gallery or the Kandy museum which are dust covered and leaking spaces hardly visited by the public.

A tourist hotel may have the space and the money to house and care for such an installation; but the hurly burly of tourist traffic and luggage is not the environment for the kind of contemplative viewing such an installation demands. In today's world perhaps only some big private company or better still a bank, can create a foyer where people can sit and contemplate a creative piece such as this. Perhaps one can urge some such Sri Lankan company to save this piece for posterity, not only as the work of a renowned Sri Lankan artist, but as an artistic statement of our world and time.

Ranjini Obeyesekere  
Kandy  
December 2016



**Art as a place: Canvas of germination and growth**  
*Jyoti Dhar writes on the recently concluded Colombo Art Biennale*

25<sup>th</sup> December 2016

<http://www.sundaytimes.lk/161225/plus/art-as-a-place-canvas-of-germination-and-growth-221240.html>



Half-way down Hospital Street - a microcosm of Colombo development, as one of the oldest lanes in the historical Fort district, adjacent to the 17th century Dutch Hospital, and since 2011 part of a high-end shopping, bar and hotel area – a bunch of artists, poets and filmmakers take part in the city’s first “Video Jam.” Set against this giddy vista, on the bare and unfinished roof-top of a trendy new hotel, we witness a similarly raw and hip mix of live sound and composed films. A woman sings in a staccato, operatic style in response to black-and-white archival images floating above a luscious landscape; a local beat-boxer times pops, clicks, fizzles and sputters to a sinister, stop-motion animation of wooden circus dolls; and deep, electronic beats lace psychedelic imagery of green-tinged growths, morphing like mini-explosions out of multi-coloured pyramids. Paired together by curator Shereen Perera, the latter is an auditory answer by Colombo-based musician Asvajit Boyle to London-based animator Alice Dunseath’s chimerical visuals, “You Could Sunbathe in this Storm” (2014). On its own, the short film is suggestive of a gamut of organic forms, from coral and crystals to corpuscles and clouds - but presented here in the context of Colombo, it resonates most strongly with the idea of tropical growth.

As those who nurture art and culture in Sri Lanka’s capital know, the city is ripe for encouraging germination and cross-pollination. For the most part, its ecosystem tends to provide saplings and spores that fly in or take root, fertile ground in which to flourish. Sometimes, however, these growths can sprout and multiply before they have time to become firmly planted or stabilized. The Colombo Art Biennale (CAB) can be thought of in a similar vein, beginning in 2009 as a collaborative gesture between gallerist Annoushka Hempel and artist Jagath Weerasinghe, and since budding into a plethora of artistic endeavours. Over the course of three editions, titled “Imagining Peace” (2009), “Becoming” (2012) and “Making Histories” (2014), the event has tried, and sometimes struggled, to respond to the complicated course from war-time to peace-time through its curatorial premises. While the first two iterations brought together a range of artists from Sri Lanka and the wider region, the previous edition was exemplary of a conceptually haphazard collection of artworks, and exhibitions by local and international organizations, clubbed together under one umbrella. Bearing this in mind, the fourth outing of CAB, called “Conceiving Space” and curated by Manchester-based Alnoor Mitha, was a more solid rendering of the biennale format, with a move toward selective, large-scale and site-specific works.

In the Old Town Hall in Pettah, in the middle of a 19th century court-room, a monumental velvet and gold throne with elongated legs towered above the uninhabited seats below. High on top, in place of a monarch, sat a cluster of coconuts covered in crimson-red liquid, which dripped down the sides of the installation, all the way to the floor. This was Toronto-based artist and photographer, Rajni Perera’s first sculptural work, “A Long Arm, a Tight Grip” (2016) which she characterized in a curatorial tour as “a theatrical critique of the aftermath of colonial rule, which still exists to this day.” While seemingly more in dialogue with a dichotomous past than a nuanced socio-political and commercial present, the notion of imperial power was effectively echoed by the work’s historical setting. The staging of Cristina Rodrigues’s work, “The Shroud” (2016) in the architecturally hybrid space of the Cathedral of Christ the Living Saviour in central Colombo, was equally dramatic in its positioning. In this case, however, the installation itself, which intended to be a contemporary evocation of the eponymous biblical material of Turin, and consisted of several linen cloths

woven by Portuguese artisans hanging from the rafters of the cathedral, did not appear to explore or extend itself beyond its inherent premise.

When asked about this commission in an interview earlier this month, Mitha himself agreed that the work represented a “safe choice.” While understanding the need to respect local sensitivities in this situation, the tendency toward moderate and perfunctory installations unfortunately seemed to pervade much of the rest of the festival. In fact, of the artists presenting more risk-taking or radical work, asking to look at current concerns or the city anew, were Colombo-based artists Venuri Perera and Poornima Jayasinghe. As a Kandyan-turned-contemporary dancer, Perera’s practice often subverts and challenges notions of the body and its place in the larger body-politic. To engage with her work, “EntryNOEntry” (2016) audience members had to enter a pitch-dark room, one by one, and answer frank questions about their nationality, bank balance, health status and illegal activity, all of which were whispered into their ear, while being gently danced with. With this discomforting performance she asked the biennale-going public to resist complacency on increasingly urgent issues to do with immigration and nationalism, reminding us of how personal the effects of such policies are. In contrast, Jayasinghe’s intervention, “Title” (2016) stemmed from well-ingrained, neo-colonial concerns, to do with international cultural institutions and their oft-problematic framing of local culture.

Originally conceived in response to Colombo’s other major arts festival, Colomboscope, Jayasinghe’s re-staging of the work at CAB – consisting of several labels with phrases heard at the former event including “West Speaks East Listens,” “Visuals for Ex-pats” and “Great Contemporary Art Bubble” – held a mirror to some prevalent issues. The charge of elitism and catering to a limited audience has often been lobbied at CAB. Conscious of this, Hempel asked architect Gihan Karunaratne to create an architectural and community-based program for this edition, which would focus on projects in the ethnically and socially diverse suburb of Slave Island. This included ongoing projects such as Theertha Performance Platform, Mullegama Art Centre workshops and CoCA’s “Cube out of the box” mobile exhibition. The culmination of this - in the middle of origami birds made with local children, a sky garden connecting two sides of the street and model of an imagined community centre for the Nawala suburb - was the “Great Feast” by the UK-based collective Assemble; a sit-down lunch for 500 people along Dispensary Lane, to which caterers and the community contributed a range of dishes. In the end, this overwhelming mix elicited a host of reactions from neighbouring inhabitants and the local art community alike, including Slave Island resident and artist Firi Rahman.

“It was good because it was a very new experience for many people,” he told us. “But I was expecting more, something less temporary, something which could be useful to the residents in the future.” The idea that such outreach programs need to be more carefully considered and grounded in local realities was also echoed by Jayasinghe. “We have to ask ourselves, ‘Is this what the community really needed?’ As artists and curators, we have to think about the sustainability of these projects and what they really mean.” In the end, the fourth CAB was certainly stronger and on for longer than previous editions, but still seemed to be affected by inherent issues that threaten to unmoor it. Learning from other biennales in Asia, whether Sharjah, Kochi or Shanghai, we see that they are usually planned two years in advance, are partly or fully state-backed, and remain open to local audiences for months at a time. While it is important to allow CAB to have its own trajectory and identity, it is also clear that there is only so much it can ever do or be given its current infrastructure. Indeed Hempel acknowledges that it needs to change its status from that of a private biennale to a non-profit foundation, if it is to address key issues of framework and execution in the future. Once that

happens, perhaps it can re-generate and be supportive once again, not just of its own stable growth, but of organic off-shoots and life-cycles around it altogether.

*\* Art as a Place derives its name from the Sarai Reader 09 exhibition (2013) in New Delhi, curated by Raqs Media Collect*

THURSDAY DECEMBER 8, 2016

C2

# THIS & THAT



## 4<sup>TH</sup> EDITION OF THE COLOMBO ART BIENNALE (CAB)



The theme for CAB 2016 is 'Conceiving Space.' The Colombo Art Biennale (CAB) is the largest and most significant contemporary art manifestation in Sri Lanka. Established in 2009, CAB showcases contemporary art with an emphasis on Sri Lanka and the South Asian region.

Speaking to Annoushka Hempel, the lady behind this vibrant brand, she says, 'This is a place for everyone to express art and to learn what can be brought out from it, and every time we do it, we are growing and we are adding more' - she looked very tired when she was telling me this too!

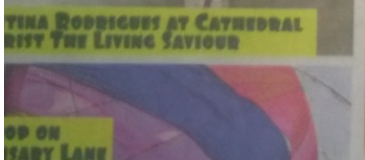
The theme for CAB 2016, curated by Alnoor Mitha, is 'Conceiving Space', to open up a paradigm of seeing, providing possibilities for creative production that engage with explorations of diverse senses of space. The Biennale has brought together 45 International & Local artists including: Mithu Sen (Delhi), Pushpamala N

(Bangalore), Reena Kallat (Delhi), Faiza Butt (UK/Pakistan), Naiza Khan (UK/Pakistan), Ghada Khungi (Bahrain), Cristina Rodrigues (Portugal), Ruby Chisthi (US), Rajni Perera (Sri Lanka/Canada), Saskia Pintelon (Sri Lanka/Belgium), Priyantha Udagedara (Sri Lanka), Tracy Holsinger (Sri Lanka), Venuri Perera (Sri Lanka), S. P. Pushpakanthan (Sri Lanka) and Asvjit Boyle (Sri Lanka).

As this is a journey of art, here on WTF we have the breakdown for the next few days, and our WTF video carries a full discussion on it too.



"The Colombo Art Biennale (CAB) is the largest and most significant contemporary art manifestation in Sri Lanka. Established in 2009, CAB showcases contemporary art with an emphasis on Sri Lanka and the South Asian region."



### FRIDAY 9TH OF DECEMBER 2016

VISUAL ARTS PROGRAMME OPEN TO PUBLIC AT ALL VENUES

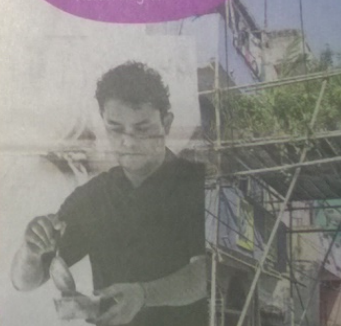
- 9am-3pm Theertha Performance Platform (TPP) Workshops, Slave Island.
- 10am-5pm Ciriadis Lehnerer Architekten Installation (Aerial Architectural Model of Slave Island) Slave Island, Colombo 02
- 11am-7pm Performance by Venuri Perera at Prana Lounge, first floor (it will take about five minutes for each visitor)
- 1.30pm-4.30pm Studio Assembly and Madelo
- 4am-8pm Street performance at Slave Island at Theertha Performance Platform in front of Badhriya Mosque, Slave Island.
- 7.30pm Dinner at Santore' Bistro Italiano restaurant - special menu and entertainment, 45, Sir Marcus Fernando Mawatha, Colombo 07

### SATURDAY 10TH OF DECEMBER 2016

- 9am-3pm Theertha Performance Platform (TPP) Workshops, Slave Island.
- 10am-5pm Ciriadis Lehnerer Architekten Installation (Aerial Architectural Model of Slave Island) Slave Island, Colombo 02
- 11am-2pm Performance by Venuri Perera at Prana Lounge, first floor (it will take about five minutes for each visitor)
- 1.30pm-6pm Architects Symposium featuring local and international Biennale Architects at Nuga Gama, Cinnamon Grand Hotel.
- 4pm-8pm 4pm - 8pm - Theertha Performance Platform Street performance starts in front of Badhriya Mosque, Slave Island.

### SUNDAY 11TH OF DECEMBER 2016

- 10am-12pm Theertha Performance Platform (TPP) Workshops, Slave Island.
- 10am-5pm Ciriadis Lehnerer Architekten Installation (Aerial Architectural Model of Slave Island) Slave Island, Colombo 02
- 12.30pm 'The Great Feast', Dispensary Lane, Slave Island (open to all)



WHAT "Conceiving Space" WHERE Around Colombo WHEN 2nd - 20th Decer WHO Annoushka Hempel

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BY Jithendri Gomes



There is an outburst of Biennials in the globe. It appears that each and every city in the globe wants to actively transform its artistic discourse by presenting contemporary art in an urban setting.

In many ways this explosion of creativity encourages a new cultural dialogue. It benefits the local artistic scene as well as an international audience who may not have visited the place for the first time. So where does the biennial phenomenon arise from? The word itself is Italian and means an event that happens every two years.



◀ **Alnoor Mitha**  
**FRSA, Lead Curator**  
**Colombo Art Biennial**

"As the lead curator for the CAB, my main aim as a researcher and curator is to establish a framework of curating a significant number of local artists from the wider regions of Sri Lanka"

Exhibited at several different locations around Colombo including Colombo 7 and Colombo 3: Fort and Slave Island, from December 2nd to December 20th 2016



# SOUTH ASIAN HUB CAB 2016

*'Conceiving Space'*

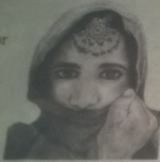
In many ways the globe and its cultural Art fairs are almost like theme parks or a new form of cultural tourism. The artistic global community is able to visit these new events, be it biennials, triennials or Art Fairs that somehow feed the community of collectors, and wider audiences with multiple snapshots of contemporary art. More recently, we have the South Asian focus on the biennial culture. South Asia is an interesting constituency, rich with history and international trade routes. Take for example the Kochi Muziris Biennial, India, Dhaka Art Summit, Bangladesh, Lahore/Karachi Biennial Pakistan, Kathmandu Triennial, Nepal and the Colombo Art Biennial, Sri Lanka.



From page 1

These initiatives have created a new kind of audience to consume art in a very different way.

As the lead curator for the CAB, my main aim as a researcher and curator is to establish a framework of curating a significant number of local artists from the wider regions of Sri Lanka. The programme will present the works of approximately 25 local artists and 25 international artists exhibited at several different locations around Colombo including Colombo 7 and Colombo 3; Fort and Slave Island, from December 2nd to December 20th 2016. - Alnoor Mitha FRSA, Lead Curator Colombo Art Biennial



The local artist segment includes participants from Jaffna, Puttalam, Batticaloa,

Gampaha and Colombo and will focus on young emerging artists of Sri Lanka who will make up 50% of local artist participation at CAB2016. Local and international participants will display a variety of artistic disciplines, including installation, sculpture, sound and performance art.

The conceptual framing for CAB 2016 envisages a consideration of the following intentions and strategies in its artistic direction and curatorial vision: Engage with the theme of 'Conceiving Space' - interrogating space as 'public' and private; space as protest and contestation; space as tangible and imagined; space as community, memory and legacy; space as architectural, performative, temporal, spiritual and rhythmic; space as liminal and ritualistic; space as embodied and meditative; space as virtual and transcendent."

'Conceiving Space' seeks to strengthen the established contemporary Sri Lankan art space and context, and engage with creating artistic associations in the Asian Region, while being acquainted in international contemporary art discourses, 'Conceiving Space' demands an expansion in the mediums of artistic expression that will be engaged with so that, for example, performance art

and music composition and sound could contribute as a provocation about what constitutes art for artists and art communities.

"I am particularly interested in curating the first 'South Asian Hub' in Colombo. In other words, there will be a significant number of South Asian artists whose ancestry is from South Asia but now live in either Europe or USA.

EXHIBITED AT SEVERAL DIFFERENT LOCATIONS AROUND COLOMBO INCLUDING COLOMBO 7 AND COLOMBO 3; FORT AND SLAVE ISLAND, FROM DECEMBER 2ND TO DECEMBER 20TH 2016

The idea of focusing on the hub will create a unique platform that will investigate the current quality of artists from South Asia living internationally."

So why South Asian hub? As I have highlighted earlier, South Asia is a fascinating geographical location, however the regions haven't had a friendly or neighbourly relationship. There have been political and religious divisions between the regions, and I don't really want to go into much detail about the differences. However, I am interested in showcasing the familiar, or shall we say the similarity of cultures not least the similarity of artistic exchanges between artists. Artists from South Asia are making some of the most exciting work in the world today. I wanted to curate a space that not only engaged with outstanding talented international artists but also a space that supported the local Sri Lankan artistic sector. I believe that the emerging artists from Sri Lanka will be interconnected with international artists. I have also established a mentoring scheme for local artists where the older generation of artists support the younger ones in a collaborative process."

Alnoor Mitha

I am particularly interested in curating the first 'South Asian Hub' in Colombo. In other words, there will be a significant number of South Asian or first whose ancestry is from South Asia but now live in either Europe or USA.

The CAB 2016 has various creative strands including the architectural intervention to be launching for the first time. The programme which will run from the 3rd - 11th December will be centered in and around the Slave Island district in Colombo with a strong focus on Community Engagement.

#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This nine-day programme will see internationally renowned and award winning architects working as artists with the local community with the support of both international and local students and artists. At the end of the programme the collaborations will be showcased in and around the community area, culminating in a 'Great Feast' on the last day bringing together 500 members of the local community who will be cooking and joined by artists, architects and visitors.

#### SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CAB2016 WILL INCLUDE

The work by local Sri Lankan artists Venuri Pereira, Abdul Haliq Azis, Priyantha Udagedara, and Liz Fernando. The international artists will include Mithu Sen, Pushpamala N., Reema Kallat, Faiza Bhutt, Naiza Khan and Hardeep Phandal. These are just a few names to entice everyone to the artistic programme.

# SOUTH ASIAN HUB CAB 2016

'Conceiving Space'

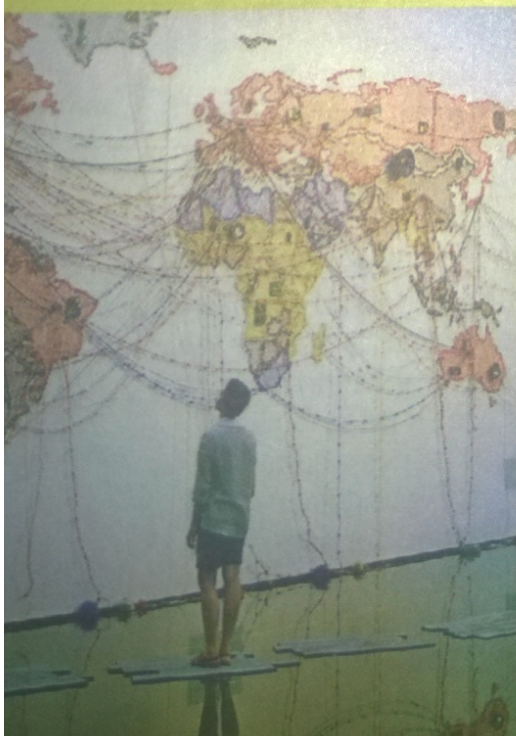


# COLOMBO ART BIENNALE CONCEIVING SPACE

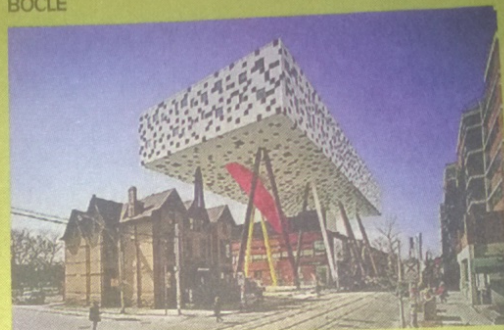
The Colombo Art Biennale (CAB) is the largest and most significant contemporary art manifestation in Sri Lanka. Established in 2009, CAB showcases contemporary art with an emphasis on Sri Lanka and the South Asian region.

The theme for CAB 2016, curated by Alnoor Mitha, is 'Conceiving Space', seeks to open up a paradigm of seeing, providing possibilities for creative production that engage with explorations of diverse senses of space. The Biennale will bring together 40 international artists including: Mithu Sen (Delhi), Pushpamala (Bangalore), Reena Kallat (Delhi), Faiza Butt (UK/Pakistan), Naiza Khan (UK/Pakistan), Ghada Khungi (Bahrain), Cristina Rodrigues (Portugal), Ruby Chisthi (US), Rajni Perera (Sri Lanka/Canada), Saskia Pintelon (Sri Lanka/Belgium), Priyantha Udagedara (Sri Lanka), Tracy Holsinger (Sri Lanka), Venuri Perera (Sri Lanka), S. P. Pushpakanthan (Sri Lanka) and Asvaji Boyle (Sri Lanka).

*The theme for CAB 2016, curated by Alnoor Mitha, 'Conceiving Space', seeks to open up a paradigm of seeing, providing possibilities for creative production that engage with explorations of diverse senses of space.*



THE TEARS OF BANANAMAN BY JEAN-FRANÇOIS BOCLÉ



OCAD UNIVERSITY BY WILL ALSOP-IMAGE COURTESY RICHARD JOHNSON1

## 2nd - 20th December 2016

'Conceiving Space' reimagines traditional concepts of the 'spatial' in relation to boundaries and engagement; it demands a foray into space as public and private; space as protest; space as tangible and imagined; space as community, memory and legacy; space as architectural, conceptual, performative, temporal, spiritual, symbolic, intuitive and rhythmic; space as liminal and ritualistic; space as embodied and meditative, virtual and transcendent.

Integral to CAB's vision for 2016 is the establishment of dialogue between local and international artists, curator Mitha explains:

CAB 2016 priorities community engagement and educational initiatives.

CAB 2016 will be held at over ten different sites around Colombo including, Prana Lounge, The Old Town Hall, Cathedral of Christ the Living Saviour, Slave Island, Theertha Red Dot Gallery. Parallel events will also be held at Barefoot Gallery, Saskia

