



Other Asias

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Hamja Ahsan



Fatima Hussain

Should we train our imagination to allow 'Asia' to emerge as a continent?
(Gayatri Spivak, 2008)

Other Asias is an ambitious artist-led initiative that challenges contemporary navigations of Asia as region, as potentiality, as memory, as imagination and investigation through an arena of fluid exhibitionary structures. Our organisation activates chains of exhibitions, film screenings, fictions, forums, performance, plays, walks and talks, historical revisions, reading circles, archives, taxonomies, political vocabularies, public education and transnational circulation towards a post-West cultural horizon.

Other Asias operates as open assemblage of artists, writers and designers that weaves together reanimated alliances and counter-cartographies. We grew discontented with the ossification of official "cross-cultural" departments, institutionalised post-colonial studies and new internationalism, embodied in the systematic mediocrity of the first Asian Arts Triennial (Manchester 2008).

Other Asias was founded in 2008 and has worked with above 50 artists producing projects that investigate not only the exhibition formats but also address the issue as ingenuously as possible. Redo Pakistan sparked a controversy when launched in Karachi for the first time. The project has now become a quarterly newspaper.

Other Asias is based in London (UK), Lahore (Pakistan) and Dhaka (Bangladesh) with a satellite network of links across the Asian continent. We are an independent, not-for-profit arts organisation run by an open collective of volunteers.

PAST PROJECTS



Iqbal Festival in collaboration with IMASE December 2009



Redo Pakistan at Deptford X in Sept 2009



A Cup of Tea Solves everything (Tours Ireland in August 2009)

P A S T

LONG TERM PROJECTS

-Bengali Theatre Season: Scheduled Nov 2010 An exhibition around Bengali theatre, literature, graphic design to coincide with the Bengali theatre season at Brady Artscentre.

-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/>

-Islamic Prisoners work with Shahidul Alam (DRIK/ Chobi Mela) and journalist - Working on an allegoric photo essay on fate of Muslim prisoners in British jails

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

UP COMING PROJECTS

-REDO PAKISTAN ISSUE 2: Launch events in Pakistan, UK, US and Bangladesh scheduled for mid 2010. Venue and dates TBC.

-Other Asias presenting at the Tate Britain Cross Cultural Symposium 'Status of Difference' scheduled for June 2010.

-Redo Pakistan at The Guild, NY, USA.



E V E N T S



Karachi



Lahore



London

P A S T

CURRENT II - REDO PAKISTAN

Originally conceived by Fatima Hussain

With the kindness and support of REDO PAKISTAN Lahore/London Volunteers Collective.

Pakistan was founded by Mohammed Ali Jinnah in 1947 who served as its first Governor-General. Over the decades it has been founded again and again geographically, politically and intellectually by the temporary Governments, unstable rulers, natural hazards, and the political super powers.

What if, Pakistan was to be restored, stabilized today by the social envisioners? What would a Pakistan, reconstructed in 2009, the year after the unstable rule, look like?

What if, instead of the super powers renovating the third world nations, were to leave one country in the hands of the social envisioners? How do you fantasize remodeling the land, geographically, politically, intellectually? We challenge you to propose a design, plan, idea that eradicates anything you feel threatens the nation and proves to be the utopia we all have been waiting for. The best ideas, designs, descriptions, proposals, images, videos sent in for the Re-do will be discussed thoroughly and the best plan of action will be acted upon.

This Open Submission Traveling Group Show is scheduled to be shown in Karachi/Lahore-Pakistan, London-UK, and Dhaka Bangladesh.

Redo Pakistan received an overwhelming response of over 40 artists contributing to the idea from all over the world. Envisioners from Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Germany, Poland, Greece, UK, and Canada came together through Painting, Sculpture, Drawing, Photography, Sound, Film, Critical and Creative Writings to reform the nation.



T REDO PAKISTAN IN KARACHI
 N EVENT : SHANAKHT FESTIVAL
 E VENUE : ARTS COUNCIL KARACHI
 V
 E

P A S T

The works were put together in a form of a show in Karachi at the Shanakht festival which were to be followed by a symposium. The panel (Anwar Maqsood, Durriya Kazi, Salima Hashmi, Kauser Jehan and Arfan Ghani) were to dissect the ideas and highlight the role of the artist in the current scenario of the country.

It seemed it was going to be an unforgettable day in the Karachi's recent tormented past. It turned out to be true for all the wrong reasons.

Shanakht Festival, of which Redo Pakistan was a part, began with much hope & fanfare on 8th April 2009, with 1,500 school children visiting the exhibits in the morning alone. By sunset, more than a thousand Karachiites had visited the event, which they appreciated greatly & hoped to visit again with their friends & family soon.

No one could have predicted that this calm social gathering was in for a rude awakening to the dark side of Karachi. Several political activists of the dominant political party in Pakistan took offence to a work of art, exhibited, by another group, in the same gallery as Redo Pakistan, & threatened to beat the organizers up if they did not hand over the artist behind the "sacrilegious" piece. Those goons later went on to ransack the gallery & to damage other exhibits as well, scaring away the many Karachiites who saw their hopes for a peaceful & entertaining night out dashed.

The next day, we took toll of the damage, packed up our exhibit & headed home after the Sindh Government refused to provide security guarantees to the organizers of the Shanakht Festival.





E V E N T

REDO PAKISTAN IN LAHORE
 EVENT : NEWSPAPER LAUNCH/ SYMPOSIUM
 VENUE : ALHAMRA ARTS COUNCIL, LAHORE

P A S T

2009 being the toughest year for Pakistan, May and June were by far the most challenging ones. The frequent suicide bombings in the public buildings, attack on the ISI headquarters in Lahore, explosion in the intercontinental hotel in Peshawar had left the Pakistani nation anxious and bewildered. 'Art' seemed like a luxury and 'galleries' a lavish resort.

Our past experience with the show and the current situation of the country led us to think of more urgent ways of getting across the idea of reforming the nation. It was impossible to think that people would even consider coming to the gallery to spend time with the works so carefully put together by the Envisioners. We decided to curate the show in the form of a newspaper and alter the role of the artist as a newspaper vendor.

The handing out of the newspaper to the audience took place in the gallery and outside. The show was much more accessible to the nation than it was ever before. It was received well by the public. The symposium in the gallery space highlighted this new role of the artist as the vendor, being the most urgent and contemporary keeping in mind the scenario of the country.

Panel for the Symposium

- Suroosh Irfani
- Kauser Jehan
- Ghazanfar Ali Dada





THE NEWSPAPER ISSUE - 1

P A S T



PG/01



PG/02



PG/03



PG/04



PG/05



PG/06



E V E N T

REDO PAKISTAN IN LONDON
 EVENT : NEWSPAPER / SERIES OF EVENTS
 VENUE : DEPTFORD LONDON

P A S T

REDO PAKISTAN, a travelling group show started as a discussion forum that had formed itself into a newspaper that activates multiple chains of events. In London, the focus shifted from the urgency of the city, the geographical politics to a more educational and diverse dialogue that celebrates and revisits the post colonial archive. The series of events act as an opening for further dialogue and currents that define the practice of Other Asias as a whole.

LONDON 18TH SEPT – 4TH OCT

- PROLOGUE 'JINNAH PAPER' **18TH SEPT 2009**
- OPENING **25TH SEPT 2009**
- FILM SCREENING 'ZIBAH KHANA' **1ST OCTOBER**
- FAIZ AHMED FAIZ EVENT (READING GROUP) **27TH SEPT 2009**
- SADAT HASSAN MANTO (WALK) **27TH SEPT 2009**
- TRYST WITH DENSITY (SADAT HASSAN MANTO) **3RD OCT 2009**
- 'LEAVE THE LETTERS TILL WE'RE DEAD' **3RD OCTOBER 2009**
- DECLARATION OF WAR **4TH OCTOBER 2009**

PRESS

-DEPTFORD: PAKISTAN EXHIBITION, A FESTIVAL HIT!!

http://www.newsshopper.co.uk/news/lewgreen/4661159.DEPTFORD__Pakistan_exhibition_is_a_festival_hit/

-FROM PAKISTAN: HANGING FIRE

<http://www.whitewallmag.com/2009/10/27/from-pakistan-hanging-fire/>

-REDO PAKISTAN ON OPTICAL RADIO

<http://opticalradio.com/featuredsets.php>

Click Feature no 5. in Featured Interview with Other Asias Optical Zoo.



E V E N T

REDO PAKISTAN IN LONDON
EVENT : SERIES OF EVENTS
VENUE : DEPTFORD LONDON



P A S T



'Leave the letters till we're dead'.
Reading by Gemma Sharpe



Readin Circle



Performance walk based on
Manto's Toba Tek Singh



'Tryst' with density. Written by Akkas
for Redo Pakistan.



Faiz. A. Faiz Event



The Fantastic India/Pakistan Battle.



Display at Deptford Project Space.



Display at Old Police Station



E V E N T

REDO PAKISTAN
COLLABORATING PARTNERS

P A S T



BAHRIA TOWN

BAHRIA TOWN



DAWN NEWS



ZONG



LAAJVERD



VASL



SHANAKHT



AIR BLUE



DEPTFORD



STAR MARKETING



CAP



PAKISTAN

E V E N T

REDO PAKISTAN
NEWS PAPER - ISSUE 02
CALL TO THE ENVISIONERS / EVENTS TBC

C U R R E N T

'DECLARATION₁ OF WAR₂ AGAINST₃ THE PRESENT₄ TIME₅'

- 1 The formal announcement of the beginning of state or condition.
- 2 To deal with or end a particular unpleasant or undesirable situation or condition.
- 3 In anticipation of and preparation for a problem or difficulty.
- 4 Expression of action now going on or habitually performed or a condition now existing.
- 5 A distinct period of history.

Literal translation of 'Zarb-e-Kalim' (title of the poetry compilation by Dr. Allama Mohammad Iqbal). Published in the year 1936 for the same nation 73 years ago.

The message has been updated in the year 2010 and calls for urgent consideration.

We challenge you to declare WAR, intellectually, socially against the existing.

The best ideas, designs, descriptions, proposals, images, critical writing selected will be printed, published and distributed as part of the 'Redo Pakistan' quarterly Newspaper and will be curated at our Newspaper Events.

Newspaper Launch will be curated in Pakistan, UK, and the US in Mid 2010. Issue 2 will be printed and published in Lahore, Pakistan, Will be distributed internationally.

Events planned for the Launch include

TALKS
FILM SCREENINGS
RADIO SHOW
DISCUSSION FORUMS
GALLERY EXHIBITS



contact

Director of Exhibitions and Events (Lahore/ London):

Fatima Hussain (Visual artist, curator and theatre practitioner based in Lahore (Pakistan)/ London (UK).
www.Fatima-Hussain.net

Director of Exhibitions and Events (London/ Dhaka):

Hamja Ahsan (Artist, writer and curator based in London (UK)/ Dhaka (Bangladesh).
www.HamjaAhsan.com

Redo Pakistan (Pakistan Wing Project Coordinator)

Zahra Hussain (Architect, Artist based in Islamabad, Pakistan).

L O N D O N

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