

HAMJA AHSAN - CURATING EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

Key Interests/ Statement

My interests grow out of my writing and research interests in the following arena: the emergent rise of Asia, the crisis of the nation state, secularism and violence, global religious revivalism, multiculturalism, diaspora politics, security and surveillance and formations of Imperialism. (See **OTHER ASIANS** for more projects). I am interested in innovative exhibitionary structures and formats, translating practitioners of non-art disciplines (e.g. journalism, geography, blogging, economics, physics) into contemporary art practice. I am experienced with working within the context of artist-run spaces, university campus, music festivals, local community groups as well as large specialist public arts institution. My curatorial projects reanimate models of public education concerning cross-cultural exchange. Whilst currently booked with projects, I work on a freelance basis and would be interested in offers of new art projects. So feel free to get in touch for enquiries, advice or exhibition and event proposals.

Special Current interests:

- translating the practice of internet blogs, blogging as politics into contemporary art display and exhibition structure
- Situating the Pan-Islamic historiography and politics within critical theory
- South Asian diaspora politics
- Marxism and Indian cinema
- Cinema of Partition
- Curating Bangladesh language movement and war of Independence 1971 as contested historical ground

(Long-Term Projects in Development)

1. *Bengali Theatre Season Exhibition – Scheduled July 2010*

An exhibition around Bengali theatre, literature, graphic design to coincide with the Bengali theatre season at Brady Arts centre

2. *Zoe Rahman Archive*

Working with jazz musician Zoe Rahman tracing journey of the Bangladesh diaspora through the making of her work *Where Rivers Meet*

<http://www.zoerahman.com/>

3. *Islamic Prisoners work with Shahidul Alam (DRIK/ Chobi Mela) and journalist -*

Working an allegoric photo essay on fate of Muslim prisoners in British jails

<http://shahidul.wordpress.com/>

4. *REDO Pakistan – Newspaper volume 2*

Commissioning artwork for next volume of exhibition, focusing on translation of bloggers and blogging politics of the South Asian diaspora

Artwork Commissioned as Curator:

(2008)

- Asia Coming Drawing Series -Emi Miyashita
- Erudite- Seb Gaeta & Koichi Samuels, Sound art remix of Asian national anthems
- The Other Place – Fatima Hussain, Video text projection

(2009)

- Pakistan Rekonstrukt – Shafiq Dadd
- Poster series for REDO Pakistan (Karachi – Shanaakht Festival)
- Pakistan –Slide Show - Saif Osmani
- Tea and biscuits– Play by Hussain Ismail

- Tea or Coffee/ Tea Traders/ Spoonful – Lorna Robertson, (series of road signs, posters, light board around the business of tea)
- Tea, Satire and Superstition -Helen Grundy, Animation/ Short film commission
- Universal set – Helena Wee, Conceptual drawing based on scientific formula
- Sylhet Tea Gardens – Diana Ali Photographic collage

List of Curated Exhibitions/ Programmes:

(2009 September)

Pakistan Rerun – Deptford X

Awarded and selected by Deptford X jury

Exhibition with satellite events of film and Faiz Ahmed Faiz reading

(2009 August)

Manton 789 - (Late at Tate Britain with MA CWCP – Tate Britain

(3 hour programme of sound art, interventions, talks, short films, video art) Invited artists included Mark Fisher (K-Punk) and the Objectifiers

(2009 August)

A Cup of Tea Solves Everything Redux– Forfey Festival (Northern Ireland)

Extended exhibition – including new commissions

(2009 July)

Why Palestine is Still the Issue?

Exhibition with satellite events – University of the Arts Hub

Invited Katie Barlow film director, Palestine Filmmaker collective

Organised by University of the Arts Palestine Solidarity Network

(2009 June)

Project Biennale Symposium – Sheffield SIAD gallery

(2009 May)

Newspaper Vendors – Alhambra Centre, Lahore (Pakistan)

Include symposium

(2009 April)

Redo Pakistan (associate curator for commissions from London-based artists)– Shakaant Festival, (Karachi)

(2009 March)

Who Invented the Afternoon Tea? An Evening of Short Film and Performance – Departure, London

(2009 February)

A Cup of Tea Solves Everything – Departure

Exhibition with series of events, performance and films

New artworks, performances and plays commission especially for exhibition

(2009 January)

The Reception – Wimbeldon gallery

Curated a series of tables based around the format of a wedding reception party

(2008 – and ongoing)

Public Film Screenings of Bengali Art Cinema, Documentary and Artists Film and Video with discussion and writing produced with Other Asias and Bengali Diaspora Arts Exchange, regularly held at Departure, London. Conceived as a public education/ outreach programme for new and settled Bangladeshi migrant community and transforming white, Euro-centric East London artworld.

(2008 November)

The Liberation War Museum (curated 2 hour Film Screening) – Departure

Include work by Palestine Film Makers Collective, Jihoi Lee, Roberto Bolotti

Themes: Post-Imperial Liberation, trope of Vietnam, Colonialism in retrospective, the museum

In/Formation – Noli's Gallery

2 floor exhibition featuring over 20 young International artists from across Asia and Europe

New Commissioned work by Seb Gaeta, Emi Miyashita, contemporary dance, performances, film screening, theoretical production, reading circles.

(2008 September)

Family Time – curated 2 hour film screening around themes of rural and urban time, Bengali diaspora, prison, domestic and family drama, migration, pauses.