



Education Folio
Naeem Mohaiemen
Bangladesh

How to use this folio

This education folio contains information about the featured artists in the Asia Pacific Breweries Foundation Signature Art Prize 2014, their artworks as well as artistic processes, giving visitors a better understanding and appreciation of the artworks displayed.

Questions and activities found at the back of the folio are meant for visitors to have a deeper engagement with each of the finalist artworks. The questions can be used for discussions when looking at the particular artwork, while the suggested activities are designed for educators or parents to explore with their students or children for further engagement beyond the museum visit.

The suggested reading and viewing lists also provide more information about the artist's practice, artwork themes and related ideas or issues, which are aimed at helping educators and readers make interesting and relevant connections to matters in their daily life.

Introduction

The Asia Pacific Breweries (APB) Foundation Signature Art Prize is a premier juried prize inaugurated by the Asia Pacific Breweries Foundation and the Singapore Art Museum in 2008. It is a hallmark of distinction awarded to artists whose artworks represent a significant development in contemporary visual art in the Asia Pacific region.

A triennial competition, the APB Foundation Signature Art Prize seeks to highlight new developments in the visual arts, stimulate lively public discussion and critical debate, and provide a cross-cultural exhibition platform for established practitioners and significant emerging artists alike. Aimed at recognising the single most outstanding contemporary visual artwork produced in the preceding three years, the competition is open to all visual artworks, regardless of medium, subject matter and size.

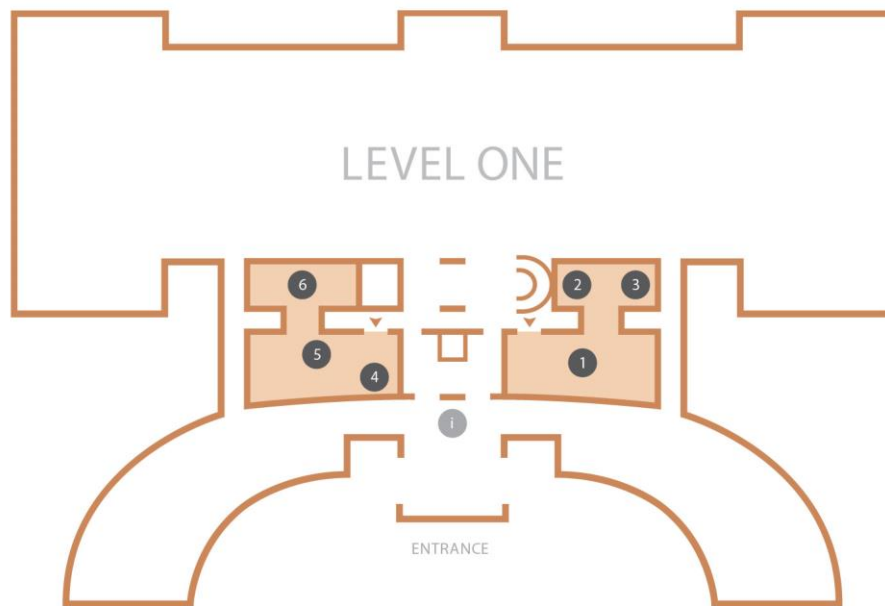
The inaugural edition in 2008 focused only on 12 countries: Cambodia, China, India, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam, and received a total of 34 nominations. The APB Foundation Signature Art Prize soon expanded its focus in 2011 to reach the entire Asia Pacific region, including 130 artworks from 23 Asia Pacific countries and territories. Nominations were received from new countries and territories including Indonesia, Philippines, Myanmar, Brunei, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Australia and other Oceania and Pacific islands. The 2014 edition includes nominations from all previous countries and territories, including a nomination from new entrant, Hong Kong.

Nominators from across the region with a wide range of specialties and backgrounds are specially invited to nominate specific artworks – instead of artists – that had been aesthetically, culturally and socially significant in their particular artscenes in the past three years. A diverse panel of distinguished judges, who mostly hail from the Asia-Pacific region, are also selected specially to evaluate the nominations, shortlist the finalists, and decide on the key award-winning works in the APB Foundation Signature Art Prize exhibition

All nominated works are assessed on a set of criteria: the strength of the idea and concept; creative and interesting use of medium and material; technique, expression and form; artistic insight and interpretation, and imagination and originality. The Grand Prize and two Juror's Choice Awards are chosen by the international jury of art experts, critics and curators, while the People's Choice Award will go to the artist whose work garners the most number of public votes.

The APB Foundation Signature Art Prize is a recognition of distinction and significance in artistic practice, presenting the best of contemporary art in the Asia-Pacific region.

Exhibition map



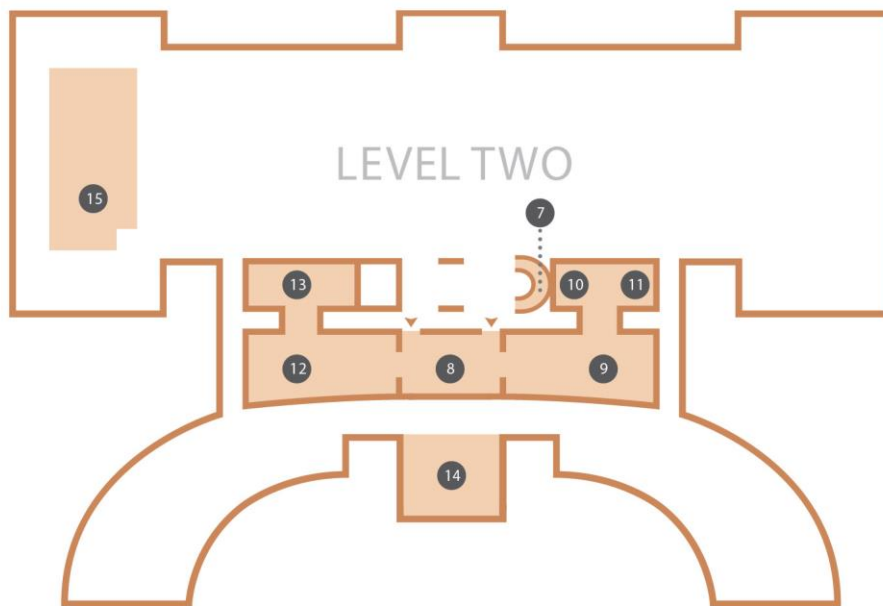
LEVEL ONE

- 1 Nguyen Trinh Thi
- 2 Robert Zhao Renhui
- 3 Owen Leong
- 4 Farida Batool
- 5 Peng Wei
- 6 Yao Jui-Chung
+ Lost Society
Document (LSD)

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Exhibition map



LEVEL TWO

- 7 Liu Jianhua
- 8 Choe U-Ram
- 9 Go Watanabe
- 10 Lisa Reihana
- 11 Naeem Mohaiemen
- 12 Arin Rungjang
- 13 Ranbir Kaleka
- 14 Melati Suryodarmo
- 15 Ho Tzu Nven

Artwork



Rankin Street, 1953

Naeem Mohaiemen

2013

Mixed media installation with video, blueprint drawings, vintage photographs, and matching sandstone moulds

Dimensions variable, duration 8:00 mins

Edition 2 of 3 (Video and blueprint drawings)

Edition 3 of 3 (Vintage photographs and matching sandstone moulds)

Collection of Experimenter Gallery and Samdani Art Foundation

Image courtesy of the Artist and Experimenter Gallery

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About the artwork and artistic process

Naeem Mohaiemen's *Rankin Street, 1953* is a mixed media installation consisting of twelve old photographs, twelve **sandstone** moulds crafted according to the **negative spaces** in the photographs that resembles topographical maps, eight photographs overlain with **blueprints** of the Rankin Street residence, and an eight-minute long video explaining the background of the artwork.

The conceptualization of this work first came about when Mohaiemen uncovered a box of photography negatives by accident, each negative stored in a separate sleeve and in good condition. He had initially expected the photographs to be of the city of Dhaka where his family resided, but instead many of them turned out to be of the family cat and of his seven aunts in their younger years. It was discovered that the photographs were all taken by Mohaiemen's father in the old house on Rankin Street that the family formerly lived in. Mohaiemen's father was a professional surgeon who did not take photography seriously but regarded it as a hobby, this being the first camera he bought when he was still in medical school. This collection was also the first and only box of negatives found.

Subsequently, the old family house on Rankin Street was demolished in the 1970s due to the rapid urbanisation of the city of Dhaka that resulted in a tremendous increase in the demand for land. It was also a reflection of how the economic needs of a developing nation could alter the country's landscape and **supersede** the emotional bonds of an extended, multigenerational family.

About the artist

Naeem Mohaiemen (b. 1969, London, England) is an artist and writer from Dhaka, Bangladesh who currently works in both his home country and in New York. He graduated from the Oberlin College, Ohio in 1993 with a Bachelors in Economics and Concentration in History and is currently pursuing his postgraduate degree in Anthropology with a Certificate in Comparative Literature at Columbia University, New York.

Mohaiemen's artworks span a variety of mediums, and they frequently involve the use of photography, film, mixed media as well as critical writing to address historical events, migrant identities and political issues.

His work has been shown around the world, more recently at the Edinburgh Art Festival (2014); Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland (2014); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2014); Kirin Nadar Museum, Delhi (2013); Dhaka Art Summit (2012); Sharjah Biennial, United Arab emirates (2011); and the Frieze Art Fair, London (2010).

Discussion and suggested activities

Questions for discussion

- Look at the twelve photographs. Who are these people and how might they be related to the artist? What do you think happened before or after the photograph was taken?
- The twelve photographs were taken indoors. What do you imagine happened before or after each photograph was taken?
- Look at each set of photographs and their corresponding sandstone moulds. Can you make out the images depicted by the sandstone moulds? What do you think is the meaning behind using sandstone moulds to rework the photographs?
- Look at the eight photographs that are overlaid with blueprint drawings of the old house. What similarities do you notice about the photographs? What is the symbolism of overlaying the two elements?
- In the artwork, the artist describes the old house where his father and relatives used to live as a place of history and nostalgia. Unfortunately, the old house succumbed to the country's rapid development plans and was eventually demolished. Do you think it is important to conserve old buildings and spaces? Why do you think so?
- [FOOD FOR THOUGHT] Like Dhaka, Singapore is also a city that has undergone rapid development over the last 50 years. How has urbanisation affected people in terms of their living conditions and lifestyles? Discuss some advantages and disadvantages brought about by urbanisation in the context of Singapore.

Suggested activities

- Look for old family photographs taken in a home environment and ask your parents, grandparents or relatives about these photographs. How much about their former homes and events can they remember? Document your family's history and heritage by recording down these anecdotes, stories and memories.
- Conduct research on the *kampongs* that used to exist in Singapore before they were demolished for land redevelopment plans. Obtain a current map of Singapore and plot down the former locations of these *kampongs*. Which areas were these *kampongs* situated? What modern buildings or facilities have been built on the former sites of these *kampongs*?

Glossary

Sandstone

Any of a group of common sedimentary rocks consisting of sand grains consolidated with such materials as quartz, haematite, and clay minerals: used widely in building.

Blueprints

A photographic print of plans, technical drawings, etc, consisting of white lines on a blue background.

Negative spaces

The space around and between the subject or subjects of an image or object.

Supersede

To take the place of (something old-fashioned or less appropriate); supplant.

Further reading and viewing

Artist's official website

<http://www.shobak.org/>

Book on the geography, history, government, economy, people, religion, language, arts, leisure, festivals, and food of Bangladesh

Bangladesh by Mariam Whyte. Available [here](#).

Book on the impact of foreign investment and industrialisation in Bangladesh

Discordant development: global capitalism and the struggle for connection in Bangladesh by Katy Gardner. Available [here](#).

Video about the rapid growth and urbanisation of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Megacities Reflect Growing Urbanization Trend by PBS NewsHour. Available [here](#).