

## PRESS RELEASE

### Eleven arts organisations in the North of England and South Asia announce major contemporary art network - *New North and South*

- A three year programme of artistic commissions, exhibitions and intellectual exchange will celebrate the shared heritage of South Asia and the North of England
- 2017 programme highlights include solo exhibitions by Waqas Khan, Hetain Patel, Neha Choksi and Risham Syed at Manchester Art Gallery, Raqs Media Collective and Raqib Shaw at the Whitworth and Dhaka Art Summit, Reena Saini Kallat at Manchester Museum and a new performance by Nikhil Chopra at the Museum of Science and Industry

A new network of eleven arts organisations from across the North of England and South Asia, today announced a three year programme of co-commissions, exhibitions and intellectual exchange to celebrate shared heritage across continents and develop artistic talent. The *New North and South* network, supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England's *Ambition for Excellence* programme, will bring prominence to the work of leading **Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan** and **UK** artists and include new artistic commissions, exhibitions and performances in **Manchester, Leeds** and **Liverpool** and in **Colombo, Dhaka, Lahore, Karachi** and **Kochi**.

This new network consists of Manchester Art Gallery, the Whitworth, Manchester Museum, Liverpool Biennial, The Tetley in Leeds and Colombo Biennale (Sri Lanka), Dhaka Art Summit (Bangladesh), Karachi and Lahore Biennales (Pakistan), Kochi-Muziris Biennale (India) and the British Council. The *New North and South* aims to connect with diverse audiences on both continents through a programme of exhibitions and events that showcase the best of contemporary art from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the UK and also explore unequal and contested histories of empire and the industrial revolution.

**Bose Krishnamachari, Co-founder of Kochi-Muziris Biennale said:** *'The Kochi Biennale Foundation is proud to work with a range of partners in South Asia and in the UK on this long term initiative to share knowledge and creativity across the world. We thank the Arts Council of England for their support and look forward to a productive and shared future.'*

**Diana Campbell Betancourt, Artistic Director of Dhaka Art Summit said:** *'The Dhaka Art Summit exists as a needed non-commercial research and exhibitions platform to consider art and culture in South Asia beyond India and Pakistan, exploring this region as a long standing zone of global contact where ideas are born. We are thrilled to support the New North New South network and we look forward to developing sensitive and meaningful projects together that benefit these important art scenes.'*

**Dr Nick Merriman, Director of Manchester Museum said:** *'New North and South offers a platform for world class contemporary artists from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka to be shown in the UK and gives us the opportunity to connect better to the diverse communities of the North. Manchester, Liverpool Biennial and the Tetley look forward to collaborating with our partners in Colombo, Dhaka, Karachi, Kochi and Lahore to open the exchange of ideas and develop long-lasting connections for all involved.'*

**Rashid Rana, Artistic Director Lahore Biennale 01** said: '*Lahore Biennale 01 identifies collaboration and engagement as a key component of its creative process and therefore a partnership with New North and South opens up exciting avenues. South Asia has a complicated present in terms of hard political boundaries within the region and has a complicated past with the UK. The New North and South partnership initiates and strengthens a nexus within South Asia and the UK in a unique way. This initiative celebrates the individual artistic and intellectual expressions of the region, while recognizing our collective histories.*'

The first twelve months of the *New North and South* will commence in Manchester with a retrospective of photographs by **Sooni Taraporevala** at the **Whitworth** (opening 4 March 2017) showcasing 40 years of images of Mumbai/Bombay. The Whitworth will also showcase its rich South Asian textile collection alongside the work of contemporary artists **Raisa Kabir, Yasmin Jahan Nupur, Risham Syed** and **Indian collective CONA** (opening 20 May 2017). **Manchester Art Gallery's** design gallery will present its south Asian decorative art alongside work by contemporary makers **Adeela Suleman, Halima Cassell, Manish Arora** and **Cobalt Designs** (opening 18 May 2017).

Contemporary artist **Raqib Shaw** will have a solo exhibition at the Whitworth that will examine real and imagined spaces between the East and West (opening 24 June 2017). Co-curated by Diana Campbell Betancourt, Director of Dhaka Art Summit, Dr. Maria Balshaw, Director of the Whitworth and Manchester Art Gallery and the artist, Shaw's paintings will be combined with historic textiles, furniture and drawings from the Whitworth collection referencing Kashmir and the aesthetic of the East, echoing the opulent imagery and mythic space Shaw inhabits and creates in his paintings. The installation will then be reimagined for the South Asian context of the Dhaka Art Summit 2018.

Manchester's **Museum of Science and Industry** will welcome performance artist **Nikhil Chopra**. Chopra will create a one-off performance based around a steam locomotive held in the Museum's permanent collection. The steam engine was built in Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside, but served on the Indian Railways and was then transferred to Pakistan after Partition in 1947. This single object and the original Liverpool Road station, the terminus the world's first commercial railway line from Liverpool to Manchester, will become the symbolic centre of Chopra's performance (29 September – 1 October 2017).

**The Tetley** in Leeds will host a week-long workshop facilitated and led by established performance artists **Nikhil Chopra, Madhavi Gore** and **Jana Prepeluh**, also known as 'Bodyworkshop'. This workshop travels to Leeds from the 2016 Dhaka Art Summit. At The Tetley twelve artists, selected by the eleven network partners and drawn from Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and the UK, will incubate new ideas culminating in a weekend of performances and talks (5-6 August 2017).

From 30 September 2017, the *New North and South* network will host a Manchester-wide programme, of which highlights include:

- Solo exhibitions of new work by leading Pakistani artists **Mehreen Murtaza, Waqas Khan, Risham Syed** and **Tentative Collective**, Indian artist **Neha Choksi** and UK artist **Hetai Patel** at Manchester Art Gallery.
- The work of four pioneering Pakistani and Indian modernists, **Sadanand Bakre, Avinash Chandra, Anwar Jalal Shemza** and **F.N. Souza**, at the Whitworth.
- A major exhibition and intervention by **Reena Saini Kallat** across Manchester Museum. The multimedia exhibition will see Kallat create new audio installations and a large outdoor sculpture inspired by the Museum's natural science and human cultures collections. Works including *Colour Curtain* (2009), a barricade made from rubberstamps with the names of individuals who have been denied visas and *Light Leaks* (2008-2010), a sculpture modelled on the gates at the Wagah Attari border between India and Pakistan will also be displayed.
- The first major UK exhibition by **Raqs Media Collective** at the Whitworth and throughout the Whitworth Park, exploring the history of Suffrage and the birth of the labour movement. The exhibition will include new commissions inspired by Manchester's industrial heritage.

Complementing the *New North and South* programme will be performances, film screenings, music events and social history exhibitions that will take place across Manchester including: **Memories of Partition**, coordinated by **Manchester Museum, The Royal Exchange Theatre, the Race Relations Archive** and the **Manchester BME Network**, which will collect oral history interviews from people affected by the Partition of 1947. Contemporary South Asian music with Manchester's **Band On The Wall** and a Partition film season at HOME will also take place.

In parallel to the public programme the *New North and South* network will facilitate a series of residencies hosted by **Liverpool Biennial**. The residencies will enable mid-career artists from South Asia to work alongside, or be supported by, artists and curators with international reputations. The residencies will culminate in a series of co-commissions with the **Lahore and Karachi Biennales in 2017**. Liverpool Biennial will also develop mentoring and commissioning opportunities for emerging Bangladeshi artists selected for the Samdani Award with **Dhaka Art Summit** in 2018.

Further announcements around *New North and South* projects will follow in the spring and autumn of 2017, including projects at the 2017 Karachi Biennale and the Dhaka Art Summit and Lahore Biennale 01 in 2018.

Find out more at [www.newnorthandsouth.org](http://www.newnorthandsouth.org) and follow the conversation with #newnorthsouth.

## ENDS

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

### About Arts Council England

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2015 and 2018, we plan to invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and an estimated £700 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country. [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

### About British Council

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and build trust between them worldwide. We work in more than 100 countries and our 8,000 staff – including 2,000 teachers – work with thousands of professionals and policy makers and millions of young people every year by teaching English, sharing the arts and delivering education and society programmes. We are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter. A core publicly-funded grant provides 16 per cent of our turnover which last year was £973 million. The rest of our revenues are earned from services which customers around the world pay for, such as English classes and taking UK examinations, and also through education and development contracts and from partnerships with public and private organisations. All our work is in pursuit of our charitable purpose and supports prosperity and security for the UK and globally. [www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)

### About Colombo Biennale

Colombo Art Biennale (CAB), the largest and most recognised contemporary art manifestation in Sri Lanka was launched in 2009 amidst the civil armed conflict to showcase the power of Sri Lankan art and as a mission for social change through contemporary arts. CAB has just completed its fourth edition with its continuing and successful vision of exposing and sharing the strengths of the arts to a larger audience through international relations and community engagement as well as offering space for conversations to occur through its artistic praxis. CAB intends to continue to build a stronger and larger art community not only through further editions of the Biennale that will develop narrative content with contemporary relevance, but also through ongoing projects, workshops and educational programmes that will contribute to community building in Sri Lanka, within the region and globally. [colomboartbiennale.com](http://colomboartbiennale.com)

### **About Dhaka Art Summit**

An international non-commercial research and exhibition platform for art and architecture related to South Asia, the Dhaka Art Summit seeks to re-examine how we think about these art forms in a regional and wider context, with a focus on Bangladesh. Rejecting the traditional biennale format to focus on the advancement and promotion of South Asia's creative communities, the Summit's interdisciplinary programme invites local and international guest curators from leading institutions to unlock new areas of inquiry while initiatives including the Samdani Art Award and Seminars programme express its developmental commitment to the local arts community. The fourth edition will be held from the 2 to 10 February 2018. [www.dhakaartsummit.org](http://www.dhakaartsummit.org)

### **About Karachi Biennale**

The Karachi Biennale is a visionary platform that focuses on innovation, excellence and criticality through curatorial strategies that will bring art from Pakistan and the rest of the world together for a large public audience. Its discursive interventions aim to cross pollinate ideas and explore meaning and truth across disciplines and contexts. Artists are invited to respond to the theme WITNESS. Art as a testament of its time has always held significance, particularly in times when memory is heavily contested. The theme Witness has been chosen for its strong relevance to politics of representation, erasure and selective documentation. The main venue for the Biennale is the 160-year-old, NJV School building which is located within the historical precincts of one of the most populous cities of the world. With an architecture of exhibitions, discursive interventions and extensive visitor programs during the Karachi Biennale, Art in Karachi will combine creative energies and spark new ones. [karachibiennale.org.pk](http://karachibiennale.org.pk)

### **About Kochi-Muziris Biennale**

The Kochi-Muziris Biennale is an international festival of contemporary art hosted in the city of Kochi, in Kerala, India. It is India's largest contemporary art event, and the largest public exhibition of this nature in South Asia. The landmark event has created an enduring platform for artistic and cultural contributions to society, and has established itself as a centre for artistic engagement in this part of the world. The three editions of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, since 2012, have ensured that Kochi now occupies a prominent position on the global art calendar. The Biennale has exhibited more than 300 artworks by over 250 artists from all over the world, and hosted more than a million visitors. The Biennale is conducted by the Kochi Biennale Foundation, and forms an important part of the Foundation's mission to increase awareness of contemporary art practices in India. The third edition of the Biennale runs until 29 March 2017. [kochimuzirisbiennale.org](http://kochimuzirisbiennale.org)

### **About Lahore Biennale 01**

With Artistic Director Rashid Rana at the helm, Lahore Biennale 01 is envisioned as an ever-evolving process rather than a product. At the very core of the curatorial premise lies questioning, rethinking and reinventing existing biennale formats, dispelling the concept of "one grand exhibition", and exploring fully the artist/public and gallery/public space dichotomies. To this end, it seeks to analyse the idea of "function" in art and consequently questions the role of art, artists, as well as art practice. With an all-encompassing outlook, using Lahore as a mere point of departure, the aim is to soften all kinds of boundaries: conceptual, spatial, temporal, societal, as well as institutional. To achieve this the Lahore Biennale 01 will explore the intersection of art and its social context by inciting dialogue amongst practitioners, academics and thinkers from diverse disciplines, and through new commissions from some of the world's most engaging artists, both established and emerging. [lahorebiennale.org](http://lahorebiennale.org)

### **About Liverpool Biennial**

Liverpool Biennial presents the UK's festival of contemporary art. It takes place every two years across the city in public spaces, unused buildings, galleries and online. The Biennial is underpinned by a programme of research, education, residencies and commissions. Founded in 1998, Liverpool Biennial has commissioned over 305 new artworks and presented work by over 444 artists from around the world. The Biennial's 10th edition will celebrate 20 years of commissioning art in Liverpool. It will run from 14 July – 28 October 2018. [www.biennial.com](http://www.biennial.com)

### **About Manchester Art Gallery**

Manchester Art Gallery dates to 1835. Originally established to showcase the best art and ideas from across the world, today the gallery's 45,000-strong collection spans six centuries of fine art, design,

craft, photography and fashion. It is particularly rich in 19<sup>th</sup> century art, including an outstanding collection of Pre-Raphaelite paintings. It also has a reputation for staging new work by some of the most compelling artists working today, among them Turner Prize winning artist Jeremy Deller, Joana Vasconcelos, Matthew Darbyshire and Raqib Shaw. Alongside its exhibitions run events that range from feminist 'takeovers' to wellbeing sessions, political debate and creative workshops, via award-winning family, community and schools programmes. Part of Manchester City Council, Manchester Art Gallery is one of the country's most popular, with over half a million visitors every year. [manchesterartgallery.org](http://manchesterartgallery.org)

### About Manchester Museum

Manchester Museum, part of The University of Manchester, first opened in 1890. It is the UK's largest university museum with a collection of about 4.5 million items from every continent. Its combination of the academic and the popular is what makes the museum so distinctive and lies at the heart of its widespread appeal. The Museum's vision is to promote understanding between cultures and work towards developing a sustainable world. In 2015, visitor numbers exceeded 450,000 for the first time in its history, reflecting an institution which has become a leading visitor attraction. Each year, Manchester Museum provides an exciting schools programme to approximately 30,000 children and delivers pioneering family programmes and adult learning opportunities to more than 95,000 people of all ages and backgrounds. [www.manchester.ac.uk/museum](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/museum)

### About The Tetley

The Tetley is a centre for contemporary art in the heart of Leeds' South Bank. Housed in the 1931 headquarters of the Joshua Tetley & Son brewery, The Tetley opened in 2013 as a gallery with a learning studio, work space for the creative industries, restaurant and bar. Described by the London Evening Standard as "the heart and soul of Leeds' art scene" The Tetley's programme of exhibitions, residencies and events aim to inspire and bring audiences closer to art and artists, support the production of new work and develop artists' practice. [thetetley.org](http://thetetley.org)

### About the Whitworth

The Whitworth is part of The University of Manchester. It is home to internationally renowned collections of modern art, textiles, watercolours, prints, drawings and sculpture. Created in 1889 as the first English gallery in a park, the Whitworth has developed a new vision for the role of a university gallery. A creative laboratory within an ambitious university, the Whitworth is a place where good, unusual things happen.

The Whitworth re-opened to the public on 14 February 2015 after a major £17 million redevelopment by architects MUMA. The Whitworth has welcomed over 800,000 since re-opening, and more than doubled its previous annual records. The redevelopment has doubled public space and created state-of-the-art new facilities including expanded gallery spaces, a study centre, learning studio, and a collections centre. The gallery was crowned Art Fund Museum of Year 2015, nominated for the prestigious Stirling Prize and named Best Emerging Cultural Destination in Europe. [www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth)



the Whitworth



Manchester Art Gallery



Liverpool Biennial



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